

Project:

2018 Public Relations and Social Media Services for Uptown Special Service Area (SSA) #34

About Uptown United:

Uptown United is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit economic and community development organization serving the Uptown neighborhood on Chicago's North Side. The mission of Uptown United to lead efforts to build a strong, unified business environment; facilitate economic development; and strengthen community – all to nurture a diverse, vibrant, thriving and strong Uptown. Uptown United serves as the sole service provider for Uptown Special Service Area #34, a special taxing body that focuses on commercial corridor improvements and marketing efforts throughout the district.

Key Challenges

In 2016 the boards of Uptown United and Business Partners, The Chamber for Uptown along with the Uptown SSA commission agreed that boosting Uptown's image was a key priority. In 2016 and 2017 the organizations engaged a branding firm to provide background research and develop a new visual brand for our work promoting the Uptown neighborhood. In 2018, we seek to take this new brand and engage neighbors, visitors, businesses and investors and elevate the reputation of Uptown. Locals, visitors, and businesses often view Uptown as unsafe and run-down, despite drastic improvements to safety, infrastructure, and private development. We wish to tell a compelling, authentic story of Uptown's rich tapestry of diverse businesses, positive changes, and vibrant community assets. We hope to combat misinformation about our neighborhood and respond productively to negative press mentions of our community.

Scope of Work

The goal of this contract is to use media relations, strategic communications, and social media to shape an authentic, positive, and welcoming narrative to (1) attract consumers to and investment in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, (2) increase awareness of and attendance at community and business events, and (3) position Uptown United as a trusted, valuable resource for local businesses, organizations, investors, residents, and visitors. Part I (Public and Media Relations) and Part II (Social Media) below can be bid separately.

Part I: Public and Media Relations

Services requested:

1. Work with Uptown United and our marketing committee to develop public relations priorities, strategies, and timelines
2. Secure placement in local and national print, television, and digital media
3. Generate press material, including all press releases and press kits
4. Distribute press material to appropriate news outlets
5. Arrange interviews and appearances with key organization, business, and community stakeholders, as necessary
6. Plan press conferences and press events, as necessary, to drive coverage
7. Serve as primary contact for all media inquiries and provide a representative to attend all relevant events when members of the press are expected to be present
8. Compile information from local businesses and organizations to create and distribute monthly "What's Up in Uptown" press releases



9. Provide crisis management assistance for negative community press mentions, as appropriate
10. Recommend and manage paid advertising opportunities
11. Gather media placements for posting on social media
12. Consult and help manage ad buys for digital, social media, and print
13. Develop key performance indicators, monitor press coverage, provide analytics of media placements (reach, audience, etc.), and compile monthly press recaps
14. Follow Uptown brand and messaging guidelines
15. Participate in regular meetings with key stakeholders:
 - a. Regular check-in meetings with Uptown United staff
 - b. Marketing Committee meetings (one hour per month)
 - c. Other necessary meetings at the discretion of the Firm or Uptown United

Part II: Social Media Strategy and Execution

Services requested:

16. Develop strategy for management of neighborhood and organizational social media channels, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, email newsletter, blogging, etc.
17. In consultation with Uptown United staff, manage and post on various social media channels, including recommendation and implementation of social media advertising
18. Provide analytics of social media channels (audience, reach, etc.)
19. Integrate and coordinate social media strategies with public and media relations projects
20. Follow Uptown brand and messaging guidelines

Proposal Requirements:

*Firm may bid for Part I and/or Part II of proposal.

- Firm overview and qualifications
- Overview of approach to the project (Part I and/or II) of proposal
- Overview of key performance indicators and approach to measuring impact
- Names, biographies, and experience of all members assigned to project
- At least 3 examples of related work or client projects
- At least 3 references for similar work, including media/press samples
- Itemized budget, (broken down by Part I and/or Part II), including monthly retainer and any additional anticipated costs
- 8-month (May-December 2018) initial contract terms with option to renew for 2019 (January-December)
- Provide scalable, alternate scope of work for project which may occur due to anticipated funding changes, changes in SSA priorities, or assignment of contract after initial eight month term.

Budget: Approximately \$3,000 per month.

Additional requirements:

Firm must comply with all applicable federal and state laws and city ordinances related to performing these services as a subcontractor to the City of Chicago for a Special Service Area. Many relevant City of Chicago requirements for subcontractors can be found in the Uptown United's 2018 Service Provider Agreement, which can be downloaded at exploreuptown.org. Firm must be licensed to do business and be in good standing in the State of Illinois.

Timeline for Proposals:

RFP Release Date: Friday, March 30th 2018
Proposal Due Date: Monday, April 16th 2018
Evaluation Period: Tuesday, April 17th – Tuesday, April 24th 2018 (*estimated*)
Award Date: Thursday, April 26th 2018 (*estimated*)
Services Start Date: May 1st 2018 (*estimated*)

Please send proposals by 5:00pm on **Monday, April 16th, 2018** via email to:

Justin Weidl, *Business District Manager*
Uptown United
4753 N Broadway, #822
Chicago, IL 60640
Phone: 773.878.1064
Emails: justin@exploreuptown.org

For questions or meeting requests, please email Justin Weidl at: justin@exploreuptown.org

Please note that any questions and answers may be shared with other bidders as well as the SSA Commission and public.

Qualified firms may or may not be asked to prepare in-person interviews and/or presentations with Uptown United staff and/or Uptown SSA Commission. Firm may be selected for Part I and/or Part II.

Uptown United reserves the right to accept any or no bids.