



HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL
Request for Proposal (RFP)
Next Generation 9-1-1 Equipment and Services
Solicitation Number: DS-911-CHENGCS-01-23

EVENT	DATE
ISSUED:	Thursday, January 26, 2023
PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE DATE:	Tuesday, February 07, 2023 @ 10:00 a.m. CST Information on how to register for the pre-proposal meeting is on page 17.
QUESTIONS DEADLINE:	Thursday, February 09, 2023 @ NOON CST
SHAREFILE ACCESS INVITATION REQUEST DEADLINE:	Wednesday, March 08, 2023 @ NOON CST Requests made after this time will <u>not</u> be accepted.
CLOSING DATE / SUBMISSION DEADLINE:	Thursday, March 09, 2023 @ NOON CST
NOTIFICATION OF SHORTLIST:	Thursday, March 30, 2023
ESTIMATED INTERVIEW DATE:	Tuesday, April 11, 2023 Interviews will be held in-person at H-GAC 3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120 Houston, TX 77027
EST. GCRECD BOARD APPROVAL DATE:	Tuesday, May 16, 2023
ESTIMATED CONTRACT START DATE:	June, 2023
FORMAT:	One (1) electronic copy in PDF format. Please combine all files being submitted into one (1) pdf. Additional files may not be reviewed.

Please read the submission instructions carefully, exceptions cannot be made if instructions are not followed:
SUBMISSION: Respondent must email the below information (1-4) to purchasing@h-gac.com to request access to the ShareFile folder where Respondent will upload the Response. **The request for access to the folder must be made before indicated deadline;** requests received after the deadline will **NOT** be accepted. **SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED BY EMAIL OR MAIL.**

1. Company Name and Company Representative Name
2. Representative Email Address (for ShareFile folder access)
3. Subject Line: "ShareFile Folder Access Request"
4. The Solicitation Number (exactly as listed above)

If technical issues with the ShareFile System arise, preventing all Respondents from submitting a response within the two (2) hours preceding the deadline, the solicitation due date and time may be automatically extended for a period of 24 hours. Any technical issue must be with the ShareFile system and affect all respondents. H-GAC will verify the technical issue or unavailability of the ShareFile system. Technical issues localized to a single Respondent will not be considered cause for an extension. It is strongly recommended that submissions be uploaded no later than four (4) hours prior to the deadline. H-GAC is not responsible for attempting to resolve any technical issues occurring four (4) hours before the submission deadline, nor is H-GAC responsible for incomplete or late submissions.

Recording of submission time and date will occur via ShareFile. Submissions uploaded after the deadline will not be accepted or opened. Responses may be submitted any time prior to the submission deadline. To satisfy any required public opening, H-GAC will post only the names of the companies which submitted responses to the H-GAC website (<http://www.h-gac.com/procurement>) as soon as possible after the closing date.

SIGNATURE PAGE

A signature below constitutes acknowledgement and acceptance of all the **Solicitation Terms and Conditions** located at <https://www.h-gac.com/getmedia/d80790aa-ac7c-466e-9849-9a457210da6e/Solicitation-Terms-and-Conditions> and can be downloaded in .pdf for review. Respondents, their authorized representative, and their agents are responsible for obtaining, and will be deemed to have, full knowledge of the conditions, requirements, and specifications of this Solicitation at the time a response is submitted to H-GAC. This Solicitation does not commit H-GAC to award a contract, issue a Purchase Order, or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a submission to this Solicitation. The submission will become part of H-GAC's official files without any obligation on H-GAC's behalf. All Submissions will be held confidential from all parties other than H-GAC, until after a contract is executed; then submissions become available as public records.

Note: Submission must be signed by a duly authorized representative(s) of the respondent, which must be the actual legal entity that will perform the contract if awarded and any total fixed price contained therein will remain firm for a period of one-hundred eighty (180) days following the submission due date and can be further extended by mutual written agreement. Respondent is <i>REQUIRED</i> to sign this <i>Signature Page</i> and return with the submitted response. An unsigned Submission will be deemed non-responsive.	
Legal Name of Entity/Individual Filed with IRS for this Tax ID Number:	
Doing Business As (DBA) Name:	
Is Respondent business currently a Certified Small Business (SBA), Minority (MBE) or Disadvantaged (DBE)? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, copy of certificate must be attached.	
Company Mailing Address and Billing Address (if different from company address):	
City, State, Zip Code:	
Tax ID Number (EIN):	DUNS Number:
Contact Person:	Phone Number:
Email Address:	
Signature of the person authorized to bind Respondent company to any contract/purchase order that may result from this Solicitation and acknowledgement and acceptance of the full Solicitation Terms and Conditions located at https://www.h-gac.com/getmedia/d80790aa-ac7c-466e-9849-9a457210da6e/Solicitation-Terms-and-Conditions	
Authorized Signature:	Date:
Printed Name:	Title:
Email Address:	

All clarifications to this Solicitation will be in writing and identified as a Letter of Clarification. Verbal communications and other written documents intended to clarify and interpret will not legally bind the Houston-Galveston Area Council. Only information supplied by a Letter of Clarification and posted to the H-GAC website should be used in preparing submissions. Any Letter of Clarification will be posted on the H-GAC website (<http://www.h-gac.com/procurement>) as soon as available. H-GAC **does not assume responsibility for the receipt of any Letters of Clarification by Respondent(s). Respondents must frequently check <http://www.h-gac.com/procurement> for updates.**

PART I –GENERAL INFORMATION

Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Background

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is the region-wide voluntary association of 133 local governments and local elected officials in the 13-county Gulf Coast Planning region of Texas. Local elected officials organized H-GAC in 1966 after authorization by State enabling legislation. Its service area is 12,500 square miles and includes more than 7-million residents. H-GAC is governed by a 36-member Board of Directors composed of local elected officials, who serve on the governing bodies of member local governments. All H-GAC programs are carried out under the policy direction of its Board of Directors. H-GAC's mission is to serve as the instrument of local government cooperation, promoting the region's orderly development and the safety and welfare of its residents. H-GAC is the regional organization through which local governments consider issues and cooperate in solving area-wide problems. Agency programs emphasize local government concerns, such as transportation, air and water quality, criminal justice, demographic analysis, mapping programs, and intergovernmental purchasing. H-GAC also serves its citizens through workforce development programs, services to the aging and elderly, and small business finance programs.

Solicitation Background

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC)'s Gulf Coast Regional 9-1-1 Emergency Communications District (GCRECD) provides 9-1-1 emergency communications services, systems, support, and related data to 23 public safety answering points (PSAPs), with a total of 65 positions, in the counties of Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Liberty, Matagorda, Walker, Waller, and Wharton.

The 23 PSAPs, also known as emergency communications centers (ECCs), handle approximately 320,000 calls per year.

GCRECD has a population of 628,910.

Additional Resources

[Next Generation 9-1-1 \(texas.gov\)](http://texas.gov)

Objective/Purpose

The Gulf Coast Regional 9-1-1 Emergency Communications District (GCRECD) is seeking qualified contractor(s) to provide and implement market-ready solutions for Next Generation 9-1-1 call handling equipment, as well as Emergency Services Internet Protocol network (ESInet) and Next Generation Core Services (NGCS) as described in this solicitation.

Contract Term

GCRECD intends to award one or more contracts for the services requested under this Solicitation. The term of this contract will be for a period of seven (7) years. GCRECD may, at its option, extend the contract for up to three (3) additional one-year terms. GCRECD/H-GAC reserves the right to extend and/or expand the scope of this contract, subject to GCRECD Board of Managers approval and/or additional funding availability.

Payment for Work

Contractor will submit monthly invoices based on work completed. Completed work is defined as meeting milestone project objectives as defined in the schedule that accomplishes the Scope of Work within the appropriate time frame. All invoices must be accompanied by progress reports and backup documentation.

No Guarantee of Usage

H-GAC makes no guarantee of volume or usage under any contract resulting from this Solicitation. Services will be requested and contracted on an as needed basis and the type and value of each assignment will vary.

Pre-Award Audit

Due to the amount and type of funding programmed for this project, H-GAC requires that a pre-award audit be conducted before the execution of a contract. The information required for this audit, in addition to a draft contract and detailed scope of work, is:

1. Detailed annual budget
2. 12-month project Schedule/Timeline
3. Itemized cost estimate by personnel job title (including hours), benefits, overhead, travel, equipment, supplies, printing and other direct expenses; and
4. Support data for the benefit and indirect rates (overhead) based on audited costs.
5. Federal OMB Form 60

Post Award Meeting

H-GAC/GCRECD reserves the right to require the awarded Contractor attend a post award meeting with H-GAC/GCRECD staff and/or other designated persons at H-GAC offices in Houston, Texas within thirty (30) calendar days after the award. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the terms and conditions and to provide additional information regarding the work tasks and requirements. Awarded Contractor and H-GAC/GCRECD will identify specific goals, strategies and activities planned for meeting program objectives.

Goal for Contracting with Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area firms (if subcontracts are to be let)

H-GAC has established a goal of **25%** small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firm participation in its total annual third-party consulting opportunities. H-GAC's goal is to assure that small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible in providing services under a contract. In accordance with federal procurements requirements of 2 CFR §200.321, if subcontracts are to be let, the prime contractor must take the affirmative steps listed below:

1. Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists
2. Assuring that small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources
3. Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller task or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises
4. Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises
5. Using the services and assistance as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce

Nothing in this provision will be construed to require the utilization of any firm that is either unqualified or unavailable.

[Supplemental Guidance/Requirements for Contracting with Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area firms \(if subcontracts are to be let\)](#)

As a recipient and sub-recipient of Federal funds, the guidance of the appropriate funding agency supplemental regulation regarding Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) programs will be incorporated as listed below, and as may be applicable. Please refer to the applicable guidance for the indicated funding source. The Small Business Administration (SBA) is the primary reference and database for information on requirements related to Federal Subcontracting <https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-guide/prime-subcontracting>

Funding Source	Supplemental Regulation by Funding Agency
	U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT/FAA): Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 23 and Part 26. Only businesses listed under the Texas Unified Certification Database Diversity Management System are qualified to meet the stated goal requirement. Locate a business here: https://txdot.txdotems.com/
	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations parts 33, Executive Order 11625, Executive Order 12138, and Executive Order 12432.
	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): HUD Acquisition Regulations (HUDAR) HUDAR, dated January 21, 2000, Parts 2419 and 2426.
	U.S. Department of Labor (DOL): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 29, Parts 2900-2999.
	U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 13, Subchapter D.
	U.S. Department of Energy (DOE): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 9, Subchapter D.
	U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 4, Subchapter D.
	U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) including FEMA: Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 30, Subchapter D.
	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 3, Subchapter D.
	U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 29, Subchapter D.
	U.S. Department of the Treasury (USDT): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 10, Subchapter D, Part 1022.
	U.S. Department of Education (ED) Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 34, Subchapter D.

Additional Resources for Socio-Economic Databases/Programs - The entities and programs linked below can also be searched or contacted for assistance in locating a small business if no funding agency is indicated above.	
City of Houston, Office of Business Opportunity	Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC)
City of Austin, Small Business Development	National Women Business Owners Corporation
Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority	National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC)
North Central Texas Certification Agency	U.S. Women Chamber of Commerce
South Central Texas Certification Agency	U.S. Department of Transportation DBE Program
Texas Department of Transportation	SBA Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Program Certification
The Small Business Administration	

Service Region

The VIPER host pairs and their respectively served remote PSAPs are shown in the table below:

Host Pairs		
Walker County Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC) and Liberty County Sheriff's Office (SO)	Wharton Police Department (PD) and Waller County SO	Angleton PD and Lake Jackson PD
Served Remote PSAPs		
Chambers County SO Mont Belvieu PD Dayton PD Liberty PD Cleveland PD	Colorado County SO Brookshire PD Wharton County SO El Campo PD Matagorda County SO Bay City PD	Brazoria County SO Alvin PD Clute PD Freeport PD Brazoria PD West Columbia PD

The figure below depicts the host and remote PSAP locations. The three host pairs and remote PSAPs are grouped by color.

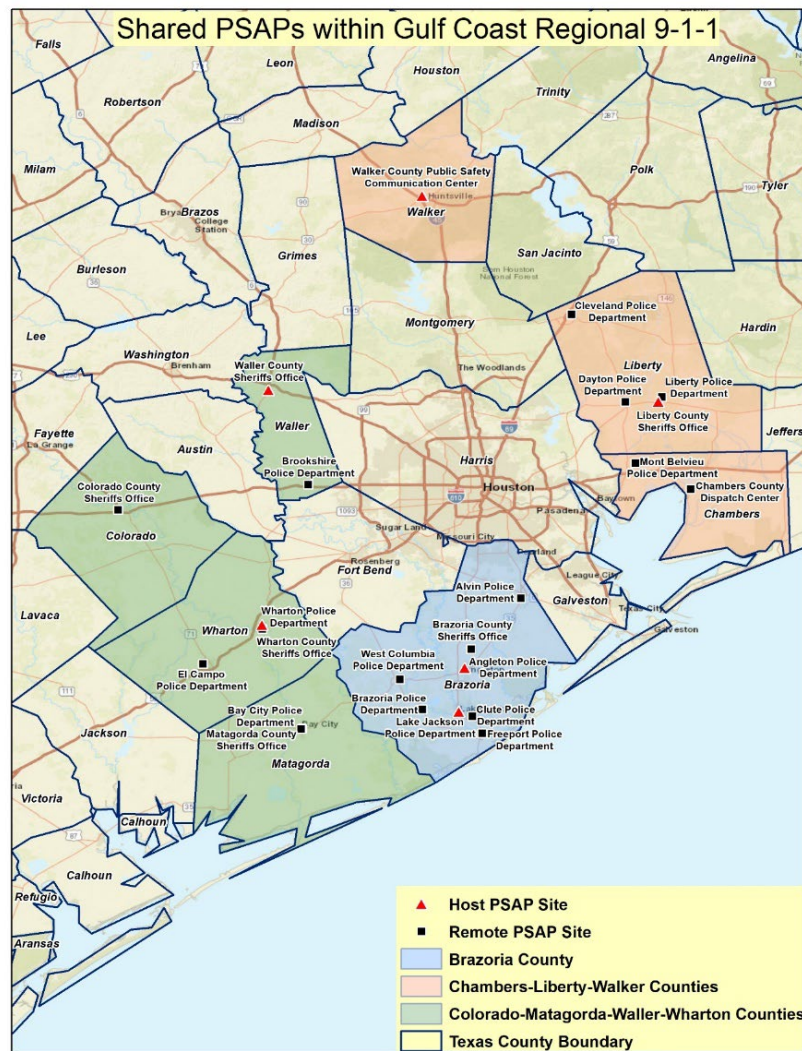


Figure 1: PSAP Locations

PART II – SCOPE OF WORK/SPECIFICATIONS

This Solicitation is divided into two (2) separate but related categories consisting of Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) call handling equipment (CHE), and Emergency Services Internet Protocol network (ESInet) and Next Generation Core Services (NGCS).

Respondent may choose to propose a solution on one or both categories. No additional weighted value will be given to a Respondent who offers a solution for both categories.

GCRECD's preferred method of implementation is to commence with the NG9-1-1 CHE solution and then subsequently the NGCS and ESInet services. Therefore, Respondents must provide solutions that conform to this implementation approach.

GCRECD seeks to accomplish its vision through the following objectives:

- Transition from a regional agency providing funding and operational support of legacy 9-1-1 solutions to a region operating and supporting NG9-1-1 call-routing and call-handling solutions.
- Evaluate and/or optimize systems, data, policies, procedures, and organizational structure to support future needs regarding NG9-1-1 system operation.
- Plan, procure, and implement solutions that provide the greatest value to the agencies and citizens of the region.
- Carefully and strategically plan and execute necessary organizational and technical objectives with minimal disruptions to stakeholders.

GCRECD further desires to provide through this procurement a vehicle for neighboring agencies to procure the same solutions and services selected through the competitive procurement process.

Category A: NG9-1-1 CHE

GCRECD's current call handling equipment (CHE) solution is the Intrado VIPER® 5 Power 9-1-1, Version 5.1.0.49, which is deployed as a host-remote system in a multi-node configuration. There are three host pairs housed in six PSAPs. Each host pair has redundant connectivity to their associated remote sites.

As such, GCRECD seeks to procure and implement an i3-compliant call-handling solution. The solution must be market-ready and capable of agnostic interoperability between call-routing and call-handling elements internal to GCRECD's solution, and to future external NG9-1-1 solutions operational in neighboring agencies. GCRECD desires to own, operate, and manage the proposed call-handling solution.

A Respondent's CHE product will result in an end-to-end NG9-1-1 system shared by GCRECD ECCs, with connectivity through the NG9-1-1 ESInet with a full NGCS solution.

Category B: ESInet and NGCS

The objective is to procure a market-ready regional ESInet and to deploy a National Emergency Number Association (NENA) i3-compliant NGCS to support every PSAP. The Respondent will be responsible for designing, documenting, installing, securing, operating, maintaining, monitoring, and evolving (in alignment with ongoing industry standards development) all cabling, equipment, and NGCS capabilities throughout the duration of the contract.

Attachments

- Attachment A – GCRECD PSAP Information
- Attachment B – CHE Performance Standards, Network Measurement and Reporting, and Service Level Agreements
- Attachment C – ESInet/NGCS Performance Standards, Network Measurements and Reporting, and Service Level Agreements
- Attachment D – Adopted Industry Standards
- Attachment E – CHE Technical Requirements
- Attachment F – ESInet and NGCS Technical Requirements
- Attachment G – Pricing Matrix
- Attachment H – Past Performance Questionnaire
- Attachment I – Acknowledgement Form

Bundled Solutions

GCRECD recognizes some Respondents may offer CHE as well as ESInet and NGCS in response to this Solicitation. Respondents offering proposals in both areas may be able to provide cost savings or other advantages by “bundling” their solutions together.

While GCRECD is very interested in the advantages of these bundled proposals, to conduct the necessary pricing analysis for all proposals from all Respondents (and in the event a Respondent offering a bundled solution is only awarded a contract for ESInet/NGCS or CHE, but not both), GCRECD requires that any Respondent proposing a bundled solution must also provide pricing for the separate “unbundled” (i.e., à la carte) procurement of the proposed ESInet/NGCS and CHE solutions.

Interoperability

To ensure interoperability among all components of the ESInet/NGCS, and the CHE solutions selected, all Respondents must commit to, and document (prior to completion of contract negotiation), interoperability with all other awardees’ solutions (ESInet/NGCS or CHE). If, as required, all solutions are truly NENA i3-compliant, this should not impose an undue burden on the Respondent(s). Documentation of interoperability may take the form of any of the following (listed in order of probative value, from highest to lowest):

- References from joint customers where solutions from multiple vendors have been deployed and made operational for a minimum of six (6) months
- Documentation of interoperability efforts undertaken within a non-production (i.e., laboratory) environment with the participation and support of all organizations represented in the combined solution
- Documentation of interoperability efforts undertaken within a non-production (i.e., laboratory) environment and by only one solution provider as a proof-of-concept exercise

Performance Standards

Refer to Attachments B and C for the performance standards, network measurement and reporting requirements, and service level agreements (SLAs) applicable to the services and solutions covered by this Solicitation.

Industry Standards

GCRECD seeks a standards-based solution that complies with nationally accepted standards and requirements applicable to Internet Protocol (IP) network architecture, security, and interface functionality. All aspects of the Respondent’s proposed system design, deployment, operation, interoperability, and security shall be in full compliance with the standards, requirements, and recommendations identified in Attachment D – Adopted Industry Standards. Standards-development organizations (SDOs) include:

Call Handling Equipment	ESInet and Next Generation Core Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS) • Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International • Central Station Alarm Association (CSAA) • Department of Justice (DOJ) • Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) • National Emergency Number Association (NENA) • National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) • Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International • The Monitoring Association (TMA) • National Emergency Number Association (NENA) • Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS) • Department of Justice (DOJ) • Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) • North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) • National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) • Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA)

Standards Evolution

As industry standards evolve, the selected Respondent’s solution must be upgraded to maintain compliance with the current version of established industry standards. The Respondent’s solution must support new IP network and security industry standards within eighteen (18) months of ratification of applicable industry standards. If a Respondent is not compliant with the version or revision listed, they must include their compliant version in their proposal. Compliance requirements apply also to the supporting standards referenced within each standard. As solution updates are made to maintain compliance, the solution must not abandon services or feature functionality in place at the time of the solution upgrade. The selected Respondent must uncover any performance or feature changes prior to the upgrade and report them to GCRECD for approval.

Support Commitment

The Respondent commits to supporting the offered solution(s) or service(s) for a minimum of seven (7) years from the date of full solution or service acceptance by GCRECD. In this context, “supporting” means the continued development, evolution, and availability of improvements, enhancements, and identified bug fixes of the solution(s) and service(s). If market forces, component suppliers, or other events beyond the control of the Respondent requires an unexpected end to the service life of a service or solution offered herein, the Respondent agrees to provide a migration path to an equivalent or better service or solution, at no cost to GCRECD beyond the support contract provisions contained hereunder.

Technical Requirements

GCRECD desires to procure an i3-compliant NG9-1-1 CHE solution for its 23 PSAP/ECCs within the District. The GCRECD legacy 9-1-1 network is supported by a three-host-pair CHE configuration hosted in its PSAP/ECCs, but the Respondent's NG9-1-1 CHE solution must be a single-host pair to be in two designated geo-diverse data centers. The chosen NG9-1-1 CHE solution must be NENA i3 — one specifically designed for NG9-1-1 — and not simply Request for Assistance Interface (RFAI) protocol-compliant. An output of the Respondent's Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) stack to prove protocol compliance will be required. Additionally, the chosen NG9-1-1 CHE must be able to function in a legacy 9-1-1 environment during the transition to NGCS and ESInet at no additional cost.

The proposed solution and implementation of NENA i3-capable NGCS call-routing functions and an ESInet must be capable of interoperability with, and continuing support of, existing legacy systems currently in use.

GCRECD prefers to implement an i3-compliant CHE before proceeding with implementation of NGCS and an ESInet. Because of the requirements in Senate Bill 8 (SB8) passed during the third special session of 2021 and detailed in Rule 5.408 (Title 34, Part 1 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 5, Subchapter S § 5.408) to implement NG9-1-1 prior to the end of 2024, this document seeks to solicit both CHE and NGCS/ESInet solutions.

The procurement and implementation of new CHE is a complex and collaborative effort. The chosen contractor will work with GCRECD to manage the deployment process, including implementing the proposed Host-Remote CHE network as illustrated in Figure 1, and completing any necessary hardware refreshes and software upgrades, operational readiness testing, and training of GCRECD stakeholders.

Respondent will provide solution(s) that conform to this implementation approach. GCRECD offers no instruction on preference as to the physical location of the “service” — for example, cloud-based or premises-based — but seeks the best value for compliance to the technical requirements to accomplish the service.

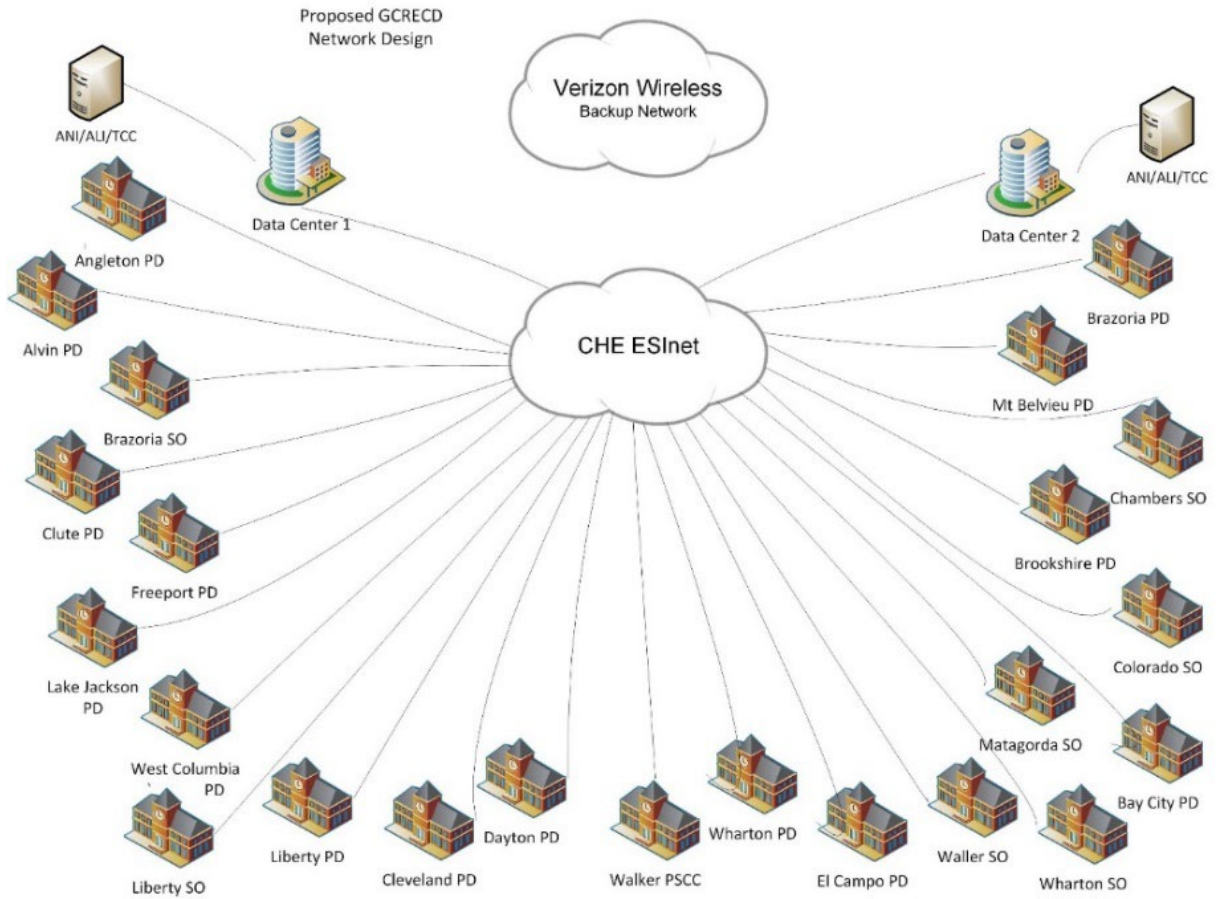


Figure 2: Proposed GRECD CHE Network Design

PART III –SUBMISSION CONTENTS

Submissions must include the information described below. Staff resumes, and any additional forms, can be included as an appendix to the submittal and do not count towards any section page limits noted below.

A. Summary Letter

This letter must include a summary of key aspects of the contractor's qualifications and must indicate the Respondent's commitment to provide the services proposed and certify that all statements and information prepared and submitted in the response to this Solicitation are current, complete, and accurate; and that the proposed solution for the project meets all the requirements of this Solicitation. (Maximum 1 page)

B. Signature Page and all Forms as Listed on last page of this Solicitation

Submit completed and signed Signature Page (located on page 2) and all required/applicable forms of the checklist provided on the last page of this solicitation. Submission will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for evaluation if the submission is not signed.

C. Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Affirmation Form

Complete and sign the applicable section (A, B, or C) of the Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Affirmation Form. Respondent must identify the small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms' participation level and the role that each small and minority business, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firm will have in the project implementation. Since small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms' proposed are considered part of the team, the Respondent must include all relevant information necessary to effectively perform the evaluation of the response as it relates to the submission requirements listed in this section. Nothing in this provision will be construed to require the utilization of any small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firm that is either unqualified or unavailable. The applicable section of this form must be completed, signed and returned with the submission, failure to return this signed form and any applicable required good faith effort documentation may result in the submission being deemed non-responsive.

D. Project Work Program and Schedule

Submit details regarding approach to undertaking the tasks listed in this Solicitation. A recommended methodology for performance of each task identified in the scope of work must be included, along with a timeline for completion. Describe how your proposed solution(s) meet or exceed the performance standards in Attachments B and C, as applicable. Complete Attachments E and F, as applicable. Complete Attachment I; if Respondent is not compliant with the current version or revision of established industry standards, include the compliant version. Joint submissions must describe how the partners will support each other in ensuring a successful outcome. The timeline must illustrate key milestones and anticipate necessary meetings with H-GAC staff.

E. Responsibility and Qualifications

Submit a project organization and management plan that includes project staffing with an indication of the personnel to be involved, their respective roles, and person-hours by task dedicated to the project. Brief resumes of staff members, including field staff, must be included. Substitutions for essential personnel involved will not be allowed without H-GAC's prior approval and resulting delays will be the responsibility of the Contractor. H-GAC retains the right to request the removal of any personnel found, in H-GAC's opinion, to be unqualified to perform the work.

F. Past Performance and References

Complete Attachment H – Past Performance Questionnaire. References must illustrate Respondent’s and project manager’s ability to provide the services outlined in the scope of services. H-GAC’s evaluation team will be the sole judge of references.

G. Readiness and Capacity to Perform

Provide satisfactory evidence of ability to manage and coordinate the types of activities described in this Solicitation and to produce the specified products or services on time. Provide a statement about the availability and commitment of the firm and its principal(s) and key professionals to undertake the project.

H. Notification of Service Outages, Network Monitoring, and Service Level

Describe in detail how service outages will be handled, including identification and notification of outage, the method and level of monitoring support and the method used to report outages to the H-GAC. Provide service level agreement details and explain how maintenance is scheduled for planned and unplanned outages.

I. Proposed Cost

Complete Attachment G – Pricing Matrix. Submit a detailed plan for the proposed project, including a budget narrative accurately reflecting project delivery and support the budget with detailed costs. Respondents proposing a bundled solution must also provide pricing for the separate “unbundled” (i.e., à la carte) procurement of the proposed ESInet/NGCS and CHE solutions. Any travel associated expenses that may be incurred for additional offered services must be priced separately and cannot exceed current U.S. General Services Administration established rates. For more information please visit: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel-resources>

J. Additional Information

Submit additional information Respondent deems pertinent to demonstrating qualifications and/or experience to perform the services being requested such as memberships in any professional associations, documents, examples, and others. (Maximum 10 pages)

PART IV – EVALUATION, SELECTION AND AWARD

Evaluation

An evaluation committee may consist of representatives from H-GAC/GCRECD and other stakeholders. The committee members will individually evaluate and numerically score each submission in accordance with the evaluation criteria section of this Solicitation.

Selection/Award Recommendation

Submissions will be evaluated on the basis of meeting the minimum qualifications and selection criteria listed in the Evaluation Criteria section of this Solicitation. Each criterion is given a weight totaling 100%, submissions are scored on a scale of 0-5, and are then ranked on the total of the weighted score.

Upon completion of the initial evaluation, the committee will develop a short list of no less than two (2) Respondents. The short-listed Respondent(s) will be scheduled for a structured interview. Such presentation will be at no cost to H-GAC/GCRECD. At the end of the oral presentation, demonstration and/or interview, the evaluation of the short-listed Respondent(s) will be completed, and the evaluation committee will rank each submission on the total score.

Upon review of all information provided by Respondents, the evaluation committee will rank each submission. H-GAC/GCRECD intends to select the submission(s) that best meets the needs of H-GAC/GCRECD, and other stakeholders to be determined.

Approval and Final Award

A recommendation will be presented to the GCRECD Board of Managers for approval to negotiate, and execute, a contract with the ranked Contractors in descending order. H-GAC/GCRECD reserves the right to award based on the best interests of H-GAC/GCRECD, whether that be single or multiple awards. However, the final approval and selection of award lies with the Board of Managers. H-GAC/GCRECD reserves the right to delay that date as needed and to reject any and all submissions as deemed in its interest.

Debriefing

Requests for a debriefing must be made in writing to purchasing@h-gac.com within five (5) working days after notification of non-selection. H-GAC reserves the right to not conduct debriefings if requests are made after that time. This procedure is NOT available to Respondents who did not participate in the selected Solicitation, to non-responsive or non-timely Respondents, or when all submissions are rejected.

Presentation/Demonstration/Interview

The evaluation committee reserves the right to request and require that each Respondent provide a final presentation/demonstration/interview regarding submission at a scheduled date and time. No Respondent is entitled to this opportunity, and no Respondent will be entitled to attend the presentation/demonstration/interview of any other Respondent. The purpose of the presentation/demonstration/interview is to inform the work of the evaluation committee. If necessary, Respondents may be required to make more than one presentation/demonstration/interview. Interviews can incorporate clarifying questions of the evaluation committee and H-GAC/GCRECD reserves the right to utilize the information to complete final scoring of proposals after the presentation/demonstration/interview. During this process, the proposer cannot incorporate, or present new information not contained in the original submitted proposal.

Best and Final Offer (BAFO)

H-GAC/GCRECD reserves the right to request a Best and Final Offer from finalist Respondent(s), if it deems such an approach necessary. In general, BAFO would consist of updated costs and answers to specific questions that were identified during the evaluation. If H-GAC/GCRECD chooses to invoke this option, Submissions would be re-evaluated by incorporating the information requested in the BAFO document, including costs, and answers to specific questions presented in the document. The specific format for the BAFO would be determined during evaluation discussions. Turnaround time for responding to a BAFO is usually brief (i.e., five (5) business days).

PART V – EVALUATION CRITERIA

Responsiveness (Pass/Fail)

Submission must be responsive to all material requirements that will enable the evaluation committee to evaluate submissions in accordance with the evaluation criteria to make a recommendation to H-GAC/GCRECD officials. This includes a signed signature page by a person authorized to bind the company to any contract/purchase order that may result from this Solicitation; if subcontracting, may include the completed Small and Minority Business Affirmation Form.

Project Work Program and Schedule (25%)

The submission delineates an effective technical approach and methodology to achieving project objectives and demonstrates a clear understanding of the tasks to be undertaken in this Solicitation. Respondent meets performance standards listed in Attachments B and C, as applicable. Respondent meets technical requirements of Attachments E and F, as applicable. Timeline is acceptable and illustrates key milestones.

Responsibility and Qualifications (25%)

Demonstrated experience, qualifications and capability of the proposed team, key team members and other personnel as evidenced by statement of experience and resumes. Demonstrated effective organizational structure and relevant experience on similar projects. Evidence that the contractor meets the minimum qualification and ability to comply with all contractual requirements.

Past Performance and References (15%)

Completed Attachment H – Past Performance Questionnaire. Demonstrated record of timely performance, quality and integrity as evidenced by a list of client references for similar projects and budgets and relevant samples of work provided. Demonstrated ability to complete work without change orders, extensions, and/or budget revisions.

Readiness and Capacity to Perform (15%)

Satisfactory evidence of respondent ability to manage and coordinate the types of activities described in this Solicitation and to produce the specified products or services on time. Evidence is provided of the availability and commitment of the firm and its principal(s) and key professionals to undertake the project.

Notification of Service Outages, Network Monitoring, and Service Level (10%)

Acceptable detailed service level agreement and reporting of outage methodology, monitoring support, and service level response time.

Proposed Cost (10%)

Completed Attachment G – Pricing Matrix. Demonstrated ability to deliver services at a reasonable cost and all elements of cost detail are provided. Budget narrative clearly reflects the cost for providing the services, is detailed and includes all costs required for successful project completion.

PART VI – INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS

Pre-Proposal/Response Conference

A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held on **Tuesday, February 7, 2023 @ 10:00 a.m.** The virtual meeting will be held using Zoom, registration is required. Once registered, applicants will receive notification and a direct link for participation. Click on the following link to register:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAtc-ippzwsGNM74xb_R7ZEdNhArGZLWZJA

It will be assumed that Respondents attending any conference have reviewed the Solicitation in detail and are prepared to raise any substantive questions which have not already been addressed by H-GAC/GCRECD in this Solicitation.

Inquiries and Additional Information

Respondents must submit questions by e-mail to Purchasing@h-gac.com by the Questions deadline, any questions received after the deadline will not be answered. Telephone inquiries will not be accepted. H-GAC/GCRECD will respond as completely as possible to each question. Questions and answers will be posted on the H-GAC website (<http://www.h-gac.com/procurement>) as soon as available. The names of respondents who submit questions will not be disclosed.

Letter(s) of Clarification

All clarifications to this Solicitation will be in writing and identified as a Letter of Clarification. Verbal communications and other written documents intended to clarify and interpret will not legally bind H-GAC. Only information supplied by a Letter of Clarification posted at <http://www.h-gac.com/procurement>) should be used in preparing a response. **H-GAC does not assume responsibility for the receipt of any Letters of Clarification by Respondent(s). Respondents must periodically check the website for updates.**

Examination of Documents and Requirements

Each Respondent must carefully examine all Solicitation documents and become thoroughly familiar with all requirements prior to submission to ensure the response meets the intent of this Solicitation. Respondent is responsible for making all investigations and examinations that are necessary to ascertain conditions affecting the requirements of this Solicitation. Failure to make such investigations and examinations will not relieve the Respondent from obligation to comply, in every detail, with all provisions and requirements of the Solicitation.

Modification of Submission (Before Deadline)

Respondents may modify submissions that have already been submitted by providing a written modification to H-GAC. However, no submissions may be modified after the deadline.

Non-Responders to Solicitation

If unable to submit a response, please email Purchasing@h-gac.com and advise the reason.

Resolution of Protested Solicitations and Awards

Any Respondent who is aggrieved in connection with a purchase transaction may file a grievance. The grievance may be filed at any phase of the procurement, and up to five (5) days after the GCRECD Board of Managers public agenda is posted for action regarding the questioned item. Grievances filed more than five (5) working days after action by the H-GAC Board of Directors and GCRECD Board of Managers will not be deemed timely and will not be considered. In order for a Respondent to enter the grievance process, a written complaint must be sent to the Deputy Assistant Director of H-GAC by certified mail and sent to 3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, Texas 77027, which includes the following:

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

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

The Procurement and Contracts Department will contact the complainant and all interested parties and attempt to resolve the allegations informally within ten (10) working days from the date of complaint. If the allegations are successfully resolved by mutual agreement, documentation will be forwarded to the Deputy Executive Director of the resolution with specifics on each point addressed in the original complaint.

If the Procurement and Contracts Department is not successful in resolving the allegations, the complaint, along with the comments, will be forwarded to the Deputy Executive Director immediately. The Deputy Executive Director will review all documentation. All interested parties will be given written notice of the date, time, and place of hearing and an opportunity to present evidence. A written decision will be issued within five (5) working days after the hearing along with notice of appeal rights.

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

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

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

PART VII – REQUIRED FORMS TO SUBMIT WITH RESPONSE

	Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Affirmation Form (if subcontracts are to be let)
	Signed Signature Page (located on Page 2)
	Attachment E – CHE Technical Requirements (as applicable)
	Attachment F – ESInet/NGCS Technical Requirements (as applicable)
	Attachment G – Pricing Matrix
	Attachment H – Past Performance Questionnaire
	Attachment I – Acknowledgement Form

PART VIII - REQUIRED FORMS IF AWARDED A CONTRACT

	Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Ineligibility
	(External Form) Conflict of Interest Form CIQ (if a conflict exists) (refer to link Part VII, DD)
	(External Form) Certificate of Interested Parties – Form 1295 (refer to link Part VII, DD)
	Certification Regarding Lobbying
	Copy of W-9

Download Forms: <https://www.h-gac.com/procurement>

PART IX – SOLICITATION TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a response to this Solicitation, respondent agrees that it has read and fully intends to comply with the terms and conditions of this solicitation as applicable to any subsequent contract or funding agency requirements or agreements. Exceptions to these Terms and Conditions are not permitted. Please view the full Terms and Conditions located here: <https://www.h-gac.com/getmedia/d80790aa-ac7c-466e-9849-9a457210da6e/Solicitation-Terms-and-Conditions>