

**Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC)**  
**In Cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)**

**Announces Availability of Municipal Solid Waste Grants Program Funding  
For Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027 and Issues this Request for Project Applications**

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**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this program is to provide funding for eligible local and regional municipal solid waste management projects in support of the goals and objectives of H-GAC's adopted Regional Solid Waste Management Plan (RSWMP). Funding for this program is provided through a grant from the TCEQ, under the authority of §361.014, Texas Health and Safety Code.

**II. ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS**

The following public entities are eligible for grant funding under this program (nonprofit organizations and private companies are not directly eligible, but may be subcontracted by eligible public entities):

- Cities
- Counties
- Public school districts (excluding universities and other post-secondary educational institutions)
- General and special law districts with the authority and responsibility for water quality protection or municipal solid waste (MSW) management (e.g., river authorities and municipal utility districts)
- Councils of governments (COGs)

**III. GOVERNING STANDARDS**

The conduct of projects provided funding under this program shall be in accordance with all applicable state and local statutes, rules, regulations, and guidelines. The main governing standards, include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- §361.014(b) of the Texas Health and Safety Code.
- Title 30 Texas Administrative Code (30 TAC) Chapter 330, Subchapter O, TCEQ MSW Regulations.
- 30 TAC Chapter 14, TCEQ Regulations.
- Texas Grants Management Standards (TxGMS)
- General Appropriations Act, 89th Legislature.
- H-GAC/TCEQ Allowable Expenditure Guidelines (pertaining to allowable costs for cost reimbursement contracts and grants).
- The Uniform Guidance 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 200, Subpart F; and
- The Grant Agreement between the Council of Governments and TCEQ.

#### **IV. AUTHORIZED PROJECT CATEGORIES**

The following project categories are eligible for funding. Under each category heading is a brief description of the purpose of that category, as well as special requirements pertaining to that project category.

##### **Category 1. Local Enforcement**

This category consists of projects that contribute to the prevention of illegal dumping of municipal solid waste, including liquid wastes. Under this category, grant recipients may investigate illegal dumping problems; enforce laws and regulations pertaining to the illegal dumping of municipal solid waste, including liquid waste; establish a program to monitor the collection and transport of municipal liquid wastes through administration of a manifesting system; and educate the public on illegal dumping laws and regulations. Funding limitations applicable to this category include:

- Funds may not be expended to any law enforcement agency regulated by Chapter 1701, Texas Occupations Code, unless: (a) the law enforcement agency is in compliance with all rules on Law Enforcement Standards and Education; or (b) the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education certifies that the requesting agency is in the process of achieving compliance with such rules. If compliance with TCLEOSE rules is still pending, attach a certification from TCLEOSE to indicate that the agency is in the process of achieving compliance with the rules.
- When funding is to be provided for salaries of local enforcement officers, the funds recipient must certify that at least one of the officers has attended or will attend within the term of the funding the TCEQ's Criminal Environmental Law Enforcement Training or equivalent training.
- Local enforcement vehicles and related enforcement equipment purchased entirely with funds provided under this program may only be used for activities to enforce laws and regulations pertaining to littering and illegal dumping, and may not be used for other code enforcement or law enforcement activities. Vehicles and equipment that are only partially funded must be dedicated for use in local enforcement activities for a percentage of time equal to the proportion of the purchase expense funded.
- Entities receiving funds for a local enforcement officer, enforcement vehicles, and/or related equipment for use by an enforcement officer, must investigate major illegal dumping problems, on both public and private property, in addition to investigating general litter problems on public property.
- Entities receiving funds to conduct a local enforcement program must cooperate with the TCEQ's regional investigative staff in identifying and investigating illegal dumping problems. Lack of cooperation with the TCEQ staff may constitute a reason to withhold future funding to that entity for local enforcement activities.
- Funds may not be used for investigation and enforcement activities related to the illegal dumping of industrial and/or hazardous waste. Instances where industrial or hazardous waste is discovered at a site do not preclude the investigation of that site, so long as the intent and focus of the investigation and enforcement activities are on the illegal dumping of municipal solid waste.

- Grant funds may not be used for either the cleanup of illegal disposal sites or the transportation and/or disposal of wastes collected during such cleanups.
- Funds may not be used to purchase ammunition, firearms, or HazMat gear.

### **Category 2. Litter and Illegal Dumping Cleanup and Community Collection Events**

Litter and illegal dumping cleanup may include both ongoing and periodic activities to clean up litter and illegal dumping of MSW, excluding cleanup of scrap tire dumping sites. Eligible expenses include waste removal, recycling of removed materials, fencing and barriers, and signage. Placement of trash collection receptacles in public areas with chronic littering problems may also be funded. Reuse or recycling options should be considered for managing the materials collected through these efforts, to the extent feasible. Cleanup of hazardous waste will not be eligible for funding.

Periodic community collection events to provide for collection of residential waste materials for which there is not a readily available collection alternative may also be funded. This type of project may not include regular solid waste collection efforts, such as weekly waste collection. Funds may not be used for the disposal of collected wastes.

Funding limitations applicable to this category include:

- Projects funded to clean up litter or illegal dumping on private property must be conducted through a local government sponsor or H-GAC. Funds may not be provided directly to a private landowner or other private responsible party for cleanup expenses. The local government sponsor or H-GAC must either contract for and oversee the cleanup work, or conduct the work with its own employees and equipment.
- The costs for cleanup of hazardous waste and/or Class 1 nonhazardous industrial waste that may be found at a municipal solid waste site must be funded from other sources, unless a waiver from this restriction is granted by the TCEQ to deal with immediate threats to human health or the environment.
- The cleanup of Class 2 and 3 nonhazardous industrial waste that may be found at a municipal solid waste site may be funded in conjunction with the cleanup of the municipal solid waste found at a site.
- All notification, assessment, and cleanup requirements pertaining to the release of wastes or other chemicals of concern, as required under federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including 30 TAC Chapter 330, TCEQ's MSW Rules, and 30 TAC Chapter 350, TCEQ's Risk Reduction Rules, must be complied with as part of any activities funded under this program.
- All materials cleaned up using funds provided under this program must be properly disposed of or otherwise properly managed in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. To the extent feasible, it is recommended that materials removed from a site be reused or recycled. For projects to clean up large amounts of materials, H-GAC will consider withholding at least ten percent (10%) of the reimbursements under an implementation project grant or subcontract, until documentation is provided that the cleanup work has been completed and the materials

properly managed.

- Funded community collection events may be held no more frequently than four times per year, and must only be intended to provide residents an opportunity to dispose of hard-to-collect materials, such as large and bulky items (eg: large appliances and electronics) that are not picked up under the regular collection system, and might otherwise be illegally dumped by residents.

### **Category 3. Source Reduction and Recycling**

This category may include projects that are intended to provide a direct and measurable effect on reducing the amount of MSW going into landfills, by diverting materials from the MSW disposal stream for recycling or reuse, or by reducing waste generation at the source. Funded activities may include: diversion from the waste stream and/or collection, processing for transport, and transportation of materials for reuse and/or recycling; implementation of efficiency improvements in order to increase source reduction and recycling, to include full-cost accounting systems and cost-based rate structures, establishment of a solid waste services enterprise fund, and mechanisms to track and assess the level of recycling activity in the community on a regular basis; and educational and promotional activities to increase source reduction and recycling.

Funding limitations applicable to this category include:

- Any program or project funded under this program with the intent of demonstrating the use of products made from recycled and/or reused materials shall have as its primary purpose the education and training of residents, governmental officials, private entities, and others to encourage a market for using these materials.
- Any revenues realized from recycling efforts funded through this program by a grant recipient must be placed back into the respective solid waste management program and may not be placed into a funded entities general revenue fund. Any monies realized must be used to promote sustainability of the funded program.

### **Category 4. Local Solid Waste Management Plans**

This category includes projects to develop and/or amend local solid waste management plans by local governments, in accordance with Chapter 363, Texas Health & Safety Code, as implemented by state rule, 30 TAC Chapter 330. In selecting a local solid waste management plan project for funding, H-GAC shall ensure that at least one year is available for the completion and adoption of the local plan.

Funding limitations applicable to this category include:

- All local solid waste management plans funded under this program must be consistent with H-GAC's regional solid waste management plan and prepared in accordance with 30 TAC Subchapter O, Chapter 330, TCEQ Regulations, and the Content and Format Guidelines provided by the TCEQ.

### **Category 5. Citizens' Collection Stations and "Small" Registered Transfer Stations**

Funds may be used for projects to design, construct, and equip the facilities identified below. Other registered or permitted facilities may receive funding upon prior authorization from TCEQ on a case-by-case basis. The costs associated with operating these types of facilities will not be funded. However, eligible facilities which do not charge customers for services rendered qualify to pursue implementation project funding under this agreement to cover facility upgrades and periodic maintenance costs associated with the free services provided. Projects funded for these types of facilities shall include consideration of an integrated approach to solid waste management, to include providing recycling services at the site, if appropriate to the management system in place. Any revenues realized by entities funded through this program should be used in support of the entity's solid waste program and may not be redirected to an entity's general revenue fund.

The following MSW facilities qualify to pursue funding:

- Notification tier municipal solid waste transfer stations that qualify under 30 TAC 330.11(e).
- Registered municipal solid waste transfer stations that qualify under 30 TAC 330.9(b)(1) through (3), or (f).
- Notification tier citizens' collection stations that qualify under 30 TAC 330.11(e)(1).
- Exempt local government recycling facilities as provided for under 30 TAC 328.4(a)(1).
- Notification tier composting facilities which qualify under 30 TAC 332.21 – 332.23.
- Liquid waste transfer stations which qualify for registration in 30 TAC 330.9(g) and (l).
- Registration tier used oil collection facilities which qualify under 30 TAC 324.7(1) or (3).

### **Category 6. Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)**

This category includes projects that provide a means for the collection, recycling, reuse, and/or proper disposal of HHW, including household chemicals, used oil and oil filters, antifreeze, lead-acid batteries, and other materials. This category does not include programs and facilities for collecting, recycling, or disposing of scrap tires, except as may be an ancillary part of the overall program or facility. Funded activities can include: collection events; consolidation and transportation costs associated with collection activities; recycling or reuse of materials; proper disposal of materials; permanent collection facilities, and education and public awareness programs.

Funding limitations applicable to this category include:

- All HHW collection, recycling, and/or disposal activities must be coordinated with the TCEQ's HHW program staff, and all applicable laws, regulations, guidelines, and reporting requirements must be followed.
- All HHW events must meet the requirements of 30 TAC 335, Subchapter N, and must be coordinated through the TCEQ/External Relations Division. Additionally, the TCEQ Used Oil Program regulates the handling – including transportation – of used oil and oil filters. HHW collections should be aware of registration requirements when selecting vendors or running a collection programs themselves.
- All HHW collection event activities must be conducted under an operational plan which meets the requirements of 30 TAC 335.405(a), to be maintained onsite, which addresses collection, ingress and egress, storage, training, transportation, recycling, and disposal.

- Designated HHW “operator” must submit to the TCEQ HHW Program a 45 Day Notice which meets the requirements of 30 TAC 335.403(b). The operator must also report to the HHW program by April 1st of the following year on the amount of material received under the collection.
- First-time applicants may request funds for disposal costs. Second and subsequent year requests will be considered at the discretion of the Solid Waste Management Committee (SWMC).

### **Category 7. Technical Studies**

This category includes projects for the collection of pertinent data, analysis of issues and needs, evaluation of alternative solutions, public input, and recommended actions, to assist in making solid waste management decisions at the local or regional level. Projects under this category may also include research and investigations to determine the location, boundaries, and contents of closed municipal solid waste landfills and sites, and to assess possible risks to human health or the environment associated with those landfills and sites.

Funding limitations applicable to this category include:

- All technical studies funded under this program must be consistent with H-GAC’s regional solid waste management plan, and prepared in accordance with guidelines provided by the TCEQ.

### **Category 8. Educational and Training Projects**

Educational components are encouraged under the other categories in order to better ensure public participation in projects; those educational components should be funded as part of those projects and not separately under this category. Funds can also be used for “stand-alone” educational projects dealing with a variety of solid waste management topics. Projects can include funding for information-exchange activities.

Funding limitations applicable to this category include:

- Educational and training programs and projects funded under this program must be primarily related to the management of municipal solid waste, and funds applied to a broader education program may only be used for those portions of the program pertaining to municipal solid waste.

## **V. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

The following categories of expenses may be eligible for funding under this program. All expenses must directly relate to the conduct of the proposed project. The Narrative sections of the Grant Budget Summary portion of the Application will be used to describe how proposed expenditures will support the proposed project (refer to the FY2026/2027 Solid Waste Grant Application, Grant Budget Summary Instructions for detailed instructions).

1. **Personnel.** Appropriate salaries and fringe benefits for employees working directly on the funded project are authorized under most of the grant categories. Personnel funding is limited to no more than 15 months. Grant funds cannot supplant existing salaries, and overtime is treated the same as salary.

2. **Travel.** Travel expenses directly related to the conduct of the funded program are authorized. Only the employees of the funds recipient assigned to the project will receive reimbursement for travel expenses. In accordance with TxGMS, in those instances where grantees do not have an established organization-wide written travel policy approved by the governing board of the local jurisdiction, all employee-related travel expenses must be claimed at no higher than the same rates allowed by the State of Texas for its employees. For authorized reimbursement through the Regional Solid Waste Grants Contract, all travel authorized for pass-through recipients must comply with Chapter 660 of the Government Code, and Article VI of the General Appropriations Act, 89<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session.
3. **Supplies.** Expenses for supplies necessary for the conduct of the funded project are authorized. Expenses included under the Supplies expense category of a project budget should be for non-construction related costs for goods and materials having a unit acquisition cost (including freight) of less than \$10,000. Such expenditures must generally relate to the routine purchase of office supplies (paper, pencils, etc.) or other goods that are consumed in a relatively short period of time, in the regular performance of the general activities of the proposed project.
4. **Equipment.** Equipment necessary and appropriate for the proposed project are authorized. H-GAC will carefully evaluate all requests for equipment to determine appropriateness of the equipment for the project. No equipment is to be purchased by an implementation project grant recipient unless approved in advance by H-GAC. Expenses included under the Equipment expense category should be for non-construction related, tangible, personal property having a unit acquisition cost of \$10,000 or more (including freight and set up costs) with an estimated useful life of over one year. Any equipment that will be used for other projects or activities, in addition to the funded project, may only be funded at an amount reflecting the appropriate percentage of time that the equipment will be directly used for the funded project.
5. **Construction.** Appropriate construction costs are authorized. Expenses budgeted under this category should be for costs related to the enhancement or building of permanent facilities. An implementation project grant recipient shall incur no construction costs unless H-GAC approves the construction details in advance. Appropriate costs that may be included are:
  - a. The cost of planning the project;
  - b. The cost of materials and labor connected to the construction project;
  - c. The cost of equipment attached to the permanent structure; and
  - d. Any subcontracts, including contracts for services, performed as part of the construction.
6. **Contractual Expenses.** Professional services or appropriate tasks provided by a firm or individual who is not employed by the implementation project grant recipient for conducting the funded project are authorized for subcontracting by the funds recipient. An implementation project grant recipient shall incur no contractual costs unless H-GAC approves the subcontract in advance. ***Applicable laws and regulations concerning bidding and contracting for services must be followed.*** Any amendment to a subcontract that will result in or require substantive changes to any of the tasks required to be performed must be approved in writing by H-GAC.

7. **Other Expenses.** Other expenses, not falling under the main expense categories, are included, if connected with the tasks and activities of the proposed project. Promotional items are expressly prohibited. Expenses in this category include:

- a) Postage/delivery
- b) Telephone/FAX
- c) Utilities
- d) Printing/reproduction
- e) Advertising/public notices
- f) Signage
- g) Training/registration fees
- h) Dues/membership fees
- i) Office space
- j) Basic office furnishings
- k) Equipment rentals
- l) Books/subscriptions
- m) Repair/maintenance
- n) Legal services
- o) Temporary services
- p) Recycling bins
- q) Personal protective equipment
- r) Computer hardware (less than \$10,000)
- s) Computer software
- t) Audio/visual equipment
- u) Other equipment (less than \$10,000)

**Types of Expenses That May Be Appropriate Under Each Project Category**

Following are examples of some of the types of expenses that may be appropriate under each of the project categories.

**Category 1: Local Enforcement**

- Equipment, such as vehicles, communications equipment, and surveillance equipment (NOTE: this does not include firearms or ammunition)
- Program administration expenses, such as salaries/fringe benefits, office supplies and equipment, travel, training, and vehicle maintenance
- Protective gear and supplies (NOTE: this does not include self-contained breathing apparatus equipment)
- Education and outreach materials

**Category 2: Litter and Illegal Dumping Cleanup and Community Collection Events**

- Equipment, such as trailers and trucks
- Public space garbage and recycling bins
- Program administration expenses, such as, salaries/fringe benefits, office supplies and equipment, travel, training, and vehicle maintenance
- Subcontract expenses
- Protective gear and supplies

- Fencing, barriers, and signage
- Education and outreach materials

**Category 3: Source Reduction and Recycling**

- Facility design and construction
- Equipment, such as balers, crushers, recycling and composting containers, trailers, chippers, forklifts, and trucks
- Program administration expenses, such as salaries/fringe benefits, office supplies and equipment, travel, training, and equipment maintenance
- Education and outreach materials
- Printing and advertising expenses
- Signage

**Category 4: Local Solid Waste Management Plans**

- Consultant services
- Printing and advertising expenses
- Program administration expenses, such as salaries/fringe benefits, office supplies, and travel

**Category 5: Citizens' Collection Stations and “Small” Registered Transfer Stations**

- Facility design and construction
- Equipment, such as dumpsters or roll-off containers, trailers, compactors, crushers, scales, and recycling containers
- Protective gear
- Education and outreach materials
- Printing and advertisement expenses
- Signage

**Category 6: Household Hazardous Waste Management**

- Design and construction of permanent collection facilities
- Equipment for permanent collection facilities, such as storage containers, trailers, forklifts, and crushers
- Protective gear
- Contractual services for special collection events
- Education and outreach materials
- Printing and advertising expenses
- School chemical clean-out campaign (SC3) events and programs

**Category 7: Technical Studies**

- Consultant services
- Printing and advertising expenses
- Program administration expenses, such as salaries/fringe benefits, office supplies, and travel

**Category 8: Educational and Training Projects**

- Education and outreach materials
- Printing and advertising expenses
- Contractual services

- Program administrative expenses, such as salaries/fringe benefits, office supplies, and travel

## **VI. SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING STANDARDS**

In addition to the standards set forth in applicable laws and regulations, as well as the category-specific funding limitations, the standards outlined below apply to all uses of the FY 2026/2027 solid waste grant funds.

1. **Texas Grant Management Standards.** The provisions of the Texas Grant Management Standards (TxGMS) issued by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts apply to the use of these funds, as well as the supplement financial administration provided in the program Administrative Procedures.
2. **Procurement of Goods and Services.** Recipients of funds under this Contract, including H-GAC, implementation project grant recipients, and subcontractors shall comply with all applicable state and local laws and regulations pertaining to the use of state funds, including laws concerning the procurement of goods and services and competitive purchasing requirements.
3. **Payment of Fees.** Local and regional political subdivisions subject to the payment of state solid waste disposal fees and whose payments are in arrears are not eligible to receive grant funding.
4. **Land Acquisition Costs.** Funds may not be used to acquire land or an interest in land.
5. **Municipal Solid Waste-Related Programs Only.** Funds may not be used for programs dealing with wastes that are not considered MSW, including programs dealing with industrial or hazardous wastes.
6. **Activities Related to the Disposal of Municipal Solid Waste.** Except as may be specifically authorized under an eligible project category, funds may not be used for activities related to the disposal of MSW. This restriction includes: solid waste collection and transportation to a disposal facility; waste combustion (incineration or waste-to-energy); processing for reducing the volume of solid waste which is to be disposed of; any landfill-related facilities or activities, including the closure and post-closure care of a landfill; or other activities and facilities associated with the ultimate disposal of MSW. This provision does not apply to activities specifically included under an authorized project category.
7. **Projects Requiring a TCEQ Permit.** Funds may not be used for expenses related to projects or facilities that require a permit from the TCEQ and/or that are located within the boundaries of a permitted facility, including landfills, wastewater treatment plants, and other facilities. This provision, however, may be waived by the TCEQ, at its discretion, for otherwise eligible activities to be located at a closed permitted facility and/or for recycling activities that will take place within the boundaries of an open facility. Recycling activities that may qualify for such a waiver may include recyclables collection, composting, and land application of bio-solids for beneficial use. The applicant and/or H-GAC will request a preliminary determination from the TCEQ as to the eligibility of the project prior to consideration for funding.

8. **Projects Requiring TCEQ Registration.** Projects or facilities that require registration from the TCEQ, and which are otherwise eligible for funding, may be funded. However, the registration for the facility must be finally received before that project can be selected for funding.
9. **Projects that Create a Competitive Advantage Over Private Industry.** In accordance with §361.014(b) of the Texas Health and Safety Code, a project or service funded under this program must promote cooperation between public and private entities and may not be otherwise readily available or create a competitive advantage over a private industry that provides recycling or solid waste services. Under this definition, the term “private industry” includes non-profit entities.
10. **Supplanting Existing Funds.** Funds may not be used to supplant existing funds. In particular, staff positions where the functions assigned to that position will remain the same, were active at the time of the grant application and were funded from a source other than a previous solid waste grant, are not eligible for grant funding.
11. **Food/Entertainment Expenses.** Funds may not be used for food or entertainment expenses, including refreshments at meetings and other functions. This provision does not apply to authorized employee per diem expenses for food costs incurred while on travel status.
12. **Use of Alcoholic Beverages.** Funds may not be used for payment of salaries to any employee who uses alcoholic beverages on active duty. None of these funds may be used for the purchase of alcoholic beverages, including travel expenses reimbursed with these funds.
13. **State Contracts.** Funds may not be provided through an implementation project grant or subcontract to any public or private entity that is barred from participating in state contracts by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, under the provisions of §2355.077, Government Code.
14. **Intended Purpose.** All equipment and facilities purchased or constructed with funds provided under this program shall be used for the purposes intended in the funding agreement for the life of the equipment.
15. **Consistency with Regional Solid Waste Management Plan.** A project or service funded under this program must be consistent with H-GAC’s approved regional solid waste management plan, and must be intended to implement the goals, objectives, and priorities established in the regional plan.
16. **Lobbyists.** Funds may not be used for employment or contracts for services of a lobbyist or for dues to an organization that employs or otherwise contracts for the services of a lobbyist.
17. **Enforcement Actions.** Funds may not be used to assist an entity or individual to comply with an existing or pending federal, state, or local judgment or enforcement action. This restriction includes assistance to an entity to comply with an order to clean up and/or remediate problems at an illegal dumpsite. However, the TCEQ may waive this restriction, at its discretion and on a limited case-by-case basis, to address immediate threats to human

health or the environment, and where it is demonstrated that the responsible party does not have the resources to comply with the order.

18. **Penalties.** Funds may not be used to pay penalties imposed on an entity for violation of federal, state, or local laws and regulations. This restriction includes expenses for conducting a supplemental environmental project (SEP) under a federal or state order or penalty. Funds may be used in conjunction with SEP funds to support the same project.

## **VII. NOTIFICATION OF PRIVATE INDUSTRY REQUIRED**

According to state law (Section 361.014 (b) TX Health & Safety Code), a project or service funded under this program must promote cooperation between public and private entities, and the grant-funded project or service may not be otherwise readily available or create a competitive advantage over a private industry that provides recycling or solid waste services. In accordance with grant requirements established by the TCEQ, an applicant for funding under one of the listed project categories below must adhere to the requirements listed below.

### **Applicable Categories**

1. Source Reduction and Recycling
2. Citizens' Collection Stations and "Small" Registered Transfer Stations
3. A demonstration project under the Educational and Training Projects category

### **Applicant Notification Requirements**

1. Contact in person or in writing the known private service providers of similar services that, at the time of the application development, are providing services within the geographic service area that the project intends to serve, prior to making the application.
2. Inform the private service providers of the basic details of the proposed project and consider any input and concerns from the private service providers about the project when completing the project proposal.
3. Consider, where appropriate, meeting directly with private service providers that may have a concern about the proposed project to attempt to resolve any concerns before an application is submitted.
4. Complete applicable information on the appropriate grant application forms to provide documentation that private service providers were notified of the project prior to submission of the application and submit written comments provided by any private service provider.

## **VIII. FISCAL YEAR 2026 and 2027 GRANT PROJECT DURATION**

Projects selected for the FY 2026 Solid Waste Implementation Grant Cycle will begin approximately March 1, 2026, while projects selected for FY 2027 funding will begin September 1, 2026. All projects awarded funds from both the FY 2026 and 2027 application process should be completed by May 31, 2027.

## **IX. HOW PROPOSALS WILL BE CONSIDERED**

Proposals will be reviewed by H-GAC's Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee, using screening and selection criteria developed in cooperation with the TCEQ. The Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee, consisting of at least seven (7) members with representation from local government,

private industry, citizen/environmental groups, nonprofit organizations and H-GAC staff, will score the solid waste grant applications. All review committee members, excluding H-GAC staff, are members, alternates, or designees appointed by a member of H-GAC's Solid Waste Management Committee. Any change to the makeup of the Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee will be posted on the H-GAC website under [www.h-gac.com/solid-waste-management/grants](http://www.h-gac.com/solid-waste-management/grants).

### **SCREENING CRITERIA**

In order for any proposed project to be considered, the following screening criteria must be met. If these screening criteria are not met, the proposed project will receive no further consideration for grant funding.

1. The application must be complete and all application requirements and procedures followed, including requirements to notify private service providers of the proposed project, when applicable.
2. The proposed project must conform to eligible category standards, eligible recipient standards, and allowable expense and funding standards, as established by the TCEQ and H-GAC and under all applicable laws and regulations.
3. The applicant must agree to document the results of the project as required by H-GAC.
4. The proposed project must be technically feasible, and there must be a reasonable expectation that the project can be satisfactorily completed within the required time frames.
5. The proposed project activities and expenses must be reasonable and necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the project.
6. The proposed project must be consistent with the approved H-GAC regional solid waste management plan and must directly support implementation of the regional plan.
7. The applicant must present to the Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

If a proposed project meets all of the applicable screening criteria, it will be evaluated by H-GAC's Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee, using the following selection criteria. There are three sets of selection criteria:

- Project Merits and Needs (0 - 45 points)
- Local Resources and Commitments (0 - 25 points)
- Project Evaluation (0 - 30 points)

### **PROJECT MERITS AND NEEDS (0 - 45 Points)**

In this section, describe the problem or need your organization will be addressing by implementing the proposed grant project, the plan for completing the project within the grant period, and the outreach and education efforts that will be incorporated into the project.

- Need for Project: *Describe the proposed project and justify the need for it. Justification could include data, anecdotal evidence, attached pictures (uploaded on the Supporting Documents*

*page of the application), or anything else that proves there is a specific need in your community that you will be addressing.*

- **Objective:** *List the overall goal or objectives of the proposed project. Describe the expected benefits of the proposed project.*
- **Project Feasibility:** *Include if this is a startup or pilot project where no such program exists or if this is an enhancement of an existing program. Discuss how you've been successful to date if this is an existing program, how this grant will give you the resources needed to be successful in the future, or how your organization has successfully implemented similar projects in the past. Describe staff qualifications. Describe progress or agreements made regarding this project so far. Describe the backup plan, other ideas/expenses, that your organization may seek to pursue should the original project funded come in under budget once implemented. Will you host additional events, buy additional supplies or equipment, etc.? All ideas included in your backup plan must fall within the same project category as the original project. Attach the required Grant Project Implementation Timeline. A link to the template can be found in the online application.*
- **Outreach and Education:** *Explain what steps you will take to promote the program to the public, local officials, etc. How will your project be publicized? Are there adequate levels of customer incentives, public education or public input, as appropriate to the proposed project? How will the public be involved in your project? What kind of education methods will be used?*

#### **LOCAL RESOURCES AND COMMITMENTS (0 - 25 Points)**

In this section, describe the ways your organization intends to provide resources to make the project succeed during the grant period and beyond.

- **Ability to Sustain the Project:** *If the proposed project could become an ongoing service, describe/demonstrate how this project may be sustained beyond the grant period. To what extent are salaries or operational expenses requested, how will the salary or operational expenses be continued when grant funding ends? List previously demonstrated commitments to preferred solid waste management practices, such as implementing and sustaining other solid waste projects. If the proposed project has received previous H-GAC grant funding, describe to what extent this proposal involves expansion of current services or operations and present quantifiable documentation of the success of the project in order to warrant further funding.*
- **Matching Funds or In-Kind Services:** *Local match through cash or in-kind services is encouraged, but no minimum level is required. If the applicant is providing contributions to the project either through cash matching funds or in-kind services, please identify the match on your application in this section. In-kind services should relate only to staff or services directly involved with the proposed project. Your narrative should show the relative importance or effort of the local contribution in relationship to the entire project. (H-GAC Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee understands that due to the timing of this RFA, cash contributions may not be feasible.)*

- Partnerships: *Please explain any partnerships involved with the project and describe the role of each partner.*

### **PROJECT EVALUATION (0 - 30 Points)**

This section describes how the project is cost-effective and a good use of grant funds.

- Return on Investment: *Explain how the proposed project will be able to fund itself in the future. Will the project bring in funds? Will the project reduce costs of another program?*
- Anticipated Effectiveness: *Describe the expected results. What makes you believe this project will be successful? By how much will recycling rates increase, litter reduce, etc.?*
- Measures of Success: *Discuss the results that would indicate success has been achieved for your project. Additionally you should touch on the methods of measurement.*

### **SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION (No points are associated with these sections.)**

These sections will give a fuller picture of your project and help provide the Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee with the details they need to score the other sections.

- Additional Program Information: *This section is intended to provide general or background information to the Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee members to help them better understand your program or project. Additionally, information requested here is used in the process of seeking approval for your proposed project if it is recommended for funding. Questions are specific to the grant category selected on the General Information page of the application. Some categories will not have any additional questions on this page.*
- Supporting Documentation: *Please include copies of letters, resolutions, pictures, quotes, or anything else that will help support your application.*

### **X. SCORING PROCESS AND PROCEDURES**

- Staff will provide each member of the Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee with a summary of all applications received and information to view applications received by the deadline established.
- Each applicant must have a representative available during the scoring process on October 29 or October 30 to provide a brief presentation on the project and to answer review committee members' questions and concerns.
- Order of presentations for proposed projects will be determined by applicant availability.
- The high and low scores on each application will be eliminated. The remaining scores will be averaged (on less than full point intervals) to obtain the final score.
- There will be no consensus scoring. Each member will score project applications individually (See attached score sheet on page 18).
- Ranking of projects will be based on scores derived from the review process.
- Applications selected for funding may see reductions made in the proposed budgets due to the removal of any ineligible expenses or to allow more projects to be funded.

## **XI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Scoring committee members must abstain from voting on any application during the Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee review and scoring process if the member or an individual related to the member within the third degree of consanguinity or within the second degree of affinity

- is employed by the applicant agency and works for the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded;
- serves on any board that oversees the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded;
- receives any funds from the applicant as a result of the grant; or
- uses or receives a substantial amount of tangible goods, services or funds from the applicant.

A member will not be prohibited from voting or commenting upon projects that are being carried out to serve the entire region.

A member who abstains from voting on any application will document the abstention by clicking on the appropriate selection in the online scoring application. All records will be kept on file.

## **XII. OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

Grant recipients will be required to enter into standard legal agreements with H-GAC to ensure that the approved work program of the project is followed. Among other provisions, legal agreements will include the following:

- Grant funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis only, and all requests for reimbursement must be handled through H-GAC. All requests for reimbursement must include the required backup documentation in order to justify reimbursement requests.
- Grant recipients must agree to provide data related to the results of the project to H-GAC. As appropriate to the project, the grant recipient will also be asked to commit to monitoring the results of the project beyond the grant term, and periodically provide H-GAC additional reports on the status of the project.
- Grant recipients must agree to allow staff of H-GAC and/or TCEQ to perform on-site visits to monitor the progress of projects.

## **XIII. APPEALS**

Applicants may appeal the funding recommendations to the H-GAC SWMC after the results of the scoring process have been announced. All appeals must be based on a **specific, identified error** of the Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee and not on factors that allow discretion by the Solid Waste Grants Scoring Subcommittee members.

The appeal deadline is **5:00 p.m., Friday, November 7, 2025**. Applicants must notify H-GAC staff of any appeals. Notification must be in writing via email. The written notification must include a justification of the grounds for the appeal.

The SWMC will meet on **Friday, November 14, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom** to hear appeals if needed. If any appeals are upheld, H-GAC staff will send out a notice with the revised project rankings, funding amount recommendations and comments. However, please note that these

recommendations will not be final until considered by the H-GAC Board of Directors on December 16, 2025, from 10 a.m. to noon

#### **XIV. HOW TO APPLY**

Project proposals should be submitted directly to the Houston-Galveston Area Council via the online application website. The link to the online application can be found at [www.h-gac.com/solid-waste-management/grants](http://www.h-gac.com/solid-waste-management/grants). Submit your completed online application(s) by **noon, Tuesday, October 14, 2025**. No late applications will be accepted.

H-GAC staff members are available to assist interested parties during the application process.

Erin Livingston      [erin.livingston@h-gac.com](mailto:erin.livingston@h-gac.com)

Amanda Ashcroft      [amanda.ashcroft@h-gac.com](mailto:amanda.ashcroft@h-gac.com)

#### **XV. GENERAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

A separate application must be submitted for each individual project proposed. In completing your application, please be concise, but provide a sufficient level of detail to facilitate the consideration of your proposed project.

*Please remember...*

- Complete all parts of the application as requested, including all application certifications, assurances, and deliverables.
- Save a copy of your application for your records.
- Notify private service providers, if applicable (see instructions on Page 12).

Sample FY2026/2027 Grant Scoring Sheet

Applicant	Project Type
City of X	SRR

Application Number
1

Grant Request	Local Match	Total Cost	Local Match as % of Total
\$100,000	\$25,000	\$125,000	22

*Score*

Merits and Needs	
Need for project	_____ out of 15 points
Objective	_____ out of 5 points
Project feasibility	_____ out of 15 points
Outreach and education	_____ out of 10 points
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 30px; display: inline-block;"></div> <b>Total out of 45 points</b>

Local Resources and Commitments	
Ability to sustain project	_____ out of 15 points
Matching funds or in-kind services	_____ out of 5 points
Partnerships	_____ out of 5 points
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 30px; display: inline-block;"></div> <b>Total out of 25 points</b>

Project Evaluation	
Return on investment	_____ out of 15 points
Anticipated effectiveness	_____ out of 10 points
Measures of success	_____ out of 5 points
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 30px; display: inline-block;"></div> <b>Total out of 30 points</b>

<b>TOTAL FOR PROJECT</b>		<b>out of 100 points</b>
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**Comments**

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Scored by: 

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*Signature*

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*Printed Name*

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*Date*