



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ACCOUNTING SERVICES**

The Fulton County/City of Atlanta Land Bank Authority, Inc., d/b/a, the Metro Atlanta Land Bank (“MALB”) is issuing a request for proposal (“Proposal”) from qualified public accounting firm/s and/or certified public accountant/s (“CPA”) to provide bookkeeping and accounting services for the MALB.

The MALB has traditionally engaged sole proprietor consultants and small/medium accounting firms to serve in the role of bookkeeper/accountant. The MALB’s complexity of the operations requires the use of a CPA for monthly bookkeeping, annual audit support, and vendor payment processing.

Interested firms should submit an electronic or physical copy of their Proposal, which addresses the Proposal Requirements described in the Scope of Work section. Fax proposals are not acceptable.

**PROPOSALS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL 4:30 PM (EDT), November 15, 2023**

**Electronic submissions should be addressed to:**

**Mr. Christopher Norman – Executive Director**

**Metro Atlanta Land Bank**

**[cnorman@metroatlantalandbank.org](mailto:cnorman@metroatlantalandbank.org)**

**with a copy to:**

**Elizabeth Roberts, Esq.**

**[eroberts@metroatlantalandbank.org](mailto:eroberts@metroatlantalandbank.org)**

**Physical copies should be mailed or hand delivered to:**

**229 Peachtree Street NE**

**Suite 525**

**Atlanta, Georgia 30303**

If you have any questions concerning this request, please contact Elizabeth Roberts, Esq. at (404) 585-3398.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §48-4-60 the Fulton County/City of Atlanta Land Bank Authority, Inc. was established through an Interlocal Cooperation Agreement dated January 19, 1994 which was amended and restated in 2017 and continued the MALB pursuant to the new provisions and powers of the "Georgia Land Bank Act" (the City of Atlanta (16-R-4112) and Fulton County (16-1045)). The Amended and Restated Interlocal Agreement between Fulton County, Georgia and the City of Atlanta, Georgia bound both parties to the following purpose:

- A. The Land Bank Members shall participate jointly in the continued incorporation of a nonprofit corporation named the Fulton County/City of Atlanta Land Bank Authority, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as the "Authority"), the establishment of which is to foster the public purpose of returning property which is dilapidated, abandoned, foreclosed and/or tax delinquent and in a nonrevenue generating, nontax producing status, to an effective utilization status in order to provide housing, new industry, and jobs for the citizens of the City of Atlanta and of Fulton County.
- B. In carrying out this purpose, the Authority shall, in accordance with applicable laws and codes, acquire title to certain tax delinquent, dilapidated, abandoned or foreclosed properties which it will in turn inventory, classify, manage, maintain, protect, rent, lease, repair, insure, alter, sell, trade, exchange or otherwise dispose of under such terms and conditions as determined in the sole discretion of the Authority.
- C. In further carrying out this purpose the Authority may, in its discretion, and in conjunction with the Land Bank Members' respective School Districts, extinguish past due tax liens from property foreclosed upon by the Land Bank Members in their tax collection capacities, in accordance with the guidelines contained herein.
- D. The purpose of this Agreement is to empower the Authority to exercise the powers, duties, functions and responsibilities of a land bank under the Georgia Land Bank Act (O.C.G.A. §48-4-100 et seq.) as same may be amended, and to do all other things necessary or convenient to implement the purposes, objectives and provisions of the Georgia Land Bank Act, as same may be amended, and the purposes, objectives and powers delegated to a land bank under other laws or executive orders.

Over the past 29 years, the MALB has served the City of Atlanta and Fulton County in this capacity and has stood as a model for other Land Bank Authorities around the country.

Funding for the MALB's operational needs is provided from both the City of Atlanta and Fulton County through annual funding requests, as well as, from philanthropic sources and transactional revenue. The MALB also periodically receives funds for programmatic initiatives. The sources of these funds are local and federal.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

Services to be performed include the following:

### **Project #1 – Assist Auditor with Completion of Financial Audits for FY2020, FY2021 and FY2022**

- Auditor is currently completing financial audits for fiscal years 2020, 2021 and 2022. The Vendor will assist auditor and MALB staff with all required tasks to complete all audits.

### **Project #2 – Review property specific transactions**

- The Vendor will review all QuickBooks accounting entries and information related to all property transactions from 2018 to present. The review will ensure that all property transactions are accurately recorded in QuickBooks and associated financial statements.

### **Project #3 – Set up Bill.com Account Interface or Equivalent**

- The Vendor will coordinate with MALB staff to acquire license/subscription to Bill.com or equivalent platform. Vendor will integrate Bill.com or equivalent platform into QuickBooks financial management system and assist MALB staff with training to effectively utilize.

### **Project #4 – Assist with Reinstatement of Federal 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Status**

- The Vendor will assist MALB with preparing and filing all required documentation to obtain reinstatement of Federal 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Status for MALB.

### **Project #5 – File Federal Tax Returns**

- The Vendor will interface with Internal Revenue Services (IRS) to determine all required tax returns. Vendor will prepare required tax return documentation and coordinate with MALB to file with IRS.

## **Additional Engagement and Support**

In addition to the aforementioned projects, the Vendor will provide support for the following activities on an ongoing annual basis:

- Review Chart of Accounts to determine adequacy for MALB activity.
- Utilize Chart of Accounts for accounting entries.
- Maintain General Ledger system in QuickBooks by identifying daily activity in bank accounts. Reconcile bank accounts monthly. Includes reconciling splits of depository and disbursement activity. Monthly reports provided to MALB designated staff and Board recipients.
- Maintain books on accruals basis such as Grant Receivable and other accruals.
- Manage grant receipts and apply to proper Grant Receivable.
- Load and track program and grant related budgets.
- Assist Vacant Property Manager and Office Manager with reconciliation of insurance and property management expenditures and reimbursements.

- Record and reconcile expenditures to proper job/contract agreement in QuickBooks.
- Track and maintain fixed assets and properties purchased by MALB along with associated depreciation, if any.
- Assist Office Manager with Payroll Journal Entries into QuickBooks.
- Assist with annual year-end audits.
- Develop, improve, and generate monthly Financial Statements for Executive Director and Board of Directors.
- Provide ongoing recommendations for process improvement.
- Assist Executive Director with review, improvement, and implementation of Accounting Policies and Procedures.

## **EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS**

1. Evaluation Committee – Proposals received will be evaluated by a committee consisting of MALB Staff, MALB Board Directors and selected professionals.
2. Review of Proposals – The Evaluation Committee will use a two-step method to render a decision on the selection of the awardee.

**Step 1.** Proposals must meet certain mandatory criteria in order to qualify for further evaluation. Any “no” answer to the first three questions will disqualify the proposal.

1. Is the firm legally properly licensed?  yes  no
2. Is the firm independent?  yes  no
3. Is the firm registered with E-Verify or if exempt, does the owner/principal possess a valid driver’s license from Georgia or another U.S. State or proof of U.S. citizenship?  
 yes  no
4. Has disciplinary action been taken or is pending against the firm?  yes  no

**Step 2.** Proposals will be scored using the following technical criteria. Points for each question will range from 0-15. The maximum technical score is 100 points. Proposals should address each question.

- Does the proposal fully respond to the needs of the MALB with regard to accounting services? (0-10 points)

- ❑ Has the proposer demonstrated sufficient stability, continuity of operations, and resources to provide reasonable assurance of its ability to perform the required services over at least a one year period? (0-10 points)
- ❑ Does the firm have a quality control program to help ensure adherence to high professional standards? (0-5 points)
- ❑ Has the firm performed similar services for other local governments, or has there been experience working with the City of Atlanta and Fulton County? If so, please list the references for local government experience and indicate if we may contact them. (0-10 points)
- ❑ Has the firm performed services for any non-profit organizations? If so, please list the references for non-profit experience and indicate if we may contact them. (0-5)
- ❑ Is the quality of the firm's professional personnel to be assigned to the engagement and quality of the firm's management support personnel available for technical consultation adequate? (0-15 points)
- ❑ Will the field personnel to be assigned to the engagement have previous non-profit or local government experience? How experienced and credentialed are the staff that will be involved? Are the "in-charge" staff CPA's? (0-15)
- ❑ Does the proposal demonstrate the firm's familiarity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) as they apply to non-profits or local governments? Does it also demonstrate familiarity with grant accounting? (0-15 points)
- ❑ Does the proposal adequately describe in a clear, concise, and understandable manner the work to be performed and procedures to be used? (0-15)

## **PROPOSAL FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS**

In order to secure information in a form, which will ensure that your proposal will be properly evaluated, you are asked to submit your proposal in the format listed below. Standard proposal formats are acceptable provided the following information is included:

- ❖ Title page should include the proposal subject, the firm's name, address, phone and fax numbers, email address, contact person, and date of the proposal.
- ❖ A Table of Contents with page numbers.
- ❖ A transmittal letter briefly stating the understanding of the work to be done, the commitment to perform the work within the period, a statement why the firm believes it to be the best qualified to perform the engagement and that the proposal is an irrevocable offer for a stated period of time (minimum 90 days).
- ❖ Information about the firm. Is the firm local, national or regional? Outline the firm's history, philosophy and target market. Does the firm meet all CPA licensing and continued education requirements? Is the firm independent with respect to the MALB?
- ❖ A description of your understanding of the project objectives and outcomes and how these will be achieved.
- ❖ Team composition—a complete listing of all key personnel who will be assigned to this project, their background, experience, qualifications, roles and responsibilities, and availability.
- ❖ Provide prior experience with providing similar services for the past four years. Information on each engagement should indicate term of engagement, and types of services provided (i.e. bookkeeping, audit, consulting, etc.). Highlight particular experience in dealing with non-profit organizations and/or local governments.
- ❖ Provide references of at least three accounting services clients (with phone numbers and contact persons). If applicable, include reference contacts for local government or non-profit clients as part of the references. The total number of references may exceed three. The clients listed should be those served by members of the proposed accounting team and/or the local office that will serve the MALB.
- ❖ Provide information as to the approach, timing, and work program of the engagement team. Include a proposed work plan and time schedule addressing the scope of work.

- ❖ A section detailing the cost for the work, including cost estimates for out-of-pocket expenses and a proposed payment schedule based on the work plan. Please also indicate the total estimated hours required by classification by the partner, manager, senior and staff.
- ❖ Provide description of internal quality control program used to ensure high standards of performance.
- ❖ Outline the level of support your firm will require of the MALB staff or the Board of Directors.

### **WITHDRAWAL OF RFP PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Proposals may be withdrawn before the RFP submittal deadline by submitting a written request to the Contact Person. Re-submittal before the RFP submittal deadline can be made; however, they may not be re-submitted after the deadline.

### **RFP COSTS**

All costs incurred in the preparation and presentation of the RFP shall be completely absorbed by the responding party to the RFP. All documents submitted as part of the RFP will become property of the MALB. Requests for specific material to be returned will be considered. Any material submitted that is confidential must be clearly marked as such.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS**

The selected firm agrees to be bound by applicable Federal, State and Local laws, regulations and directives as they pertain to the performance of the accounting services contract.

## **AWARD BASIS**

At the option of the Board of Directors of the MALB, finalists may be selected for a final round of negotiations; however, potential vendors are encouraged to present their best offers with their initial submission.

MALB reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals, to waive any irregularities in any proposal process, and to make an award of contract in any manner in which MALB, acting in the sole and exclusive exercise of its discretion, deems to be in MALB's best interest. The award of the contract will not necessarily be made to the firm offering the lowest price.

## **CONTRACTUAL DEVELOPMENT**

Once a proposal is accepted, the successful respondent will enter into a contract with MALB in their role as management entity for the MALB Board of Directors. Contract discussion and negotiation will follow the award selection. Bidders must be amenable to inclusion, in a contract, of any information provided whether herein or in response to this RFP, or developed subsequently during the selection process.

## **OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### 1. WORK PRODUCT

All work papers prepared in connection with the contracted services will remain the property of the successful bidder. The work papers must be retained for a period of five years and be made available to the MALB or the City of Atlanta and Fulton County upon request. All reports rendered to the MALB are the exclusive property and subject to their use and control.

### 2. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

The successful bidder and its agents, officers and employees shall act at all times in an independent capacity during the term of the agreement and in the performance of the services to be rendered, and shall not act as, and shall not be, and shall not in any manner be considered to be agents, officers or employees of MALB, the City of Atlanta or Fulton County.

### 3. ASSIGNMENT

Neither the agreement, nor any part thereof, shall be assigned by the successful bidder without the prior written consent of MALB and the MALB Board of Directors.

## **CONTRACT TERMS**

The firm that is selected is eligible to enter into a one-time service contract with the option to extend and/or amend. MALB may terminate the contract upon written notice to the vendor of not less than thirty (30) days.

The MALB also reserves the right to request changes in the selected firm's representation if, at our discretion, assigned personnel are not satisfying the needs of the MALB.

## **PAYMENT TERMS**

The MALB will pay the compensation for services, as included in the accepted proposal, based on net 30 days from date of receipt of invoice.

## **INFRINGEMENT AND INDEMNIFICATION**

The firm awarded this contract pursuant to the RFP process agrees to protect, defend and hold harmless the MALB against any demand for payment for use of any patented materials, process, article, or device that it may enter into the rendering of the necessary services. Furthermore, the selected firm agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the MALB, their employees and the MALB Board of Directors from suits or actions of every nature and description arising out of, or in connection with, the performance of those contracts, or on account of any injuries or damages received or sustained by a party or parties by or from any act of the selected firm, or its agents.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

The MALB emphasizes that all respondents will receive full consideration without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sex, disability, age or sexual orientation. While no additional points will be given for their status during the qualification and award process, minority and women-owned firms are especially encouraged to respond to this RFP.

## **LIMITATIONS**

The MALB, reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals and to waive any informality in the solicitation process. Total proposal length excluding cover letter should not exceed 15 pages. Note that this also excludes exhibits.

## **BIDDER'S QUESTIONS**

Any technical questions concerning the Request for Proposals should be submitted in writing to:

Elizabeth Roberts, Esq.  
Internal General Counsel/Sr. Program Director  
Metro Atlanta Land Bank  
225 Peachtree Street, Suite 525  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
**Email: [eroberts@metroatlantalandbank.org](mailto:eroberts@metroatlantalandbank.org)**  
**Tel. (404) 585-3398**

Such questions must be received by the date and time stipulated in the calendar of events. If necessary, written responses to these questions will be provided to all firms holding Request for Proposals by the date and time stipulated in the calendar of events.

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Listed below are the important actions and dates/times by which the actions must be taken or completed. If MALB finds it necessary to change any of these dates, it will be done by addendum.

<b>October 18, 2023</b>	Issue Date
<b>October 25, 2023, 10:00 a.m.</b>	Pre-Proposal conference (non-mandatory) Marquis II Conference Room <i>(Located via doors on north side of hotel entrance roundabout/drop off)</i> (Marriott Marquis Complex) 285 Peachtree Center Ave. NE Atlanta, GA 30303
<b>October 27, 2023, 4:30 p.m.</b>	Deadline for questions regarding RFP
<b>November 1, 2023, 4:30 p.m.</b>	MALB issues responses to questions
<b>November 15, 2023, 4:30 p.m.</b>	Proposal submission deadline
<b>December 20, 2023</b>	Notification of Award