



# MEMORANDUM

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GPA DIVISION

TO: Amadeo Saenz, Jr., P.E.

DATE: June 8, 2010

FROM: Steven E. Simmons, P.E. *SES*

SUBJECT: Ad Council

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The committee formulated to address agency advertising program activity with respect to Sunset Review Recommendation Item 3.4 has met to discuss the planning and direction of these areas. This effort has led to a recommendation to establish an internal Ad Council to coordinate the agency's major marketing campaigns, excluding travel/tourism related programs under the guidance of the Office of the Governor Economic Development and Tourism. I support this approach and recommend approval of this plan.

Members of the Ad Council will include Division Directors from the Government and Public Affairs Division (GPA), Environmental Affairs Division, Travel Information Division, Traffic Operations Division, Turnpike Authority Division, General Services Division (GSD) and one district representative. Coby Chase will serve as the executive sponsor of the Ad Council and will arrange briefings for the Administration in a similar fashion as Judy Skeen, Director of the Technology Services Division, does in her role on the Information Resource Council.

The Ad Council will establish a quarterly meeting schedule. At these meetings, representatives from appropriate districts, divisions, offices, and regions (D/D/O/Rs) will appear before the Council to present proposed campaign programs and seek approval before proceeding. To guide efforts in this oversight role, the committee has outlined the roles and responsibilities of the Ad Council as noted below:

- Develop an agency-wide plan of action to ensure coordination of marketing efforts;
- Establish standards and protocols for campaigns and media events;
- Establish thresholds for those advertising campaign efforts that must be reviewed by the Ad Council;
- Serve as central repository of advertising activities and expenditures;
- Maintain master calendar (registry) of advertising activities in order to be aware of activities and identify opportunities for leveraging media buys;
- Capture data and display marketing plans by:
  - types of events
  - media buys
  - media vendors
  - target audiences/markets
  - ad schedules
  - press release schedules
  - added value approaches;
- Oversee the selection and use of a pool of advertising vendors for use by all of TxDOT;

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- Review and approve initial marketing concepts for major statewide campaigns and review at key milestones;
- Assist, as needed, responsible D/D/O/R program managers with negotiation and selection of advertising vendor(s) for major campaigns;
- Contract for independent assessment of best advertising and marketing practices to assist in guiding agency campaigns and establish benchmarks for evaluating efforts;
- Contract for independent survey assessments of marketing results at the conclusion of a campaign through nationally recognized research institutions;
- Periodically report status of activities to the Administration.

Currently, GPA is working with staff from GSD and proposed members of the Ad Council to initiate a formal Request for Proposal solicitation to establish a pre-approved pool of vendors for agency marketing and advertising initiatives. We expect to have the new purchase orders in place by the first part of 2011.

We recommend that the Community Relations section of GPA assist the Council with their administrative duties within current FTE staffing levels assigned to that division, as well as provide program support in administering the blanket purchase orders for the pooled vendors, assisting the D/D/O/Rs in selecting the best vendor for a particular project, etc. We also recommend that GPA staff collect and house agency marketing expenditure data to ensure we are able to respond to inquiries in a timely manner.

I believe this approach will preserve the unique creative nature of our successful campaigns, establish a recognizable and consistent brand image for the department, result in cost-efficiencies, and address the recommendations in the Sunset Advisory Report.

I am available to discuss at your convenience.

#### Attachment

cc: Carol Rawson, P.E., Director, Traffic Operations Division, TxDOT  
Dianna F. Noble, Director, Environmental Affairs Division, TxDOT  
Doris Howdeshell, Director, Travel Information Division, TxDOT  
Mark E. Tomlinson, Director, Turnpike Authority Division, TxDOT  
~~Goby Chase, Director, Government and Public Affairs Division, TxDOT~~  
Scott D. Burford, Director, General Services Division, TxDOT