



REVITALIZE
POTTER COUNTY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Potter County Economic Revitalization
Implementation Plan (Revitalize Potter County)

INQUIRIES:

For questions regarding the RFP please use the survey link or QR Code in the Proposal Requirement section.

Question Deadline: November 22, 2024

Submittals: Proposals must be received electronically

No Later than December 20, 2024

Non-Mandatory Pre-Proposal Meeting

Will be held via Microsoft Teams on November 6, 2024 @ 10am (link above).

Please RSVP by Emailing klogue@pottercountypa.net.

Released: October 16, 2024



Issue Date: **October 16, 2024**

Timing: Approximate twelve-month process from contract execution to deliverables

Proposal: Potter County Economic Revitalization Implementation Plan
Revitalize Potter County

Point of Contact:

Will Hunt, Potter County, GIS/Planning/Community Development Director
Kal Logue, Potter County, Community Development Coordinator
Marc Wilken, Economic Recovery Corps Fellow, Pennsylvania Wilds Center of Entrepreneurship

Submission Deadline: December 20, 2024

INTRODUCTION

Potter County invites proposals from experienced consultants or firms to develop a County-Wide Economic Revitalization Implementation Plan (**Revitalize Potter County**). This plan is intended to provide actionable steps to implement more specific strategies that are outlined in our [County Comprehensive Plan](#) (2020-30) aimed at fostering sustainable economic growth and leveraging economic prosperity, and building stronger, more vibrant connected communities across Potter County.

BACKGROUND

Potter County, located in the north-central part of Pennsylvania, known for its scenic beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities. Established in 1804, it was named after James Potter, a general during the American Revolutionary War.

Geography and Natural Features: Potter County is part of the Allegheny Plateau and features a rugged landscape with rolling hills, forests, and numerous streams. The county is known for its rich natural resources, including timber and natural gas. The county features numerous state parks and a wide expanse of publicly available state forest land which provide ample opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Economy and Industry: Historically, the county's economy was driven by logging and coal mining. In recent years, tourism and natural gas extraction have become significant contributors to the local economy. The county has also been developing its amenities to attract tourists, with activities centered around its natural landscape.

Communities: The county seat is Coudersport, a small town that serves as the administrative and cultural hub of the region. Other notable communities include the boroughs of Galeton, Austin, Shinglehouse, and Ulysses that offer a mix of historic charm and local businesses catering to both residents and visitors.



Culture and History: Potter County has a rich history linked to its early settlers and industrial past. Its small-town atmosphere and strong sense of community are evident in local events and traditions. The county is also home to several historical sites and museums that reflect its heritage.

Overall, Potter County is a region that emphasizes its natural beauty and outdoor lifestyle, appealing to those who enjoy nature and a slower pace of life.

SCOPE

The Potter County GIS/Planning/Community Development Department desires to seek out qualified professional services to assist in the creation of a County-Wide Economic Revitalization Implementation Plan (**Revitalize Potter County**). Interested firms should have noticeable knowledge of Federal, Regional, and State Economic Development plans, policies, practical abilities, funding opportunities, and regulatory limitations in practicing economic development. Additional considerations will be given to those firms who exhibit similar knowledge for practicing economic development within the Commonwealth. Below are some regional and state economic plans and/or associations for reference:

- [PENNSYLVANIA GETS IT DONE.](#)
- [A Ten-Year Strategic Plan for Economic Development in Pennsylvania](#)
- [North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission - Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy \(CEDS\) and Resiliency Plan](#)
- [North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission - Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#)
- [Pennsylvania Economic Development Association](#)
- [Pennsylvania Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship](#)

The selected consultant will work with the Potter County GIS/Planning/Community Development Department to refine project objectives, clarify and coordinate deliverables, develop a detailed project schedule for deliverables resulting from the consult, community outreach, and public meetings. Throughout the planning process, the consultant will work closely with Marc Wilken, an Economic Recovery Corps (ERC) Fellow who is serving the Pennsylvania Wilds, a rural 13-county region that encompasses Potter County, [in partnership with the PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship](#). [PA Wilds Center](#) is a nonprofit leading a regional revitalization strategy that leverages the region's authentic place-based brand and more than 2 million acres of public lands to establish a premier outdoor recreation destination as a way to help diversify local economies, inspire stewardship, attract investment, retain the working-age population, and improve quality of life. Overall, the ERC Fellow will function as a collaborator and thought partner with the consultant, as well as a connector to a [national coalition of organizations and practitioners](#).

The selected consultant should also be prepared for some on-site and virtual meetings. Our vision is to compile a group of stakeholders to evaluate the progress of the Comprehensive Plan to identify and assess the economic development assets of the county. This assessment will identify potential growth opportunities and gaps to be closed through the County-Wide Economic Revitalization Implementation Plan (**Revitalize Potter County**). This scope of work will include:

- Market Analysis (Where we are)
- Prioritization (Where we want to be)
- Strategy (How we get there)



The final **Revitalize Potter County** plan will furnish a clear and inspiring vision in prioritizing measurable goals, implementation strategies, and serve collectively as the “Plan Aspirations” that will reflect the following categories or more (*please note the categories below are not listed in any particular order*).

Plan Aspirations

- Capacity Assessment
- Public Infrastructure and Service Improvements
- Employment and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem
- Community Characteristics, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation
- Blight
- Housing/Land Use
- Emergency Economic Recovery
- Post Graduation Retention
- Child Care

The County-Wide Economic Revitalization Implementation Plan (**Revitalize Potter County**) must be strategic, thorough and achievable. The plan must also provide a method to easily track the plan’s goals and objectives through the life of the plan. Including indicators that can help measure the health of the county’s economic development ecosystem.

Throughout the planning process, the consultant will investigate and evaluate the current and future readiness to advance the recommendations that are discovered in the plan, including ranking the sequence for implementing the Plan Aspirations, accounting for, among other things, the County’s strengths and desires.

Examples listed below for each bold category are not exhaustive.

Capacity Assessment:

- Local Government
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Boards, Agencies, and Authorities

Public Infrastructure and Service Improvements

- Utilities (e.g. sewer, water, broadband, etc.)
- Transportation
- Safety (e.g. law enforcement, fire, ambulance, etc.)

Employment and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

- Agriculture
- Business Incentives
- Entrepreneurial Support
- Business Succession Planning
- Remote Work Promotion
- Job Creation

Community Characteristics, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation

- Arts and Culture



- Lodging
- Hospitality
- Guide Services/Outfitters
- Food and Beverage Services

Blight

- Restoration, Removal, and/or Demolition
- Regulatory and Enforcement Solutions

Housing/Land Use

- Workforce
- Senior Living
- Long & Short-Term Rental

Emergency Economic Recovery

- Natural Disasters
- Health
- Accidental

Post Graduation Retention

- High School or GED
- College (Undergraduate or Graduate)
- Vocational

Child Care

- Facilities/School Districts
- Workforce

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

For the purposes of this project, GIS will be used as a component of outreach, information gathering, project tracking, and transparency.

Potter County will provide the awarded Consultant with a username and password for access to the Potter County Enterprise GIS Portal Environment. The assigned login will be terminated at the conclusion of the project and all data will remain in the ownership of Potter County.

The selected consultant will develop an ESRI based web application/site within the Potter County Portal Environment. This web application will serve as the platform for tracking of the plan development, community outreach and engagement along with the final plan landing page at the completion of this effort.

Potter County GIS Staff will organize, develop and distribute GIS related data as part of the plan development. Surveys will be collected using ESRI Survey123. Survey questions to be developed under the advisement of the selected consultant in collaboration with the Steering Committee and/or Stakeholders.



DELIVERABLES

Prepare Draft Plan: The draft plan document will summarize all the above tasks and activities and include the following sections:

- Executive Summary
- Introduction and Purpose
- Planning Methodology
- Post Evaluation Condition Assessment
- Current and Future Plan Aspirations
- Implementable Recommendations and Sequencing
 - ✓ Action
 - ✓ Measure
 - ✓ Partners
 - ✓ Funding Strategies

Steering Committee and Stakeholder Review of Draft Plan: The draft plan will be provided to the steering committee members and stakeholders for review and comment.

Steering Committee Meeting: The consultant will host a virtual meeting for the steering committee to review comments. Comments shall be incorporated into a second draft plan.

Potter County Staff Review of Second Draft Plan: The second draft plan will be sent to the Potter County staff members for review before the publicly held business meeting.

Draft Presentation Public Hearing: The consultant will present a summary of the plan to the Potter County Planning Commission during a regular business meeting to initiate public comment. The consultant will work with the relevant staff to schedule the presentation.

Final Plan Presentation and Adoption: The consultant will present the final, **Revitalize Potter** County plan to the Potter County Commissioners during a regular business meeting for consideration of adoption. The consultant will work with the relevant staff to schedule the presentation.

Preparation of the final documents: The final **Revitalize Potter County** plan will be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan not exceeding 75 pages. Twenty-five hard copies shall be provided by the consultant. The plan shall be provided in both PDF and Word files as well. All web applications and mapping efforts undertaken as a result of this project shall be provided in its native digital format for future use by the Potter County GIS/Planning/Community Development Department.

EXPECTATIONS

- Outreach and engagement with youth leadership and administration with all school districts supporting Potter County residents.
- Interaction and engagement with a cross section of the businesses, economic development organizations, tourism agencies, community sectors, and other entities that



makeup Potter County and the region’s economic ecosystem to gain a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses.

- Meetings and engagement with the various authorities and boards operating under the umbrella of county-wide economic development efforts.
- Meetings across Potter County, with both the Steering Committee and Stakeholders including but not limited to business owners and community leaders identified through market research.
- Attendance and in-person presentation of the County-Wide Economic Revitalization Implementation Plan (**Revitalize Potter County**) to County Commissioners and Planning Commission.
- Please consider this to be an approximate 12-month process.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

To be considered, any proposal must be received no later than **December 20, 2024**.

All deadlines will be considered end of business day which is 4:30pm.

Proposals shall be sent electronically: whunt@pottercountypa.net, klogue@pottercountypa.net, and fellow@pawildscenter.org

*If the file size is too large for email, please contact the emails above in advance to arrange delivery ahead of deadline through a file sharing service. *



Please use either the QR Code or survey link below for questions regarding the RFP. The deadline for questions will be no later than **November 22, 2024**. We have reserved a period to review all questions and provide answers by end of day on **December 10, 2024**.

QUESTIONS SURVEY LINK

All proposals shall be received electronically no later than **December 20, 2024**. All submittals shall be clearly marked “**Potter County Economic Revitalization Implementation Plan (Revitalize Potter County)**.” Late proposals will not be accepted.

All proposals, whether selected or rejected, shall become the property of Potter County. All proposals received prior to the date and time specified above for receipt may be withdrawn or modified by written request of the proposer. To be considered, the modification must be received in writing prior to the date and time specified for receipt of proposals.

Proposals should be limited to specific discussion of the elements outlined in this RFP. The intent of this RFP is to encourage responses which meet the stated requirements, and which propose the best methods to accomplish the work.

Any other correspondence that is needed can be sent by mail to:

Potter County Community Development
One North Main Street
Coudersport, PA 16915



The organization of the proposal should follow the general outline below. Each proposal should consist of a technical proposal (items 1-6 below) and a cost proposal (item 4).

1. Transmittal Letter

The transmittal letter should include the name, title, address, phone number, and original signature of an individual with authority to negotiate on behalf of and to contractually bind the consultant(s) firm, and who may be contacted during the period of proposal evaluation.

The transmittal letter should be addressed to Will Hunt, Potter County Community Development, One North Main Street, Coudersport, PA 16915, presented on official letterhead from the proposing firm, or lead firm of a proposed team of firms, must identify the lead firm and all other subcontracting firms (if any) included on the team. The letter must identify the lead project manager and other key staff on the team and commit them to the contract if the team is selected.

The letter must affirm that the Proposal package shall remain in effect and will not be withdrawn for 180 days from the proposal due date at Potter County. Also, to be included is a clear statement of any business or family relationship between the firm or the principals of the firm and any officials or employees of Potter County. Letters of Commitment with similar content must be included from each subcontracting firm (if any) that is a member of the team.

2. Executive Summary

A brief description of the proposer's firm, including the year the firm was established, type of organization of firm (partnership, corporation, etc.), and annual gross receipts of the firm. Please include a statement of the firm's qualifications for performing the subject consulting services. Include a brief description of the firm's recent experience in performing similar services for other agencies or companies. The proposal must also include discussion of the consultant's affirmative action policy, use of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) in the performance of this work, and disclosure of any actual, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest.

3. Statement of Approach

Proposals should provide a narrative statement demonstrating an understanding of intent of this RFP. The narrative should also provide details on the methods your firm would engage to complete the study. We are specifically seeking how your firm would engage our businesses, youth, and community leaders to receive a broad spectrum of input across industry and ownership. The plan must be actionable.



4. Cost Proposal

The cost proposal shall describe both the hourly rate for principal(s) and employees to be assigned to this contract and a summary of any other related costs that are to be billed directly. Cost proposal should show amount budgeted per task. Payment for services under this agreement shall be made as tasks and deliverables are completed up to a total contract of \$73,000.

5. Proposal Evaluation and Selection

It is the responsibility of the proposing firm or team of firms to ensure that all Proposal package requirements are fulfilled, and that all required components are present, accurate, and complete at the time of submittal.

All Proposal packages will be reviewed for completeness by the Potter County GIS/Planning/Community Development Staff to determine eligibility for contract negotiations. Only firms or teams of firms that provide a complete Proposal package will proceed to a full technical review by a Selection Review Committee as described below.

Following the review and evaluation from all submitted Proposals the result will provide a recommendation to the Potter County GIS/Planning/Community Development Staff one firm or team of firms for the Potter County Economic Revitalization Implementation Plan **(Revitalize Potter County)**.

The Selection Review Committee may include but not limited to representatives from the following agencies:

- Potter County GIS/Planning/Community Development Department **(3)**
- PA Wilds Center's Economic Recovery Corps Fellow **(1)**
- Potter County Board of Commissioners **(3)**
- Potter County Planning Commission SALDO/Planning Committee **(3)**
- School District Administrator **(1)**

The following criteria has been established to guide the technical review process. Review Committee members will be asked to explain any scores given that are not recorded as "Average."

The Proposals will be evaluated based on the following evaluation criteria upon receipt of the proposals, a technical evaluation will be performed. Each of the major sections of the proposal will be reviewed and evaluated with criteria designed to help judge the quality of the proposal. Evaluation criteria will include such considerations as:

- Understanding of project requirements, including local, state, and federal requirements and mandates as it relates to this project **(10)**
- Approach to the scope of work/ services to be performed and project schedule **(30)**
- Specialized experience, qualifications and technical competence as related to the services requested **(25)**



- Experience performing similar work for similar size communities and demonstrated understanding of rural context including but not limited to thoughtful strategies for engaging communities across a highly rural area and issues and challenges specific to rural counties as it relates to this project **(25)**
- Cost estimate and relative allocation of resources to key tasks, including the time and skills of personnel assigned to the task and the consultant’s approach to managing resources and project output. **(10)**
- **Total (100)**

After technical review of all Proposals, the Proposals will be ranked based on total weighted score. The Selection Review Committee will develop a short list of the top ranked firm(s). The lead project manager for the short-listed firm(s) or team(s) of firms will be notified by e-mail. The lead project manager for the firm(s) or team(s) of firms not included on the short list will be notified by e-mail the same day. Shortlisted firm(s) or team(s) of firms may be asked to furnish additional information and/or clarification regarding their Proposal and may be asked to make oral presentations to the Selection Review Committee.

If needed, virtual, oral presentations are tentatively scheduled for **the week of January 20, 2024**. If oral presentations are required, each firm’s project manager must participate in the presentation. Any presentations will be limited to a 30-minute maximum per firm or team and may consist of up to a 20-minute presentation by the team, allowing adequate time for questions and discussion. The Selection Review Committee will then be given the opportunity to refine scores as needed based on the presentations.

The firm with the highest final total weighted score will be recommended to the Potter County GIS/Planning/Community Development Department by the Selection Review Committee for the Potter County Economic Revitalization Implementation Plan (**Revitalize Potter County**) contract. If the pricing details are deemed reasonable based upon Potter County’s price and cost estimates, Potter County GIS/Planning/Community Department will commence contract negotiations with the top ranked firm or team of firms.

The lead project manager for the selected firm or team of firms will be notified by e-mail on or about **January 24, 2025**. The lead project manager for any short-listed firm(s) or team(s) of firms not selected for the Potter County Economic Development Implementation Plan (**Revitalize Potter County**) contract will be notified by e-mail the same day.

Contract negotiations will commence with the recommended firm or team of firms. If unable to successfully execute a contract with the recommended firm, Potter County will break off negotiations with that firm or team of firms.

It is expected that the Potter County Economic Revitalization Implementation Plan (**Revitalize Potter County**) notice to proceed will be issued by **January 24, 2025**. Potter County reserves the right to reject any or all the Proposal packages.

6. **Schedule (interactive links included)**

RFP Available:
[Non-Mandatory Pre-Proposal Meeting](#)

October 16, 2024
November 6, 2024 @ 10am

**Questions Deadline**

Answers to Submitted Questions
Proposal Due
Potential Interviews
Notifications
Contract Start Date

November 22, 2024
December 10, 2024
December 20, 2024
Week of January 20, 2025
January 24, 2025
February 10, 2025

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS**A. Award**

The Potter County may ask RFP finalists to provide oral presentations regarding their firm and any special expertise in the necessary areas. All finalists may be required to participate in negotiations and submit such price, technical, or other revisions of their proposals as may result from negotiations. Potter County also reserves the right to award the contract without discussion, based upon the initial proposals.

Potter County reserves the right to waive any irregularity or informality in any proposal or in the RFP process, if, in the judgment of Potter County, such action will not negate fair competition and will permit proper comparative evaluation of the proposal submitted.

Potter County reserves the right to award the contract to the firm who presents the proposal which, in the judgment of Potter County, best accomplishes the desired results.

B. Verbal Agreement or Conversation

No prior, current, or post award verbal conversations or agreement(s) with any officer, agent, or employee of Potter County shall affect or modify any terms or obligations of the RFP, or any contract resulting from this RFP.

C. Pre-contractual Expense

Pre-contractual expenses are defined as expenses incurred by proposers and selected contractor in:

1. Preparing proposals in response to this RFP.
2. Submitting proposals to Potter County.
3. Negotiations with Potter County on any matter related to proposals.
4. Other expenses incurred by a contractor or proposer prior to the date of award of any agreement.

In any event, Potter County shall not be liable for any pre-contractual expenses incurred by any proposer or selected contractor. Proposers shall not include any such expenses as part of the price proposed in response to this RFP. Potter County shall be held harmless and free from any and all liability, claims, or expenses whatsoever incurred by, or on behalf of, any person or organization responding to this RFP.



D. Signature

The proposal will also provide the following information: name, title, address, and telephone number of individuals with authority to bind the company and who may be contacted during the period of proposal evaluation. The proposal shall be signed by an official authorized to bind the consultant and shall contain a statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm offer for at least a sixty (60) day period. Execution of the contract is expected by **February 10, 2025.**

E. Term

This contract shall go into effect when signed by both parties, and the CONTRACTOR shall commence work after notification to proceed by Potter County. All work shall be completed, and the contract shall end on **March 31, 2027** (“the termination date”), unless extended by contract amendment.

F. Fiscal Out Clause

The Agreement may be terminated at any time, without further liability other than payment for services incurred up until the date of termination.

G. Insurance

The successful firm shall provide evidence of the following insurance requirements: General liability insurance in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 naming Potter County as an additional insured.

H. Conflict of Interest

Firms submitting proposals in response to this RFP must disclose to Potter County any actual, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest that may exist relative to the services to be provided under Agreement for consulting services to be awarded pursuant to this RFP. If this firm has no conflict of interest, a statement to that effect shall be included in the proposal.