



RECOMMENDED ACTION

To authorize the President and CEO to enter into a three-year contract with two, one-year options with Commune Communication for creative, social media, agency promotional and website management services.

STAFF REPRESENTATIVE

Mike Gold, Executive Director/VP, Customer Relations and Communications

BACKGROUND

This contract is in support of Long Beach Transit's (LBT) five strategic priorities: Improve Safety and Service Quality; Exercise Financial Accountability; Foster Employee Engagement; Enhance Customer Experience; and Promote Community and Industry Focus.

LBT wants to continue developing effective communications tools and strategies to its customers, the community and the transit industry with creative, social media, agency promotional and website management services.

In 2017, LBT's Board of Directors authorized the President and CEO to enter into two agreements with separate agencies to promote LBT and serve as the creative Agency of Record (AOR) to develop and launch a new customer-facing website. In the advertising and marketing industry, an AOR is an agency that is authorized to purchase advertising time (for radio or television advertising) or space (for print or web advertising) on behalf of the agency.

In 2018, LBT launched an all-new website at www.ridelbt.com focusing on LBT's strong brand and an exceptional customer experience, while leveraging best web practices for information architecture, user experience design, responsive design and overall design/navigation.

Since 2018, customer and employee communication and outreach has increased. LBT's brand identity has evolved and just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an increase in ridership.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, customer and employee communication has become more important than ever and having professionally designed materials is critical to effectively reach LBT's diverse audiences, including employees, as well as to recruit, retain and reclaim customers.

With a constantly changing media and communications landscape, creative materials need to be refreshed on a regular basis. To reach diverse audiences, such as students, seniors and non-English-speaking customers, LBT needs to develop strategic campaigns and materials with the assistance of a creative agency.



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October 22, 2020

The selected firm will manage LBT's external website content and creative services for advertisements (digital and print), presentations, flyers, posters, publications and other collateral material. The collateral material will be used to educate and inform LBT's varied demographic groups about the agency's programs, projects, services, and events, as well as to encourage public involvement.

Additionally, the firm will work collaboratively with LBT's Customer and Community Relations department to develop annual marketing campaigns and plans for digital, online and social media advertising and assist in managing LBT's brand and image to the community.

Finally, the firm will develop marketing strategies for the non-English-speaking market, consistent with LBT's brand.

The current contracts are set to expire by the end of Calendar Year 2020.

PROCUREMENT

LBT issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to 60 firms and received 10 qualified proposals. The 10 proposals were evaluated based on the following criteria: experience and qualifications, quality of work, proposal quality and approach, and price.

The total amount of possible points for technical evaluation (excluding price) was 80 points. The top three firms, based on the technical evaluation, had scores in the range of 62 points to 70 points. These three firms were then scored based on total price.

The combined technical score and overall cost rates resulted in the selection Commune Communication, who received the highest number of points.

Commune Communication, located in Long Beach, California, was found to be responsive and responsible by LBT's Purchasing department at a cost of \$655,200 with two, one-year options at \$243,360 each year, and a 10% contingency, for a total authorization amount not to exceed \$1,256,112.

DBE/SBE PARTICIPATION

The Small Business Enterprise (SBE) goal established for the solicitation was 13%. Commune Communication is a State of California Department of General Services SBE-certified firm. The firm will perform all services in-house. The overall SBE utilization will be 100%.



ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Staff considered assuming the responsibility of creative, agency promotional and website management services internally; however, LBT does not have employees with the skills or experience to manage the external website or undertake graphic design.

LBT could hire subject matter experts as full-time LBT personnel; however, staff concluded this alternative is not fiscally prudent relating to the number of employees warranted and the agency's constantly changing need for creative design material.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this contract were included in the previously approved Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff is requesting LBT's Board of Directors to authorize the President and CEO to enter into a three-year contract with two, one-year options with Commune Communication for creative, social media, agency promotional and website management services for a total authorization amount not to exceed \$1,256,112.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "K. McDonald".

Kenneth A. McDonald
President and Chief Executive Officer