Request For Qualifications (RFQ)
RFQ #2026-602

Port Attorney and Legal Counsel Services for Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District

Release Date: October 16, 2026
Question Submission Deadline: October 23, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. CT
SOQ Submission Deadline: November 6, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. CT

Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District, TX
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Procurement Contact: Hilda Calvillo, Administrative Assistant
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1. Notice of Request for Qualifications

The Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District ("PISBND" or the "District") is requesting Statements of Qualifications ("SOQs") from qualified individual attorneys interested in providing Port Attorney and legal counsel services ("Port Attorney") to the District.

The District seeks an experienced Texas attorney to serve as the principal legal advisor to the District's Board of Commissioners ("Board"), Port Director, and authorized District representatives.

The attorney selected through this RFQ will be expected to personally serve as the District's primary legal counsel and maintain a direct working relationship with the Board and District administration.

An attorney may practice individually or through a law firm or other lawful professional organization. However, the District's selection will be based primarily upon the qualifications, experience, judgment, availability, and suitability of the individual attorney proposed to serve as Port Attorney, rather than the size or resources of the attorney's firm.

The District reserves the right to retain separate or special counsel for litigation, bond matters, conflicts, specialized regulatory matters, or other matters as determined appropriate by the Board.

2. Background

The Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District is a political subdivision of the State of Texas responsible for the ownership, operation, administration, and development of the Port of Port Isabel and related District property and infrastructure.

The District's activities include maritime, commercial, industrial, governmental, real estate, infrastructure, contractual, and administrative matters requiring ongoing legal advice and representation.

Texas Water Code § 63.106 authorizes the District's Board of Commissioners, as the governing commission of the District, to employ an attorney to represent the District in the preparation of contracts, conduct proceedings in or out of court, serve as legal advisor to the Commission, and perform other legal functions considered necessary. The attorney is retained upon such terms and fees as determined by the Commission and agreed upon by the parties.

3. General Instructions

3.1 Purpose

The purpose of this RFQ is to identify and select a qualified individual attorney to serve as Port Attorney and provide legal counsel services for the District.

The District seeks an attorney capable of providing practical, timely, and experienced legal advice concerning the District's governmental and operational affairs.

3.2 Intent

The District intends for the selected attorney to serve as its primary legal advisor and to personally provide or oversee the legal services requested by the Board and authorized District representatives.

The final scope of services, compensation, and other terms of representation will be established through an engagement agreement approved by the Board.

The District shall be the client for purposes of the attorney-client relationship. Representation of the District does not, solely by reason of the engagement, create a separate attorney-client relationship between the selected attorney and any individual Commissioner, officer, employee, or representative of the District.

4. Scope of Services

The selected Port Attorney may be requested to provide legal services including, but not limited to, the following:

4.1 Board and General Counsel Services

- Attend regular and special Board meetings, workshops, and executive sessions as requested;
- Advise the Board, Port Director, and authorized District personnel regarding legal matters affecting the District;
- Advise regarding Board procedures, authority, duties, and governmental responsibilities;
- Prepare and review resolutions, orders, policies, agenda-related documents, and other governmental instruments; and
- Provide legal opinions and recommendations as requested.

4.2 Open Government and Ethics

Advise the District regarding:

- Texas Open Meetings Act;
- Texas Public Information Act;
- Public records and records retention;
- Conflicts of interest;
- Ethics and disclosure requirements; and
- Other laws applicable to Texas political subdivisions and public officials.

4.3 Contracts and Procurement

- Draft, review, revise, and negotiate contracts and agreements;
- Review procurement and solicitation documents;
- Advise regarding contract awards, amendments, change orders, and contract administration;
- Advise concerning compliance with applicable purchasing and procurement requirements; and
- Assist with contractual disputes when necessary.

4.4 Real Estate and Port Matters

Provide legal advice concerning:

- District-owned real property;
- Leases and tenant matters;
- Easements, rights-of-way, licenses, and access agreements;
- Acquisition, disposition, and development of property;
- Title and property issues;
- Port facilities and operations;
- Infrastructure agreements; and
- Other real estate and port-related matters.

4.5 Employment and Administrative Matters

Advise regarding employment, personnel policies, employee relations, administrative matters, and other issues affecting District operations.

4.6 Claims and Litigation

- Advise regarding actual or threatened claims;
- Represent the District in litigation, administrative proceedings, negotiations, mediation, or other proceedings when requested; and
- Coordinate with insurers, special counsel, experts, and other professionals.

The District may retain separate litigation or specialized counsel when determined appropriate by the Board.

4.7 Other Legal Services

Perform other legal services reasonably requested by the Board or authorized District representatives in connection with the District's governmental, administrative, operational, commercial, or property affairs.

5. Minimum Qualifications

Respondents must demonstrate:

- Current license and good standing to practice law in the State of Texas;
- Substantial professional legal experience;
- Experience representing or advising Texas governmental entities, governing boards, or comparable public entities;
- Knowledge of Texas laws applicable to political subdivisions and governmental operations;
- Experience drafting and reviewing contracts and other legal instruments;
- Ability to attend District meetings in person when requested;
- Availability to respond promptly to routine and time-sensitive District matters;
- Professional judgment and communication skills appropriate for serving as counsel to a governmental board; and
- Absence of conflicts of interest that would materially interfere with representation of the District.

Experience involving navigation districts, ports, municipalities, counties, special districts, governmental real estate, infrastructure, commercial leasing, or comparable matters is preferred.

6. Statement of Qualifications Requirements

Respondents shall submit an SOQ demonstrating the qualifications and experience of the **individual attorney proposed to serve as Port Attorney**.

The SOQ should include the following:

6.1 Cover Letter and Attorney Information

Provide:

- Attorney's name;
- Texas Bar number;
- Business address;
- Telephone number;
- Email address;
- Current firm or professional affiliation, if applicable; and
- Number of years licensed to practice law.

The cover letter should confirm the attorney's interest and availability to personally serve as Port Attorney.

6.2 Qualifications and Experience

Provide a resume or professional biography describing relevant experience, including:

- Representation of governmental entities;
- Representation or advising of governing boards;
- Governmental contracts and procurement;
- Open meetings and public information;
- Real estate and leasing;
- Public infrastructure;
- Employment matters;
- Litigation and dispute resolution; and
- Port or navigation district matters, if applicable.

6.3 Relevant Governmental Representation

Identify up to five governmental or comparable clients represented within the preceding ten years.

For each, briefly identify:

- Client/entity;

- Nature of representation;
- Attorney's role; and
- Approximate period of representation.

6.4 Availability and Responsiveness

Describe:

- Availability to attend District meetings;
- Ability to respond to urgent legal matters;
- Typical availability to the Board and Port Director; and
- Any existing professional commitments that could materially affect the attorney's ability to serve the District.

6.5 References

Provide at least three professional references, preferably governmental clients familiar with the attorney's legal services.

For each reference, provide:

- Entity or organization;
- Contact person;
- Telephone number;
- Email address; and
- Brief description of services provided.

6.6 Conflicts of Interest

Identify any actual or potential conflict of interest that could affect representation of the District.

Respondents should disclose any current representation that is directly adverse to the District or any other relationship the respondent believes should reasonably be disclosed to the District in evaluating the proposed representation.

6.7 Disciplinary History

Identify any public disciplinary action imposed against the attorney by the State Bar of Texas or another attorney licensing authority during the preceding ten years.

If none, state "None."

7. Required Forms and Certifications

The following forms and certifications shall be provided as specified below.

7.1 Conflict of Interest Questionnaire

A respondent shall complete and submit Form CIQ, Conflict of Interest Questionnaire, if required by Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code.

A respondent that is not required to file Form CIQ under applicable law is not required to submit the form with its SOQ.

7.2 Texas Statutory Contract Certifications

Following selection and before execution of an engagement agreement, the selected attorney shall provide any certifications required by applicable Texas law based upon the nature, amount, and terms of the resulting contract.

A certification that is not applicable will not be required.

7.3 Certificate of Interested Parties – Form 1295

The selected attorney shall complete and submit Texas Ethics Commission Form 1295, Certificate of Interested Parties, if required by Texas Government Code § 2252.908 and applicable Texas Ethics Commission rules.

Form 1295 is not required to be submitted with the SOQ unless specifically requested by the District.

7.4 Non-Collusion Affidavit

Each respondent shall complete, sign, and submit the Non-Collusion Affidavit – Exhibit 2 with its Statement of Qualifications.

By submitting the affidavit, the respondent certifies that its SOQ was independently prepared and is not the result of any unlawful collusion, agreement, or arrangement with another respondent or other person intended to restrict competition or improperly influence the selection process.

8. Evaluation Criteria

SOQs will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Evaluation Criterion	Maximum Points
Experience representing Texas governmental entities and governing boards	30
Qualifications and professional experience of the individual attorney	25
Relevant experience involving contracts, real estate, infrastructure, ports, navigation districts, or similar matters	20
Availability, responsiveness, and ability to personally serve the District	15
References and past performance	10
Total	100

9. Evaluation and Selection Process

The District may use the following process:

- Review SOQs for responsiveness;
- Evaluate SOQs based upon the published criteria;
- Verify qualifications and references;
- Develop a shortlist, if appropriate;
- Request written clarifications;
- Conduct interviews;
- Rank or otherwise identify the attorney considered best suited to serve the District;

- Negotiate compensation and engagement terms with the selected attorney;
- Recommend selection to the Board; and
- Execute an engagement agreement following Board approval.

The District may select an attorney without conducting interviews.

The Board retains discretion to select the attorney it determines is best qualified and best suited to serve as Port Attorney based upon the published evaluation criteria, together with information obtained through permitted clarifications, reference checks, conflict review, and interviews conducted as part of this RFQ.

No respondent will have a contractual right or property interest in an engagement unless and until an engagement agreement is approved and executed by the District.

10. Interviews

The District may invite one or more respondents to participate in an interview.

Interview topics may include:

- Experience advising governmental boards;
- Understanding of the role of Port Attorney;
- Relevant governmental and port experience;
- Approach to providing legal advice;
- Availability and responsiveness;
- Potential conflicts;
- Communication style;
- Approach to handling specialized legal matters.

Because the District is selecting an individual Port Attorney, the attorney proposed to serve in that capacity must personally participate in any interview.

11. Questions and Requests for Clarification

Questions concerning this RFQ must be submitted in writing to:

Contact: Hilda Calvillo, Administrative Assistant
Email: administration@pisbnd.com
Subject Line: Questions - RFQ #2026-602 - Legal Services

Questions must be received no later than October 23, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. CT

Respondents may not rely upon oral explanations or instructions. Material interpretations, clarifications, or changes will be issued by written addendum.

Respondents shall not contact individual District Commissioners, employees, consultants, legal counsel, or evaluation committee members regarding this solicitation except through the designated contact person. Unauthorized communications may result in disqualification.

12. SOQ Submission Instructions

Statements of Qualifications must be received no later than **November 6, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. CT.**

SOQs received after the deadline may be rejected as late and nonresponsive.

12.1 Electronic Submission

Respondents shall submit one complete electronic copy of the SOQ in searchable PDF format by email to:

Hilda Calvillo, Administrative Assistant
Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District
Email: administration@pisbnd.com

The subject line shall state: RFQ #2026-602 – Legal Services

The electronic SOQ must be received by the District no later than the submission deadline. Respondents are responsible for ensuring successful and timely transmission.

12.2 Physical Copies

Respondents shall also submit one (1) original and five (5) printed copies of the complete SOQ in a sealed envelope or package clearly marked: RFQ #2026-602 - Legal Services

Physical submissions shall be delivered or mailed to:

Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District
Attn: Victor Barrera, Port Director
250 Industrial Drive
Port Isabel, Texas 78578

The required physical copies must be received by the District no later than the submission deadline.

Both the electronic submission and the required physical copies must be timely received for the SOQ to be considered responsive.

12.3 SOQ Format

SOQs shall:

- Be submitted electronically as a searchable PDF;
- Include the required original and five (5) printed copies;
- Be organized using numbered sections generally corresponding to the applicable sections of this RFQ;
- Be limited to ten (10) pages, excluding the cover page, resume, required forms and certifications; and
- Use a readable font of at least 11 points.

The District may reject an SOQ that is materially incomplete or fails to comply with the submission requirements of this RFQ.

13. Public Information

SOQs and supporting materials submitted in response to this RFQ may be subject to disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act and other applicable law.

Respondents should not include confidential, privileged, or sensitive client information in their SOQs.

Nothing in this section requires an attorney to disclose information protected by the attorney-client privilege, applicable confidentiality obligations, or the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct.

14. District Reservations

The District reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all SOQs;
- Cancel, suspend, amend, or reissue this RFQ;
- Waive informalities, irregularities, or minor defects;
- Request clarifications or additional information;
- Conduct interviews;
- Verify information submitted by respondents;
- Contact references and prior clients;
- Consider relevant past performance and disciplinary history;
- Disqualify a respondent because of a conflict of interest;
- Negotiate compensation and engagement terms;
- Select no respondent;
- Retain special or additional legal counsel when appropriate; and
- Take any other action permitted by applicable law.

The District will not reimburse respondents for expenses associated with preparation of an SOQ, interviews, negotiations, or participation in this selection process.

15. Engagement Requirements

The selected attorney will be required to execute an engagement agreement acceptable to the District.

The agreement may address:

- Scope of representation;
- Compensation and billing;
- Term of engagement;
- Attorney-client privilege and confidentiality;
- Conflicts of interest;
- Professional liability insurance;
- Assignment or use of other attorneys;
- District files and records;
- Compliance with applicable law;

- Termination;
- Venue and governing law;
- Governmental immunity; and
- Other terms approved by the District.

The selected attorney shall not commence representation pursuant to this RFQ until the engagement has been approved by the Board and the engagement agreement has been executed.

16. Insurance Requirements

The selected attorney shall maintain insurance reasonably appropriate for the legal services to be provided to the District and as required by the final engagement agreement.

Depending upon the nature of the engagement and services to be performed, the selected attorney may be required to maintain the following insurance coverages:

- Professional Liability / Lawyers Professional Liability Insurance;
- Commercial General Liability Insurance, if applicable;
- Automobile Liability Insurance, if applicable to services performed for the District; and
- Workers' Compensation Insurance, if required by applicable law.

The specific coverage types, limits, endorsements, and certificate requirements will be established in the final engagement agreement.

The District may modify or waive insurance requirements that are not reasonably applicable to an individual attorney or the nature of the services to be performed.

Evidence of required insurance shall be provided prior to commencement of services if requested by the District.

17. Professional Independence and Standard of Performance

The selected attorney shall exercise independent professional judgment and shall provide legal services in accordance with applicable law, the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct, and generally accepted standards of professional legal practice.

The attorney shall:

- Exercise independent professional judgment on behalf of the District;
- Provide candid legal advice regarding matters presented for review;
- Promptly identify material legal risks, conflicts, or compliance concerns;
- Keep the Board and authorized District representatives reasonably informed regarding matters handled by the attorney; and
- Perform services in a timely, professional, competent, and ethical manner.

Nothing in this RFQ or the resulting engagement agreement shall require the attorney to take any action inconsistent with applicable law, professional obligations, or ethical duties.

18. Attorney-Client Privilege and Confidentiality

For purposes of the attorney-client relationship, the District is the client. The attorney's communications with Commissioners, officers, employees, and representatives of the District shall be undertaken in connection with representation of the District and shall not, solely by reason of such communications, establish a separate attorney-client relationship with any such individual.

The selected attorney will receive and generate information that may be confidential, privileged, sensitive, or otherwise protected from public disclosure.

The attorney shall preserve the confidentiality of information relating to representation of the District in accordance with applicable law and professional obligations.

The attorney shall take reasonable measures to protect:

- Attorney-client communications;
- Attorney work product;
- Confidential legal advice;
- Litigation strategy;
- Documents provided for purposes of legal representation; and
- Other confidential or privileged District information.

The attorney shall not disclose confidential or privileged information except as authorized by the District, required by applicable law, or permitted or required by applicable professional obligations.

Nothing in this section shall limit the District's obligations under the Texas Public Information Act or other applicable law.

19. District Files and Work Product

Unless otherwise required by applicable law or professional obligations, documents and materials prepared specifically for the District in connection with the representation shall be maintained as part of the District's legal files.

Upon termination of the engagement, the selected attorney shall cooperate in the orderly transfer of District files to the District or successor counsel, subject to applicable law, ethical obligations, and any lawful rights concerning attorney files.

The attorney shall maintain District records and files in a manner reasonably designed to preserve confidentiality, accessibility, and continuity of representation.

The treatment, retention, return, and destruction of files may be further addressed in the final engagement agreement.

20. Conflict of Interest

The selected attorney shall comply with all applicable conflict-of-interest requirements, including the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct and applicable Texas statutes.

The attorney shall promptly disclose to the District any actual or potential conflict of interest arising during the engagement that could materially affect the representation.

The existence of a potential conflict does not automatically disqualify an attorney if the representation is permissible under applicable law and professional rules and the District determines that any required waiver or other appropriate action may lawfully be taken.

The District reserves the right to retain separate counsel whenever the Board determines that a conflict, specialized matter, or other circumstance makes separate representation appropriate.

21. Term and Termination

The initial term of the engagement will be established in the engagement agreement approved by the Board.

The District intends for the selected attorney to serve as Port Attorney subject to the continuing approval and direction of the Board.

The engagement agreement may provide for renewal, continuation, modification, or termination in accordance with terms approved by the District.

Nothing in this RFQ shall be construed as guaranteeing a minimum amount of work, minimum number of hours, minimum compensation, or any specific duration of representation.

The District reserves the right to terminate the engagement in accordance with the engagement agreement and applicable law.

The selected attorney may withdraw from representation only in accordance with applicable professional obligations and the terms of the engagement agreement.

22. Use of Other Attorneys and Assignment

The District is selecting the individual attorney identified in the SOQ to personally serve as Port Attorney.

The selected attorney may utilize other attorneys, paralegals, or support personnel when reasonably necessary or efficient, subject to the terms of the engagement agreement and the attorney's professional responsibility for the services provided.

Material responsibility for serving as Port Attorney shall not be assigned or transferred to another attorney without prior approval of the District.

The selected attorney shall remain principally responsible for the legal representation unless otherwise approved by the Board.

The District may require prior authorization for substantial work to be performed by other attorneys or outside counsel at the District's expense.

23. Special or Outside Counsel

The District reserves the right to independently retain special counsel, litigation counsel, bond counsel, labor counsel, environmental counsel, regulatory counsel, or other specialized legal counsel whenever determined appropriate by the Board.

The Port Attorney may be requested to coordinate with such counsel to promote efficient and consistent legal representation of the District.

Selection as Port Attorney does not confer an exclusive right to perform all legal services required by the District.

24. Compliance with Applicable Law

The selected attorney shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws applicable to the services and the resulting engagement.

The attorney shall also comply, to the extent applicable, with statutory contracting requirements applicable to Texas governmental entities.

Any statutory representation, verification, or certification required as a condition of entering into the engagement agreement shall be completed prior to execution of the agreement.

A certification or statutory requirement that does not apply to the selected attorney or resulting contract will not be required.

25. No Employment Relationship

The selected attorney will serve as independent legal counsel to the District and shall not, solely by virtue of the engagement, be considered an employee of the District.

Nothing in this RFQ or the resulting engagement agreement shall create an employer-employee relationship, partnership, joint venture, or other relationship except the attorney-client relationship established through the approved engagement.

The selected attorney shall be responsible for the attorney's own taxes, professional expenses, personnel, and business operations except for reimbursable expenses expressly authorized under the engagement agreement.

26. Governmental Immunity

Nothing in this RFQ, the selection process, or any resulting engagement agreement shall be construed as a waiver of any governmental, sovereign, official, qualified, statutory, or other immunity or defense available to the District, its Commissioners, officers, employees, or representatives under applicable law.

No provision of an engagement agreement shall be interpreted as creating a waiver of immunity unless the waiver is expressly authorized by Texas law.

27. Governing Law and Venue

This RFQ and any resulting engagement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Texas.

To the extent permitted by applicable law, venue for any proceeding arising from the engagement shall lie in Cameron County, Texas.

28. Board Approval and No Binding Obligation

Selection of a respondent through this RFQ does not itself create a binding attorney-client engagement or contractual obligation.

Any engagement resulting from this RFQ is subject to:

- Selection by or authorization of the Board;
- Successful negotiation of compensation and engagement terms;
- Completion of any legally required disclosures or certifications;
- Approval of the final engagement agreement by the Board; and
- Execution of the engagement agreement by the authorized parties.

The District shall have no obligation to compensate a respondent for legal services performed before the effective date of an approved engagement agreement unless separately authorized in writing by the District.

29. RFQ Schedule

The District anticipates the following procurement schedule:

Event	Anticipated Date
RFQ issued	October 16, 2026
Deadline for Written Questions	October 23, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. CT
SOQ Submission Deadline	November 6, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. CT
Evaluation / Interviews conducted	November 2026
Board Consideration / Selection	November 2026
Contract Negotiation and Execution	Late November / Early December 2026

The District may modify this schedule at its discretion. Any material change to a submission deadline will be communicated by written addendum.

Exhibits and Required Forms

The following exhibits and forms are incorporated into this RFQ as applicable:

Exhibit 1 – Conflict of Interest Questionnaire (Form CIQ)
To be submitted with the SOQ only if required by Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code.

Exhibit 2 – Non-Collusion Affidavit
Must be completed, signed, and submitted with the SOQ.

Texas Statutory Contract Certifications
To be completed by the selected attorney before execution of the engagement agreement to the extent required by applicable Texas law.

Texas Ethics Commission Form 1295 – Certificate of Interested Parties
To be completed by the selected attorney if required by Texas Government Code § 2252.908 and applicable Texas Ethics Commission rules.