

# HOTEL LOBBY DESIGN SERVICES REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (“RFQ”)

ISSUED: June 29, 2026

DUE DATE: **11:00 a.m. on July 22, 2026** (the “Submission Deadline”)

INSTRUCTIONS: Respondents must timely submit three (3) paper copies and one (1) electronic copy (on a flash drive) of their Statement of Qualification (“SOQ”) in a sealed envelope labelled “RFQ” to the following address:

Houston First Corporation, Attn: David Stephenson, 701 Avenida de las Americas, Suite 200, Houston, TX 77010

SOQs must be delivered by mail, courier, or in person. Submittals received after the Submission Deadline, by email, or unsealed, will be rejected without further review or consideration.

QUESTIONS: Any questions concerning the form or content of this RFQ must be submitted by email to [bids@houstonfirst.com](mailto:bids@houstonfirst.com) no later than **11:00 a.m. on July 14, 2026**. All materials questions will be answered collectively, rather than individually, in the form of a Letter of Clarification available at [www.houstonfirst.com/do-business](http://www.houstonfirst.com/do-business). Questions received may be edited or combined with similar questions for clarity or length.

## OVERVIEW AND SCOPE

Houston First Holdings LLC (“HFH”) requests Statements of Qualifications from qualified and experienced architectural firms (each a “Respondent” and, collectively “Respondents”) to provide professional architectural, interior design, and related professional services in connection with the redesign and renovation of the of the ground floor lobby (and, potentially, associated elements) of the Hilton Americas-Houston Hotel (the “Hotel”), located at 1600 Lamar St., Houston, Texas 77010.

HFH seeks to enhance, modernize and ensure the most efficient use of the Hotel lobby, including registration, concierge, retail, food service, ingress/egress, and communal spaces. An ideal design will complement and serve to develop greater connectivity with the Convention District to progressively refine the aesthetic and functional appeal of the Hotel as a vibrant and iconic destination.

The Respondent selected as a result of this RFQ process will need to work with HFH, and other consultants engaged to ensure the orderly and timely completion of the project, which is expected to include a development manager engaged by HFH to advise and assist with the development of the project. HFH presently intends to engage a general contractor for the substantive project work utilizing a construction manager-at-risk method.

The project scope, schedule and budget are under development. Currently, HFH expects the first phase of construction work to be completed by May 2028. Several project construction phases are anticipated subsequently, and all phases must be planned mindfully so as to minimize disruption of hotel operations and accommodate scheduled events.

## BACKGROUND

Houston First Corporation, the sole member of HFH, 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. The entity is responsible for the operation of the George R. Brown Convention Center, Avenida Houston, Partnership Tower, Wortham Theater Center, Jones Hall for the Performing Arts, Miller Outdoor Theatre, and an array of outdoor venues, properties, and parking facilities.

Opened in December 2003, the Hilton Americas-Houston Hotel is one of the nation's top-tier convention center hotels, having received the prestigious Hilton Connie Award for operational excellence in 2025. Located in the heart of the Convention District in downtown Houston, the hotel is steps away from Discovery Green Park, Toyota Center, Shell Energy Stadium, and Daikin Park.

## SOQ FORMAT

Respondents are directed to include and provide all of the following information in their SOQ, to the best of their ability:

- a. **Submittal Form:** Respondents are required to complete and submit the Submittal Form provided below as the first substantive page of their SOQ. The form must be signed by a person authorized to make representations on behalf of the Respondent.
- b. **Firm Profile:** Provide a brief profile of the Respondent firm, noting its history, structure, strengths, and abilities. Be sure to note the number of years the firm has been in business, and the location of the office from which the majority of work would be performed.
- c. **Team:** Introduce the essential architectural services and interior design personnel who would be assigned to provide services under any resulting agreement, explain their respective functions, and include a summary of their qualifications. (Respondents are not expected to know or be able to present the remainder of their consultant team at this time.)
- d. **Experience:** Describe Respondent's experience in designing or redesigning hotel facilities similar in scope and complexity to the project described in this RFQ and provide three references for ongoing or recently completed projects. For each example given or project referenced, describe the extent to which the essential personnel named in the SOQ were involved. Please include a contact name, phone number, and email address for each reference.

Respondents are asked to limit the total page number to a maximum of 50 pages.

## EVALUATION

SOQs timely received in response to this RFQ from Respondents who have submitted a Submittal Form will be reviewed and scored collectively based on the following weighted criteria: Submittal Form (10 points), Firm Profile (20 points); Team (20 points); and Experience (30 points).

HFH reserves the right to schedule and conduct interviews with the top-ranked Respondents, not to exceed five. If held, interviews would occur the week of July 27th, and up to an additional 20 points may be added to the existing SOQ scores of the Respondents interviewed, based on their participation and responsiveness to questions during such interviews.

The top-ranked Respondent will be asked to prepare a fee proposal and will be selected for

negotiation of a contract. When negotiations are completed, the recommendation of the evaluation committee will be submitted to the Houston First Corporation Board of Directors at their September 2026 meeting; provided, however, that preliminary services, such as conceptual design, may be contracted directly, in the interests of time, on a limited basis prior to such meeting.

HFH expects to select the top-ranked Respondent on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualification, subject to negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation, which may include a not-to-exceed amount and/or prior-authorization requirement for services in excess of a mutually-agreed estimate of service hours. If HFH and such Respondent should fail to agree on such fair and reasonable compensation or other contract terms, then HFH reserves the right to and may conduct negotiations with the next most-qualified Respondent. If necessary, HFH will conduct negotiations with successive Respondents in descending order until a contract award can be made to a qualified Respondent whose price and other contract terms HFH believes are fair and reasonable.

This RFQ does not commit HFH to make a final selection, award a contract, or issue a purchase order. HFH will not pay any cost incurred in the preparation of a SOQ in response to this RFQ. HFH reserves the right to select or reject all or part of any submittal, waive technicalities, and select one or more service providers in the manner and to the extent that they serve their best interests. HFH reserves the right to request clarifications and/or additional information from some or all Respondents.

#### **DIVERSITY**

HFH expects that the Respondent selected will use good faith efforts to award subcontracts to certified diversity participants. (A list of acceptable certifying agencies may be found in the [HFC Diversity Program](#).) A specific diversity goal may be included in an agreement resulting from this selection process, in the manner and to the extent allowed under applicable law. Any such goal shall be based on a mutually agreed percentage of the total value of the services to be performed. Respondents should note if they are certified as a diversity participant in their SOQ; however, such certification shall not lessen or otherwise alter the requirement to use good faith efforts or comply with any diversity goal or reporting requirements established by contract.

#### **LETTERS OF CLARIFICATION**

Responses to all material questions timely submitted by potential Respondents, as well as revisions incorporated into this RFQ, if any, will be confirmed collectively in a letter posted online at <http://www.houstonfirst.com/do-business> ("Letter of Clarification"). When issued, Letters of Clarification become part of this RFQ 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 link and ensure they receive any such Letters of Clarification and incorporate them in their submittal.

#### **NO PRE-SUBMITTAL CONFERENCE**

A pre-submittal conference has not been scheduled for this RFQ and HFH does not anticipate that such a meeting will be held.

#### **RESTRICTIONS ON COMMUNICATIONS**

Throughout the selection process, commencing with the Issue Date, Respondents are directed not to communicate with any HFH, Houston First Corporation, or Hilton Americas-Houston Hotel employee, officer or director regarding their SOQ or any matter relating to this RFQ, other than

through [bids@houstonfirst.com](mailto:bids@houstonfirst.com), or in response to a direct inquiry from the HFH or Houston First Corporation. HFH reserves the right to reject an SOQ received due to violation of this restriction.

### **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Respondents are advised that they have an affirmative obligation to disclose any affiliation or business relationship with an HFH or Houston First Corporation employee, officer, or director creating a conflict of interest (or appearing to a reasonable person to potentially exist). The disclosure form may find it online at <https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/data/forms/conflict/CIQ.pdf>. By submitting their SOQ, Respondent represents 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 RFQ content must be filed by the actual or potential Respondent with HFC SVP Legal Services no later than five business days prior to the Submission Deadline. If the protest consists of a dispute regarding the Respondent recommended by the evaluation committee, or otherwise relates to the alleged misapplication of selection criteria, then HFC General Counsel must receive the protest from an actual Respondent after the Submission Deadline, but at least three business days prior to consideration of a contract resulting from this RFQ by HFC.

All protests must be made in writing and delivered to Houston First Corporation, Attn: SVP Legal Services, 701 Avenida de las Americas, Ste. 200, Houston, TX 77010. To be considered, 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 RFQ; (c) Material grounds for the protest, including the provisions of the RFQ 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 Respondent that the protesting party wishes to have considered; and (f) An affidavit attached to support any factual allegations stated in the submission.

### **WITHDRAWAL; ERROR**

Submittals 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.

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

Houston First Corporation 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 will have the opportunity to raise objections to disclosure with the Texas Attorney General at their expense.

### **RFQ PACKETS**

A complete copy of this RFQ, including exhibits, necessary 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 HFH.

**HOTEL LOBBY DESIGN SERVICES**  
**SUBMITTAL FORM**

Respondents to the foregoing Hotel Lobby Design Services Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) are required to complete each field of this Submittal Form and are asked to include it as the first substantive page of their SOQ.

**1. Contact Information**

a. Company Name (the “Respondent”): \_\_\_\_\_

b. Address: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Contact Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

d. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

e. Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Terms and Conditions**

By completing this form and submitting a SOQ, the Respondent represents all of the following:

a. Respondent has the necessary experience, knowledge, abilities, skills, and resources to perform the services required to undertake and complete the services.

b. Respondent accepts the evaluation process set forth in the RFQ and acknowledges that some subjective judgments must necessarily be made during the effectuation of such process.

c. Respondent has complied with Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code and the Restrictions on Communication section of this RFQ.

d. Respondent has not, within the past five years, been party to a service contract terminated for cause, or received material, adverse findings from any governmental authority having regulatory oversight of services similar to those required under this RFQ.

**3. Acknowledgment**

By signing below, Respondent represents and warrants that all of the foregoing is true, correct and may be relied upon by Houston First Holdings LLC and Houston First Corporation without exception:

\_\_\_\_\_ (“Respondent”)

By:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_