

CHICAGO SOUTHLAND CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

2022 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

For
MARKETING SERVICES
CHICAGO SOUTHLAND LEISURE RECOVERY
CAMPAIGN

RFP Issue Date: **July 26, 2022**

Bid Proposal Due Date: **August 15, 2022**



I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau (CSCVB) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) for marketing services and invites submittals from qualified firms.

Purpose

The development and implementation of a Chicago Southland Leisure Recovery Campaign focusing on four areas: **To-A-T (trails, trains, tunes & taprooms), festivals, restaurants and arts/culture.**

Process

The proposal submission and review process will consist of following:

The issuance of the RFP, receiving proposals and the review process. At the conclusion of the evaluation process, a successful applicant may be chosen at the discretion of the bureau.

Qualified Firms (Applicants)

- Demonstrated success in developing advertising campaigns and digital strategies
- Experience in destination marketing for a Cook County entity preferred, but not required
- Ability to provide comprehensive plans, creative, professional ad placement, and measurement with reporting and written overviews

Questions

We've designed the RFP to provide applicants with the information necessary to prepare a competitive proposal. Any questions should be directed to Kim Kislowski, director of marketing of the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau. All questions must be submitted in writing via e-mail. Questions will be accepted until July 29, 2022.

Kim Kislowski

Kim@VisitChicagoSouthland.com

BACKGROUND

History

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau was founded 35 years ago as a subsidiary of the South Suburban Regional Economic Development Coordinating Corporation. In 1993, the CVB separated from that parent organization, service marked the name "Chicago Southland," and became an independent 501(c)(6) organization. As a regional marketing cooperative, the Chicago Southland CVB represents 62 south and southwest municipalities, approximately 25 miles south of downtown Chicago.

Mission

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau's mission is as follows:

As the official destination management organization, the mission of the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau is to market the communities within the Chicago Southland region as a meetings and leisure destination; soliciting conventions, exhibitions, sporting events and other related group business; engaging in visitor promotions

including those which generate overnight stays for the region; promoting lodging, food and beverage, attractions, festivals and events; and other visitor related businesses; to promote and aid in tourism-related product development, thereby enhancing and developing the image, economic fabric and vitality of the Southland.

Who We Are

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau represents over 4,000 sleeping rooms, many of which are limited service or motels. There are four full-service conference hotel facilities and several smaller properties offering meeting room capabilities. The diversity of these properties dictates the need for a coordinated sales and marketing program that attracts business and clients who will utilize their facilities. What one property may wish is not necessarily what another wants; market segments vary as well as flexibility in rates and date availability. This poses a unique challenge for the CVB.

Geographic distribution of hotel/motel properties is broad, with groupings in:

- Bridgeview/Burbank
- Alsip/Crestwood/Oak Forest/Orland Hills/Orland Park
- Chicago Heights/East Hazel Crest/Homewood/Markham
- Calumet City/Lansing/South Holland
- Matteson/Mokena/Monee

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths:

- Visitor Information Center (VIC)
- Proximity to Midway, O'Hare International and Lansing Airports
- Availability of sports venues
- Increasing upward mobility of Chicago Southland population and positive news coverage of the region
- Abundance of hospitality services in the region
- 5-hour drive to 8 midwestern states

Challenges:

- Regional Image / National Press on Chicago Crime
- Interstate signage
- Lack of airport transportation to hotels
- Region lacks a major, year-round attraction
- Tax structure in southern Cook County discourages business investment
- Inconsistent hospitality service and high turnover rates among hospitality personnel
- Lack of a convention center to market puts the entire Chicago Southland region at a severe competitive disadvantage

For **more information** about the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau, please visit VisitChicagoSouthland.com, find us on Facebook (Chicago Southland), or follow us on Instagram (@VisitSouthland), Twitter (@VisitSouthland) and YouTube (Chicago Southland CVB).

II. TIMETABLE

The schedule provided is an estimate of deadlines. The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau reserves the right to amend the RFP at any time and any changes to this schedule will be posted to our website with the date of the change stated.

Distribution of RFP	Tuesday, July 26, 2022 online at VisitChicagoSouthland.com/2022MarketingRFP
Written Questions Due	Friday, July 29, 2022 to Kim@VisitChicagoSouthland.com
Proposal Submissions Due	Monday, August 15, 2022 before 3:30 pm CDT to Kim@VisitChicagoSouthland.com
Notice of Selection	by Monday, August 29, 2022

CONTRACT ACTIVITIES

Start of Initial Contract Period	September 1, 2022
End of Initial Contract Period	August 31, 2023

III. Campaign Details

The development and implementation of a Chicago Southland Leisure Recovery Campaign focusing on four areas: **To-A-T (trails, trains, tunes & taprooms), festivals, restaurants and arts/culture**. The CSCVB outlined a tentative list of items to be included in the Leisure Recovery Campaign, along with estimated costs:

- Social Media Advertising (\$30,000 of direct social media advertising clicks to be included in marketing agency's cost, in addition to the agency's cost for management and creative of the social media ad campaign)
- Bandwango – Mobile passport program (4) (\$14,500 to be paid by CSCVB)
- Sojern (or similar) - Programmatic Advertising (\$75,000 to be paid by CSCVB)/Ad units: 300x350, 728x90, 160x600, 320x50, 120x600, 180x150 and 468x60 for each focus area
- ADARA – Programmatic Advertising with hotel room night tracking (\$80,000 to be paid by CSCVB)/Ad units: 300x250, 728x90, 160x600 and 300x600 for each focus area
- Lighthouse Printing – Promotional items for passport completion prizes (\$9,500 to be paid by CSCVB)/4 layouts, size depends upon promotion item chosen for each focus area
- WGN (or similar) – Radio, digital and on-air advertising (\$72,800 to be paid by CSCVB)/Ad units: 30 second spot, 60 second spot, 300x250, 320x50, 300x60, 728x90, 1920x480, 1024x512 for each focus area
- Streaming TV/TV Ad Program (Hulu) comprehensive streaming program to Midwest zip codes (\$30,500 to be paid by CSCVB)/Ad unit: :30 commercial for each focus area

- Midwest Living – Print ads in Midwest Living magazine and digital campaign (\$25,370 to be paid by CSCVB)/Ad units: 2.25”wx4”h x2 print ad, 1/3-page print ad x2
- AAA Living – Banner ads in e-newsletters in IL/MI/WI and digital campaign (\$50,000 to be paid by CSCVB)/Ad units: 660x330, 728x90, 300x50, 300x250 for each focus area
- USA Midwest Travel Guide – USA Today go Escape – Midwest print ad (\$3,500 to be paid by CSCVB)/Ad unit: 4.75”x5” print ad
- Daily Herald Newspaper – Digital campaign for 8 months and print ads once a month (\$44,000 to be paid by CSCVB)/Ad units: 11.125”x20.25” print ads x8, 728x90, 300x250, 320x50 for each focus area
- Adsplosure (or similar vendor) – 12-week transit advertising campaign (\$17,900 to be paid by CSCVB)/Ad unit: 84”x26” supertail
- J. Rudny – Implementation of recommended hero images and other graphic elements provided by ad agency for each landing page as well as Bandwango passports (\$6,000 to be paid by CSCVB)
- Blog Posts – Quarterly blog posts for each focus area to be placed on CSCVB website. (Costs to produce these quarterly blog posts should be included in total marketing agency’s cost).

For additional notes and contact information for each vendor, click here:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ve8e2tcmt8avo8e/AAC4kABJmOYsWImD173vr6_Ea?dl=0

IV. PROPOSAL OUTLINE

The proposal should utilize a numerical outline, with titles/subtitles that are consistent with the following outline:

- I. Introductory Letter
- II. Chicago Southland Leisure Recovery Campaign
- III. Budget (Budget should include agency fees for the development and implementation of recovery program including all items outlined above, in addition to the social media advertising click cost - \$30,000. CSCVB will directly pay all other vendors.)
- IV. Background and Demonstration of Past Performance

I. Introductory Letter

The introductory letter must be on the official letterhead of the company that will provide the work and must be signed by an individual authorized to legally bind the applicant. If the signer is not the president or equivalent principal officer if not a corporation, evidence shall be submitted showing the individual’s authority to bind the applicant. The letter must include complete geographic, telephonic and electronic contact information for a) the business headquarters, b) authorized signer, c) RFP contact person and d) primary person who will be responsible for performing the scope of the work described in the proposal.

II. Chicago Southland Leisure Recovery Campaign

Applicant must submit a comprehensive plan including items listed in the Campaign Details section

with revisions and/or other recommendations for implementation September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023. The goal of the campaign is to:

- Drive visitation and increase travelers and visitor expenditures
- Increase website visits and number of visitor guide requests
- Inspire travelers from out of town to visit Chicago Southland and entice them to come again

Scope of Work

The development and implementation of a Chicago Southland Leisure Recovery Campaign focusing on four areas: To-A-T (trails, trains, tunes & taprooms), festivals, restaurants and arts/culture.

- Develop creative / messaging for each of the four focus areas that will be incorporated in traditional advertising (print, radio, television and cable), digital advertising and content marketing (including social media, website and blog). Include a possible refresh of creative midway through the contract.
- Co-manage all vendors outlined in Campaign Details section and any other vendors/promotions added to the campaign throughout the duration of the campaign from agreement through reporting including, but not limited to, insertion orders (CSCVB will sign all insertion orders), placement details and production of all required creative materials (digital ads, print ads, radio spots, TV commercials, advertorial, blog posts, e-newsletter content, photography, etc.).
- Prepared correspondence to members with regards to the Bandwango Mobile Passport Program.
- Create monthly social media campaigns on the four focus areas including posts, ads and stories on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. (1) post/ad/story per topic per month

Deliverables

- Creation of campaign elements and messaging as outlined in the Scope of Work.
- Implementation and management of all programs outlined in the Campaign Details and Scope of Work including insertions (CSCVB will sign all insertions), submission of all CSCVB approved materials and reporting. CSCVB will process all payments except for social media advertising. The chosen marketing agency will handle all credit card payments for social media advertising.
- Comprehensive quarterly reports on all placements including impressions, clicks, engagements and conversions.
- All creative materials developed under the agreement shall become the property of the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The contract is expected to begin September 1, 2022 and should be completed by August 31, 2023. After an evaluation by the CSCVB, there may be the option to renew for an additional year on September 1, 2023. An option to renew will be at the sole discretion of the CSCVB.

Excluded Work

Website Development or Maintenance
SEM Management

III. Budget/Expenditure Plan

Applicants will be responsible for submitting a budget specific to creative, placement of advertising, implementation of all agreed upon strategies, social media advertising and reporting. Agency bid should include \$30,000 to be spent on social media advertising. Agency should submit a brief social media plan with bid.

The successful applicant/contractor will be responsible for staying within their budget presented in the proposal and as outlined in a contract. It will be expected that the successful applicant will be able to achieve all the goals set out in the proposal and within the approved timeframe without the need for any additional monies.

IV. Background and Demonstrated Past Performance

Applicants who have not done prior work with the CSCVB must provide relevant information that clearly demonstrates the applicant's financial position and related experience and knowledge of marketing as it relates to tourism.

To be included, but not limited to:

- Minimum of three (3) financial references
- Applicant's establishment, development and accomplishments
- Locations of business headquarter and branch offices
- The number of years in business
- The number of years providing services relevant to the work described in this RFP
- Minimum of three (3) client references and a short narrative of the work provided including success stories
- List of past and or current CVB clients
- List of IL and Cook County tourism clients
- The identification of all threatened or pending litigation and business disputes involving the applicant

IV. RFP PROCESS

Phase I

- Issuance of the RFP on July 26, 2022
- Receipt of proposals no later than August 15, 2022
- Review of the bid proposals to assess compliance with mandatory requirements
- Detailed evaluation of proposed services

Phase II

- Ranking of proposals
- Selection of agency

Award decision by Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Submittal Procedure

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau must receive proposals electronically by **August 15, 2022 BEFORE 3:30 PM CST** to Kim@VisitChicagoSouthland.com. Compliance to this deadline is

mandatory. Any proposal received after this deadline will be rejected. It is the vendor's responsibility to ensure timely receipt of their bid proposals.

Applicants must furnish all information necessary to evaluate the bid proposal. Proposals that fail to meet the mandatory requirements of the RFP will be disqualified. Verbal information provided by the applicant shall not be considered part of the applicant's proposal.

Proposals can be submitted electronically by emailing a PDF to Kim@VisitChicagoSouthland.com by the required deadline. Use of a file sharing service is allowed as long as the document is uploaded and a notification of the upload with password and link is emailed to Kim before 3:30 pm CST on August 15, 2022. Any costs of preparation and delivery of the proposals are solely the responsibility of the applicant.

V. RFP EVALUATION

Evaluation Process

The evaluation process is designed to award the contract not necessarily to the vendor of least cost, but rather to the vendor with the best combination of attributes to perform the required services.

Evaluation Criteria

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau will evaluate all proposals and make an award using the following criteria, which are listed in no particular order:

- Compliance with the mandatory requirements of the RFP
- Evaluation of applicant's experience and qualifications as outlined and including introductory letter, background and demonstrated past performance
- Evaluation of applicant's ability to meet all the service requirements of the RFP as outlined.

Other factors include, but are not limited to:

- Applicant's project approach and methodology
- Quality of project work plan
- Description of the proposed deliverables
- Project management and internal controls

VI. PROVISIONS, CONDITIONS, DISCLAIMERS AND DISCLOSURES

Government contract restrictions and/or guidelines

The Chicago Southland CVB has the right to accept none of the proposals, reject or deny any proposal, and accept partial proposals.

Contracting department

All contracts will be approved by the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau and signed by the President/CEO.

Insurance

Any consulting firm under contract with the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau must agree to meet the minimum insurance requirements.

Notice of selection

Notice of intent to award the contract will be sent electronically to all vendors submitting a timely bid proposal. Negotiation and execution of the contract shall be completed no later than September 1, 2022.

Conflicts of Interest

No relationship should exist between the applicant and the CSCVB that interferes with fair competition or is a conflict of interest. Applicants must also disclose if they are working with other destination marketing organizations.

Insurance

During the course of this agreement, the contractor shall, at its sole expense, procure and maintain insurance with mutually acceptable companies as noted below:

- Comprehensive General Liability Insurance with limits no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 in the annual aggregate;
- Commercial Auto Insurance covering all owner, non-owned and/or hired autos with limits no less than \$1,000,000 per accident;
- Workers' Compensation Insurance with Statutory limits and Employer's Liability limits no less than \$100,000 per accident, \$100,000 per employee in the event of disease, and \$500,000 policy aggregate in the event of disease, and;

During the course of this agreement, the contractor shall provide certificate of insurance as outlined above in addition to listing CSCVB as additional insured.