

GRAYS HARBOR COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Implementation of U.S. EPA Brownfields Community Wide Assessment Grant

RFQ Release Date: March 5, 2024

Statement of Qualification Due Date: April 2, 2024

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Purpose of this Request for Qualifications

The Grays Harbor Council of Governments (GHCOG), Aberdeen WA, is seeking a qualified environmental consulting and/or planning firm to provide assistance with project management, environmental inventory and assessment, and public information and outreach services related to a Fiscal Year 2023 United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) brownfield community-wide assessment grant award. GHCOG has been awarded an EPA grant for five years and is seeking qualified firms to assist in implementation of the grant. Assistance may include (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. 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.

The GHCOG's Coalition members include the cities of Aberdeen, Hoquiam, Westport, as well as the Summit Pacific Medical Foundation located in the Elma target area (collectively referred to as the "target communities"). The Coalition will continue the momentum of its Brownfield Site Revitalization Program (referred to as the "Project") started with the FY2017 and 2020 EPA Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grants awarded to the GHCOG. The Coalition will focus on addressing sites within the target communities and may examine sites outside of these areas and within the GHCOG's jurisdiction (Grays Harbor County), as appropriate, to further local economic goals.

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 achieving the goals of effective and successful implementation of the grant, subject to the requirements of the approved U.S. EPA Cooperative Agreement (CA) and Work Plan.

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 services to GHCOG. The scope of work to be performed by the successful consultant at a minimum is expected to include:

- 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 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.
- Assist with community-wide inventory of potential 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.
- Conduct comprehensive community outreach and public participation program.
- 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.
- Assist with required ACRES reporting.

2.2 Project Budget

The GHCOG 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 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. Implement successful grant per the approved work plan.
2. Review existing comp plans and development regulations related to redevelopment and site reuse.
3. Facilitate community outreach activities as needed/requested.
4. Coordinate any necessary activities with U.S. EPA Region 10 staff for U.S. EPA grant(s).
5. Meet checkpoints in a timely manner and complete all deliverables as agreed upon.
6. Assist with the required reporting through ACRES.

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 the firm's ability to fully and effectively meet the requirements of assisting with implementation of grant(s) secured.

3.2 Reporting Requirements

The following reports shall be prepared by the consultant and submitted to the GHCOG for approval:

1. Quarterly and annual financial and progress reports required under the U.S. EPA grant.
2. Submittal and updating of information on assessed sites on the U.S. EPA ACRES reporting system.
3. Draft and final work plans (as applicable by work assignment).
4. Technical memoranda.
5. Any and all grant reports as required by the U.S. EPA and other deliverables as may be required by other federal and/or State of Washington Agencies, and GHCOG.

3.3 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. If subcontractors/subconsultants are being utilized, similar information should be included for all subcontracted firms.

Management Outline and Project Approach: A description of the project and how the consulting firm will work with the GHCOG in the implementation of the brownfields grant. This section shall include the applicant's approach to 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: The proposal should address the capacity of the consultant to provide the work with a schedule and amount to be determined at a later date. It is expected that the consultant shall be capable of supporting two (2) or more qualified investigative teams at the same time. A current fee schedule shall be provided, as well as a listing of typical project expense rates including vehicle mileage, equipment fees, and other resource charges commonly applied to the scope of work noted in the RFQ. If the 2024 fee schedule has been approved by the consultant's firm, that fee schedule should also be included. Specify the mark-up rates/fees for laboratory or other sub-consulted services. SOQ prices shall be maintained through the evaluation/selection period. Any rate adjustments during the term of the grant will be negotiated with GHCOG.

3.4 General Process

The GHCOG will review and evaluate the proposals with the following criteria in mind: expertise, knowledge and experience in working on brownfield sites, 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; familiarity with GHCOG and its target areas; 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 40 Points)

- Experience conducting Phase I and Phase II ESAs and environmental investigation.
- Project experience in implementing state and/or federal grant funded projects.
- Site redevelopment planning experience and market feasibility research.
- Brownfield redevelopment planning and community involvement activities.

PART B: Regulatory and Scientific/Technical Knowledge: (Maximum 30 Points)

- Knowledge and expertise pertaining to federal and state environmental grant programs.
- Knowledge and expertise pertaining to federal and state environmental statutes or associated regulations.
- Individual staff knowledge and technical experience relative to ESAs, brownfield projects, and contaminated site remediation.
- Knowledge and expertise with reporting requirements, federal procurement, and Minority Business Enterprise, Small Business Enterprise, and Woman’s Business Enterprise compliance.

PART C: COST (Maximum 30 Points)

- The proposal will be evaluated for its relative value.

3.5 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 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.

3.6 Public Information

Information supplied by the Proposer is subject to the Washington Public Records Law. 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.

3.7 Proposal Time Schedule

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

March 5, 2024 - First announcement date for RFQ

March 19, 2024 - Second announcement date for RFQ

April 2, 2024 @ 1:00pm - Deadline for proposals submittal

April 16, 2024 - Notification of award

Award of contract within 30 days

3.8 Notification of Award

The GHCOG plans to select a consultant in March of 2023 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.

3.9 Number of Proposals to Submit; Deadline, Mail, and Hand Delivery Addresses

Three (3) copies of the proposal must be submitted by **1:00 pm on April 2, 2024**. Email submittals will not be accepted.

The mailing and hand delivery address is:

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

3.10 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 Consultant 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 Consultant shall furnish a written affirmative action plan.