



**Request for Proposals**

**Comprehensive Grundy County Economic Analysis**

Release Date: March 15, 2023

Due Date: April 12, 2023

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## Comprehensive Grundy County Economic Analysis

### I. BACKGROUND and SCOPE OF SERVICES

#### A. Introduction

##### 1. Purpose:

The Grundy County Economic Development Council (GEDC) and the Grundy County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), collectively “the Partners,” are soliciting proposals for a Comprehensive Grundy County Economic Analysis (RFP). This report is the first component of a larger study, *Grundy County Nuclear Host Community Economic Resiliency Strategy*, or the “Grundy Resiliency Project,” funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) and Grundy County. The objective of this economic analysis report is to provide a comprehensive baseline, trends, and comparative data of key Grundy County economic indicators and the impacts of the potential future closure of the Dresden Nuclear Station using several scenarios. In the future, this economic analysis report will be used to formulate development strategies to build diversification and resiliency in the economy.

##### 2. Background:

Grundy County, with a population of 57,000 residents, is located just outside the Joliet MSA and approximately 60 miles southwest of Chicago with Interstate 80 running along the northern portion of the county and Interstate 55 along the eastern side. The county also boasts four class-one railroads and the navigable Illinois River. Although the majority of the land use is agriculture, the county has a long history of industrial, energy, and healthcare facilities. In Goose Lake and Aux Sable townships, the primary energy assets include Constellation Dresden Station, Aux Sable Liquid Products, newly constructed CPV Three Rivers Energy generating station, significant transmission lines including 345kV and 765kV lines, intrastate pipelines, Chevron biofuels, 138 wind turbines, and solar installations. World-class chemical plants are led by LyondellBasell, Nouryon, Reichhold, and others. The top employer in the county is Morris Hospital and its auxiliary healthcare facilities. In the last 15 years, the logistics industry has increased its prominence in the region with nearly 15 million square feet under roof, primarily along I-80 in Minooka and Morris. Land, transportation corridors, and energy assets continue to fuel development in the region.

The GEDC and the Chamber applied to the US EDA when the future of Constellation Dresden Station (Dresden) was uncertain, and the risk of a plant closure was very possible. Dresden is the second largest employer in Grundy County with approximately 800 direct employees and over 865 direct and induced jobs. Dresden is the largest property tax payer

in the County, with an annual tax bill estimated at or near \$24 million. In 2022, Illinois enacted the Illinois Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), which provided financial incentives for the nuclear plants to remain open for five years. Since that legislation, the federal government has also recognized the importance of nuclear energy and provided further market enhancements for nuclear plant operators. Although the current future of Dresden is positive, the GEDC and the Chamber are working diligently to improve the diversity and resiliency of the local economy for the future, with or without Dresden.

## **B. Scope of Work and Services to be Performed**

The Comprehensive Grundy County Economic Analysis should, in the form of a final report, provide the following:

1. An **up-to-date economic analysis of Grundy County**, to include baseline, trending, and comparative (regional, state, national) data for key economic indicators. The Economic Analysis should include, but should not be limited to, the following key indicators:

- Population demographics
  - Age, race, growth, income, retirement rate by industry
- Employment
  - Participation, unemployment rates, and wage data
- GDP/GRP
- Business Analysis
  - Retail/commercial/small business analysis
  - Industrial analysis - key assets, clusters, growth rates, top employers
- Workforce Analysis
  - Workforce share by industry, wages by occupation, key workforce skillsets, in-demand skills and gap analysis, commuting patterns, labor shed, skillsets of inbound/outbound workers, skill transferability between industries
  - Skill development pipeline - data relating to postsecondary training, including higher education graduates, in the region
- Real Estate Analysis - Residential, Commercial, Industrial
  - Trends - pricing, active listings, time on market
  - Vacancies
  - Rents
  - Housing affordability & availability
  - Available land

2. An **up-to-date assessment of the hypothetical economic impact of the closure of Constellation's Dresden Nuclear Station** on Grundy County and the nuclear plant's sphere of economic influence in surrounding counties. This assessment should update and build upon the [previous economic analysis of the impact of Dresden Generating Station](#) completed in 2020. The current analysis should include, but should not be limited to, the following considerations:

- Employment impact of closure (direct, indirect, and induced employment; impacted businesses including suppliers, trades, and local merchants)
- Population impacts of closure
- GDP impacts of closure
- Employee compensation impacts
- Property tax implications of closure on affected taxing districts
- Impact on philanthropic giving in the region
- Impact on residential real estate market
- Capacity of local workforce trainers to potentially retool the nuclear workforce

This Comprehensive Economic Analysis should be designed to inform and feed into a subsequent study which will identify key initiatives, action items, and opportunities for economic diversification in Grundy County with the goal of building economic resilience.

Respondents are encouraged to provide other factors and components/services not specifically mentioned above but are deemed appropriate to the purpose and planned use of the study.

### **C. Additional Project Services and Expectations**

1. The final report shall be written and presented with synthesized data and components as outlined above. It shall also provide interpretations and explanations of key findings, trends, issues, and assets.

The final report must include:

- An Executive Summary with a narrative of key findings, also to be provided in slide deck presentation format
- Baseline, trending, and comparative economic analyses
- Possible opportunities for additional analysis
- An appendix containing support documents and data sources

In addition to the final report, any raw data should be provided in an electronic format which can be redeployed and manipulated for future studies. Printed and electronic copies of final reports should be provided.

2. The consultant should plan for two in-person meetings. The first will be a kick-off meeting with a local “steering committee.” The second will be to present the findings of the analysis and explain the final product to key stakeholders in the Grundy Resiliency Project.

3. The consultant should plan to participate in routine, virtual progress meetings to provide updates on the status of the project. The consultant should propose target dates for at least two progress updates in the Project Work Plan of the Proposal.
4. Consultant should plan to agree to provide a preliminary draft of work subject to at least one round of feedback and revisions from the Partners prior to delivery of the final report by August 1, 2023.

## **II. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

All types of entities are eligible to submit proposals, including public, not-for-profit, and for-profit organizations. The applicant must be able to demonstrate previous experience, the capacity, and the commitment to implement this project. All applicant entities must have been a legal organization for a minimum of one year prior to the start of the contract.

The procurement of proposals is being undertaken in compliance with the federal guidelines set forth in the "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards Final Rule" (also known as the Super-circular or Omni-circular). All contractor(s) selected under this RFP must follow the guidelines set forth in this circular, found at <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200>.

In connection with this project, the contractor shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The contractor shall take affirmative action to ensure that any involved staff members are treated during employment without regard to their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

The expense of preparing and submitting a proposal in response to this request is the sole responsibility of the respondent/consultant/firm.

The Partners reserve the right to award the grant-funded work of the economic analysis to respondents as they deem to be in the best interest of the overarching Grundy Resiliency Project, the County, and its residents. The Partners reserve the right to accept or reject any submissions, including the right to reject all submissions and re-solicit, if deemed necessary, or to cancel in part or in whole this RFP. This solicitation in no way obligates the Partners to award a contract.

## **III. BUDGET**

The Partners have budgeted \$35,000 for the entirety of this economic analysis. This project is funded by a grant through the U.S. Economic Development Administration, with additional, local funding provided by Grundy County. For all tasks requested within this RFP, please indicate in your proposal which tasks, if any, may not be feasible within the available budget. Please provide a quote for the additional cost to complete those items.

#### **IV. SUBMISSION**

Proposals will be due **by 4:00 PM CST on April 12, 2023**, to the Partners **via email** to [nnorton@gedc.com](mailto:nnorton@gedc.com) and [christina@grundychamber.com](mailto:christina@grundychamber.com) with the subject line **“Economic Analysis RFP Submission.”** A receipt will be emailed when a proposal is received and viewed. If respondents (proposing entities) do not receive an email receipt, it is their responsibility to contact the Partners to verify receipt of the proposal. No proposals will be accepted after the deadline date. Paper submissions will not be accepted.

#### **V. PROCUREMENT AND PROJECT TIMELINE**

The following timetable is proposed:

March 15, 2023: Economic Analysis RFP is issued

April 12, 2023: All proposals due to the Partners by 4 PM CST

Week of May 8: Possible in-person or virtual interviews with steering committee

May 12, 2023: Deadline by which project contract will be awarded – Project begins

August 1, 2023: Target for delivery of final Comprehensive Grundy County Economic Analysis

Applicants must be prepared to begin the project immediately following the award of a contract.

#### **VI. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES**

##### **A. Format**

Submissions must be prepared as a standard 8 ½ x 11, letter-size document, be limited to 20 pages, and submitted in PDF format to [nnorton@gedc.com](mailto:nnorton@gedc.com) and [christina@grundychamber.com](mailto:christina@grundychamber.com).

##### **B. Cover Letter**

A statement must be signed by an authorized representative of the firm committing to provide the services within the proposed schedule. Please provide the contact person for this RFP, their phone number, and their email address. *The attached cover sheet should also preface the proposal.*

##### **C. Background and Experience**

Describe the background/experience of the proposing individual or organization including experience providing the same or similar services.

##### **D. Project Work Plan / Program Description**

Discuss how services to be performed related to each required component under Section I.B will be implemented, developed, and completed. This section should identify the methodology and data sources that will be used. An implementation timetable must be included and specify target dates, including the project start date, the data collection phase, routine project updates, the tentative draft report delivery date, and the final report delivery date. *For more information on the implementation timetable, please see item G.*

**E. Staffing Plan and Qualifications**

Each respondent is required to submit a staffing plan to include the total number of staff assigned to the project, as well as the background and resumes of staff assigned to the project.

**F. Fiscal Management Plan and Budget**

All proposals should present a budget outlining specific dollar amounts assigned to proposed services. *Each proposal must include the required Budget Form, attached herewith.*

The financial plan must describe all costs associated with implementing the project that are to be covered with the grant funds. All costs should be necessary and reasonable according to the Federal guidelines set forth in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth in 2 CFR 200, commonly referred to as “Super-Circular” or “Omni-Circular.”

The review of cost items may include comparison of costs among respondents or consultants, comparisons of average costs with previous experience, and a comparison of individual cost items with market prices. Proposals that may score well against program design and effectiveness criteria may not be selected because of unreasonable, excessive unexplained, or unallowable costs.

**G. Proposed Timetable**

The consultant should provide a proposed project timeline or implementation timetable. The timetable should clearly delineate project tasks and stages, as well as target dates for engagement with the Partners, project updates, delivery of drafts and final products, and any other specific tasks necessary for the successful completion of the planned scope of work.

**H. References**

Provide the contact name, organization, address, email, and telephone number of three (3) recent clients for which similar tasks were performed.

**VII. EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

A committee will evaluate proposals according to the requirements of this RFP. Proposals will first be evaluated for minimum requirements, and those which do not meet minimum standards will be eliminated.

The proposal will be awarded based on the following evaluation criteria:

Description	Points Awarded
Experience and background of respondent/organization in providing services requested in this RFP, including a record of past performance, the ability to meet specifications, and the technical skills to accomplish the work	10
Specific work plan to include collection, analysis, and reporting of data, including a project timeline of the work to be performed and delivered	50
Names, qualifications and experience of personnel to be assigned to the project	15
A budget and timeline setting forth specific deliverables	25
Total Points	100

**VIII. QUESTIONS**

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing via e-mail to Nancy Norton at [nnorton@gedc.com](mailto:nnorton@gedc.com) by 4:00 PM CST on April 3, 2023, with the subject line “Questions and Requests for Clarification” relating to the RFP, and are not RFP submissions. No questions will be accepted after this date. Responses to all questions will be posted on the GEDC website, [www.gedc.com](http://www.gedc.com), by 4:00 PM CST on April 7, 2023.

**IX. GENERAL ASSURANCES PROVISIONS**

- A. Any verbal comments or discussion concerning this solicitation cannot add, delete or modify any written provision of this Request for Proposal. Only changes to the requirements of this RFP issued in writing will have force.
- B. Upon request, respondents may be asked to furnish satisfactory evidence of their ability to successfully provide the services requested by this RFP. This evidence may include copies of reports on prior independent audits of the respondent. The Partners reserve the right to make the final determination as to the respondent’s capabilities.
- C. The Partners reserve the right to accept or reject any or all proposals for any reason and to negotiate with any and all respondents on modifications to proposals.
- D. The proposal submitted by the successful respondent, modified as necessary through negotiations, will become part of a contractual agreement between the Partners and the successful respondent.
- E. All data, material, and documentation originated or prepared by the respondent pursuant to a contract award shall be in the public domain, will be subject to disclosure under the



Freedom of Information Act, and may be freely used and disseminated by the Partners as they deem appropriate.

- F. The successful respondent will be required to provide regular and detailed service and expenditure reports to the Partners at a frequency and in a manner prescribed in the contract.
- G. The Partners reserve the right to conduct discussions with respondents. Respondents will be accorded fair and equal treatment concerning any opportunity for discussion of their proposals. Respondents may be required to make oral presentations, participate in negotiations, and to re-write portions of proposals as agreed during negotiations.
- K. The Partners are Equal Opportunity Employers and will give consideration to all qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religions, national origin, ancestry, ages, sex marital status, order of protection status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or unfavorable discharge from military services as those terms are defined in section 1-103 of the Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-103).

Response Cover Sheet

Name of Consultant/Respondent Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Organization:

- Public entity
- Private not-for-profit organization
- Private for-profit organization
- Other

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Federal Employer ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

DUNS Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Authorized Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Representative email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Certification

The information contained in this proposal fairly represents the proposed operating plans and budget necessary to conduct the activities described. The consultant/respondent organization assures that it is prepared to implement the activities described in the proposal. This proposal has been duly authorized by the governing body of the consultant/respondent organization. I certify that I am authorized to sign this statement on behalf of the organization submitting this proposal.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

BUDGET

LINE ITEM	BUDGET AMOUNT
Wages – Staff	
Fringe Benefits	
Staff Travel	
Rent	
Insurance/Bonds	
Supplies	
Communications	
Copying/Printing	
Utilities	
Equipment	
Other	
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	