



## **Request for Qualifications**

### **Qualified Environmental Professional(s)**

**Community-Wide Assessment Grant**

**for**

**Clarion County, Pennsylvania**

**Clarion County, Pennsylvania – Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment**

Issued: 03/07/2024.

Written Questions Due: 04/12/2024.

Proposals Due: 04/26/2024.

Target Project Start: 06/17/2024.

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## BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

Clarion County in rural northwestern Pennsylvania, has a long and proud history of cultivating natural resources and has historically been a significant producer of lumber, iron ore, coal, oil and natural gas. Its namesake, the Clarion River, traverses through its center, while the confluence of the Allegheny and Clarion Rivers mark its southwestern border and Redbank Creek marks its southern border. Clarion County was within the oil-producing region of the state and shared in the development of this natural resource after the drilling of “Colonel” Edwin L. Drake’s well at Titusville, PA in 1859. The County was at one time a leading oil and coal producer. Like much of western Pennsylvania, the County also became an important center for iron manufacturing which relied heavily on the local coal industry.

The Clarion County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) is the lead economic development organization for Clarion County. The CCEDC’s mission is to foster and develop economic success for all communities of the County. The CCEDC implements this mission by assisting workforce development, identifying business locations and creating economic incentives for equitable growth. The CCEDC recognized the abundance of available and underutilized buildings and infrastructure from the strong industrial past and how legacy environmental conditions have stalled revitalization. In 2023, CCEDC was awarded a US EPA Brownfields Assessment funding to identify, assess and plan for the cleanup of impacted sites to facilitate their mission.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

CCEDC is the recipient of a FY2023 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The CCEDC will select a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP), typically an environmental consultant. The environmental consultant will be retained using a qualification-based selection process in accordance with Pennsylvania law and that complies with applicable federal funding procurement regulations (2 CFR Part 200, 2 CFR Part 1500, 40 CFR Part 33, and 40 CFR §31.36). Additionally, the consultant will have previous experience on multiple brownfields redevelopment projects where multiple brownfields financing incentives were leveraged to ensure they have successful experience with grant procedures, requirements, and timeframes.

The legacy of heavy manufacturing and coal industry across Clarion County is proving to be a challenging impediment to contemporary social and economic progress as the County reinvests and adapts to changing social priorities and economic situations. The County is rife with

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brownfields sites as a result of the continued decline in these industries which are preventing the County from realizing its full growth potential. These sites are negatively impacting sensitive and disadvantaged populations by exposing them to contaminants including, heavy metals, waste oils, volatile organic compounds, and asbestos through multiple pathways.

Below are brief descriptions of select priority brownfield sites that may be targeted for assessment by the CCEDC because of their size, potential for contamination to impact underserved communities, environmental liabilities, and potential to become a community and economic asset.

Redevelopment of the former Owens-Illinois Glass Plant, now known as the Glassworks, is paramount to the CCEDC and Clarion County. The plant closed in 2008 and along with it over 400 jobs were lost. Brownfield assessment work is currently underway at this site. The CCEDC was awarded ~\$96,000 in 2022 through a Pennsylvania Industrial Site Reuse Program Grant. Additional funding will be necessary to fully assess and characterize the 28-acre site. Clarion County's natural resources powered industry in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries with the use of bituminous coal. The cessation of mining operations has left 396 abandoned mine sites scattered across the County. According to the Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation, there are over 70,000 acres (~18% of Clarion County land)<sup>1</sup> of abandoned mine land in Clarion County. The CCEDC owns 48 acres of mine scarred land along county Route 338 proximal to the I-80 corridor. The CCEDC purchased the property with the intention to redevelop it into an industrial park. Environmental assessment of the mine scarred land will be a key step to facilitate investment and future redevelopment. Another key target site is the former Sealy's Manufacturing Plant in Strattanville, PA, a PADEP identified environmental Justice area (EJA). The 50-acre plant site closed in 2008 along with over 100 jobs lost. Recent interest in revitalizing the site into a lumber and milling operation which would provide good paying local jobs proximal to the I-80 corridor. A controlled explosion of the Piney Power Plant near Clarion was performed in 2019 after the current owners failed to attract buyers. The former buildings have been razed and the property is now designated as abandoned mine land due to the spoil piles remaining onsite. The plant operated from 1990 and was shuttered in 2013. Over 30 good paying full-time jobs were lost. The remaining two sites designated as Former Dillon's Auto and the Former Liberty Street Dry Cleaners are in the heart of Clarion Borough (identified as an EJA) proximal to schools, churches and parks. Both are vacant and in disrepair.

### CCEDC GOAL

The Clarion County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) mission is to foster and develop economic success for all communities of the County. The CCEDC implements this mission by assisting workforce development, identifying business locations and creating economic incentives for equitable growth. The CCEDC recognized the abundance of available and underutilized buildings and infrastructure from the strong industrial past and how legacy

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1. <sup>1</sup> <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Mining/AbandonedMineReclamation/AMLProgramInformation/Pages/History-of-PA's-AML-Inventory.aspx>

environmental conditions have stalled revitalization. The CCEDC was awarded US EPA Brownfields Assessment funding to identify, assess and plan for the cleanup of impacted sites to facilitate their mission.

## PROJECT TASKS

Consultants will conduct the assessment and assessment related activities outlined below.

<b>Task 1: Programmatic</b>	
i.	<p><u>Project Implementation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Overall programmatic and administrative oversight along with cooperative agreement (CA) compliance</li> <li>▪ Solicitation, selection, and contracting an experienced, qualified environmental professional (QEP)</li> <li>▪ Annual and quarterly progress reporting (US ACRES), ASAP accounting updates, and grant closeout</li> <li>▪ Cross checking expenditures associated with this grant do not duplicate those of other programs</li> <li>▪ Travel for applicant attendance at state and federal conferences to present program success stories</li> <li>▪ Development and submission of the Quality Management Plan (QMP)</li> </ul>
ii.	<p><u>Identifying Additional Sites:</u> Additional Sites will be selected based on community need and those with the potential for the greatest positive impact for the community. Preferential site selection will be biased toward underserved communities, specifically the identified underserved EJ areas surrounding Clarion Borough and Rimersburg.</p>
iii.	<p><u>Anticipated Project Schedule:</u> The solicitation for and selection of the QEP will be completed within 3 months following execution of the CA. The QMP will be developed and submitted within 90 days of the beginning of the grant-performance period. All other administrative tasks will be completed, as required in the CA, over the grant-performance period. Conference attendance, annually, as available.</p>
iv.	<p><u>Task/Activity Lead:</u> Clarion County Economic Development Corporation (Applicant)</p>
v.	<p><u>Outputs:</u> CA execution, QEP solicitation and contracting, US EPA approved QMP, 16 quarterly progress reports (US ACRES), monthly ASAP accounting updates, annual FFR and MBE/WBE reporting, 1 kickoff meeting with US EPA, travel for no more than 2 CCEDC staff for to up to 3 conferences, and requisite grant closeout reporting.</p>
<b>Task 2: Community Outreach</b>	
i.	<p><u>Project Implementation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public announcements of grant progress, updates, and meetings via print, electronic, and TV media*</li> <li>▪ Solicitation of community input through CCEDC social media accounts and email newsletters</li> <li>▪ Secondary information distribution via CCEDC community engagement partners*</li> <li>▪ Host a kick-off meeting in Clarion (and livestream) to inform the community and solicit input</li> <li>▪ Outreach to community engagement partners, local governments, and private stakeholders *</li> </ul>
ii.	<p><u>Identifying Additional Sites:</u> CCEDC will utilize its network of partners to seek and engage community input to identify additional sites during meetings and through website announcements and notifications.</p>
iii.	<p><u>Anticipated Project Schedule:</u> Initial public meeting will be scheduled during the first quarter following grant award. Program updates, announcements, and solicitations for input will be posted regularly via CCEDC social media accounts and websites and public update meetings will be held annually, or as needed, based on community input, site selection, and program progress.</p>
iv.	<p><u>Task/Activity Lead:</u> Clarion County Economic Redevelopment Authority (Applicant)</p>
v.	<p><u>Outputs:</u> Host up to 5 public meetings, regular social media and website updates, creation of marketing materials, press releases/conferences, and regular outreach to community partners.</p>

### Task 3: Site Inventory and Selection

- i. Project Implementation:
  - Maintain, update, rank, and prioritize brownfields inventory sites\*
  - Coordinate with community engagement partners and coordinate with the selected QEP to expand the list of brownfields sites and revise ranking criteria to incorporate EJ criteria
  - Site owner outreach\*, site access coordination, and completion of site access agreements
  - Preparation of Property Approval Questionnaires (PAQs) and coordination of requisite eligibility determination for petroleum sites with the Pa Dept. of Environmental Protection
- ii. Identifying Additional Sites: CCEDC will focus on identifying sites through community input, remotely through GIS systems and by performing site visits.
- iii. Anticipated Project Schedule: The existing site inventory will be actively expanded during the first 6-9 months following grant award and updated for the duration of the performance period. Site selection will be completed and access agreements, PAQs, and petroleum eligibility determination coordination, as necessary, will be completed continuously during the 4-year grant-performance period.
- iv. Task/Activity Lead: Clarion County Economic Redevelopment Corporation (Applicant)
- v. Outputs: Update and expand site inventory list, rank and identify priority sites, complete up to 20 PAQs and 20 site access agreements (14 hazardous sites), including eligibility determination coordination for up to 6 petroleum products sites, and complete up to 5 site inventory evaluation visits.

### Task 4: Site Assessments

- i. Project Implementation:
  - Prepare and submit a quality assurance program plan (QAPrP) for both hazardous substances and petroleum products to be used for the duration of the performance period for all sites
  - Coordinate site access at eligible sites to complete Phase I/II activities\*
  - Complete up to 20 Phase I ESAs (and accompanying US EPA All Appropriate Inquiry Checklists) in accordance with ASTM E1527-21 and All Appropriate Inquiry requirements
  - Complete up to 9 Phase II ESAs, which include the completion of site-specific health and safety plans (HASP) and submission of Field Sampling Plans (FSPs) to evaluate environmental conditions, consistent with Pa's Voluntary Cleanup Program (Land Recycling Program) requirements
  - A minimum of 10 assessments will be completed in underserved areas
- ii. Identifying Additional Sites: CCEDC will contact property owners to discuss the site assessment process and arrange for access accordingly. Preference will be given to those sites within EJA's that will have the most positive impact on the community.
- iii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Phase I ESAs will be initiated within 6 months of the start of the program and will be ongoing throughout the duration of the performance period. A FSP, HASP, and a Phase II ESA report will be initiated for each site, as appropriate, based on the findings of the Phase I ESA on a rolling basis. The QAPrP will be completed and submitted to the US EPA within the first 6 months of the program and prior to initiation of any Phase II ESA activities.
- iv. Task/Activity Lead: The selected Qualified Environmental Professional. At the direction of the CCEDC (Applicant), the QEP will be the Task 4 lead because of the specialized expertise and familiarity with programmatic requirements of the US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant program and Pa's Voluntary Cleanup Program (Land Recycling Program) regulations, along with specialized training necessary to complete the activities for Task 4 (e.g., HAZWOPER, 29 CFR Part 1910.120).

v. <u>Outputs</u> : Up to 20 Phase I ESA reports (14 hazardous & 6 petroleum), 1 QAPrP, 9 FSPs, 9 HASPs, 9 Phase II ESA reports, and US ACRES updates.
<b>Task 5: Remedial Planning and Design</b>
i. <u>Project Implementation</u> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete up to a total of 4 Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) for hazardous substances and petroleum products sites, based on the results of the Phase I and Phase II ESAs and reuse needs/requirements</li> <li>▪ The RAPs will outline the remediation plans and will be used to leverage additional assessment and cleanup funds and satisfy Pa Land Recycling Program requirements.</li> </ul>
ii. <u>Identifying Additional Sites</u> :
iii. <u>Anticipated Project Schedule</u> : RAPs will be developed and submitted to the US EPA within 3 months following the completion of Phase II ESA activities for a given site, as appropriate.
iv. <u>Task/Activity Lead</u> : The selected Qualified Environmental Professional. At the direction of the CCEDC (Applicant), the QEP will be the Task 5 lead because of the specialized expertise and familiarity with programmatic requirements of the US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant program and Pa's Voluntary Cleanup Program (Land Recycling Program) regulations.
v. <u>Outputs</u> : Complete up to 4 RAPs, identify secondary funding programs to leverage with the completed RAPs*.

## CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

In response to this RFQ, the consultant team will be evaluated on their strengths associated with the following factors:

- 25 points - Experience working on brownfield remediation, neighborhood revitalization and downtown business district development in communities similar to Clarion County, Pennsylvania.
- 25 points - Experience preparing Sampling Analysis Plans (SAP) and Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPP).
- 10 points - Success in preparing client communities for future projects.
- 15 points - Proven experience in community engagement efforts centered on neighborhood revitalization.
- 10 points - Experience managing multiple agency funding requirements.
- 10 points - Cost of QEP services
- 5 points - References

## BUDGET

The budget for this project is **\$500,000**, which will be divided among the aforementioned tasks. Consultants are advised that they will be required to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local requirements based upon the final funding package for the project.

## SCHEDULE

The project’s consultant will be selected in Spring 2024 and the project will conclude by September 30, 2027.

The GANNT chart below is the proposed schedule for completion of project milestones.

Quarter	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-21	22-24	25-27	28-30	31-33	34-36
Community Engagement												
BF Inventory												
Site Access												
Phase I & II Investigations												
Site Reuse/ Cleanup Plan												
Market Study												
Resource Map												
Revit. Plan												

## PROPOSAL CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

All proposals must be prepared electronically in Adobe .pdf format with the ability to be legibly printed on 8.5”X11” paper. The .pdf files shall be indexed to simplify committee review. The RFQ shall include the requested materials below, comply with the requested page limits, and not exceed 4 MB in file size.

RFQ Element	Max Pages
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<p><b>Cover Letter</b> that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prime consultant’s legal name and federal ID number</li> <li>• Subcontractor’s legal name and federal ID number</li> <li>• Identification of key personnel who will manage the project and who can negotiate and execute the project contract.</li> </ul>	1
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<p><b>Consulting Team Profile</b> that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background and description of the consulting team including prime consultant and subcontractors.</li> <li>• Organizational chart showing the staff involved in the project and their respective assignments.</li> <li>• Listing and description of similar projects, in tabular format, that have been completed in the past 5 years by the prime consultant and/or proposed subcontractors. The consultant should include links to where the committee may review electronic copies of the deliverables from the listed projects. Do not attach electronic versions or send hard copies of previously completed projects.</li> <li>• Reference list that may be contacted by CCEDC for recently completed similar projects.</li> <li>• Resume of proposed project manager</li> <li>• A breakdown of the % of work (by allocation of dollars) each consultant/subconsultant firm will perform as part of this contract.</li> </ul>	4
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<p><b>Project Understanding, Approach, Scope of Work and Budget</b> that includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrative that includes the consultant’s understanding of the purpose and need for implementation of the Community Wide Assessment and Area Wide Plan.</li> <li>• Detailed discussion of the items listed in the “Consultant Qualifications” above with elaboration on how the consulting team meets those qualifications.</li> <li>• Specific project task descriptions, associated outcomes/deliverables and corresponding budget. Each project task should have an associated timeframe for the activity.</li> <li>• A separate allocation of travel, supplies, and any contingency costs per project task item.</li> <li>• Ability to complete the work within the anticipated schedule and budget.</li> </ul>	10
<p><b>Quality Assurance and Control Plan</b> that includes: Project management and quality assurance plan that highlights the consultant’s approach to managing potential projects, managing costs, and achieving client quality standards.</p>	1

#### RFQ SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS

CCEDC will accept one RFQ from each prime consultant. Prime consultants may propose subcontractor arrangements with other consulting firms; however, prime consultants may not serve as a subcontractor to another consulting team responding to this RFQ. A consultant not submitting as a prime consultant may be designated as subcontractor for more than one prime consultant.

Electronic submissions are due by **04/26/2024**. Consultants are encouraged to make their submissions prior to the 4:00 PM deadline to avoid last-minute technical difficulties that could result in a late submission that is rejected.

**Submissions shall be emailed directly to: [jarred@clarioncountyedc.com](mailto:jarred@clarioncountyedc.com)**

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## RFQ DISCLOSURES

Consultants responding to this RFQ are doing so with full disclosure, understanding and acceptance of the following:

- Submissions not conforming to the standards outlined in this RFQ will be rejected.
- CCEDC reserves the right to reject any RFQ in whole or part for any reason.
- CCEDC may change the scope of work or selection process at its discretion at any time.
- CCEDC may cancel or postpone any aspect of this project within the bounds of the Consultant contract.
- CCEDC is not responsible for any costs incurred by Consultants in the preparation, submission, or subsequent discussion of this RFQ.
- Recommendations and/or approvals made by CCEDC with respect to this project are final.

All proposals become the property of CCEDC upon submission. CCEDC has the right to reject any or all of the proposals. CCEDC is an equal opportunity agency. Certified disadvantaged business/women owned business and veteran owned are encouraged to submit proposals. Following award of the contract by CCEDC, all RFQ submissions are considered public records that are subject to Pennsylvania's "Right to Know" laws. Materials considered confidential by the Consultant must be clearly identified and include a statement of why said records should not be considered public records.

## Federal Contract Provisions

Work performed under agreements resulting from this RFQ may be subject to federal contractual provisions. CCEDC hereby puts QEPs on notice that a successful award at the end of this process may be contingent upon an agreement between the CCEDC and the QEP to comply with standard federal contractual provisions, including but not limited to, Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Kickback, and Davis-Bacon, contract work hours and safety standards.

## SELECTION PROCESS

A consultant selection committee is in place and will review the consultant submissions. The committee will evaluate the submissions based upon the experience of the project team and the proposed project approach. The committee may shortlist 2-3 firms that will be invited to participate in an oral presentation via phone, if deemed appropriate. The committee will identify a preferred consultant and CCEDC will negotiate a scope of work, price, and associated contract. The preferred consultant, scope of work, price, and contract will be submitted to CCEDC for review and approval.

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The resulting contract will be for four years. CCEDC may amend or extend this contract beyond the initial four years to accommodate the terms and conditions of the FY23 Brownfields Assessment Grant or Future EPA grants awarded to CCEDC within this four-year period provided a market survey conducted by CCEDC indicates that the process the contractor proposes are reasonable.