CENTER FOR CREATIVE LAND RECYCLING

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CENTER FOR CREATIVE LAND RECYCLING (CCLR)

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Economic Return on Investment (ROI) & Impact Study

California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Equitable Community Revitalization Grant (ECRG) Program

Issued by:	Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR)
Date issued:	September 3, 2026
Responses due:	October 1, 2026
Interviews (if needed):	October 5 - October 13 , 2026
Anticipated award:	October 19, 2026
Contact:	Jean Hamerman, Executive Director, at jean.hamerman@cclr.org
Budget range:	Up to $150,000
Anticipated term:	Five to eight months from Notice to Proceed

DEFINITIONS & ACRONYMS

Definitions

- **Capital Leverage Ratio:** The ratio of total project development cost to the public cleanup grant amount, expressing how many dollars of public and private investment each ECRG dollar catalyzed (e.g., “$1 of cleanup funding unlocked $20 of neighborhood investment”).
- **Condition Snapshot (“Previous, Present, and Planned”):** A point-in-time comparison of a site’s pre-grant and current/planned direct outputs (property value, on-site jobs, and housing units) in lieu of long-range forecasting.
- **Community Benefits Commitments:** The legally binding outcomes ECRG grantees commit to, such as affordable housing units, acres of green/open space, local hiring and contracting, Davis-Bacon wage jobs, and community-serving programs.
- **Economic Impact Analysis (EIA):** Measurement of the total change in economic activity (output, employment, and income) resulting from a project, program, or investment within a defined area.
- **Ripple Effects:** The indirect and induced economic activity generated by direct ECRG-related investment, typically estimated using input-output (I-O) modeling.
- **ROI Index:** A composite “success score” combining direct ROI, ripple effects, and community-benefit metrics into a defensible shorthand that reflects the ECRG program’s triple-bottom-line goals.
- **Cohort:** A defined group of ECRG projects analyzed together. This engagement covers the first cohort of 38 projects; subsequent reports will cover the next 25 and the final 27.
- **Framework:** The documented, repeatable methodology, data schema, and guidance that allows the analysis to be reproduced for future cohorts and to support later additionality (“but-for”) testing.
- **Conflict of Interest:** A current or prior working relationship between the Vendor and any subject ECRG project that would compromise the Vendor’s independence.

Acronyms & Abbreviations

- CCLR — Center for Creative Land Recycling • CES — CalEnviroScreen 3.0 • DTSC — California Department of Toxic Substances Control • ECRG — Equitable Community Revitalization Grant • EIA — Economic Impact Analysis • I-O — Input-Output (economic modeling) • OBI — UC Berkeley Othering & Belonging Institute • RFQ — Request for Qualifications • ROI — Return on Investment

SECTION 1: PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

1. Background & Purpose

The Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR) serves as the technical assistance provider to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) for its Equitable Community Revitalization Grant (ECRG) program. CCLR is issuing this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to identify a consulting partner to conduct an economic Return on Investment (ROI) and impact study of the ECRG program.

ECRG is a landmark environmental justice initiative that has awarded more than $131 million across 90 grants supporting 154 sites in 49 cities and 22 counties, funding Community-wide Assessments, Site-specific Investigations, and Site-specific Cleanups in California's most overburdened communities. Funded through two rounds (2022 and 2024), ECRG prioritizes disadvantaged communities using the state's CalEnviroScreen (CES) tool and requires grantees to make binding community-benefit commitments and meet accountable community-engagement standards. CES version 3.0 was used for selection. Their website contains significant information about the program.

In 2024, the UC Berkeley Othering & Belonging Institute (OBI) published a baseline assessment, Greater Social Equity in Brownfields Cleanup and Reuse, which demonstrated that ECRG projects out-perform traditional cleanups on social equity, affordable housing, and environmental-justice targeting. This study is intended to build on OBI's qualitative and spatial foundation by formally quantifying the program's economic and community ROI.

Purpose of this engagement

- **Quantify ROI and ripple effects** for the program's first cohort of projects, capturing direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts alongside community-benefit outcomes.
- **Establish a repeatable framework** so this becomes the first in a series of reports as ECRG moves through the remaining years of its implementation, estimated to end in late 2027.
- **Support DTSC's triple-bottom-line story** and help justify the continuation and replication of grant programs like ECRG, in California and nationally.

2. Scope of Work

This engagement covers the first ECRG cohort of 38 grant recipients supporting various sites statewide. The Vendor's methodology and data tools must be designed to scale to subsequent cohorts.

Cohort definition. The first cohort of 38 grants will be identified by 33 Round 1 and 5 Round 2 grantees. Projects vary in scope and stage (planned, under construction, and completed), and available data will vary accordingly. **Only nine projects have fully completed construction to the intended reuse.**

2.1 Data Assessment & Site Inventory

A. Assemble a redevelopment and investment inventory for the 38 cohort projects, drawing primarily on DTSC application materials and the mandatory on-going grantee reporting. The contractor will get access to the DTSC data management system as well as DTSC staff to access all available information. CCLR can also contact the grantee for additional information as needed.

B. Document each project's current status and redevelopment type, identify data gaps, and flag where supplemental public-record research (property values, tax records, developer budgets/capital stacks) is required.

2.2 Direct ROI, Capital Leverage Ratios

Where projects are sufficiently advanced (particularly completed, non-tax-exempt private developments, etc.), calculate Capital Leverage Ratios comparing total development cost to the ECRG grant amount.

2.3 Condition Snapshots ("Previous, Present, and Planned")

For the cohort, compare pre-grant and current/planned direct outputs (property value, direct on-site jobs, and housing units) providing early, defensible glimpses of expected ROI for projects still in development.

2.4 Ripple Effects (Required)

Estimating the program's ripple effects is a required outcome of this study. The Vendor must estimate the direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts of ECRG-related investment (including economic output, employment, labor income, and tax revenue).

- The modeling method is at the Vendor's discretion and industry best practice. Input-output modeling (e.g., IMPLAN or REMI) is permitted and anticipated, but not mandated by name.
- Where I-O software is used, the Vendor must document all inputs, assumptions, and the defined study geography so that findings are transparent, defensible, and reproducible. Approaches that rely on "black-box" outputs without documented inputs are discouraged.
- The Vendor should propose the appropriate geographic scope(s) for ripple-effect estimation (statewide, regional, and/or local).

2.5 Community Benefits & Equity Audit

Index the legally binding community benefits committed by cohort grantees (affordable housing units, acres of green/open space, local hiring and contracting, Davis-Bacon wage jobs, and community-serving uses) and overlay results against CalEnviroScreen to characterize equity targeting. This audit captures the fine-grained, triple-bottom-line outcomes that distinguish ECRG.

2.6 Performance and Efficiency

Beyond return on investment, the study must establish a baseline measure of how efficiently the ECRG program delivers its assessment work. For cohort projects that have completed Phase I and/or Phase II environmental site assessments, the Vendor will: (a) compile the cost and elapsed time to deliver each Phase I and Phase II assessment — for example, dollars per assessment and per acre, and days from grant award or Notice to Proceed to deliverable acceptance; (b) normalize for the factors that legitimately drive variation, such as site size, prior land use, and contaminant complexity, so comparisons are fair; and (c) average the normalized results across the cohort to produce a program-level baseline for assessment cost and delivery time. This baseline gives DTSC a defensible efficiency benchmark that successive cohort reports can be measured against — showing whether the program delivers assessments faster and at lower cost over time. The method must be documented so the baseline is reproducible in future cohorts.

2.7 ROI Index

Combine the direct ROI, ripple-effect, and community-benefit metrics into a documented composite "ROI Index", ratio, success score or other metric. The Index methodology must be transparent, defensible, and replicable so that scores are comparable across the current and future cohorts and usable by DTSC as triple-bottom-line shorthand.

Valuing early-stage (assessment-only) projects. Because much of the cohort will have completed a Phase I or Phase II assessment without yet reaching sale or redevelopment, the Vendor must propose a defensible method for capturing the value such projects create before development occurs, so that assessment-only sites are not recorded as zero-ROI. Approaches the Vendor may draw on include: the risk-reduction or "uncertainty-resolution" value of converting a site of unknown condition into a characterized, known-condition site that lenders and developers can transact on; the avoided cost to future private parties of assessment work already performed with public funds; any measurable market-readiness or appraised-value effect of clearing environmental uncertainty; and a clearly labeled, forward-looking "pipeline potential" figure (e.g., planned units or square footage) reported as potential rather than realized value. Confirmation of the type/level of contamination and potential cost of clean is a critical path to prioritizing sites and aligning with developer interests. The ROI Index must accommodate these interim, early-stage scores so that progress is visible across cohorts as projects mature from assessment to redevelopment.

2.8 Case Studies

Develop three to five (3–5) narrative case studies reflecting the diversity of the first cohort, in the spirit of the OBI report, to convey the qualitative goals and community outcomes that quantitative metrics alone cannot.

2.9 Repeatable Framework & Data Schema (Required)

Deliver a documented, repeatable framework with methodology, data template/schema, and update guidance detailed in a manner that enables CCLR, DTSC, or a future consultant to apply the same analysis to subsequent cohorts and to execute the additionality ("but-for") analysis in the final report of the series. This framework is a firm requirement and a distinct deliverable, not merely a by-product of the report.

2.10 Project Management

Provide project-management support, including participation in regularly scheduled check-in meetings with CCLR and DTSC, coordination, and schedule maintenance.

3. Deliverables & Report Requirements

Instead of writing a final, polished public report, the contractor is tasked with delivering a comprehensive Technical Data Memorandum and related analytical components. DTSC will use these foundational "building blocks" to construct and thread together the final report. At minimum, the contractor will be responsible for delivering:

- **A Technical Data Memorandum** detailing the neutral, factual findings of the Capital Leverage, Condition Snapshot, Ripple-Effect, and Community-Benefit analyses for the 38-project cohort, alongside a summary statement of the methodology, inputs, and assumptions used.
- **Analytical Building Blocks**, comprising heavily detailed bullet points, baseline metrics, and quantitative/qualitative recommendations that DTSC can adapt for the final narrative.
- **Case Study Inputs**, providing the complete factual text, data points, and anecdotal information for three to five (3–5) narrative case studies.
- **The Documented ROI Index** and its complete methodology.
- **The Repeatable Framework**, including the data schema and update guidance (per Section 2.9).
- **Reusable Visuals**, including raw charts, graphs, and maps suitable for DTSC to drop directly into the final public report.

Note on Scope Flexibility: CCLR and DTSC recognize that some data points may be unavailable or infeasible to analyze within the five-month term. The final, negotiated scope of outputs will be scaled to align with core program priorities and practical data availability.

4. Timeline for Project Completion

Work may begin upon issuance of a Notice to Proceed. The anticipated term is five (5) months. A draft of the Technical Memorandum document for CCLR/DTSC review should be delivered by February 15, 2027, followed by a final version incorporating comments by the beginning ofMarch.

Month(s)	Milestone / Deliverable
1	Project kickoff; confirm cohort of 38; data access plan; begin recurring check-ins.
1–2	Complete data assessment and site-redevelopment inventory for the cohort.
2–4	Conduct Capital Leverage, Condition Snapshot, ripple-effect, and community-benefit analyses.
3–5	Develop ROI Index; draft 3–5 case studies; build repeatable framework & schema.
5	Submit a draft technical memorandum and analytical building blocks to CCLR/DTSC for review.
5-6	Incorporate comments; submit final report, framework, and reuse-ready summary.

SECTION 2: VENDOR PROPOSAL, EVALUATION & AWARD

1. Economy of Preparation

Responses should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Vendor's ability to satisfy the requirements and goals of this RFQ. Emphasis should be placed on completeness and clarity. Response sections should be labeled for ease of evaluation.

2. Submission Requirements

Each response must include the following, clearly labeled:

1. Firm qualifications, relevant experience, and past performance (see Section 2.4 below).
2. Resumes for the proposed lead economist(s) and key personnel.
3. Two to three (2–3) examples of comparable public-sector economic impact or ROI reports; at least one must be an Economic Impact Analysis completed by the Vendor.
4. A brief (approximately two-page) narrative describing how the Vendor would approach this study, including its proposed approach to estimating ripple effects and constructing the ROI Index.
5. A project-management approach and proposed staffing plan aligned to the five-month timeline.
6. A cost proposal (see Section 2.5 below).

Note on cost information. Unlike a qualifications-only Expression of Interest, this RFQ requests a cost proposal to be evaluated alongside qualifications.

3. Evaluation Criteria & Award

CCLR will evaluate responses on the criteria listed below. The most qualified Vendors may be invited to an interview, after which CCLR will rank Vendors and negotiate scope and price with the highest-ranked firm. Should negotiations with the top-ranked firm be unsuccessful, CCLR may proceed to the next-ranked firm.

Criteria
Qualifications, experience & past performance (incl. economist with EIA and I-O modeling experience)
Methodology & approach (ripple-effect estimation, ROI Index, repeatable framework, case studies)
Cost proposal / value
Oral interview

4. Required Qualifications

1. At least one staff member with a degree or certification in economics and demonstrated experience conducting Economic Impact Analyses, including experience with economic modeling software (e.g., IMPLAN or REMI) for estimating direct, indirect, and induced impacts.
2. At least one staff member with a degree or certification in community or land-use planning, or a minimum of four (4) years' equivalent experience.

3. A minimum of four (4) years' experience developing economic impact or ROI reports.
4. Experience with brownfields redevelopment and/or California real estate, equitable-development, or policy-evaluation work (preferred).
5. At least one (1) example Economic Impact Analysis report completed by the Vendor.
6. A project-management approach and staffing plan meeting the Section 1 timeline.
7. The Consultant must certify that it is not debarred, suspended, or otherwise prohibited from performing work under federal, state, or municipal contracts and that it remains in good standing to enter into and perform the services described in this RFQ.

5. Cost Proposal

CCLR welcomes submissions from a broad range of qualified firms and teams, and encourages joint or teamed proposals where complementary firms combine — for example, brownfield and economic-impact expertise paired with input-output modeling capability. Vendors may propose on the full scope of work or on one or more discrete portions of it, organized by the tasks in Section 1; a Vendor bidding on a portion should state clearly which tasks it proposes to perform.

So that CCLR can compare full and partial proposals and, where advantageous, assemble complementary teams, each cost proposal should present costs task-by-task and include a not-to-exceed total for the tasks proposed, a rate schedule for key personnel, and an allocation of hours and cost by task. The proposal should cover all personnel, materials, software, travel, and any other resources necessary to complete the proposed work under the vendor's scope of services. The anticipated budget for the vendor's contract, inclusive of all vendor costs and expenses associated with the proposed work, is up to $150,000. This budget applies solely to the vendor's portion of the project and does not represent the total budget for the overall study. Vendors proposing on a portion of the scope should price only that portion.

CCLR places strong emphasis on cost-effectiveness, and the budget will be a significant consideration in evaluating proposals. Competitive pricing will receive stronger consideration when paired with a clear ability to facilitate the process effectively and deliver the desired outcomes. To help manage costs, bidders are encouraged to identify opportunities where tactical or administrative tasks may be supported by CCLR or DTSC staff.

CCLR reserves the right to award the full scope to a single Vendor, to make multiple awards for different portions, or to negotiate a combined team from among the responding Vendors.

6. Oral Presentations / Interviews

CCLR may conduct interviews with the most qualified Vendors. During interviews, Vendors may clarify but not alter or add to their submitted responses, and should be prepared to discuss their qualifications, example reports, and proposed approach to ripple effects and the ROI Index.

7. Procurement Schedule & Follow-On Opportunities

The anticipated procurement schedule is:

- **RFQ issued: September 3, 2026**
- **Questions: Please address questions to Executive Director, Jean Hamerman at jean.hamerman@cclr.org. All answers will be posted on our website here.**
- **Responses due: October 1, 2026**

- **Anticipated award / Notice to Proceed: October 19, 2026**
- **Submission:. Submit your Proposals to rfq_p@cclr.org with the subject line RFQ ECRG ROI by 12pm PT on October 1, 2026.**

Follow-on opportunities. This engagement is the first in an anticipated series covering successive cohorts of ECRG projects. Subject to satisfactory performance and the availability of funds, CCLR may engage the selected Vendor for subsequent cohort analyses and related work (for example, an educational ROI webinar or guidance for other brownfield programs). No follow-on work is guaranteed.

8. Reference Benchmark Studies

To assist Vendors in understanding the desired methodologies and reporting standards for this engagement, CCLR has identified several benchmark economic impact and ROI studies. Vendors are encouraged to review these reports, as they represent the specific methodological approaches (such as dynamic economic modeling and targeted geographic analysis) that informed this RFQ.

Delaware: Center for Applied Demography & Survey Research, University of Delaware. (February 2026). *Economic Impact on Delaware's Economy: The Brownfield Program 2025.*

- *Methodology Highlighted:* Use of dynamic and structural economic modeling software (REMI PI+) to estimate causal relationships and multiplier effects across regions, as well as Return on Investment (ROI) calculations based on assessed property values.

New York: NYU SPS Schack Institute of Real Estate. (October 2021). *New York State Brownfield Cleanup Program and Tax Credits: Analysis of a Three Generation Program*.

- *Methodology Highlighted:* Analysis of on-site return on investment (private development dollars versus tax credits) and evaluation of geographic targeting tools, such as En-Zones and Brownfield Opportunity Areas.

Virginia: Virginia Department of Environmental Quality & Stantec. (March 2025). *Economic Impact Analysis: Virginia Brownfields Restoration & Redevelopment Assistance Fund (VBAF) Program*.

- *Methodology Highlighted:* Input-Output modeling (IMPLAN) to estimate direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts, alongside qualitative case studies outlining broader community benefits like tourism and revitalization.

California (Baseline Equity Study): UC Berkeley Othering & Belonging Institute (OBI). (2024). *Greater Social Equity in Brownfields Cleanup and Reuse*.

- *Methodology Highlighted:* Spatial analysis and equity auditing using CalEnviroScreen.

SECTION 3: TERMS & CONDITIONS

- **Contracting entity.** CCLR is the contracting entity for this engagement, using funds provided by DTSC under CCLR's technical-assistance contract for the ECRG program.
- **Notice to Proceed.** Work may begin only after a Notice to Proceed is issued. The Vendor is responsible for keeping the project on schedule.
- **Invoicing.** The Vendor may invoice upon completion of deliverables or milestones, as agreed in the executed contract.

- **Ownership of materials.** All data, materials, models, documentation, and deliverables generated under this engagement, including the repeatable framework and data schema, are jointly owned by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and the Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR), with both entities retaining perpetual, royalty-free rights to use, modify, and distribute the repeatable framework, data schema, and final reports.
- **Conflict of interest.** Vendors with a current or prior working relationship with any subject ECRG project must disclose it; such a relationship may disqualify the Vendor from bidding on the affected work.
- **Reservation of rights.** CCLR reserves the right to amend or cancel this solicitation, to request clarifications, and to negotiate scope and price with the highest-ranked Vendor.
- **Contract terms.** Final terms, insurance, and other conditions will be set out in the executed contract.