

The Basic Project:

The Lawrence County Regional Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Corporation is seeking potential site selection boutique firms to assist with creating an in-depth community assessment, economic & community development strategies, and marketing materials specifically designed to identified target industries.

The community would like to identify potential vendors who can deliver on:

- Independent Comprehensive Community Assessment
- High – Level Target Industry Identification / Analysis
- Regional Asset Map to Relevant Target Industries
- Economic Development Strategy & Verbiage for Marketing Materials, RFP Responses, Speaking Points, and Other Identified Marketing / Communication Plan Components
- Identification of High Potential Industrial Development Sites
- Community Development Strategy
- Stakeholder Input / multiple Visioning Sessions
- Workforce Development Strategy
- Organizational Structure Analysis

Due to the heavy economic development marketing focus of this project, special consideration will be given to consultants whose firms are active in assisting companies through the site selection process.

Project Cost:

The community anticipates the project to cost approximately \$120,000 or less. This cost is based on past knowledge of somewhat similar projects performed for similar communities. If you believe the work discussed in this RFQ would exceed that level, please indicate in your response. Such indications will assist us in crafting a realistic RFP, and you will not be eliminated from receiving the RFP based on comments provided related to the cost of this project.

The community anticipates seeking funding assistance from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development’s Keystone Communities Grant, the Appalachian Regional Commission, USDA Rural Development, and/or local sources.

About Us – Community:

Lawrence County, PA is located along the Ohio / Pennsylvania border, approximately 60 miles north of downtown Pittsburgh and 90 miles south of Erie. We are the northwest most corner of the Pittsburgh MSA, and are adjacent to the Youngstown / Warren (OH) MSA. Lawrence County has a population of approximately 88,000 today, down from a high of approximately 108,000 set in the early 1970s.

Our largest city – New Castle, at 23,000 people, is the third largest city in western PA. The city currently operates under the state’s Act 47 (distressed) status, and must exit by the end of 2020.

We are still largely a manufacturing based economy, with strong transportation assets. Crossing our county is I-76, 79, 376, and I-80 is about three miles above our northern border. The PIT is about 40 miles away from New Castle. The community also boasts two class 1 and 2 rail companies.

About Us – Chamber / EDC:

## Draft RFQ – Forward Lawrence

9.4.19

The Chamber and EDC merged their efforts in 2017. Combined, the organization operates approximately a \$1.4 Million budget with a staff of five. Among the staff, there are three CECD & EDFP professionals, and one IOM with two others expected to complete the IOM in 2020. The EDC is a Pennsylvania Certified Economic Development Organization

Our website is <https://www.lawrencecountychamber.org/>. We have collected past reports to provide reference material to firms seeking to work with us. The data is accessible at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/t2v52ct78wnmuf8/AABLHUoJCWm-Y-uzil0f91-ta?dl=0>

### Project Estimated Timeline:

The community would like to begin the Forward Lawrence project by the first quarter of 2020, and complete it by the end of the third quarter of 2020. We anticipate the creation of a steering committee of 50 – 80 persons.

### Special / Desired Project Outcomes:

- A) Lawrence County is very diverse and can be divided into a minimum of four areas: 1) New Castle Central Business District & Southside, 2) Suburban Region (New Castle North Hill, Neshannock, Union, Mahoning, & Shenango Townships, 3) Northern Lawrence (anchored around Volant & New Wilmington), and 4) Southern Lawrence (anchored around Ellwood City). Our community development plan should be distinctive and reflective of each of the four regions.
- B) Each of the four areas identified above should have a minimum of two community-visioning sessions in each, with at least one online countywide survey available.
- C) Marketing materials and verbiage designed to each specific target industry identified for use in RFP responses, brochures, website, etc. Also, identification of possible marketing venues relevant for both our target industries and local market.
- D) Practical community and economic development recommendations that both outline steps the community could undertake, given our available resources, to best position the community for long-term success, and strengthens community support, trust, and confidence in groups seeking to implement the provided recommendations.

### RFQ Responses:

The chamber seeks the following information at this time:

1. Name of firm.
2. Name of key personnel and potential project lead.
3. Best contact information (phone / email / etc.).
4. Description of similar projects / past community references.
5. Experience conducting similar projects paid for in part by Federal and/or Pennsylvania funds.
6. Level of current engagement with site selection activities (# of announcements by year for last several years, # jobs announced, \$ capital invested, list of notable clients, etc.).
7. Can your firm perform all identified activities, or would some areas need to be outsourced?
8. Do you agree with projected cost of \$120,000 or less for provided scope of services sought?
9. Other special considerations you wish to provide.

Responses should be received by 10.20.19, and sent to Alex McCoy at either 325 E. Washington Street, New Castle, PA 16101, or [mccoy@lawrencecounty.com](mailto:mccoy@lawrencecounty.com) Subj: RFQ – Fwd Lawrence