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9/26/2019

TO: Local Agency Formation Commission

FROM: Gary Thompson, Executive Officer

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SUBJECT: PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTANT PROPOSAL

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LAFCO has received the attached proposal for providing public relations and outreach services from Curt Pringle & Associates. (CP&A). CP&A is an experienced full service consulting firm, providing various public affairs, government relations, and land use services, and is headquartered in Orange County. This proposal was not requested by LAFCO staff, however, it is being brought forward for the Commission's review and discussion if the Commission were to desire to entertain obtaining these services.

Although this proposal is before the Commission, normal procedure for procuring these types of services would be to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) through a competitive process, which is an option for the Commission to consider.

The proposal's Scope of Work basically provides for development and implementation of a public communication strategy for promoting and educating the general public, and other public agencies and stakeholders on LAFCO responsibilities and functions. The Scope of Work includes development of databases and surveys of agencies and stakeholders, messaging development and development of policy standards for communication. Additionally, the Scope of Work provides for development and implementation of messaging and information outflow to the public through various social media outlets, email newsletter, and facilitating stakeholder meetings as appropriate.

The proposal specifies a monthly retainer cost of \$4,000 plus reimbursable expenses such as mailers, mapping, photography, etc., subject to pre-approval by LAFCO. The proposal specifies a one year guaranteed consultant agreement. Thus the total cost of the proposal will be \$48,000 plus the unknown amount for the identified reimbursable costs.

If the Commission desires to include this element of strategy in any future Strategic Plan, this proposal would serve the need of

an initial development and implementation of that strategy element.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Commission provide direction to staff regarding the below options:

1. Proceed with this proposal. If the direction is to proceed, staff will bring back a final agreement at a later meeting.
2. Issue a Request for Proposals for this type of service.
3. Defer for now, and further discuss this type of service if the Commission decides to include a public relations/outreach element in a future final Five-Year Strategic Plan.

Respectfully submitted,



Gary Thompson  
Executive Officer

Attachments-

- 1) CP&A Public Relations Proposal

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## Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) - Riverside County

### Communications /Stakeholder Outreach

#### **FIRM PROFILE**

Curt Pringle & Associates (CP&A) is a full-service public affairs, government relations, land use, and public relations firm based in Orange County, CA. Founded in 1999 by Curt Pringle, former State Assembly Speaker and former two-term Mayor of Anaheim, CP&A has unparalleled experience in working with private, public, and non-profit sector clients on a variety of specialized projects in Orange County, the Inland Empire, and Los Angeles.

CP&A is guided by the following operating philosophies:

- Communicate *HONESTLY* with stakeholders and clients
- Engage stakeholders with *CREATIVITY* and *COMPASSION*
- Provide *CONSISTENT* and *EFFECTIVE* guidance to clients
- *DELIVER* the right message at the right time

CP&A creates and implements comprehensive strategic communications plans that ensure target audiences (residents, community leaders, business groups, elected officials, local and regional media outlets, etc.) receive and understand client perspectives.

Building positive public perception, communicating effectively with key demographics, anticipating areas of exposure or risk, and simultaneously navigating the media can be challenging. CP&A understands the importance of clear, concise, and effective messaging. A nuanced approach is taken with every client to ensure the successful delivery of public relations strategies that focus on establishing facts and mitigating potential concerns.

#### **PROJECT UNDERSTANDING**

The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) serves the citizens of Riverside County by facilitating constructive changes in governmental structure and boundaries through special studies, programs, and actions that resolve intergovernmental issues, by fostering orderly development and governance and by promoting the efficient delivery of services. LAFCO also serves as a resource for local governments and citizens by providing a structure for sharing information among stakeholders throughout the County. We understand LAFCO has a desire to achieve the following goals:

- Enhance perception of LAFCO as a collaborative partner and trusted resource for local government agencies;
- Strengthen relationships with special districts, city and county executives and elected officials; and
- Increase public awareness of LAFCO's purpose and how it carries out its critical mission.

#### **PLAN APPROACH**

##### ***Phase 1 – Due Diligence and Messaging – 2 months***

It is paramount that before starting outreach efforts, we have a baseline of information to set up for success. These tasks will include:

##### **1. Due Diligence and Stakeholder Identification**

- a. Define and understand the **key audiences and stakeholders** that will be the focus of our outreach efforts, and identify past or present challenges and opportunities for building or strengthening those relationships.
- b. Establish and/or edit existing **master database** of all community, government, and local (local chambers of commerce groups, local boards and commissions, hospitals, etc.) stakeholders, including elected officials and/or their staff members.
- c. Develop a baseline understanding of how LAFCO is currently perceived by **deploying an online survey amongst key stakeholders**

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## Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) - Riverside County Communications /Stakeholder Outreach

### 2. Message Development

- a. Review inventory of existing collateral and all relevant materials that develop **new, top-line messages** consistent with the Commissions Strategic Plan to define how LAFCO *should* be perceived amongst stakeholders.
- b. Conduct a **messaging session** with LAFCO staff (and potentially commission members) to define the Commission's story and develop messages to fill identified gaps.
- c. Identify **obstacles and issues** to further refine and match messages to key audiences.

### 3. Communications Guidelines

- a. Assist Commission in creating an internal policy document to establish LAFCO public communications standards (such as logo usage, style guide for online and printed materials, social media content policy, etc.) to ensure consistency across platforms.

### *Phase 2 - Develop Strategic Communications & Outreach Plan – 2 months*

Our team will develop a written Strategic Communications and Outreach plan with prioritization of goals, tasks, and tactics to complement those defined in LAFCO Strategic Plan and Work Plan through 2020. This phase will include the following:

#### 1. Content Creation

- a. **Collateral.** Our team will assist in the creation of new collateral materials for public outreach efforts. These materials include, but are not limited to **e-mail newsletters**, visually appealing explanations or **infographics, fact sheets, FAQs** (frequently asked questions), and public meeting fliers for print and/or online distribution.
- b. **Digital.** Review/enhance all digital outreach communications efforts to ensure consistency with the overall Strategic Plan and Outreach Plan. This includes:
  - i. Refining current or creating a new website and/or **create landing pages on the LAFCO website** on projects or LAFCO reports with an emphasis on **visually appealing and easily digestible** content.
  - ii. Create **original digital content** on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

#### 2. 'Opportunities' Calendar

- a. Pro-actively identify opportunities throughout the year for LAFCO to present to community stakeholders, either in personal briefings, at chamber events, or other community forums where local government efficiency and service delivery is of mutual interest
- b. Identify timely media opportunities for LAFCO commissioners or executives to tell its story through op-eds in mainstream media or specialty publications.

### *Phase 3 – Plan Implementation – Ongoing*

After the due diligence and plan development phases are complete, CP&A will implement the Communications and Outreach Plan and adjust tactics as needed. This phase will include activities such as:

- Strengthen LAFCO's presence throughout the County, by **building relationships in the business community** with various organizations, and agencies.

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### Communications /Stakeholder Outreach

- **Facilitate one-on-one elected and community leader briefings**, first, for those currently or potentially impacted by LAFCO projects/studies, and later with those who may be impacted in the future.
- **Host a 'legislative staffer' lunch** intended to educate State and Federal representatives about the Commission's initiatives and relevant reports/projects.
- **Assist LAFCO staff in organizing and facilitating community meetings** regarding project updates as needed. CP&A are experts in mitigating community concerns through public forums as we have successfully coordinated and managed many public forums throughout the firm's history.
- **Position LAFCO as the preeminent subject matter expert** on the issues of governance and the efficient delivery of services by ghost-authoring **guest op-eds and commentaries** in mainstream media or specialty publications / outlets such as *Governing* magazine or *Public CEO*.
- **Host media training sessions** as needed for LAFCO staff and commissioners to respond when issues emerge and will serve as media consultants and/or spokespersons if/when issues and opportunities arise.
- **Monitor political activity** throughout the region and report to LAFCO staff on implications
- **Monitor public perception** about the agency and its projects through digital engagement, in-person post-presentation surveys, and polls.

### PROJECT TEAM



#### **Curt Pringle, Lead Strategist**

In 1999, Curt Pringle launched Curt Pringle & Associates. Mr. Pringle is a land use, public relations and government affairs expert with a passion for navigating the political process on a state and local level. With extensive depth and breadth of policy knowledge, Mr. Pringle provides strategic advice to a variety of both public and private sector clients. Mr. Pringle's ability to see the "big picture" makes him a trusted third party who is sought after for sound counsel and action. During his tenure in the State Assembly, Assemblyman Pringle served as the Republican Leader, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, chairman of the Rules Committee, and vice chairman of the Budget Committee. He also served on the Insurance, Governmental Organization, Banking, Local Government, and Joint Legislative Budget Review Committees. Additionally, he served as a budget conferee in 1995, where he authored the 1995-1996 California State Budget.



#### **Paul Simonds, Project Manager**

Paul Simonds has nearly 20 years of public affairs and strategic and crisis communications experience. Before joining the CP&A, he served as a public affairs manager with SoCalGas, where he advocated on behalf of the nation's largest natural gas distribution company before 13 Orange County jurisdictions. Before that, he worked with the L.A.-based Cerrell Associates, where he managed the firm's social media efforts, and Western Growers Association which covered all of California and Arizona.

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## Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) - Riverside County Communications /Stakeholder Outreach



### **Clare Venegas, Project Lead**

Clare Venegas has over 20 years of executive management and strategic communications experience in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. She has held media relations and corporate communications positions, beginning her career with the *Orange County Register* as a reporter and editor. Her public relations skills include authoring op-eds and blogs, working with LA and national TV and radio news media, and securing media placements in industry trade media. Clare has worked with C-suite executives and elected officials in the areas of media training, crisis communications, and speech writing.



### **Jesse Ramirez, Project Lead**

Jesse Ramirez brings advocacy and communications skills honed in the state legislature and state agencies. Most recently serving as Information Officer for Board of Equalization Fourth District under the leadership of Chairwoman Diane Harkey. Mr. Ramirez helped manage a constituency of over four counties, 250,000 registered small businesses and 9.5 million people, while providing outreach on behalf of the State of California. His experience includes community and nonprofit development, serving as a director for both the Veterans Housing Alliance, assisting veterans in obtaining affordable home-ownership and Inland Empire Hispanic Leadership Council, which provides underrepresented minorities with resources in education, technology, and financial literacy.

### **RELATED CLIENT EXPERIENCE**

#### **RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITY, RIVERSIDE TRANSMISSION RELIABILITY PROJECT (RTRP)**

In November 2017, the General Manager of the Riverside Public Utility (RPU) issued a contract to Curt Pringle & Associates (CP&A) to advise RPU on public outreach and stakeholder engagement strategies. Since that time, CP&A has worked with the City of Riverside and RPU to develop a multi-faceted public and governmental affairs working draft plan specific to the RTRP consisting of three main areas of focus. Areas of focus include:

- A. Stakeholder "Core" Engagement
- B. Community Outreach/Education
- C. Legislative Outreach

CP&A responsibilities are as follows:

- Develop strategic project communications for the project purpose
- Community and stakeholder education plan/workshops
- Opposition mitigation plan/strategy
- Development and maintenance of relationships with key stakeholders and civic leaders
- Meetings and presentations with local and regional legislators

#### **TCA (TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR AGENCIES)**

Since 2016, CP&A has been responsible for strategic communications services and stakeholder engagement regarding the reduction of traffic congestion in the South Orange County region. The main goal remains to build support for north/south mobility in South Orange County, while educating and informing the public in the process. This was and continues to be done in three main phases:

1. Research – Polling, focus groups and analysis

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2. Brand refresh and public engagement – Local supporter identification and persuasion
3. Regional stakeholder development – Regional support identification and persuasion

CP&A's main responsibilities for this project include:

- Development of strategic communications, public outreach, and stakeholder engagement plan
- Establishment of a strategic counselor program to provide an external, expert perspective on delivering major infrastructure projects in today's culture
- Facilitating and organizing local elected official roundtables (South Riverside County Working Mobility Group) to collaborate on reducing regional traffic congestion
- Conducting a series of community public forums which provided interactive capabilities to expand public participation regarding regional traffic congestion relief

**PROJECT COST**

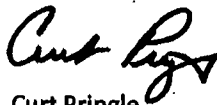
Curt Pringle & Associates proposes to provide the above-mentioned services for a fee of **\$4,000 per month**. The initial term of this Agreement shall be for an initial period of 12 months, which may be extended and/or modified upon concurrence of both parties. This Agreement can be terminated upon 30 days written notice by either party.

Our firm does not bill by the hour or for incidental expenditures. We would only pursue additional expenses with your advance consent and approval. Routine, day-to-day administrative costs and expenses are included in our fee; out-of-pocket costs and expenses (professional copies, mailers, radius maps, professional photography, drone footage, etc.) would be estimated for your approval in advance and billed separately.

On behalf of the entire staff at Curt Pringle & Associates, I want to thank you for allowing us to work with LAFCO. We look forward to assisting you in meeting your goals and educating the community about this important Commission.

We believe that our experience, relationships, and track record of success will serve you well. If you agree to the proposed terms, please sign below and return a copy to our offices. Thank you again for your consideration of CP&A.

Sincerely,



Curt Pringle

I concur with the terms and conditions set forth as part of this letter agreement between Curt Pringle & Associates and LAFCO and agree to make payment for such services in a timely and expeditious manner.

By:

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## Client Case Study: Social Media Evaluation Reports

### OVERVIEW

Curt Pringle & Associates (CP&A) was contracted by a client to educate the public about a proposed new use of an industrial site. Through the social media platform, Facebook, we targeted specific audiences within the surrounding area, specifically with a certain age and income category. The most engaging form of communication was determined to be video production, informative content, and a petition.

### GOAL

The goal of this campaign was to increase public awareness about a proposed new use of a current industrial site. Additionally, a secondary goal was to solicit personal engagement on the issue from those contacted through this campaign.

### BUDGET

The total media advertising budget for this project was \$1,000. During that period the budget sustained a two-month campaign total which was \$800, all spent on media advertising.

### CAMPAIGN

The first ad: *Video*, which informed the audience about the specific project and how it would affect local businesses and families. This ad had a lifetime budget of \$400 which ran for 8 days and reached 23,000 people. 480 people clicked on the call to action link that led them to sign the petition.

The second ad specifically targeted residents and businesses located in a specific geographic area. We split the ad into two different boosts, so it could reach two different demographics, ie. young professionals and parents of public-school children. This differentiation made it simple for us to see which demographic were more engaged.

By the end of the 21 day campaign, the online petition had 105 signatures.

### OUTCOME

In total, the project reached over 42,000 people and had 1,300 link clicks with a lifetime budget of \$800.

	Campaign	Impressions	Reach	Link Clicks	Cost per Click	Amount Spent
First Ad:	Video	39,108	23,000	480	\$0.83	\$400.00
Second Ad:	1 <sup>st</sup> Demographic	23,730	17,600	384	\$0.55	\$210.21
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Demographic	17,891	13,404	482	\$0.39	\$189.79
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>80,729</b>	<b>42,592</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>\$0.59</b>	<b>\$800.00</b>