

Firm Name: Blais & Associates, Inc.	DUNS Number: 060806773	Federal EIN: 45-3083595
Prequalification Contact First, Last Name and Title: Neil Blais, President/CEO	Phone Number: +1 (469) 579-5905	Prequalification Contact E-mail Address: nblais@blaisassoc.com
Firm Web Address www.blaisassoc.com	Firm Mailing Address 4017 Moonlight Dr, Little Elm, TX 75068	Name of Firm's President/Managing Officer: Neil C. Blais

**Application for Prequalification to Provide Administrative Services**

**IMPORTANT:** The term “respondent” refers to the individual or firm responding to this RFQ. Responses to the items in Part 1 will be posted on TDA's website with the Approved Vendor List for Grant Administrative Services. Responses to the items in Part 2 will be disclosed to participating local governments during the project-based solicitation. The applicant must verify their eligibility through the System for Award Management (SAM) and demonstrate they are not listed on the government-wide exclusion list. Attach printout(s) of verification page with date. **With the exception of SAM verification, TDA will not accept or publish any attachments to the application. A response is required for all questions.**

Part 1

1. Provide a brief history or background of the respondent including number of years in the business of providing grant writing and/or grant administration services.

Blais & Associates, Inc. (B&A) is a full-service grant management firm focused on local government agencies. B&A was launched in California in 2000 and incorporated as a California S Corporation in May 2005. As part of planned expansion, B&A moved the corporate headquarters in 2011 to Dallas, TX. B&A is now incorporated as an S Corporation in the State of Texas and also registered and in good standing with California Secretary of State. March 2018 will mark B&A's 18th anniversary providing grant research, writing, and management services. B&A is fiscally healthy and does not have any conditions (e.g., bankruptcy, pending litigation, or planned office closures) that could impede our ability to serve municipalities in the State of Texas. Since inception, B&A has submitted over 700 different types of grant applications and funding vehicles, including formula grants and competitive programs. These applications represent requests for approximately \$793 million on behalf of our clients. Since 2014, B&A staff developed 258 grant applications requesting nearly \$353 million in funding across a broad range of agencies and grant programs. B&A has submitted transportation, water, wastewater, storm water, capital improvement, recreation, parks, cultural, education, historic preservation, public safety, economic development, planning, environmental protection, library, museum, and homeland security grants, among others. In addition to grant writing, B&A also provides grant management services (post-award), including reporting and close-out. This effort includes working with clients to review the grant agreement, develop a Timeline and Checklist for the reporting requirements, prepare reimbursements or drawdown requests, and assist with project reporting and project close-out. B&A provides all clients with an Audit Binder that contains all information needed for the single audit process, internal audits, or external, 3rd party audits.

2. Describe the respondent's experience with the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and in particular the state CDBG program.

B&A has experience with State-managed CDBG programs. In Texas, we worked with the Town of Little Elm to prepare and submit a \$275,000 CDBG application for roadway infrastructure in an impoverished community called Hilltown. The application was not selected for funding but this experience enabled the Town staff to understand the need for an income survey and additional public outreach. B&A advised Town staff throughout the process and submitted the proposal on their behalf. In California, B&A's experience includes: 1) developing and submitting a \$1 million CDBG application to construct a sports park for low-income residents located in Farmersville, CA; 2) \$70,000 CDBG Planning and Technical Assistance application prepared and submitted to acquire vacant parcels that would be used for park activities (\$67,640 awarded); and 3) \$62,740 CDBG Planning and Technical Assistance application was prepared and funded to study water and sewer service for a small impoverished community called Cameron Creek Colony.

3. Describe the respondent's experience with the following:

- a. Community wide infrastructure projects
- b. Direct beneficiary projects, such as housing rehabilitation or on-site sewer facility replacement
- c. Job creation programs, including TCF-Infrastructure/Real Estate
- d. Projects involving multiple funding sources

The following examples are provided as evidence of B&A's experience with the above-listed types of projects:

1) The City of Anaheim worked with B&A staff to obtain multiple funding sources for a road widening project called Brookhurst South. This was a complicated project that involved installing bioswales, curb and gutter, driveways, and traditional road rehabilitation. B&A developed and won the following multiple grant awards for this single project: 1) \$1.344 million from the California State Water Resources Control Board Proposition 84 Storm Water Grant Program; 2) \$1.085 million from the Orange County Transportation Authority M2 Environmental Cleanup Program, Tier 2, and 3) \$900,000 from the Federal Highway Administration's Highway Safety Improvement Program.

2) For the California Rural Water Association (CRWA), B&A staff is assisting with post-award grant management and program development for a Household/Small Water System project. Funds are being administered for individual/household drinking water upgrades to resolve individual household drinking water bacterial violations. B&A staff developed the intake form to obtain information from interested individuals or households, a draft grant agreement to be used between the CRWA and individuals/households, internal procedures the CRWA would adhere to during the grant's performance period, and an application for individuals or households to complete in order to apply for said grant for their individual or household water system.

3) For the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, B&A developed six Sustainability Planning Grants that would benefit the entire San Bernardino County region (the largest county in the continental United States by area) for submission to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) on behalf of the agency's membership. The projects for which applications were developed are listed below:

- Updates to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan and Environmental Report (awarded \$200,000);
- Working with the Building Industry Association to develop public and private initiatives for housing development and sustainability (denied);
- Develop an active transportation access plan with the Redlands Passenger Rail Project (awarded \$200,000);
- Working with ESRI to develop story maps showing the County's built environment and transportation story (awarded \$50,000);
- Working with local jurisdictions to develop a Regional Conservation Investment Strategy and Pilot Projects (denied); and
- Develop the Morongo Basin Active Transportation Plan (awarded \$200,000).

4) For the City of Anaheim, B&A developed three Highway Safety Improvement Program applications for community-wide infrastructure projects. The projects for which the applications were developed are listed below:

- Replace 672 existing pedestrian crossing heads with 672 pedestrian countdown timer heads (awarded \$250,000);
- Replace 10 antiquated guardrails with upgraded and enhanced guardrails to absorb collision impacts and slow vehicles down (awarded \$381,000); and
- Install new mast arms with left turn phasing, emergency vehicle preemption, intersection lighting and a new median at the intersection of Glenoaks Avenue and Euclid Street (awarded \$1,118,610).

5) For Denton County Transportation Authority, B&A developed a Brownfields Assessment grant for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The application requested funding to conduct subsurface testing in and around the Lewisville Rail Maintenance Facility to assess whether any hazardous substances and/or petroleum products are present within and outside of the facility. The application requested \$178,200 for the testing. This application was awarded funding.

4. Describe the range of services that the respondent offers in-house and the services typically offered through subcontractors.

B&A provides all grant research, writing, and post-award management/administration using all in-house staff.

5. Identify the geographic areas in which the respondent offers services.

<input type="checkbox"/>	AACOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	ATCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	BVCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	CAPCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	CBCOG
<input type="checkbox"/>	CTCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	CVCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	DETCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	ETCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	GCRPC
<input type="checkbox"/>	HGAC	<input type="checkbox"/>	HOTCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	LRGVDC	<input type="checkbox"/>	MRGDC	<input type="checkbox"/>	NCTCOG
<input type="checkbox"/>	NORTEX	<input type="checkbox"/>	PBRPC	<input type="checkbox"/>	PRPC	<input type="checkbox"/>	RGCOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	SETRPC
<input type="checkbox"/>	SPAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	STDC	<input type="checkbox"/>	TEXOMA	<input type="checkbox"/>	WCTCOG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Statewide

5. Describe the respondent's ability to devote the needed time to a project based on current workload.

B&A currently employs 21 associates and has approximately 51 contracts with cities, counties, water districts, and council of

government agencies. All B&A directors and associates are a cohesive team and serve on the B&A bench. Our bench, and ability for any associate to develop any grant, is unique feature of our firm. At any time, B&A can bring significant resources should multiple cities pursue multiple applications.

6. Using the table below, provide detailed information on up to five performance contracting projects the respondent completed (if possible, include contracts with multiple different entities served by the respondent). Only include projects that have at least one year of documented performance data or are currently under contract with the respondent, and that can be used as references.

Project Data and References		Add Project
Remove Project	<b>Project Name</b>	Lakefront Trail
Facility Type and Use		Trail, Public Use (benefits entire Town)
Project Location (Jurisdiction)		Little Elm, Texas
<b>Project Size</b> -Number of Houses/Buildings -Total Linear Feet/Square Footage		Construct 12 foot wide by 4.46 mile long multi-use pedestrian/bicycle trail from Town Center and Beard Park to Witt Road
Role & Responsibilities		Post-award grant management compliance, reporting, and reimbursements
Project Cost		\$1,795,204
Financing/Funding Source		U.S. Department of Transportation, FHWA, Transportation Enhancement Funds
Method of Documenting Beneficiaries		Not applicable
<b>Project Schedule</b> -Environmental Review Start and End Dates -Construction Start and End Dates -Describe if project was completed on schedule or delayed		Env. Review: 11/2014 - 3/2016 Construction: 8/2016 - 1/2018 Project was completed on schedule
Monitoring and Verification Methods		Visual monitoring via site tours and invoicing from contractors
<b>Project Personnel</b> List all personnel associated with this project and their roles and responsibilities (only list those who may be assigned to a project).		Ursula Drake Develop Tracking Table to serve as project management and grant compliance tool; conduct monthly project/grant management conference call; develop and submit quarterly reports; develop and submit request for reimbursements; review compliance requirements in grant agreement and ensure compliance; liaison with funding agency for project amendments, scope changes, schedule changes, or issues arising during performance period.
<b>Contact Information</b> Current phone and e-mail address of local government representatives you worked with.		Karla Stovall, Chief Financial Officer, (214) 975-0415, kstovall@littleelm.org Kimberly Brawner, PE Town Engineer, (214) 975-0489, kbrawner@littleelm.org Robin Bromiley, Sr. Accountant, (214) 975-0409, rbromiley@littleelm.org
Remove Project	<b>Project Name</b>	Feasibility Study for Water Reclamation and Reuse
Facility Type and Use		Feasibility Study
Project Location (Jurisdiction)		Hudson Oaks, Texas
<b>Project Size</b> -Number of Houses/Buildings -Total Linear Feet/Square Footage		Hudson Oaks total population - 2,251
Role & Responsibilities		Post-award grant management compliance, reporting, and reimbursements
Project Cost		\$340,815
Financing/Funding Source		U.S. Department of the Interior; Bureau of Reclamation, Title XVI Program

Method of Documenting Beneficiaries	N/A
<b>Project Schedule</b> -Environmental Review Start and End Dates -Construction Start and End Dates -Describe if project was completed on schedule or delayed	10/2015 - 9/2017 No delays
Monitoring and Verification Methods	Progress reports from consultant (Pacheco Koch) and invoicing
<b>Project Personnel</b> List all personnel associated with this project and their roles and responsibilities (only list those who may be assigned to a project).	Ursula Drake Develop Tracking Table to serve as project management and grant compliance tool; conduct monthly project/grant management conference call; develop and submit quarterly reports; develop and submit request for reimbursements; review compliance requirements in grant agreement and ensure compliance; liaison with funding agency for project amendments, scope changes, schedule changes, or issues arising during performance period.
<b>Contact Information</b> Current phone and e-mail address of local government representatives you worked with.	Patrick Lawler, City Administrator, (682) 229-2400, patrick.lawler@hudsonoaks.com Chad Janicek, Asst. City Administrator, (682) 229-2400, chad.janicek@hudsonoaks.com
<b>Remove Project</b>	<b>Project Name</b>
	Western Riverside County Regional Wastewater Authority Plant Expansion
Facility Type and Use	Wastewater Plant
Project Location (Jurisdiction)	Riverside
<b>Project Size</b> -Number of Houses/Buildings -Total Linear Feet/Square Footage	The wastewater treatment plant is a tertiary treatment facility that treats 8 million gallons per day of wastewater. Due to high demand, the plant was expanded from 8 MGD to 14 MGD using loan proceeds.
Role & Responsibilities	Loan management compliance, reporting, and reimbursements
Project Cost	\$72.620 million loan
Financing/Funding Source	Clean Water State Revolving Fund (loan)
Method of Documenting Beneficiaries	N/A
<b>Project Schedule</b> -Environmental Review Start and End Dates -Construction Start and End Dates -Describe if project was completed on schedule or delayed	Env. Review: N/A (completed prior to loan award and B&A involvement) Construction: 1/2015 - 12/2017  Project was delayed due to issue with removing a recycled water pump station from the project's scope of work; B&A helped prepare and submit an extension request for contractor
Monitoring and Verification Methods	Progress reports from consultant and invoices/billing
<b>Project Personnel</b> List all personnel associated with this project and their roles and responsibilities (only list those who may be assigned to a project).	Ursula Drake Develop Tracking Table to serve as project management and grant compliance tool; conduct monthly project/grant management conference call; develop and submit quarterly reports; develop and submit request for reimbursements; review compliance requirements in grant agreement and ensure compliance; liaison with funding agency for project amendments, scope changes, schedule changes, or issues arising during performance period.
<b>Contact Information</b> Current phone and e-mail address of local government representatives you worked with.	Rod LeMond, Chief Financial Officer, (951) 571-7220, rlemond@wmwd.com Tina Barber, Project Coordinator, (951) 571-7220, tbarber@wmwd.com

9. Describe the experience, competence and training of personnel with respect to grant writing and administration, and related work. Use the following table to present background on personnel who will potentially be assigned responsibility for a core project task. Also include any added expertise and capability of staff available through other branch offices, subcontracts, etc., that can provide back-up strengths.

B&A's top five Directors (not including owners) have been with the company since 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2016. The 2016 hire is a new Director of Grants Management position created as a result of growth in the post-award sector over the past 36 months. All Directors hold at least a four year college degree. While licensing is not required for grant writers or grant managers, B&A believes in maintaining and promoting professional standards. As such, B&A is a proud member of several professional organizations that provide professional development, ethics, and standards for the grant writing industry. Our memberships include the Grant Professionals Association (GPA), the National Grants Management Association (NGMA), and the American Grant Writers Association (AGWA). B&A holds to, and maintains the code of ethics promoted by the three organizations and we will provide the highest quality services to CDBG applicants in the State of Texas. B&A has very strict processes and procedures to control the quality of our products. B&A's Process and Procedures Manual and Code of Conduct details all requirements for deliverables and writing styles. As part of this process, every document is reviewed by at least one Senior Associate or the Founder prior to being sent to the client or submitted to the grant agency. With respect to managing the budget, B&A has a simple solution. Because we are the experts at developing grants, we commit to provide Not-to-Exceed quotes to all entities desiring our services. Our staff is also given full latitude to ensure that issues with electronic portals or hard copy mailings (or other submission processes) do not interfere with the delivery of applications or post-award reports. We have had occasions where extreme measures were taken due to failures within FedEx, and the application or report was still delivered on time.

Personnel Profile(s)		Add Personnel
Remove Personnel	<b>Full Name</b>	Ursula Drake
Potential Role	Post-Award Grant Management	
Base Location	Wichita, Kansas	
<b>Current Employment</b>	Blais & Associates, Inc.	
Current job title	Director of Grants Management Services	
Company (if subcontractor)	N/A	
Job responsibilities	Ensure grant compliance, develop reports, process reimbursement requests, liaison with funding agencies, develop audit binders, process budget amendments, scope of work changes, schedule changes, conduct weekly or monthly calls to ensure projects are staying on budget and schedule and complying with all grant requirements	
Number of years with respondent	1.25 years	
<b>Previous Employment</b>	Wichita Area Technical College	
Job Title	Director of Budget and Grants Management	
Company name	Wichita Area Technical College	
Job responsibilities	Reconcile college's budget with multi-year state and federal grant awards, financial analysis, reporting	
Number of years with firm		
<b>Academic/Professional Qualifications</b>	B.A. in Business Management from Baker College, where she graduated Summa Cum Laude	
Degree/Discipline		
College/University	Currently studying for the Grants Management Certification through the National Grants Management Association. Registered to take exam in March 2018.	
Professional Affiliations		
Technical Training		
Accreditations		
<b>Overall</b>	15	
Total Years or relevant experience		
Other relevant experience or accomplishments		
Remove Personnel	<b>Full Name</b>	Liz Range-Pendell
Potential Role	Assistant to Ursula Drake	
Base Location	Austin, Texas	
<b>Current Employment</b>	Blais & Associates, Inc.	

Current job title	Senior Associate
Company (if subcontractor)	Develop grant applications, liaison with funding agencies, manage portfolio of clients
Job responsibilities	5 years
Number of years with respondent	
<b>Previous Employment</b>	
Job Title	Volunteer & Training Manager
Company name	National Dating Abuse Hotline, Manager of Hotline Services
Job responsibilities	National Domestic Violence Hotline
Number of years with firm	Manager volunteers for hotline services and provide training 3 years
<b>Academic/Professional Qualifications</b>	
Degree/Discipline	B.A. Public Policy, Center for Mexican-American Studies. University of Texas, May, 2004
College/University	Currently studying for grant writing credentials through the Grant Professional Association.
Professional Affiliations	Scheduled to sit for exam in Spring 2018.
Technical Training	
Accreditations	
<b>Overall</b>	15
Total Years or relevant experience	
Other relevant experience or accomplishments	
Remove Personnel	<b>Full Name</b>
	Destin Blais
Potential Role	Advisor and reviewer
Base Location	Dallas, Texas
<b>Current Employment</b>	
Current job title	Founder
Company (if subcontractor)	Blais & Associates, Inc.
Job responsibilities	Provide strategic direction to ensure quality assurance and client satisfaction. Review work products for adherence to company standards and grant compliance.
Number of years with respondent	18
<b>Previous Employment</b>	
Job Title	Grant Manager
Company name	Orange County Transportation Authority
Job responsibilities	Direct all grant writing and post-award management activities for county-based transportation agency.
Number of years with firm	3
<b>Academic/Professional Qualifications</b>	
Degree/Discipline	B.S. Accountancy, University of Missouri - Columbia, 1992
College/University	
Professional Affiliations	
Technical Training	
Accreditations	
<b>Overall</b>	24
Total Years or relevant experience	
Other relevant experience or accomplishments	

10. Provide a statement on the availability and commitment of the firm and personnel to undertake the project.

B&A currently employs 21 associates and has approximately 51 contracts with cities, counties, water districts, and council of government agencies. All B&A directors and associates are a cohesive team and serve on the B&A bench. Our bench, and ability for any associate to develop any grant, is unique feature of our firm. At any time, B&A can bring significant resources should multiple cities pursue multiple applications. Our associates are all trained using written protocol and standard operating procedures and the each associates follows a proven standardized process outlined in a Process and Procedures Manual.

11. Is the respondent certified or self-identified as a small business, minority- or woman- owned business enterprise, or Section 3 business?

Small Business	Woman Owned	Minority Owned	Section 3
----------------	-------------	----------------	-----------

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

12. State the respondent's policy regarding affirmative action.

It is the policy of Blais & Associates, Inc. (B&A) to provide equal employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information or any other protected characteristic under applicable law. This policy relates to all phases of employment, including, but not limited to, recruiting, employment, placement, promotion, transfer, demotion, reduction of workforce and termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, selection for training, the use of all facilities, and participation in all company-sponsored employee activities. Provisions in applicable laws providing for bona fide occupational qualifications, business necessity or age limitations will be adhered to by the company where appropriate.

As part of the company's equal employment opportunity policy, B&A will also take affirmative action as called for by applicable laws and Executive Orders to ensure that minority group individuals, females, disabled veterans, recently separated veterans, other protected veterans, Armed Forces service medal veterans, and qualified disabled persons are introduced into our workforce and considered for promotional opportunities.

Employees and applicants shall not be subjected to harassment, intimidation or any type of retaliation because they have (1) filed a complaint; (2) assisted or participated in an investigation, compliance review, hearing or any other activity related to the administration of any federal, state or local law requiring equal employment opportunity; (3) opposed any act or practice made unlawful by any federal, state or local law requiring equal opportunity; or (4) exercised any other legal right protected by federal, state or local law requiring equal opportunity.

The above-mentioned policies shall be periodically brought to the attention of supervisors and shall be appropriately administered. It is the responsibility of each supervisor of the company to ensure affirmative implementation of these policies to avoid any discrimination in employment. All employees are expected to recognize these policies and cooperate with their implementation. Violation of these policies is a disciplinary offense.

The Affirmative Action Officer has been assigned to direct the establishment and monitor the implementation of personnel procedures to guide our affirmative action program throughout B&A. A notice explaining the company's policy will remain posted.

13. Provide any additional information that the respondent feels is essential to the respondent's statement of qualifications.

Blais & Associates staff are experienced professionals in all grant compliance requirements including: Davis Bacon; Debarred or Suspended verification via the System for Award Management (SAM); compliance with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act Requirements; utilization of Force Accounts (city labor); State of Texas procurement rules and regulations; Texas Prevailing Wage; construction contracting, Civil Rights Assurances, Drug-Free Workplace, Lobbying, and many other federal and state rules and regulations.

B&A also has a proprietary software program (called "Blais") that provides both project management and grant management in one single software as a service (SAAS) system. This software (launching in February 2018) will be viewable by all clients who have grants managed by B&A and will aid in grant compliance and project management by any client who contracts with B&A for CDBG grant management. A demo of this software can be provided to State staff if desired.