

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
GRANT WRITING AND LOBBYING
SERVICES

October 19, 2026

Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority
130 E. Atwater Street
Detroit, MI 48226
313-259-5091



PORTDETROIT
Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority

I. INTRODUCTION

The Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority (the “Port Authority”) is a public corporation formed under Public Act 639 of 1978 and incorporated by the City of Detroit and Wayne County in 1978. Governed by a five-member Board of Directors two appointed by the City of Detroit, two appointed by Wayne County, and one appointed by the Governor of Michigan. The Port Authority supports maritime commerce, environmental stewardship, and regional economic development.

The Port Authority regularly pursues primarily federal, and some state of Michigan, grants in areas such as port modernization, decarbonization, maritime workforce development, environmental remediation, and intermodal freight efficiency. Additionally, the Port Authority seeks to strengthen relationships with key congressional offices, federal agencies (including MARAD, USDOT, EPA, DOE, and NOAA), and relevant committee staff to advance Detroit’s role as a Great Lakes maritime and innovation hub. The Port Authority coordinates its lobbying efforts with the American Great Lakes Ports Association (“AGLPA”) and the American Association of Port Authorities (“AAPA”).

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), the Port Authority seeks a firm with proven experience in federal lobbying and grant-writing—particularly for port, maritime, and transportation-related projects—to assist in both securing federal funding and advocating for federal legislative and policy priorities. The scope will also include assistance in state grants for which the Port Authority qualifies.

II. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected firm will be expected to provide comprehensive federal advocacy and federal and state grant development support, including but not limited to:

1. Federal Legislative and Policy Advocacy

- Develop and implement a federal advocacy strategy to support the Port Authority’s goals and initiatives.
- Monitor, analyze, and report on federal legislation, agency rulemaking, and budgetary developments relevant to the maritime and port sectors.
- Engage with federal legislators, congressional committees, and administration officials to promote Port Authority priorities.
- Facilitate meetings between Port Authority leadership and relevant federal stakeholders.

2. Federal and State Grant Research and Writing

- Identify and evaluate federal grant opportunities (e.g., INFRA, RAISE, MEGA, PIDP, EDA, Maritime Environmental and Technical Assistance, Port Infrastructure Programs, among others).
- Lead or assist in preparing competitive federal and state grant applications, including drafting narratives, compiling budgets, and coordinating with partners.
- Provide technical support for post-award reporting or compliance, as requested.

4. Compliance and Registration

- Ensure all activities comply with federal lobbying disclosure requirements, ethics laws, and applicable federal regulations.

5. Term of Agreement

- The Port Authority proposes to award a contract for one year, with up to optional 3 one-year renewal terms.

III. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should be concise, well-organized, and address the following elements:

A. Cover Letter

- Summary of firm qualifications and interest in this engagement.
- Identify the primary contact and key staff who will work directly with the Port Authority.
- Confirm proposal validity for 90 days.
- Signed by an official authorized to bind the firm.

B. Firm Experience and Expertise

Provide details on the firm's relevant experience, particularly in:

- Federal lobbying for maritime, port, or transportation entities.
- Successful pursuit of state and federal grants, especially competitive USDOT, MARAD, or EPA programs.
- Relationships with key federal agencies, offices, and committees.
- Examples of prior successful advocacy and grant awards.

C. Key Staff Qualifications

- Include resumes of staff who will provide services, outlining their lobbying, grant-writing, or federal policy experience.
- Identify specific roles and responsibilities within this engagement.

D. Pricing and Cost Structure

Provide a clear pricing proposal, including:

- Hourly rates, retainer fees, or fixed monthly costs.
- Expected level of service (e.g., number of meetings, grant submissions, strategy reports).
- Any anticipated travel or additional costs.

E. References

Provide contact information for three (3) clients with similar work (preferably public sector or transportation-related).

F. Conflicts of Interest

Disclose any current or past clients that may pose a conflict with Port Authority interests, particularly other ports, shipping associations, or logistics competitors. The Port Authority reserves the right to assess potential conflicts and request clarification.

IV. RFP SCHEDULE

Milestone	Date
RFP Issued	October 14, 2026
Questions Due	November 2, 2026, by 5:00 PM ET
Q&A Posted	November 5, 2026
Proposals Due	November 13, 2026, by 5:00 PM ET
Interviews (if necessary)	November 16-17, 2026
Board Approval	November 20, 2026

All dates are subject to change.

V. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- Submission Deadline: 5:00 PM (ET), November 13, 2026
- Format: Electronic submission only.
- Submit to: rfp@portdetroit.com
- Subject Line: "RFP for Federal Lobbying and Grant Writing Services"

Each proposal must identify a primary contact person with name, title, email, and mobile number.

VI. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated federal lobbying experience and success.
2. Track record of grant development and awards.
3. Qualifications and expertise of assigned personnel.
4. Cost-effectiveness and clarity of pricing.

5. Quality of references.
 6. Absence or management of conflicts of interest.
-

VII. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Port Authority reserves the right to request additional information, conduct interviews, and negotiate terms prior to final selection. Issuance of this RFP does not constitute a commitment to award a contract.

VIII. DISCLAIMERS

The Port Authority reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFP, waive informalities, or cancel the process. All submissions become the property of the Port Authority and may be subject to public disclosure.

No Contact Rule: Firms are prohibited from contacting Port Authority Board members or staff regarding this RFP except through the designated contact. Violations may result in disqualification.

Respectfully,

Mark Schrupp
Executive Director
Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority
130 E. Atwater St., Detroit, MI 48226
mschrupp@portdetroit.com