



**MONTROSE BRIDGES DECORATIVE LIGHTING  
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (“RFQ”)**

ISSUE DATE: February 23, 2023

SOQS DUE: **2:00 P.M.** on **April 4, 2023** (“Submission Deadline”)

INSTRUCTIONS: Respondents are asked to submit five (5) paper copies and one (1) electronic copy of their SOQ on a flash drive. Electronic files should include the name of the company as the first part of the file name. Submittals must be delivered in a sealed package in person, via mail or courier. Any submittal received by email, fax, or after the Submission Deadline will be rejected.

SUBMIT TO: Houston First Corporation, Attn: Mitch Miskowski, 701 Avenida de las Americas, Suite 200, Houston, TX 77010. Please write “**Lighting Design**” clearly on the outside of the sealed package.

CONTACT INFO: Any questions concerning this RFQ must be submitted by email to [bids@houstonfirst.com](mailto:bids@houstonfirst.com) no later than **10:00 a.m.** on **March 21, 2023**. Material questions received will be answered collectively, rather than individually, in the form of a Letter of Clarification made available online at [www.houstonfirst.com/do-business](http://www.houstonfirst.com/do-business). Questions may be combined or edited for clarity or length at the discretion of HFC.

**OVERVIEW.** Houston First Corporation (“HFC”) is pleased to issue this Montrose Bridges Decorative Lighting Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) from experienced architects, engineers, and lighting designers capable of creating an inspired, iconic, budget and maintenance-minded decorative exterior lighting design that will satisfy TxDOT’s safety requirements for 6 bridges spanning IH-69 in the Montrose area in Houston, Texas. The bridge crossings, owned by TxDOT, are at Hazard Street, Woodhead Street, Dunlavy Street, Mandell Street, Graustark Street and Montrose Boulevard (double bridge).

After reviewing each Statement of Qualification (“SOQ”) received from respondents, up to five firms (or teams) will be selected to prepare and participate in a preliminary schematic design concepts (3 concepts) presentation for final selection. Design concepts will need to demonstrate creativity, ease of controls, and ease of maintenance. They need to be inspirational and depict varying cost options with rough order-of-magnitude estimates. HFC expects that the top design firm will be retained to further refine and develop the concept(s); HFC does not, however, guarantee it will enter into a contract for any work beyond the SOQ and preliminary schematic concepts.

**PROJECT.** The existing decorative lighting systems on the bridges defined above are no longer operational. The lighting systems were installed under a TxDOT led procurement and construction in 2016 and managed by the now inactive Montrose Management District until 2019. Due to various reasons, the lighting began failing in late 2019 and continued to date where very few, if any, lights are operable.

**BACKGROUND.** HFC is a local government corporation created by the City of Houston to facilitate economic growth through the promotion of the greater Houston area and the business of conventions, meetings, tourism, and the arts. HFC is the primary entity responsible for marketing Houston and increasing awareness of its many attractions and amenities.

HFC is responsible for the operation and management of the George R. Brown Convention Center, Avenida Houston, Partnership Tower, Wortham Theater Center, Jones Hall for the Performing Arts, Miller Outdoor Theatre, an array of outdoor properties (including Lynn Wyatt Square for the Performing Arts), and parking facilities that can accommodate nearly 10,000 vehicles.

HFC represents the consolidation of the former City of Houston Convention & Entertainment Facilities Department and the Houston Convention Center Hotel Corporation. The Houston Convention Center Hotel Corporation (now called Houston First Corporation) was organized in 2000. The consolidation with the Convention & Entertainment Facilities Department was effective on July 1, 2011.

**SOQ FORMAT.** Although HFC prefers substance over form, to be considered responsive, respondents are asked to include all of the following information in their SOQ, not to exceed 20 pages total:

- a. **Transmittal Letter:** Provide a brief introductory letter communicating why the respondent the firm should be selected. The letter must be signed by a person authorized to make representations on behalf of the respondent and include their direct phone number and email address.
- b. **Firm Profile:** Summarize respondent's history, structure, strengths, methodology, and experience in meeting the needs of its clients. Respondents must disclose if their firm has, within the past five years, (i) been party to a service contract terminated for cause, or (ii) received material, adverse findings from any governmental authority having regulatory oversight of services similar to those required under this RFQ.
- c. **Experience of Firm:** Identify three outdoor lighting projects completed primarily by respondent similar in complexity and scope to this project. Provide current references for each such project, including a contact name, phone number, and email address. Neither HFC or the City of Houston may be used as a reference.
- d. **Project Team:** Identify the essential personnel who would be assigned to perform work on this project, such as the project designer, project manager, responsible corporate executive and probable subcontractors; include a brief summary of their qualifications and note if any are diversity certified, such as MWDBEs or HUBs.

**SOQ EVALUATION.** HFC will review and rank every SOQ received in response to this RFQ based on the following criteria: Transmittal letter (10 points); Firm profile (20 points); Experience of firm (35 points); and Project team (35 points).

HFC reserves the right to schedule and conduct interviews (in-person or by video conference call) with the top-ranked respondents, not to exceed ten. If interviews are scheduled, then up to an additional 20 points may be added to the existing SOQ scores of the respondents interviewed, for a maximum possible total of 120 points, based on their participation and responsiveness to questions during such interviews.

**PRELIMINARY CONCEPTUAL DESIGN PHASE.** Top-ranked firms, not to exceed five, will be invited to participate in an interview and presentation process by preparing preliminary schematic concepts with rough order of magnitude cost estimates. Acceptance will require each firm to sign a letter of agreement and submit their conceptual design proposal in a timely manner.

Subject to the terms and conditions of the letter agreement, the top-ranked firms will each receive a stipend of \$7,500.00. HFC is **not** responsible for payment of any other amounts, including but not limited to any costs related to the preparation and submission of a SOQ or a preliminary concept proposal. The preliminary schematic concepts process does not obligate HFC to award a contract for additional services to any respondent.

Preliminary schematic concepts will be reviewed and evaluated by a selection committee based on criteria that will be distributed to the top-ranking firms/teams. SOQ scores will **not** be combined with preliminary schematic concepts scores.

**PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETING.** A Pre-Submittal Meeting will be held for the benefit of all prospective respondents by video teleconference call at **10:00 a.m. on March 9, 2023.** Respondents who expect to attend must register in advance by clicking [here](#); further instructions for joining the meeting will be sent to each registrant. Although attendance at the meeting is not mandatory, all prospective respondents are encouraged to attend.

**LETTERS OF CLARIFICATION.** Responses to all material questions timely submitted by potential respondents, as well as revisions incorporated into this solicitation by HFC, if any, will be confirmed collectively in one or more letters posted online at [www.houstonfirst.com/do-business](http://www.houstonfirst.com/do-business) (each a "Letter of Clarification"). When issued, each Letter of Clarification will become part of this solicitation and automatically supersede any previous specifications or provisions in conflict therewith. By submitting their SOQ, respondents shall be deemed to have reviewed all Letters of Clarification on the website and incorporated them into their submittal. Verbal responses will not otherwise alter the specifications, terms and conditions as stated herein. It is the responsibility of respondents to monitor the foregoing website and ensure they review any such Letters of Clarification and incorporate them in their SOQ.

**DIVERSITY PARTICIPATION.** Respondents should review and be familiar with the requirements of the [HFC Diversity Program](#). If HFC engages the top-ranked firm to provide work beyond the preliminary schematic concept stage, then such respondent shall be required to use good-faith efforts to award subcontracts to diversity participants certified by any of the identified certification agencies equal to **25%** of the total value of the resulting agreement.

**VENDOR CODE OF CONDUCT.** Respondents who do business or seek to do business with HFC are expected to interact with HFC with high ethics and integrity. To promote ethical conduct by its existing and potential contractors, HFC has adopted a Code of Conduct for Vendors, available online at [www.houstonfirst.com/do-business](http://www.houstonfirst.com/do-business). HFC requires that all respondents be familiar with and abide by the Code of Conduct for Vendors.

**RESTRICTIONS ON COMMUNICATIONS.** Throughout the selection process, commencing with the Issue Date, potential respondents are directed not to communicate, directly or indirectly, with any HFC employee, officer, director, or selection committee member regarding their SOQ, or any matter relating to this solicitation, other than through [bids@houstonfirst.com](mailto:bids@houstonfirst.com) or during the Pre-Submittal Meeting. Respondents are solely responsible for observation and compliance with such restrictions, and HFC reserves the right to reject any submittal due to violation of this provision.

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.** Respondents are advised that they have an affirmative obligation to disclose any affiliation or business relationship with an HFC employee, officer, or director creating a conflict of interest (or appearing to a reasonable person to potentially exist). Those who need the disclosure form may find it [online](#). By submitting a SOQ, respondents represent to HFC that they have complied with the requirements of Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code.

**PROTEST PROCEDURES.** Any protest relating to the form, terms and conditions, selection criteria, specifications, exhibits, or any other material solicitation content must be filed by the actual or potential respondent with the Purchasing Agent no later than five business days prior to the Submission Deadline. If the protest consists of a dispute regarding the respondent recommended by the selection committee, or otherwise relates to the alleged misapplication of selection criteria, then the Purchasing Agent must receive the protest from an actual respondent after the Submission Deadline, but at least three business days prior to approval of a contract resulting from this solicitation by HFC.

All protests must be made in writing and delivered to Houston First Corporation, Attn: Purchasing Agent, 701 Avenida de las Americas, Ste. 200, Houston, TX 77010. To be considered by HFC, protests must be timely received and include, at a minimum, all of the following information: (a) The name, address and contact information of the respondent, with sufficient information to establish that a bona fide respondent is the person or entity filing the protest; (b) The full title of the solicitation; (c) Material grounds for the protest, including the provisions of the solicitation and the applicable law or regulation that serves as the basis for the protest; (d) A statement of the specific relief requested by the respondent; (e) Reference to and attachment of any pertinent documents or sources relied upon by the protestor that the protestor wishes to have HFC consider; and (f) An affidavit attached to support any factual allegations stated in the submission. The Purchasing Agent will notify the respondent to acknowledge receipt of a protest.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION.** HFC is subject to the Texas Public Information Act (“TPIA”). 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 may, in accordance with applicable law, elect to assert objections to disclosure with the Texas Attorney General at their cost and expense.

**SOLICITATION PACKETS.** A complete copy of this RFQ, including exhibits, forms and other relevant information is available on-line at [www.houstonfirst.com/do-business](http://www.houstonfirst.com/do-business). This RFQ provides the information necessary to prepare and submit a SOQ for consideration and ranking by HFC.

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