

TRN 09-002
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
Livable Centers Studies
for the City of Houston

CLOSING DATE: Wednesday, March 18th at 4:30 p.m.

FORMAT: Hard copy, bound/stapled and signed

NUMBER OF COPIES: Ten (10)

SUBMIT TO: Meredith Dang
Land Use Transportation Coordinator
Houston-Galveston Area Council

Mailing address
P.O. Box 22777
Houston, TX 77227-2777

Physical/delivery
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
Houston, TX 77027

Contact information
Main number: (713) 627-3200
Desk: (713) 993-2443
Fax: (713) 993-4503
Email: meredith.dang@h-gac.com

Those responding to this solicitation may elect to either mail or personally deliver their proposals to H-GAC offices. Failure to submit the required number of copies as stated above may result in disqualification from the proposal process. H-GAC will not accept any proposals delivered by telephonic, electronic or facsimile means.

The deadline for the submittal of proposals is no later than 4:30 PM on March 18, 2009. H-GAC shall date-time all proposals upon receipt. Proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted. Respondents may submit their proposal to the H-GAC office any time prior to the deadline.

Submission of a proposal will constitute acknowledgement and acceptance of all the terms and conditions contained in this RFP. Proposers, their authorized representative, and their agents are responsible for obtaining, and will be deemed to have, full knowledge of the conditions, requirements, and specifications of this Request for Proposal at the time a proposal is submitted to H-GAC.

PRE-PROPOSAL COMMUNICATIONS

A Pre-Proposal Meeting is to be held on Monday, February 23rd, 2009, from 1:30-2:30 p.m. in the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) 2nd Floor Conference Room C. Those unable to attend this meeting in person may participate via conference call. Please notify Meredith Dang no later than Thursday, February 19th, 2009, if you plan to attend the meeting, or wish to be included on the conference call.

It will be assumed that potential Proposers attending this meeting have reviewed the RFP in detail and are prepared to raise any substantive questions which have not already been addressed by H-GAC. H-GAC requests that, as much as is practical, Proposers submit all questions in advance in writing, via email or fax, prior to the Pre-Proposal Conference. No additional questions regarding the RFP will be accepted after 5:00 PM on February 23, 2009. Questions submitted in advance should be sent to Meredith Dang, H-GAC Land Use Transportation Coordinator, via email at meredith.dang@h-gac.com or via fax at 713-993-4503. All questions and answers from the Pre-Proposal meeting will be compiled and provided to participating Proposers, as well as posted on the H-GAC web site.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND SPECIFICATIONS

Requests for additional information and questions should be addressed to Meredith Dang, Land Use Transportation Coordinator, Community and Environmental Planning Department, Houston Galveston Area Council, telephone – 713.993.2443 fax - 713.993.4503, or e-mail – meredith.dang@h-gac.com, no later than February 23, 2009 at 5:00 PM local time. H-GAC will provide written responses to all questions received in writing on or before the written question submittal deadline (see Pre-Proposal Meeting). Questions received from all respondents, including those raised at the Pre-Proposal Meeting, shall be answered and sent to all respondents who are listed as having obtained Requests for Proposal, as well as posted on the H-GAC web site. Proposers shall be notified in writing (via email) of any changes in the specifications contained in this Request for Proposal, and any changes will also be posted on the H-GAC web site.

NON-RESPONDERS TO THE RFP

If unable to submit a proposal, please contact H-GAC in writing advising the reason for not submitting a proposal. Reasons for non-response to the RFP may be submitted to Meredith Dang at meredith.dang@h-gac.com.

OBJECTIVE

H-GAC is seeking consulting services to conduct a study and develop a plan to further the goals of the Livable Centers program in the City of Houston. The Consultant (team) will develop a plan that address the application of the Livable Centers program goals to the identified study areas, including identification of transportation improvements that could leverage private investment and improve the quality of life in the project areas.

The consultant (team) will be required to have knowledge and expertise in the following areas:

- Creating quality, walkable, mixed-use places, creating multi-modal travel choices, improving environmental quality, and promoting economic development.
- Estimating potential for private investment to be leveraged from public improvements.
- Planning and design of street, sidewalk, signage, and lighting improvements, including developing cost estimates.

Please see the Livable Centers section of the H-GAC website for additional Livable Centers program information: www.h-gac.com/livablecenters.

Since this project requires a range of research, transportation, and planning expertise, a team of specialized firms is permitted. A consultant, or team of consultants, with one prime contractor, is a typical type of consultant contract used by H-GAC.

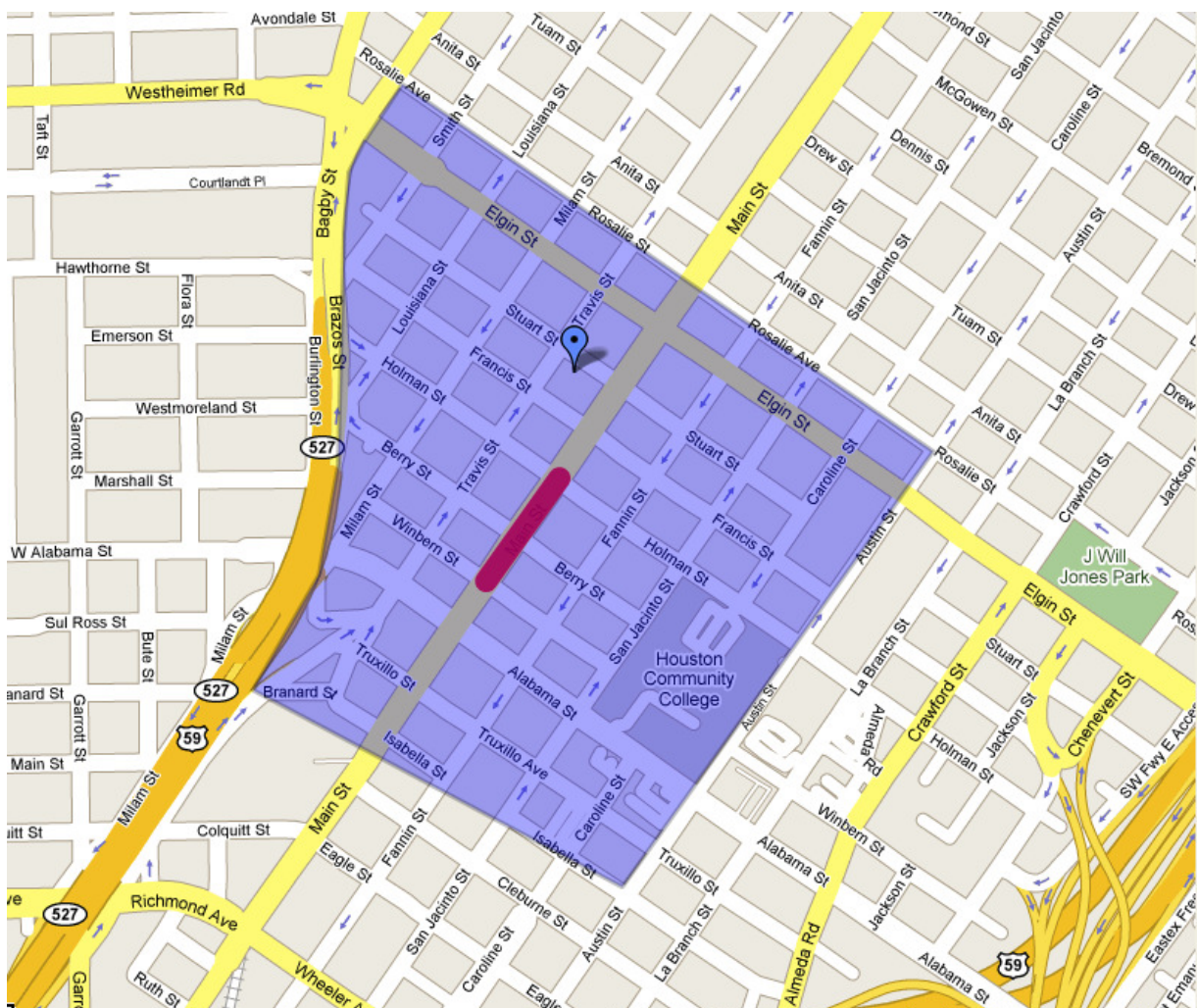
BACKGROUND

H-GAC is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the eight-county Houston-Galveston Transportation Management Area (TMA). This two-part study (and resulting recommended project(s)) is one of a number of action steps adopted by H-GAC's Transportation Policy Council to address mobility challenges and quality of life in the region.

STUDY AREA: Transit-Oriented Development at Ensemble/HCC Station in Midtown and Mixed-Use/Transit Oriented Development Plan for Code Enforcement Building

As the two focal study points (Code Enforcement Building and HCC/Ensemble light rail stop) are located within two blocks of one another it will be necessary for the projects and recommendations for these projects to be coordinated.

The study area is centered around the Ensemble/HCC station along the Main Street Light Rail Line (Red Line on map) and the City of Houston Code Enforcement building located at 3300 Main (Blue Marker on map) in the Midtown neighborhood in the City of Houston. The study area encompasses



roughly a quarter mile radius surrounding the identified marker points, roughly bounded by Rosalie Ave. to the north, Austin St. to the east, Isabella St. to the south, and Spur 527 to the west (please see map above).

SCHEDULED TIME FRAME

The work is scheduled to begin on or about May 1, 2009 and to be completed within nine months of the start date. H-GAC reserves the right to extend and/or expand the scope of this contract, subject to H-GAC Board of Directors approval and additional funding availability.

PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK:

The scope of work to be performed is for the preparation of a plan/(plans) to further the goals of the Livable Centers program including the identification of transportation infrastructure investments to support the goals of the study within the defined study area. The two projects contain distinct elements and requirements, but also share common tasks and processes. Due to the close geographic relationship of these two projects, it will be necessary for the design and project recommendations to be coordinated between the two.

Background and Specific elements for HCC/Ensemble Station:

This project will capitalize on the momentum generated by the following planning efforts: a market study conducted in the summer of 2006, "Building Houston's Competitive Edge: Transit-Oriented Development for the HCC/Ensemble Station" (U.S. EPA Implementation Assistance) and the work of the City of Houston's 'Mixed Use/Transit Corridor Planning Commission Subcommittee.' These efforts offer an assessment of barriers and opportunities to creating an urban pattern of development, including market demand, financial feasibility, and regulatory perspectives. The Livable Centers study should identify specific projects and strategies to implement the recommendations from the previously completed studies according to the tasks outlined below.

Background and Specific elements for 3300 Main Street: The City of Houston's current Code Enforcement Center at 3300 Main Street will be re-constructed and leased to a developer. The City of Houston would like to integrate the location as a transit-oriented development and as a public gathering place with streetscape and pedestrian friendly elements. The Livable Centers study should create a master plan for the area that analyzes the safety and quality of the pedestrian environment, identifies existing as well as potential future pedestrian generators, and provides design solutions for an enhanced, attractive and safe pedestrian environment, according to the tasks outlined below.

Public involvement:

Coordination with property owners, community groups, transit agency, and other stakeholders within the study area will be necessary, including the formation of a stakeholder's advisory committee, to meet monthly or at appropriate benchmark intervals during the course of the project.

Major task elements are described below:

Task 1: Needs Assessment

The Consultant (team) will collect any data necessary to evaluate existing transportation and land use conditions and recommend Livable Centers improvements within the project study area(s). This effort should include an inventory of existing land uses and an evaluation of the existing street network, including an identification of any impediments to the use of alternative modes of transportation. The data collection should also examine existing local planning efforts and

demographics within the study area, including an examination of current mode split. The Consultant (team) must be sensitive to the needs of the community and their culture, and have strong communications skills and language capabilities. The needs assessment should be reviewed by the project sponsor and stakeholders and refined, as necessary.

Task 2: Develop Conceptual Plan

Based on the needs assessment, the Consultant (team) will prepare a draft conceptual plan identifying strategic investments and policies in the transportation and land use realms that, if implemented, will improve the safety and feasibility of using alternative modes of transportation, increase the sense of identity, and leverage private investment in the study area.

Specifically, the study shall provide an analysis of the current and potential future land use mix within the study area and analyze the potential for redevelopment of land uses that will be supportive of and encourage alternative modes of transportation. This analysis should propose specific improvements to transportation infrastructure that will improve the pedestrian realm and pedestrian safety in conjunction with the light rail. The analysis should also discuss the potential for the identified investments and policies to leverage the desired land use mix and development types.

The study shall provide recommendations to improve the connectivity within the study area, focusing on physical connectivity and transportation impacts to/from the light rail. The study shall analyze and develop concepts for enhanced connectivity, circulation and access within and outside of the study area. The analysis should include:

- On-street parking potential, as well as off-street parking needs. On-street parking analysis should include options for angled head-in parking and parking pockets. Off-street parking analysis should include a focus on locations, shared parking possibilities, and overall parking need.
- Internal and external site circulation and access, street and block patterns that respect the historic nature of the area, and internal and external connectivity related to area anchors and assets.

The draft plan should be reviewed by the project sponsor and stakeholders and refined, as necessary.

Task 3: Develop Designs for Specific Proposed Recommendations

The consultant (team) shall propose and provide design drawings of improvements that could be replicated within the study area so as to improve the sense of identity and establish a unifying set of characteristics for the area. This may include streetscape or other elements and may also include examples of voluntary design guidelines for use within the study area. The design drawings should reflect the demographics of the study area.

Task 4: Develop Implementation Plan for Proposed Recommendations

Working with the project sponsor, the consultant (team) shall prepare an implementation plan for the proposed recommendations, including a fiscal analysis that outlines the proposed funding source and/or identification of leveraging of public and private investment and potential partnerships for the recommendations. The implementation plan should include proposed project scopes, cost estimates, and priority level. Transportation infrastructure investments identified as suitable for consideration within H-GAC's Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program (RTP/TIP) should be identified.

Deliverables

- Documentation of Livable Centers needs assessment, stakeholder meetings and materials, as necessary, and documentation of additional needs as identified through stakeholder input, as appendices to the final report (3 hard copies, 1 electronic format)
- Conceptual plan and maps. (15 hard copies, 1 electronic format)
- Written description of projects contained in the plan, with a fiscal analysis containing supporting documentation of methodologies used in calculations, and cross listing of potential funding categories for each project (3 hard copies, 1 electronic format)

PROPOSAL CONTENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Proposals should, at a minimum, include the information described in Sections A-G below:

A. Cover Letter

This letter should include a brief summary of key aspects of the consultant's (team's) qualifications and approach to achieving project within the available budget and time frame. The letter should also include the primary contact name, mailing address, telephone number, and email address for each firm in the proposed team. (Maximum 2 pages)

B. Project Work Program and Schedule

The consultant (team) should detail their approach to undertaking the tasks listed in this RFP. A recommended methodology for performance of each task identified in the scope of work (shown in Exhibit A) should be included, along with a timeline for completion. This timeline should also illustrate key milestones and anticipate necessary meetings with H-GAC staff, the project Steering Committee, the local project sponsor and others. This contract will be completed within nine months of execution. (Maximum 5 pages)

C. Project Organization and Management

A project organization and management plan should be developed. The plan should include project staffing with an indication of the personnel to be involved, their respective roles, and person-hours by task dedicated to the project. A general summary of the approach to be used in accomplishing the work should be given. The consultant (team) should describe functions and responsibilities of the firms and staff involved. Proposals should clearly delineate all individuals, by names and titles that will be working on this study and their areas of responsibility. If substitutes or back-up personnel are planned on a contingency basis, they should be indicated in the plan. H-GAC requests the prime contract signatory be specified, with title, to facilitate the preparation of the contract. (Maximum 5 pages)

D. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal

For projects funded by grants from the U. S. Department of Transportation (DOT), H-GAC has established a goal of 16% DBE participation in its total annual third party consulting opportunities. Each respondent is encouraged to take affirmative action and make every effort possible to use DBE firms in the performance of work under this contract. Nothing in this provision shall be construed to require the utilization of any DBE firm that is either unqualified or unavailable.

E. Title VI Requirements, EEO and Conflict of Interests/Debarment

Successful respondents will be required to demonstrate compliance with all requirements imposed by Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 (49 U.S.C. Section 2000d), the Regulations of DOT issued hereunder (49 C.F.R. part 21), and the assurances by H-GAC thereto.

Equal Employment Opportunity – Successful respondents will be required to comply with all applicable Equal Employment Opportunity laws and regulations.

Proposals should state whether there is a potential conflict of interest and be cognizant of the requirement for executing a debarment certification stating that they have not been barred from doing work involving federal funds. A signed Debarment Certification will be required for each of the consultant team members prior to contract execution.

F. Conflict of Interest Questionnaire

Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code requires vendors and consultants contracting or seeking to contract with H-GAC to file a conflict of interest questionnaire (CIQ) if they have an employment or other business relationship with an H-GAC officer or an officer's close family member. The required questionnaire is located at the Texas Ethics Commission website <http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/>. H-GAC officers include its Board of Directors and Executive Director, who are listed on this website.

The CIQ must be completed and filed with a bid/proposal response if an employment or business relationship defined in the law exists.

G. Budget

Funding for this contract, estimated at \$552,000, is dependent upon the successful execution of an interagency agreement between H-GAC, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the City of Houston. H-GAC reserves the right to expand the total budget and scope of the contract. Respondents are not required to submit a budget of categorical costs in their proposals, but should indicate the approximate percentage of the available funding that will be required for each task. Respondents should be prepared to provide a detailed budget in a timely fashion should they be selected. (Maximum 3 pages)

H. Responsibility and Qualifications

The project manager and other key staff members must be specified and a clear indication given as to their involvement in the project, the amount of time they will be on-site and the percent of their time dedicated to this project. Brief resumes of staff members should be included. The successful respondent to this RFP must understand they are expected to provide qualified personnel to accomplish each portion of the work in this planning study. Substitutions for essential personnel involved in the study will not be allowed without H-GAC's prior approval and resulting delays will be the responsibility of the consultant. H-GAC retains the right to request the removal of any personnel found, in H-GAC's opinion, to be unqualified to perform the work. (Maximum 10 pages)

IN SUMMARY

While the above items provide a general description of what sections and information are expected in the proposal, they are not meant to limit or exclude other pertinent information.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

A Proposal Evaluation Team consisting of selected staff from H-GAC, the City of Houston and the Texas Department of Transportation, will review the responses to the RFP received by the designated closing date (**March 18, 2009 at 4:30 pm**), using the Evaluation Criteria described in the following section. The Proposal Evaluation Team reserves the right to contact respondents for clarification of information submitted and to contact references to obtain information regarding past performance, reliability, and integrity.

Consortiums, joint ventures, or teams submitting proposals will not be considered responsive to this RFP unless they have demonstrated in a “management plan” that all contractual responsibility rests solely with one “prime” contractor or legal entity of the “team”. A duly authorized official of the prime respondent must sign the cover letter and other pertinent certifications.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The proposal evaluation criteria for the ranking (and possible short-listing) of the consultant will include:

Capabilities (25%)

Consultant (team) must have demonstrated capabilities in planning quality, walkable, mixed-use places and creating a multi-modal transportation environment. Consultant (team) must be able to analyze data from a variety of sources, including databases, GIS, travel surveys, traffic counts and plan documents. Consultant (team) must possess knowledge of “best practices” for design of Livable Centers investment and an understanding of the types of projects that are eligible for federal funding.

Approach (25%)

The proposal must delineate an effective approach to achieving project objectives within available time frame and budget. Consultant (team) should provide a project schedule and timeline for achieving key milestones, such as project meetings with H-GAC staff and the contract Steering Committee. An estimated budget for achieving major project tasks should also be provided.

Project Management, Organizational Structure and Key Personnel (20%)

The Consultant (team) must have a qualified Project Manager. Proposal must demonstrate an effective organizational structure. Key personnel assigned to the project must possess necessary qualifications and be available to perform the work within the project time frame.

Past Performance (20%)

The Consultant (team) must have a demonstrated track record of timely performance, quality and integrity, as evidenced by a list of client references. Contact information for client references, including email addresses is required to be included.

Other Elements (10%)

H-GAC’s Proposal Evaluation Team may also evaluate other elements in the proposal that it deems pertinent to the Consultant’s (team) capability to perform the required tasks.

CONTRACT AWARD

Evaluation team scores for each RFP respondent will be averaged using a methodology of H-GAC's choosing. The ranked respondents may be reduced to a shortlist of no less than two and no more than four by score. H-GAC reserves the right to NOT conduct interviews with the short-listed respondents.

H-GAC will provide short-listed respondents with instructions as to how the final Consultant (team) ranking will be determined. These may include, but not necessarily be limited to, questions about elements of the proposal submitted, specific scope of work questions and/or interviews. A recommendation will be presented to the Budget and Finance Committee of the H-GAC Board of Directors for approval to negotiate, and execute, a contract with the ranked Consultants (teams) in descending order. The targeted date for Board approval is **April 21, 2009**. H-GAC reserves the right to delay that date as needed and to reject any and all proposals as deemed in its interest

COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Respondent's attention is called to the fact that any contract between H-GAC and the selected respondent(s) will be subject to financial assistance contracts between the H-GAC, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), and the City of Houston. The contract to be awarded, therefore, is subject to the terms of these agreements and will not proceed without these agreements having been duly executed. The successful respondent will be required to comply with, in addition to other provisions of the agreement, the conditions required by applicable federal regulations, including those regulations which must be documented in the proposal, as indicated in sections E, F, & G of the Proposal Contents section of this RFP.

RESOLUTION OF PROTESTED SOLICITATIONS AND AWARDS

Any Proposer who is aggrieved in connection with a purchase transaction may file a grievance. The grievance may be filed at any phase of the procurement, up to 10 working days after first action by H-GAC Board of Directors to authorized negotiation with top-ranked Proposers. Grievances filed more than 10 days after action by H-GAC Board of Directors will not be deemed timely and will not be considered. In order for a Proposer to enter the grievance process, a written complaint must be sent to the Chief Financial Officer of H GAC by certified mail which includes the following:

1. Name, mailing address and business phone number of the complainant.
2. Appropriate identification of the procurement being questioned.
3. A precise statement of the reasons for the protest.
4. Supporting exhibits, evidence or documents to substantiate any claims.

The grievance must be based on an alleged violation of H-GAC's Procurement Procedures, a violation of State or Federal Law (if applicable), or a violation of applicable grant or contract agreements to which H-GAC is a party. Failure to receive a procurement award from H-GAC in and of itself does not constitute valid grievance. Upon receipt of grievance, the Chief Financial Officer will initiate the informal resolution process.

The Procurement Officer or Departmental Director responsible for the solicitation shall contact the complainant and all interested parties and attempt to resolve the allegations informally within ten (10) working days from the date of complaint. If the allegations are successfully resolved by mutual agreement, documentation will be forwarded to the Office Services Manager of the resolution with specifics on each point addressed in the original complaint.

If the Procurement Officer or Departmental Director is not successful in resolving the allegations,

the complaint along with the comments will be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer immediately. The Chief Financial Officer will review all documentation. All interested parties will be given written notice of the date, time, and place of hearing and an opportunity to present evidence. A written decision will be issued within five (5) working days after the hearing along with notice of appeal rights.

The complainant may appeal the Chief Financial Officer's decision by submitting a written appeal, within five (5) working days, to the Executive Director of H-GAC. The Executive Director, upon receipt of a written notice of appeal, shall contact the complainant and schedule a hearing within ten (10) working days. The Executive Director of H-GAC has the option of appointing a Hearing Officer to preside over the hearing. If appointed, the Hearing Officer shall conduct a hearing and forward a summary and recommended resolution to the Executive Director.

The decision reached by the Executive Director or his designee shall be final and conclusive. This decision will be forwarded to the complainant in writing within thirty (30) working days.

The Proposer may, if it elects to do so, appeal the final and conclusive decision of the Executive Director to a Court of competent jurisdiction.

H-GAC RESPONSIBILITIES

H-GAC is responsible for project administration and final decisions on all contractual matters. All responses to inquiries about the RFP and attachments will be posted on the H-GAC website as often as possible:

<http://www.H-GAC.com> to access the RFP page

No inquiries about the Scope of Work, specifically, will be answered prior to the pre-proposal meeting on **February 23rd, 2009**. Inquiries about the Scope of Work in Exhibit A or other sections of this RFP should be directed to:

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Land Use Transportation Coordinator
Houston-Galveston Area Council
P.O. Box 22777
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