



## Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

Dean C. Logan  
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

March 25, 2014

TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich  
  
William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer

FROM: Dean C. Logan, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

### **NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS FOR SOLE SOURCE AGREEMENT WITH IDEO FOR CONSULTING SERVICES TO DEVELOP DETAILED DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS FOR A BALLOT MARKING DEVICE AND RELATED COMPONENTS**

This is to notify your Board that the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) intends to enter into sole source negotiations with IDEO for consulting services to develop detailed design specifications required to progress to a competitive contracting process for full-scale manufacturing services for a ballot marking device and related components, as part of our current effort to modernize Los Angeles County's voting system.

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2009, the Voting System Assessment Project (VSAP) was launched to modernize the County's aging voting systems in order to ensure accessible, accurate and secure elections. As a result of your Board's Motion in September 2010, the RR/CC has provided your Board with quarterly reports regarding the status of VSAP. The project seeks to redesign the voting experience for Los Angeles County voters and implement a voting system that is not only secure and accessible but, elicits the highest degree of public trust.

From a development perspective, at the core of our project principles are modularity, hardware independence and non-proprietary source code.

This is a critical needs project. The environment and demands under which the RR/CC administers elections have become increasingly complex; challenged by a growing and diverse electorate, an aging voting system, a fluid regulatory environment that has limited the development of voting systems and the recent phenomenon of special vacancy elections. Many of these complexities are not unique to Los Angeles County but, they are compounded by two critical factors: 1) the size and diversity of the jurisdiction; 2) the current state of its voting system.

Over the past two years the project has made great strides. We established stakeholder advisory bodies to ensure citizen participation in the project. A set of General Voting System Principles were developed in collaboration with our advisory bodies. Then, in 2013, we completed a design process that envisioned a new voting experience and detailed a design for a Ballot Marking Device, the core component to the voter's experience.

This process was supported through a grant/loan from the Quality and Productivity Commission and subsequent Net County Cost funding. In October 2012 the Quality and Productivity Commission awarded \$470,000 in Productivity Investment Fund (PIF) grant funding in support of the initial VSAP voting system design phase to develop a series of initial draft voting device concepts. From March 28, 2013 to January 31, 2014, the Chief Executive Office (CEO) authorized the RR/CC to enter into a Delegated Authority Agreement with the award winning human-centered innovation and design firm IDEO to provide consulting services to provide initial design drafts of a new voting system in Los Angeles County totaling \$1,071,120. Through an iterative design process, IDEO produced a single voting system design concept based on field research, user testing and stakeholder engagement, including a "looks like" prototype of the proposed Ballot Marking Device.

To move the development of this Ballot Marking Device forward we must develop detailed hardware and software specifications for manufacturing. The production of these specifications will allow the Department to initiate a competitive contracting process that is not only driven by the principles set forth by the project but, also affords a greater opportunity to control the cost and intellectual property of the product. This process will include continuous stakeholder feedback as we further refine the system.

Development of additional voting system components (e.g. Tabulation System, Vote by Mail system) is dependent on the development of system specifications for and manufacturing of the Ballot Marking Device.

## **JUSTIFICATION FOR SOLE SOURCE AGREEMENT WITH IDEO**

IDEO met all prior contractual obligations and produced a custom design concept that is both original and innovative. Through various iterations which have engaged voters, academics, election workers, and other stakeholders, IDEO has acquired critical subject matter expertise and knowledge of the established General Voting System Principles adopted by the VSAP Advisory Committee which is hard to replace and costly to reacquire.

IDEO is an award winning global design and innovation consultancy. This company creates positive impact through design by taking a human-centered approach to helping organizations in the public and private sectors innovate, grow, and bring to market new ideas. IDEO's expertise can help us achieve this goal in an acceptable timeframe and in accordance with the principles adopted by the VSAP Advisory Committee.

The process involved in the conceptualization of a new voting system and the design of the components required for such a system are complex. As such, it is imperative that the design elements and establishment of manufacturing specifications are consistent from start to completion; maximizing the subject matter expertise and experience of the firm initially engaged in the design process. This ensures the retention of subject matter experts; which decreases the learning curve that would be required for a new engagement and saves time. Additionally, it will be prohibitively costly to switch vendor's mid-point since all progress would need to be reassessed, possibly jeopardizing the entire development. IDEO has gained substantial knowledge working directly with the RR/CC, specifically as it relates to voting systems and processes, and how these directly impact Los Angeles County voters.

This will allow us the opportunity to capitalize on the success of our initial venture and continue to build the momentum necessary to reach the next milestone. In order to execute a timely, successful, and seamless transition from system design to system engineering and specifications development it is imperative that we complete the extent of the project with IDEO.

Please note that IDEO is not a voting system vendor and this is not a manufacturing agreement. IDEO will not solicit or compete for the manufacturing of the Ballot Marking Device or related voting system components that will be delivered as a result of this engagement.

## **NEXT STEPS**

In accordance to Board Policy 5.100, we will proceed to enter into negotiations for the next phase of the VSAP project with IDEO after the two week notice period unless

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
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otherwise directed. The negotiated agreement with IDEO will be provided for your approval by July 2014.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or you may contact Efrain Escobedo, Governmental and Legislative Affairs Manager at (562) 462-2721.

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c: Chief Executive Office  
Deputy CEO  
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
RR/CC Board Deputies  
Chief Information Office  
County Counsel