

**GRAYS HARBOR COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**  
**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**  
**U.S. EPA Brownfields Grant Application and Implementation Assistance**  
**RFQ Release Date: September 9, 2022**  
**Proposal Due Date: October 7, 2022**

**1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

**1.1 Purpose of this Request for Proposals**

The Grays Harbor Council of Governments (GHCOG), Aberdeen WA, 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 the GHCOG area 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 fall of 2022.* Please note – Federal guidelines for the 2023 EPA Assessment Grant have not yet been released. This solicitation complies with Federal procurement standards outlined in CFR §200.317 - CFR §200.326 applicable to hiring consulting firms to assist communities with grants awarded by the U.S. EPA.

**1.2 Background Information**

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 the GHCOG area. GHCOG objectives 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 GHCOG and its participating Agencies to obtain and implement these grants and explore other grants and brownfields initiatives as funds become available.

GHCOG has secured two (2) prior brownfields assessment grants. However, there are still brownfield sites within the GHCOG area presently undetermined, as is 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 GHCOG and its participating Agencies and in furthering their assessment, cleanup if necessary, and redevelopment.

**1.3 Type of Contract and Contract Term**

The GHCOG prefers to award a contract to one full-service firm to serve as a partner in successfully obtaining initial U.S. EPA brownfields grant funding and then achieving the goals within the subsequent U.S. EPA Cooperative Agreement (CA) and Work Plan. The contract period may be extended at the option of the GHCOG 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 3.2 Part C 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 GHCOG 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 GHCOG. The scope of work to be performed by the successful consultant at a minimum is expected to include:

- Assisting the GHCOG with the preparation of applications for U.S. EPA Community-Wide Assessment Grant.
- If one or more of the initial applications is unsuccessful, provide assistance with revision and resubmittal of application(s) as part of the following year's competition.
- Provide assistance with development of U.S. EPA-required project work plan(s) for applications that are successful.
- Assist in the development of coalition communities within Grays Harbor.
- 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 EPA and the Washington Department of Ecology 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 GHCOG of completed Phase I and Phase II ESA reports, site investigation reports, response action plans and other environmental reports or plans required under the applicable Washington 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 GHCOG, its participating Agencies and advisory committees as requested.
- Prepare presentations to provide information about the project's progress as requested.
- 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.
- Conduct community outreach and public participation program as needed.
- Implement site specific cleanup or remediation (if future funding becomes available through this or another grant funded program).
- Market research and redevelopment planning related to environmental site reuse.

## **2.2 Project Budget**

The total budget for the U.S. EPA brownfields assessment grant is one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00.) over a five (5) year period. The GHCOG and the successful consultant will develop budgets for assessment activities at individual sites as the project progresses and 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 GHCOG'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 GHCOG will:

1. Work with the GHCOG in writing the text for the grant application.
2. Compile associated demographic data to support the grant application.
3. Assist the GHCOG with solicitation of letters of support from local stakeholders.
4. Review existing comprehensive plans and development regulations as they relate to redevelopment and site reuse within the GHCOG area.
5. Facilitate community outreach activities as needed to enhance the grant application.
6. Coordinate any necessary activities with U.S. EPA Region 10 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 GHCOG 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.

### **3.2 Proposals**

Proposals should be limited to ten single sided (10) 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, 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 GHCOG 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. This section may also include reference to past successes the consultant firm has had in submitting and managing successful EPA Brownfields grants.

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 GHCOG may contact said persons to check on past performance records.

**Cost:** Provide a lump sum cost to prepare a single U.S. EPA Community-Wide Assessment Grant application in the amount of one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00). This should include itemized 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 the next funding round. 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.

### **3.3 General Process**

The GHCOG 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 GHCOG reserves the right to accept or reject proposals on any basis it deems appropriate.

**Proposals will be evaluated based on a 100 Point Scale as Follows:**

#### **PART A: Project Experience of Key Personnel: (Maximum 45 Points)**

- Hands-on experience and knowledge in working with Grays Harbor County and its cities.
- Proven track record in preparing successful U.S. EPA brownfield grant applications.
- Experience in conducting Phase I and Phase II ESAs, environmental investigations and cleanups.
- 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.

**PART B: Regulatory and Scientific/Technical Knowledge: (Maximum 40 Points)**

- 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.

**PART C: COST (Maximum 15 Points)**

- The proposal will be evaluated for its relative value.

**3.4 Terms and Conditions**

The selected consultant will be required to assume responsibility for all services offered in the proposal, including any services provided by subcontractors. Further, the GHCOG 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.

The process of selecting organizations to provide consultation services for the GHCOG'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 - §200.326 for the implementation portion of this proposal and subsequent successful grant applications.

The GHCOG reserves the right to accept or reject all proposals or portions thereof without stated cause. The GHCOG reserves the right to re-issue any RFQ or cancel the RFQ if none of the proposals are deemed satisfactory.

Upon selection of a finalist, the GHCOG shall attempt to negotiate and reach a final agreement with the finalist. If the GHCOG, for any reason, is unable to reach a final agreement with this finalist; the GHCOG then reserves the right to reject such finalist and negotiate a final agreement with another finalist who has the next most viable proposal. The GHCOG may also elect to reject all proposals and re-issue a new RFQ.

Clarification of proposals: The GHCOG reserves the right to obtain clarification of any point in a proposal or obtain additional information. Any request for clarification or other correspondence related to the RFQ shall be emailed to [vcummings@ghcog.org](mailto:vcummings@ghcog.org) and a response shall be provided within 2 business days.

The GHCOG is not bound to accept the proposal with the lowest cost, but may accept the proposal that demonstrates the best ability to meet its needs. The GHCOG 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 its best interests. The GHCOG 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 Public Information**

Information supplied by the Proposer is subject to the Washington Public Records Act. Such information shall become public unless it falls within one of the exceptions in the statute, such as security information, trade secret information, or labor relations information. If the Proposer believes any information which is not public will be supplied in response to this RFQ, they shall take reasonable steps to identify what data, if any, falls within the exceptions. If the proposal data is not marked in such a way as to identify non-public data, the GHCOG will treat the information as public and release it upon request. In addition, the GHCOG reserves the right to make the final determination of whether data identified by the proposer as not public falls within the exceptions within the statute.

### **3.6 Proposal Time Schedule**

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

September 9, 2022 - Initial RFQ posting date

September 16, 2022 - Second RFQ posting date

October 7, 2022 @ 12:30 pm - Submittal deadline

October 14, 2022 - Notification of award

Award of contract within 30 days

### **3.7 Notification of Award**

The GHCOG plans to select a consultant in October 2022 and approve a contract within 30 days or less. Should either party fail to execute a contract within 30 days of notification of award, the GHCOG reserves the right to rescind the award and select services from another interested firm.

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

One (1) original and three (3) copies of the proposal must be submitted by 12:30 pm on October 7, 2022.

The mailing and hand delivery address is:

Vicki Cummings, Executive Director  
Grays Harbor Council of Governments  
115 S. Wooding Street  
Aberdeen, WA 98520

### **3.9 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 GHCOG 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 GHCOG has adopted a Title VI non-discrimination policy. The policy assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, creed, color, sex, or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Restoration Act of 1987, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity. This policy also extends to marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual preference, disability, or age. The Grays Harbor Council of Governments further assures every effort will be made to ensure non-discrimination in all of its programs and activities, whether or not those programs and activities are federally funded.

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 GHCOG, the Proposer shall furnish a written affirmative action plan.