

CHOOSE CHICAGO
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Neighborhood Wayfinding Sign Permitting Services

INTRODUCTION

Choose Chicago is the official destination marketing organization and convention bureau for the City of Chicago. Our mission is to attract regional, national, and international business and leisure visitors to our amazing city for the economic benefit of the entire community.

Choose Chicago is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking a qualified permit expeditor company to assist in acquiring the necessary permits for the installation of metal wayfinding interpretive signs throughout public spaces in Chicago. These signs will serve as guides for residents and visitors, highlighting popular businesses, attractions, cultural institutions, and other offerings in the nearby neighborhood. The project will result in the creation and installation of 25 - 30 wayfinding signs, with multiple signs placed in each of the following neighborhoods: Uptown, Hyde Park, Little Village, Bronzeville, South Shore, and Chatham. The specific installation location for each wayfinding sign will be determined by Choose Chicago and City of Chicago agencies including the Mayor's Office, DCASE, CDOT, and BACP. Separate vendor agreements with an installer and a fabricator will be arranged. All signs must be completed and installed by December 31, 2025.

BACKGROUND

Chicago is a world-class destination thanks in large part to our vibrant and diverse neighborhoods. Since March 2021, Choose Chicago has undertaken a robust strategy to highlight local business districts, international cuisines, distinctive architectural attractions, beautiful parks and gardens, and locations where important Chicago history took place. With financial support from the City of Chicago, Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), our Neighborhood and City-wide Marketing Campaign expanded in 2023.

To further this effort, Choose Chicago is looking for an experienced permit expeditor company to assist in acquiring the necessary permits to install 25 - 30 wayfinding interpretive signs in public way locations across the City of Chicago.

DELIVERABLES

The selected vendor will be responsible for securing the following City of Chicago permits for each wayfinding sign installation:

1. **Public Way Use (PWU) Permit** - Issued by the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP)
2. **Public Way Opening Permit** - Issued by the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)
3. **Occupy the Public Right of Way Permit** - Issued by the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)

In addition, the selected vendor will be responsible for the following:

1. **Permit Acquisition and Submission**
 - a. In coordination with Choose Chicago, prepare and submit all required applications and supporting documentation for the three types of city permits.
 - b. Ensure all documents, drawings, and specifications meet city requirements.
 - c. Respond to any city requests for additional information, and assist in resolving issues that may delay approvals.
2. **City Agency Liaison**
 - a. Serve as the primary liaison between Choose Chicago, city agencies, and relevant stakeholders to facilitate permit approvals.
3. **Reporting and Documentation**
 - a. Track permit status and provide regular updates to Choose Chicago on permit status.
 - b. Maintain organized records of all permits and applications.

DEADLINE FOR RFP SUBMISSION

Proposals should be received no later than TUESDAY, APRIL 8TH by 5 p.m. CDT and submitted by email to Erik Castelan, Project Manager at ecastelan@choosechicago.com

The selection process will conclude, and vendor notifications will be sent no later than WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30TH.

You are welcome to send any questions, at any time, to Erik Castelan.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants should submit a thoughtful, clear, and well-organized proposal package that includes the components listed below:

- 1) **Company Profile:** Include contact information such as the company's address, phone number, website, and primary point of contact.
- 2) **Identify which team members have the following responsibilities:**
 - a) General project manager

- b) Staff responsible for permit acquisition and agency coordination
- 3) **Proposed timeline and budget**
- a) Include a projected budget breakdown, with separate cost estimates for 25 signs vs 30 signs, for securing the three types of permits required for installing the interpretive wayfinding signs in public way spaces. Here are [examples](#) of similar types of metal wayfinding interpretive signs we expect to fabricate and install.
- b) Estimated timeline for securing permits of all 25 - 30 signs. All signs must be completed and installed by December 31, 2025.
- 4) **Portfolio:** Examples and description of previous experience with securing city permits for similar public way projects in Chicago. Special attention will be given to companies with experience securing permits for interpretive signage or information kiosks installation in public spaces.
- 5) **Address the Selection Criteria (below) with your submitted materials**

SELECTION CRITERIA

- **Qualification of Team.** Attention will be given to teams with the following: extensive experience in navigating the City of Chicago's permitting process, particularly in securing approvals for wayfinding signs, information kiosks, or other structures installed in the public way.
- **Cost Estimate/Budget.** Attention will be given to teams that can secure permits for the interpretive wayfinding signs in a cost-efficient manner.
- **Quality of Performance History/Portfolio.** Demonstrate past examples of successful permit acquisitions for similar public way installation projects, including interpretive wayfinding signs, information kiosks, or comparable structures.
- **Chicago Experience/Knowledge.** Prior experience acquiring permits for sign or kiosk installation in the City of Chicago is a plus. Knowledge of City of Chicago regulations and permitting requirements is a must.
- **MBE/WBE Requirements.** Special attention for teams that are based in Chicago and are 51% owned and controlled by a minority or woman and are M/WBE certified.

Vendors may subcontract any services if they lack in-house capability. If subcontracting, vendors must include all relevant qualifications, budgets, portfolios, and compliance assurances from their partners in the submission.

FUNDING

Choose Chicago was awarded a grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) for the permitting services needed to install interpretive wayfinding

signs to support our neighborhood work. Distribution of funds will be determined with the selected vendor as agreed upon with the vendor, Choose Chicago, and DCASE.