

# **ADDISON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

## **U.S. EPA Brownfield Grant Application and Implementation**

**Assistance RFQ Release Date: September 14, 2021**

**Proposal Due Date: October 15, 2021, 4:00 p.m.**

### **1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **1.1 Purpose of this Request for Proposals**

The ADDISON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (ACRPC) through this Request for Qualifications (RFQ), is seeking a qualified environmental consulting and/or planning firm to provide assistance with: (a) securing United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and potentially other federal or state grants for the assessment, cleanup, or redevelopment of brownfields properties within Addison County, VT, and (b) implementation of environmental assessment, remedial planning, community outreach, and other environmental or planning components of grants for which funding is secured. The initial focus for the contract will be securing a U.S. EPA assessment grant as part of the U.S. EPA's annual Brownfields Grant Competition, for which it is anticipated grant applications will be due in October 2021. This solicitation is being issued in part to comply with Federal procurement standards outlined in CFR §200.317- CFR §200.326 that are applicable to hiring of consulting firms to assist communities with grants awarded by the U.S. EPA.

#### **1.2 Background Information**

Brownfields are defined by U.S. EPA as: *"real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant"*

The purpose of the U.S. EPA brownfields assessment grant is to conduct Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments (ESAs) at brownfield sites located within Addison County. The objectives of the community may expand at a later date to include actual cleanup of individual sites targeted for assessment, depending on the future availability of funding. The successful consultant will bring experience and insight to a partnership with the community to obtain and implement these grants as well as explore other grants and brownfields initiatives as funds become available.

The number and location of brownfields sites within the county is presently undetermined, as well as the economic impact of these sites in depressing property values and hindering redevelopment of high priority areas. One outcome of the U.S. EPA assessment grants, if secured, will be to develop an inventory and other information related to these sites to allow for more effective planning by the ACRPC and community partners in furthering their assessment, cleanup if necessary, and redevelopment.

### **1.3 Type of Contract and Contract Term**

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission prefers to award a contract to one full-service firm to serve as a partner in successfully obtaining initial U.S. EPA brownfield grant funding and then achieving the goals within the subsequent U.S. EPA Cooperative Agreement (CA) and Work Plan. The contract period will begin after the contract approval and continue through the subsequent implementation period for any successful grants. The contract period may be extended at the option of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission if additional grant funds are obtained.

### **1.4 Payment Procedures**

Payments for grant preparation services will be on a lump sum basis, as outlined below in the Cost section. Payments for implementation of any successful grants will be made no more than monthly, for work specified and completed and in accordance with the budget developed and approved by the ACRPC and the EPA.

## **2. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**

### **2.1 Activities Required Under this Request for Qualifications**

This RFQ is to solicit for a qualified consultant who is expected to provide a wide range of potential grant, assessment, and planning services to the community. The scope of work to be performed by the successful consultant at a minimum is expected to include:

- Assisting the ACRPC with the preparation of applications for U.S. EPA Community-Wide Assessment Grants for in an amount up to \$500,000 for FY 2022.
- Provide assistance with revision and resubmittal of application(s) as part of the FY2022/2023+1 competition, if the one or more of the initial applications is unsuccessful.
- Provide assistance with development of U.S. EPA-required project work plan(s) for applications that are successful.
- Prepare and maintain schedules and budgets for assessment or cleanup activities.
- Conduct and oversee site assessment studies and prepare appropriate technical reports required by the U.S. EPA and Vermont DEC in print and electronic format.
- Field investigations including sample collection and lab analysis.
- Interviews with neighboring property owners.
- Evaluation of cleanup options and risk assessment analysis and costs.
- Preparation of a written Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) in compliance with U.S. EPA regulations.
- Delivery to the ACRPC completed Phase I and Phase II ESA reports, site investigation reports, response action plans and other environmental reports or plans required under the applicable Vermont environmental regulations.
- Project management, implementation, and/or technical oversight.
- Professional advice regarding environmental issues associated with land reuse/redevelopment.
- Provide regulatory and financial information as needed.

- Attend meetings of the ACRPC and advisory committees as requested.
- Prepare presentations to provide information about the project's progress as requested.
- Assist with conductance of community-wide inventory of potential hazardous substance and petroleum brownfields sites.
- Develop preliminary budget, financing options and implementation plan for cleanup/reuse.
- Complete contaminant characterization and risk assessments as determined necessary following Phase II activities (as funds allow).
- Involve public and private opportunities for citizen participation throughout all phases of projects.
- Comprehensive community outreach program and public participation program.
- Implement site specific cleanup or remediation (if future funding becomes available through this or another grant funded program).
- Redevelopment planning and market research as related to environmental site reuse.

## **2.2 Project Budget**

The total budget for each U.S. EPA brownfield Community-Wide assessment grant is \$500,000. The ACRPC and the successful consultant will develop budgets for assessment activities at individual sites as the project progresses as specific sites are identified for assessment. The budget for any future related grants executed under this contract will be negotiated with the consultant if and when such funding becomes available. It will be the ACRPC's option whether or not to utilize this contract for future brownfields grants beyond the initial U.S. EPA assessment grant application and implementation projects.

## **2.3 Project Management**

The successful consultant, under the direction from the ACRPC, will:

1. Work with the ACRPC in writing the text for the grant application.
2. Compile any associated demographic data to bolster the grant application.
3. Assist the ACRPC with solicitation of letters of support from local stakeholders.
4. Review existing comprehensive plans as they relate to redevelopment within Addison County and specific site reuse.
5. Facilitate community outreach activities as needed to enhance the grant application.
6. Coordinate any necessary activities with U.S. EPA Region 1 staff for U.S. EPA grant(s).
7. Meet checkpoints in a timely manner and complete all deliverables as agreed upon.

### **3. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **3.1 General Expectations**

Consultants are asked to submit concise proposals describing their capacity and success within the U.S. EPA brownfield grant program as well as their ability to manage and implement these types of grant funded projects on behalf of local units of government. The proposals should include a clear outline of how the firm would help the ACRPC in preparing successful grant applications as well as the firm's ability to fully and effectively meet the requirements of assisting with implementation of grant(s) secured. Any clarification or questions regarding this proposal shall be submitted to the below contact person, clarification will be provided within 3 business days.

Adam Lougee  
Executive Director

Addison County Regional Planning Commission  
14 Seminary St.  
Middlebury, VT 05753

(802) 388-3141 x1  
[alougee@acrpc.org](mailto:alougee@acrpc.org)

#### **3.2 Proposals**

Proposals should be limited to ten (10) single-sided standard-sized pages, exclusive of:

- a maximum of five (5) resumes (limited to 2 pages each)
- 1 page cover letter
- 1 page table of contents
- 1 page rate schedule

Standard advertising brochures should not be included in the proposal. The proposal shall include the following information in the order presented below:

- **Business Organization.** This section shall include the firm's name, areas of expertise, a brief history of the firm, size, office locations, and business addresses. The name, address, and telephone number of a contact person and/or prospective project manager regarding the proposal shall be included.
- **Management Outline and Project Approach.** A description of the project and how the consulting firm will work with the ACRPC in preparing successful U.S. EPA brownfields assessment grant application(s) and subsequent implementation of said brownfields grants. This section shall include the applicant's approach to grant preparation, community outreach activities, planning, organization, and management. Each consulting firm shall provide a list of proposed key personnel.
- **Experience and Capabilities.** The relevant management and technical experience and capabilities of the consulting firm shall be defined with respect to the following activities related to implementation of any successful grants:

### **A. Project Experience of Key Personnel:**

- Experience preparing successful U.S. EPA brownfield grant applications
- Conducting Phase I and Phase II ESAs.
- Conducting environmental investigations and cleanups.
- Project experience in implementing U.S. EPA grant funded projects performed on behalf of local units of government.
- Development/redevelopment experience and market feasibility research.
- Redevelopment planning and community involvement activities related to brownfields properties.
- Performance of environmental inventories utilizing GIS in conjunction with U.S. EPA brownfields grants.
- Other areas of expertise relevant to the project (optional).

### **B. Regulatory and Scientific/Technical Knowledge:**

- Knowledge and expertise pertaining to federal and state environmental grant programs and track record preparing successful grant applications.
- Knowledge and expertise pertaining to federal and state environmental statutes or associated regulations.
- Knowledge and expertise pertaining to EPA environmental and other Federal, laws, and regulations.
- Individual staff knowledge and technical experience relative to ESAs, brownfield projects, and contaminated site remediation.

### **C. Cost**

Provide a lump sum cost to prepare a single U.S. EPA Community-Wide Assessment Grant in the amount of \$500,000 for Brownfield Assessment activities. This should include and itemize grant preparation fees and any applicable success fees for the grant application. In the event the grant application is not successful, the consultant shall provide a lump sum cost to participate in a debriefing with U.S. EPA and prepare a resubmittal of any unsuccessful grant applications for FY 2023/2024+1. The consultant shall also provide a current fee schedule including staff that would likely be involved in the grant implementation, the prices on which shall be fixed for a period of not less than 24 months.

All representative project descriptions provided shall include the location of the project, the name and phone number of a knowledgeable contact person, and other pertinent information. The ACRPC may contact said persons to check on past performance records.

The selected consultant will be required to assume responsibility for all services offered in the proposal, including any services provided by subcontractors. Further, the ACRPC will consider the consultant to be the sole point of contact with regard to contractual matters, including payment of any and all charges resulting from the contract. The consultant is responsible for adherence by the subcontractors to all provisions of the contract.

### **3.3 General Process**

The ACRPC will review and evaluate the proposals with the following criteria in mind: successful track record in obtaining grant funding; expertise related to relevant project components; firm and staff experience related to brownfields assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment planning; project approach; ability to facilitate public outreach activities; demonstrated ability to provide comprehensive and innovative environmental services; and cost. The ACRPC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals on any basis it deems appropriate.

The proposal scoring system is based on a 100-point scale as follows:

- 5 pts Business Organization
- 10 pts Management Outline and Project Approach
- 25 pts Experience and Capabilities
- 25 pts Project Experience of Key Personnel
- 20 pts Regulatory and Scientific/Technical Knowledge
- 15 pts Cost

### **3.4 Terms and Conditions**

The process of selecting organizations to provide consultation services for the community's benefit requires the accumulation of comprehensive and accurate information to ensure that a knowledgeable, objective decision can be made as well as compliance with Federal procurement standards outlined in CFR §200.317- CFR - §200.326 for the implementation portion of this proposal and subsequent successful grant applications.

The ACRPC reserves the right to accept or reject all proposals or portions thereof without stated cause. The ACRPC reserves the right to re-issue any RFQ or cancel the RFQ if none of the proposals are deemed satisfactory to the ACRPC. Upon selection of a finalist, the ACRPC by its proper officials shall attempt to negotiate and reach a final agreement with the finalist. If the ACRPC, for any reason, is unable to reach a final agreement with this finalist; the ACRPC then reserves the right to reject such finalist and negotiate a final agreement with another finalist who has the next most viable proposal. The ACRPC may also elect to reject all proposals and re-issue a new RFQ.

Clarification of proposals: The ACRPC reserves the right to obtain clarification of any point in a Proposer's proposal or obtain additional information. Any request for clarification or other correspondence related to the RFQ shall be in writing or email, and a response shall be provided within 2 business days.

The ACRPC is not bound to accept the proposal with the lowest cost, but may accept the proposal that demonstrates the best ability to meet the needs of the community. The ACRPC reserves the right to waive any formalities, defects, or irregularities, in any proposal, response, and/or submittal where the acceptance, rejection, or waiving of such is in the best interests of the community. The ACRPC reserves the right to disqualify any proposal, before or after opening, upon evidence of collusion, intent to defraud, or any other illegal practice on the part of the Proposer.

### **3.5 Proposal Time Schedule**

The timeline for completion of this request for proposals is outlined below.

September 14, 2021 Formal announcement date for RFQ

4:00 p.m., October 15, 2021 Deadline for submittal of proposals

### **3.6 Notification of Award**

The ACRPC and representatives of its partners from Addison County Economic Development Corporation (ACEDC) and one (or more) managers of the three largest municipalities in the Addison County Region will select a consultant. Should either party fail to execute a contract within 30 days of notification of award, the ACRPC reserves the right to rescind the award and select services from another interested firm.

### **3.7 Number of Proposals to Submit; Deadline, Mail, and Hand Delivery**

#### **Addresses**

Please submit (3) hard copies of the Proposal **and** (1) electronic copy to:

Adam Lougee, ACRPC, 14 Seminary St, Middlebury, VT 05753 and [alougee@acrpc.org](mailto:alougee@acrpc.org)

Deadline is 4:00 p.m., October 15, 2021

### **3.8 Late Proposals**

Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

## **4. VENDOR REQUIREMENTS**

### **4.1 Contracting With Disadvantaged Business Enterprises**

It is U.S. EPA policy to award a fair share of contracts to disadvantaged business firms. Accordingly, affirmative steps must be taken to ensure that disadvantaged businesses are utilized when possible as sources of supplies, equipment, and services. The community will ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that at least the U.S. EPA "fair share" objectives for prime contracts and subcontracts are made available to organizations owned or controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, women, and historically black colleges and universities. The consultant shall agree to support the U.S. EPA's disadvantaged business enterprise contract procurement program ensuring those businesses' participation in subcontracts.

Affirmative steps include the following as a minimum:

1. Including qualified disadvantaged businesses on solicitation lists;
2. Ensuring that disadvantaged businesses are solicited whenever they are potential sources;
3. When economically feasible, dividing total requirements into smaller tasks or quantities so as to permit disadvantaged business participation;
4. Where the requirement permits, establishing delivery schedules which will encourage participation by disadvantaged businesses;
5. Using the services and assistance of the Small Business Administration, the Office of Minority Business Enterprise of the Department of Commerce, and the Community Services Administration as required;
6. Consultants are encouraged to procure goods and services from disadvantaged businesses.

### **4.2 Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Proposer agrees to comply with all federal, state, and local laws, resolutions, ordinances, rules, regulations, and executive orders pertaining to unlawful discrimination on account of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual preference, disability, or age. When required by law or requested by the community, the Proposer shall furnish a written affirmative action plan.