

DETROIT/WAYNE COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS/PROPOSALS: PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEDIA SERVICES

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q1: When do you anticipate working beginning, and would the work be ongoing or have a specific end date?

A1: Work will begin in mid-December 2024 and will be ongoing, subject to the terms of the agreed-upon contract.

Q2: Who is your most important audience?

A2: It's difficult to establish one audience as the most important. Overall, creating awareness among the residents of the City of Detroit and Wayne County about the work of the Port Authority and how it impacts their lives is probably the most important goal of these services. However, there are specific groups – residents near the Port area, the greater maritime community (within the Great Lakes and beyond), civic leaders, and potential funding sources are all very important constituencies.

Q3: Are you looking to raise awareness for the Port Authority as a destination / event venue or are you more focused on raising awareness for your initiatives and projects?

A3: Initiatives and projects.

Q4: Who would be the main Port Authority point of contact for this work?

A4: The Executive Director.

Q5: Do you have an identified monthly or total budget for this work?

A5: The budget is flexible. Therefore, proposals should present a range of service options.

Q6: Who from the Port Authority do you anticipate being spokespeople in media interviews?

A6: Primarily, the Executive Director. From time to time, the Sustainability Manager, Port Operations Director and the Chairman of the Board.

Q7: Is there an incumbent agency / individual included in this RFP process?

A7: No.

Q8: What do you want the public to think and know about the Port Authority?

A8: This will be a discussion with the selected contractor. In general, the port authority would like to increase awareness of its initiatives (primarily around decarbonization), careers in the maritime industry, cruise shipping and the importance of maritime activity in our economy.

Q9: Who are your most important audiences?

A9: Residents of Detroit and Wayne County, businesses, legislators, the maritime industry, among others.

Q10: What are your biggest challenges?

A10: Awareness of who the port authority is and what we do.

Q11: Who leads communications?

A11: The Executive Director

Q12: Are there other ports that represent the type of communications strategy you want to pursue?

A12: Port of Cleveland, Port of Burns Harbor

Q13: What is the Port Authority's estimated budget range for this partnership?

A13: Not decided; looking for options.

Q14: What is the geographic footprint you are trying to reach with media coverage and other outreach (local/Detroit, regional, national, etc.)

A14: Primarily Southeast Michigan, secondarily the Great Lakes, and worldwide with respect to decarbonization.

Q15: Has the Port Authority worked with partner agencies in the past, and if so what was your most successful media campaign? Also, what past media relations campaigns have you tried that were less successful?

A15: The Port Authority is a member of other industry groups (ie., the American Great Lakes Ports Association, various cruise ship organizations) and has participated in media initiatives. There have not been any particularly successful campaigns.

Q16: What role has the Port Authority played in attracting cruise ships to downtown Detroit? How active has Port Authority been in collaborating with Visit Detroit, DEGC, and other city/regional entities?

A16: The Port Authority has collaborated with Visit Detroit and the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Corporation in promoting cruise shipping and tourism in Detroit, mainly in a supportive role. The Port Authority has issued press releases, hosted press conferences, hosted VIP tours of ships, and regularly posts the ship schedule on its website.

Q17: Does the Port Authority maintain an email database of contacts for communications via e-blast/e-newsletter?

A17: Lists, but not a full or regularly updated database.

Q18: Does the Port Authority have B-roll footage to share with media?

A18: No.

Q19: How active are you in promoting the ability to host events at Waterview Loft? Do you work directly with party planners/corporate event planners/wedding planners, etc.?

A19: Not very. Other than providing a link on the port authority website, the event space contractor handles its promotions.

Q20: What role will hydrogen fuel play in the Port Authority's future?

A20: Hydrogen could play a major role in the energy needed to power port equipment and even vessels in the Port. The Port Authority has been awarded a grant to study and plan for the implementation of hydrogen into port operations.

Q21: Does the Port Authority promote the economic impact of cruise ships on Detroit restaurants and other businesses in the City?

A21: Yes, the Port Authority advocates for more shoreside spending by the cruise ships and their passengers.

Q22: Is Port Authority looking for the partner agency to help create compelling social media content as part of this partnership?

A22: Yes, if that would help achieve our goals.

Q23: How does Port Authority use social media to maximize awareness of Port Authority projects, and are you looking for a social media growth strategy from your partner?

A23: Facebook.

Q24: Does Port Authority regularly engage with your social media followers online?

A24: Only through occasional Facebook posts.

Q25: Biden announced \$3 billion in funding today to clean up ports. I see **Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority** was “selected to receive \$21.9 million to transition the Port of Detroit to a zero-emission future by integrating battery-electric cargo equipment, vessels, and solar arrays. The project includes the removal of outdated diesel equipment to improve air quality and the creation of a community engagement and workforce development guidebook.” How are you localizing that story? Need us to start earlier? 😊

A25: Too bad we weren't further along with the RFP. Yes, the Port Authority issued a press release and worked with the EPA coms team to host a press conference. Local tv media coverage was poor. Industry media coverage is producing a number of stories.

Q26: Will the PR agency create the guidebooks as part of their scope?

A26: Not sure what is meant by guidebooks.

Q27: I see your legislative affairs/government relations RFP was issued the same day as the PR and Media Services RFP. Are you going after additional government funding? Is there a specific reason you are onboarding two agencies at once?

A27: The Port Authority seeks funding regularly. The scopes are different, though the firms may be required to interact when PR is needed to support a legislative initiative.

Q28: Have you ever worked with a PR agency before?

A28: The Port Authority has engaged PR firms, but not recently.

Q29: Do you publicize/maintain a dashboard with progress on your decarbonization plan that resulted from the Tunley Environmental report? How often do you repeat (or plan to repeat) the tests?

A29: The carbon footprint data on the website will be updated every other year.

Q30: What is the current status of the Fitzgerald biodiesel bill (HB 4847)?

A30: It's in the House Tax Policy Committee.

Q31: Is there a reason you haven't published an annual report since 2021? Or did they not get added to the website? Will the annual report be part of the scope of the new PR agency?

A31: That was an omission when our website was revised. They should be up within a day. Yes, we'll include the annual report in the scope.

Q32: Is traffic at the Port of Detroit increasing/decreasing?

A32: Cargo levels in the Port are declining, as industrial production and utility decarbonization is reducing the need for coal. Cruise ship traffic is increasing.

Q33: Do you work closely with the cruise ship companies to share their stories/economic impact?

A33: No, not with the ships. We do work closely with other groups who promote Great Lakes cruise shipping.

Q34: Will the PR agency help market the Port of Detroit meeting space as a profit center for you?

A34: Possibly.

Q35: What is the best media story coming out of the Port Authority in 2024? Worst story?

A35: The Port Authority's development of a decarbonization plan for the port of Detroit was the best. There really wasn't a worst story.

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