



**REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES AT CHICAGO EXECUTIVE AIRPORT**

**May 3, 2021**

**Statements of Qualifications due by: 4:00 P.M. Central Time June 1, 2021**

**Contact person: George Sakas, (847) 537-2580 extension 113**

**Introduction**

Chicago Executive Airport (Airport) invites interested consultants to submit statements of qualifications for public relations services to the airport. CEA seeks a long-term relationship with a public relations entity for standard ongoing public relations management and on-call services for unique events.

The airport is jointly owned by the City of Prospect Heights and the Village of Wheeling. The airport board of directors maintains a close relationship with the village and city leadership and is committed to transparency and efficiency as a public trust. Concurrently, the airport must run as a business concern, continuing to be self-supporting financially and an economic development engine for the region.

**Scope of Work**

Public Relations Management

1. Strategic Communications: Development and execution of a strategy, plan, and consistent message for the airport in multiple markets and for many audiences with ongoing assistance and advice to the airport board and staff.
2. Airport Communications:
  - Standardized Policies for airport communications means and content (e.g. social media, web site, etc.)
  - Managing various lists and classifications of audiences for campaigns within the Airport’s customer relationship management system
  - Public information efforts
3. Recurring and Special Event Strategy:
  - Policy direction: Leverage events for the maximum benefit to the airport incurring only necessary costs and operational impacts.
  - Advise the airport board and staff on the appropriate scheduling and conduct of events within the overall public relations effort

Specific Public Relations Tasks

Tasks either physically accomplished by the vendor or in assistance to airport staff.

1. Media Relations: Press releases, email blasts, communication of customer news, etc.
  - Emergency event management
  - Coordination with master plan partners
  - Coordination with Residential Sound Insulation Program partners
2. Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc. ) and web site - individual posts and staff assistance for postings.
3. Recurring and Special Event Coverage:
  - Professional press coverage of on-airport events sponsored by the airport, owner municipalities, or airport businesses.
  - Off-airport events’ coverage as required
4. Branding/Marketing Assistance
  - Video and photography for use in communications
  - Planning and management of standard annual advertising

- Coordinate commercial photography and filming requests on the airport
5. Administrative requirements
- Monthly Reports
  - Standard metrics TBD
  - Attendance, participation, and presentation at airport board and other meetings and events as needed.

### **Other Pertinent Information**

The current airport budget reflects approximately \$ 5,000 per month for public relations services. The previous arrangement was for a standard number of work hours and specific tasks. The number of hours and tasks on the previous contract are not necessarily a guiding factor in the award of this project.

Financial accommodations could include a retainer with supplied hours, tasks or other quantifiable metrics. Alternately, a time-and-materials contract could be considered.

It is expected the selected entity will have or will quickly attain a working knowledge of aviation pertinent to the airport. It is also advantageous for the awardee to be familiar with the form and function of Illinois municipalities, the airport being owned by two municipalities.

It is anticipated that a local presence would benefit this program area – events and incidents needing immediate on-site response and management.

The airport board intends for the public relations provider to function in full partnership with the board and staff. Although a vendor, the provider should work seamlessly within the organization and while representing the airport to the public. The best-case scenario is a long-term relationship that develops institutional knowledge on the vendor's part and full trust in their capabilities by the board and staff.

### **Response Format**

Please provide detailed information thus:

1. Introductory Letter: Please include a cover letter summarizing your firm's background, resources, and relevant experience.
2. Project Understanding and Approach: Provide a concise statement of your firm's understanding of the project and briefly describe your anticipated approach to the project.
3. Team Organization and Staff Profiles: Descriptions of your organization and team. This should identify the project manager and the day-to-day contact person for the job, subcontractors, etc. Present the individuals proposed for this project with their previous related experience.
4. Related Project Experience: Provide descriptions of similar projects your team firm has performed.
5. Three (3) or more references.
6. Submission: Please submit four (4) hard copies and electronic .pdf(s) to Chicago Executive Airport no later than 4:00 P.M., Central Time, on Monday, June 1, 2021 addressed to:  
Jamie Abbott, Executive Director  
Chicago Executive Airport  
1020 South Plant Road  
Wheeling, Illinois 60090

Proposals may be delivered by mail or in person. Faxed proposals will not be accepted. Proposals received after the time specified above will be returned unopened.

### **Selection Procedure & Criteria**

Upon receipt of responses, the selection panel will evaluate them and may narrow them to three or more finalists for interviews. If necessary, the finalists will be interviewed in person.

Prospective consultants are advised that no obligations or duties are incurred by the Chicago Executive Airport in soliciting for Statements of Interest and Qualifications. The Airport retains the right to award the project in part or in total to the consultant of its choice, should it decide to undertake the project or to terminate the proposed project at any time prior to approval of a formal contract.

Chicago Executive Airport will evaluate the RFQs based on the following factors:

1. Qualifications of the firm and experience with past projects
2. Criteria contained within this solicitation and others as needed
3. References

During the evaluation process, the Airport may request additional information or clarifications from the proposers. Based on RFQ responses and interviews, qualified firm(s) may be selected to submit amended proposals to benefit selection and approval of a professional services contract.

### **Tentative Selection Schedule**

The Airport is not responsible for late, misdirected, or damaged submissions and reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals for any reason. The following is a tentative schedule for the selection and award of a consultant agreement for this project:

- Advertise RFQ – May 3, 2021
- Deadline to Receive Statements of Qualifications June 1, 2021
- Interviews (if necessary) – June 2 to June 9, 2021
- Presentation of selected vendor to the airport board – June 16, 2021 regular board meeting
- Airport board resolution approving a professional services contract – July 21, 2021 board meeting
- Notice to Proceed – immediately thereafter

### **Inquiries**

Questions regarding the RFQ should be directed to George Sakas, Director of Economic Development at (847) 537-2580 or via e-mail at: [gsakas@chiexec.com](mailto:gsakas@chiexec.com).

### **Rejection of Proposals**

The Chicago Executive Airport expects to select a firm from the qualifications submitted but reserves the right to request substitutions of firms. The Airport also reserves the right to reject any or all responses to the RFQ, to advertise for new responses, or to accept any response deemed to be in the best interest of the Airport. A response to this RFQ should not be construed as a contract or an indication of a commitment of any kind on the part of the Airport, nor does it commit either to pay for costs incurred in the submission of a response to this request or for any cost incurred prior to the execution of a final contract.

### **Incurring Costs**

The Airport is not liable for any costs incurred by the firm prior to issuance of a contract.

### **Equal Opportunity Program Requirements**

Equal Opportunity Contracting Policy Statement - It is the policy of Chicago Executive Airport that all businesses, including those that meet the definition of socially and economically disadvantaged (DBEs), be provided equal access to participate in the performance of all contracts and leasing opportunities. The Airport has further committed to take all necessary and reasonable steps to increase its utilization of socially and economically disadvantaged business enterprises, to the extent feasible and legally permissible.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Defined -To qualify for certification as a DBE, a for-profit business entity, whether a sole proprietorship, Partnership, joint venture, or corporation, must meet at a minimum the following definition, as set forth in 49 Code of Federal Regulations ("CFR") Part 23.

A business that is at least 51 percent owned by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (or, in the case of any publicly-owned business at least 51 percent of the stock is owned by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals) and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who own it.

The following groups, who are citizens of the United States (or lawfully permanent residents), are refutably socially and economically disadvantaged:

- (1) Women;
- (2) Black Americans;
- (3) Hispanic Americans;
- (4) Native Americans;
- (5) Asian-Pacific Americans; and
- (6) Asian-Indian Americans.

DBE Participation Goal - A DBE participation goal for this solicitation of 10% as measured by the total estimated dollar value of this agreement has been established. Respondent shall take all necessary and reasonable steps in making good faith efforts to achieve this DBE participation goal DBE participation may be in the form of one or more sub-participants, partnerships, or other legal arrangements meeting the eligibility standards in 49 CER Part 23.

Required DBE Information -Respondents must provide information pertaining to its proposed DBE participation for this solicitation. Information to be provided will include the name and address of each DBE and a description of the services to be provided.

Respondent's Good Faith Efforts -Good faith efforts are those that could reasonably be expected to result in goal attainment by a respondent.

Respondent's Obligation -Respondent will assure that no person is excluded from participation in. denied the benefits of; or otherwise discriminated against in connection with the award and performance of any contract, including leases, covered by 49 CFR 23 on the grounds of race, color, national origin or sex.