GERALD R. FORD International Airport

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Federal Lobbying and Government Affairs Services

REQUEST NUMBER: 2626

DUE DATE: November 6, 2026

DUE TIME: 2:00 pm (local)

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INTRODUCTION

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority (GFIAA) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to seek proposals from qualified Federal Lobbyist firms (Respondent) to provide Lobbying Services on behalf of the Authority to support continued growth and federal engagement.

The selected Respondent will act as a representative of the Authority at the federal level, providing lobbying services with the highest level of professionalism and integrity. This includes, but is not limited to, identifying key issues, developing strategies, drafting materials, and engaging with lawmakers and government agencies on behalf of the Authority.

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport is the second busiest airport in Michigan, serving over 4 million business and leisure travelers annually with nonstop and connecting flights. The Ford Airport is managed and operated by the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority.

SOLICITATION AND PROJECT SCHEDULE

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFP Issue Date	October 16, 2026
Question Deadline	October 27, 2026
Submission Due Date	November 6, 2026 at 2 pm
Contract Start Date	January 1, 2027

The Authority intends to award an agreement effective January 1, 2027. The term of this Agreement will be two (2) years, ending on December 31, 2028. The term may be extended by the Authority for two (2) additional two (2) year terms.

GFIAA reserves the right to modify the deadline set forth in the above table in its sole discretion. Any such modifications will be stated in an addendum.

WORK SCOPE

Project Overview

GFIAA seeks the services of a qualified Federal Lobbyist firm to provide federal lobbying and government affairs services to advance the Authority's priorities and support continued growth and federal engagement. Services shall include, but are not limited to, legislative advocacy, governmental relations, federal funding and grant opportunities, regulatory advocacy, issue monitoring, strategic communications, and representation before federal decision-makers and agencies.

The selected Respondent will serve as a strategic advisor and advocate for GFIAA at the federal level and shall work collaboratively with Authority leadership to identify issues, develop advocacy strategies, advance federal priorities, and communicate relevant legislative and governmental developments.

Scope of Services

The selected Respondent shall provide the following services:

1. **Legislative Advocacy and Monitoring**
   - Identify, monitor, track, and report on federal legislation, regulations, policies, and other governmental actions that may affect GFIAA.
   - Analyze proposed legislation, regulations, and policy developments and advise the Authority regarding potential impacts to its operations, programs, finances, infrastructure, and strategic priorities.
   - Develop and recommend legislative and advocacy strategies to advance GFIAA's interests and influence legislative and policy outcomes.
   - Provide regular legislative and governmental affairs updates, including monthly, quarterly, and annual activity reports, as appropriate.
   - Maintain an understanding of the Authority's programs, finances, operations, and priorities sufficient to effectively advocate on its behalf.
2. **Grant and Funding Opportunity Support**
   - Identify federal appropriations, grants, funding programs, and other federal opportunities relevant to GFIAA, including opportunities related to aviation infrastructure, environmental initiatives, and airport operations.
   - Provide timely notification of applicable funding opportunities, legislative developments, and changes to federal funding programs.
   - Support the Authority's efforts to pursue federal funding opportunities through legislative advocacy, governmental engagement, and strategic recommendations.
   - Assist the Authority in identifying opportunities to strengthen and advance its federal funding priorities.
3. **Relationship Development:**
   - Develop and maintain effective working relationships with key federal decision-makers, Congressional members, executive agencies, and their respective staff.
   - Foster opportunities for engagement between GFIAA leadership and federal governmental stakeholders on matters relevant to the Authority's legislative agenda and priorities.
   - Facilitate periodic meetings, briefings, and other engagements with appropriate Congressional and executive branch officials and staff.
   - Represent GFIAA, as requested, at federal hearings, briefings, meetings, and other governmental affairs events.
   - Provide guidance to Authority leadership regarding appropriate governmental engagement and relationship-building opportunities.

4. **Strategic Communications:**
   - Draft or assist in the development of official correspondence, including letters of support, legislative testimony, briefing materials, talking points, and other advocacy materials.
   - Develop communication strategies and materials designed to advance GFIAA's federal priorities.
   - Assist the Authority in developing and refining its legislative agenda and strategic advocacy priorities.
   - Provide recommendations regarding messaging and communication approaches for federal legislative and governmental affairs matters.
5. **Compliance and Ethical Standards:**
   - Maintain all registrations and reporting required under applicable federal lobbying laws and regulations, including the Lobbying Disclosure Act.
   - Comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, ethics requirements, and lobbying disclosure requirements.
   - Maintain appropriate records and documentation related to lobbying activities and required disclosures.
   - Immediately notify GFIAA of any matter that may affect the Contractor's ability to comply with applicable lobbying, ethics, or conflict-of-interest requirements.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. Be a registered lobbyist for Federal legislative affairs services and maintain such registration throughout the term of the contract.
2. Have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing federal legislative affairs, lobbying, or governmental affairs services.

SUBMISSION FORMAT

Submissions should include and will be evaluated on the elements outlined below:

1. **Executive Summary** – One (1) page maximum
   Summarize the Respondent's strong points and how experience, particularly with similar responsibilities, will benefit the stakeholders.
2. **Business Organization** – One (1) page maximum
   State the full name and address of the organization and, if applicable, the branch office, consultants, or other subordinate elements that will provide or assist in providing the service. Include phone number(s), email address(s) and Respondent's website address.
3. **Project Understanding & Recommendation** – Twelve (12) pages maximum
   State in concise terms the Respondent's understanding of the major issues of this request. Describe specifically the Respondent's intended process and responsibilities. Identify important steps that will be taken to meet the GFIAA's expectations and identify deliverables.

4. **Project Staffing – Four (4) pages maximum**
   Provide a chart with the staff you are committing to the solicitation. Show lines of authority and communication, and provide a brief role description with responsibilities for each person as they relate to the solicitation as well as each staff member's key credentials

5. **References – One (1) page maximum**
   Provide a minimum of three (3) relevant references, preferably for projects of similar scope and complexity. Include the names of the projects, location, completion date, project cost, and specific challenges; identify project team members and references for each project including telephone numbers and email addresses.

6. **Fee Proposal – Two (2) pages maximum**
   Respondent shall include a proposed Fee Schedule for the initial two (2) year agreement and the potential two (2) additional two (2) year terms. Please include the hourly rates for each person(s) assigned to provide such services. Retainer fees for ongoing representation must be clearly stated. The terms of the resulting Agreement will be subject to negotiations between GFIAA and the successful Respondent.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Responses may be delivered physically or electronically. To be considered, complete submissions must be received prior to the due date and time specified (local time).

- Electronic responses can be securely uploaded as a single pdf document to:

  https://www.dropbox.com/request/z9akqhc1nyz5yau9yrxr

- Hard copy responses can be mailed or otherwise delivered to the address below.

  Submission address:

  Attn: Marissa Norris, Senior Procurement Specialist
  Gerald R Ford International Airport Authority
  5500 44th St SE
  Grand Rapids, MI 49512

Electronic submissions shall be named with a form or portion of the Respondent's name as part of the document name.

The Respondent certifies the response submitted has not been made or prepared in collusion with any other respondent and the prices, terms or conditions thereof have not been communicated by or on behalf of the respondent to any other respondent prior to the official opening of this request. This certification may be treated for all purposes as if it were a sworn statement made under oath, subject to the penalties for perjury. Moreover, it is made subject to the provisions of 18 U.S.C. Section 1001, relating to the making of false statements.

Submissions may be withdrawn by written request only if the request is received on or before the opening date and time.

Submissions not meeting these criterions may be deemed non-responsive.

GFIAA is not liable for any costs incurred by any prospective Respondent prior to the awarding of a contract, including any costs incurred in addressing this solicitation.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

GFIAA reserves the right to require that its standard terms and conditions apply to any actual order placed in response to a Respondent's submission. No attempt to modify GFIAA's Standard Terms and Conditions shall be binding, absent agreement on such modification in writing and signed by GFIAA.

No payment shall be made to the Respondent for any extra material or services, or of any greater amount of money than stipulated to be paid in the contract, unless changes in or additions to the contract requiring additional outlay by the Respondent shall first have been expressly authorized and ordered in writing by contract amendment or otherwise furnished by the GFIAA.

The intent of these specifications is to solicit a properly designed and all-inclusive response. Any requirements not in the specifications, but which are needed for such a response, are to be included in the submission.

The Gerald R Ford International Airport Authority, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 USC §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders or offerors that it will affirmatively ensure that for any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, [select businesses, or disadvantaged business enterprises or airport concession disadvantaged business enterprises] will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and no businesses will be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin (including limited English proficiency), creed, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), age, or disability in consideration for an award.

The Respondent shall not discriminate against an employee or applicant for employment with respect to hire, tenure, terms, conditions or privileges of employment, or a matter directly or indirectly related to employment, because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, marital status, or disability that is unrelated to the individual's ability to perform the duties of a particular job or position.

The Respondent shall observe and comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules and regulations at all times during the completion of any contract with the GFIAA.

The terms of this request shall be interpreted, construed and enforced pursuant to the laws of the State of Michigan, and the Parties irrevocably consent to the jurisdiction of the federal and state courts presiding in Michigan.

The GFIAA is tax-exempt and a regional airport authority organized under 2015 P.A. 95, being MCL 259.137 et. seq.

Vendor Representation and Warranty Regarding Federal Excluded Parties List: The Respondent acknowledges that the GFIAA may be receiving funds from or through the Federal Government; such funds may not be used to pay any Respondent on the Federal Excluded Parties List (EPLS). The Respondent represents and warrants to the GFIAA that it is not on the Federal EPLS. If the Respondent is in non-compliance at any time during execution or term of this agreement (including any extensions thereof), the Respondent shall be in breach and the GFIAA shall be entitled to all remedies available to it at law or equity, specifically including but not limited to recovery of all moneys paid to the Respondent, all consequential damages (including the loss of grant funding or the requirement that grant funding be returned), and attorney fees (including the costs of in-house counsel) sustained as a result of the Respondent's non- compliance with this warranty and representation.

Pursuant to the Michigan Iran Economic Sanctions Act, 2012 P.A. 517, by submitting a bid, proposal or response, Respondent certifies, under civil penalty for false certification, that it is fully eligible to do so under law and that it is not an "Iran linked business," as that term is defined in the Act.

Insurance requirements are posted on the Documents and Forms page of the GFIAA website within the Purchasing Terms and Conditions document.

Termination For Cause: Should the Respondent fail to perform the Work as required by and in accordance with the schedule or time requirements, or otherwise violate any of the terms set forth in the Solicitation Request, it shall constitute breach of the Contract. Other than in force majeure situations, Respondent shall have five (5) calendar days to cure a breach of the Contract (the "Cure Period") following issuance of GFIAA written notice. Failure to cure a breach of the Contract within said Cure Period shall allow the GFIAA to, without further notice to the Respondent, declare the Contract terminated and proceed with the replacement of the Respondent and the GFIAA shall be entitled to all remedies available to it at law or in equity including a claim against any required payment/performance bonds.

Termination Without Cause: Notwithstanding any other provision, at any time and without cause, GFIAA shall have the right, in its sole discretion, to terminate the contract by giving sixty (60) days written notice.

Although it is the intent to contract with one provider, the GFIAA reserves the right to contract with alternate sources if the Respondent is unable or unwilling to service its obligation, or it is deemed by GFIAA to be in its best interest to use alternate sources.

Assignment: Neither party shall assign or delegate any of its rights or obligations under this Agreement without the prior written consent of the other party.

Respondent warrants that they are an authorized provider of products or services of his/her submission.

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Questions regarding this solicitation are to be submitted in writing to *purchasing@grr.org* prior to 2 p.m. on October 27, 2026.

GFIAA reserves the right to publish and respond to an inquiry, respond directly to the inquirer without publishing or not respond to the inquiry at its sole discretion. Unless otherwise indicated, all questions will be complied into one document and answers will be issued as a Questions & Answers document within 4 days after the question deadline.

It is the Respondent's responsibility to become familiar with and fully informed regarding the terms, conditions, and specifications of this solicitation. Lack of understanding or misinterpretation of any portions of this solicitation shall not be cause for withdrawal after opening or for subsequent protest of award.

Addendums will only be published by the GFIAA Purchasing Department and available for review at www.grr.org.

MICHIGAN FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Information submitted in this solicitation is subject to the Michigan Freedom of Information Act and may not be held in confidence after the Respondent's submission is opened. A submission will be available for review after the project has been awarded.

GFIAA cannot assure that all of the information submitted as part of or peripheral to the Respondent's submission will be kept confidential. Any Respondent submission language designated as confidential is considered automatically invalid and void. GFIAA is subject to the Michigan Freedom of Information Act, which prohibits it from concealing information on or associated with responses, successful or unsuccessful, once they are opened.

EVALUATION AND AWARD NOTIFICATION

The selection committee will evaluate the Proposals that are responsible and responsive to the requirements of this RFP using the following weighted criteria listed:

Phase I Evaluation Criteria	Max Points
Governmental Affairs Strategy & Approach	25
Evaluate the Respondent's understanding of the Authority's governmental affairs and legislative needs and the quality, effectiveness, and practicality of its proposed approach to representing the Authority. Consider the Respondent's proposed strategy for legislative advocacy, governmental relations, issue monitoring, identification of opportunities and risks, and communication with Authority leadership.	
Relevant Governmental Affairs / Lobbying Experience	20
Evaluate the Respondent's demonstrated experience providing governmental affairs, legislative advocacy, lobbying, and related consulting services comparable to those requested in this RFP. Consider the Respondent's experience representing public-sector clients, governmental entities, transportation organizations, authorities, or other similarly situated organizations.	
Airport / Aviation Industry Experience	15
Evaluate the Respondent's demonstrated knowledge and experience with airports and the aviation industry, including relevant federal, state, and local governmental issues, aviation policy, funding programs, regulatory matters, infrastructure initiatives, and other issues affecting airport operations and development.	

Proposed Team & Staffing	10
Evaluate the qualifications, experience, availability, and proposed roles of the individuals who will be responsible for providing services under the resulting contract. Consider the team's governmental relationships, subject matter expertise, relevant experience, accessibility, and ability to effectively represent the Authority's interests.	
Firm Capacity & Resources	10
Evaluate the Respondent's overall ability and resources to successfully provide the requested services throughout the contract term. Consider the firm's organizational capacity, geographic and governmental reach, relationships with key governmental stakeholders, legislative monitoring and research capabilities, responsiveness, and ability to support the Authority on emerging issues and time-sensitive matters.	
Fee Structure	10
Evaluate the Respondent's proposed compensation structure for the services described in this RFP, including the clarity, reasonableness, transparency, and overall value of the proposed fees and any other anticipated costs.	
Total Phase I Score	**90**

Phase II Evaluation Criteria

Understanding of Airport Priorities & Challenges	3
Governmental Affairs Strategy & Recommendations	2
Proposed Team and Expertise	1
Questions, Scenarios, and Communication	4
Total Phase I & II Score	**10**

The Authority reserves the right to request additional information it may deem necessary after the submissions are received.

As part of the evaluation process, Respondents may be requested to make an oral presentation, at the Respondent's expense, to an evaluation committee. Key staff to be assigned to this project must participate in this presentation unless otherwise waived by the Authority. The presentation may be followed by a question-and-answer session.

The Authority reserves the right at its discretion to waive irregularities of this solicitation process.

In the event of extension errors, the unit price shall prevail and the Respondent's total offer will be corrected accordingly. In the event of addition errors, the extended totals will prevail and the Respondent's total will be corrected accordingly. Respondent must check their submission where applicable. Failure to do so will be at the Respondent's risk. Submissions having erasures or corrections must be initialed in ink by the Respondent. Respondents are cautioned to recheck their submissions for possible errors.

The Respondent shall not be allowed to take advantage of error, omissions or discrepancies in the specifications.

The Authority, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to award to the Respondent whose response is deemed most advantageous to the Authority. The Authority, at its sole discretion, shall select the most responsive and responsible Respondent and evaluate all responses based on the requirements and criterion set forth in this solicitation while reserving the right to weigh specifications and other factors in the award. The Authority reserves the right to reject any and all submissions as a result of this solicitation.

The Authority reserves the right to award by line item when applicable and to accept or reject any or all parts of a submission.

Accelerated discounts should be so stated at the time of submission. If quick-pay discounts are offered, The Authority reserves the right to include that discount as part of the award criterion. Prices must, however, be based upon payment in thirty (30) days after receipt, inspection, and acceptance. In all cases, quick-pay discounts will be calculated from the date of the invoice or the date of acceptance, whichever is later.

Award notifications are posted on the Authority website. It is the Respondent's responsibility to monitor the website for status updates.