

Council Meeting Staff Report

December 9, 2014

Agenda No.:	A.
Indexes (Council Goals):	2014 Council Goal – Quality of Life – Market and Brand Los Alamos as a Scenic Destination Featuring Recreation, Science and History
Presenters:	Harry Burgess; Kelly Stewart, Marketing Specialist
Legislative File:	AGR0350-14b

This item was approved for reconsideration by action taken at October 28, 2014 meeting.

Title

Reconsideration Of Contract For General Services, Agreement No. AGR15-4159 With Atlas Advertising, LLC In The Amount Of \$25,000.00 For Brand Logo Design Services, \$25,000.00 For Brand Implementation Plan Services And, Subject To Future County Council Approval, \$175,000.00 For Brand Execution Services For A Possible Total Of \$225,000.00 plus Applicable Gross Receipts Tax.

Prior Action

I move that Council Approve Contract for General Services, Agreement No. AGR15-4159 with Atlas Advertising, LLC in the amount of \$25,000.00 for brand logo design services, \$25,000.00 for brand implementation plan services and, subject to future County Council approval, \$175,000.00 for brand execution services for a possible total of \$225,000.00 plus applicable gross receipts tax.

Board, Commission or Committee Recommendation

The Lodgers' Tax Advisory Board voted to support this agreement and the creation and implementation of a brand for the Los Alamos County community.

Body

During the summer of 2005, the Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce held a community contest designed to develop a theme that would communicate the pride the community wanted to reflect about how it viewed itself. The contest yielded ~330 entries and a screening committee selected the winning theme "Los Alamos, Where Discoveries Are Made". On August 30, 2005, the County Council unanimously adopted "Los Alamos...Where Discoveries Are Made" as the new community theme and authorized the placement of this theme on community promotional materials developed by County staff (excluding tourism promotional materials pending completion of strategic marketing plan) and downtown banners per the County Administrator's discretion. Since that time, the community theme has been placed on landscaping (rocks at the entrance of town), as well as County websites and marketing materials.

Since Council's acceptance of the Economic Vitality Strategic Plan in April 2010, the standing County Councils have consistently and publicly instructed staff to develop a brand for Los Alamos County, for the expressed purpose of growing and cultivating a sustainable economy.

In response, County staff has consulted experts in the field of international economic development marketing and place branding to identify a proven process for developing a brand for Los Alamos that will shine and deliver in the marketplace. The identified process includes the following steps:

- 1) research of target audiences (completed);
- 2) brand platform statement that defines our assets for those audiences (completed);

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- 3) brand narrative to guide creative (completed);
 - 4) strapline;
 - 5) logo;
 - 6) graphics standards manual;
 - 7) implementation plan;
 - 8) execution;
 - 9) performance evaluation measurement, adjustment and execution.

In 2012, the County conducted a national solicitation and hired North Start Destination Strategies to develop a Brand Study for Los Alamos. Based on nine months of quantitative and qualitative research, insights and interpretation by place branding experts, the Brand Platform Statement (below), adopted by the County Council on May 6, 2014, encapsulates the assets that our target audiences--prospective employers, employees, residents--value most:

For those who never stop questioning what's possible, Los Alamos County, in the elevated outdoors of northern New Mexico and home to the Los Alamos National Lab, is where some of the world's best brains power the breakthroughs that shape our world so you are challenged to think bigger and live brighter.

While this statement may not include everything County residents have come to know and esteem, it does highlight the assets that have made Los Alamos unique and special since the first days of the Manhattan project. These are the qualities that set Los Alamos County apart from other communities vying for new residents, employees, retail and other economic development opportunities the County needs to achieve a sustainable future. The Brand Narrative (See Exhibit D) and the Brand Strapline--"Live Exponentially"--are the creative interpretations of the Brand Platform Statement approved by the Branding Review Committee and Council.

The current Brand Logo Design, Brand Implementation, and Brand Execution Services contract provides the County with the resources to complete the branding initiative's development, as well as the means to work with our partners to effectively market the County in a measurable way. The contract incorporates public participation as a vital input to each deliverable and the measures that define success.

Funding for Los Alamos County's branding initiative is phased and subject to Council approval. To date, \$50,000 has been spent on the necessary research, results interpretation and initial creative elements produced by North Star Destination Strategies. The cost of the next phase--Brand Logo Design and Brand Implementation Plan Development--as defined in the contract with Atlas Advertising (AGR15-4159) is \$48,500 for delivery of three logo options and an implementation plan, at which point the Council may make a selection and a decision to continue. Brand Execution--the actual rollout of the brand--totals \$175,000 but is phased over a five year period at \$35,000 per year, subject to annual budget approval by Council.

Future Brand Initiative Steps Pending Council Direction:

1. Pending Council's affirmation of approval of the County's contract with Atlas Advertising, LLC for Brand Services, Atlas will initiate the Brand Logo Design process for an amount not to exceed \$25,000, followed by Brand Implementation Plan development services, incorporating public input as defined in contract scope, and adjusting creative elements as prescribed, for an amount not to exceed \$23,500.
2. Atlas will present to Council three (3) options for a Brand Logo along with three versions of a

Brand Implementation Plan defining how each Brand Logo will be applied to County assets and marketing elements.

3. If Council selects/approves a Brand Logo and Brand Implementation Plan, the contract provides Council the option to approve the Brand Execution phase at the same meeting. The Brand Execution phase provides funding for putting the brand into action as prescribed in the approved Brand Implementation Plan. Funding is \$35,000 per year for up to five years, contingent upon annual approval by Council.

4. Pending Council's approval of Brand Execution, Atlas will finalize the Brand Logo and Brand Implementation Plan, and Initiate Brand Execution, including establishment of benchmark Brand Performance Evaluation metrics and measures, as well as trademark status for all Los Alamos County brand elements (e.g., logo, strapline, etc.).

5. Year 1 of Brand Execution Services to include the launch/rollout of the Los Alamos Brand, as well as regular Brand Performance Evaluations and adjustments.

6. Brand Evaluation Checkpoint (1 year).

7. Future Brand Execution Years with annual Brand Performance Evaluation Checkpoints.

Alternatives

*The Council Could Affirm Approval of Contract AGR15-4159;

*The Council Could Take No Action For Contract AGR15-4159 (resulting in the continuation of the previously executed contract);

*The Council Could Request Amendment of Contract AGR15-4159 To Facilitate Completion of Separate Strapline Development Process (in accordance with Procurement guidelines);

*The Council Could Rescind Approval Of Contract AGR15-4159 And Direct County Administrator To Cancel the Agreement;

*The Council Could Rescind Approval Of Contract AGR15-4159 And Direct County Administrator To Initiate New Solicitation To Include Strapline Development Process.

Fiscal and Staff Impact/Planned Item

The branding logo design, implementation plan, and execution is a planned item in the Economic Development fund. If the direction received is to cancel the contract, the County will be liable for expenses incurred up to the date of cancellation.

Attachments

A - AGR15-4159 Atlas Advertising for Brand Services

B - Los Alamos County Branding Initiative Actions To Date

C - Los Alamos Brandprint Study Results Summary (Apr 2014)

D - Los Alamos Brandprint Final Report (Apr 2014)

E - Branding Presentation to Council (May 6 2014)