



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Wicker Park Bucktown SSA #33

Audit Services Annual SSA Audit (2025 fiscal year)

Special Service Area #33, the business improvement district for the Wicker Park and Bucktown neighborhoods, is seeking a full-service accounting firm to audit the financial statements for SSA #33 for the 2025 fiscal year (ending 12/31/2025) in accordance with City of Chicago's annual Special Service Area Audit Review process.

Proposal due by **Friday, March 6, 2026.**

Services requested:

Qualified and licensed CPA firm with not-for-profit expertise to audit the financial position of SSA #33 and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the previous year. Audits must be conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and submitted to SSA #33 by **Wednesday, April 8th**. Selected firm must have a representative available to attend evening SSA Commission meeting on April 15th to present summary of findings and answer any questions before final submission to the City of Chicago in advance of May 1st deadline.

Additional dates for informational sessions with the City of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development may be scheduled. Preference will be given to firms located in the City of Chicago. MBE/WBE firms are strongly encouraged to apply.

Selected firm will provide the following documents from the audit to SSA #33:

- Independent Auditor's Report
- Statement of Net Position & Government Funds Balance Sheet
- Statement of Activities and Governmental Funds, Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance
- Statement of Revenue and Expenditures (budget vs. actual)
- Notes to the Financial Statements
- Summary Schedule of Findings
- Management Letter
- Firm's CPA License
- And any additional documentation specified during the process by the City of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development

Proposal Should Include:

- Basic description of your firm: size, location, areas of expertise, and relevant professional memberships and affiliations.
- Description of your firm's nonprofit industry experience/expertise (especially if it includes other chambers of commerce, special services areas or business improvement districts)
- Explain your approach to staffing audits and ensure continuity.
- An indication of whether the firm is independent as defined by applicable audit standards
- Provide information on the senior professionals who would serve as primary contacts for SSA #33
- Detail steps of the engagement, noting stages that would involve our personnel.
- Provide a detailed breakdown of fees for the audit process
- Optional: provide fee structure for audits in up to 2 future fiscal years in case SSA #33 would like to exercise the option to renew
- Provide a proposed timeline and work schedule of audit from beginning to end the audit and how long it will take to complete. (Audit must be completed by April 8th and presented for approval on April 15th SSA Commission meeting.)
- Contact information for 3 references from not-for-profit organizations (SSAs or SSA service provider organizations encouraged)
- Provide proof of liability coverage.
- Provide policies on notification of changes in key personnel.
- Confirm your firm and key personnel assigned maintain an active license in the State of Illinois and attach a copy of a current license with the RFP response.
- Indicate whether or not your firm is on the City's debarred vendor list.

For more information, please see *Attachment A: Background on SSA #33 and Core Values*. If you have questions prior to submission, please call or email us at 773-384-2672 or ssa33@wickerparkbucktown.com

Proposals should be sent via:

Email (preferred method) to: ssa33@wickerparkbucktown.com

Or in person or by mail to:

Wicker Park Bucktown Chamber of Commerce
Attention: SSA #33
1414 N Ashland Ave
Chicago, IL 60622

Please Note: All proposals must arrive at the Wicker Park Bucktown Chamber of Commerce office by **5pm Friday March 6, 2026**. Late proposals will not be accepted or considered.

Background on SSA #33 and Core Values

What is WPB SSA #33?

The mission of SSA #33 is to sustain and promote the prosperity and unique qualities of life in the Wicker Park and Bucktown neighborhoods and commercial district, while preserving its diverse character for the benefit of its residents, visitors, and businesses through the wise and discerning investment of resources to enhance our public ways.

Core Values

The Commission of SSA #33 has a set of core values that are at the heart of any and all decisions made. These values guide the Commission, influencing goals, priorities, and allocation of funding for projects.

Environmental best practices are preferred and should be incorporated into all projects. Being located in a well-established urban area presents unique environmental challenges. Green space is limited, while hard, impervious surfaces abound, especially on the commercial streets of SSA #33. Alternatives to conventional methods of managing stormwater runoff should be explored and implemented whenever possible. As natural resources become increasingly limited, the need to recycle as well as find alternative methods for powering vehicles, buildings, etc. is becoming more imperative. The Commission is committed to finding ways to encourage recycling and a more “green lifestyle” in order to lessen the burden on infrastructure and resources.

Walking, bicycling, and public transit are preferred methods of transportation. Traffic congestion and parking are major concerns in the Wicker Park and Bucktown neighborhoods. The Commission feels that it is important to maintain the neighborhoods as safe, interesting, and inviting places to walk and bike. When residents are walking and biking, they are more likely to use transit. The private vehicle is here to stay and needs to be considered in planning, however, the Commission desires to put the needs of walkers, cyclists and transit riders first, as they are the more sustainable means of transportation in an urban setting.

Public space, particularly streets, are an integral part of making a neighborhood exciting. When people talk about a great neighborhood, they are often referring to the public life of the neighborhood, an experience that can only be had in the public way, on streets or sidewalks. An active, exciting, and interesting street life is the backbone of successful neighborhoods, as it serves residents, visitors, and businesses of all kinds equally. When people talk about a great neighborhood, they rarely speak of the interior of houses or stores, but rather the people they watch, the storefronts that catch their eye, the outdoor spaces where they relaxed, and the overall experience of being in the neighborhood as experienced from its sidewalks. To this end, the Commission is interested in maintaining the unique atmosphere of Wicker Park and Bucktown that can only be experienced in the public way.

Honoring the heritage of the neighborhoods while progressing into the future.

The Wicker Park and Bucktown neighborhoods have been home to many artists, musicians, writers, and others in the creative community for many years. Unfortunately, there has been a decline in the creative community, a detriment to the culture and liveliness of the neighborhoods. Similarly, the neighborhoods have a wealth of architectural history that has also been lost. The Wicker Park and Bucktown neighborhoods are at an important crossroads: find ways to nourish the creative community and preserve architectural heritage so that it continues to flourish or risk further decline and the loss of what has helped define the neighborhoods for so long.

Any community process should be open and transparent to its stakeholders. SSA #33 is funded through property tax dollars and exists as a public body. Any planning, budgeting, or decision-making process shall be open to the public. The Commission considers transparency and engagement to be paramount to its success and validity in the community.