



GALVESTON WHARVES

2023-014

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

INTERNET AND PHONE SERVICES

Introduction

The Board of Trustees of the Galveston Wharves, Galveston, Texas (“Galveston Wharves”) is seeking qualifications and proposals on the terms set out in this Request for Proposals (“RFP”), from:

Firms capable of delivering a turn-key package to install, administer and run Internet and Telephone services that meet or exceed the enclosed criteria. The package should incorporate but not be limited to all equipment and services described herein for the Port of Galveston and include all the required training and equipment needed for the Port of Galveston to have secure and reliable high-speed Internet and Telephone services supplied by Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP). The ideal firm will have knowledge of Internet and telephone circuitry, programming and equipment and have expertise in providing, servicing, and administering Internet network connections and VoIP Telephone services. Proposals will be accepted as Internet and VoIP services from one provider or for the proposed services separately.

The contract will be issued with no guaranteed quantity of services and use of the contract is wholly dependent on the needs of Galveston Wharves. A more detailed description of the services the contractor will be expected to provide is contained in Attachments A (*Scope of Services*), B (*Description of Services and Fee Schedule*), and C (*Master Services Agreement*).

Please note that all Proposals (“Submissions”) must be received at the designated location, by the deadline indicated below. Submissions received after the required deadline will be returned unopened, considered void, and unaccepted.

I. General Requirements

A. Deadlines

Sealed Submissions will be received until **2:00 PM (Central Time) on Friday, October 13, 2023**, and then publicly opened and read aloud at the Port of Galveston’s general offices located at 123 25th St., 8th Floor, Galveston, TX 77550. Packages received after this date and time will not be considered.

B. Guidance on Submissions

Submissions shall be addressed and mailed to:

**Procurement Manager
Port of Galveston
123 25th Street
8th Floor
Galveston, Texas 77550**

Sealed packages shall include the responding company's name and be clearly labeled in the lower left-hand corner as follows:

“DO NOT OPEN IN MAILROOM. SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO 2022-008 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR STATE ADVOCACY AND LEGISLATIVE SERVICES”

The Port will accept question about this RFP and about any matter related to the scope of work through **2:00 PM (CST) on Friday, September 29, 2023.**

Questions must be e-mailed to purchasing@portofgalveston.com. (Oral instructions or information concerning the RFP given by Galveston Wharves' staff or personnel will not bind Galveston Wharves and should not be considered authoritative when assembling Responses.) All questions and answers will be posted on Galveston Wharves' website (portofgalveston.com), under the “Business” section. (Select the “Bids” tab in the “Business” section.)

Submissions must address each applicable requirement set out in this RFP. Only Respondents who can provide, either directly or as part of a team under its control, (collectively referred to herein as “Respondent”) the services identified in Attachment A (Scope of Services) should provide a Submission for consideration.

Unless expressly allowed by written authorization from Galveston Wharves, no Submission may be changed, amended, or modified in any manner after it is delivered to Galveston Wharves. However, a Submission may be withdrawn and resubmitted any time prior to the deadline set for receipt thereof.

Response packages shall include:

- **Six written Submissions** (one original and five copies) of all materials; and
- **One electronic copy** (Adobe Acrobat-compatible file is preferred), on a USB flash drive, of all material.

Galveston Wharves requests that Respondents do not bind their Submissions. To facilitate review by members of Galveston Wharves' evaluation committee, material will be filed in three-ring, loose-leaf binders after opening. (Each member of the evaluation committee will be provided with a single binder containing all of the material, except the price or cost information.) **Instead of binding the copies, the Port requests that each copy be independently collated, using binder clips, paper clips, rubber bands or similar easy-to-remove materials.**

(The manner in which submitters secure their Submissions will not affect Galveston Wharves' substantive assessment of the merits of the material.) Finally, Galveston Wharves requests that copies of the Submissions be **three-hole punched** to facilitate assembly of the evaluation committee's notebooks.

Responses must be typed on standard-size (8 ½ in. x 11 in.) paper with each page numbered sequentially. Responses must contain a table of contents with page numbers and be arranged to correspond to the terms and requirements of this RFP in the order those terms and/or requirements appear in this RFP. **Responses must be typed in 11-point font or larger.**

Submissions **may not exceed 20 pages** in length, excluding any cover letter and supporting documentation. Submissions that succinctly address the qualifications of the Respondent on projects similar to the services specified in Attachments A (Scope of Services) and B (Description of Services and Fee Schedule) will be more favorably received than Submissions which make it difficult for the evaluation committee to assess the Respondent's ability to perform the services ultimately expected of the selected contractor.

Unless otherwise requested or specified, there will be no pre-Submission meeting or site visit.

Except to verify receipt of the Submissions, Respondents shall not contact Galveston Wharves' staff after the closing date for receipt of Submissions. All Respondents will be notified when a selection has been made.

II. Client Background Information

The Port of Galveston is the second oldest port on the Gulf of Mexico. Today, its strategic proximity to the Gulf of Mexico enables the Port to play a key role in moving a wide range of cargo and support a broad segment of the maritime industry. Current cargo includes roll-on/roll-off, fresh fruit, grains and fertilizers, petroleum (crude and refined), specialty products (such as wind turbines and ship-to-rail cargo), and containers. The Port is also one of the nation's largest cruise ports. In 2019, the Port ranked as the nation's fourth busiest cruise port. As a result, the Port is a major contributor to the economy of Texas. An economic impact study completed in the fall of 2018 found that marine cargo activity at terminals in the Port generated a total of \$2.1 billion in economic activity and resulted in 14,103 direct, indirect, and induced jobs in the State of Texas.

III. Proposal Submissions and Selection Process

Each Respondent must provide a Submission containing a full and complete response to each of the questions and requests set forth in this section and fully comply with the General Requirements set out in Section I above and Section IV below.

The response shall provide a cost structure for all services as described in Attachment B.

The Submission package should begin with a cover letter, not exceeding one page in length that summarizes the Respondent's key qualifications and approach to performing the required services. If the Respondent is proposing a team or multiple- entity arrangement to perform the services, the cover letter shall identify the lead firm and all proposed subcontractor(s) and indicate the nature of the business relationship (e.g., joint venture, prime/subcontractor, etc.) between the parties. The letter shall indicate who is authorized to legally bind the Respondent and must be signed by that individual.

In preparing a Submission, Respondents shall answer each of the following questions and requests thoroughly. The completeness and succinctness of the Respondent's answers to these questions and requests will be considered in the evaluation process.

1. Discuss the capability of the Respondent's firm and/or team to provide all of the services requested in this RFP.
2. Answer the following business-related questions. If the Respondent's firm will directly provide all of the required goods and/or services for the project please answer the following for the Respondent. If the Respondent's firm is proposing to provide the goods and/or services for the project as part of a team under the Respondent's control, please answer the following questions for the lead firm and for each team member.
 - a. If a corporation, limited partnership, or limited liability Company, provide the name of the State in which the business was incorporated and whether the corporation is licensed to do business, and provide the requested services, in the State of Texas.
 - b. Identification information for key contact person (e.g., name, telephone number, e-mail address, mailing address, etc...).
3. Identify the key person(s)¹ who will be working on the project and summarize their qualifications. Provide a succinct resume of all key persons. (Resumes may be included as an attachment to the Submission and will not count against the page limit of the Submission.)
4. Identify any special certifications, degrees, licenses, or professional designations held by each of the

key person(s).

¹ Companies (or, teams of companies) submitting qualifications and proposals in response to this RFP should recognize that the key person(s) identified in the response will be designated as key person(s) in the agreement between Galveston Wharves and the successful Respondent. Changes in key person(s) after the agreement is signed require the advance approval Galveston Wharves staff.

5. Explain the respondent's understanding of, and experience with, the services requested. Describe similar projects the Respondent has worked on for clients similar in size to the Galveston Wharves with a client history dating back five years.
6. Describe the capability of the Respondent's organization to commit the resources necessary to provide the requested services through presenting the Respondent's historical fee structure and the Respondent's marketing products.
7. Identify the head office of the Respondent and, if different, the location of the Respondent's office in the region. If the Respondent is proposing a team arrangement, identify the locations of the head and local offices of the lead team member.
8. Describe the benefits that Galveston Wharves will realize in selecting the Respondent's firm or team for this project. Benefits may include unique or specialized processes or organizations, staff qualifications, capabilities, specialized experience, best practices, or other factors that distinguish the Respondent from other Respondents.
9. List up to five issues that the Respondent's firm has encountered in providing similar services to other clients. Identify how the Respondent's firm addressed and/or resolved those issues.
10. Provide a statement of exceptions, if any, to Galveston Wharves' *Master Services Agreement*, the *Scope of Services*, and any other material included, directly or by reference, in this RFP. A copy of Galveston Wharves' *Master Services Agreement* is included as Attachment C. Galveston Wharves will use this document as the basis of its agreement with the selected Respondent. If the Respondent takes exception to any of the terms or the scope of required services, the Respondent should identify those concerns and cite appropriate reasons in an appendix to the Submission. Galveston Wharves reserves the right to reject, or otherwise adjust the score of, Submissions that contain exceptions to Galveston Wharves' *Master Services Agreement*.
11. Provide three client references from governmental entities that can attest to the Respondent's prior experience with consulting projects and that are knowledgeable about the value of the Respondent's services on those projects. When providing client references, use the form included as Attachment D.
12. Briefly summarize any other appropriate factors, not already provided in response to the questions and requests listed above, about the Respondent's qualifications that are relevant to the consideration of the Respondent for this project.

IV. Description of Goods and Services

The Port is seeking a proposal for the requested equipment and services for both Internet Services and VoIP Services for a primary period of performance of three (3) years, with two (2) one-year extensions at the Port's option. See Attachment A – Bid Specifications and Scope of Services and Attachment B - List of Current Equipment and Services. Additionally, the training program should be specifically designed for the Port of Galveston's facilities and personnel. The Respondent should submit a Firm Fixed Price proposal which will include all of the required training and include all supplies and equipment necessary for the Port to maintain daily and uninterrupted Internet connectivity and telephone service. The Port envisions Subject Matter Experts (SME) involved in any and all facets of the equipment installation and employee training as required.

V. Fees and Expenses

The cost quoted for the reviews and evaluation tools should be all inclusive. No additional charges will be accepted for such things as travel, telephone consultations, computer time, copies, fax copies, or any other such items. The reports and all rights thereto will become the exclusive property of the Galveston Wharves.

1. Please provide services, fees, and any hourly rates for optional services.
2. Provide rate sheet for continuing support services needed.
3. In the last five years, has the Respondent been involved in any litigation, actions by a State Attorney General, or actions by the Department of Insurance related to fees or any services proposed? Is any action or litigation currently pending?
4. Are any of the services provided being offered for no charge? If so, please describe.
5. Describe your billing process in detail. Include a sample invoice to show how services provided are listed, amounts due, amounts received, etc. Include examples of any income offsets, such as commissions or other income.
6. For project work, will you provide a not-to-exceed fee?
7. How and when do you alert clients of out-of-scope fees?
8. Please provide any fees, by type of service, for the implementation and first year.

VI. Evaluation Process

The Evaluation Committee will use the evaluation criteria listed in the following paragraphs to evaluate Submissions:

- **Price (30%):** Although price will be a major consideration in evaluating the Submissions, it will not be the sole factor.
- **Experience and Past Performance (30%):** Evidence and documentation of prior experience that demonstrates the Respondent's ability to satisfactorily perform all of the required services and familiarity with Internet Protocol and VoIP Telephone Services. Overall specialized experience and technical competence and record of past performance. Strength of client references for same or similar services.
- **Respondent's Capability to Perform (20%).** Ability of Respondent to provide personnel with expertise in meeting or exceeding the requirements as outlined in the RFP. Ability of Respondent to transition from existing provider, if applicable, in a minimum amount of time and without disruption to current services will also be an important consideration.
- **Respondent's Understanding of Security Networks and connectivity to Internet Protocol systems (10%).** Ability of the Respondent to see potential differences of port security networks versus other public venues.
- **Miscellaneous considerations (10%).** Local presence of contractor (and its team). The Port will recognize and consider State of Texas Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program certifications, as well as compliance with administrative requirements of the RFP solicitation.

VII. Selection Process

After determining the highest ranked Respondent using the criteria described above, Galveston Wharves'

staff will first attempt to negotiate a contract with the Respondent. If Galveston Wharves is unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with the selected Respondent, Galveston Wharves shall, formally and in writing, end all negotiations with that Respondent and proceed to negotiate with the next Respondent in the order of the selection ranking until a contract is reached, or negotiations with all Respondents end.

VIII. Additional Requirements

A. General

Galveston Wharves does not assume, and hereby specifically disclaims, any responsibility or obligation, of any nature, to any of the persons or entities responding to this RFP. Galveston Wharves will make no payment or reimbursement of any cost, fee, or other expenditure whatsoever associated with the preparation or submission of a Submission.

The contract(s) awarded will be governed by the laws of the State of Texas and is (are) deemed payable and performable in Galveston County, Texas. The venue for all disputes thereunder shall lie in Galveston County, Texas.

B. Schedule

The Port intends to adhere to the following schedule for choosing the successful Respondent:

Milestone	Period End Date
Release of RFP for Qualified Submissions	Sunday, September 17, 2023
Questions due	Friday, Sep. 29, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. (CST)
Answer Provided by	Wednesday, October 4, 2023
Submissions Due; Public Opening	Friday, October 13, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. (CST)

C. Miscellaneous

In addition to all rights provided by law, Galveston Wharves:

1. Reserves the right to reject any or all Submissions; and,
2. May, at its sole discretion, waive technical mistakes, informalities, or irregularities in any Submission received.

Neither this document, nor the advertisement of the Notice of the RFP, is an offer. The attachments included with this RFP are incorporated herein for all purposes.

It is the express intent of Galveston Wharves that each Submission be: comprehensive, prepared in good faith, and be in full compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, rules, standards and ordinances. Acceptance of any Submission is expressly conditioned upon actual closing and funding of the project after approval of all documents by counsel for Galveston Wharves and by the Board of Trustees of the Galveston Wharves. Acceptance of any Submission is not acquiescence or agreement with any term or condition set forth in the Submission or any proposed documents included in, or referenced by, the Submission.

The proposal shall identify the existence, or lack thereof, of any actual or potential conflicts of interest, including, without limitation, whether the successful Respondent has a direct or indirect economic or other financial relationship with Galveston Wharves.

Galveston Wharves may determine that oral presentations are required before making a final decision. At its discretion, Galveston Wharves may invite proposers to make such presentations. Discussions will be on an individual basis and will be closed to third parties and other Respondents.

IX. Texas Public Information Act

Submissions will be subject to the Texas Public Information Act (the “Act”), located in Texas Government Code Chapter 552, and may be disclosed to the public upon request. Subject to the Act, Respondents may protect trade secrets and confidential information from public release. If the Respondent asserts that information provided in the Submission is trade secrets or other confidential information, it must clearly mark such information in boldface type and include the words “confidential” or “trade secret” at the top of the page in, at least, 14-point font.

Furthermore, the Respondent must identify trade secret or confidential information and provide an explanation of why the information is exempt from public disclosure under the Act in a separate section of the Submission. Respondents should consult the Texas Attorney General’s website for information concerning the Act’s application to proposals and potential exceptions to disclosure.

Galveston Wharves will make best efforts, but make no representation, that it will be able to maintain total confidentiality of the Respondent’s information. At all times, Galveston Wharves will comply with the provisions of the Texas Public Information Act as required by State law. The Public Information Handbook is freely available at https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/files/og/publicinfo_hb.pdf.

ATTACHMENT A – SCOPE OF SERVICES

Background and basic description of the requirement:

In order to fulfill its mission and operate efficiently, the Port depends heavily on high bandwidth connectivity to the Internet for its internal Administrative and Security networks, as well as to provide WiFi connectivity for the cruise terminal complex at the Texas Cruise Ship Terminals on Galveston Island. Additionally, the Port depends on high quality telephone services provided over VoIP to conduct its business and administer its facilities and operations.

The Port's primary administrative offices are located on the eighth (8th) floor of the Shearn Moody Plaza Building (SMP) located at 123 Rosenberg Avenue (25th Street), Galveston, Texas 77550. Port staff are also located in offices located in the cruise ship terminals at Pier 23-26 (Cruise Ship Terminal 1) and Pier 27-29 (Cruise Ship Terminal 2), the Port Police Department Building located adjacent to the Port's Cruise Ship Terminal 2 and in the Port's Construction and Maintenance Department Building located at 40th Street and Old Port Industrial Boulevard, Galveston, Texas 77550. Additionally, the Port maintains manned security gates and locations in the Port's east and west end terminal facilities, including 14th Street and Harborside Drive and 40th Street and Old Port Industrial Boulevard, as well as in Shearn Moody Plaza Parking Garage and the Galveston Transit Terminal, both of which are located in the Historic Downtown Strand district on 25th Street. Port personnel are also working in cruise passenger parking lots along Harborside Drive between 27th Street and 37th Street.

The Port of Galveston (POG) is accepting bids for high speed Internet service and VoIP telephone service. The primary goal of this RFP is to secure the most reliable, efficient, and cost effective Internet access and VoIP telephone service for the Port of Galveston and remain in compliance with all rules, regulations, filing and application procedures. Cost will be an important factor but not the only factor in the selection of the contractor.

Specifications are not intended to eliminate any reputable manufacturer, brand, or bidder. Reference to manufacturers, brand names, suppliers catalog numbers, etc., is intended to set quality standards and does not exclude bids from others as long as quality standards are met. Pictures, descriptions, and specifications shall accompany all bids. Bids may include any Wide Area Network (WAN) technologies acceptable to both parties.

Quotes will state all recurring and non-recurring costs to the Port of Galveston of any/all proposed services/solutions.

Contractor Qualifications and Responsibilities:

In the best interest of the Port of Galveston, a minimum set of qualifications is required from each participating contractor. The possession of these qualifications will ensure that the Port of Galveston receives efficient, reliable, and professional service. Preference will be given to contractors with experience in ISP/VoIP operations within a municipal environment. The Port of Galveston reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and also reserves the right to award the contract in a manner that is in the best interests of the Port of Galveston. Contractors wishing to submit a response to this RFP must

meet, at a minimum, but not limited to, the following requirements and submit proof of meeting these requirements with bid submissions.

- Contracts over \$10,000 require compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity Regulations, The Clean Air Act, The Clean Water Act, and Environmental Protection Agency Regulations.
- The POG is an equal opportunity agency and prohibits discrimination in any of its programs and activities, including employment, on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, color, age or any handicapping condition.
- Equal Employment Opportunity. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the first federal law designed to protect most U.S. employees from employment discrimination based upon that employee's (or applicant's) race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (Public Law 88-352, July 2, 1964, 78 Stat. 253, 42 U.S.C. Sec. 2000e et. seq.)
- Contractor must meet Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) requirements for telecommunications provider, or Internet Service Provider (ISP), or service provider, as applicable, for the term of the contract.
- Contractor must have employed on staff a minimum of two Microsoft Certified Systems Engineers (MCSE) for Windows 2012 Server or higher and, two Cisco Certified Networking Professionals (CCNP).
- Contractor must have at least five years of experience in implementation and support of ISP and VOIP operations in a municipal environment in Texas.
- Contractor must be able to provide on-site maintenance using experienced and qualified personnel.
- Contractor must submit at least five references who can verify successful completion of similar projects (ISP/VoIP).
- Contractor must provide a toll free telephone number for technical support, as a minimum, during the work week Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. Due to the nature of the Port's operations, technical support may be necessary after-hours and on weekends, particularly when cruise ship operations are ongoing. Contractor shall include as part of its proposal a toll free telephone number or other means of providing technical support outside of the base work week period stated above.
- It is understood that, except as otherwise specifically stated in this RFP, the Contractor shall provide and pay for all materials, labor, tools, equipment, transportation, temporary construction of every nature and all other services and facilities of every nature whatsoever, necessary to execute, complete and deliver the work within the specified time. Licenses necessary for the execution of the work shall be secured and paid for by the Contractor.
- Contractor may represent multiple providers needed to complete end-to-end connectivity, and will indicate the participation of those providers. Contractor will take responsibility as the single point of contact in a multiple provider solution.
- The Contractor shall protect all buildings, furniture, equipment, personal items, trees, shrubs, lawns and all landscaping on Port property from damage. Any damaged property shall be repaired

or replaced at the Contractor's expense. Labor shall include all restoration (leveling, sodding) of grounds broken up during the installation of this network.

- Contractor must maintain compliance with the specifications of this bid throughout the life of any awarded contract.

