



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)  
EVENT OPERATIONS & PRODUCTION MANAGER  
12<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL SOUTH SHORE SUMMER FESTIVAL**

Issued By:  
The South Shore Chamber of Commerce, Inc. (SSCC)  
On behalf of Special Service Area #42 (SSA #42) – South Shore

**Proposals are due no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, Dec 8, 2025, via email to [lashawn@southshorechamberinc.org](mailto:lashawn@southshorechamberinc.org). All questions must be submitted in writing to [lashawn@southshorechamberinc.org](mailto:lashawn@southshorechamberinc.org) no later than 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 26, 2025. Entities submitting a response to this RFP will be hereafter referred to as “Respondent”.**

## **I. SSA #42 BACKGROUND**

Special Service Area #42 (SSA #42) – South Shore is a designated business district that funds enhanced services and programs through a localized property tax levy. These services supplement those provided by the City of Chicago and include, but are not limited to:

- Litter abatement
- Security patrols
- Landscaping and beautification
- Business and customer attraction initiatives

SSA #42’s Service Provider is The South Shore Chamber of Commerce, Inc. (SSCC). The selected Contractor will be subcontracted by SSCC and must adhere to all applicable provisions of SSCC’s agreements with the City of Chicago related to SSA #42 operations.

SSA #42 Boundaries: Stony Island Avenue from 67th Street to 79th Street (west side); from 67th Street to 73rd Street (east side); and 71st Street from Kimbark Avenue to South Shore Drive/Yates/Exchange, both north and south sides.

As a subcontractor to the Service Provider the selected Respondent shall adhere to the applicable provisions cited in the Service Provider’s Agreement with the City of Chicago. See the following link: [SSA42 SPA 2025](#)

## **II. OVERVIEW**

SSCC, on behalf of SSA #42, is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to serve as Event Operations & Production Manager for the 12th Annual South Shore Summer Festival, to be held Sunday, August 16, 2026, at the South Shore Cultural Center, a Chicago Park District facility.

The South Shore Summer Festival is an established, high-profile, family-friendly outdoor event featuring:

- National, regional, and local musical entertainment
- Local restaurants, food trucks, and culinary vendors



- Retail, artisan, nonprofit, and community resource exhibitors
- Civic, community, and business partners
- Sponsors, dignitaries, and neighborhood stakeholders

The Festival is free to attend, with voluntary donations (including electronic donations) encouraged.

All proposals submitted by the selected Respondent, for the venue, must be reviewed by the Executive Director. The South Shore Community is a high density, luxury home community and prefers mainstream entertainment such as Jeffery Osborne, Cameo, Kem, SWV, Dru Hill, Chico DeBarge, Robin Thicke, October London, and the like. The selected Respondent must have total turn-key implementation from beginning to end and work in tandem with the SSCC, Commissioners and SSA #42 staff.

SSCC and SSA #42:

- Provide strategic direction, oversight, and accountability.
- Retain control over contracts, payments, branding, data, and final approvals.
- Seek a Contractor with the expertise to manage full operational execution using and enhancing an existing, proven model.

### III. SCOPE OF WORK

Role Definition: The selected Contractor will serve as the primary operations and production lead for planning and executing the Festival.

SSCC will provide prior-year site plans, templates, operations plans, communication frameworks, and related materials. The Contractor is expected to enhance and update the existing model in alignment with SSCC's tools, templates, and processes, and may recommend improvements or additional tools, subject to SSCC review and approval prior to implementation.

SSCC and SSA #42 retain:

- Final authority over vendor and sponsor selection.
- Control of all contracts and financial transactions.
- Control of branding, official communications, and patron/donor data.

All operations must comply with applicable requirements of the Chicago Park District, the City of Chicago, and relevant agencies.

#### 1. Planning, Governance & Project Management

The Contractor shall:

- Use SSCC-provided Monday.com as the primary project management platform to track project timeline, tasks, vendor and sponsor status, volunteer roles, permits, licenses, COIs, and operational plans.
- Develop a comprehensive project timeline (for SSCC approval), including:
  - DCASE and Chicago Park District permitting milestones
  - Vendor and sponsor outreach and confirmation
  - Marketing, listings, PR, flyer/yard sign rollout (core campaigns active no later than May 1, 2026)



- Entry/check-in system design and testing
- Site walkthroughs, production schedules, load-in/load-out
- Volunteer recruitment, training, and deployment
- Kids Zone and Community Pavilion planning and confirmations
- Lead regular coordination meetings (minimum bi-weekly March–August 2026, or as requested) with documentation maintained in Monday.com.
- Attend SSA #42 Commission and other relevant meetings, when requested by SSCC, to present plans, progress, and respond to questions.
- Not exceed the total approved budget allocated for the event.
- Agrees that any delay in receiving tax levy funds may delay payment until funds are received.

## **2. Site Planning, Park District Coordination & Production**

The Contractor shall:

- Update prior-year site layout to include:
  - Main stage(s), sound, lighting, and power
  - Food and beverage vendors
  - Retail and artisan vendors
  - Nonprofit and community/resource booths
  - Perimeter fencing and controlled entry points
  - Entrances/exits, ADA routes, EMS and emergency lanes
  - Restrooms and waste/recycling stations
  - VIP areas (for sponsors, elected officials, SSCC Board, SSA #42 Commissioners, key partners, invited guests)
  - Entertainer and staff operations areas
  - Children's Activation (Kids Zone)
  - Community Pavilion (SSCC, 5th Ward Aldermanic Office as partner, QLP, approved organizations)

Waste disposal plan (to be provided by SSCC's litter abatement contractor)

Safety/Security plan (to be provided by SSCC's armed security services contractor)

- Ensure compliance with Chicago Park District rules, policies, and facility requirements.
- Submit all site and production plans to SSCC for review and written approval prior to use.
- Coordinate SSCC-approved production services including staging, sound, lighting, tents, fencing, wayfinding/signage, electrical, sanitation, and restrooms.
- Serve as on-site production lead for setup and teardown in collaboration with SSCC, Chicago Park District, security, and vendors.

## **3. Vendors & Sponsor-Linked Activations**

The Contractor shall:

- Assist SSCC in implementing a vendor outreach plan for food vendors, food trucks, local businesses, artisans, nonprofits, and community organizations.
- Utilize SSCC's PaperForm system (managed by SSCC) as the official vendor application and payment intake tool; rely on SSCC-issued reports as the authoritative vendor list.
- Coordinate vendors that are also sponsors or branded activations to ensure tent size, location, power, signage, and benefits match SSCC-approved terms.



- Prepare and distribute Vendor Information Packets (subject to SSCC approval) including site maps, assignments, load-in/load-out schedules, licensing requirements, parking, credentials, and day-of contacts.

SSCC retains final approval of all vendors.

#### **4. Sponsorship Support & VIP Management**

The Contractor shall:

- Support SSCC in operationalizing sponsor benefits and activations on-site.
- Coordinate VIP logistics for sponsors, elected officials, SSCC Board members, SSA #42 Commissioners, key community partners, and other invited guests designated by SSCC.
- Integrate VIP needs into check-in, credentials, reserved seating/viewing, hospitality elements, and parking/access plans, consistent with security and perimeter controls.

All sponsorship agreements and revenue remain under SSCC's control.

#### **5. Marketing, Website, Listings, PR & Outreach**

The Contractor shall:

- Coordinate with SSCC's internal communications and social media staff to provide timely and accurate event information, recommended messaging, and campaign timing; all public-facing content is subject to SSCC approval.
- Work with SSCC-selected or SSCC-approved vendors on creative design, website (SouthShoreSummerFestival.com) updates, signage, and print materials.
- Ensure approved event information is submitted for listings on Choose Chicago, DCASE Event Calendar, SSCC/SSA #42 channels, and other designated platforms, with core listings live by May 1, 2026.
- Plan and support flyer and yard sign distribution at key events (e.g., Bud Billiken Parade, Chosen Few Picnic & Festival) and at businesses/locations in South Shore, Bronzeville, Chatham, Auburn Gresham, and Englewood; coordinate SSA #42 corridor distribution with SSCC.
- Recommend messaging for SSCC-managed text outreach to prior patrons.
- Draft media advisories, press releases, and talking points for SSCC approval and assist with media relations and on-site media management.
- TV, Radio and Print Advertisement- Identify and obtain coverage through major TV, Radio and Print areas. Provide list of proposed outlets with prices no later than at the June 2022 SSA#42 Commission meeting.

All paid advertising, media, and public-facing materials require prior written approval from SSCC.

#### **6. Permits, Safety, Licensing & Insurance**

The Contractor shall:

- Assist SSCC with DCASE Special Event Permit, Chicago Park District requirements, and any additional health, liquor (via liquor vendors), structural, and safety approvals.



- Update SSCC's Safety & Emergency Plan with input from the contracted security provider, CPD/CFD (as applicable), and Chicago Park District, covering perimeter control, emergency access, severe weather, evacuation, and communication protocols.
- Ensure documentation is ready for SSCC to submit the final Special Event Permit application at least 60 days prior to the event.
- Track and confirm vendor licensing requirements and ensure all applicable licenses are obtained prior to final permit submission.
- Coordinate collection and verification of Certificates of Insurance (COIs) from staging/production vendors, security providers, fencing and other high-liability vendors, and food/liquor vendors where required; ensure COIs comply with requirements of SSCC, City of Chicago, Chicago Park District, and applicable Chicago DCASE conditions, and are secured in advance of final permit submission. SSCC will act as central repository; Contractor manages tracking and follow-up.

Compliance with permitting, licensing, and insurance is a material performance requirement.

#### **7. Entertainment & Stage Management**

- Assist SSCC in refining an entertainment lineup consistent with festival history and community expectations.
- After SSCC finalizes talent contracts, develop and manage a detailed run-of-show, including sound checks, set transitions, and MC coordination.
- Oversee backstage operations in alignment with SSCC guidelines.

#### **8. Children's Activation (Kids Zone)**

- Propose a Kids Zone plan for SSCC approval, including activities, layout, schedule, and safety measures.
- Coordinate with an SSCC-approved Kids Activation Partner who may operate or co-lead this area.

#### **9. Community Pavilion**

- Plan and manage a Community Pavilion including SSCC, the 5th Ward Aldermanic Office (as partner), QLP, and other approved organizations.
- Ensure appropriate visibility, accessibility, infrastructure, and inclusion in wayfinding and communications.

#### **10. Volunteer Coordination**

- Develop a volunteer operations plan identifying roles (entry, information, Kids Zone, Pavilion support, wayfinding, etc.), shifts, and supervision.
- Coordinate volunteer recruitment with SSCC and partners such as Chicago Cares.
- Ensure volunteers are clearly identifiable in brightly colored South Shore Summer Festival t-shirts or SSCC-approved apparel, receive orientation, and are integrated into the event's command structure.

#### **11. Parking, Shuttle/Trolley, Credentials, Fencing & Communications**

- Design and manage on-site parking for staff, VIPs, entertainers, and approved vendors only.
- Implement a parking pass/decal and credential system aligned with perimeter security and controlled access points.



- Coordinate with SSCC on shuttle/trolley and off-site parking plans; integrate final routes and stops into maps, signage, and public/volunteer information.
- Work with fencing contractor and security to define perimeter, gates, checkpoints, and ensure ADA and emergency access.
- Utilize SSCC-provided radios to support communication among SSCC designees, Contractor designees, security, shuttle/trolley designees, Chicago Park District contacts, and other key operations posts.

### **12. Attendee Entry, Counting & Donations**

- Design an entry and check-in plan with defined entry points that supports security and allows for reliable attendance counting.
- Utilize approved tools (e.g., registration/ticketing platforms, scanning, wristbands, manual counts) as appropriate and approved by SSCC.
- Implement SSCC-approved electronic donation options (e.g., QR codes, signage); ensure any cash donations are handled only by SSCC-designated personnel.

### **13. Budget Coordination & Documentation**

- Collaborate with SSCC to refine and operate within an agreed event budget. (SSCC to provide budget template for planning purposes)
- Provide clear cost estimates, vendor quotes, and updated projections. NOTE: Security services and Litter Abatement services to be procured through existing SSA#42 contractors.
- Submit timely invoices and documentation required for SSCC reconciliation.

### **14. Post-Event Close-Out**

Provide a Post-Event Close-Out Report by September 30, 2026, including:

- Attendance data and methodology;
- Vendor and sponsor participation summary;
- Volunteer deployment overview;
- Evaluation of site layout, entry, safety, communications, parking, shuttle, signage;
- Summary of incidents and resolutions;
- Assessment of marketing and outreach;
- Total cost of project with an itemized budget, sponsorship dollars with an itemized amount; and
- Recommendations for future festivals.

## **IV. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS & FORMAT**

The Respondent must provide in the following with its response to this RFP:

- Owners of the firm cannot be current employees of the city of Chicago. State statute prohibits businesses owned by City of Chicago employees or elected officials from contracting with SSA Service providers. All subcontractors must sign an affidavit attesting that the above is true. (See Exhibit I)
- A copy of its City of Chicago and its State of Illinois licenses.
- The Respondent must provide proof of commercial general liability and when applicable excess/umbrella liability insurance.
- Respondents are strongly encouraged to:
  - Engage local businesses in South Shore and throughout the Chicagoland area;
  - Utilize Disadvantaged, Minority, Women, and Veteran-Owned Businesses where feasible;



- Collaborate with existing SSA #42-aligned providers where appropriate and consistent with SSCC’s direction.
- Proposals should include a brief plan describing how such businesses will be integrated.
- Check List—Address and submit all requested information as cited above Proposals should be concise, complete, and include:
  1. Cover Page
  2. Table of Contents
  3. Introduction
  4. Summary of Relevant Expertise, Products, and/or Services
  5. Scope of Work Response
  6. Challenges & Mitigation Strategies
  7. Key Personnel
  8. Background & Experience
  9. Regulatory & Compliance Experience
  10. Cost Proposal
  11. Optional Services (if any)
  12. Disclosures (See Exhibit I)
  13. Subcontractor Affidavit (See Exhibit II)
  14. Copy of Business License
  15. General Certificate of Insurance
  16. Four References for similar services

## V. CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATIONS

Respondents must demonstrate:

- Experience with large-scale outdoor public events of comparable scope and complexity;
- Ability to work within SSCC’s established systems (Monday.com, PaperForm, approved ticketing/entry tools, creative/web processes);
- Regulatory and compliance competency with Chicago Park District, DCASE, and City requirements;
- Effective coordination of sponsors, vendors, VIPs, and community stakeholders;
- Strong operational, communications, and budgeting discipline;
- Capacity to coordinate safety planning, COIs, and licensing requirements;
- Ability to present to and collaborate with oversight bodies, including SSA #42 Commission;
- Relevant references from public, quasi-public, or community-facing clients.

The selected Contractor must:

- Be licensed to do business in Illinois;
- Comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations;
- Maintain insurance coverages as required by SSCC, City of Chicago, Chicago Park District, and applicable Chicago DCASE special event permit conditions; and
- Certificates of Insurance must reflect required additional insureds and be provided prior to contract execution.



## VI. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCESS

Evaluation criteria may include:

- Demonstrated experience and qualifications;
- Strength and clarity of proposed approach;
- Understanding of event context and compliance requirements;
- References and past performance;
- Proposed fee structure and overall value.

Shortlisted Respondents may be required to present their proposal and key personnel to the SSA #42 Commission on the evening of Tuesday, December 9, 2025 or Thursday, December 11, 2025. By submitting a proposal, Respondents acknowledge their ability to make key personnel available for one of these dates.

## VII. SUBMISSION DISCLAIMER & SSCC RIGHTS

SSCC and SSA #42 reserve the right to:

- Modify or cancel this RFP;
- Request additional information or clarification;
- Conduct interviews or presentations;
- Reject any or all proposals;
- Select the proposal(s) deemed most advantageous to SSA #42, SSCC, and the South Shore community.

No costs related to proposal preparation, submission, or presentation will be reimbursed.





**Exhibit II:**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**  
**Special Services Area #42**  
**Contract Period: January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026**  
**SUBCONTRACTOR AFFIDAVIT—EVENT OPERATIONS & PRODUCTION MANAGER**

Section 35 ILCS 200/27-100(b) of the Illinois Special Service Area Tax Code:

**“No business owned by an employee or elected official of the municipality [City of Chicago] may, for valuable consideration, provide goods or services as a subcontractor of a service provider agency pursuant to a services contract for any special service area located within that municipality.”**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Special Service Area #42

SSA Subcontractor Information:

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Service or Goods being provided: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner’s name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact’s name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact title: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, I confirm that this business is *not* owned by an employee or elected official of the City of Chicago.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Failure to comply with this statute will result in but may not be limited to immediate revocation of this subcontract agreement. This affidavit must accompany the SSA subcontractor agreement and be maintained in the files of the SSA Service Provider.