



**June 18, 2020**

**To:** Legislative and Communications Committee

**From:** Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

**Subject:** Agreement for Graphic Design Services for Bus Service Change Materials

### **Overview**

On March 16, 2020, the Orange County Transportation Authority issued a request for proposals for professional services to provide graphic design and production services for the bus service change materials. Board of Directors' approval is requested to execute an agreement for these services.

### **Recommendations**

- A. Approve the selection of Digital Graphics Centre as the firm to provide graphic design and production services for bus service change materials.
- B. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute Agreement No. C-0-2178 between the Orange County Transportation Authority and Digital Graphics Centre, in the amount of \$210,000, for a three-year initial term with two, two-year option terms, to provide graphic design and production services for the bus service change materials.

### **Discussion**

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) provides public transportation services to Orange County. OCTA's service area covers approximately 752 square miles throughout Orange County. The transit system includes fixed-route bus service, OC Bus (including local, intracounty and intercounty express routes), OC ACCESS service for those unable to take fixed route, OC Flex on-demand service and Metrolink commuter train service.

It is important for OCTA to keep the public informed about its services and changes that occur in routing and scheduling. The local fixed-route system undergoes three service changes per year, occurring in February, June, and October. There are various printed materials that OCTA uses to communicate

these service changes to customers. The bus book is a comprehensive bus book, which includes pertinent information on how to ride the OCTA bus system, all OCTA bus route maps and schedules, as well as connecting service schedules such as Metrolink, iShuttle, and neighboring county and city bus service maps and schedules. The on-street signage program includes over 5,000 bus stops countywide that provide customers with general information on the routes and schedules that stop at each particular bus stop. The individual route maps are produced and made available to businesses and customers who are interested in only one particular route.

Due to the extensive amount of design and production that is needed to produce all of these materials, OCTA contracts with a third-party firm to provide these materials in a timely manner.

OCTA's current contract for bus service change design and production expires on July 31, 2020, and the continuation of these services is important to continue providing customers with timely service change information.

Historically, OCTA has held shorter-term contracts for these services; however, it was determined that the graphic design program for bus service and change materials would benefit from a longer engagement as it will allow for potential cost savings from a multiyear agreement.

***Procurement Approach***

The procurement was handled in accordance with OCTA Board of Directors' (Board)-approved procedures for professional services. Award is recommended to the firm offering the most comprehensive overall proposal considering such factors as prior experience with similar projects, staffing and project organization, work plan, as well as cost and price.

On March 16, 2020, Request for Proposals (RFP) 0-2178 was issued electronically on CAMM NET. The project was advertised in a newspaper of general circulation on March 16, and 23, 2020. One addendum was issued to respond to written questions related to the RFP.

On April 15, 2020, five proposals were received. An evaluation committee consisting of OCTA staff from Contracts Administration and Materials Management, Marketing and Customer Engagement, Vanpool Program, General Services, as well as Scheduling and Bus Operations Support departments met to review all proposals received.

The proposals were evaluated based on the following evaluation criteria and weightings:

- Qualifications of the Firm 25 percent
- Staffing and Project Organization 25 percent
- Work Plan 25 percent
- Cost and Price 25 percent

Several factors were considered in establishing evaluation criteria weights. All criteria were weighted the same as it is equally important for this project that the firm demonstrate experience providing similar graphic design and production expertise in bus service change materials. Staffing and project organization is also important as the firm had to present a project team with expertise and skills, as well the availability, to produce the required materials. Through the work plan, the firm had to demonstrate its understanding of the scope of work and its ability to meet the requirements specified. Cost and price was important to ensure OCTA receives value for the services provided.

On April 23, 2020, the evaluation committee reviewed the proposals based on the evaluation criteria and short-listed the three most qualified firms listed below in alphabetical order.

Firm and Location

Art Machine, (AM)  
Los Angeles, California

Digital Graphics Centre (DGC)  
Fullerton, California

Mix Marketing, LLC (MML)  
San Juan Capistrano, California

On April 30, 2020, the evaluation committee conducted interviews with the three short-term firms. Each interview consisted of a presentation to demonstrate the firm's understanding of OCTA's requirements. The firms' project managers and key team members had an opportunity to present each team's qualifications and respond to the evaluation committee's questions. Questions were asked relative to the firm's approach for completing the bus service change materials. In addition, each team was asked specific clarification questions related to its proposal. After considering the responses to the questions asked during the interviews, the evaluation committee reviewed the preliminary ranking and made adjustments to

individual scores. However, DGC remained the highest-ranked firm with the highest overall score.

Based on evaluation of written proposals and the information obtained from the interviews, the evaluation committee recommends DGC for consideration of the award. The following is a brief summary of the proposal evaluation results.

#### Qualifications of the Firm

Incorporated in 2003, DGC is headquartered in Fullerton, California with a staff of 14 employees. DGC demonstrated relevant experience in graphic design services for bus service change materials. DGC has worked on graphic design and production projects for Santa Monica Transit, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, OCTA, and private sector organizations such as Boeing, Northrop Grumman, and Raytheon. The firm has a full-service, 24/7 operation without a need for subcontractors.

AM was founded in 1999 and provides graphic design and production services related to bus service change materials. The firm's proposal and interview demonstrated relevant project experience in preparing on-street signage for public agencies, including the Santa Monica Transit and the California Department of Public Health. The firm's proposed subcontractors offer design, production and printing services required to successfully complete the project.

MML was established in 2011 and provides graphic design and production services for The Irvine Company, AAA Travel, and the Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce. MML proposed a subcontractor that it has worked with for over eight years. Although, the firm has experience designing and producing service maps and visitor's guides for the tourism industry, it did not demonstrate experience producing maps with the level of detail and information that are required for the OCTA bus book, route maps, and on-street signage.

#### Staffing and Project Organization

DGC proposed a senior-level project team with many years of graphic design and production experience. The project manager has over 30 years of experience in the graphic design and production industry. In addition, the firm's staffing plan demonstrated an effective project management approach to ensure sufficient availability of resources to meet the project requirements. Furthermore, DGC's proposal identified key personnel with technical expertise to ensure the required level of support is met while completing the project within budget. The firm provided a detailed project organization chart with resumes for key

personnel. During the interview, the project team members discussed their roles and approach to providing graphic design and production services for the bus service change materials, as well as demonstrated its experience and capabilities in meeting OCTA's requirements. The project team responded to the evaluation committee questions, which demonstrated an understanding of OCTA's project needs.

AM proposed a project team with relevant experience. The proposed project manager has over eight years of experience in the graphic design and production industry. The account supervisor has over 10 years of experience. The proposal mentioned that the firm's account team and creative team would be committed to the project. AM did not identify which members of the key personnel would complete each task. The firm provided a general project organization chart and no resumes. During the interview, the firm's team provided responses to the evaluation committee's questions as to the firm's approach to providing graphic design and production services specified in the scope of work.

MML proposed a project team with relevant experience. The proposed project manager has 15 years of experience. The creative director has over 25 years of experience. The proposal did not identify which members of the key personnel would complete each task. While the project team has graphic design and production experience, the team has limited experience developing individual route maps and demonstrating how the transit map will be created. During the interview, the project team members responded to the evaluation committee's questions, discussed their roles and approach to providing graphic design and production services for bus service change materials.

#### Work Plan

DGC's work plan demonstrated an understanding of the project requirements by outlining in stages the activities and tasks that would be undertaken during the project. The firm's approach to the work plan included DGC's writer and editor who provides feedback on inconsistencies and catching certain errors. DGC's work plan also identified a proposed schedule for delivering OCTA's Bus Book. DGC indicated that it will leverage its knowledge of OCTA's past projects to refine its graphic design and production process. Furthermore, the firm's workplan included different timelines, schedules, and the ability to use the Apple InDesign platform which is currently used to create OCTA's service change materials. DGC included a variety of samples, which demonstrated the firm's creative capabilities.

AM provided a generic work plan that did not address specifics of the scope of work such as outlining the activities and tasks that would be undertaken during the project. Furthermore, the firm did not demonstrate that they are able to adapt their experience on cited projects with Santa Monica Transit and other public agencies to that of OCTA's project requirements. The firm mentioned in their interview that they had experience using different applications from the Apple InDesign platform, but did not demonstrate knowledge of using the Smart Styles plug-in which is required in the scope of work to be able to design the required materials. The firm provided quality work samples.

MML demonstrated a basic workplan, which lacked the detail to convey their understanding of OCTA's scope of work. The work plan contained no outline of activities and tasks. During the interview, the firm stated they had experience using the different applications from the Apple InDesign platform, but were not certain they would be able to use the Smart Styles plug-in. The firm provided a calendar example of when bus book deliverables would be available to OCTA demonstrating its scheduling capabilities. The firm provided quality work samples.

#### Cost and Price

Pricing scores were based on a formula which assigned the highest score to the firm with the lowest weighted average hourly rate and scored the other proposals' weighted average hourly rate on their relation to the lowest weighted average hourly rate. DGC proposed the lowest weighted average hourly rate.

#### Procurement Summary

Based on the evaluation of the written proposals, the firms' qualifications, as well as the information obtained from the interviews, the evaluation committee recommends the selection of Digital Graphics Centre as the top-ranked firm to provide graphic design and production services for bus service change materials. DGC delivered a thorough and comprehensive proposal and interview that were responsive to all the requirements of the RFP.

#### Fiscal Impact

The project was approved in OCTA's Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget, External Affairs Division, Account 1837-7519-A3311-1GI, and is locally funded through the Orange County Transit District.

**Summary**

Staff is recommending the Board authorize the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute Agreement No. C-0-2178 between the Orange County Transportation Authority and Digital Graphics Centre, in the amount of \$210,000 for a three-year initial term with two, two-year option terms, to provide graphic design and production services for the bus service change materials.

**Attachments**

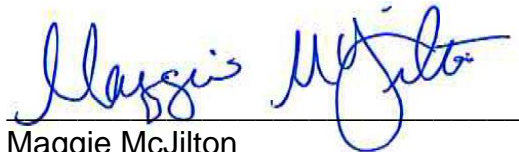
- A. Review of Proposals, RFP 0-2178 Graphic Design Services for Bus Service Change Materials
- B. Proposal Evaluation Matrix (Short-Listed Firms), RFP 0-2178 Graphic Design Services for Bus Service Change Materials
- C. Contract History for the Past Two Years, RFP 0-2178 Graphic Design Services for Bus Service Change Materials

**Prepared by:**

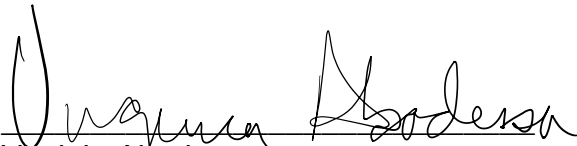


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