

Material Testing Services

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

- ISSUE DATE: April 29, 2016
- DUE DATE: **11:00 a.m. on May 16, 2016** (“Submission Deadline”)
- INSTRUCTIONS: Submit five paper copies and one electronic copy of the respondent’s Statement of Qualifications on a flash drive. Submittals must be delivered in a sealed envelope in person, via mail or courier. **Please write “Material Testing RFQ” clearly on the outside of the sealed envelope.**
- SUBMIT TO: Houston First Corporation, Attn: General Counsel, 1331 Lamar St., 7th Fl., Houston, TX 77010. Submittals received by email or fax will be rejected.
- CONTACT INFO: Questions concerning this RFQ must be sent by e-mail to bids@houstonfirst.com no later than **noon on May 12, 2016**. Questions will be answered collectively, in the form of a Letter of Clarification, and made available online.

BACKGROUND. HFC is a local government corporation created by the City of Houston to facilitate economic growth through the business of conventions and the arts. HFC is responsible for management and operation of more than ten city-owned buildings and surface/underground parking for nearly 7,000 vehicles. Facilities include the George R. Brown Convention Center (“GRB”), Jones Hall, Wortham Theater, Miller Outdoor Theatre, Talento Bilingue de Houston, and outdoor facilities such as Jones Plaza, Sesquicentennial Park, Ray C. Fish Plaza, Root Memorial Square, and several other small landscaped properties.

Prompted by a master development plan that identified a need for additional hotel rooms and amenities in the vicinity of the GRB, HFC has undertaken additional infrastructure improvements in the convention district to attract visitors, creating retail opportunities and improving pedestrian traffic. These projects include a new parking garage, skybridges to serve the GRB and new Marriott Marquis, reconfiguration of Avenida de las Americas, retail developments, and improvements to the GRB façade and lobby.

PROJECT AND SCOPE

The primary catalyst for this RFQ is the planned construction of an approximate 12,000 square foot building, stage, surface parking and other facilities intended for use as an entertainment venue on a tract of land located immediately south of the GRB (“Project”). The Project is scheduled to begin in mid-June 2016 and is to be completed within 150 days.

HFC has determined that materials testing services will be required on an as-needed basis for the Project and may be needed for other related or unrelated projects, as identified by HFC, arising during the term of any resulting agreement.

HFC anticipates that the materials-testing services required will include, by way of example and not limitation, the following: (i) Concrete testing, such as slump, air, cylinders, beams, yield, coring, cement content, mix-design verification, and rebar inspection; (ii) Asphalt testing, such as densities, cutback sampling, cores, specific gravity, bulk, density, gradation and extraction, mix design, and stability; and (iii) Structural steel, such as weld inspection, A325 Bolt torque, magnetic particle inspections, paint thickness, and sandblasting

inspection. Material tests are to be conducted in general accordance with ASTM, TXDOT and AASHTO standards including, by way of example, moisture content, unconfined compression test, Atterberg limits, permeability tests, consolidation tests, California bearing ratio, density tests, proctor tests, specific gravity, compaction, and shear strength.

SOQ FORMAT. Although HFC prefers substance over form, to be considered responsive, respondents are asked to include all of the following information in their Statement of Qualifications (“SOQ”):

- a. **Transmittal Letter:** Include a brief statement summarizing respondent’s ability to perform the work signed by a person authorized to make representations on behalf of respondent, including his or her direct phone number and email address. Respondents **must** make a specific, unambiguous statement accepting and agreeing to comply with the Material Testing Services Agreement if selected, or identify any objections within or immediately following the letter (be advised that any SOQ including material exceptions will be rejected without further consideration).
- b. **Profile:** Provide at least three references, including contact names, phone numbers, and a brief description of the work completed by Respondent. (A model form is provided below.)
- c. **Experience:** Identify three projects completed primarily by respondent similar in scope to this Project. Provide references for each such project.
- d. **Project Team:** Identify the essential personnel who would be assigned to perform work on this Project and probable subcontractors; include a brief summary of their qualifications and note if any subcontractors are certified as MWDBEs or HUBs.

Although there is no page limitation to the SOQ, conciseness and clarity are appreciated.

MANNER OF SELECTION

This RFQ is the first step in an anticipated two-step process for selecting a materials testing firm. This RFQ includes the information necessary to prepare and submit qualifications for consideration by HFC.

Initial selection will be based on merit and qualifications. Specifically, HFC will consider experience and references, key personnel, MWDBE/HUB participation, and the overall thoroughness, relevance and organization of each SOQ.

Based on the SOQ evaluation, HFC may elect to arrange oral interviews with up to five respondents in the second step of the process. HFC will rank the interviewed respondents to determine the firm most qualified to perform the work.

DIVERSITY COMMITMENT. The bidder selected will be required to use good faith efforts to award subcontracts to diversity participants certified by any of the identified certification agencies as defined in the HFC Diversity Program (See www.houstonfirst.com/Do-Business). The specific goal for this Project is **33%** of the total value of the contract. Bidders shall be required to comply with the HFC Diversity Program and failure to comply may cause your response to be considered non-responsive. Bidders should note if they are certified as a diversity participant in their submittal; however, such certification shall NOT lessen or otherwise alter the requirement to use good faith efforts to award subcontracts to diversity participants.

RESTRICTIONS ON COMMUNICATIONS. From the date issued until the Submission Deadline, respondents are directed not to communicate with any HFC employee or director regarding any matter relating to this RFQ, other than through bids@houstonfirst.com. HFC reserves the right to reject any SOQ due to violation of this provision.

LETTERS OF CLARIFICATION. Any revisions to be incorporated into this Invitation to RFQ will be confirmed in a written letter to all potential respondents (“Letter of Clarification”) prior to the Submission Deadline. When

issued by Houston First Corporation, Letters of Clarification automatically become part of this RFQ and shall supersede any previous specifications or provisions in conflict therewith. By submitting a SOQ, respondents shall be deemed to have received all Letters of Clarification and to have incorporated them into their SOQ. Verbal responses will not otherwise alter the specifications, terms and conditions as stated herein. It is the responsibility of each respondent to monitor www.houstonfirst.com/Do-Business to ensure they receive any such Letters of Clarification.

PRE-SUBMITTAL CONFERENCE. A pre-submittal conference has not been scheduled as part of this RFQ.

FORM OF AGREEMENT. By submitting a SOQ, each respondent represents that, if selected by HFC to perform services on this Project, they shall enter into the Material Testing Services Agreement (available online at www.houstonfirst.com/Do-Business). If a respondent takes exception to any portion of such agreement, then such respondent must submit a list of such exceptions as part of its transmittal letter in response to this RFQ; provided, however, that HFC reserves the right to reject SOQs including substantive objections without further review or consideration.

PUBLIC INFORMATION. As HFC is subject to the Texas Public Information Act ("TPIA"), all information submitted by respondents is subject to release under the provisions of the TPIA set forth in Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code. Each page where confidential or proprietary information appears must be labeled as such clearly and unambiguously. Respondents will be advised of any request for public information that implicates their materials and will have the opportunity to raise objections to disclosure with the Texas Attorney General at their cost and expense.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST. Respondents are advised that they have an obligation to disclose any affiliation or business relationship that might cause a conflict of interest with HFC. Those who need the disclosure form may find it online at: <http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/forms/CIQ.pdf>. By submitting a SOQ, respondents represent that they are in compliance with the requirements of Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code.

WITHDRAWAL; ERROR. SOQs may be withdrawn due to errors or for any other reason by a written request received by bids@houstonfirst.com prior to the Submission Deadline.

REFERENCE FORM

Bidders must be able to demonstrate that they have performed services comparable in size and scope to those described in this Bid. Three references should be provided in the space provided below.

Company/Bidder Name: _____ **Years in Business:** _____

Reference #1

Business Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Name/Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email address: _____

Description of Services _____

Reference #2

Business Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Name/Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email address: _____

Description of Services: _____

Reference #3

Business Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Name/Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email address: _____

Description of Services: _____
