

CHICAGO SOUTHLAND CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

2024 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

For
MARKETING SERVICES
CHICAGO SOUTHLAND LEISURE & GROUP
MARKETS CAMPAIGN

RFP Issue Date: **December 15, 2023**

Bid Proposal Due Date: **January 5, 2024**



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 & Group Marketing Campaign (meetings/conventions, group tours, sports and social).

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 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, Vice President of Marketing of the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau. All questions must be submitted in writing via e-mail.

Kim Kislowski

Kim@VisitChicagoSouthland.com

BACKGROUND

History

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau was founded 37 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 60 south and southwest municipalities, approximately 25 miles south of downtown Chicago.

Statement of Purpose

The Chicago Southland CVB enhances the Region's Quality of Life by attracting visitors spending that powers job creation, the generation of non-resident taxes and the development of new hospitality amenities.

Vision Statement

The Chicago Southland will be recognized as the most excitingly diverse, accessible, inclusive and safe region in all of the Chicago area.

Mission Statement

The Chicago Southland CVB promotes the region's communities as an exceptional destination for meetings, events and leisure pursuits while advocating for the development of outstanding Inclusive experiences that attract visitors and residents alike.

Who We Are

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau represents over 5,800 sleeping rooms, many of which are limited service or motels. There are nine 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:

- Bedford Park
- 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	Friday, December 15, 2023, online at https://www.visitchicagosouthland.com/RequestsForProposals
Proposal Submissions Due	Monday, January 5, 2024 , before 3:30 pm CDT to Kim@VisitChicagoSouthland.com
Notice of Selection	by Monday, January 22, 2024

CONTRACT ACTIVITIES

Start of Initial Contract Period	February 1, 2024
End of Initial Contract Period	July 31, 2024

III. Campaign Details

The development of a group markets ad campaign with complementing tradeshow materials and development and implementation of a Chicago Southland Leisure Campaign based on current leisure ad graphics. The CSCVB outlined a tentative list of items to be included in the campaigns. The total available funding for marketing services and ad placements is **\$91,000**.

- New Group Markets Print and Native Digital Ad Campaign - The CVB advertises in the following group markets: Meetings & Conventions, Group Tours, Social Events & Sports. The ad campaign would need to be adaptable to all markets. We place approximately 35 ads and send about 10 e-blasts per year. The CVB will take care of planning and signing the insertions and sending ad materials. Ad agencies need to provide a price to create the overall campaign (including the variations for each market: meetings, sports, social and group tour. Each market will need a display ad, banner ad and html created. Price should include the cost of resizing ads (35). (No ad placement costs should be included for the group market, just design work).
- Website Hero Images based on the newly designed ad campaign.
- Booth Screens and table wrap artwork for each of the following markets: meetings, sports and leisure (leisure booth screen based on CVB's current ad design). Booth screens are 33"x80" and table wraps are for 6' and 8' tables. (CSCVB will pay vendors directly for booth screens and table wraps. These costs should NOT be included in the overall budget.)
- Leisure Advertising creative based on current ad graphics (all the following outlined costs will be paid directly by the CSCVB but SHOULD be in the overall budget).
 - WGN (or similar) – Radio, digital and on-air advertising /Ad units: 30 second spot, 60

- second spot, 300x250, 320x50, 300x60, 728x90, 1920x480, 1024x512 for each focus area
- Streaming TV (Hulu or similar)/Network TV (WGN) Ad Program: comprehensive streaming program to Midwest zip codes to be paid by CSCVB/Ad unit: :30 commercial for each focus area
- Chicago Tribune Newspaper – Digital/print/ Ad creative: open to print ad size, 728x90, 300x250, 320x50

Current Leisure Ad:



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 Campaign Specifics (Include recommended media and number of placements, impressions, reach, etc. for Radio, TV and Newspaper)
- III. Budget (Budget should include agency fees for the development and implementation of outlined campaign)
- 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 & Group Markets Campaign

Applicants must submit a comprehensive plan including items listed in the Campaign Details section with revisions and/or other recommendations for implementation February 1, 2024, through July 31, 2024. The goal of the campaign is to:

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

Scope of Work

The development and implementation of a Chicago Southland Leisure & Group Markets Campaign.

- Develop creative / messaging for each of the group markets (meetings/Conventions, group tours, sports and social) that will be incorporated in traditional and digital advertising, as well as tradeshow materials (booth screens and table wraps)
- Develop a schedule of radio, TV and newspaper leisure placements.
- 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, etc.).

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.
- Comprehensive monthly 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 February 1, 2024, and should be completed by July 31, 2024.

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 and reporting.

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 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 December 15, 2023
- Receipt of proposals no later than January 5, 2024
- 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 **January 5, 2024 BEFORE 3:30 PM CST** to Kim@VisitChicagoSouthland.com. Compliance with 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 if the document is uploaded and a notification of the upload with password and link is emailed to Kim before 3:30 pm CST on January 15, 2024. 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 January 25, 2024.

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.