



September 15, 2022

To: Legislative and Communications Committee
From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: Agreement for Express Lanes Marketing Program Services

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darrell E. Johnson", is written over the "To:" and "From:" lines of the memo.

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority requires the services of a firm to provide Express Lanes marketing program services. A competitive procurement has been conducted and proposals were received in accordance with the Orange County Transportation Authority's procurement procedures for professional and technical services. Board of Directors' approval is requested to execute an agreement to provide Express Lanes marketing program services.

Recommendations

- A. Approve the selection of Webb and Duffy, Inc., doing business as Truth and Advertising, as the firm to provide Express Lanes marketing program services.
- B. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute Agreement No. C-2-2392 between the Orange County Transportation Authority and Webb and Duffy, Inc., doing business as Truth and Advertising, in the amount of \$300,000, for a two-year initial term, with two, two-year option terms to provide Express Lanes marketing program services.

Discussion

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) owns and operates the original 91 Express Lanes (91 EL), offering drivers a time-saving choice for trips between Orange County and the Inland Empire. OCTA took ownership of the ten-mile 91 EL in 2003 and has made improvements with innovations that enhance both safety and reliability for customers. In fiscal year 2021-22, customers took 19.8 trips on the 91 EL. In late 2023, OCTA will begin operating the 405 Express Lanes (405 EL), to offer drivers a similar time-saving choice for

traveling through west Orange County. The 405 EL is part of the 16-mile improvement project that is also creating general purpose lanes as promised to voters by Measure M2.

Ongoing marketing campaigns, educational programs, and customer communications are necessary to provide information on the 91 EL and the 405 EL services to create and enhance awareness of the lanes and how to use them, as well as to attract new customers and increase the levels of usage and satisfaction of existing customers.

For the 91 EL, the marketing and communications goals for the next few years are to develop and implement innovative campaigns and programs to reach potential and existing customers and enhance the overall value among high-frequency users.

When the 405 EL opens in late 2023, it will be essential to introduce the new facility to Orange County and surrounding areas with marketing and communications programs. Brand development is required to create a visual identity and messaging for the new lanes.

A marketing campaign is necessary to create awareness and introduce the lanes to target markets and new customers prior to and after the 405 EL opening. In addition, an education program is necessary to familiarize customers with 405 EL operations.

For the 91 EL and 405 EL, marketing and communications programs include:

- **405 EL Brand Development**
The selected consultant will provide creative design, messaging, and production support to create online and print materials and other campaign elements to help ensure a successful launch of the new 405 EL.
- **Marketing and Sales Program(s)**
A comprehensive awareness campaign will be developed to introduce the 405 EL through targeted marketing and communications programs to create awareness, promote usage, and generate accounts for the new facility. New targeted programs will also be developed and implemented for both express lanes facilities.
- **Customer Communications**
The selected consultant will create traditional public information and/or customer communications such as quarterly newsletters and other collateral.

- Annual Report
The selected consultant will create an individual annual report for stakeholders of each express lane that documents activities and finances in the prior year.

To assist with the development and implementation of marketing campaigns and customer communications for the express lanes facilities, OCTA requires consultant support to provide various professional services to develop effective materials and tactics. Services include:

- Marketing and digital campaign planning, implementation, and optimization.
- Print and digital creative development including copywriting, design, and photography.
- Email, social media, and mobile marketing strategy development and implementation, and optimization.
- Collateral printing and distribution, large format specialty printing, and sign printing.

Procurement Approach

The procurement was handled in accordance with OCTA Board of Directors-approved procedures for professional and technical services. Various factors are considered in the award for professional and technical 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 June 7, 2022, Request for Proposals (RFP) 2-2392 was issued electronically on CAMM NET. The procurement was advertised in a newspaper of general circulation on June 6 and June 13, 2022. A pre-proposal conference was held on June 15, 2022, with two attendees representing two firms. Two addenda were issued to make available the pre-proposal conference registration sheets and presentation, address administrative issues related to the RFP, and provide responses to written questions.

On June 27, 2022, four proposals were received. An evaluation committee consisting of staff from the Contracts Administration and Materials Management, Marketing and Customer Engagement, Express Lanes Program, and Public Outreach 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 30 percent

- Cost and Price 20 percent

Several factors were considered in developing the evaluation criteria weightings. Qualifications of the firm was weighted at 25 percent as the firm had to demonstrate previous experience providing similar marketing program services. Staffing and project organization was also weighted at 25 percent as the firm needed to propose an experienced, well-rounded team with adequate staff availability, as well as experience and knowledge to create awareness and positive perceptions for increasing new customer accounts. Work plan was weighted highest at 30 percent as the firm needed to demonstrate its approach to implementing an express lanes marketing program. Additionally, the firm had to demonstrate an understanding of the project scope, challenges, and level of effort required. Cost and price was assigned a weight of 20 percent to ensure that OCTA receives value for the services provided.

On July 6, 2022, the evaluation committee reviewed the proposals based on the evaluation criteria and short-listed the two most qualified firms listed below in alphabetical order:

Firm and Location

We the Creative (WTC)
Irvine, California

Webb and Duffy, Inc., doing business as Truth and Advertising (Truth)
Santa Ana, California

On July 13, 2022, the evaluation committee conducted interviews with the two short-listed firms. The interviews consisted of a presentation by each firm to demonstrate the firms' 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 related to anticipated marketing challenges in diverse communities, as well as experience related to express lanes and its significance in the current and future regional transportation infrastructure.

After considering responses to questions asked during the interviews, the evaluation committee reviewed the preliminary ranking and made adjustments to individual scores. However, Truth remained the higher-ranked firm with the higher overall score.

Based on the evaluation of written technical proposals and the information obtained from the interviews, as well as cost and price, the evaluation committee recommends Truth for consideration of award. The following is a brief summary of the proposal evaluation results.

Qualifications of the Firm

Truth was founded in 1996 and is headquartered in the City of Santa Ana with 21 employees. The firm demonstrated relevant experience providing marketing services to public agencies such as Irvine Ranch Conservancy, Orange County Parks, The Metropolitan Water District, and United States Forestry Service, as well as the OC Streetcar marketing launch plan. In addition, Truth demonstrated experience on transportation-related campaigns associated with freeways, express lanes projects, strategic planning, and media strategy for the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor, OCTA's 91 Express Lanes, and the Pacific Surfliner. Truth received positive comments from its references and demonstrated relevant experience developing marketing programs for express lanes programs and a variety of transportation-related projects during the interview.

WTC was founded in 2007 and is headquartered in the City of Irvine with eight employees. The firm demonstrated relevant experience providing marketing services on various projects for public agencies, such as the City of Anaheim's annual social media plan and content strategy, City of Laguna Niguel's Free Summer Trolley, and City of Long Beach's print and digital report. Additionally, WTC provided marketing services for OCTA's rideshare marketing, vanpool, and Dump the Pump programs. The project engagements in WTC's proposal did not demonstrate direct experience on transportation-related campaigns associated with freeways, express lanes projects, or brand development as required in the scope of work; however, the firm provided information for efforts and messaging during the interviews. The firm received positive comments from its references.

Staffing and Project Organization

Truth's proposed account manager has been with the firm for three months and has over 20 years of account and marketing management experience, market campaigns, and brand building, as well as developing marketing plans, advertising, and social media strategy. The proposed creative director who will be responsible for images and concepts for the project has 28 years of experience and has been with the firm for 19 years. The firm proposed sufficient availability of key personnel. During the interview, the project team presented its roles and approach to ensure effective marketing efforts for the express lanes and provided detailed responses to the evaluation committee's questions.

WTC proposed an experienced and knowledgeable project team. The account manager has five years of experience and has worked with WTC for three years managing proprietary projects including marketing projects for OCTA and City of Long Beach. The proposed creative director has ten years of experience in marketing and advertising. The proposed staffing plan did not include availability of key personnel, and the firm responded to the evaluation

committee's questions during the interview. The information relative to availability of key personnel was acquired and considered reasonable.

Work Plan

Truth presented a comprehensive work plan that addressed all of the elements of the scope of work. The firm detailed its approach to providing the marketing program with a strategy that includes press outreach, media events, and influencer programs, as well as social media campaigns, email marketing, and partnership events. The campaign will involve leveraging strategic content that includes specific targeting, language, and informative calls to action. The firm proposed five specific strategies: email campaigns, banner ads, videos, artwork, and awareness campaigns using imagery and photography. The samples displayed in the firm's proposal were satisfactory, and they were created, designed, and produced by the key personnel proposed for assignment to this project. During the interview, the firm provided detailed responses to questions regarding its approach to implementing an express lanes marketing program.

WTC provided a general approach for the marketing requirements of the 91 EL. The firm provided a business process with a four-phase approach that includes discovery, design, development, and delivery. Additionally, the firm discussed methodologies for quality, budget, and schedule controls. The work plan did not provide details on the requirements of the 405 EL marketing program, such as branding development and creative design, messaging, and production support to create online and offline materials and campaigns to ensure a successful launch of the new 405 EL brand. During the interview, the firm provided responses regarding its approach to implementing an express lanes marketing program. The samples displayed in the firm's proposal were satisfactory.

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 based on its relation to the lowest weighted average hourly rate. Truth's weighted rates were slightly lower than WTC's rates and lower than the OCTA project manager's independent cost estimate. The firm's rates are deemed fair and reasonable.

Procurement Summary

Based on the evaluation of written proposals, the firms' qualifications, the information obtained from the interviews, as well as cost and price, the evaluation committee recommends the selection of Truth as the top-ranked firm to provide express lanes marketing program services. Truth delivered a thorough and comprehensive proposal and an interview that was responsive to all the requirements of the RFP.

Fiscal Impact

The project is approved in OCTA's Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget, People and Community Engagement Division, Account Nos. 0036-7519-B0001-H2H, 0036-7519-B0001-H2F, 0037-7519-X2006-PV3, 0037-7519-X2006-PQ5, and 0037-7519-X2006-NB0, and is funded through federal funds.

Summary

Staff is recommending the Board of Directors authorize the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute Agreement No. C-2-2392 between the Orange County Transportation Authority and Webb and Duffy, Inc., doing business as Truth and Advertising, in the amount of \$300,000, for a two-year initial term, with two, two-year option terms to provide express lanes marketing program services.

Attachments

- A. Review of Proposals, Request for Proposals 2-2392 Express Lanes Marketing Program Services
- B. Proposal Evaluation Criteria Matrix (Short-Listed Firms), Request for Proposals 2-2392 Express Lanes Marketing Program Services
- C. Contract History for the Past Two Years, Request for Proposals 2-2392 Express Lanes Marketing Program Services

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