

## Notice of Request for Qualifications

### **Columbus County, North Carolina RFQ for Brownfield Services**

### **Columbus County, North Carolina REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS Professional Environmental Consulting Services RFQ Release Date: September 2, 2021 Qualifications Due Date: September 23, 2021**

#### **1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

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

Columbus County, North Carolina, through this Request for Qualifications (RFQ), is seeking a qualified environmental consulting firm to provide assistance with its ongoing Brownfields Program. The County is seeking assistance with environmental assessment and cleanup activities including Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments, Asbestos Inspections, cleanup and redevelopment planning, community outreach, and other components of the EPA and State of North Carolina Brownfields Program for which funding is secured. This solicitation is being issued 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.

##### **1.2 Background Information**

The County's Brownfields Program began in 2018 when it was awarded a Community-wide Brownfields Assessment Grant by the EPA. The County along with coalition partners the Towns of Chadbourn and Fair Bluff has been selected for a Coalition Brownfields Assessment grant in 2021. Funds will be used to conduct Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments and prepare reuse plans. Grant funds will also be used to create a community involvement plan, host community meetings, and conduct other community outreach activities as needed. The County will also need assistance with additional brownfields assessment and cleanup activities as well as with navigating projects through the North Carolina Brownfields Program.

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

Columbus County will award a single five-year contract to one full-service firm to implement USEPA brownfields grant funds in support of their brownfield program. The initial contract may be extended at the option of the County for an additional two years.

#### **2. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**

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

This RFQ is to solicit for a qualified environmental consultant who is expected to provide a wide range of environmental services to the County. The scope of work to be performed under this contract by the consultant at a minimum is expected to include:

- Assist the County with budget management tracking of grant funds.
- Assist the County with quarterly and annual EPA reporting requirements.
- Provide grant programmatic and regulatory support as required.
- Prepare and maintain schedules and budgets for assessment and/or cleanup activities.
- Provide tools and support in creating a brownfields property inventory including prioritization of properties.
- Preparation of a written Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) in compliance with USEPA requirements.
- Preparation of Site-specific QAPP Addendum for each property where a Phase II ESA will be performed.
- Perform and complete Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments (ESAs), site investigations, remedial planning and other environmental requirements under applicable State of NC environmental regulations and ASTM standards.

- Perform other eligible assessment activities including, but not limited to, asbestos surveys, mold surveys, lead paint surveys, and wetlands and natural resource surveys.
- Attend meetings with the County and advisory committees as requested.
- Prepare presentations to provide information about the project's progress as requested.
- Participate in and coordinate community outreach and public engagement activities as requested.
- Identification and assistance in writing grant applications for EPA grants, including, but not limited to, USEPA Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grants.
- Prepare Grant Close-out Report(s).

## **2.2 Minimum Requirements**

Responses will be evaluated per the requirements specified in Section 3.3 Qualifications. Qualified respondents will also meet the following requirements of this Request for Qualifications.

- Firm will have at least one (1) full-time State of North Carolina-licensed professional geologist and at least one (1) full-time State of North Carolina-licensed professional engineer in good standing.
- Firm will have at least one (1) full time State of North Carolina Accredited Asbestos Inspector.
- Firm will have at least one (1) full time USEPA Lead Paint Inspector.
- Firm will have at least one (1) full time Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH).
- Proposed Project Manager has a minimum of ten (10) years' experience working with the State of North Carolina environmental regulations.
- Firm must have demonstrated experience in implementing EPA-funded brownfields grant programs in EPA Region 4.
- Firm must have demonstrated experience in completing North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality Brownfields projects.
- Firm must be a North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality Registered Environmental Consultant (REC) and have at least one Registered Site Manager (RSM).
- Firm must demonstrate its involvement in projects that have resulted in property reuse and/or redevelopment in the State of North Carolina.

## **2.3 Project Budget**

The total budget for the EPA brownfields coalition assessment grant is \$600,000. The County and the successful consultant will develop a project specific scope of services to fulfill the project requirements of the brownfield grant funds. The budget for any future related grants or additional work executed under this contract will be negotiated with the consultant if and when such funding becomes available. It will be the County's option to utilize this contract for future brownfields grants beyond the initial USEPA assessment grant application and implementation projects.

## **3. RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **3.1 General Expectations**

Consultants are asked to submit concise qualifications describing their experience within the EPA brownfield program as well as their ability to manage and implement these types of grant funded projects. The response should include a clear outline of how the firm would help the County to implement their brownfields program and highlight their experience and successes managing such USEPA Brownfields Assessment grants.

### **3.2 General Process**

The County will review and evaluate qualifications with the following criteria in mind: expertise related to relevant project components; firm and staff experience related to brownfields redevelopment; project approach; ability to facilitate public outreach activities; grant writing experience and demonstrated ability to provide comprehensive environmental services. The County reserves the right to accept or reject responses on any basis it deems appropriate.

### **3.3 Qualifications**

Responses should be prepared to fit standard size 8 ½ x 11-inch paper. Standard advertising brochures should not be included in the response. The response shall include the following information in the order presented below. Qualifications will be evaluated based on a 100 Point Scale as follows:

**SECTION A Qualifications and Capabilities**

**0-25 pts.**

This section shall include the firm's name, areas of expertise, a brief history of the firm, size, number of office locations, and business address of the office responsible for this contract. The name, address, and telephone number of a contact person responsible for their submittal shall be included. In addition, the following information shall be provided:

- General description of firm's history providing USEPA brownfields services including grant writing and other related redevelopment funding and incentives.
- Project experience in implementing the requirements of USEPA grant funded projects including programmatic requirements.
- Experience of the firm in completing Phase I and Phase II ESAs.
- Experience of the firm in completing NCDEQ Brownfields projects.
- General description of the firm's services including experience for this contract in providing additional eligible assessment services including but not limited to: asbestos surveys, asbestos cleanup project design, mold surveys, lead paint surveys, Property Condition Assessments (PCAs), and wetlands and natural resource surveys.
- Summary of experience conducting community involvement and engagement activities related to brownfields program.
- Ability to perform environmental inventories utilizing GIS in conjunction with USEPA brownfields grants. Knowledge and experience pertaining to EPA and state regulations shall be demonstrated.

**SECTION B Technical Approach**

**0-25pts.**

- Description of the firm's technical approach to complete the tasks required of EPA brownfield grants funded projects including grant writing as described in Section 2.1 under Technical Specifications.

**SECTION C Local Knowledge**

**0-10pts.**

- Demonstrate local knowledge of the County including an understanding of the County's redevelopment planning and goals relevant to the brownfields program.

**SECTION D Project Staff**

**0-25pts.**

- Brief biographical summaries of related experience for staff members working on the project.
- Organizational chart.
- Resumes for key project personnel assigned to this project. Indicate the project manager who will be responsible for ensuring the project success. Provide no more than ten (10) resumes.
- A summary of professional licensures for proposed staff members.

**SECTION E References**

**0-15pts.**

- Include three (3) references for which the firm is currently providing or has completed environmental brownfields consulting services in North Carolina. References should include at least one (1) public entity (municipalities, counties, university, etc.). Please include descriptions and dates of the services provided, reference name, phone number, and email address.

**3.4 Terms and Conditions**

The process of selecting organizations to provide consultation services for the County'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 County reserves the right to accept or reject all proposals or portions thereof without stated cause. The County reserves the right to re-issue any RFQ or cancel the RFQ if none of the proposals are deemed satisfactory to the County.

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

Clarification of proposals: The County 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 emailed to Dr. Gary A. Lanier at [GLanier@columbusco.org](mailto:GLanier@columbusco.org) and a response shall be provided within two (2) business days.

The County 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 County. The County 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**

Documents submitted to the County relating to this RFQ are subject to requirements of the Freedom of Information Act and may be deemed public records. The County will not conduct a formal public opening of submittals though all submittals will be kept on file for review by interested parties in the office of the Columbus County Economic Development Commission at 111 Washington Street, Whiteville, NC 28472.

### **3.6 Proposal Time Schedule**

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

September 2, 2021: Formal announcement date for RFQ.

September 23, 2021 – 4:00PM EDT: Deadline for submittal of firm's Statement of Qualifications.

September 27, 2021: Notification of award.

October 5, 2021: Award of contract by Columbus County.

### **3.7 Notification of Award**

The County plans to select a consultant with Council approval by October 4, 2021. Should either party fail to execute a contract within 30 days of notification of award, the County 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 one (1) digital (PDF) copy** of the proposal must be submitted by **4:00 PM EDT on September 22, 2021**. The mailing and hand delivery address is:

Columbus County Economic Development Commission

Re: Brownfields Grant Submittals

111 Washington Street

Whiteville, NC 28472

### **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 USEPA 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 County will ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that at least the USEPA "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 USEPA's disadvantaged business enterprise contract procurement program ensuring those businesses' participation in subcontracts.

Affirmative steps include the following as a minimum:

- Including qualified disadvantaged businesses on solicitation lists;
- Ensuring that disadvantaged businesses are solicited whenever they are potential sources;
- When economically feasible, dividing total requirements into smaller tasks or quantities so as to permit disadvantaged business participation;
- 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 County, the Proposer shall furnish a written affirmative action plan.

### **4.3 Insurance Requirements**

Prior to award, the successful bidder will be required to furnish evidence of insurance as follows:

Comprehensive General Liability: Limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence, combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage including premises and/or operations, independent contractors, products and/or completed operations, broad form property damage and contractual liability endorsement.

Business Auto Liability: Covering any auto with minimum limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence with combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage. This shall include owned vehicles, hired and non-owner vehicles and employee non-ownership.

Professional Liability and Errors and Omissions: The Consultant shall carry Professional Liability Insurance with a coverage minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

Workers' Compensation: The Consultant shall carry Workers' Compensation coverage to apply for all employees for statutory limits and shall include employer's liability with a limit of \$1,000,000 each accident, \$1,000,000 disease policy limits, \$1,000,000 disease limit each employee.

All policies shall provide a 30-day notice of cancellation or modification of coverages. Prior to commencement of work, the proper insurance certificates shall be provided to and approved by Columbus County.