

**AGREEMENT FOR
ARBITRAGE REBATE COMPLIANCE SERVICES
BETWEEN
BROWN COUNTY, TEXAS
(Hereinafter Referred to as the "Issuer")
AND
HILLTOP SECURITIES ASSET MANAGEMENT, LLC
(Hereinafter Referred to as "HSAM")**

It is understood and agreed that the Issuer, in connection with the sale and delivery of certain bonds, notes, certificates, or other tax-exempt obligations (the "*Obligations*"), will have the need to determine to what extent, if any, it will be required to rebate certain investment earnings (the amount of such rebate being referred to herein as the "*Arbitrage Amount*") from the proceeds of the Obligations to the United States of America pursuant to the provisions of Section 148(f)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "*Code*"). For purposes of this Agreement, the term "Arbitrage Amount" includes payments made under the election to pay penalty in lieu of rebate for a qualified construction issue under Section 148(f)(4) of the Code.

We are pleased to submit the following proposal for consideration; and if the proposal is accepted by the Issuer, it shall become the agreement (the "*Agreement*") between the Issuer and HSAM effective at the date of its acceptance as provided for herein below.

1. This Agreement shall apply to all issues of tax-exempt Obligations delivered subsequent to the effective date of the rebate requirements under the Code, except for (i) issues which qualify for exceptions to the rebate requirements in accordance with Section 148 of the Code and related Treasury regulations, or (ii) issues excluded by the Issuer in writing in accordance with the further provisions hereof, (iii) new issues effected in a fashion whereby HSAM is unaware of the existence of such issue, (iv) issues in which, for reasons outside the control of HSAM, HSAM is unable to procure the necessary information required to perform such services:

Covenants of Hilltop Securities Asset Management

2. We agree to provide our professional services in determining the Arbitrage Amount with regard to the Obligations. The Issuer will assume and pay the fee of HSAM as such fee is set out in Appendix A attached hereto. HSAM shall not be responsible for any extraordinary expenses incurred on behalf of Issuer in connection with providing such professional services, including any costs incident to litigation, mandamus action, test case or other similar legal actions.
3. We agree to perform the following duties in connection with providing arbitrage rebate compliance services:
 - a. To cooperate fully with the Issuer in reviewing the schedule of investments made by the Issuer with (i) proceeds from the Obligations, and (ii) proceeds of other funds of the Issuer which, under Treasury Regulations Section 1.148, or any successor regulations thereto, are subject to the rebate requirements of the Code;
 - b. To perform, or cause to be performed, consistent with the Code and the regulations promulgated thereunder, calculations to determine the Arbitrage Amount under Section 148(f)(2) of the Code; and
 - c. To provide a report to the Issuer specifying the Arbitrage Amount based upon the investment schedule, the calculations of bond yield and investment yield, and other information deemed relevant by HSAM. In undertaking to provide the services set forth in paragraph 2 and this paragraph 3, HSAM does not assume any responsibility for any record retention requirements which the Issuer may have under the Code or other applicable laws, it being understood that the Issuer shall remain responsible for compliance with any such record retention requirements. HSAM shall maintain Issuer records and work product pursuant to its own internal document retention policy.

June 28, 2021
(Exhibit #7)

APPENDIX A - FEES

The Obligations to be covered initially under this contract include all issues of tax-exempt obligations delivered subsequent to the effective dates of the rebate requirements, under the Code, except as set forth in Section I of the Agreement.

The fee for any Obligations under this contract shall only be payable if a computation is required under Section 148(f)(2) of the Code. In the event that any of the Obligations fall within an exclusion to the computation requirement as defined by Section 148 of the Code or related regulations and no calculations were required by HSAM to make that determination, no fee will be charged for such issue. For example, certain obligations are excluded from the rebate computation requirement if the proceeds are spent within specific time periods. In the event a particular issue of Obligations fulfills the exclusion requirements of the Code or related regulations, the specified fee will be waived by HSAM if no calculations were required to make the determination.

HSAM's fee for arbitrage rebate services is based upon a fixed annual fee per issue. The annual fee is charged based upon the number of years that proceeds exist subject to rebate from the delivery date of the issue to the computation date.

HSAM's fees are payable upon delivery of the report. The first report will be made following one year from the date of delivery of the Obligations and on each computation date thereafter during the term of the Agreement. The fees for computations of the Arbitrage Amount which encompass more, or less, than one Computation Year shall be prorated to reflect the longer, or shorter, period of work performed during that period.

The fee for each of the Obligations included in this contract shall be based on the table below.

Additionally, due to significant time saving efficiencies realized when investment information is submitted in an electronic format, HSAM passes the savings to its clients by offering a 10% reduction in its fees if information is provided in a spreadsheet or electronic text file format.

| Description | Annual Fee |
|--|-----------------|
| ANNUAL FEE | \$1,400 |
| <i>COMPREHENSIVE ARBITRAGE COMPLIANCE SERVICES INCLUDE:</i> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commingled Funds Analysis & Calculations • Spending Exception Analysis & Calculations • Yield Restriction Analysis & Calculations (for yield restricted Project Funds, Reserve Funds, Escrow Funds, etc.) • Parity Reserve Fund Allocations • Transferred Proceeds Calculations • Universal Cap Calculations • Debt Service Fund Calculations (including earnings test when required) • Preparation of all Required IRS Paperwork for Making a Rebate Payment / Yield Reduction Payment • Retention of Records Provided for Arbitrage Computations • IRS Audit Assistance • Delivery of Rebate Calculations Each Year That Meets the Timing Requirements of the Audit Schedule • On-Site Meetings, as Appropriate, to Discuss Calculation Results / Subsequent Planning Items | INCLUDED |
| <i>OTHER SERVICES AVAILABLE:</i> | |
| IRS Refund Request – Update calculation, prepare refund request package, and assist issuer as necessary in responding to subsequent IRS Information Requests | \$750 |

Covenants of the Issuer

4. In connection with the performance of the aforesaid duties, the Issuer agrees to the following:
 - a. The fees due to HSAM in providing arbitrage rebate compliance services shall be calculated in accordance with Appendix A attached hereto. The fees will be payable upon delivery of the report prepared by HSAM for each issue of Obligations during the term of this Agreement.
 - b. The Issuer will provide HSAM all information regarding the issuance of the Obligations and the investment of the proceeds therefrom, and any other information necessary in connection with calculating the Arbitrage Amount. HSAM will rely on the information supplied by the Issuer without inquiry, it being understood that HSAM will not conduct an audit or take any other steps to verify the accuracy or authenticity of the information provided by the Issuer.
 - c. The Issuer will notify HSAM in writing of the retirement, prior to the scheduled maturity, of any Obligations included under the scope of this Agreement within 30 days of such retirement. This notification is required to provide sufficient time to comply with Treasury Regulations Section 1.148-3(g) which requires final payment of any Arbitrage Amount within 60 days of the final retirement of the Obligations. In the event the Issuer fails to notify HSAM in a timely manner as provided hereinabove, HSAM shall have no further obligation or responsibility to provide any services under this Agreement with respect to such retired Obligations.
5. In providing the services set forth in this Agreement, it is agreed that HSAM shall not incur any liability for any error of judgment made in good faith by a responsible officer or officers thereof and, except to the limited extent set forth in this paragraph, shall not incur any liability for any other errors or omissions, unless it shall be proved that such error or omission was a result of the gross negligence or willful misconduct of said officer or officers. In the event a payment is assessed by the Internal Revenue Service due to an error by HSAM, the Issuer will be responsible for paying the correct Arbitrage Amount and HSAM's liability shall not exceed the amount of any penalty or interest imposed on the Arbitrage Amount as a result of such error. Additionally, it is understood and agreed that HSAM shall incur no liability for any errors, omissions, or failure to make a timely payment in connection with any IRS Computation Date calculations occurring prior to the effective date of the Initial Agreement with the Issuer, even if the error is discovered after the date of HSAM's engagement.

Obligations Issued Subsequent to Initial Contract

6. The services contracted for under this Agreement will automatically extend to any additional Obligations (including financing lease obligations) issued during the term of this Agreement, if such Obligations are subject to the rebate requirements under Section 148(f)(2) of the Code. In connection with the issuance of additional Obligations, the Issuer agrees to the following:
 - a. The Issuer will notify or cause the notification, in writing, to HSAM of any tax-exempt financing (including financing lease obligations) issued by the Issuer during any calendar year of this Agreement, and will provide HSAM with such information regarding such Obligations as HSAM may request in connection with its performance of the arbitrage rebate services contracted for hereunder. If such notice is not provided to HSAM with regard to a particular issue, HSAM shall have no obligation to provide any services hereunder with respect to such issue.
 - b. At the option of the Issuer, any additional Obligations to be issued subsequent to the execution of this Agreement may be excluded from the services provided for herein. In order to exclude an issue, the Issuer must notify HSAM in writing of their intent to exclude any specific Obligations from the scope of this Agreement, which exclusion shall be permanent for the full life of the Obligations; and after receipt of such notice, HSAM shall have no obligation to provide any services under this Agreement with respect to such excluded Obligations.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS:

- a. **Computation Year:** A "Computation Year" represents a one year period from the delivery date of the issue to the date that is one calendar year after the delivery date, and each subsequent one-year period thereafter. Therefore, if a calculation is required that covers more than one "computation year," the annual fee is multiplied by the number of computation years contained in the calculation being performed. If a calculation includes a portion of a computation year, i.e., if the calculation includes 1 ½ computation years, then the base fee will be multiplied by 1.5.
- b. **Electronic Data Submission:** The data should be provided electronically in MS Excel or ASCII text file (comma delimited text preferred) with the date, description, dollar amount, and an activity code (if not in debit and credit format) on the same line in the file.
- c. **Variable/Floating Rate Bond Issues:** Special services are also required to perform the arbitrage rebate calculations for variable rate bonds. A bond is a variable rate bond if the interest rate paid on the bond is dependent upon an index which is subject to changes subsequent to the issuance of the bonds. The computational requirements of a variable rate issue are more complex than those of a fixed rate issue and, accordingly, require significantly more time to calculate. The additional complexity is primarily related to the computation of the bond yield, which must be calculated on a "bond year" basis. Additionally, the regulations provide certain flexibility in computing the bond yield and determining the arbitrage amount over the first IRS reporting period; consequently, increased calculations are required to determine which bond yield calculation produces the lowest arbitrage amount.
- d. **Commingled Fund Allocations:** By definition, a commingled fund is one that contains either proceeds of more than one bond issue or proceeds of a bond issue and non-bond proceeds (i.e., revenues) of \$25,000 or more. The arbitrage regulations, while permitting the commingling of funds, require that the proceeds of the bond issue(s) be "carved out" for purposes of determining the arbitrage amount. Additionally, interest earnings must be allocated to the portion of the commingled fund that represents proceeds of the issue(s) in question. Permitted "safe-harbor" methods (that is, methods that are outlined in the arbitrage regulations and, accordingly, cannot be questioned by the IRS under audit), exist for allocating expenditures and interest earnings to issues in a commingled fund. HSAM uses one of the applicable safe-harbor methods when doing these calculations.
- e. **Debt Service Reserve Funds:** The authorizing documents for many revenue bond issues require that a separate fund be established (the "Reserve Fund") into which either bond proceeds or revenues are deposited in an amount equal to some designated level, such as average annual debt service on all parity bonds. This Reserve Fund is established for the benefit of the bondholders as additional security for payment on the debt. In most cases, the balance in the Reserve Fund remains stable throughout the life of the bond issue. Reserve Funds, whether funded with bond proceeds or revenues, must be included in all rebate calculations.
- f. **Debt Service Fund Calculations:** Issuers are required under the regulations to analyze the invested balances in their debt service funds annually to determine whether the fund depletes as required during the year and is, therefore, "bona fide" (i.e., potentially exempt from rebate in that year). It is not uncommon for surplus balances to develop in the debt service fund that services an issuer's tax supported debt, particularly due to timing differences of when the funds were due to be collected versus when the funds were actually collected. HSAM performs this formal analysis of the debt service fund and, should it be determined that a surplus balance exists in the fund during a given year, allocates the surplus balance among the various issues serviced by the fund in a manner that is acceptable under IRS review.
- g. **Earnings Test for Debt Service Funds:** Certain types of bond issues require an additional level of analysis for the debt service fund, even if the fund depletes as required under the regulations and is "bona fide." For short-term, fixed rate issues, private activity issues, and variable rate issues, the regulations require that an "earnings test" be performed on a bona fide debt service fund to determine if the interest earnings reached \$100,000 during the year. In cases where the earnings reach or exceed the \$100,000 threshold, the entire fund (not just the surplus or residual portion) is subject to rebate.
- h. **Transferred Proceeds Calculations:** When a bond issue is refinanced (refunded) by another issue, special services relating to "transferred proceeds" calculations may need to be performed. Under the regulations, when proceeds of a refunding issue are used to retire principal of a prior issue, a pro-rata portion of the unspent proceeds of the prior issue becomes subject to rebate and/or yield restriction as transferred proceeds of the refunding issue. The refunding issue essentially "adopts" the unspent proceeds of the prior issue for purposes of the arbitrage calculations. These

calculations are required under the regulations to ensure that issuers continue to exercise due diligence to complete the project(s) for which the prior bonds were issued.

- i. **Universal Cap:** Current regulations provide an overall limitation on the amount of gross proceeds allocable to an issue. Simply stated, the value of investments allocated to an issue cannot exceed the value of all outstanding bonds of the issue. For example, this situation can occur if an issuer encounters significant construction delays or enters into litigation with a contractor. It may take months or even years to resolve the problems and begin or resume spending the bond proceeds; however, during this time the debt service payments are still being paid, including any scheduled principal payments. Thus, it's possible for the value of the investments purchased with bond proceeds to exceed the value of the bonds outstanding. In such cases, a "de-allocation" of proceeds may be required to comply with the limitation rules outlined in the regulations.

- j. **Yield Restriction Analysis/Yield Reduction Computations:** The IRS strongly encourages issuers to spend the proceeds of each bond issue as quickly as possible to achieve the governmental purpose for which the bonds were issued. Certain types of proceeds can qualify for a "temporary period," during which time the proceeds may be invested at a yield higher than the yield on the bonds without jeopardizing the tax-exempt status of the issue. The most common temporary period is the three-year temporary period for capital project proceeds. After the end of the temporary period, the proceeds must be yield restricted or the issuer must remit the appropriate yield reduction payment when due. HSAM performs a comprehensive yield restriction analysis when appropriate for all issues having proceeds remaining at the end of the applicable temporary period and also calculates the amount of the yield reduction payment due to the IRS.

Effective Date of Agreement

7. This Agreement shall become effective at the date of acceptance by the Issuer as set out herein below and remain in effect thereafter for a period of five (5) years from the date of acceptance, provided, however, that this Agreement may be terminated with or without cause by the Issuer or HSAM upon thirty (30) days prior written notice to the other party. In the event of such termination, it is understood and agreed that only the amounts due to HSAM for services provided and extraordinary expenses incurred to and including the date of termination will be due and payable. No penalty will be assessed for termination of this Agreement. In the event this Agreement expires or is terminated prior to the completion of its stated term, all records provided to HSAM with respect to the investment of monies by the Issuer shall be returned to the Issuer as soon as practicable following written request by Issuer, provided that such records have not been destroyed pursuant to HSAM's internal document retention policy. In addition, the parties hereto agree that, upon termination of this Agreement, HSAM shall have no continuing obligation to the Issuer regarding any arbitrage rebate related services contemplated herein, regardless of whether such services have previously been undertaken, completed or performed.

Acceptance of Agreement

8. This Agreement is submitted in duplicate originals. When accepted by the Issuer in accordance with the terms hereof, it, together with Appendix A attached hereto, will constitute the entire Agreement between the Issuer and HSAM for the purposes and the consideration herein specified. In order for this Agreement to become effective, it must be accepted by the Issuer within sixty (60) days of the date appearing below the signature of HSAM's authorized representative hereon. After the expiration of such 60-day period, acceptance by the Issuer shall only become effective upon delivery of written acknowledgement and reaffirmation by HSAM that the terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement remain acceptable to HSAM.

Governing Law

9. This Agreement will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas, without regard to its principles of conflicts of laws.

Acceptance will be indicated on both copies and the return of one executed copy to Hilltop Securities Asset Management.

Respectfully submitted,

HILLTOP SECURITIES ASSET MANAGEMENT, LLC

By Rebecca Vega

Rebecca Vega, Senior Vice President

Date 05/25/2021

ISSUER'S ACCEPTANCE CLAUSE

The above and foregoing is hereby in all things accepted and approved by

_____ on this the _____ day of _____,

By Paul D. Lilly
Authorized Representative

Title County Judge

Printed Name Paul D. Lilly

CONFLICT OF INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

FORM CIQ

For vendor doing business with local governmental entity

This questionnaire reflects changes made to the law by H.B. 23, 84th Leg., Regular Session.

This questionnaire is being filed in accordance with Chapter 176, Local Government Code, by a vendor who has a business relationship as defined by Section 176.001(1-a) with a local governmental entity and the vendor meets requirements under Section 176.006(a).

By law this questionnaire must be filed with the records administrator of the local governmental entity not later than the 7th business day after the date the vendor becomes aware of facts that require the statement to be filed. See Section 176.006(a-1), Local Government Code.

A vendor commits an offense if the vendor knowingly violates Section 176.006, Local Government Code. An offense under this section is a misdemeanor.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received

1 Name of vendor who has a business relationship with local governmental entity.

Hilltop Securities Asset Management, LLC

2 Check this box if you are filing an update to a previously filed questionnaire. (The law requires that you file an updated completed questionnaire with the appropriate filing authority not later than the 7th business day after the date on which you became aware that the originally filed questionnaire was incomplete or inaccurate.)

3 Name of local government officer about whom the information is being disclosed.

Not Applicable

Name of Officer

4 Describe each employment or other business relationship with the local government officer, or a family member of the officer, as described by Section 176.003(a)(2)(A). Also describe any family relationship with the local government officer. Complete subparts A and B for each employment or business relationship described. Attach additional pages to this Form CIQ as necessary.

A. Is the local government officer or a family member of the officer receiving or likely to receive taxable income, other than investment income, from the vendor?

Yes

No

B. Is the vendor receiving or likely to receive taxable income, other than investment income, from or at the direction of the local government officer or a family member of the officer AND the taxable income is not received from the local governmental entity?

Yes

No

5 Describe each employment or business relationship that the vendor named in Section 1 maintains with a corporation or other business entity with respect to which the local government officer serves as an officer or director, or holds an ownership interest of one percent or more.

Not Applicable

6 Check this box if the vendor has given the local government officer or a family member of the officer one or more gifts as described in Section 176.003(a)(2)(B), excluding gifts described in Section 176.003(a-1).

7 Hilltop Securities Asset Management, LLC

By Rebecca Vega
Signature of vendor doing business with the governmental entity

5/25/2021
Date