



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

For Market Analysis and Feasibility Study for a Regional Agricultural Center (RAC)

Issued by: Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation

Release Date: July 17, 2025

Submission Deadline: August 25, 2025 (12 pm)

I. INTRODUCTION

Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation (AAEDC) invites qualified consulting firms to submit Request for Proposals (RFP) to conduct a comprehensive economic and market study and feasibility assessment for the development of a **Regional Agricultural Center (RAC)** in **Southern Maryland** that strengthens the regional agricultural economy, supports local livestock producers, and meets the growing demand for local meat processing services, value added processing, and/or aggregation of products.

This project seeks to assess current and future market demand, stakeholder needs, infrastructure requirements, and possibly to provide an actionable implementation plan for a RAC, depending on demand and funding.

II. BACKGROUND

Southern Maryland has a rich agricultural heritage, with a growing need for local meat processing infrastructure. Livestock producers report the need to travel significant distances to access USDA-inspected slaughter and processing facilities, limiting growth, profitability, and the ability to meet consumer demand for locally raised meats.

A Regional Agricultural Center (RAC) could provide services such as slaughter, meat processing, value-added production, cold storage, and aggregation/distribution to support producers as well as the regional food system.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

The selected firm(s) will be expected to complete either or both phases of the following project. The results of phase I will determine whether phase II proceeds and if so, will help define the full scope, budget and required expertise.

PHASE I- Market Study and Demand Analysis

The first phase market study will quantify demand for a Regional Agriculture Center, which may or may not lead to execution of the Phase II, based on Phase I evaluation.

Stakeholder and Agricultural Community Engagement

- Conduct outreach and structured interviews/focus groups with livestock producers, agricultural organizations, government agencies, and other key stakeholders.
- Facilitate meetings or workshops to gather input and share findings.

- Ensure input reflects the diversity of operations in the region, including small, mid-sized, and minority-owned farms.

Quantitative Market Analysis

- Analyze current and projected supply and demand meat processing, value added processing, and product aggregation services in Southern Maryland and surrounding market area.
- Determine the primary and secondary market areas
- Evaluate supply-side data: number and type of producers, volume of animals and produce, and seasonal trends.
- Identify competitors, potential partners, existing facilities, and market gaps.
- Examine consumer trends for locally sourced meats and value-added products.

Final Deliverables

- Comprehensive and professional market study based on stakeholder input, quantitative market data and analysis with an executive summary.
- PowerPoint presentation of findings to public stakeholders and decision makers.
- Digital assets suitable for grant applications, fundraising, and community outreach.
- Final product to include recommendations on the economic viability of a RAC in Anne Arundel County and if viable, recommendations for scoping Phase II to include or refine the tasks below.

PHASE II

Facility Needs Assessment

- Identify technical requirements for a RAC based on findings from Phase I, including equipment, workforce, regulatory considerations, and throughput capacity.
- Provide recommendations on facility size, location considerations, services to be offered, and operational models (e.g., cooperative, private, public-private partnership).
- Assess infrastructure needs (utilities, transportation, wastewater, cold storage).
- Identify partnership opportunities both public and private and respective roles and responsibilities

Implementation Plan

- Develop a roadmap for establishing the RAC, including:
 - Budget estimates (capital and operational)
 - Timeline and milestones
 - Funding strategies and potential grant sources
 - Regulatory and permitting requirements
 - Recommended governance and management structure

Final Deliverables

- Comprehensive and professional written report with an executive summary.

- PowerPoint presentation of findings to the steering committee and public stakeholders.
- Digital assets suitable for grant applications, fundraising, and community outreach.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS

Qualified respondents must demonstrate:

- Experience conducting agricultural or food systems market research and feasibility studies.
- Familiarity with USDA regulations and meat processing facility requirements.
- Experience working with rural and agricultural communities.
- Strong stakeholder engagement and facilitation capabilities.
- Ability to deliver a comprehensive, actionable implementation and operation of facility plan.

V. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Interested firms should submit a proposal that includes each of the items listed below.

The proposal should not exceed seven (7) pages, however, the page limit does not include Cover Letter, resumes, references and price proposal.

1. Cover Letter (1 page)
2. Firm Profile and Relevant Experience
3. Key Personnel and Roles
4. Examples of Similar Projects (preferably links to similar projects)
5. Proposed Approach and Timeline
6. References
7. Fee Structure and Cost Estimate for each phase (include hourly rate for each key personnel assigned to the project)

VI. SELECTION CRITERIA

Submissions will be evaluated based on the following:

Technical (70%)

- Relevant experience and qualifications
- Understanding of project goals and approach
- Experience with agricultural stakeholder engagement
- Quality of previous work and references
- Capacity to complete work within timeframe

Price proposal (30%)

VII. TIMELINE

- Submission Deadline – Monday, August 25th 12pm
- Pre-proposal Conference – Thursday, July 24th, 2025 2p ([Link Here](#))
- Evaluation of Qualifications – August 26th – September 5th
- Interview short listed firms – Tuesday, September 9th, 2025 from 11a to 3p.
- Project Kickoff – late September/early October

VIII. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Please send digital submissions (PDF preferred) to:

Christina Holliday

Chief of Staff

Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation

cholliday@aaedc.org

(410)222-7410

Subject Line: RFP Submission – Regional Agricultural Center Study

IX. QUESTIONS

A pre-proposal conference will be held on **Thursday, July 24th at 2p.**

All questions regarding this RFP can either be addressed at the pre-proposal conference or must be submitted in writing to Christina Holliday at cholliday@aaedc.org by **Thursday, July 23rd at 3p.** Responses will be compiled and shared with all interested parties.

X. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to negotiate terms with the selected respondent, and to modify or cancel this RFP at any time.

We look forward to receiving your proposal and partnering with a qualified firm to develop an impactful Economic Development Roadmap for our community.

Sincerely,



Amy Gowan
President/CEO