



**Request for Qualifications
(RFQ)**

for

Professional Accounting and Financial Services

City of Houston
Finance Department

RFQ #Q22969

June 27, 2008

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I. Purpose of RFQ

The City of Houston (“City”) invites established accounting and financial services firms to participate in the selection process to qualify companies for the purpose of providing professional support to the Accounting and Internal Control Division of the Finance Department.

II. Background

The Accounting and Internal Control Division of the City of Houston Finance Department oversees the following areas of responsibilities.

1. Coordinate financial audit for the issuance of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.
2. Accounting policies and procedures.
3. Fixed assets management.
4. Auditing services: Tax Abatement Audits, Hotel Occupancy Tax Audits, internal control and compliance audits, and other special audits.
5. Grant accounting and compliance management.
6. General fund cash management.
7. Cost accounting studies and reviews.
8. Revenue and tax accounting.

The City converted to the use of SAP on July 1, 2006 for its accounting and financial functions. From time to time, especially during critical financial reporting periods, our division needs the support of professional accounting and financial services firms with in-depth understanding of all aspects of governmental accounting and the SAP system.

The City of Houston, through the issue of this RFQ, seeks to identify highly qualified accounting and financial services firms. The City intends to engage the services of these firms under predetermined terms that permit the City to engage their services on an “as needed” hourly basis.

III. Scope of Work

The duties and responsibilities of the firm(s) hired **include but are not limited** to the following areas.

1. **Assist in general ledger account reconciliations.**
2. **Provide support to City staff in the preparation for and support of the annual financial audit. These will include but will not be limited to the following:**
 - a) **Preparation of audit schedules.**
 - b) **Analysis of accounting transactions.**
 - c) **Coordination of audit responses.**

3. **Assist in internal and compliance audits.**
4. **Identify internal control weaknesses and provide recommendations.**
5. **Assist in developing accounting policies and procedures.**
6. **Provide accounting and reporting support for cost recovery from unusual events, such as Hurricane Katrina, etc.**

In all areas of work, the personnel of the firm hired will be required to work alongside city employees assigned and allow the employees unrestricted access to all work done. The firm shall be required to provide full documentation and detail explanation of all work done.

IV. Qualifications

Knowledge and experience in:

1. Accounting

- a) Governmental accounting/ GASB.
- b) Financial accounting/ FASB.
- c) Auditing.
- d) Internal controls.
- e) Federal and state grants/Single Audit.
- f) Fixed assets.

2. Technology

- a) SAP experience in financial accounting. Experience in fixed assets and grants management a plus.
- b) Advanced skills of major Microsoft applications, primarily Excel and Access.

3. Documentation of Policies and Procedures

- a) Accounting and internal control flowcharts.
- b) Accounting manual.

V. Duration of Service

The intended duration of this service agreement is estimated to be 2,000 billable hours; however, this may be subject to change at the time of contract negotiation.

VI. Key Requirements

1. Proposal Deadline

All proposals must be received by 3:00 p.m. (CSDT), Monday, July 14, 2008 to be considered. There will be no exceptions made.

Six (6) identical hard copies and three (3) electronic copies of the Proposals must be submitted to the City of Houston by the time and date stated above. All Proposals are to be submitted to:

**Muoy J. Kuon
Finance Department
City of Houston
611 Walker, 10th Floor
Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: 713/ 221-0933**

Any questions concerning this RFQ should be directed, by email, to Muoy Kuon at muoy.kuon@cityofhouston.net. Telephone calls are strongly discouraged.

2. Public Information Notification

The City considers all materials, information, communications and correspondence in any form from the respondents to this RFQ to be non-propriety and non-confidential and, therefore, subject to public disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act (Texas Government Code 552.00-1, et seq.) after a contract is awarded. Respondents are informed that the City will abide by all statutes, court rulings and opinions of the Texas Attorney General concerning disclosure of RFQ information.

3. Format of Proposal

Proposal should be **spiral-bound** and organized in the format stipulated below:

a) Report Cover

The cover clearly displays the title of the RFQ:

**City of Houston
Finance Department
Request for Qualifications
RFQ #Q22969
Professional Accounting and Financial Services**

Submitted By: [Name of Firm]
Submittal Date: _____

b) Table of Contents

c) Tabbed Dividers

Each proposal should have tabbed dividers separating each of the following **5 sections** and matching the following headings:

1) Divider #1: Firm Information

- Firm name, address, telephone/fax numbers, and e-mail addresses.
- Firm web address if available.
- Primary contact person.
- Structure of firm, i.e., sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation.
- Size of firm.
- Years the firm has been in business.
- Names of principals in firm.
- Organizational description.
- Description of firm's philosophy.

2) Divider #2: Letter of Interest

The first page following the divider shall be a letter stating the firm's interest in being considered for this RFQ. The letter should provide a summary of:

- Your firm's background in working with Federal or Large City government in the area of accounting. The nature of services rendered.
- Your firm's level of expertise in SAP as it relates to Governmental accounting.
- The experience of the assigned personnel to this engagement if your firm is hired, in the area of governmental accounting projects similar to this and their level of knowledge in SAP as it relates to governmental accounting.
- Experience in providing proper documentation of work and procedures writing.
- Experience in training employees during assignments.
- Letter must be signed by a partner or principal of the firm.

3) Divider #3: Evidence of Past Work

Provide several samples of previous work in:

- Federal and Large City Government in the area of governmental accounting.

- SAP in similar governmental settings.
- Special Governmental accounting work during natural disaster (i.e. hurricanes, flooding, etc.).
- Employee training.
- Procedures writing.
- Work documentation.

4) Divider #4: Qualifications of Personnel

Provide resumes of personnel to be involved in the assignments assuming that the services of the firm are engaged. Resume must clearly states professional credentials and previous experiences in the areas discussed above.

5) Divider #5: References

Provide at least 3 references of clients who are willing to be interviewed.

VII. Selection Process

The City will evaluate the qualifications of the firms through the Selection Panel, immediately following the application deadline. Statements of Qualifications and other information submitted by the firms in support of their applications will be thoroughly reviewed by the Selection Panel. The City will shortlist the firms of interest and may arrange to interview them, before making a final selection. The City may require additional information after the review of the initial information received. Responding to this RFQ constitutes understanding and agreement to methods of evaluation and selection.

The City reserves the right to award the contract to the respondent(s) it deems would be best able to satisfy the requirements and qualifications set forth above. The criteria used in the selection process will be the sole discretion of the City.

Following the final identification of the best-qualified firms, the City will then begin a fees and terms negotiation process with the firm of choice. In the event that a mutually acceptable agreement cannot be reached with the first choice firm, the City will then proceed to negotiate with the second choice firm. This process will continue until an agreement has been achieved with one of the firms selected.