

# MISSOURI HOUSING DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION



## Request for Proposals for Bond Counsel

Released: December 12, 2023

**Proposal Due Date:**  
**January 10, 2024 1:00 PM Central Time**  
via email to: [mlappin@mhdc.com](mailto:mlappin@mhdc.com)

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The Missouri Housing Development Commission (“MHDC” or the “Commission”) is a governmental instrumentality of the State of Missouri and a body corporate and politic. The Commission’s authority is derived from Section 215.030 RSMo.

MHDC administers, and provides financing for, the construction of affordable housing. The Commission also provides funding for home loans to qualified buyers through a network of certified, private mortgage lenders. Mortgage financing is facilitated through the sale of mortgage-backed securities and through the sale of tax-exempt and taxable bonds that the Commission is authorized to issue. The Commission administers the federal and Missouri Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) programs, the Affordable Housing Assistance Program Tax Credit (AHAP), federal HOME funds, and the direct funding of other housing assistance programs. Additional information, including financial information, is available per request of the Commission’s Custodian of Records whose contact is provided on the Commission’s website at [www.mhdc.com](http://www.mhdc.com).

#### ***Purpose of Request for Proposals for Bond Counsel (RFP)***

The Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC) is seeking proposals for service as Bond Counsel for MHDC housing bond issues and related program advice and services.

#### ***Term of Service***

It is expected that the firm(s) selected pursuant to this Request for Proposals will serve as Bond Counsel for a period of three years with one additional two-year renewal option, for a total of up to five years. Any transaction initiated prior to the ending date of the term of service, for which a material amount of time or expense has been incurred, will be completed by Bond Counsel although the closing might occur following the end of the term of service. MHDC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to terminate the agreement with any firm selected pursuant to this RFP prior to the expiration of the term of service, or to extend the agreement (with the concurrence of the firm selected) for an additional two-year period.

## II. GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS

### *Anticipated Timetable for RFP and Proposal*

Release RFP	December 12, 2023
Proposal Due Date	January 10, 2024 1:00 P.M. Central
Evaluation Committee Recommendation	TBD – estimated February 2024
Selection by Board of Commissioners	TBD – estimated February 2024

### *Form of Response*

The Commission desires to consider responses to this RFP in a consistent and easily comparable format. Proposals not organized in the manner set forth in this RFP may be considered, at the Commission’s sole discretion, as unresponsive. Please do not refer to other parts of your proposal, to information that may be publicly available elsewhere, or to the submitting entity’s website or another website in lieu of answering a specific question. The proposal must be accompanied by a cover letter stating that: (a) the information submitted in and with the proposal is true and accurate, and (b) the person signing the letter is authorized to submit the proposal on behalf of the firm.

Interested qualified firms are invited to submit proposals that contain information submitted in the order of Section IV below.

**Completed proposals must be submitted to the Commission electronically by the proposal due date. Respondents shall transmit completed proposals to the Commission by email to [mlappin@mhdc.com](mailto:mlappin@mhdc.com) in PDF file format along with the spreadsheet listing in Excel file format of the bidding firm’s owners pursuant to Section IV.B.2. The “Subject” line of the email should state “[name of firm] Bond Counsel Proposal.”**

### *Standards of Conduct*

Please refer to the Commission’s “Standards of Conduct” Policy for information regarding contact with MHDC commissioners or staff in connection with this RFP, necessary disclosures thereunder and other policies regulating the actions of interested parties, employees, commissioners, and former employees, and former commissioners during a competitive matter. The Commission’s Standards of Conduct Policy is available on MHDC’s website at [www.mhdc.com](http://www.mhdc.com). Furthermore, pursuant to the Standards of Conduct, any Response under this RFP shall disclose the name of the individual, entity and/or entities having ownership interests in the Respondent as set forth in Section IV.B.2 of this RFP. All entities identified in this disclosure shall be reduced to their human being level irrespective of the number of entity layers that may be present for any disclosed entity. If the respondent to this RFP is a publicly held corporation the disclosure under this section shall include the names of the respondent’s board of directors, its chief executive officer, chief financial officer, chief operating officer and any individual participating in the preparation of the application vis-à-vis this RFP. Questions regarding this requirement may be directed to the Commission’s General Counsel, Anne Powell, by phone at 314-877-1373 or email at [apowell@mhdc.com](mailto:apowell@mhdc.com).

### ***Inquiries***

The Commission will provide responses to inquiries submitted by firms to the Commission's contact person, Marilyn Lappin, Deputy Executive Director and Director of Finance. All questions must be submitted in writing via email to Ms. Lappin at [mlappin@mhdc.com](mailto:mlappin@mhdc.com) and received no later than Wednesday, December 20, 2023, 1:00 p.m. Central Time. The "Subject" line of the email should be, "RFP for Bond Counsel Questions." Questions submitted after the deadline will not receive a response. Responses will be provided by December 27, 2023, 1:00 p.m. Central Time to all interested bidders that have provided an email address to Ms. Lappin prior to the above deadline for the submission of questions. Should MHDC determine that additional time is needed to provide responses to questions, all interested bidders who provide an email address prior to the question deadline will be notified.

All inquiries must be submitted by email, citing the particular proposal section and paragraph number. Proposers should note that all clarifications and exceptions are to be resolved prior to submission of the proposal. A list of all substantive inquiries received with relevant responses will be provided to interested bidders.

Other than the contact person identified herein and except as provided in Sections IV.B.2 and IV.B.11 below, prospective proposers shall not approach the Commission's employees, managers or commissioners after the publication of this RFP and before the announcement of a selection about any matters related to the RFP or any proposal submitted pursuant thereto. As provided in MHDC's Standards of Conduct, once the RFP is submitted and the deadline has passed, the proposer is an "interested party" in the "disclosure period" and subject to disclosure protocol. The disclosure period extends until seven days prior to a scheduled MHDC decision on the RFP, which is when the "quiet period" begins. Interested parties are prohibited from contacting commissioners and staff members during the quiet period.

### ***Public Records***

Respondents are advised that all submissions may be made available to the public on request upon completion of the process and award of an Agreement. Accordingly, any information which the respondent thinks benefits from an exception to disclosure under the Missouri Sunshine Law (RSMo §§610.010-225) shall be clearly identified as such and segregated from the rest of the proposal. MHDC, in its own discretion, shall determine which information may be disclosed under the Missouri Sunshine Law. By responding to this RFP, respondent agrees that any determination made regarding disclosure of information contained in the response is satisfactory.

### ***Modifications to Proposals***

Respondents may not modify or correct its Proposal any time after the Proposal Due Date, except in direct response to a request from the Commission for clarification.

### ***Revisions to this RFP***

In the event that it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, MHDC will provide an updated RFP or an addendum on its website with notification to each firm who provides an email address as described in the *Inquiries* section above or who submits a proposal in response to this RFP. Any additional information required to clarify portions of this RFP will be issued in the form of an addendum.

### ***Expenses Relating to Proposals***

All costs directly or indirectly related to the preparation of a response to this RFP shall be the sole responsibility of and shall be borne by the respondent. MHDC shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by respondents in replying to this RFP.

### ***Visits and Interviews***

All firms responding to this RFP must be prepared to schedule a visit to MHDC's offices or to another location upon request by the Commission. In addition, firms responding to this RFP may be interviewed by the Commission as a part of the selection process.

### ***Reservation of Rights***

The Commission reserves the right to conduct any investigation of the qualifications of any firm that it deems appropriate; negotiate modifications to any of the items proposed in the Proposal; request additional information from any firm; reject any or all Proposals; and waive any irregularities in any Proposal. **The Commission retains the right to negotiate the fees and compensation arrangements for its Bond Counsel services.** At the Commission's sole discretion, the selection of a proposal by the Commission may be cancelled at any time prior to the complete execution of a contract or agreement. If the Commission cancels its selection of a proposal, the Commission may repost this or a similar RFP and re-seek proposals.

## **III. SCOPE OF SERVICES**

MHDC anticipates the need for legal services in connection with the issuance of its homeownership bonds, multifamily housing bonds, occasional refunding bonds, and other bonds or notes. It is anticipated that mortgage revenue bonds may possibly be issued three or four times per year during the term of the agreement. Multifamily housing bonds may be issued at various times during the term of the agreement. Bond Counsel is expected to assign those attorneys and professionals employed by the firm who are best suited to advise the Commission in all matters associated with issuance of housing bonds and with ongoing compliance of trust indentures and other documents and agreements integral to the issuance of bonds. In addition, occasionally the Commission may seek legal assistance for contractual and other technical legal matters in conjunction with its housing programs, including Mortgage Credit Certificates.

**The scope of services to be provided may also include any or all of the following:**

1. Preparation of board resolutions related to bond issues and mortgage credit certificate programs.
2. Preparation of master and supplemental indentures for ongoing single family and multifamily housing bond issues.
3. Preparation and/or review of all official statements and disclosure documents necessary and appropriate to the authorization, issuance, sale or delivery of multifamily housing bonds.
4. Review of all official statements and other disclosure documents necessary and appropriate to the authorization, issuance, sale or delivery of mortgage revenue bonds and other bonds associated with MHDC's homeownership programs.

5. Delivery of legal opinions regarding the due and lawful authorization and issuance of each bond issue, the exemption from federal and state taxes for those bonds issued on a tax-exempt basis, exemption from securities laws, the sufficiency of the disclosure for those portions of the official statement prepared by bond counsel or summarizing documents for which bond counsel is responsible and delivery of such other legal opinions typically provided in connection with similar transactions.
6. Preparation of closing documents in connection with each bond issue.
7. Preparation of legal documents and IRS filings in connection with each mortgage credit certificate program.
8. Administration and tracking of private activity volume cap available to the Commission for both homeownership and multifamily transactions.
9. Prepare bond and loan yield analyses and related IRS filings for arbitrage rebate purposes.
10. Participation in meetings and phone conferences regarding specific bond issues and the Commission's bond programs generally.
11. Attendance at meetings with MHDC staff, Commissioners, and others party to MHDC's issuance of bonds, including financial advisors, underwriters and rating agencies.
12. Provision of any other legal services, advice or opinions, as requested, regarding the Commission's bond and other housing finance programs.

#### **IV. STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF PROPOSAL**

Respondents to this RFP should prepare clear and complete responses to each of the following questions and information requests. Brevity and clarity of responses will be appreciated. Respondents interested in responding to this RFP should submit the following information.

##### **A. COVER LETTER (limit to 1 page)**

Include a Cover Letter stating that: (i) the information included in the Proposal is true and correct to the best of its knowledge and (ii) the person signing the transmittal letter is authorized to execute the Proposal on behalf of the Respondent.

##### **B. BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE**

Please submit the following information.

1. Firm Information. Provide a description of your firm that includes the location of the firm's office(s), the length of time your firm has been in business, status as a veteran, minority or woman-owned firm, the number of partners and associates, an overview of the housing legal group and the bond arbitrage and related federal tax group and a discussion of any substantive changes in its ownership, management and housing group, and in any other area of its public finance practice in the last three (3) years.

2. Firm Ownership. Pursuant to the Standards of Conduct (see Section II of this RFP), any Response under this RFP shall disclose the name of the individual, entity and/or entities having ownership interests in the Respondent. All entities identified in this disclosure shall be reduced to their human being level irrespective of the number of entity layers which may be present for any disclosed entity. Notwithstanding the previous sentence, to the extent any Respondent under this RFP is a publicly traded corporation, such a Respondent may limit this disclosure to all board members, officers (and other key employees) and any shareholders owning or controlling ten percent (10%) or more of the corporation. **For purposes of providing firm ownership information, please complete Exhibit 1 (attached) in spreadsheet format to include a listing of your firm's owners/shareholders.** Questions regarding this requirement or any other requirements or restrictions imposed by the Standards of Conduct may be directed to the Commission's General Counsel, Anne Powell, by phone at 314-877-1373 or email [apowell@mhdc.com](mailto:apowell@mhdc.com).
3. Contact Person. Provide the name, address, phone number, fax number and email address of the firm's contact person for this engagement.
4. Housing Experience. Include general discussion of your firm's experience in single family and multifamily housing bond work, including the number of partners and associates in your tax exempt housing bond practice.
5. Federal Tax Law. Describe your firm's experience with federal tax law related to tax-exempt single family and multifamily housing revenue bonds. Include discussion of your firm's experience with the eligibility requirements for single family mortgage revenue bonds, willingness to respond to specific inquiries from lenders, experience with bond and loan yield analysis on both single family and multifamily housing bonds and experience with arbitrage rebate issues on housing bonds. Has your firm ever represented a housing bond issuer on a random audit by the IRS? What was the outcome? Has a federal tax opinion delivered by your firm during the past ten years been invalidated or overturned? Has the firm or any client of the firm entered into any closing or settlement agreements, or similar arrangements, in connection with any federal tax opinions delivered by the firm during the past ten years?
6. Co-counsel or Subcontractor Participation. Describe any relationships that you have with other law firms regarding proposed co-counsel relationships and/or fee splitting arrangements with another firm, including any veteran, minority or woman-owned firms that would assist in any capacity with services to be provided to MHDC. If you have a co-counsel relationship and/or fee splitting arrangement, provide detailed information about your proposed financial and work sharing arrangement with these firms. If none are described, confirm that your firm will provide all services described above without the involvement or assistance of any other firm or lawyers.
7. Special Strengths. Include any additional information that may be helpful to the Commission in making a decision, including any special strengths or capabilities of your firm (which may include administering programs for other state housing finance agencies, special expertise with single family finance, the presence of offices or headquarters in Missouri, the number of employees of the firm within Missouri or any other special services or assistance your firm may provide to MHDC) that you believe may be relevant to or helpful to MHDC in financing or administering its Homeownership Loan Program and homeownership lending initiatives.

8. Economic Impact to Missouri. The Respondent must provide information and data concerning the economic impact of any contract entered into pursuant to this RFP. At minimum, the Respondent must provide: a) a description of proposed services that will be performed and/or the proposed products that will be provided by Missourians; b) a description of the economic impact returned to the State of Missouri through tax revenue obligations and otherwise; and c) a description of the Respondent's economic presence within the State of Missouri, including Missouri employee statistics.
9. Professional Liability Insurance. Describe the type and amount of professional liability insurance your firm carries.
10. Investigations and Proceedings. Indicate whether your firm has any knowledge of any active investigations or criminal proceedings by the Internal Revenue Service, the Securities and Exchange Commission or any other state or federal agency with regard to your members or practices. If so, please provide a brief description of such investigation and the name and phone number of a person whom MHDC might contact to obtain more information.

Identify any administrative proceeding, investigation or litigation regarding your firm and/or any member of the firm, which is ongoing or has been settled or otherwise concluded during the past five years.

11. Federal Work Authorization Program. Pursuant to Mo.Rev.Stat. §285.530.2, firm(s) selected pursuant to this RFP shall provide MHDC with an affidavit stating that Respondent does not employ any person who is an unauthorized alien in conjunction with the contracted services, and that Respondent is enrolled in and participating in a federal work authorization program with respect to the employees working in connection with the contracted services. Prior to execution of any agreement contemplated herein, Respondent shall provide evidence of participation in a federal work authorization program. Questions regarding this requirement may be directed to the Commission's General Counsel, Anne Powell, by phone at 314-877-1373 or email at [apowell@mhdc.com](mailto:apowell@mhdc.com). **In your proposal, please indicate whether your firm is currently enrolled in and participating in a federal work authorization program such as E-Verify.**
12. Prohibition to Boycott Israel. Pursuant to Mo. Rev. Stat. §34.600, MHDC shall not enter into a contract with any firm that boycotts Israel. In your proposal, state whether your firm is or is not currently engaged in a boycott of (i) goods or services from the State of Israel; (ii) companies doing business in or with Israel or authorized by, licensed by, or organized under the laws of the State of Israel; or (iii) persons or entities doing business in the State of Israel. "Boycott" means refusing to deal with, terminating business activities with, or otherwise taking any action that is intended to penalize, inflict economic harm on, or limit commercial relations, but does not include an action made for ordinary business purposes.

### C. SPECIFIC EXPERIENCE AND RESOURCES

1. Tax Exempt Bond Issues. List all tax exempt bond issues for which the firm has acted as bond counsel since January 1, 2021. Note issuer, type of issue, dollar amount, and issuance date of each issue. Highlight those issued in Missouri and that are housing bonds (whether within or outside Missouri). In addition, please note those issues for which your firm has given a sole or lead opinion.

2. MHDC Experience. Describe your firm’s historical experience in serving MHDC or other state or local issuers of housing bonds.
3. MHDC Staffing. Identify the partners and associates who will serve MHDC (including tax attorneys), including office location, phone number, fax number and email address. Provide appropriate resumes and identify their responsibilities in serving MHDC. Please provide evidence that the attorneys that will serve MHDC are licensed to practice law in the State of Missouri and whether or not they are members of the National Association of Bond Lawyers.
4. Analytical Capabilities. Describe the firm’s experience and analytical systems with respect to yield verification for mortgage revenue bond issues and multifamily bond issues.
5. IRS Experience. Describe your firm’s recent experience in obtaining Internal Revenue Service rulings and clarification of IRS code and regulations.
6. Tax Law Communications. Describe the manner by which your firm regularly communicates changes in tax law to your clients.
7. Federal Legislation Updates. Discuss your firm’s ability to monitor and advise MHDC on federal legislation that may affect MHDC’s housing operations.
8. Firm Resources. Identify resources of the firm that will be made available to MHDC.
9. Other Information. Discuss any topics not covered in this Request for Proposals that you would like to bring to the attention of MHDC.

#### **D. COSTS**

Describe your proposed fee structure. Please include the hourly rate to be charged by the members of the firm for work on related matters not directly resulting in a bond issue. Also state whether the firm will charge in the event a proposed bond or other financing issue is not successfully sold. State whether the firm will charge for attendance at meetings of the Board of Commissioners or other meetings relating to MHDC’s bond or other housing finance programs.

Provide an estimate of your firm’s fees and expenses under a “per-bond” rate structure for each of the following types of transactions: a \$100,000,000 single family new money issue; a \$50,000,000 single family new money issue; a \$30,000,000 single family taxable refunding issue; a \$10,000,000 multifamily housing issue and a \$5,000,000 multifamily housing issue. Note that some mortgage revenue bonds and multifamily housing issues may be privately placed and the related fees negotiated.

State whether the proposed fees include expenses, or whether expenses will be charged separately (identify those expenses that will be charged separately, if any). State whether the fees submitted are effective for the duration of the expected service period of three years and the additional optional two-year period. In the event the proposed fees would not extend for the full duration of the contract, describe your process and expected frequency for rate changes, including maximum percentage increases.



## **V. RFP REVIEW AND SELECTION CRITERIA**

The Bond Counsel Services Agreement will be awarded to the firm(s) which, in the opinion of MHDC, is (are) the best qualified to provide such services.

Proposals will be evaluated on a variety of factors, including:

1. The firm's demonstrated willingness to follow the guidelines in this RFP.
2. Experience and qualifications of both the firm and the staff to be assigned to these financings, as evidenced by formal training; education; appropriate professional licensing and related experience.
3. Firm's ability to provide the required services on a timely basis in light of the anticipated workload, and the availability of adequate personnel and resources of the firm.
4. The firm's experience during the past three years as bond or underwriter's counsel on various housing and mortgage revenue bond financings.
5. The firm's expertise in the area of tax law.
6. Involvement and accessibility of staff to be assigned to the financings.
7. Organization, size and structure of firm. The firm's presence in Missouri.
8. Projected costs and proposed fee structure for services performed.
9. The Commission's prior experiences, if any, with the firm and any other factors the Commission believes would be in its best interest to consider.
10. Related investigations and regulatory proceedings involving the firm will be taken into account, depending upon the nature and significance of the proceedings.

**There is no additional information requested. Thank you for reviewing this RFP.  
We look forward to your response.**