

Houston County Farm Center Arena - Request for Information (RFI)

Introduction

Houston County is seeking information from interested parties to operate the soon-to-be renovated Houston County Farm Center Arena, a 48,000 square foot multi-purpose covered pavilion located in Dothan, Alabama. The county's primary objective is to maximize the facility's use as a community asset while ensuring that operational costs are covered. We are particularly interested in engaging event management companies or individuals with relevant experience to manage the facility and ensure it is utilized to its fullest potential.

Scope of the RFI

Houston County seeks to lease the facility to a qualified operator who will manage the venue by renting it out to various entities, including companies, event promoters, individuals, and community organizations. The facility is expected to serve a diverse range of events, from farmers markets and local gatherings to private events and small-scale commercial activities.

Desired Outcomes:

- Maximize the facility's use as a community resource.
- Ensure financial sustainability, aiming for at least a break-even point for the county.
- Maintain the facility in good condition, with the operator handling routine cleaning and minor maintenance.

Key Responsibilities and Expectations:

- Operate the facility efficiently, prioritizing community use.
- Provide routine cleaning and minor maintenance (e.g., toilets, paint).
- Ensure compliance with all relevant local and state regulations.
- Engage with the community to align with local needs and interests.

Submission Guidelines

Interested parties are requested to provide the following information:

1. **Company or Personal Profile:** Include references and past work experience relevant to managing similar facilities.
2. **Operational Proposal:** Outline your proposed approach to operating the facility, including how you will maximize usage, manage maintenance, and engage with the local community.
3. **Financial Proposal:** Suggest a financial structure, including a fixed minimum monthly payment and any revenue-sharing models.
4. **References:** Provide at least three references from previous clients or partners.

Submission Deadline: Responses should be submitted no later than December 15th. Please send your submission to Peter Covert at pbcovert@houstoncountyal.gov.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Relevant experience in event and facility management.
- Creativity and feasibility of the operational proposal.
- Financial viability and proposed lease terms.
- Ability to engage with and benefit the local community.

Lease Terms Overview

- Financial Structure: Houston County prefers a financial model that includes a fixed minimum monthly payment, with the potential for revenue sharing. We are open to discussions and flexible on these points.
- Maintenance and Operational Responsibilities: The operator will handle routine cleaning and minor maintenance. Major repairs and structural modifications will be the responsibility of Houston County.
- Insurance Requirements: The operator must carry adequate insurance to protect the county's interests.

Legal and Regulatory Considerations

The facility must be operated in compliance with all applicable Alabama state laws and local regulations. The operator will ensure that any required licenses or permits are obtained.

Preferred Tenant

The Poplar Head Farmer's Market is to be a preferred tenant of the Farm Center Arena and will utilize the facility free of charge for up to 12 consecutive Saturdays beginning around mid-May of every year.

Next Steps

Houston County will review the submissions and may invite selected respondents for further discussions during a formal proposal process later. We anticipate requesting formal proposals in the first quarter of 2025.

For Further Questions

If you require further information, please call (334) 677-4740 or email Chairman Shoupe at bshoupe@houstoncountyal.gov.