Council Communication
March 13, 2023 City Council Meeting

Department: Community Development Case/Project No.: N/A	Ordinance No.: N/A Resolution No.: 23 -	First Reading: N/A Second Reading: N/A Third Reading: N/A Public Hearing: N/A

Subject/Title

Accept and Execute Consultant Contract to carry out the 2022 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant

Location

813 22nd Avenue, Council Bluffs – the former Reliance Battery Factory area

Background/Discussion

Background

The former Reliance Battery Factory site encompasses 0.93 acres within the 800 block of 22nd Avenue. Constructed in 1925, the building was located in an open area without any adjacent property owners. As the city expanded, the area surrounding the property became residential and the battery factory became a legal, nonconforming use within the neighborhood. The site was used for manufacturing, repairing and reconditioning lead acid batteries and remained in operation until Spring 2020. During its operation, the factory was cited several times for lead contamination, which resulted in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) completing a soil removal project in 1991 to reduce the lead exposure in the neighborhood.

In May 2020, Staff began working with the owner to acquire the property. After extensive testing, it was determined the site was again contaminated with lead in areas up to as much as 30 times standard levels of lead in the soil. Staff determined the best solution for the safety of residents would be to acquire the property, demolish the existing structures and work with EPA to clean up the lead contamination on the site. In October 2020, the City closed on the property and by January 2022, the structures on the property were demolished, prepping the site for cleanup.

In December of 2021, an application for an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant was prepared and submitted. The application requested $500,000 with an additional $100,000 in cost share utilizing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to assist the City in the overall planning and coordination of cleanup activities on the former Reliance Battery Factory site. In the summer of 2022, the City was awarded a $500,000 EPA Cleanup Grant.

Discussion

In order to select a consultant to carry out these activities, staff completed a Request for Proposals (RFP) process for a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP). Two proposals were received, one from Impact 7G, and one from Blackstone Environmental. Based on the qualifications of either firm, staff recommends hiring Impact 7G. Impact 7G is familiar with Council Bluffs and specifically the former Reliance Battery Factory site. The consultant will assist the City in preparing cooperative agreements and oversight, community engagement and outreach, cleanup planning and site cleanup as outlined in the Cooperative Agreement Work Plan. The total amount will not exceed $500,000 with an additional $100,000 in cost share utilizing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

Staff Recommendation

The Community Development Department recommends City Council adopt a resolution authorizing the

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Mayor to accept and execute a contract with Impact 7G for consultant services for the 2022 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant for the former Reliance Battery Factory area.
Attachments A. Map of the Project Area B. Proposals to the RFP