




July 15, 2024

To: Members of the Board of Directors
From: Jason Jewell, Managing Director 
Subject: Amendment to Agreement for Public Relations Services

Overview

On August 15, 2022, the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Board of Directors approved an agreement with The ACE Agency, Inc., to provide public relations services for the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency for a one-year initial term and two, one-year option terms. Board of Directors' approval is requested to exercise the second option term effective September 1, 2024, through August 31, 2025.

Recommendation

Authorize the Managing Director to negotiate and execute Amendment No. 3 to Agreement No. L-2-0002 between the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency and The ACE Agency, Inc. to exercise the second option term of the agreement, effective September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025, in the amount of \$60,000, to provide continued public relations services to the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency for the Pacific Surfliner marketing program. This will increase the maximum obligation of the agreement to a total contract value of \$146,250.

Discussion

The Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency (Agency) is responsible for marketing the Pacific Surfliner service to enhance public awareness of the service and increase ridership and revenue.

On August 15, 2022, the LOSSAN Agency's Board of Directors (Board) approved an agreement with The ACE Agency, Inc. (The ACE Agency), to provide public relations services to boost awareness of the Pacific Surfliner and enhance the brand's credibility. In addition to distributing press releases to print, online, and broadcast media, The ACE Agency supports the LOSSAN Agency with pitching stories and developing media contacts across industries such as transportation

and tourism. Efforts also include working with bloggers and online influencers to promote visibility and awareness of the Pacific Surfliner.

Public relations services scope of work includes the following:

- Develop and implement targeted public relations campaigns to generate featured articles and related publicity.
- Work with bloggers and online influencers to promote visibility and awareness of the Pacific Surfliner brand.
- Utilize public relations syndication and media monitoring tools to track coverage, provide reporting, and identify opportunities to protect and enhance the Pacific Surfliner brand. Provide consultation for crisis management as needed.
- Build and maintain relationships with the press on behalf of the LOSSAN Agency. Maintain and update the Pacific Surfliner Media Room and editorial calendar.
- Manage media lists including updating contacts and building targeted distribution lists with print, digital, and broadcast sources from local, regional, and national media outlets.
- Plan and execute media events that build positive visibility in key markets. Coordinate group and independent media familiarization trips including handling travel arrangements and correspondence with business and tourism partners. Follow up with press to ensure coverage following events.

Procurement Approach

The procurement was handled in accordance with LOSSAN Agency's Board-approved policies and procedures for professional services. The original agreement was awarded on a competitive basis and included a one-year initial term for \$75,000, and two, one-year option terms. The first option term of the agreement expires on August 31, 2024. This agreement has been previously amended as shown in Attachment A.

The proposed Amendment No. 3 is to exercise the second option term of the agreement effective September 1, 2024, through August 31, 2025. The budget for this amendment is \$60,000, based on current and historical commitments, bringing the total contract value to \$146,250. An hourly rate escalation was negotiated with the original contract. However, staff from the Contracts Administration and Materials Management Department was able to negotiate with The ACE Agency to hold its first option term rates through the second option term resulting in an approximate cost savings of \$1,752.17, for the final year of the agreement. Exercising the second option term with The ACE Agency shall allow continuity of service for public relations services for the Pacific Surfliner marketing program through August 31, 2025.

Fiscal Impact

The \$60,000 amount for the second option term of the agreement is a not-to-exceed maximum obligation, and is included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 budgets included in the Annual Business Plan. However, the actual marketing spend will be adjusted to be in alignment with the funding amounts approved by the California State Transportation Agency for the FY.

Summary

Staff recommends the Board of Directors authorize the Managing Director to negotiate and execute Amendment No. 3 to Agreement No. L-2-0002 with The ACE Agency, Inc., to exercise the second option term, in the amount of \$60,000, for a total contract value of \$146,250, for continued public relations services for the Pacific Surfliner marketing program.

Attachment

- A. The Ace Agency, Inc., Agreement No. L-2-0002 Fact Sheet