

Request for Proposals

Municipal Economic Development Consulting for the Town of Sudlersville, Maryland

Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development (QACETD) is soliciting proposals from qualified economic development consulting firms to work with the Town of Sudlersville (TOS), Maryland to assist in fostering sustainable growth and economic vitality of the town. The selected firm will work collaboratively with the town officials and stakeholders to develop and implement strategies that support the town's efforts to attract and retain diverse investment, create employment opportunities, expand the municipal tax base, and ultimately create a resilient local economy.

The selected firm will have expertise in economic development, placemaking, community engagement, sustainable development, economic resilience, and community economic development. The expected time to complete the project is seven (7) months from project initiation.

Posting Date: February 9, 2024

Letters of Intent Due by: February 23, 2024

Questions Due by: March 1, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.

Due Date: March 15, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.

Department of Economic & Tourism Development Overview

The Department of Economic & Tourism Development elevates [Queen Anne's County](#) as an economically vibrant, welcoming and diverse place for business and recreation by:

- Delivering exceptional customer service and timely, relevant resources;
- Proactively cultivating business attraction, retention and expansion;
- Developing and strengthening destination amenities;
- Promoting visitor opportunities and experiences;
- Forging intern and apprentice partnerships; and
- Skillfully managing County resources to fuel economic growth.

A valued resource, connector and catalyst, the Department strengthens Queen Anne's County's economic and community vitality, showcases the county's culture and character, and supports sustainable growth opportunities for residents, businesses, and visitors.

For more information on Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development, visit www.choosequeenannes.com

Background & Objective

Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development has been working with the Town of Sudlersville on its goals related to economic growth as part of its work to promote targeted community economic development at the municipal level. The town has the infrastructure and resources to grow, but is limited in its staffing capacity to apply, maintain, and access the funding sources needed to do so. This project aims to address these challenges by contracting with an economic development consultant to:

- Oversee the comprehensive plan process;
- Support the completion of the Sustainable Communities application/renewal;
- Define the vision, goals, and objectives for the provision of economic development services that align with TOS' priorities, ensuring they are reflective of the varied needs, interests, and priorities of the community;
- Complete a community assessment of the existing assets in the local economy, including both private and public features;
- Based on the assessment, determine the current and future economic priorities of the community, identify opportunities for enhancing the local economy and developing place-based economic development initiatives;
- Support local economic competitiveness and vitality with a focus on data analysis in residential, commercial, and industrial areas in the Town;
- Ensure coordination of the Town's economic development initiatives with those of Queen Anne's County;
- Create prioritized, short-term, intermediate, and long-term action items to guide economic investments;
- Develop recommendations and in implementation strategy that will support sustainable development in the community both through short-term and long-term initiatives. These recommendations will highlight the benefits of collaboration in community economic development, economic investment, and placemaking; and
- Implement the identified economic strategies, and monitor the metrics developed to assess impact.

Principles

The following principles will provide the foundation for implementing a plan for TOS:

- Community Wellbeing

- Economic Resiliency
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Sustainability
- Business Expansion
- Placemaking
- Sector Diversification
- Infrastructure & Land Use Efficiency

Letter of Intent

Interested applicants should submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) on February 23, 2024 via email to Rebecca Clark, Economic Development Coordinator, at rclark@qac.org

Request for Proposals

The contract will be awarded to the consulting firm that offers the most beneficial proposal encompassing all possible criteria established within this Request for Proposals, as well as the cost for the proposed services and timeframe needed to complete the data collection and recommendation summary. Proposals will be reviewed privately and evaluated by a panel of public and private stakeholders who make the award recommendation to the Queen Anne's County Commissioners for final approval.

Scope of Work & Deliverables

The consultant will provide professional services to support the tasks listed below. QACETD will work jointly with the selected consultant to develop a final, comprehensive scope of work and schedule for the project. Municipal economic development consulting services for TOS must include:

1. Analysis and Strategy Development:

- Conduct a thorough assessment of Sudlersville's current economic landscape, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Develop a comprehensive economic development strategy that aligns with the town's vision and goals.
- Identify target industries or sectors for growth and provide recommendations for attracting new businesses while nurturing existing ones.

2. Community Engagement and Stakeholder Collaboration:

- Facilitate community engagement sessions and stakeholder meetings to gather input and insight into economic development priorities.

- Collaborate with town officials, local businesses, residents, and other stakeholders to ensure inclusivity and diverse perspectives in the development of the economic plan.

3. Implementation:

- Provide a detailed implementation plan outlining specific actions, initiatives, and timelines for executing the proposed economic development strategy.
- Offer guidance on resource allocation, potential partnerships, and funding opportunities to support the plan's successful implementation.
- Implement the identified strategies that will enhance the Town of Sudlersville's economic vitality.
- Support the completion of the Sustainable Communities application/renewal.
- Oversee the comprehensive plan process and ensure project completion.

4. Monitoring and Reporting:

- Develop metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the progress and success of the economic development initiatives.
- Present regular progress reports to the Town Council and stakeholders outlining accomplishments, challenges, and adjustments, if any.

Subconsultants

QACETD will allow subcontracting on this work.

Term

QACETD intends to enter into an agreement from April 2024 through December 2024 with no option for renewal.

Budget

The budget for this project shall not exceed \$70,000. This amount is inclusive of all consultant salary costs, general and overhead expenses and disbursements, including costs associated with promoting and organizing community engagement events, marketing placements, supplies, subscriptions, or other services. \$30,000 has been set aside separately to cover the cost of the Town's Comprehensive Plan with a different consultant.

Payment will be in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement to be entered into between the Consultant and QACETD. The Consultant will be solely responsible for effectively implementing the project proposal; as such, the Town shall not be responsible for covering any costs

incurred related to errors or omissions in implementing the project proposal. No over-expenditure or timeline extension will be permitted without prior written authorization from QACETD.

Project Timeline

The following table outlines the anticipated schedule for this RFP process. Queen Anne’s County Economic & Tourism Development reserves the right to modify or reschedule milestones as necessary.

Schedule Item	Date
RFP Announced	February 9, 2024
Letters of Intent Due	February 23, 2024
Questions Due	March 1, 2024 at 12:00 p.m. (noon)
Proposals Due	March 15, 2024 at 12:00 p.m. (noon)
Evaluation of Proposals	March 21 to March 27, 2024
Interviews (optional, at QACETD discretion)	March 29, 2024
Consultant selected	March 29, 2024
Commissioner Review	April 9, 2024
Project Timeframe	April to November 2024

Proposal Due Date/Time

12:00 p.m. (noon EST) on Friday, March 15, 2024. Proposals received after this time will not be considered.

Questions about the Request for Proposals

Questions about the scope of work, requests for additional information, and/or concerns about the submission of the proposal should be directed to Rebecca Clark at rclark@gac.org by 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Friday, March 1, 2024. Questions via telephone or other methods will not receive responses, as email provides the best opportunity for tracking and accountability. Questions and answers will be posted in the form of an Addendum to the original post on <https://emma.maryland.gov> and www.choosequeenannes.org tentatively on March 8, 2023.

Proposal Format, Content, and Submission Requirements

Email a digital version of the application with all documentation in one PDF to Rebecca Clark at rclark@qac.org. Applicants must also provide one original and five hard copies in one sealed, company-marked envelope and clearly labeled "Municipal Economic Development Consulting for the Town of Sudlersville, Maryland," to Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development no later than 12:00 pm on March 15, 2024. The proposal should be addressed to:

Rebecca Clark - rclark@qac.org
Economic Development Coordinator
Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development
425 Piney Narrows Road
Chester, MD 21619

There is no expressed or implied obligation for Queen Anne's County to reimburse organizations for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals in response to this request. Queen Anne's County reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and to use any ideas in a proposal regardless of whether that proposal is selected.

Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the organization of the conditions contained in this Request for Proposals, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract.

Proposals must include all information requested and meet all specifications and requirements outlined in this RFP. The following submittals must be part of your proposal; if any are not included, your proposal may be judged as non-responsive. A committee will evaluate the submitted proposals. During the evaluation process, QACETD reserves the right to request additional information or clarification from firms responding to this RFP.

A complete response *will not exceed ten pages* and include:

1. Cover letter of not more than one page stating:
 - a. Brief overview of firm
 - b. Reason for interest
 - c. List of services offered by firm, in alignment with the scope of work
 - d. Firm's point-of-contact name, position, and contact information
2. Summary of approach - Explain your approach to assisting the Town of Sudlersville in advancing its goals and priorities described in this RFP. Summarize your proposal and methodology.
 - a. Describe your project management approach with a focus on managing scope, schedule, and budget.
 - b. Describe your experience in providing effective economic development consulting services to small, rural municipalities like the TOS.
 - c. What analysis tools would your team use?
 - d. How will the team effectively coordinate with QACETD and TOS staff?

3. Hours - Provide hour estimates for recommended approach(es) that include number of hours by task and project team members for tasks identified in this RFP, and any proposed alternatives.
4. Project Schedule - Include a proposed timeline for completion of each deliverable. The work schedule will be confirmed during contract negotiation. A preliminary summary schedule is provided in this RFP.
5. Project Lead & Team Qualifications - Describe the team's experience and capabilities/expertise. Identify the individual you propose to assign as principal and any associate(s); include resume and relevant work experience for each member. *Resumes can be included as an Appendix.*
6. Subconsultants - If any service is to be supplied by a partner or third party, identify the provider(s) and provide relevant work experience.
7. Business Name - Proposals must be made in the official name of the firm or individual under which business is conducted (showing official business address) and must be signed by a person duly authorized to legally bind the person, partnership, company, or corporation submitting the proposal. A corporation must indicate place and date of incorporation.
8. References - Include a list of references, with contact information of at least three (3) contracts within the last three (3) years. QACETD reserves the right to contact references without prior notification. *Can be included as an Appendix.*
9. Work Samples - Provide samples of documents your firm has produced that are similar to the documents your firm would provide under this contract. The consultant selected for this project must provide work samples that highlight an ability to design technical processes that support policy evaluation, draw strong and supported inferences from their observations, and effectively communicate outcomes and recommendations that can reasonably be implemented. *Can be included as an Appendix.*
10. Cost - Provide a detailed budget for the requested services, including expenses, billing rates, and expected hours from all members of the team. The budget for this contract is \$70,000. Staff resources from QACETD are available to assist the consultant with outreach and other identified tasks, within reason and at the discretion of its Director.
11. Signed Acknowledgement of RFP Terms and Conditions. *This is considered an Appendix.*

Rating of Proposals

Each proposal will be rated and ranked in accordance with by following criteria:

- Approach to providing municipal economic development consulting services
- Specific methodologies for different projects
- Demonstrated ability, capacity, creativity, and experience
- Technical qualifications of individuals assigned to the project
- Ability to meet the proposed timeline
- Ability to complete the study within budget

Queen Anne's County reserves the right to award a contract based solely on the proposals or to negotiate with one or more consultants. During the evaluation process, Queen Anne's County may request additional information or clarification from applicants. The selected consulting firm will be chosen on the basis that it is the best fit for the County, and may not necessarily be based on the lowest price. The chosen consultant must agree to execute a contract within 30 days after the Notice of Award. No contract may be assigned, in whole or in part, without the prior approval of Queen Anne's County.

Acceptance of Consultant Proposals

The Queen Anne's County Commissioners reserve the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any nonmaterial irregularities in the proposal, to accept or reject any item or combination of items and accept any proposal which best benefits the people of Queen Anne's County.

Queen Anne's County reserves the right to negotiate with any, none, or all of the proposing vendors.

Equal Opportunity

All qualified persons, firms and proposers will receive consideration without regard to age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Minority Business Enterprises (MBE), Women-Owned Enterprises (WBE), and Veteran-Owned Enterprises are encouraged to apply.

Queen Anne's County is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Queen Anne's County Standard Operating Policies

Procurement Policy #400-010

It is the responsibility of the proposer to review and adhere to all of Queen Anne's County Procurement Policies, #400-010. The policies can be located at <https://www.qac.org/593/Procurement>

Debarred, Suspended and Ineligible Contractors

The consultant certifies by submission of a proposal that it is not a debarred, suspended or ineligible contractor by any Agency of Federal or State government. No proposal received from a debarred, suspended or ineligible contractor will qualify for an award.

Acknowledgement of RFP Terms and Conditions

The proposer, as part of its response, must submit this signed document by an authorized representative that obligates the proposer to perform the commitments contained in its response.

Acknowledged and Agreed:

Signature

Signature

Printed Name

Printed Name

Title

Title

Company Name

Company Name

City, State

City, State

Phone Number

Phone Number

Date

Date

Advertisement

[Queen Anne's County](#) is seeking proposals from qualified consulting firms to develop and implement a comprehensive economic development plan for the Town of Sudlersville, Maryland. The selected firm will work collaboratively with the town officials and stakeholders to develop and implement strategies that promote economic development and enhance the community's prosperity.

Interested applicants should submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) on or before February 23, 2024 via email to Rebecca Clark at rclark@qac.org

An electronic copy of the information package may be downloaded <https://emma.maryland.gov> or www.choosequeenannes.com

Each proposal received in response to this RFP will be evaluated on the approach to analysis, methodology, outreach, capacity, experience and cost outlined in the RFP.

All proposals must be sealed, clearly marked "Municipal Economic Development Consulting for the Town of Sudlersville, Maryland," and must include all elements described in the information package.

Email a digital version of the application with all documentation in one PDF to Rebecca Clark at rclark@qac.org. Applicants must also provide one original and five hard copies in one sealed, company-marked envelope and clearly labeled "Municipal Economic Development Consulting for the Town of Sudlersville, Maryland," to Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development no later than 12:00 pm on March 15, 2024. Information and questions should be directed to Rebecca Clark at rclark@qac.org

Bid Opening will occur at 12:15 p.m. on March 15, 2024 at the Chesapeake Heritage Visitors Center, located at 425 Piney Narrows Road, Chester, MD 21619.