



**Request for Proposals  
for  
General Brownfields & Environmental Legal Services**

**Issued: February 27, 2026**

**Submission Deadline: April 17, 2026, by 6:00pm CST**

**Submissions due via [Submittable](#)**

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## 1.0 Introduction

The Houston Land Bank (HLB) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit qualifications from experienced firms to provide general brownfields and environmental legal services with a specialization in brownfields and environmentally impaired properties.

The selected firms will serve as HLB's outside general and environmental legal for brownfield-related activities, supporting a variety of projects involving assessment, remediation, redevelopment, acquisition and disposition of properties, and long-term stewardship of environmentally impacted properties.

The resulting agreements from this RFP will be structured to allow HLB to utilize the selected firms on an as-needed, task order basis, with compensation provided on an hourly basis and/or optional negotiated retainer.

HLB undertakes projects funded by federal, state, and local sources, including but not limited to U.S. EPA Brownfields grants. Selected counsel must demonstrate familiarity with public sector processes and federal environmental program requirements.

### 1.1 Sole Point of Contact

All communication regarding this RFP must be directed to:

LaTosha Okoiron  
Houston Land Bank  
Email: [lokoiron@houstonlandbank.org](mailto:lokoiron@houstonlandbank.org)

Phone: 713.253.4289 Respondents are prohibited from contacting any other HLB staff, Board members, consultants, or City of Houston employees regarding this solicitation. Any such contact may result in disqualification.

### 1.2 Request for Proposals

Interested respondents must submit their proposal to HLB by the deadline below to be considered for selection under this RFP. Respondents must submit their proposal in accordance with the requirements discussed within this RFP.

All proposals must be submitted electronically via [Submittable](#) no later than 6:00 pm Central Time on April 17, 2026. Respondents must pay the \$100 nonrefundable [application fee](#) for consideration. Late or incomplete submissions will not be reviewed.

Further submission instructions are provided below.

RFP Schedule and Timeline	Date
RFP Issued	February 27, 2026
Deadline for Questions	March 27, 2026

Responses to Questions Published	April 6, 2026
Submission Deadline	April 17, 2026 by 6:00PM CST
Notification of Finalists	Upon review by Evaluation Committee
Award of Contract	Upon approval by HLB Board

### 1.3 About Houston Land Bank

HLB is a government corporation that promotes workforce development, community and economic development, and affordable housing through our land inventory throughout the communities we serve. We acquire vacant, deteriorated, and often contaminated properties and return them to productive use. In addition, HLB encourages and supports resilient planning and development efforts that create affordable housing units, provide economic opportunity, and encourage community-centric redevelopment in various Houston sub-markets.

HLB adopts a holistic approach that considers the community's and other stakeholders' needs and aspirations, achieving success through innovative practices that expand the organization's capacity to serve our community. HLB seeks to create an ecosystem of resilient neighborhoods and districts where all individuals have the opportunity to thrive. Our community partners supplement our community-focused approach, which requires empathy and understanding of disinvested neighborhoods' unique challenges and opportunities. Additionally, HLB's work aligns with the goals and objectives of the City of Houston's Complete Communities Plans, which center around a healthy, economically thriving, equitable, and sustainable Houston for everyone. HLB works with these partners to create specific program and policy solutions to address development needs in pilot and future neighborhoods and advance public trust and community partnerships.

## 2.0 Scope of Legal Services

The selected firms will provide general environmental and brownfield legal services for HLB on an as-needed basis. Services may include, but are not limited to:

### 2.1 Environmental & Brownfield Compliance

- Advising on CERCLA, RCRA, TSCA, CWA, and state of Texas / TCEQ regulatory requirements as they relate to properties owned or being acquired by the HLB
- Guidance on liability protections, bona fide prospective purchaser defenses, and continuing obligations
- Support with No Further Action (NFA) determinations, applications, and regulatory closure documentation
- Drafting environmental covenants, land use controls, and institutional/engineering controls

- Coordination with environmental consultants and regulatory agencies as needed

## 2.2 Real Estate & Land Use Related to Brownfields

- Drafting and reviewing purchase and sale documents for contaminated properties
- Drafting environmental indemnities, restrictions, covenants, and deed notices
- Advising on risk transfer mechanisms and environmental insurance
- Supporting redevelopment agreements involving brownfield parcels
- Supporting intergovernmental, nonprofit, and developer agreements tied to contaminated properties

## 2.3 Brownfields Funding & Grant Compliance

- Advising on U.S. EPA Brownfields grant compliance
- Reviewing loan agreements from the City of Houston's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program if HLB is awarded a cleanup loan
- Ensuring compliance with 2 CFR 200 and 40 CFR Part 33 (DBE requirements)
- Supporting federal reporting, compliance protocols, and contract language

## 2.4 Procurement & Contractor Agreements

- Drafting and reviewing contracts with environmental consultants, remediation contractors, planners, engineers, and developers
- Advising on procurement compliance requirements
- Supporting task orders, scopes of services, and amendments

## 2.5 Governance & Regulatory Support

- Advising on Open Meetings Act, Public Information Act, and governance compliance as it relates to environmental and property matters
- Assisting with policy development related to environmental risk management
- Drafting legal memos, board items, and resolutions related to contaminated properties

## 2.6 Risk Management Support

- Advising on dispute resolution related to contaminated properties or cleanup activities
- Supporting claims, insurance matters, and regulatory enforcement issues
- Consultation during negotiations with potentially responsible parties (PRPs)

## 3.0 Minimum Qualifications

Respondents must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- Licensed to practice law in the State of Texas
- Staff Attorneys with a Minimum of five (5) years of demonstrated experience in:

- Environmental law
- Real estate transactions involving contaminated property
- Public-sector legal work
- Direct experience supporting brownfield projects and contaminated property redevelopment
- Familiarity with EPA Brownfields Program requirements
- Knowledge of TCEQ and Texas environmental regulations
- Professional Liability (Errors & Omissions) Insurance
- Not debarred or suspended from federally funded programs

HLB strongly encourages participation by minority-, women-, and veteran-owned firms.

## 4.0 Submission Instructions

All proposals must be submitted electronically via [Submittable](#). Respondents must pay the \$100 nonrefundable [application fee](#) for consideration. Submittals received after that date and time will be rejected without review. Submittals that arrive on time, but are incomplete, and/or do not follow the submittal requirements will be rejected. No in-person or hard copy submissions will be accepted. Respondents are responsible for confirming receipt of their proposal.

### 4.1 Rejection of Proposals

HLB reserves the right to reject all proposals and in particular to reject a proposal not received by the date above or any proposal in any way incomplete or irregular. HLB further reserves the right to accept the proposal which is in the best interest of HLB. HLB reserves the right to reject any proposal if HLB's review of the above submittals and its investigation fails to establish that the Contractor possesses to the satisfaction of HLB, in its sole discretion, the qualifications necessary to fully, properly and timely carry out all obligations described in this RFP. The Contractor will be required to comply with all local, state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to equal employment opportunities. The Contractor will upon successful award be required to execute a contract with HLB.

## 5.0 Technical Proposal Requirements

Each respondent must submit a comprehensive Technical Proposal that clearly demonstrates the firm's qualifications, relevant experience, and capacity to provide environmental and brownfields-related legal services to HLB. Proposals must be well-organized, clearly written, and include all information requested in this section. Proposals that do not contain the required information, are poorly organized, or fail to address the requested criteria may be deemed non-responsive.

## 5.1 Cover Letter

Respondents shall include a concise, signed cover letter from an authorized representative of the firm with authority to bind the organization. The letter must identify the primary point of contact, confirm the firm's interest in providing environmental and brownfield legal services to HLB, and acknowledge the respondent's willingness to enter into an Exclusive Negotiation Period if selected. The cover letter should also briefly summarize the firm's relevant qualifications and experience related to this RFP.

## 5.2 Firm Qualifications

Respondents must provide a detailed description of the firm's background, legal structure, office locations, and years of operation. This section shall include a narrative summarizing the firm's experience in environmental law, brownfield redevelopment, real estate transactions involving contaminated property, and representation of public-sector clients. Resumes for all key personnel proposed to support HLB shall be included, and the respondent must confirm that all attorneys assigned to this work are licensed to practice law in the State of Texas and are in good standing. If subcontractors, co-counsel, or specialty consultants are proposed, their roles, qualifications, and relationships to the firm must be clearly identified.

## 5.3 Relevant Project Experience

The proposal must include descriptions of at least two to four (2–4) relevant projects of similar scope and complexity. For each example, the respondent shall identify the type of client served (for example, a municipality, land bank, nonprofit organization, or developer), describe the environmental or brownfield-related issues involved, and summarize the legal services provided. Respondents should also describe any measurable outcomes, such as successful regulatory closure, reduced liability, facilitated redevelopment, or improved compliance. This section should demonstrate the firm's ability to support activities such as environmental due diligence, remediation planning, risk management, property transfer, and redevelopment of contaminated sites.

## 5.4 References

Respondents must provide a minimum of three (3) professional references who can speak to the firm's performance on projects of similar size and complexity. Each reference must include a name, title, organization, email address, telephone number, and a brief description of the work performed for that client.

## 5.5 Proposed Staffing Plan

Respondents shall provide a proposed staffing plan that explains how legal services will be delivered to HLB. This must include an organizational chart and a narrative describing the roles and responsibilities of each key team member, including lead attorneys and support staff. The plan should address the availability of the team, anticipated response

times, and the firm's capacity to manage multiple assignments simultaneously, including time-sensitive or urgent matters.

## 5.6 Approach & Methodology

This section shall describe the firm's overall approach to supporting HLB's environmental and brownfield-related work. Respondents should demonstrate an understanding of HLB's mission, goals, and regulatory environment, and explain how they will assist with environmental risk management, compliance with federal and state requirements, coordination with environmental consultants and regulators, and support for property acquisition, remediation, and redevelopment efforts. Respondents may also describe how their approach aligns with environmental justice principles, equitable redevelopment, and community-centered outcomes.

## 5.7 Cost Proposal

Respondents must submit a detailed cost proposal identifying hourly labor rates for all personnel expected to work on HLB matters. If the firm proposes any blended rates, caps, or an optional retainer structure, this information must be clearly described. Any assumptions related to billing practices, reimbursable expenses, or anticipated level of effort shall be clearly stated. The cost proposal must comply with applicable federal cost-reasonableness standards, including those set forth in 2 CFR 200.404.

## 5.8 Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Each respondent must include a statement describing the firm's approach for identifying and clearing any actual or potential conflicts of interest that could affect their ability to represent HLB objectively and in the best interest of the organization. Please include a disclosure if the respondent is currently representing the City of Houston, Harris County, Houston Metro, Houston Independent School District, Port Houston, Houston Housing Authority, or other local governmental agencies that could present an actual or potential conflict of interest. Conflicts of interest will be cleared on a task order basis. 5.0

### Selection Criteria and Process

HLB will evaluate all complete and timely proposals to identify the firm whose approach and qualifications best meet the goals of this RFP. Proposals will be reviewed for responsiveness to every requirement in Section 4.0. Submissions that are incomplete or fail to follow the required format may be deemed non-responsive and removed from consideration at the sole discretion of the HLB.

## 6.0 Selection Criteria and Process

### 6.1 Evaluation Method

An Evaluation Committee composed of HLB staff and designated advisors will score each proposal using the criteria and point values below (**total of 100 points**). The committee may request additional information, written clarifications, or interviews. HLB reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive minor irregularities, and to negotiate with one or more respondents deemed most advantageous to HLB.

## 6.2 Scoring Criteria

Criteria	Points	Evaluation Focus
Firm Qualifications & Organizational Capacity	25	The evaluation will focus on the firm's demonstrated capacity in environmental law, brownfields redevelopment, real estate transactions involving contaminated property, and public-sector representation. Reviewers will consider the overall strength, stability, and experience of the firm, its ability to manage multi-year engagements, the adequacy of its administrative, financial, and operational systems, and the firm's capacity to support simultaneous environmental, transactional, and regulatory compliance matters across multiple HLB projects.
Project Team Expertise	20	Reviewers will assess the qualifications of the proposed lead and supporting attorneys, clarity of the staffing structure, and the team's demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and respond to time-sensitive matters. Evaluation will consider professional credentials, relevant certifications or specializations, availability and responsiveness, and the depth of bench support to ensure continuity of service. Emphasis will be placed on the individual attorneys' experience with environmental, brownfield, real estate, and public-sector legal matters.
Brownfield, Environmental, & Regulatory Expertise	15	This criterion evaluates the firm's knowledge and experience with federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations, including but not limited to CERCLA, RCRA, TSCA, TCEQ requirements, and EPA Brownfields Program guidelines. Reviewers will consider experience with environmental due diligence (Phase I/II ESAs), remediation planning and oversight, institutional and engineering controls, liability protections, and regulatory closure processes. Familiarity with 2 CFR 200 and DBE requirements under 40 CFR 33 will also be assessed.
Approach & Methodology	15	The evaluation will focus on the clarity, practicality, and alignment of the firm's proposed approach to providing ongoing environmental and brownfield-related legal services for HLB. Reviewers will consider the firm's understanding of HLB's mission, community-centered redevelopment goals, and regulatory environment, as well as proposed methods for addressing legal risks, coordinating with consultants and regulators, and supporting acquisition, cleanup, and redevelopment efforts. Emphasis will be placed on proactive communication, responsiveness, and the ability to support equitable and environmentally responsible redevelopment.
Cost Proposal	15	Reviewers will assess the competitiveness, clarity, and transparency of the firm's proposed cost structure, including hourly rates, blended rates (if applicable), and any optional retainer structure. The evaluation will consider overall cost reasonableness relative to the anticipated scope of work, compliance with 2 CFR 200.404, and the firm's demonstrated commitment to cost-effective, value-driven services for publicly funded projects.
Relevant Project Experience & References	10	The evaluation will focus on the relevance and quality of the firm's prior work involving brownfield sites, contaminated properties, environmental compliance, and representation of public-sector or quasi-governmental entities. Reviewers will consider the complexity and outcomes of past projects, demonstrated success in achieving regulatory closure or facilitating redevelopment, and the strength and reliability of client references.
<b>Total Points Possible:</b>	<b>100</b>	

## 6.3 Two-Stage Review

1. **Initial Review and Scoring** – After the submission deadline, the Evaluation Committee will confirm responsiveness and score each complete proposal against the criteria above.
2. **Written Interview or Presentation (if requested)** – HLB may invite one or more top-scoring submissions to answer written questions or participate in a virtual interview to clarify their experience and qualifications. Responses will inform the final scoring.

## 6.4 Recommendation and Award

Following final scoring, the Evaluation Committee will recommend the highest-ranked proposal to the HLB Board of Directors. The Board, at its sole discretion, may select the recommended respondent or another proposer whose submission it determines to be in the best interest of HLB. The selected firm will then enter into an Exclusive Negotiation Period to finalize an agreement. If negotiations do not result in an executed agreement within the negotiation period, HLB may engage the next-highest-scoring proposer or re-issue the RFP.

## 7.0 Contractual Terms and Conditions

HLB intends to enter into a contract with the selected firm for an initial term of one (1) year, with the option to renew the contract for up to two (2) additional one-year periods at the discretion of HLB. The contract will be structured as an on-call, as-needed agreement, and compensation will be provided on a flexible basis, which may include hourly billing, task order assignments, or an optional negotiated retainer. No minimum number of hours or guaranteed volume of work is implied under this solicitation.

The successful firm will be required to submit a professional representation agreement that will need to be approved and executed by HLB. HLB reserves the right to modify standard contract terms as necessary to reflect project needs, funding source requirements, regulatory obligations, and the negotiated agreement between the selected firm and HLB.

## 7.1 Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity

HLB complies with state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of any protected status.

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, HLB commits to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all of its programs and activities.

In accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 USC §2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, HLB will affirmatively ensure that in this RFP process and in any contract entered into pursuant to this RFP, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex in consideration for an award.

## 7.2 Costs of Submitting a Proposal

The cost of submittal and any related expenses, including travel and presentations, shall be entirely the responsibility of the Respondent. HLB reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

## 8.0 Questions

All questions regarding this Request for Proposals must be submitted in writing to [procurements@houstonlandbank.org](mailto:procurements@houstonlandbank.org) by the date specified in the RFP schedule. Questions must be submitted via email and must clearly reference the Houston Land Bank Brownfields & Environmental Legal Services RFP in the subject line. Verbal questions or inquiries made to HLB personnel, Board members, or City of Houston staff will not be addressed.

HLB may, at its discretion, issue written responses, clarifications, or addenda to all known respondents. It is the responsibility of each respondent to monitor for any addenda issued in relation to this RFP. Only written responses provided by HLB shall be considered official and binding.

## 9.0 Rules Governing Competition

This RFP does not commit HLB to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in preparing a response, or to procure any services. HLB reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to cancel or reissue this RFP, to reject any and all proposals, to waive minor irregularities, and to request clarification or additional information from any respondent.

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of HLB and will not be returned.

### 9.1 Examination of Proposals

Firms should carefully examine the entire RFP and any addenda thereto, and all related materials and data referenced in the RFP. Firms should become fully aware of the nature of the work and the conditions likely to be encountered in performing the work.

## 9.2 Proposal Acceptance Period

Award of this RFP is anticipated to be announced within forty-five (45) calendar days from the deadline date; however, all offers must be complete and irrevocable for one hundred twenty (120) days following the submission date.

## 9.3 Confidentiality

The content of all proposals will be kept confidential until the selection of the Contractor is publicly announced. At that time, the selected proposal may be open for review. All materials submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of HLB.

### Signature Requirements

All proposals must be signed by an officer or other agent of the firm and authorized to sign contracts on its behalf; a member of a partnership; the owner of a privately-owned vendor; or other agent if properly authorized by a power of attorney or equivalent document. Signature of the Cover Letter will meet this requirement. Failure to sign the proposal is grounds for rejection. The name and title of the individual(s) signing the proposal must be clearly shown immediately below the signature.

## 9.4 Oral Change/Interpretation

No oral change or interpretation of any provision contained in this RFP is valid whether issued at a pre-proposal conference or otherwise. Written addenda will be issued when changes, clarifications or amendments to proposal documents are deemed necessary by HLB.

## 9.5 Modification/Withdrawal of Proposals

A firm may withdraw a proposal at any time prior to the final submission date by sending written notification of its withdrawal, signed by an agent authorized to represent the company. The firm may thereafter submit a new proposal prior to the final submission date; or submit written modification or addition to a proposal prior to the final submission date. Modifications offered in another manner, oral or written, will not be considered. A final proposal cannot be changed or withdrawn after the submission date, except for modifications requested by HLB after the date of receipt and following interviews (if applicable).

## 10.0 Confidential/Proprietary Information

The content of proposals will be kept confidential until the selection of the Contractor is announced. At that time, the selected proposal is open for review to the competing proposers only (except for information properly identified as being proprietary). After the award of the contract, all submitted proposals shall become public information except for properly identified proprietary information. If a proposer wishes individual pages, which contain actual business proprietary information to be held confidential, each page must be marked and an explanation furnished of its proprietary nature. In addition to marking individual pages, the Proposal's Cover must also be annotated with the words "THIS PROPOSAL CONTAINS PROPRIETARY INFORMATION". "Confidential and

Proprietary" information is not meant to include any information which, at the time of disclosure, is generally known by the public and/or competitors.

## 11.0 Debarment Certification

By submitting a proposal, the respondent certifies that neither the firm nor any of its principals, partners, officers, or employees is currently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or declared ineligible to participate in or receive funding from any federal, state, or local agency or program. Respondents further certify that they are not included on any federal or state list of excluded or ineligible parties. (See Exhibit A, Required Forms).

HLB reserves the right to verify debarment status through available government databases and may require the selected firm to execute additional certifications related to eligibility. Any misrepresentation regarding debarment or eligibility status shall be grounds for immediate disqualification and may result in termination of an awarded contract.

## 12.0 Non-Collusion Certification

By submitting a proposal, the respondent certifies that the proposal has been prepared independently and without collusion, communication, consultation, agreement, or arrangement with any other firm or individual submitting a proposal under this solicitation. The respondent further certifies that the proposal is submitted in good faith, that all information provided is true and accurate, and that no attempt has been made to influence the selection process in an improper or unethical manner. (See Exhibit A, Required Forms).

HLB reserves the right to disqualify any respondent found to be in violation of this certification and may pursue any legal remedies available under applicable laws and regulations.