
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

PORT OF HARLINGEN AUTHORITY Railyard Industrial Park Development

RFQ No. 2026-01

Section 1: Background

Introduction

The Port of Harlingen Authority (Owner), a navigation district and political subdivision of the State of Texas, hereby invites Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) from qualified firms to provide **Progressive Design-Build (PDB)** services for the **development and construction of a new railyard and associated rail infrastructure** (Project).

This RFQ describes the minimum qualifications, submittal format, and evaluation criteria by which the Owner will select up to three (3) Respondents for short-listing. Short-listed Respondents will subsequently be invited to submit proposals in response to a Request for Proposals (RFP), leading to the award of a **Progressive Design-Build Contract**.

The Project will be delivered in two phases using the Progressive Design-Build method:

Phase 1 – Preliminary Design and Preconstruction Services

- Railyard layout planning and concept development
- Preliminary engineering (approximately 60%)
- Cost modeling, Gantt and schedule development
- Risk identification and allocation

Phase 2 – Final Design and Construction Services

- Final engineering and permitting
- Procurement of rail materials and contractors
- Construction of railyard infrastructure
- Integration with existing railroad operations
- Testing, commissioning, and close-out

The Owner shall not be liable for any costs incurred by Respondents in the preparation or submission of an SOQ.

Owner's Objectives

The Port of Harlingen Authority intends to partner collaboratively with the selected Design-Builder during Phase 1 to develop a railyard design that is operationally efficient, constructible, and cost-effective.

Key objectives include:

- **Quality and Safety:** Deliver a new high quality, safe and efficient rail park that meets or exceeds all applicable industry standards, including Union Pacific Railroad.
- **Added Capacity and Efficiency:** Deliver the new rail park facility with new access off the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) main line to significantly increase the Port's rail capacity and operational efficiency. The new facility should be designed to efficiently handle a high volume of railcars and enhance the Port's ability to attract and serve future tenants
- **Cost and Schedule Certainty:** Deliver the project in a cost-effective and timely manner. The Progressive Design-Build model has been chosen to provide early cost and schedule certainty and to foster a collaborative approach to managing the project's budget and timeline.
- **Future Expandability:** Designing the rail park using a phased approach to accommodate future expansion in a logical and cost-effective manner, in accordance with the Port's Master Plan
- **Collaboration:** Foster a balanced allocation of risk between the Port and selected Design-Builder as well as collaborative partnership between the Port and the Design -Builder and all project stakeholders, including but not limited to Union Pacific Railroad, local utilities and potential future tenants.

Section 2: Project Overview

Project Location

The Project is located within the Port of Harlingen in Cameron County, Texas. The proposed site for the rail park is an area of land located immediately west of the Port's current operational footprint (see the attached site plan). The site is part of a larger area planned for long-term rail expansion. The site is currently undeveloped and will require significant site preparations.

Project Scope

The Project scope is the design and construction of the first phase of a new, modern rail park facility. The first phase of the project is expected to include:

- **Alternative Analysis:** Perform an initial study and alternatives analysis to identify a preferred first phase alternative to move forward to design and define possible options for future expansion. Study shall consider potential for railcar stage in Phase One.
- **Railroad Coordination:** Lead coordination and design/construction approval efforts with the Union Pacific Railroad.
- **Utility Coordination:** Lead coordination efforts with existing and proposed utilities.
- **Environmental Assessment & Permitting:** Determine and prepare applicable environmental and other permits for application by the Port to appropriate agencies.
- **Site Development:** Design and construct all necessary site work, including clearing, grading, access, drainage, and utilities to support the rail park.
- **Rail Infrastructure:** Design and construct Phase 1 of the rail park facility in accordance with the preferred alternative identified in the alternative analysis. Scope includes lead tracks to connect the new rail park to the Union Pacific Railroad mainline. All track work must be constructed in accordance with UPRR's Industrial Track Construction Specifications. Design shall comply with applicable standards, including Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), where applicable.

Project Budget

The estimated total project cost for the new rail-park facility is currently \$15,000,000. This amount represents the total PDB project budget and does not include the Port's other associated costs for the project, which may include advisory services, right of way, easements, data collection, permit fees and /or administrative costs.

Project Permits and Approvals

The project is anticipated to require a number of permits and approvals from federal, state and local agencies, as well as from Union Pacific Railroad. It is anticipated that new environmental assessments, including cultural, historical, and environmental surveys, will be required for the project site.

Project Schedule

The following is a high-level, preliminary schedule for the project, which is subject to change. A more detailed schedule will be developed collaboratively with the selected Design-Builder.

Milestones	Estimated Completion
RFQ Issued	Q3 2026
SOQ Submissions Due	Q3 2026
Short-listed Firms Notified	Q3 2026
RFP Issued to short-listed firms	Q3 2026
PDB Contract Award	Q4 2026
Phase 1 NTP (Preliminary Design & pre-construction	Q1 2027
Phase 2 Final Design & Construction	Q4 2027
Substantial Completion	Q4 2028

Section 3: Progressive Design-Build Services

General

The selected Design-Builder shall provide all services necessary to plan, design, permit, and construct the Project in accordance with the Design-Build Institute of America (DBIA).

Roles and Responsibilities

Owner Responsibilities

- Provide project oversight and decision-making
- Review and approve design milestones
- Coordinate port operations and stakeholders
- Secure funding and grant oversight

Design-Builder Responsibilities

- Serve as sole point of responsibility for design and construction
 - Lead engineering, estimating, and scheduling
 - Manage risk, safety, environmental and quality programs
 - Coordinate with railroads, regulatory agencies, and utilities for all necessary permits
 - Deliver the Project in accordance with agreed scope, schedule, and price
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Section 4: Procurement Process

RFQ Contact and Communications

All communications regarding this RFQ shall be directed to:

Walker Smith

Port Director

Port of Harlingen Authority

24633 E Port Rd, Harlingen, TX 78550

Phone: (956) 423-0283

Email: walker@portofharlingen.com

Unauthorized contact with other Port officials or staff may result in disqualification.

Procurement Schedule (*Preliminary*)

Milestone	Date	Interval
RFQ Issued	7/10/2026	RFQ Date
Questions Deadline	7/20/2026	RFQ + 10 Days
Addendum Issued	7/27/2026	RFQ + 17 days
SOQs Due	8/10/2026	RFQ + 30 days
Short-List Announcement	8/21/2026	RFQ + 41 days
RFP Issued	8/21/2026	RFP Date
One on One Mtgs w/ shortlisted teams	8/24-8/28/2026	
Deadline for Questions/Comments	8/31/2026	RFP + 10 days
Final RFP Addendum posted	9/9/2026	RFP + 19 days
RFP Submittals Due	9/23/2026	RFP + 33 days
Interviews (Optional by Owner)	10/5-10/9/2026	
Notice to Selected Team	10/14/2026	RFP + 54 Days
Contract Negotiations	Oct-Nov 2026	
Commission approval	11/5/2026	RFP + 70 days

Section 5: SOQ Submission Requirements

Submittal Place and Deadline

Submittal must be received not later than 2:00 PM on Wednesday, August 10, 2026.

Sealed submissions must be supplied on a flash drive (PDF format) along with five (5) hard copies. Sealed submissions must be addressed and delivered to:

Walker Smith, Port Director

Port of Harlingen Rail Park RFQ 2026-01

Port of Harlingen Authority
24633 E Port Rd
Harlingen, TX 78550

Each Respondent assumes full responsibility for timely delivery of its SOQ. Any SOQ received after the submittal deadline will not be considered.

Submission Format

- Maximum length: **16 pages** (excluding transmittal letter & appendices)
- 8.5" x 11" format (limited foldouts allowed)
- PDF submission plus required hard copies

Required Content

1. **Transmittal Letter**
 2. **Executive Summary**
 3. **Design-Builder Profile and Subcontractors**
 4. **Project Team Structure (Organizational chart) and Key Personnel**
 5. **Relevant Railyard / Rail Infrastructure Experience of Design Builder & Subcontractors**
 6. **Experience & approach to Progressive Design-Build**
 7. **Current workload**
 8. **Appendices**
 - Acknowledgement of addenda
 - Acknowledgement of Social Equity Policy Compliance (Exhibit A)
 - Financial statements & performance bond
 - Resumes of key personnel
 - Safety Program & Record
 - Optional Contract Comments
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Section 6: Evaluation and Selection

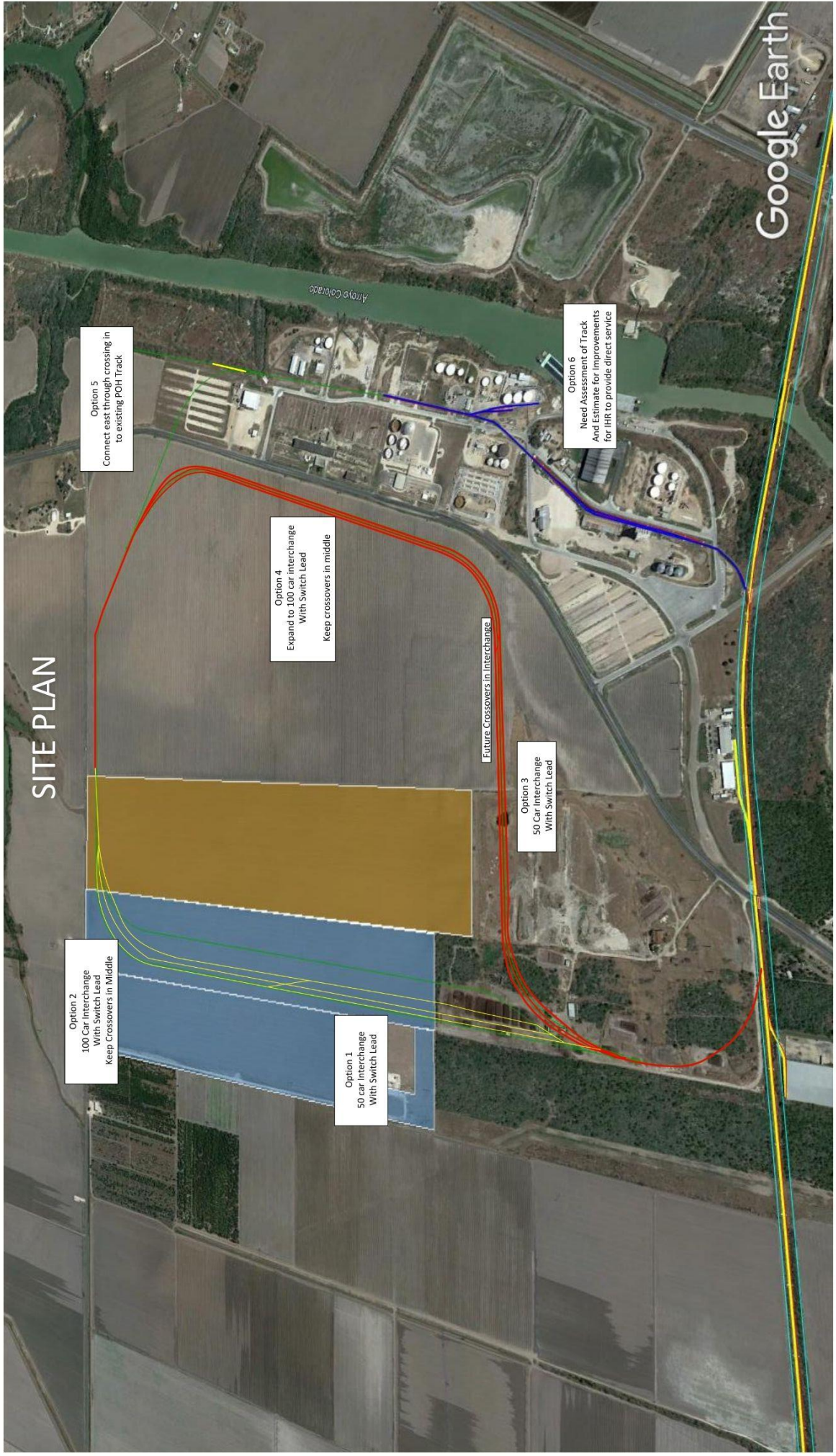
Evaluation Criteria (Weighted)

- Project Team Structure & Key Personnel – **40%**
- Relevant Railyard & Rail Infrastructure Experience – **30%**
- PDB Experience & Approach – **20%**
- Design- Builder Profile, Safety & Current workload – **10%**
- **Pass/fail requirements include:**
 - Executive summary
 - Financial capability
 - Performance & Payment Bonds

- Insurance
- Acknowledgment of compliance with Port of Harlingen Social Equity Policy

Section 7: Conditions for Respondents

- Procurement governed by applicable Texas Water Code
 - All SOQs subject to Texas Public Information Act
 - Owner reserves all rights to modify, cancel, or reject submittals
 - Key Personnel and firms must remain committed throughout procurement
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SITE PLAN

Option 2
100 Car Interchange
With Switch Lead
Keep Crossovers in Middle

Option 1
50 car Interchange
With Switch Lead

Option 4
Expand to 100 car interchange
With Switch Lead
Keep crossovers in middle

Option 5
Connect east through crossing in
to existing POH Track

Option 3
50 Car Interchange
With Switch Lead

Future Crossovers in Interchange

Option 6
Need Assessment of Track
And Estimate for Improvements
for IHR to provide direct service

EXHIBIT A

PORT OF HARLINGEN AUTHORITY COMMISSION POLICY

SOCIAL EQUITY

Policy No.

4.7.22.1

1. PURPOSE

This Policy prioritizes the Port of Harlingen Authority's commitment to social equity, using a racial equity focus, and to leverage the Port's strengths to create a more prosperous, equitable and livable region. This Policy confirms and reinforces The Port's commitment to diversity through creating and maintaining an inclusive and collaborative workplace culture. It recognizes the rewards of embedding such culture. Consistent with our values, we are a workplace that recognizes and values diversity.

2. POLICY PARTICIPANTS

All Port employees and contingent workers, Port business, Board of Commission, and stakeholder partners.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the Policy of the Port of Harlingen Authority to promote social equity with the purpose of advancing fair and equitable inclusion and creating the conditions in which all people can participate, prosper, and achieve equitable outcomes with respect to the Port's employment, business, and services.

Port staff are directed to establish a framework to integrate social equity considerations and goals into decision making processes within the Port consistent with this Policy.

- Because historically inequitable policies and practices in our community may have resulted in many social inequities that persist to this day;
- Because it is the Port's focus to enhance regional prosperity and we seek to do so with a social equity "lens";
- Because by addressing the barriers experienced by minorities, we hope to also identify solutions and remove barriers for other historically underserved population groups;

- Because we have a responsibility as neighbors in our community to understand the impacts of our decisions and our operations; and
- Because we believe more diverse voices lead to better business decisions.

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 Contingent Worker

Workers used to temporarily fill in for FTE (Full Time Employee) vacancies or to perform project-based services that are discrete in nature and that cannot be performed by an existing Port employee because of workload, specialized nature of work to be performed, etc. (i.e., contract services).

4.2 Social Equity

Fair and equitable inclusion and creating the conditions in which all people can participate, prosper, and achieve equitable outcomes with respect to the Port's employment, business, and services.

4.3 Racial Equity

The condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, one's access to opportunity. Racial equity can be advanced by ensuring that all races have access to opportunity, and that access may need to be tailored to meet an individual's or group's specific needs.

4.4 Historically Underserved

Historically underserved communities are those groups that either face barriers to participate in decision-making processes and/or have documented low levels of access to employment, service, and business opportunities.