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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES RESPONSES TO RFQ FOR EXPRESS SERVICE BETWEEN O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND DOWNTOWN CHICAGO

Four Respondents Demonstrate Strong Private Sector Interest in Transformative Project to Create Express Service to O'Hare Airport

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced the Chicago Infrastructure Trust (CIT) has received four responses to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the O'Hare Express operating system. The project aims to deliver express service that would take 20 minutes or less to travel from downtown Chicago to O'Hare International Airport (ORD), cutting more than 50 percent off current travel times.

"Four visionary groups have stepped forward because they see what we see – a connected Chicago is a stronger Chicago," Mayor Emanuel said. "Strengthening connections between the economic engines of downtown Chicago and O'Hare airport will build on Chicago's legacy of innovation and pay dividends for generations to come."

The CIT, on behalf of the City of Chicago, received responses from the following respondents:

- The Boring Company
- Oaktree Capital Management
- O'Hare Express Train Partners (OHL Infrastructure, Kiewit, Amtrak)
- O'Hare Xpress LLC (Meridiam, Antarctica Capital, JLC Infrastructure, Mott MacDonald and First Transit)

The responses demonstrate strong private sector interest in the project to create a fast and convenient option for travel directly from ORD to downtown Chicago. The CIT and the City will now begin to evaluate the statements of qualifications. Upon conclusion of that review qualified respondents will be permitted to continue in the process. The next planned step is issuance of an RFP to qualified bidders.

"The CIT's purpose as a specialized resource to the City focused on infrastructure financing and development involvement makes it the perfect choice to lead this transformative and historic project," Chicago Treasurer and CIT Chair Kurt Summers said. "We look forward to reviewing the submissions and continuing to move this important project forward."

The RFQ specifies that the O'Hare Express Service should include a downtown station, an ORD station and one maintenance facility. Corridors may be above or below surface level. Goals of the project include travel times of 20 minutes or less with a reliable service frequency of at least every 15 minutes for the majority of the day with reasonable premium service fares less than the cost of current taxi and ride-share services. Any proposal must also address how potential conflicts or impacts on existing transportation systems and the environment would be avoided or minimized.

Although cost estimates for the project are not yet known, the RFQ stipulates that the O'Hare Express Service will be funded solely by project-specific revenues (like fares or advertising) and financed entirely by the concessionaire. At this point in the competitive process additional information about the bids will not be released.

The express service stands to offer a myriad of benefits to the City, travelers, and residents: providing a faster commute from the airport to downtown and vice versa; helping to mitigate congestion on the region's roadways; and fostering economic growth and creating jobs throughout the lifetime of the project. The current total daily number of air passengers traveling between ORD and the Chicago Central Business District is approximately 20,000 and is forecast to grow to at least 35,000 daily air passengers in 2045.

For more information visit www.chicagoinfrastructure.org.

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