



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Mukesh (Mookie) Patel

SUBJECT: See Below

DATE: September 29, 2025

Approved

Date:

10/3/2025

COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

SUBJECT: San José Mineta International Airport Marketing Strategy and Execution Services Agreements

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution:

- (a) Approving the final ranking of the respondents to the San José Mineta International Airport Marketing Strategy and Execution Services request for qualifications; and
- (b) Authorizing the City Manager or her designee to negotiate and execute three Master Consultant Agreements with the three highest-ranked respondents and with the next highest-ranked respondents, in order, in the event that the City cannot reach agreement with any one or more of the three highest-ranked proposers, in an amount not to exceed \$6,900,000 for each agreement for a term of five years from the date of execution by the City and for a total expenditure for all executed Master Consultant Agreements not to exceed \$6,900,000.

SUMMARY AND OUTCOME

Authorization for the City Manager or her designee to negotiate and execute Master Consultant Agreements (Agreements) as described in this memorandum will enable Airport staff to develop and execute marketing programs for the San José Mineta International Airport (Airport or SJC) that drive the return of passengers and continued growth, while enhancing the customer experience at the Airport. Rather than select a single consultant to provide marketing consultant services at the Airport, the selection of three consultants provides Airport staff flexibility and breadth of expertise with respect to dedicated marketing consulting resources.

BACKGROUND

The Airport is a strategic asset for achieving the City's economic development goals. Air service provides an essential link to support and sustain Silicon Valley's quality of life by moving people and products between San José and both domestic and global destinations. To sustain the Airport's growth, it is critical that we market the benefits of the Airport and its services to travelers and product shippers to convince them to make SJC the airport of choice for their air travel and product delivery needs.

The disruption of air travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic has been significant and industry health concerns are a factor affecting air travel for the foreseeable future. Given the already competitive landscape for attracting passengers and new airline services, effective marketing efforts must continue for both the domestic and international markets to recover. A deliberate and focused marketing program is critical to drive passenger demand.

The City has routinely used outside agencies/consultants to provide marketing services at the Airport. The City's current Airport marketing consultant agreement, including all extension options, expires on December 12, 2025. In anticipation of the expiration of that existing agreement, Airport staff issued a new request for qualifications (RFQ) for Airport marketing consultant services on March 14, 2025.

ANALYSIS

Airport staff issued an RFQ for Airport marketing consultant services on March 14, 2025, through the City's official solicitation platform, Biddingo. The opportunity was also posted on LinkedIn and staff invited potential respondents to a non-mandatory pre-proposal conference and site tour on April 15, 2025. Reservations were received by 17 firms and 19 individuals attended, representing 12 firms. The period for submitting Statements of Qualifications (SOQs) was six weeks, and 105 companies downloaded the RFQ. Nine firms submitted complete SOQs in response to the RFQ.

Staff reviewed the SOQs against the criteria set forth in the minimum qualifications described in the Marketing Strategy and Execution Services RFQ. All nine companies that submitted their SOQ within the deadline met the minimum qualifications.

A five-member evaluation team reviewed the nine SOQs that met the minimum qualifications. The panel included representatives from the Airport, including the Marketing and Communications team and the Properties team, and Team San José. Each panelist evaluated the SOQs based on the criteria and weight below.

Evaluation Criteria	Points Assigned	Percentage
Submittal Requirement	Pass/Fail	Pass/Fail
Minimum Qualifications	Pass/Fail	Pass/Fail
Expertise: Team Resumes – Section 5.9 Firm Profile and Organizational Chart – Section 5.10	25	25%
Experience: Past or Current Projects – Section 5.11	30	30%
Client References – Section 5.15	15	15%
In-Person Interview	20	20%
Local Business Enterprise (LBE)	5	5%
Small Business Enterprise (SBE)	5	5%
MAXIMUM TOTAL	100 pts	100%

Each member of the evaluation panel independently evaluated and scored each SOQ according to the evaluation criteria. Each respondent's numerical score is the average of the scores given by the evaluation panel members for that respondent. The SOQs were ranked from highest to lowest based on their respective numerical scores. The top five respondents were invited for an in-person interview on August 5, 2025. All five firms participated. The final ranking of the nine respondents that met the minimum qualifications, along with their scores, is shown in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: Final Ranking of Respondents and Average Score of the Evaluation Panel

Evaluation Criteria	Possible Points (with interview)	Xpedition Media, Inc. & Gensler	Brown Marketing Strategies, Inc. (dba Centric)	Ignited LLC	Prophet Brand Strategy	Team Friday Inc.	Blackhorse Management, LLC	Mixo Ads Inc.	Ameredia Inc	Crossbow Group
Submittal Requirements	Pass/Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Minimum Qualifications	Pass/Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Expertise	25	24	22	20	17	17	16	12	7	11
Experience	30	26	29	28	20	16	14	17	12	10
Client References	15	14	14	13	9	11	11	11	10	2
In-Person Interview	20	15	17	13	17	17	0	0	0	0
Local Business Enterprise	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Small Business Enterprise	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	84	82	74	63	61	41	40	29	23

Based on the range of marketing needs of the department, Airport staff recommends negotiating and executing agreements with three of the most qualified firms. Following is a summary of the three highest-ranked firms in Table 1.

Xpedition Media Inc. & Gensler: Xpedition specializes in audience segmentation, consumer psychology, and storytelling that moves travelers through the decision funnel, brings expertise in aviation placemaking, user-centered design, and brand communications that connect people and place.

Brown Marketing Strategies, Inc. (dba Centric): Centric has delivered continuous, full-service marketing to United States-based clients for over 17 years, including strategy, creative, paid media, research, reporting, and analytics. It also brings over a decade of experience in multicultural marketing, working across many languages.

Ignited, LLC: Ignited has been delivering comprehensive strategic marketing consulting services, including marketing strategy, research, advertising, measurement, analytics, and reporting, to a diverse set of clients for over 25 years.

The Airport is requesting the City Council approve the selection of the top-ranking proposers noted above and adopt a resolution a) authorizing the City Manager or her designee to negotiate three Master Consultant Agreements with the ranked consultant firms for a term of five years and in an amount not to exceed \$6,900,000 for each Agreement; b) allow the City Manager or her designee to terminate negotiations with the top-ranked proposers and select the next ranked proposer if the City and the recommended proposer are unable to come to terms.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Upon approval of the resolution authorizing the City Manager or her designee to negotiate and execute Master Consultant Agreements with three of the top ranked respondents, City staff will work with the City Attorney's Office to negotiate and execute the agreements on mutually agreeable terms that are consistent with the exemplar agreement that was included as part of the RFQ. Once the agreements are signed, Airport staff will work with each respondent to execute the agreements.

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

Each agreement will be for a five-year term. All services will be authorized by service orders to be approved by the Director of Aviation, or his designee, and compensation for each service order will be subject to the annual budgeting process and the continued appropriation of funds by the City Council. Service orders will be issued among the

three Master Consultant Agreements and will not exceed \$6,900,000 in total for all Master Marketing Consultant Agreements over the five-year term.

Marketing consultants with agreements will be assigned service orders based on a variety of factors such as their expertise, project needs, hourly rates, and talent availability.

BUDGET REFERENCE

The table below identifies the fund and appropriations to fund the contract recommended as part of this memorandum and remaining project costs, including project delivery, construction, and contingency costs.

Fund #	Appn. #	Appropriation Name	Total Appropriation	Amount for Contract	2025-2026 Operating Budget Page	Last Budget Action (Date, Ord. No.)
523	0802	Airport Non-Personal/Equipment	\$59,102,392	\$6,900,000	848	6/17/2025 31230

**The 2025-2026 Adopted Operating Budget was approved on June 10, 2025, and adopted on June 17, 2025, by the City Council.*

COORDINATION

This memorandum was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office and the City Manager's Budget Office.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The RFP was released on March 14, 2025, and publicized on Biddingo and flysanjose.com. Through Biddingo, invitations were sent to 1,766 businesses within five categories (Advertising, Audio Visual and Video Product, Consulting Services – Communications, Consulting Services – Other, Photographic). There were 105 full document takers and 18 partial document takers. The item was also posted on LinkedIn, which resulted in 1,330 impressions, 115 engagements, and 86 clicks. Following the release of the RFP, the Airport hosted an optional pre-proposal conference and site tour on April 15, 2025. The presentation from the pre-proposal conference and site tour was posted to Biddingo as an addendum for interested parties that were unable to attend.

This memorandum will be posted on the City's Council Agenda website for the October 21, 2025 City Council meeting.

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

September 29, 2025

Subject: San José Mineta International Airport Marketing Strategy and Execution Services Agreements

Page 6

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND INPUT

Airport staff briefed the Airport Commission regarding this solicitation at its meeting on November 18, 2024. No commission recommendation or input were provided.

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. PP17-003, Agreements/Contracts (New or Amended) resulting in no physical changes to the environment.

PUBLIC SUBSIDY REPORTING

This item does not include a public subsidy as defined in section 53083 or 53083.1 of the California Government Code or the City's Open Government Resolution.

/s/

Mukesh (Mookie) Patel, C.M.
Director of Aviation

The principal author of this memorandum is Jill Stone, Marketing Manager, Airport Department. For questions, please contact Scott Wintner, Deputy Director of Aviation, Marketing and Communications, Airport Department at swintner@sjc.org or (408) 392-3690.