



**GENERAL COMMUNICATION
SUPPORT SERVICES**

City of Hercules

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COVER LETTER

Thank you for the opportunity to partner with the City of Hercules once again for your ongoing communications support services. It has been a privilege to work alongside your team as a trusted partner since 2022. This updated proposal maintains the same core retainer scope we have successfully executed over the past three years; while introducing a few flexible, tailored options should you require extra support for upcoming special projects.

As you are aware, Tripepi Smith brings together a diverse team of more than 70 communication professionals. Our agency is large enough to offer specialized expertise for any challenge, yet agile enough to remain highly responsive to your day-to-day needs. Because our team spans a wide range of experience levels and specialized skill sets—from graphic design and videography to strategic writing and social media management—we can seamlessly match the perfect resource to every task. This internal variety allows us to move quickly, keep engagement costs efficient, and tell your city's complete story across multiple mediums under one roof.

Tripepi Smith has built a proven track record of helping public agencies throughout California effectively connect with their communities. The insights we gather from our extensive statewide network directly benefit our city partners. We pride ourselves on offering an unmatched depth and diversity of municipal communication experience, allowing us to continuously apply real-world lessons and best practices to our daily work with Hercules.

We are excited about the prospect of continuing our collaboration and helping to share the story of Hercules with your residents, businesses, and visitors.

Regards,



Ryder Todd Smith

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PROPOSED SCOPE OF RETAINER

Bi-Weekly Check-In Calls & Content Planning

To coordinate our efforts with City Staff and sustain momentum on projects, Tripepi Smith will schedule a recurring, 30-minute bi-weekly phone call that will include a City-designated lead for our engagement. These calls will help drive content planning for press releases, social media posts and stories as well as any additional needs that may arise. This will be a working call during which Tripepi Smith will manage an agenda and provide notes for each call. After each call, the client will receive an action summary email about decisions made on the phone call and related action steps. We will produce work, such as article drafts, in a shared workspace where the City can see our progress in real time and provide instant feedback as needed. These tools allow for enhanced collaboration and expedite the production process.

Social Media Management

Content Creation: Social media content creation involves: planning, fact-checking, sourcing graphics, grammar checking and scheduling the post. Tripepi Smith will create up to three (3) posts per week over the course of a month (or generally 12 a month) and distribute them on up to five (5) platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, Nextdoor).

Council Agenda Monitoring: Our work also includes reviewing upcoming council agendas to develop additional ideas worthy of social media or press releases.

News Articles & Press Releases

Tripepi Smith can draft news articles, press releases and/or official statements, which are typically up to five hundred (500) words in length. The City would direct the allocation of stories with Tripepi Smith's suggestions, making internal subject matter experts available to aid the development of the stories when needed. Additionally, this assumes the City would provide a media and external agencies notification list for use by Tripepi Smith where a press release scenario is desired. The City would also facilitate timely approval of quotes in the release when connected with City Staff or City Councilmembers.

Monthly Dashboard Metrics Report

Each month, Tripepi Smith will provide a summary report of the basic metrics (reach, posts, engagement, etc.) related to City-controlled social media platforms and other key metrics if available, such as website visits and e-newsletter platform metrics. This will help us evaluate the success of our efforts as well as serve as an ongoing feedback mechanism for gathering valuable insights that can help inform ongoing communication strategy.

Quarterly Communications Calendar Planning Sessions

The main goal during these in-person meetings is that each department identifies key communication opportunities and wins to celebrate in the next 6-12 months. We document all this into a shared spreadsheet/editorial calendar that can then serve as a roadmap for the organization to track communication opportunities—or to hand off to the communications team to execute. The exercise breaks down barriers between departments and often helps senior staff recognize communication opportunities they were simply unaware of before. The process also includes Tripepi Smith preparing and giving a presentation that covers notable communication wins to review what has worked well. We conduct these meetings on a quarterly process to refresh our 12-month calendar and stay apprised of the upcoming communication priorities. Additionally, Tripepi Smith will curate a content calendar with staff that can be shared with media contacts.

COST ESTIMATE

Service/Deliverable	Retainer Scope
<u>Project Management</u>	
Conduct bi-weekly client check-in calls, provide check-in call recap outlining action items and deadlines, advise on media relations and strategy	Max. of 30 minutes per call
<u>Social Media Management</u>	
Create and publish social media post content.	3 posts/week
Monitor social media platforms.	Social media graphic design included
Council Agenda Review to mine opportunities for social media	Twice a week social media monitoring
<u>Press Releases</u>	
Create and publish press releases and/or website news articles	1 press release or news article per month
<u>Metrics Reporting</u>	
Produce regular report on key performance metrics for external communication channels: social media, email, etc.	1 report per month (PDF file)
<u>Quarterly Strategic Communications Planning</u>	
In-person quarterly meeting with Dept. heads to plan next year of communication opportunities	1 meeting every 3 months Max. of 2 hours per meeting
Keeping centralized "Content Calendar" updated throughout the year for staff's reference	Via Google Sheets
Total Retainer Monthly Cost	\$ 7,370.00

Service/Deliverable	Ad-Hoc Scope
<u>Annual Report (Ad-hoc)</u>	
Create 12-page report showcasing city's annual accomplishments	Content Provided by the City Includes 2 drafts and graphic design. Does NOT include printing/mailing
Total Ad-Hoc Cost	\$6,900.00
Total Annual Cost	\$95,340.00

Should Hercules determine Tripepi Smith is the most qualified and responsive vendor, but has a budget number that it must hit, then Tripepi Smith remains open to collaborating to narrow the scope engagement or refine our understanding of the scope needs and will modify our pricing accordingly.

As-Needed Services

Tripepi Smith will apply the following standard hourly rates and related fees for any authorized as-needed (Time & Materials) work. Such work must be clearly authorized in writing before proceeding.

2025-26 Hourly Rates	Standard	Reduced Retainer
Principal	\$380	\$315
Director	\$265	\$225
Art/Creative Director	\$265	\$225
Senior Business Analyst	\$205	\$180
Business Analyst	\$150	\$125
Junior Business Analyst	\$115	\$100
Senior Videographer/Animator	\$205	\$175
Senior Photographer	\$175	\$150
Videographer/Photographer	\$140	\$120
Junior Videographer/Photographer	\$115	\$100
Senior Graphic Designer	\$195	\$165
Graphic Designer	\$140	\$120
Junior Graphic Designer	\$115	\$100
Web Developer	\$210	\$185
Junior Web Developer	\$115	\$100
Drone Operator	\$205	\$180
Council Chamber A/V Operator	\$115	\$100

Invoicing & Payment Terms

At Tripepi Smith, we bill on either a Retainer, Fixed Fee or Time & Materials basis, with each billing type following its own payment schedule. Regardless, terms are Net 30 days.

- Fixed Fee work is billed upon defined milestones.
- Time & Materials work is billed in 15-minute increments (i.e. 4.0, 1.25, 6.5 or 0.75 hours) at the end of the month in which work is done.
- Retainer work is billed on the 15th of each month.

Other Cost Information

Tripepi Smith has related service fees that may come up during our engagement that we want to tell you about.

Annual Increase

Tripepi Smith will increase the hourly rates and retainer fees for all resources by 5% or the national CPI index—whichever is higher—each year on the anniversary of the contract, starting on the first anniversary of any contract when the contract duration is longer than one year. Otherwise, new rates will be negotiated with each new contract.

Retainer Discount


When a client's retainer exceeds \$7,500 per month, they gain access to our reduced retainer rates.

Travel Costs

Travel costs must be pre-authorized and then will be reimbursed by the client for any requested travel to complete a requested scope of work. Travel costs may include airfare, lodging, car rentals and gas. Additionally, when client work requires that we be onsite, we will invoice for a resource's travel time at 50% of the resource's hourly rate.

Equipment Costs

Tripepi Smith offers some services that require equipment, such as drone operations and video production. As such, in those cases, the following rates apply:

	Half Day (Under 4 Hours)	Full Day (4+ Hours)
 Video	\$450	\$650
 Drone	\$550 – Flat Fee	

Please note that A/V equipment fees are based on the amount and type of equipment required, with pricing tailored to the specifics of each event.

Music and Video Licensing

Sometimes, the client will want Tripepi Smith to apply music or use stock imagery/video while producing video. In these cases, we will need to apply licensing fees of approximately \$100 per song and \$200 if we use stock video imagery. This will provide a license for the use of the music and video footage to Tripepi Smith and its clients.

Service Fees

Tripepi Smith prefers that clients pay service providers directly to avoid unnecessary administrative costs. You should also know, however, that we have no economic interest in service providers, unless otherwise specified in this proposal.

If a client asks Tripepi Smith to pay for a service provider bill, we will apply a 10% agency fee to the reimbursement expense. Typical service fees include, but are not limited to: print, mailing, digital advertising, media placements, voiceovers, translations and closed captions.

Exclusive Access

Tripepi Smith has access to entities that may be relevant to our engagement. These partnerships allow Tripepi Smith to offer clients extra media reach or additional services at partner pricing.



Local Information Network of Knowledge (LINK): www.LocalInfoNetwork.com – A community forum for local government professionals in California to discover and share resources, policies, sample work products, best practices and more.



PublicCEO: www.PublicCEO.com – Digital news about public affairs, reaching over 17,500 California government executives through a daily podcast, job board, video podcast and more.



Civic Business Journal: www.CivicBusinessJournal.com – Digital interest stories on the people, companies and solutions that make local government in California more effective.



FlashVote: www.FlashVote.com – Statistically valid surveying that helps leaders make decisions.

- Disclaimer: Tripepi Smith President Ryder Todd Smith is an investor in FlashVote.



Tripepi Smith Talent Solutions: www.TSTalentSolutions.com – A multifaceted recruitment consultancy service, combining local government access with communications to advance talent quests and build culture warriors.



Meltwater: www.TripepiSmith.com/Media-Intelligence – An enterprise-class, comprehensive media monitoring solution that is best combined with Tripepi Smith's analytics team.