



217 Elm St., Oil City, PA 16301-1412 / 814.677.3152 / [OilRegion.org](http://OilRegion.org)

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## **Announcement Request For Proposals (RFP) —**

### **“Downs Building in Oil City, PA – Architectural/Engineering Services and Construction Management Services”**

Issued by the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism (ORA)  
on March 20, 2026

#### **Introduction**

The Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry, and Tourism (ORA) is the non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation which administers the Oil Region National Heritage Area (ORNHA) and the Pennsylvania Oil Heritage Region. See [OilRegion.org](http://OilRegion.org) for further background information. The currently vacant historic downtown property is owned by Downs Confluence, LLC, affiliated with and sharing staff with ORA. Multiple stages of building rehabilitation have already been achieved; the Downs Building has a dry updated full basement, new roof, new windows, period-appropriate rehabilitated exterior, upgraded utility systems, and interior walls on the second and third floor have been removed.

**Complete Proposals Due: Friday, April 17, 2026; 11:00 a.m.**

**Mandatory Letters of Interest Due: Monday, April 6, 2026; by 4:00 p.m.**

**Consultant Contract Period: May 1, 2026 through May 31, 2027**

The ORA is accepting proposals for the significant updating of architectural and engineering plans and construction bid specifications/bid-package for the Downs Building in order to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and guidelines of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Authority (PHFA) for projects receiving Community Revitalization Fund Program (CRFP) financial support; such services are grouped in the scope of work that is Part A of this RFP. This project must be designed in accordance with PHFA regulations and



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guidelines, in addition to current Universal Pennsylvania Construction Code and Oil City-specific ordinances for mixed-use buildings within the Oil City Downtown Commercial Historic District.

Part B of the scope of work of this RFP includes construction management services to be performed by the consulting firm which is awarded a contract resulting from this RFP, during the contract period, focusing on the construction and completion of four ADA one-bedroom apartments (two each on the second and third floors), rebuilding of the first-floor Sycamore Street façade to make it more visually appealing and historically appropriate, and finishing out the first-floor stock room space. Such construction management services are to include the following tasks: review of incoming bids from potential vendors, active participation in on-site project meetings of the project team at mutually agreed dates, review and authorization for ORA to pay invoices from project construction vendors, interviews and documentation to assure vendor compliance with Pa. Prevailing Wages and when appropriate Davis-Bacon Act wages/benefits, periodic and final inspections of construction work, review of Change Orders submitted by construction vendors, and other routine construction project oversight.

The ORA office is situated just two buildings from the Downs Building. Personnel of the selected consulting firm may utilize space and minor office supplies at the ORA office during normal weekday business hours; ORA's project manager is Abigail Watson-Popescu, who is stationed at the ORA office at 217 Elm Street, Oil City, PA.

The consultant contract resulting from this RFP will run from Friday, May 1, 2026 through May 31, 2027. Funding for this project is made available from the PHFA, PNC Charitable Trusts, and the National Heritage Area Program under the administration of the National Park Service (NPS). The total estimated cost for the architectural, engineering, and actual construction work to complete this phase of the ongoing rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the Downs Building is \$1,039,860. Construction vendors must comply with Pa. Prevailing Wages. If federal funds are used on a particular construction vendor's contract, then that entity must also comply with the Davis-Bacon Act.



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Because ORA anticipates issuing an Addendum to this RFP incorporation questions and answers received from potential proposing firms prior to the deadline for full proposals, each consulting firm considering proposing must submit to the designated contact no later than 4:00 p.m. on Monday, April 6, 2026 a Letter of Interest (LOI). During the RFP process, the designated contact is Mrs. Marilyn Black, consultant, [marilynblack@windstream.net](mailto:marilynblack@windstream.net); (814) 671-2058 mobile phone. Once a contract is executed, the designated contact will be Abigail Watson-Popescu, ORA Project Manager at [apopescu@oilregion.org](mailto:apopescu@oilregion.org); (814) 677-3152 x 121. ORA recommends that interested parties visit the Downs Building interior prior to proposal submission; please schedule escorted visitation of your firm's representative with Mrs. Watson-Popescu.

The full RFP package including instructions, background information, current exterior and interior photographs, etc. is available at [oilregion.org/the-alliance/rfps](http://oilregion.org/the-alliance/rfps).

## Request for Proposals (RFP)

### “Downs Building in Oil City, PA – Architectural/Engineering Services and Construction Management Services”

RFP issued March 20, 2026

Complete Proposals Due: Friday, April 17, 2026; 11 a.m. one (1) digital and two (2) hard copies to

Abigail Watson-Popescu, ORA, Heritage Program Manager, at [apopescu@oilregion.org](mailto:apopescu@oilregion.org), at the ORA office, 217 Elm St., Oil City, PA 16301-1412.

Mandatory Letters of Interest Due: Monday, April 6, 2026; 4 p.m. submitted via e-mail to Marilyn Black, consultant, [marilynblack@windstream.net](mailto:marilynblack@windstream.net); (814) 671-2058.

Funding for this project is made available from the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Authority (PHFA), PNC Charitable Trusts, and the National Heritage Area Program under the administration of the National Park Service (NPS).

Please direct questions to Marilyn Black; [marilynblack@windstream.net](mailto:marilynblack@windstream.net); (814) 671-2058.

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## Background

The mission of the ORA is to manage the Oil Region National Heritage Area and to increase the prosperity of the Oil Region by enticing all people to live, work, learn and play in “the Valley that Changed the World” through the preservation, promotion, development, and support of historical, educational, natural, recreational, residential, commercial, and industrial destinations. The Downs Building, and soon the completion of its gradual rehabilitation to achieve adaptive reuse to address today’s and tomorrow’s needs for upper story residential apartment units and first-floor commercial use, play important roles in exemplifying the ORA’s mission statement.

Constructed in 1894 at 201 Center Street at the southeast corner of Center Street’s intersection with Elm Street in Oil City, the three-story brick Downs Building with full basement was designed by local architect Joseph P. Brenot during a surge of new construction on that section of Oil City’s North Side which had been destroyed by the Great Fire and Flood of 1892. Newspapers of that period referred to the new block-long structure of contiguous buildings as ‘condominiums.’ The initial occupants were a first-floor saloon operated by Patrick M. Downs who resided upstairs with his family. Over decades, Downs Building housed retail businesses (i.e. ice cream and candy shop, shoe store, Radio Shack, T-shirt printing shop) as well as professional offices for doctors and attorneys, and apartment renters. When ORA acquired the Downs Building in 2013 it was vacant. It is 102 feet long (its west façade) and 20 feet wide; it shares its east wall with a fully occupied multi-use building owned and operated by Community Services of Venango County.

Now the Downs Building is situated within Venango County within Census Tract 2007, Block Group 1; inside a Qualified Federal Opportunity Zone; within Oil City Downtown Commercial Historic District recognized by the National Register of Historic Places; and along the Erie-to-Pittsburgh Trail. While it previously was surrounded by several-story commercial buildings which left the Downs Building underappreciated, its west façade now overlooks the welcoming and spacious Towne Square, a relatively newly developed full-block greenspace where outdoor concerts, festivals, outdoor arts/crafts shows, and seasonal decorations are hosted.

Already completed exterior work includes the following: roof replacement, new HVAC, restoration of the character-defining bay windows, re-creation of the black iron roof parapets, and goose-neck lighting at most entrances and adjacent sidewalk. Indoors, the beautified entrance from Center Street is now ADA-accessible; the basement is completely renovated and well-illuminated; and there are a first-floor fire suppression system, two ADA-accessible restrooms on the first floor, a rebuilt central stairwell, and 1,700 square feet of remodeled first-floor retail space. But the Downs Building lacks an elevator.

The architectural/engineering firm which served as the Architect of Record for the Downs Building closed at the end of 2025 when its principals retired. Preliminary drawings they prepared in 2014 showing options for apartments on the second and third floors of the Downs Building are enclosed as Appendix G. However, ORA has since decided that the desired one-bedroom apartments (two as affordable-housing rental properties, and two as retail market-rate short-term rental properties) must be designed and constructed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and thus ORA is receptive to other options which would include a new elevator or other solutions to make the upper stories within the Downs Building ADA-accessible.

## Scope of Work, Project Purposes, and Project Work Products

The Scope of Work for this project is divided into two parts, as follows: **Part A**— Architectural and Engineering Services, including permitting; and **Part B**—Construction Management Services during the implementation of the design and schematics of the work products generated and approved through Part A. Each proposing firm must propose to conduct Parts A and B of the Scope of Work.

Tasks by the selected consulting firm within **Part A** include the following:

- (1) Examine current conditions throughout the Downs Building which impact design options and decisions to achieve full ADA accessibility for the upper story apartments, as well as the first-floor stock room and its Sycamore Street entrance;
- (2) Identify feasible locations and related costs for recommended elevator shaft and/or other appropriate lift system(s) to enable safe convenient mobility within the Downs Building for residential tenants, guests, store employees, service personnel, and other people including those who may have disabilities;
- (3) In compliance with ‘Two means of egress’ from residential spaces, identify feasible solutions and related costs in accordance with relevant ordinances and construction codes;
- (4) Communicate with ORA, municipal, and agency personnel as to feasibility and current factors to be considered in solving access needs;
- (5) Communicate with ORA and owner of adjacent building if need to explore vertical or safe egress solutions, willingness, constraints, and costs involving such construction;
- (6) Prepare and revise after interaction with ORA, work products which update the preliminary designs and related drawings which the preceding A/E firm generated, thus illustrating new options and recommended floor plans, utility connections, and other visual schematics and product specifications;
- (7) Draft bid manuals and documents for each category of construction services as needed to achieve the construction activities outlined and detailed in the project bid manual and drawings;
- (8) Draft and assist ORA in filing each relevant permit regarding design approvals; and
- (9) Other customary related architectural design and engineering services.

Designs and selected architectural engineering plans and construction bid specifications/project manual for this phase of the Downs Building must be able to achieve compliance with these laws and regulations: the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); guidelines of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Authority (PHFA) for projects receiving Community Revitalization Fund Program (CRFP) financial support; all federal and state requirements for construction and development of accessible housing for persons with disabilities [including FHA Act of 1988 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, Pa. Universal Design Act]; and any local building code requirements and applicable accessibility standards.

Please be aware that ORA will be responsible for distributing the resulting bid packages to potential experienced construction vendors, including posting legal notices, hosting any pre-bid conferences, and handling routine questions from potential bidders.

The physical rehabilitation construction activities envisioned for inclusion in this phase of work on the Downs Building will focus on creating four one-bedroom apartments (two apartments each on the second and third floors) and related connecting spaces/utilities/systems are the following:

- Framing out apartments with new walls, insulation, wood trim, cabinets, doors, subfloor, and floors.
- Clean, repair, and seal interior brick wall.
- New Electrical, Plumbing, and HVAC.
- Expansion of the Fire Suppression System which has been installed in the basement and first floors, to then include the second and third floors.
- Finishes to include at least painting, cabinetry, doors, hardware, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, signage, etc.
- Linkage to the anticipated elevator and/or lift system.
- Appliances including washers and dryers, refrigerators, ranges, dishwashers, and restroom accessories.

In addition, the selected consulting firm's Part A duties will include designs and engineering for (a) Rebuilding the Sycamore Street façade/entrance to make it more visually appealing and historically appropriate; and (b) Finishing out the first-floor stock room space reached through the Sycamore Street entrance and through the already rehabilitated first-floor entrance from Elm Street, including new concrete to be poured.

Tasks of Construction Management Services by the selected consulting firm within **Part B** include the following:

- (1) Attending on site along with ORA liaison pre-bid conferences with potential bidders; and reviewing/editing the resulting Question/Answer Augmentation to construction bid packages as needed. ORA will be responsible for issuing such Addenda to bids to firms which attended mandatory pre-bid conference.
- (2) Reading each incoming construction/rehabilitation bid received by ORA, and then provide professional Technical feedback to ORA including identifying a recommended vendor by bid category. ORA will be responsible for conducting reference checks as based on the specific bids.
- (3) Active participation in on-site project kick-off meeting as well as periodically scheduled project team meetings.
- (4) Notify ORA and specific selected vendor of any materials, methods, or quality performance concerns which become evident to the consultants during active construction.
- (5) Review and authorize ORA to pay invoices from project construction vendors;
- (6) Interviews and documentation to assure vendor compliance with Pa. Prevailing Wages and (if federal funds are utilized for a particular construction vendor) the Davis-Bacon Act.
- (7) Periodic and final inspections of construction work;
- (8) Review of Change Orders submitted by construction vendors; and
- (9) Other customary construction project oversight services performed by the architectural and/or engineering firm.

Deliverables: Much of the communications and information exchanges among the selected consulting firm and ORA liaison will be via e-mails, telephone, and other electronic media. For project drawings initial items may be submitted electronically sized to 8.5" X 11" paper; as drawings become finalized,

firm will be required to furnish ORA with both 8.5" X 11" hard copies and two traditional larger-scaled hard copies to ORA; during bid cycles to select construction firms, additional large-scale drawings may be needed (quantities to vary depending on construction/rehab construction category). In addition, each final set of drawings and project manuals shall be furnished to ORA electronically.

### **Project Constraints, and Submittal Instructions for Letter of Interest, and for Proposal**

Downs Building is situated at a busy vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist intersection in downtown Oil City, PA. Safety and positioning practices must recognize and respect all people during outdoor examination, photography, delivery, and other presence by consulting firm personnel.

The architectural/engineering designs and bid packages which ORA will issue must be submitted to ORA and be finalized by July 31, 2026. Permits must be filed by August 31, 2026. The construction projects implemented to perform the ultimately selected design must be filed no later than August 31, 2026. The various construction/rehabilitation projects implemented based on the design plans must be completed by May 31, 2027.

Due to termination dates of the already executed grant contracts between ORA/Downs Confluence, LLC and PHFA and PNC Charitable Trusts, the successful completion of all components and steps of the Scope of Work described in this Request For Proposals (RFPs) will entail expedited turn-arounds and concerted priority assignments by ORA and by the selected consulting firm. ORA will also throughout the project communicate frequently with these project partners and other grantors, including requesting contract extensions if conditions necessitate lengthening contract duration.

**Each architectural and/or engineering firm considering proposing based on this RFP must submit via e-mail no later than 4:00 p.m. on Monday, April 6, 2026 a Letter of Interest (LOI).** The LOI should be on the proposing firm's letterhead, identifying the project title, and providing detailed contact information for the individual (and for one back-up if firm so desires) to whom ORA should direct the RFP Question/Answer augmentation which will be furnished electronically by April 8 to the interested parties. The required contact information is the individual's full name, title within the firm, physical mailing address, postal mailing address, e-mail address, and business telephone; you may include the person's individual mobile phone number(s) if you so desire. Please do not indicate you firm's anticipated proposal price information in this LOI. If your firm desires, you may in the LOI include information about your firm's experience and expertise in the successful completion of rehabilitation projects similar to those envisioned at the Downs Building. However, when it comes to rating and ranking incoming full proposals, the reviewers will not be utilizing the LOI; each eligible incoming proposals must include all of the requested information and documentation, even if already mentioned in an LOI. Do not text nor fax your signed LOI. The LOIs are to be addressed to Mrs. Marilyn Black, consultant for ORA, [marilynblack@windstream.net](mailto:marilynblack@windstream.net); (814) 671-2058.

**ORA strongly recommends that interested parties visit the Downs Building interior prior to submitting full proposal.** Please schedule with Mrs. Watson-Popescu; such individual escorted visitation of your firm's representative; Abigail Watson-Popescu, ORA Heritage Program Manager; [apopescu@oilregion.org](mailto:apopescu@oilregion.org); (814) 677-3152, Extension 121. She is stationed at the ORA office at 217 Elm Street, Oil City, PA 16301, which is two doors away from the Downs Building.

**The proposal deadline is based on when the two hard copies plus flash drive set are received at the ORA office at 217 Elm Street, Oil City, PA 16301; the deadline is 11:00 a.m. on Friday, April 17, 2026.** The hard-copy sets and flash drive must be mailed, shipped, or hand-delivered to Abigail Watson-Popescu. In addition, one proposal must be e-mailed to Mrs. Watson-Popescu by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 17, 2026, and to Mrs. Black, [marilynblack@windstream.net](mailto:marilynblack@windstream.net). It is NOT sufficient to submit the full proposal solely via e-mail or Dropbox. Include all information requested; additional information may be submitted, if necessary. All proposals must be valid for at least 120 days.

### **Consultant Qualifications**

ORA requires that the proposing consultant firm (which could constitute a team assembled from employees of more than one firm) include at least one Engineer licensed to operate in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and/or at least one Architect licensed to operate in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

In addition, the proposing consultant firm (or team composed of employees of more than one firm) shall have significant experience of the successful historic preservation of period buildings adapted into multi-use buildings such as that envisioned for the Downs Building.

### **Proof of Insurance**

The selected consultant shall provide proof of general business liability insurance and shall augment its coverage to include listing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, PHFA, ORA, NPS, and United States of America as additional insured parties for the duration of this project. See RFP Appendix C to provide current detailed information about consultant's present insurance and other various assurance statements.

All work products prepared and published during this planning project shall be the property of the selected firm, the ORA (and if federal funds are used for this A/E contract, list NPS), and which together shall own the copyrights thereto. The grantors (PHFA and NPS), as well as ORA, shall have unrestricted authority to reproduce, distribute, and use any submitted report, diagram, illustration, data, material, software, and any associated documentation that is designed or developed and delivered as part of the performance of this project. The copyrights include not only the copyright of the printed materials, but also those electronically provided or distributed.

### **Project Schedule**

The ORA will select an architectural/engineering firm or team as the consultant to perform this project, with official action to award the contract scheduled for the Thursday, April 23, 2026 meeting of the ORA Board of Directors. The consulting contract period will be from May 1, 2026 through May 31, 2027.

The planning timetable is as follows:\*

March 20, 2026 March 21 - 23, 2026	RFP issued by ORA; legal notice published in Erie Times-News. Individual RFP announcement e-mails issued to potential proposing firms and to plan houses.
March 23, 2026	ORA uploads full RFP package onto the ORA Website for convenient download by interested parties.
April 6, 2026	4 p.m.; deadline for Letters of Interest (LOI) to be submitted via e-mails to the designated contact for ORA.
April 7-8, 2026	Supplement to RFP with Questions/Answers issued individually to each firm which furnished a LOI
Friday, April 17, 2026	11 a.m. deadline for project proposals to be received at the ORA office in Oil City, PA; proposals opened and read; proposing firms are not required to be present, although welcome to do so.
April 17, 2026	Proposals circulated among reviewers.
April 23, 2026	Consultant firm selected during ORA Board of Directors meeting
April 24, 2026	The proposing firms are notified as to the selected firm.
May 1, 2026	Consultant contract start date
May, 2026	Consultant and ORA representatives conduct on-site examination of project site. Active design and drawing work begins. ORA and consultant firm assemble list of related permits and the full contact info and criteria for each permit. Interaction with project partners, and other involved parties occurs. Draft new conceptual drawings are submitted to ORA and circulated. Goal is to narrow in on no more than two designs by end of May. Any required additional testing of current conditions occurs this month.
June, 2026	During June, the two feasible approaches have construction cost estimates prepared, along with advantages and disadvantages listed for each approach, and a list of key missing relevant information will be provided to

ORA. Both parties gather the missing information as needed. Consulting firm begins drafting bid manual for the leading approach. Goal is to have agreed leading approach determined by end of June.

July, 2026

Consulting firm finishes full draft of project manual, detailed project specifications and drawings, and recommends which construction elements may be combined for a General Construction Contractor to perform and/or perform in combination with subcontractors. For Components with specialized skills or credentials, a separate procurement cycle might be conducted by ORA, and thus such separate sub-project manuals and drawings be drawn. (For instance, extending the existing Fire Suppression system might fall into this separate bid procurement process.) Professional services continue, paced so that final agreed design and bid packages are in ORA hands by the end of July, 2026.

August, 2026

Selecting firm in conjunction with ORA files related permits. ORA issues the bid invitations, related notices, and follows their standard construction/rehabilitation procurement steps. Depending on the timing sequence advised by the A/E firm, there may be simultaneous procurement cycles underway. The goal is to be able to have each loop paced for actual vendor selection at either the August 27 or September 24 Board meetings, or if necessary, a meeting of the ORA Executive Committee within that time range.

September 1, 2026

Starting date for at least one of the physical construction contracts. Other physical construction contracts may have staggered starting dates, ranging between September 1 and October 1. If some components can safely begin later during the project period, the consulting firm shall so identify those components and notify ORA of same.

September-December, 2026

Consulting firm with ORA continues to refine design if revisions are conditions of permit approvals, unusual building conditions are discovered during active construction, additional funding opportunities arise, weather conditions, or other factors need new solutions. By December 31, these activities should be completed: second and third floor general contractor framing and insulation installed, plumbing installed, HVAC installed,

electrical work, hook up with HVAC system, sprinkler system, and other components advised by consulting firm. Elevator or other vertical access system installed.

January-March, 2027

Active construction management services continue. By March 15, first floor stock room renovation and Sycamore Street entrance demolition to remove historically inappropriate features completed, poured concrete, and reconstructed historically appropriate first floor façade and entrance.

March-April, 2027

Active construction management services continue. By April 30, 2027, on the second and third floors, the electrical contractor shall have completed work; and the General Contractor shall have completed the cabinetry, doors and hardware, finishes, and appliance installation.

April-May, 2027

Consulting firm conducts inspections/reviews, prepares punch-list for each construction contractor as needed. ORA and consulting firm finalize permit reporting and conduct final inspections.

May 31, 2027

End of consulting contract

\*These deadlines may be negotiable if the proposing firm provides a compelling reason to shift with advance ORA authorization the dates and/or sequences of construction in various sections of the Downs Building for more effective coordination and cost savings.

## **Proposal Content Instructions**

Throughout this RFP, ‘proposing firm,’ ‘consulting firm,’ or ‘the consultant’ refers either to a single consulting firm or a collaborative team assembled involving personnel from multiple companies or individuals. In order to provide personnel able to meet the project timetable and have related prior experience, companies are encouraged to assemble project teams if they realize that the employees of a single company are unable to fulfill the requirements of this RFP. For a collaborative team, one company should be designated as the lead contact, both for proposal submittal purposes and for project operation purposes. ORA will submit payments only to the lead company.

The submitting firm may format the proposal narrative; standard forms A, B, C, and D are required. Two (2) hard copies and one (1) electronic copy on a flash drive must be submitted; and after bid openings, the electronic version of the complete proposals is to be provided by 4:00 pm on April 6 to the two ORA representatives indicated in the Proposal Submittal Instructions shown above in this Request For Proposals. No other distribution of proposals will be made by

the proposing entity. Proposals must be signed by an official authorized to bind the consultant to its provisions and be valid for at least 120 days. Moreover, the contents of the proposal of the selected firm will become contractual obligations if a contract is entered into. Proposals should be prepared simply and provide a straightforward and concise description of the offeror's ability to meet the requirements of this RFP.

The proposal shall include at least the following sections:

1. Statement of the Project Purpose
2. Organization of the Consulting Team
3. Work Plan including Project Schedule
4. Samples of Prior Related Work/References—provide samples and contact information (Company name, Name and title of contact, address, telephone number, and email address) for at least three (3) prior related projects.
5. Personnel Assigned to this Project—including % of time on project, title, names, resumes; and include licensing or certification that the consultant meets the required qualifications and experience.
6. Proposal Check List (see Appendix A)
7. Completed Budget Form (see Appendix B)
8. Cost and Price Analysis (including all information requested in this RFP). Include any Exceptions on a separate sheet that is clearly marked “Exceptions.”
9. Completed ORA Statement of Assurances and Insurance Information (see Appendix C), and the Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment Clause (See Appendix D).

Firms considering proposing for these services must submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) by 4:00 p.m. on April 6, 2026 to the attention of Marilyn Black, Consultant for ORA, 914-671-2058; [marilynblack@windstream.net](mailto:marilynblack@windstream.net).

Two (2) hard copies and one (1) flash drive of the sealed proposals should be mailed or hand-delivered to the ORA office at 217 Elm Street, Oil City, PA 16301. The envelope should be labeled “PROPOSAL FOR DOWNS BUILDING IN OIL CITY, PA – ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES.” The proposals must be received no later than Friday, April 17, 2026 at 11 a.m. to Abigail Watson-Popescu, Project Manager, at [apopescu@oilregion.org](mailto:apopescu@oilregion.org) and at the offices of the ORA, 217 Elm St., Oil City, PA 16301-1412. Proposals will be opened and read starting at 11 a.m. that day. By 4:00 p.m. on April 17, the proposing firms must also email the full proposal to each of the two designated representatives of ORA indicated above at the Proposal Submittal Instructions portion of this RFP.

Questions during the proposal preparation period may be addressed to Abigail Watson-Popescu, Project Manager, ORA; 814-677-3152, Ext. 121; [apopescu@oilregion.org](mailto:apopescu@oilregion.org), or to Marilyn Black, consultant for ORA, 814-671-2058; [marilynblack@windstream.net](mailto:marilynblack@windstream.net).

## **Criteria for Selection**

All completed proposals received before the deadline will be reviewed and evaluated by a committee appointed by the ORA. These reviewers will recommend to the ORA Board of Directors the selection of the proposal that most closely meets the requirements of this RFP and satisfies the needs of the funders: PHFA, NPS, and PNC Charitable Trusts.

The following factors will be considered in making the selection among proposals:

- A. Understanding of the project
- B. Soundness of Approach; completeness and clarity of designs and explication thereof.
- C. Contractor Qualifications/Experience.
- D. Work Sample Quality.
- E. Client Contacts as References.
- F. Personnel Qualifications/Experience including related projects.
- G. Cost Reasonableness while staying within maximum compensation allowed.
- H. Price Analysis in relation to Scope of Work.
- I. Contractor Assurances.
- J. Insurance Policies.

## **Proposed Method of Payment**

The contract issued to the approved firm may include a series of payments, as follows (see Project Scope of Work):

- 10% Upon execution of consulting contract
- 15% Upon receipt of top two feasible design packages including construction cost estimates, as well as advantages and disadvantages of each approach.
- 15% Upon receipt of first draft of full project manual and bid packages for the initial two bid sets to be released.
- 15% Upon receipt of revised and ready to be implemented procurement materials for the recommended design; materials mean full set of bid project manuals, drawings, and specifications.

- 10% Upon official agency approvals of all required project construction permits.
- 15% Upon commencement of Construction Management Services phase of this project.
- 5% Upon final inspection of each rehabilitation construction contract's finished work
- 15% Upon approved Completion of Project.

Payment of each invoice is usually made within one (1) month of receipt by ORA of accepted invoice and related progress documentation. If subcontractors or multiple firms are utilized, ORA will only issue payments to the lead entity.

In addition to submittal of invoices, the selected firm shall provide written reports at of the end of each month during the contract period. Each report shall include the contractor's activities performed in the preceding month, work products generated, the activities proposed in the upcoming month, any recommendations, and how the project stands relative to the budget.

**Reservation of Rights**

The ORA reserves the right to award zero, partial, multiple, or complete orders for the scope of work contained in this RFP, or to negotiate separately with competing proposing entities. Issuance of this RFP does not require the ORA to execute any contract(s) whatsoever.

**Enclosures**

- Appendix A Proposal Check List
- Appendix B Budget Form
- Appendix C Statement of Assurances and Insurance Information
- Appendix D Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment Clause
- Appendix E Legal Notice
- Appendix F Images of Downs Building, 201 Center Street, Oil City, PA 16301
- Appendix G 2014 Preliminary Conceptual Drawings for Upper Stories of Downs Building

## Appendix A

### **“Downs Building in Oil City, PA – Architectural/Engineering Services And Construction Management Services”**

#### **PROPOSAL CHECK LIST**

Complete this check list and include a copy with the original copy of the proposal that is submitted.

- Statement of the Project Purpose
- Organization of the Consulting Team
- Work Plan including Project Schedule
- Prior Experience (including full reference contact information for at least 3 prior clients, and work sample for each of the indicated clients)
- Personnel Assigned to This Project (including % of time on the proposed project, professional qualifications and resumes)
- Completed Budget Form (Appendix B of the RFP)
- Cost and Price Analysis (including all information requested in the RFP)
- Completed Proposal Check List (Appendix A of the RFP)
- Completed ORA Statement of Assurances and Insurance Information form (Appendix C of the RFP)  
AND  
Completed Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment Clause (Appendix D of the RFP)
- Samples of at least three Prior Related Work Products

**Appendix B**

**“Downs Building in Oil City, PA – Architectural/Engineering Services”**

**BUDGET FORM**

(Enclosure with proposal submitted to the ORA)

**Organization Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Authorized Agent:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Typed or Printed Name & Title of Authorized Agent:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

Consultant Services:

Part A of Scope of Work as per RFP

Architectural Design/Engineering Services \_\_\_\_\_

Part B of Scope of Work as per RFP

Construction Management Services \_\_\_\_\_

Other: (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Total :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Consulting pricing includes all items from the Scope of Work indicated for the above referenced proposal unless noted under Exceptions and is based on Project Work Products as a means to relate the Scope of Work to deliverables. Additional items suggested by the proposing firm may be listed in the additional lines. Consultant Services are to include the time rendered, travel costs, communications costs, shipping fees, photographic images, and all other routine expenses of providing consultant services.

(Continuation of BUDGET FORM)

**Exceptions:**

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**Comments:**

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**Enclosure:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Supporting Cost & Price Analysis** (illustrating how derived the proposal figures for each work product as summarized above).

## Appendix C

### STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES AND INSURANCE INFORMATION

**Proposal: “Downs Building in Oil City, PA – Architectural/Engineering Services”**

**Enclosure with proposal submitted to Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism**

#### 1. IDENTIFICATION

Proposal Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Organization name)

In response to Request For Proposals issued by Oil Region Alliance (ORA) entitled: **“Downs Building in Oil City, PA – Architectural/Engineering Services”**

#### 2. CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS

_____ YES	_____ NO	I certify that the proposing firm and its principals as of today’s date are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for disbarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency, or by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I also certify that we have not within a five-year period preceding this proposal date been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against any of us in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public transactions or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or Commonwealth antitrust statues or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property. I also certify that we are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity with mission of any of the offenses listed above. I also certify that within the five-year period preceding this proposal, we have not had one or more public transactions (Federal, Commonwealth, or local) terminated for cause or default. I also certify that the proposing firm is not delinquent in any Commonwealth obligation, including taxes. I further affirm that if, at any time during the term of any contract resulting from this proposal, the firm becomes delinquent, or is debarred, or is suspended, the firm will within 15 days of that date of delinquency, suspension or debarment provide written notice to the Oil Region Alliance.
If no, elaborate at 9--Comments.		

**3. CERTIFICATION REGARDING DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
YES      NO

If no, elaborate at 9--Comments.

I certify that the proposing firm will or will continue to provide a drug-free workplace by establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, the firm's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, any available drug counseling/rehabilitation and employee assistance programs, and the penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.

\_\_\_\_\_  
YES      NO

If no, elaborate at 9--Comments.

The proposing firm and any subcontractors shall establish and maintain a written drug-free workplace policy and shall inform their employees of the policy. Upon request by ORA, a copy shall be furnished for project files.

\_\_\_\_\_  
YES      NO

If no, elaborate at 9--Comments.

I also certify that I will not engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance in conducting any activity with the funds provided by ORA. If I am convicted or a criminal drug offense, I will report that within 10 calendar days to the ORA-assigned project manager.

**4. CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING, AND AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
YES      NO

If no, elaborate at 9--Comments.

I certify that no part of the money paid by ORA to my firm (if selected as a vendor to perform the work as described in the accompanying proposal) shall be used directly or indirectly to pay for any personal service, advertisement, telegram, telephone, letter, printed or written matter, or any other device, intended or designed to influence in any manner a Member of Congress, to favor or oppose, by vote or otherwise, any legislation or appropriation by Congress, whether before or after the introduction of any bill or resolution proposing such legislation or appropriation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
YES      NO

If no, elaborate at 9--Comments.

I certify that my firm agrees to comply with the requirements of the Lobbying Disclosures Act (65 Pa. CS).

YES       NO  
 If no, elaborate at 9—Comments.

I certify, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S. Code Section 12101, et seq., no qualified individual with a disability may, on the basis of the disability, be excluded from participation in a contract based on the enclosed proposal or from activities provided for in such a contract.

YES       NO  
 If no, elaborate at 9--Comments.

I also certify that this firm agrees for all goods and services provided pursuant to a contract resulting from this proposal, my firm shall comply With Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the “General Prohibitions Against Discrimination” set forth in 28 C. F. R. Section 35.130, and all other regulations promulgated under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act that apply to state and local governments.

YES       NO  
 If no, elaborate at 9—Comments.

I certify that if my firm is selected as the vendor to perform work as the vendor to perform work as described in the accompanying proposal, we will indemnify the Commonwealth against all third-party claims, suits, demands, losses, damages, costs, and expenses, including without limitation, litigation expenses, attorney’s fees, and liabilities, arising out of or in connection with the Contractor’s failure or its employee’s or agent’s failure to comply with the provisions of this section, as determined by the Commonwealth in its sole discretion.

**5. CERTIFICATION REGARDING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**

YES       NO  
 If no, elaborate At 9--Comments.

I certify that the firm submitting this proposal is not and will not conduct trafficking in persons.

**6. CERTIFICATION REGARDING MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE/WOMAN-OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE**

YES       NO

I certify that the firm submitting this proposal is an official Minority-owned Business Enterprise.

YES       NO

I certify that the firm submitting this proposal is an official Woman-owned Business Enterprise.

YES       NO

I certify that the firm submitting this proposal is a Small Business. At #10 among Comments, we have indicated the number of full-time-Equivalent employees as of May 28, 2020.

<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 50px; text-align: center;">YES</td> <td style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 50px; text-align: center;">NO</td> </tr> </table>	YES	NO		<p>I certify that if my firm is selected as the vendor to perform work as described in the accompanying proposal and we determine that part of the scope of work needs to be subcontracted, we will give special favorable consideration to selecting Minority-owned Business Enterprises and/or Woman-owned Business Enterprises as subcontractors.</p>
YES	NO			
<p>If no, elaborate at 9--Comments.</p>				

**7. CERTIFICATION REGARDING NON-DISCRIMINATION/SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 50px; text-align: center;">YES</td> <td style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 50px; text-align: center;">NO</td> </tr> </table>	YES	NO		<p>I certify that if my firm is selected as the vendor to perform work as described in the accompanying proposal, we agree to the following non-discrimination clauses: (a) In the hiring of any employees directly or via subcontractors, no one acting on our behalf shall, by reason of gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disabilities, religion, race, creed, or color, discriminate against any citizen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who is qualified and available to perform the work to which the employment relates; and (b) The firm and/or any subcontractor or any person on our/their behalf shall not in any manner discriminate against or intimidate any employee involved in this work on account of gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disabilities, religion, race, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.</p>
YES	NO			
<p>If no, elaborate at 9--Comments.</p>				

<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 50px; text-align: center;">YES</td> <td style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 50px; text-align: center;">NO</td> </tr> </table>	YES	NO		<p>The proposing firm and any subcontractors shall establish and maintain a written Nondiscrimination/sexual harassment policy and shall inform their employees in writing of the policy. Upon request by ORA, a copy shall be furnished for project files. The policy must contain a notice that sexual harassment will not be tolerated and employees who practice it will be disciplined.</p>
YES	NO			
<p>If no, elaborate At 9—Comments.</p>				

<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 50px; text-align: center;">YES</td> <td style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 50px; text-align: center;">NO</td> </tr> </table>	YES	NO		<p>The proposing firm affirms that enclosed in this proposal package is a signed, dated completed Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment Clause (using Appendix I in this Request For Proposal instruction set).</p>
YES	NO			
<p>If no, elaborate at 9—Comments.</p>				

**8. INSURANCE INFORMATION**

My firm has the following insurance policies currently in place:

Policy Type	Policy Number	Insurance Company	Policy Ending Date
General Liability			
Property Insurance			
Workmen’s Compensation			
Employer’s Liability			
Automobile Liability			
Other (Please specify)			

	YES      NO _____    _____ _____    _____ _____    _____ _____    _____ _____    _____	Our <u>current general liability policy</u> already lists all the following as additional insured parties: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; Pa. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; Pa. Housing Finance Authority (PHFA); Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism; National Park Service; and the United States of America.
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	YES      NO _____    _____	I certify that, upon selection of my firm as a vendor to perform the work described in the accompanying proposal, we will promptly revise our general liability policy to also include as additional insured parties any of the following parties which are not already listed on our current policy: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; PHFA; Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism; National Park Service; and the United States of America. I understand that ORA will notify the selected vendor as to the specific funding streams involved, which may include more entities than those in this list, some of which may also require such coverage as additional insured parties as conditions of their grant support. I further agree to provide ORA with written verification of the new coverage of each required additional insured party.
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If no, elaborate at 9--Comments.

**9. COMMENTS AND CLARIFICATIONS**

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See additional attachment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. SIGNATURE**

By my signature below, I certify that I am an authorized agent on behalf of the entity which submitted a proposal to ORA, and that I certify the accuracy of the statements and insurance information indicated above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Authorized Agent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Title of Authorized Agent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Typed or Printed Name of Authorized Agent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date Signed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Entity Submitting Proposal)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Mailing Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Authorized Agent's Telephone Number)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Agent's E-mail Address)

## Appendix D

### NONDISCRIMINATION/SEXUAL HARASSMENT CLAUSE

The proposing Consulting Firm represents that it is presently in compliance with and will remain in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies relating to nondiscrimination and sexual harassment for the term of any resulting contract. The Consulting Firm shall, upon request and within the time periods requested by the Commonwealth, furnish all necessary employment documents and records, including EEO-1 reports, and permit access to its books, records, and accounts by the Commonwealth for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with provisions of this Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment Clause.

The Consulting Firm shall not:

- a. in any manner discriminate in the hiring of any employee(s) for the manufacture of supplies, performance of work, or any other activity required under a contract resulting from this proposal, by reason of race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identify, or gender expression, or in violation of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (“PHRA”) and applicable federal laws, against any citizen of this Commonwealth who is qualified and available to perform the work to which the employment relates.
- b. in any manner discriminate by reason of race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or in violation of the PHRA and applicable federal laws, against or intimidate any employee involved in the manufacture of supplies, the performance of work, or any other activity required under a contract resulting from this proposal.
- c. in any manner discriminate by reason of race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, or in violation of the PHRA and applicable federal laws, in the provision of services under a contract resulting from this proposal.
- d. in any manner discriminate by reason of race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, or in violation of PHRA and applicable federal laws, against any subcontractor or supplier who is qualified to perform the work to which a contract resulting from this proposal relates.
- e. in any manner discriminate against employees by reason of participation in or decision to refrain from participating in labor activities protected under the Public Employee Relations Act, Pennsylvania Labor Relations Act or National Labor Relations Act, as applicable and to the extent determined by entities charged with such Acts’ enforcement and shall comply with any provision of law establishing organizations as employees’ exclusive representatives.

The proposing Consulting Firm shall establish and maintain a written nondiscrimination and sexual harassment policy that complies with the applicable law and these Nondiscrimination/ Sexual Harassment provisions and shall inform its employees in writing of the policy. The policy must contain a provision that states that sexual harassment will not be tolerated and employees who practice it will be disciplined. For the entire period of the contract resulting from this proposal, the Consulting Firm shall: (1) post its written nondiscrimination and sexual harassment policy or these Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment provisions conspicuously in easily accessible and well-lighted placed customarily frequented by employees at or near where the contracted services are performed; or (2) provide electronic notice of the policy or this clause to its employees not less than annually.

The proposing Consulting Firms' obligations pursuant to these provisions are ongoing from the effective date and through the termination date of a contract resulting from this proposal. Accordingly, the Consulting Firm shall notify the Commonwealth if, at any time during the term of such contract, it becomes aware of any actions or occurrences that would result in violation of these provisions.

The Commonwealth may cancel or terminate any contract resulting from this proposal and all money due or to become due under such contract may be forfeited for a violation of the terms and conditions of these Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment provisions. In addition, the agency may proceed with debarment or suspension and may place the Consulting Firm in the Contractor Responsibility File.

The proposing Consulting Firm shall include these Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment provisions in its contracts with all subcontractors providing goods or services under such contract. The incorporation of these provisions in the Consulting Firm's subcontracts does not create privity of contract between the Commonwealth and any subcontractor, and no third-party beneficiaries are created by these provisions. If the proposing Consulting Firm becomes aware of a subcontractor's violation of this clause, the Consulting Firm shall use its best efforts to ensure that subcontractor's compliance with these provisions.

Based on Article XV of PHFA Grant Agreement 2025-CRF-004 with Downs Confluence, LLC.

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(Representative of Consulting Firm Signature)

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(Printed Name and Title)

## Appendix E

### LEGAL NOTICE

The Oil Region Alliance (ORA) will accept sealed proposals until 11 a.m. on Friday, April 17, 2026 for “Downs Building in Oil City, PA – Architectural-Engineering Services”; proposals must be received at the ORA office, 217 Elm Street, Oil City, PA 16301. Letters of Interest from A/E firms considering proposing must be submitted to the designated contact by April 6, 2026. This project entails rehabilitating a downtown historic building located at 201 Center Street for upper story residential use and completing rehabilitation of first floor for commercial use. Project funding is from PHFA using public CRFP funds combined with private foundation and National Park Service grant support. For information and full instructions, contact Marilyn Black, consultant, [marilynblack@windstream.net](mailto:marilynblack@windstream.net), 814-671-2058. The electronic Request For Proposals (RFP) is posted at [www.oilregion.org/the-alliance/rfps/](http://www.oilregion.org/the-alliance/rfps/).

#####

**Appendix F – Images of Downs Building, 201 Center St., Oil City, PA 16301**  
These photos were taken in March, 2026.

Southeast corner of Elm Street and Center Street in Oil City Downtown Commercial Historic District. This three-story brick building is 102 feet long and 20 feet wide. Its east wall is shared with adjacent occupied property with separate owner.



North Façade.



North Façade (left), West Façade (right).  
Intersection of Elm Street and Central Street.



West Façade overlooks Oil City's  
Towne Square (full-block greenspace).



West Façade (left), South Façade (right).  
Intersection of Elm Street and  
Sycamore Street.



First Floor; Finished Retail Space



Finished First Floor ADA Restroom



First Floor Stock Room; in RFP



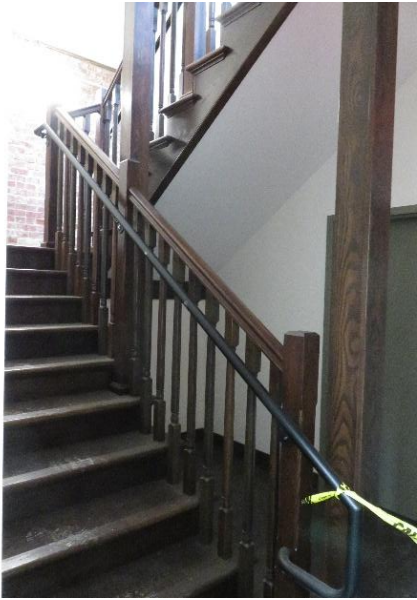
First Floor Stock Room; in RFP



Fire Suppression Controls; in RFP,  
Need to extend to include 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> floors.



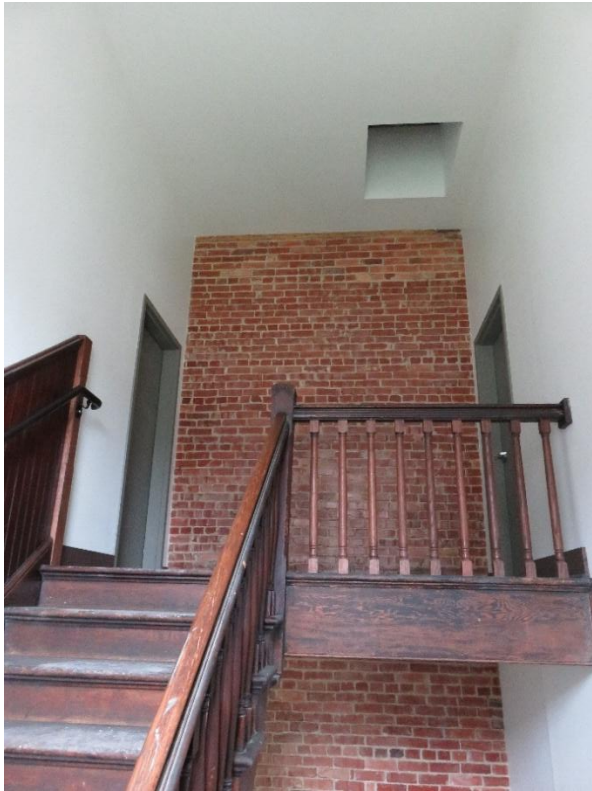
Basement.



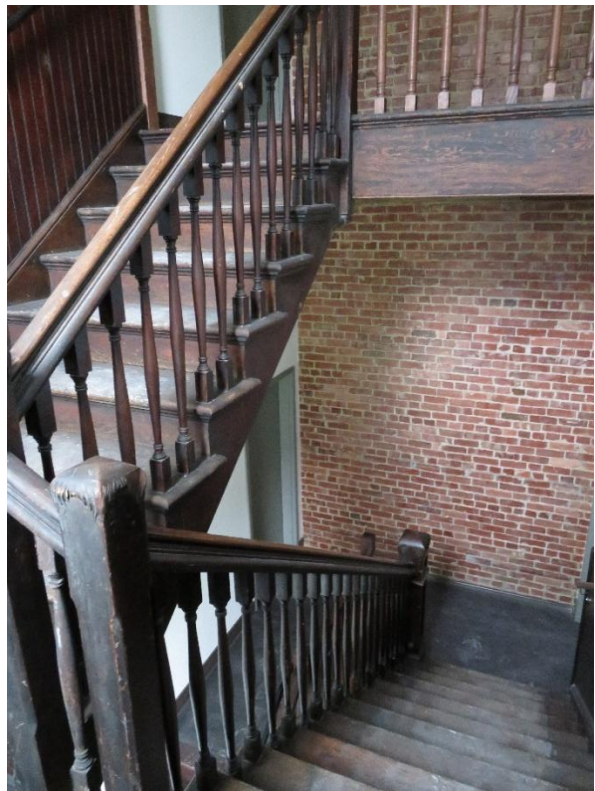
Base of Staircase



Stair Landing at Second Floor



Stair Landing at Third Floor;  
Note only access to roof.



View from Landing between  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> floors.



Second Floor; South Apartment; in RFP



Second Floor; South Apartment; with Abbe; in RFP



Third Floor; South Apartment; in RFP



Third Floor; South Apartment; in RFP

