



**Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) Services  
City of West Columbia, South Carolina  
EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant**

**Issue Date: Friday, October 17, 2025**

**Submission Deadline: Tuesday, December 2, 2025, 3:00 PM EST**

**1. Introduction**

The City of West Columbia (City) has been successfully awarded a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant to facilitate environmental assessments throughout the City. The City's current Cooperative Agreement with the EPA is for a grant of \$500,000. These grant funds are to support a full range of tasks, including public outreach, site inventory and selection, assessment activities, and reuse planning.

The City is seeking a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) for the Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Program. The QEP serves as the overall Project Manager for the implementation of this grant program, working in close collaboration with City staff to ensure that all grant funding requirements and deliverables are met, and that site assessments and required reporting are conducted in accordance with EPA and South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) regulations.

**2. Background**

The City of West Columbia is launching a transformative Brownfield Community Assessment a pivotal step toward driving economic revitalization and fostering sustainable growth within one of the city's most dynamic commercial and residential areas. This comprehensive, grant-funded initiative reflects a strong commitment to the community's more than 17,000 residents and its potential for continued development and renewal.

Situated along key corridors such as Highway 378, Highway 321, and Airport Boulevard/Charleston Highway, this area has long served as a central connector within the region. Now, through this assessment, West Columbia is building upon that strategic advantage to enhance local commerce and create new opportunities for growth.

This effort represents a foundational investment in the future of West Columbia. By evaluating environmental conditions and identifying strategic redevelopment opportunities, the city will pave the way for these corridors to evolve into vibrant community destinations. This forward-looking initiative will attract new investment, support job creation, and strengthen the local economy—ensuring that West Columbia continues to be a place where businesses thrive and residents flourish.

With an inventory of approximately 56 potential brownfield sites, including several former service and automotive-related properties, this initiative represents an important investment in West Columbia's long-term success. The project will focus on properties that offer the greatest

opportunities for economic growth, job creation, and community enhancement, while emphasizing the needs of historically underserved populations.

By proactively assessing and preparing these sites for future redevelopment, the City of West Columbia is advancing its vision for a more sustainable, inclusive, and economically vibrant community for all residents.

### **3. Scope of Services**

The QEP will be responsible for providing technical assistance and oversight for a full range of tasks, as outlined in the City's Cooperative Agreement with the EPA. Cooperative agreement funding will be used to cover the costs of activities at or in direct support of brownfield sites as defined under CERCLA 101(39). The overall coordination of the cooperative agreement will be carried out by the West Columbia Project team, with technical assistance and oversight to be performed by the QEP.

The scope of services includes, but is not limited to, the following key areas:

#### **3.1. Outreach/Programmatic Support:**

- Coordinate and support two (2) community outreach meetings/events.
- Assist in developing content for ads in local target areas.
- Support a targeted social media campaign in the community.

#### **3.2. Brownfield Assessment Activities:**

- Conduct and finalize up to twenty-four (24) Phase I ESAs.
- Develop and finalize one (1) Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP).
- Oversee and manage up to ten (10) Phase II ESAs, including site-specific Sampling and Analysis Plans (SSQAPPs).
- Assist the City in securing Site Access Agreements for properties identified for assessment.
- Conduct Property Eligibility Determinations in accordance with EPA guidelines.

#### **3.3. Site Inventory:**

- Develop and implement an Evaluation Ranking Tool for prioritizing brownfield sites.
- Maintain and update a comprehensive site inventory list of potential brownfield sites.

#### **3.4. Remediation/Reuse Planning:**

- Prepare four (4) analyses of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs).
- Facilitate two (2) Visioning Sessions/Charrettes with community stakeholders to guide future reuse.
- Develop one (1) Brownfield Revitalization Plan.

#### **3.5. Grant Compliance and Reporting:**

- Ensure all activities comply with EPA Brownfields Grant requirements and SCDES regulations, including the Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP).
- Assist the City in preparing and submitting all required EPA reports (e.g., quarterly progress reports, ACRES database updates).
- Serve as the primary technical liaison with EPA and SCDES.

The City has a total of \$500,000, with \$487,000 budgeted for consulting services, which includes all fees, expenses, and necessary materials.

#### **4. Qualifications and Experience**

Proposing firms and their proposed QEP must demonstrate substantial experience and qualifications relevant to the scope of services. Specifically, proposals should address the following:

##### **4.1. Firm Qualifications:**

- Demonstrated experience managing and implementing environmental remediation projects of similar scope and size.
- Experience working with municipalities and other public entities on environmental redevelopment projects.
- Familiarity with South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) regulations, particularly the Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP).
- Capacity to manage multiple assessment projects concurrently and meet grant timelines.
- Financial stability and sufficient resources to perform the required services.

**4.2. Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) Qualifications:** The proposed Project Manager (QEP) must meet the definition of a "Qualified Environmental Professional" as outlined in 40 CFR Part 312.10(b) – "All Appropriate Inquiries." This typically requires a combination of education and experience:

- Possession of a current professional license or certification in a relevant discipline (e.g., Professional Engineer, Professional Geologist) AND at least five (5) years of relevant full-time experience.
- OR a Baccalaureate degree or higher in environmental science, engineering, geology, or a related scientific discipline AND at least five (5) years of relevant full-time experience.
- OR at least ten (10) years of relevant full-time experience.

The QEP must also demonstrate:

- Proven experience as a project manager on environmental remediation projects.
- Strong understanding of CERCLA, ASTM E1527 (Phase I ESA), ASTM E1903 (Phase II ESA), and other relevant federal and state environmental regulations.
- Experience with developing quality assurance and sampling plans.
- Excellent communication, organizational, and public engagement skills.

**4.3 Options-Based Procurement:** The resulting contract will be for four years. The City of West Columbia may amend or extend this contract beyond the initial four years to accommodate the terms and conditions of the FY25 Brownfields Assessment Grant or future EPA grants awarded to the City of West Columbia within this four-year period, provided a market survey conducted by the City of West Columbia indicates that the prices the contractor proposes are reasonable.

## 5. Selection Criteria

The City of West Columbia reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submittals. All submittals become the property of the City upon receipt. A Project Review Subcommittee comprised of representatives from the City will evaluate each proposal according to the following factors and percentage scale:

- 30% - Demonstrated experience in addressing contaminated properties/environmental remediation and successfully completing tasks/projects
- 10% - Demonstrated experience in effectively engaging with community members and federal and state agencies
- 20% - Experience and capacity of project team/personnel
- 25% - Reasonableness of cost/price proposal (e.g., rates) based on a comparison of prices among competing offerors and other available information on market rates for consulting services
- 15% - References

**Please note that the maximum score is 100%**

## 6. Submittal Procedure: 3:00 PM (EST) on TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2025.

Five (5) copies of the RFQ must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "City of West Columbia EPA Brownfields Community Wide Assessment: RFQ" to:

City of West Columbia

Attn: Katherine Call, Director of Community Development

200 N. 12th Street

West Columbia, SC 29169

**Electronic-only submissions will not be permitted.**

The Proposal shall include the information outlined below. To ensure fair and equitable evaluation, proposals should be organized into the following separate sections.

### a. EXPERIENCE:

Include a summary of the following:

- History of the firm's experience in providing each of the environmental services listed in the scope of work (section 3).
- Experience in effectively engaging with community members and federal and state agencies

### b. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT:

- Description of the firm's proposed project approach, organizational structure, and the names and experience of key individuals who will be performing the specific services requested.
- Identify the location of staff to be committed to the project.
- Identify any potential subcontractors.

### c. COST PROPOSAL:

- Provide an estimated itemized Not-to-Exceed (NTE) budget for completing

the activities listed above. It is understood that activities such as the Phase II ESAs will be difficult to accurately budget prior to completion of Phase I.

- Include staff billing rates along with subcontractor administration fees/markup percentages and any travel costs. These rates will be considered during the selection process.
- Provide rates for asbestos, lead paint, mold, geophysical surveys, and radiation surveys. Include laboratory costs and per-sample rates, if known.
- Based on the City’s Cooperative Agreement with EPA, Davis-Bacon Act prevailing wage requirements will not apply to these projects since assessment activities generally, do not involve construction, repair, or alterations within the meaning of the Davis-Bacon Act.

**d. REFERENCES:**

- List up to three (3) references for similar services/projects that have been provided by your firm. Please include a description of the services, dates of service, and a list of the key personnel who were involved in the project. Please include a contact person, organization, email address, and phone number for each reference.

**e. INSURANCE AND LIABILITY COVERAGE:**

- The limits of liability for the insurance shall provide coverage for not less than the following amounts or greater, where required by Laws and Regulations:

1.	Workers’ Compensation and related coverages:	
	State:	<u>Statutory</u>
	Employer’s Liability:	
	Bodily injury, each accident	\$ <u>1,000,000</u>
2.	Contractor’s Commercial General:	
	General Aggregate	\$ <u>2,000,000</u>
	Each Occurrence (Bodily Injury and Property Damage)	\$ <u>1,000,000</u>
3.	Automobile Liability:	
	Bodily Injury:	
	Each person	\$ <u>1,000,000</u>
	Each accident	\$ <u>1,000,000</u>
	Property Damage:	
	Each accident	\$ <u>1,000,000</u>
4.	Excess or Umbrella Liability:	
	Per Occurrence	\$ <u>4,000,000</u>
	General Aggregate	\$ <u>4,000,000</u>
5.	Contractor’s Pollution Liability:	
	Each Occurrence	\$ <u>1,000,000</u>
	General Aggregate	\$ <u>1,000,000</u>

Submittals should be concise and should not contain any unnecessary attachments, marketing materials, enclosures, or exhibits.

**The submittal deadline is 3:00 PM (EST) on TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2025.**

**f. QUESTIONS:**

- Questions may be submitted in writing via email to Katherine Call at kcall@westcolumbiasc.gov. The deadline for questions relating to the RFQ is November 14, 2025, at 5 pm. Answers will be provided via an addendum issued on November 18, 2025. It is the responsibility of each submitter to examine the entire RFQ, seek clarifications in writing, and review their submittal for accuracy before submitting their responses. The City will not request clarification from any individual relative to their submittal but reserves the right to ask for additional information from all parties that have submitted responses.

**7. Proprietary and/or Confidential Information**

Your submission is a public document under the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), except as to information that may be treated as confidential as an exception to disclosure under the FOIA. If you cannot agree to this standard, please do not submit a statement of qualifications. All information that is to be treated as confidential and/or proprietary must be **CLEARLY** identified, and each page containing confidential and/or proprietary information, in whole or in part, must be stamped and/or denoted as **CONFIDENTIAL**, in bold, in a font of at least 12-point type, in the upper right-hand corner of the page. All information not so denoted and identified will be subject to disclosure by the City.

The contract award shall be at the sole discretion of the City. The award(s) shall be based on evaluating all information the City may request. The City reserves the right to accept or reject any or all qualifications in whole or part and waive any informalities in the RFQ. Further, the City reserves the right to enter into a contract deemed to be in its best interest. The City intends to make every effort to be fair and equitable in its dealings with all candidates for selection. However, the City reserves the right to reject all Qualifications. Issuance of this Request for Qualifications does not commit the City of West Columbia to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in preparing an RFQ, or to procure related services or supplies.