



# REQUEST FOR **INTEREST**

**VISIONARY DEVELOPER  
FOR BUSINESS &  
COMMERCE PARK**



**Brownsville, Texas**  
March 22, 2024



# GREATER BROWNSVILLE BUSINESS & COMMERCE PARK REQUEST FOR INTEREST (RFI)

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1. Overview:

The Greater Brownsville Incentives Corporation (Greater Brownsville) seeks qualified submittals from a forward-visioned Developer or Development firm to craft the future of Brownsville on approximately 700 acres in Brownsville, Texas owned by Greater Brownsville. This development will be a dynamic destination in the Rio Grande Valley of mixed-use opportunities. A true, "live, work & play" environment built with connectivity and nature in mind.

The intent of this RFI is to establish a public-private partnership with a Phased Master Plan Development that incorporates Greater Brownsville's and the City of Brownsville's vision and goals, and that of the Development Team. The submittal may be comprised by a single entity, or a team selected to accomplish the goals of this request. The submitter will be referred to herein as Development Team.

### 2. Development Vision:

Given the property's prime exposure, our strategy utilizes a national platform with local implementation for maximum impact. Situated along the preferred route to new employment clusters and the Port of Brownsville, the Greater Brownsville Business & Commerce Park aims to generate primary jobs. This urban mixed-use development will feature Class A commercial and office buildings, as well as advanced manufacturing spaces for multiple industries such as aerospace, robotics, 3D and 4D printing, and food processing. The project will also include restaurants, entertainment venues, educational facilities, multi-family structures (if dense and vertically structured), retail outlets, open spaces, and other amenities to enhance the overall environment.

### 3. Development Goals

- Propose a development plan that will incorporate business and commerce development with a parallel path for advanced manufacturing to occur.
- Incorporate a combination of uses that provide real experiences, a real community and real value. This is space making for the next generation of citizens and businesses in Brownsville.
- Serve as the environment for recruited opportunities from national and international companies who desire to relocate to Brownsville.
- Provide pedestrian, transit, and bicycle-oriented areas where walking and biking is safe, interesting, and connected to local and regional external hike/bike trail systems.

# About Brownsville



Brownsville is the 16th largest city in the state of Texas and the 3rd largest city on the border of Texas with Mexico. Known as the “Crossroads of the Hemisphere,” it is the only city on the border that offers five (5) modes of transportation: road, rail, runway, river and rocket (SpaceX South Texas Launch Site).

The City of Brownsville, with a growing population nearing 200,000 residents, is the largest City in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) and serves as the county seat of Cameron County which encompasses a population of approximately 450,000. The city is consistently recognized as one of the safest cities in America with a quality-of-life index and cost of living performance rarely matched by similar sized cities.

Brownsville is a major manufacturing center in the RGV and is known for its dedicated, young, and multi-generational, bilingual workforce. The city is pro-business with a fast-tracking process for building permits and inspections and will work with Greater Brownsville on incentives for the right opportunities.

The area stands out for its import-export operation with Brownsville’s largest trading partners being Mexico, Canada, Europe and Asia.

Brownsville offers direct connectivity to Mexico via four international bridges and is 3.5 hours from the largest industrial hub in Latin America-Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico. Its proximity to a cluster of industrial companies supported by a regional supply chain network increases the attractiveness of its bi-national region.

Recently, the city embarked on its 5G Broadband Infrastructure and Digital Inclusion infrastructure work which at its conclusion will place over 600 miles of fiber optic cable across the city.



## **> Port of Brownsville**

The Port of Brownsville, located in Cameron County, is the only deep-water port located on the U.S. - Mexico Border. It offers approximately 40,000 acres of land available for development, 17 miles of waterfront access, a direct route to non-congested international bridge crossings and rail connection through OmniTRAX, operator of the Brownsville & Rio Grande International Railroad. The port handles a wide variety of cargo including steel products, liquid, break bulk, and dry bulk commodities. It possesses the facilities and knowledge to handle international cargo and facilitate efficient movement of goods internationally.

NextDecade, a liquid natural gas facility broke ground on their 18.7-billion-dollar facility at the port in 2023. At peak construction the facility will employ 5000 workers and in operational mode NextDecade will employ approximately 500 full-time personnel. Phase 2 of their operation will add an additional 300 personnel to their ranks.

Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) No. 62 consistently ranks in the Top 3 U.S. FTZs for exports. The Port of Brownsville is the grantee for Foreign Trade Zone No. 62 which is one of the largest in the U.S. and the largest in Texas. Merchandise from every continent passes through FTZ No. 62. The whole project site is eligible for inclusion in the zone, upon request.

## **> Brownsville/South Padre Island International Airport**

The Brownsville South Padre Island International Airport boasts of a state-of-the-art 91,000 SF terminal and is poised to accommodate Brownsville's next 20 years of growth. This \$70M modern building was completed on January 20, 2021, and provides direct flight connectivity to Dallas (DFW) and Houston (IAH), considered two of the most frequented superhub airports in the world. Flights are serviced by American Airlines and United Airlines. The airport recently welcomed destination airline Avelo with multiple flights each week.

# S T A R B A S E

## > SpaceX and Aerospace

Brownsville will be the model of innovation, inclusion, and empowerment where bold people and ideas thrive. Recruitment activities in Space, Aerospace, Robotics and AI business climate are taking place. SpaceX, currently home to 2000 employees, recently announced their 100-million-dollar buildout of office space and work is nearing completion on its 1.5M square feet manufacturing facility on their campus. Additionally, a second launch pad is under construction which will establish south Texas as the launch destination for those looking to reach the stars.

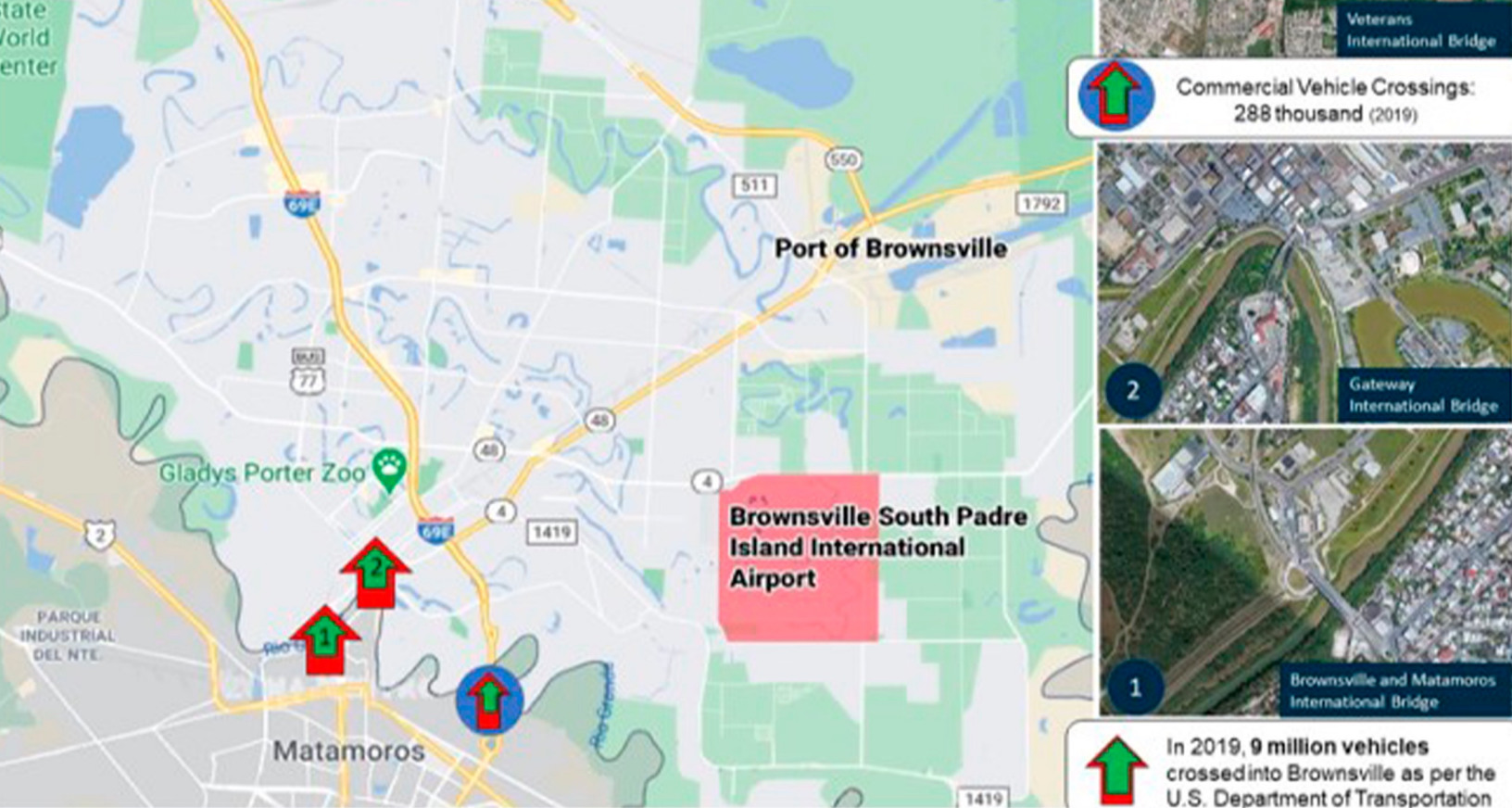
## > Quality of Life

The City of Brownsville, recently ranked #16 Safest City in the USA by Smartasset for 2021, boasts a unique blend of safety and charm. Brownsville also earned the #16 spot for Safest Place to Live in Texas by US News and was named the #4 Best Place to Live for Quality of Life in the USA.

With sister city Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico, just across the border, our region is one of the most dynamic in North America. Our geographic assets, bi-cultural charm, historic wealth, and enhanced quality of life with natural resources like our meandering resacas (waterways) and more than 100 miles of hike and bike trails make Brownsville a one-of-a-kind jewel.







## ➤ New Road Infrastructure Projects:

**East Loop Project** - The East Loop Corridor \$100M project, approved by the Texas Transportation Commission, serves the City and Port of Brownsville. The East Loop Corridor will eliminate sensitive land use crossing conflicts and improve safety. Eliminating 17 stops and 6 school zone crossings will significantly improve air quality and route efficiency. Creating the East Loop Corridor for trucks from Mexico/Veterans International Bridge at Los Tomates to the Port of Brownsville will reduce congestion on I-69E/SH 48 as well as reduce the time of travel on all roadways in the Corridor. Additionally, the corridor's route connects land owned by the Brownsville/SPI International Airport and its industrial center.

**SH 550 Gap 2 Project (Interstate 169)** - SH 550 is a controlled access facility that connects SH 48 and the Port of Brownsville to I-69E in Brownsville, TX. It is considered Interstate 169. The ultimate configuration of the Project consists of five segments. Three segments have been completed. The first segment over FM1847 was opened in 2011, the second segment connecting the Port of Brownsville in 2013, and the third connecting to I-69E opened in July 2015. The GAP 1 project helped improve the safety and mobility in the area by allowing heavy commercial and high-speed traffic to utilize the SH 550 bypassing a local public school, power plant, and Border Patrol facility. Construction began in June 2017 and was completed in April 2018. The SH 550 GAP 2 Project will extend the improvements provided by the GAP 1 project.

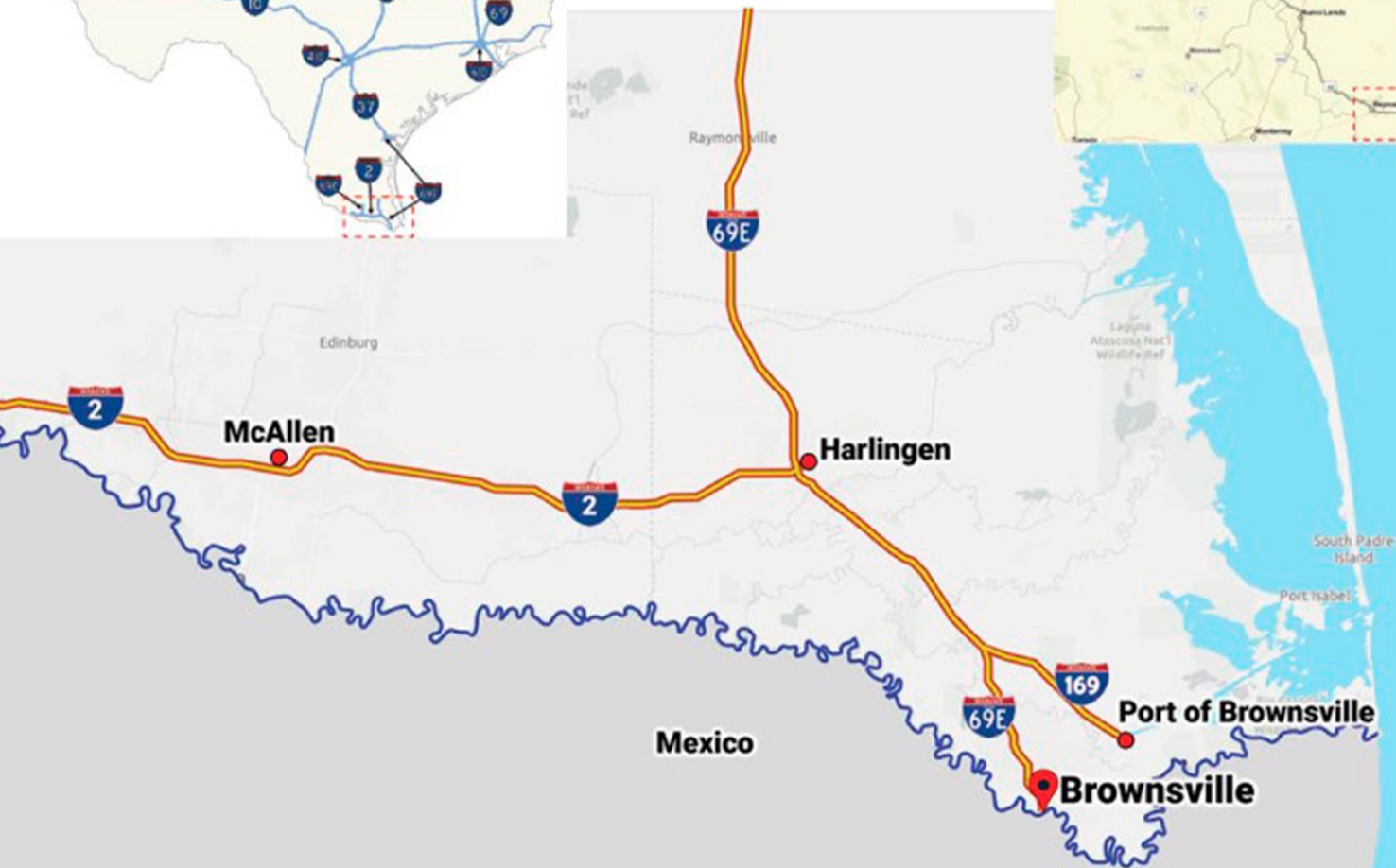
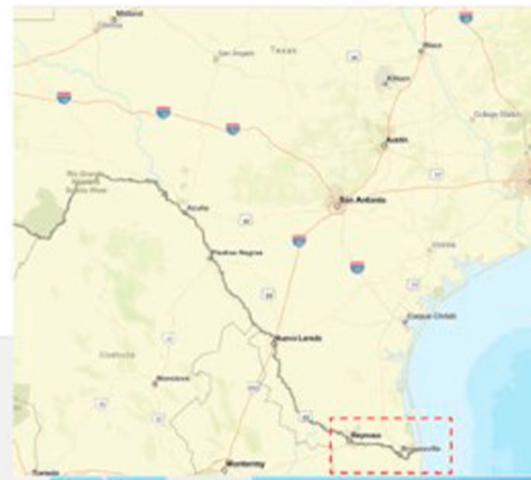


## ➤ The BTX Mobility Plan

The BTX Mobility Plan is the City of Brownsville's first city transportation plan. It is complementary to its regional plan and tasked with getting people and industry where they need to go using the best mode of transportation. It is being designed to use the best practices to determine the best transportation mode most appropriate to citizens' and business travel needs while supporting economic vitality and quality of life. The goal of the Project is to study the needs of the community members and facilitate the development of a multi-modal network of roads, bicycle lanes, trails, transit services, pedestrian facilities, while integrating connectivity to the Brownsville/SPI International Airport, space related industry (i.e. SpaceX South Launch Site), and the Port of Brownsville; adequately support existing and planned land uses of the City and its connectivity throughout the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ); and integrate and support interconnectivity with the existing and planned regional transportation system.



## Brownsville Texas



### ➤ Utilities:

The Texas electricity market is deregulated, meaning that there is competition in the generation and distribution of electricity. The project site is served by 3 electric providers:

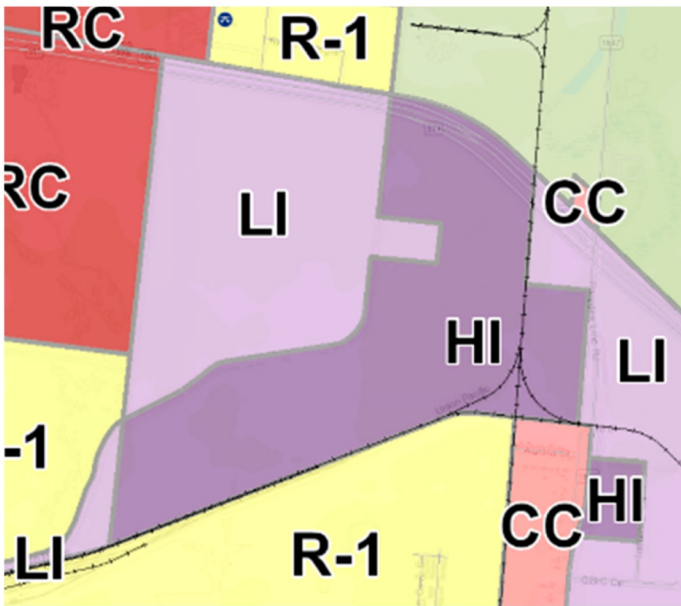
- AEP
- Magic Valley Coop
- Brownsville Public Utility Board (BPUB)

BPUB is a municipally owned utility company, not investor owned, that provides competitive rates for electrical, water, and industrial wastewater.

It has a dedicated Key Accounts Division that focuses on the needs of local manufacturers 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Utilities are located on the site or in close proximity to the site. Gas is provided by Texas Gas. To view Utility maps please see Informational Links Section under Utility Maps.

### ➤ FEMA Flood Map

A portion of the site is under flood area (Zone A) and under a 100-year floodplain (Zone X 0.2%). See under the Information Links section to access FEMA Map.



### > Zoning

The site is currently zoned both Light Industrial (LI) and Heavy Industrial (HI), but we are in the process of changing the zoning to reflect the proper uses for the site.

Other surrounding uses include Regional Corridor (RC), Commercial Corridor (CC) and Residential (R-1). It is important to note that the R-1 zoning is located north of the site and is separated by an Interstate and the residential located south of the site is separated by existing UPRR railroad tracks.

### > Site Specific Studies and Assessments:

The project site is comprised of tracts of land that have been acquired separately. However, we have undertaken the necessary studies and assessments of the entirety of the development area and can provide this information as needed.

*\*See Informational Links section to access the Studies & Assessments*

### > Green and Sustainable Design:

It is a requirement that the Project incorporates sustainable design elements, green building practices and renewable sources of energy. The design will cater to alternative transportation methods such as bicycle and pedestrian mobility.

## ➤ **Informational Links:**

It is recommended that the Development Team respondent become familiar with supporting materials to aid the quality of their submittal. Evidence of knowledge and understanding of Greater Brownsville's goals and visions related to this Project will be important considerations in selection of a Development Team(s). Additional information pertinent to the Project may be obtained by accessing the following links:

- **Greater Brownsville Incentives Corporation:**

<https://greaterbrownsville.com/>

- **City of Brownsville:**

<https://www.brownsvilletx.gov/>

- **Port of Brownsville**

<https://www.portofbrownsville.com/>

- **Location One Information System (LOIS) UPRR Rail Served Sites**

<https://app.location->

[one.com/sites/609ec2867fdb7671233339e5/Brownsville-\(I-169\)-North-Corridor-Industrial-Park](https://app.location-one.com/sites/609ec2867fdb7671233339e5/Brownsville-(I-169)-North-Corridor-Industrial-Park)

- **Unified Development Code:**

<https://www.brownsvilletx.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10893/Final-Draft-Unified-Development-Code>

- **Zoning Interactive Map**

<https://cobmis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=649aa47a8b584c1da49c300cd692c758>

- **City of Brownsville Adopted Codes and Ordinances:**

<https://www.brownsvilletx.gov/1915/Adopted-Codes-and-Ordinances>

- **For Site: CAD File, Conceptual Master Plan, Site Drone Footage/Images, FEMA Map, Studies & Assessments, Survey, and Utility Maps:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rgmPcyOiC-hAxoe\\_aeqGd9fSA5TYtb39?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rgmPcyOiC-hAxoe_aeqGd9fSA5TYtb39?usp=sharing)

## ➤ **Greater Brownsville Contact:**

All Submittals prepared in response to this RFI, as well as any questions, clarifications or requests for general information are to be directed to:

**Bret Gardella**

***bgardella@greaterbrownsville.com***

***Executive Director***

***500 E. Saint Charles Street***

***Brownsville, Texas 78520***

## ➤ **Submittal Due Date:**

Submittals are due by **3:00 p.m. CST on Friday, April 19, 2024.**

Please send all submittals via email to Bret Gardella, Executive Director, at **submittals@greaterbrownsville.com**

- Submittals received after this time and date will not be considered.
- Submittals shall be clearly marked "Greater Brownsville Business & Commerce Park".
- All submittals become the property of Greater Brownsville.

## ➤ **Submittal Format:**

**Interested and qualified Development Teams shall submit a Request for Interest (RFI) proposal document that includes the following information:**

- Submittal document shall not exceed 30 pages for the required information. A page is considered 8.5" x 11", single-sided, 12-point font size (or larger), single-spaced and in portrait orientation.
- Development Team Responders may also include documentation, photographs, artwork, or other supporting materials as Appendices to the Submittal. Appendices are not counted in the 30-page count limitation.

## ➤ **Submittals shall include the following:**

- Names and contact information for the Development Team members/equity partners with 10% participation or more. Describe and include the percentage (10% or more) of equity participation of each member.
- Professional background of Development Team members/equity partners to be associated with the project.
- Description of the Development Team's ability to provide equity and carry out the project.
- Statement of the Development Team's understanding of the Project objectives and any associated risks.
- Create a Marketing Plan to advertise
- Development Team's strategic vision for the Project.
- Financing Plan explaining the funding mechanisms to implement the Project.
- Potential land uses/concept plan.
- Green and Sustainability Initiatives.
- Potential project schedule of completion and phasing plan for its development.

## ➤ **Project References:**

- Provide three examples of Similar Projects that the team has completed or substantially completed.
- Please also provide an overview of the funding structure utilized to finance the Project.
- Provide one reference with name, address, and contact information for each Similar Project.
- Provide a single Development team point of contact for future contacts from Greater Brownsville.

## **> Process:**

All complete submittals received prior to the deadline will be evaluated by the Greater Brownsville selection team. Submittals will be evaluated based on experience, professional capabilities, financial ability, the best interests of Greater Brownsville, the City of Brownsville and its citizens, and the ability of the firm to work collaboratively to successfully realize the shared development vision for the site.

- Greater Brownsville may request candidates for the project to present their submittal and vision for the site to the Greater Brownsville Board of Directors at a date and time to be determined or the Greater Brownsville Board of Directors may select a Development Team and allow the Executive Director to enter into an "Exclusive Negotiation Agreement" with the Development Team to develop the site.

## **> IV. Terms and Notices**

### **1. Terms:**

This is a Request for Interest (RFI), and in no way obligates the Development Team, nor Greater Brownsville to enter into a contractual relationship with the responding team or make an award. Greater Brownsville may pursue discussions with one or more entities responding to this request, or none at all. Greater Brownsville reserves the right to cancel this RFI at any time. Greater Brownsville assumes no obligations, responsibilities, or liabilities, fiscal or otherwise, to reimburse all or part of the costs incurred, or alleged to have been incurred, by Development Team considering a response to and/or responding to this RFI, or any subsequent RFI. All of such costs shall be borne solely by each Development Team.

### **2. Indemnification:**

The successful Development Team Responder shall indemnify, hold harmless and defend Greater Brownsville and the City of Brownsville, its officers, agents, servants, and employees from and against any and all suits, actions, legal proceedings, claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses, attorney fees and any and all other costs or fees incident to any work done as a result of this response and arising out of a willful or negligent act or omission of the successful Development Team Responder, its officers, agents, servants, and employees; provided, however, that the successful Development Team Responder shall not be liable for any suits, actions, legal proceedings, claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses and attorney fees arising out of a willful or negligent act or omission of Greater Brownsville or the City of Brownsville, its officers, agents, servants and employees, or third parties.