

**LAND ASSEMBLAGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
("LARA")**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR BOOKKEEPING SERVICES
PROPOSAL #2013-BOOKKEEPING**

RFP For Bookkeeping Services

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SECTION I.

THE ORGANIZATION

The Land Assemblage Redevelopment Authority ("LARA") is a Texas non-profit corporation created and organized by the City of Houston as a local government corporation pursuant to the Texas Transportation Code and the Texas Local Government Code. It is governed by a 13-member Board of Directors appointed by the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Houston, the Houston Independent School District ("HISD") and Harris County, Texas ("the County"). LARA is organized for the purpose of redeveloping properties acquired by the named taxing jurisdictions after the foreclosure of liens imposed for failure of the owners of such properties to pay seriously-delinquent ad valorem taxes.

SECTION II.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The LARA Board is made up of 13 members, five of whom are appointed by the Mayor of the City of Houston, two by City Council, and three each appointed by HISD and the County.

The present members of the Board are:*

David Collins, Chairman
Antoinette Jackson, 2nd Vice-Chair
Curtis Lampley
Jeremy Ratcliff, 2nd Vice-President
Steve Hall, Secretary
James Harrison, III
John W. Bowie
Stephan Fairfield
Vincent Marquez
LaTricia Williams
Nicholas Hall
Reshard Alexander
Vacant Position

SECTION III.

STATEMENT REGARDING RFP FOR BOOKKEEPING SERVICES

The LARA Finance Committee will evaluate the Proposals submitted and award a contract to the successful proposer. All proposals will become part of LARA's files without obligation on LARA's part. LARA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any or all formalities or technicalities or to accept the proposals deemed to be most advantageous to the Authority. The contract term will be for a period of one year and may be extended for an additional year at the option of LARA and its Board of Directors.

SECTION IV.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Scope of Services for this RFP is attached as Exhibit "A". The Respondents to this Request must assure that the Proposals submitted in response to this RFP adequately addresses every element of the Scope of Services

SECTION V.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PROPOSERS

In connection with acquiring basic bookkeeping services from the successful proposer, the basic criteria employed in acquiring such services are as follows:

The successful proposer will be required to provide LARA with evidence of the following:

- A. Previous experience (at least 5 years' experience in providing bookkeeping services to businesses, including public entities
- B. Substantial knowledge of generally accepted bookkeeping principles and policies as applicable to governmental entities.
- C. Readily available resources, in terms of personnel and technical materials, for performing basic bookkeeping services and other related services as needed. The successful proposer will be required to provide services that are compatible with and complementary to that work being provided by LARA's outside public accounting firm.

In addition, evaluation criteria will include the following:

1. Qualifications of the proposer and the individuals assigned to this engagement.
2. Reasonableness of time and cost involved.
3. Proposer's Workplace Diversity policy and its willingness and ability to utilize Minority and Women-Owned businesses to perform portions of the work.

LARA reserves the right to reject any proposal for any reason and to also request additional information from the proposers related to the above-listed evaluation criteria.

SECTION VI.

LARA'S FINANCIAL REPORTS

Monthly compiled financial statements for LARA are prepared by McConnell & Jones LLP, an outside public accounting firm. A recent financial report of the Authority can be obtained from Chris Butler, LARA staff member, at 713-865-4196.

SECTION VII.

LARA'S ROLE DURING THE ENGAGEMENT

LARA'S outside public accounting firm, McConnell & Jones LLP, and LARA'S staff, will be available to provide assistance in locating documents and other information needed by the bookkeeping firm to perform its work.

SECTION VIII.

INFORMATION REQUESTED FROM THE PROPOSERS

In order to simplify the review process and obtain the maximum degree of comparison, proposals should be organized according to the following outline:

- A. **Title Page**
Show the RFP subject, the name of the proposer's firm, local address, telephone number, name of contact person, size of the firm, and date of submission.
- B. **Table of Contents**
Include a clear identification of the material by section and by page number.

C. **Letter of Transmittal**

1. Briefly state the firm's understanding of the work to be done and make a positive commitment to perform the work within the specified time period.
2. State the all-inclusive monthly fee estimate for the work proposed to be performed.
3. State the names of the persons who will be authorized to make representations for the firm, their titles, addresses, and telephone numbers.
4. State that the person signing the letter will be authorized to bind the firm.

D. **Profile of the Proposer**

1. State whether the firm is local, regional, national or international.
2. State the location of the office which will provide the personnel responsible for performing the services and the number of persons employed at that office.
3. Describe the range of bookkeeping activities performed by the local office.
4. Describe any reprimands or penalties that the firm may have received any regulatory body over the past five (5) years.
6. State the firm's experience in providing bookkeeping services for governmental entities.
7. List the firm's professional affiliations.

E. **Summary of the Proposer's Qualifications**

1. Provide the resumes of all persons expected to provide bookkeeping services to LARA, including relevant experience and continuing education for each person to be assigned to LARA for this engagement. Resumes may be included as an appendix to the proposal.
2. Describe any recent engagement of bookkeeping services provided by your local or regional office that is most similar to the type being requested under this RFP.

F. **Compensation**

State the total hours and hourly rate required by staff classification and the resulting all-inclusive monthly fee estimate for the work proposed to be performed.

G. **Diversity Plan**

Describe the Proposer's policies currently employed to achieve ethnic and gender diversity in the workplace and its plan to utilize Minority and Women-Owned businesses to perform portions of the work.

SECTION IX.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Prior to the commencement of any work awarded under this RFP, the successful proposer shall furnish LARA with copies of original completed Certificates of Insurance and endorsements, as requested by LARA. At a minimum, the successful proposer shall provide evidence of the statutory amounts of Workers' Compensation coverage and no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence of General Liability Insurance. All original Certificates shall be prepared by a properly-licensed Texas insurance agent and be signed by a person authorized by the insurer to bind coverage on its behalf. All such policies shall name, by endorsement, LARA, its officers, officials, agents, employees and volunteers as additional insureds by endorsement in respect to all operations and activities of, or on behalf of, the named insured then performing work under contract with LARA, with the exception of any Workers' Compensation and Professional Liability policies. Each policy must contain an endorsement to the effect that the issuer waives any claim or right in the nature of subrogation to recover any amount of monetary damages from LARA, its officers, officials, agents, employees or volunteers.

SECTION X.

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

THREE (3) copies of each proposer's Response to this Request For Proposals must be received by LARA no later than 2:00 o'clock p.m. on Friday, May 10, 2013. Proposers must mark on the outside of the transmittal envelope "**SEALED RESPONSE TO RFP FOR BOOKKEEPING SERVICES, May 10, 2013, 2:00 o'clock p.m.**" and mail, or hand-deliver, the Responses to:

City Secretary of the City of Houston
City Hall Annex, Public Level
900 Bagby Street
Houston, Texas 77002
Attention: Chris Butler, Land Assemblage Redevelopment Authority

LARA will not be responsible in the event the U.S. Postal Service, or any other courier system, fails to deliver any Responses to this RFP to the City Secretary's office by the given deadline set out above.

LARA also reserves the right to reject, for any reason, any or all Responses received pursuant to this RFP, to waive any irregularities contained therein, and to accept any Response deemed to be most advantageous to the Authority.

END OF DOCUMENT
(Please see Exhibits Attached)

General Qualifications:

1. Seeking Booking Services for the Land Assemblage Redevelopment Authority (LARA) needed in connection with the management and maintenance of LARA operations financial records.
2. The Service Provider will assign a specific individual to work with LARA on providing needed services. The assigned individual will work closely with and take general direction from LARA's Accounting firm, McConnell Jones. The Service Provider will bond the selected individual.
3. The assigned individual will have at least 2 years of college level book keeping training and at least 3 years of practical book keeping experience. A background in real estate book keeping is preferred.
4. The assigned individual will have a strong working knowledge of and practical experience in using "QuickBooks" software programs.
5. There is an expectation that the assigned individual will need to dedicate approximately 20 hours per month to perform the duties outlined below.

Accounts Payable Activity:

1. Set-up and maintain a database, entering payable data into "QuickBooks" and generating a monthly checks payable report.
2. Review payable invoices for accuracy and prepare voucher package for payment.
3. Prepare checks for signature.
4. Present checks (with back-up information) for signature during the Finance Committee meeting held monthly.

Accounts Receivable Activity:

1. Set-up and maintain a database (QuickBooks), entering accounts receivable and generating a monthly accounts receivable report.
2. Prepare documents needed for money transfers on grants received by LARA from the City or other sources.

Accounts and Cash Management Activity:

1. Assist as needed by gathering information for the preparation of monthly budget reports.
2. Serve as a liaison between LARA and City personnel who assist with LARA operations.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING NO OFFER OF PECUNIARY BENEFIT

The undersigned proposer, by signing and executing this proposal, certifies and represents to the Land Assemblage Redevelopment Authority that it has not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit, as defined in the Texas Penal Code, or any other thing of value as consideration for the receipt of information or any special treatment or advantage relating to this proposal. The proposer also certifies and represents that it has not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value as consideration for the recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or other exercise of discretion concerning this proposal. The proposer certifies and represents that it has neither coerced nor attempted to influence the exercise of discretion by any officer, trustee, agent or employee of LARA concerning this proposal on the basis of any consideration not authorized by law. The proposer also certifies and represents that it has not received any information not available to other proposers so as to give the undersigned a preferential advantage with respect to this proposal. The proposer further certifies and represents that it has not violated any state, federal, or local law, regulation or ordinance relating to bribery, improper influence, collusion or the like and that it will not in the future offer, confer, or agree to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value of any officer, trustee, agent or employee of LARA in return for the person having exercised his or her official discretion, power or duty with respect to this proposal. The proposer certifies and represents that it has not now and will not in the future offer, confer, or agree to confer a pecuniary benefit or other thing of value to any officer, trustee, agent, or employee of LARA in connection with information regarding this proposal, the submission of this proposal, the award of this proposal, or the performance of any work awarded pursuant to this proposal.

The proposer shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Land Assemblage Redevelopment Authority, all of its officers, agents and employees from and against all claims, actions, suits, demands, proceedings, costs, damages, and liabilities, arising out of, connected with, or resulting from, any acts or omissions of contractor or any agent, employee, subcontractor, or supplier of contractor in the execution or performance of the work awarded under this RFP.

I have read all of the specifications and general proposal requirements and do hereby certify that all items submitted meet specifications.

COMPANY: _____

AGENT'S NAME: _____

AGENT'S SIGNATURE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ TELEFAX: _____

FEDERAL ID#: _____ AND/OR SOCIAL SECURITY #: _____

DEVIATIONS FROM SPECIFICATIONS IF ANY:

Exhibit "B"

**CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT,
SUSPENSION, AND OTHER MATTERS**

Name of Entity: _____

The proposer certifies, to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals:

- a) Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal, state or local governmental entity.
- b) Have not within a five-year period preceding this proposal been convicted of a criminal offense, or had a civil judgment rendered against them, for commission of fraud in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing work under a public contract; or violation of any Federal or State antitrust statute, or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
- c) Are not presently indicted for, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity, with the commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (b) of this certification; and
- d) Have not, within a five-year period preceding the date of submission of this proposal, had one or more public contracts terminated for cause or default.

I understand that a false statement on this certification may be grounds for rejection of this proposal or termination of an award granted under this proposal. In addition, I understand that a false statement may result in criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment, or both.

Name and Title of Authorized Representative (Typed)

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date

I am unable to certify to the above statements. My explanation is attached.

Exhibit "C"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF RFP

Please acknowledge receipt of this RFP by returning this form, as follows:

FAX TO: 713-865-9398

OR

MAIL TO: LAND ASSEMBLAGE REDEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
P.O. 1562
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77251-1562

_____ WILL RESPOND

_____ WILL NOT RESPOND

COMMENTS: _____

COMPANY NAME _____

COMPANY FAX: _____

COMPANY PHONE: _____

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

Exhibit "D"