
E L M H U R S T P A R K D I S T R I C T
B O A R D O F P A R K C O M M I S S I O N E R S
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: June 23, 2025

TO: Board of Park Commissioners

FROM: James W. Rogers, Executive Director
Kari Felkamp, Director of Marketing & Communications

RE: REBRANDING FIRM CONTRACT

ISSUE

With the passage of the referendum and plans moving forward for a new Wagner Community Center and other park upgrades, the District is in an ideal position to refresh and reintroduce itself to the community through its brand identity.

DISCUSSION

The Elmhurst Park District takes great pride in its 105-year legacy but also understands the need to grow and adapt to remain relevant and connected to the community it serves. The current logo, introduced in 1999 during the District's 80th anniversary, has represented us well for the past 25 years. However, it no longer captures the spirit of who we are today – our culture, our energy, or the vibrant community we are proud to serve.

Although a new logo is proposed, a logo is just a graphic representation of the District's brand. Branding is much more than a graphic – it's how people feel when they see our name, visit our parks, or interact with staff. It's the message we share about who we are and where we're headed.

A fresh, authentic brand will help the District strengthen its connections with the community, better communicate our values, and ensure a consistent look and feel across everything we do – from signs and brochures to the website and social media. It's about creating a visual identity that matches the exceptional experiences we deliver every day. This is an exciting and timely step forward for the Park District and staff are confident it will help position the District for continued success in the next 100 years.

To guide this important initiative, staff recommends hiring an experienced branding and design firm experienced with working with public agencies, particularly park districts. Therefore, a formal request for proposals (RFP) was issued, and 30 firms submitted responses. Each proposal was carefully reviewed by the Selection Team, with input from Executive Director Rogers, based on a range of criteria, including experience with public sector branding, creative approach, understanding of our goals, and proposed methodology. Following a thorough evaluation and interviews with top candidates, Destination by Design stood out as the best fit for the District.

With a strong track record of successful rebranding projects for park districts and municipalities, Destination by Design (DbD) impressed the Selection Team with their collaborative process, creative vision, and understanding of community engagement. Their project approach consists of a multi-phase process that will include stakeholder engagement from the community, Board and staff, as illustrated in the attached materials.

Based on references from organizations that worked with DbD and a review of past projects, staff is confident DbD will provide the expertise and fresh perspective needed to craft a brand identity that reflects who we are and where we are headed. Staff looks forward to working with DbD to bring the District's vision to life and create a brand that will inspire and resonate with generations to come.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Park Commissioners award the contract for rebranding to Destination by Design for \$30,000 and authorize the Executive Director to execute said contract.

Thank you.

Attachments: Firm Selection Process
Destination by Design Proposal
Visual Identity Process

Firm Selection Process

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Staff developed the Branding and Logo Design Services Request for Proposals (RFP) to outline the project goals and scope, proposal submittal requirements, and firm selection process. By conducting an RFP process, all interested firms had access to the comprehensive proposal requirements and the opportunity to submit a proposal. On April 14, 2025, staff posted the RFP and by the submittal deadline of April 28, 2025, a total of 56 firms had requested the RFP and 30 firms had submitted proposals.

Firm Proposal Evaluation and Interviews

The Rebranding Firm Selection Team included members of the marketing team. The Selection Team members reviewed and analyzed the firms' proposals independently using the following criteria outlined in the RFP:

- Creativity & Design Expertise (40%) – Strength of portfolio and past work.
- Understanding of Community & Park District Values (20%) – Ability to align branding with the District's mission and community identity.
- Budget & Value (20%) – Cost-effectiveness and value of proposed services.
- Stakeholder Engagement Approach (10%) – Strategy for involving key stakeholders in the design process.
- Experience & References (10%) – Demonstrated success on similar projects.

After the Selection Team met and discussed which firms satisfactorily met the above criteria, members agreed that five (5) firms should continue in the selection process. The Selection Team interviewed the firms on May 14, 15 and 16, 2025 and concurred that Destination by Design (DbD) was the best fit for the project and District. The Selection Team then had a follow-up interview to include Executive Director Rogers who confirmed that DbD was the best fit. Please see attachments A and B for DbD's proposal and Visual Identity Process.

Review of Proposed Fees

DbD's proposal outlined a \$30,000 project tailored to maximize impact for the Elmhurst Park District within the established budget. The firm's proposed fee includes the following:

- **Task 1: Brand Assessment & Strategy** (\$15,000). Project initiation and management, focused discovery and stakeholder engagement, brand strategy work session, draft brand strategy, and discovery presentation.
- **Task 2: Logo and Visual Identity Development** (\$15,000). Creative direction workshop, logo design creative process, brand manual, creative deliverables.

Firm Overview, including Qualifications, Scope of Work, and References

Recommended Firm Overview and Qualifications

DbD is a multi-disciplinary placemaking and marketing firm. They specialize in economic development strategies that increase visibility and enhance quality of life. Their team collaborates to create the places you love by developing and promoting vibrant Main Streets and destination-quality parks, trails, and recreation areas.

For over a decade, they have partnered with communities to develop and leverage assets for sustainable growth, while providing branding solutions to tell their stories.

Their communications division takes a hands-on approach, working closely with communities and facilitating a process to help them discover their authentic identity. Beginning with boots on the ground, DbD engages stakeholders, performs market research, and extracts insights to shape a community-led vision for the brand.

The creative team then develops a strategy to serve as the cornerstone for all marketing and communication efforts. By crafting intentional brand language – including positioning, promise, voice, and taglines – they ensure cohesive identity and messaging.

Their collaborative, multidisciplinary approach results in distinctive visual solutions, increased public engagement, and innovative end products for communities and destinations nationwide.

Scope of Work

Dbd will be responsible for:

- Conducting stakeholder engagement to understand community values and the District's brand identity needs.
- Presenting multiple design concepts and refining based on feedback.
- Developing a new logo that reflects the District's history; current mission, vision, and values; and community priorities.
- Providing comprehensive brand guidelines, including logo usage, color palette, typography, and applications across digital and print media.
- Delivering digital assets in multiple formats for use across various platforms. The new logo will be used on facility and park signage, fleet vehicles, apparel, web, and more.
- Ensuring all designs comply with accessibility best practices.

References

References received from organizations/individuals that have worked with DbD were positive and included the following feedback:

- I've been so thankful for the DbD team. When we went into this work there was a part of me that had cautious expectations for how they would approach the work and in turn what the deliverables would be. But as promised, they approached the work with our best interests in mind and really listened to everyone they met and talked with.

- They nailed the brand framework in a way I never could have imagined.
- The team was both professional and creative. They did a great job and responsive to our input.
- Everyone we've worked with has been top notch.
- I was pleased with the team and the outcome.
- The team was responsive and provided good communication.
- They're professional, they deliver, they care about the work they do and in our experience, care that they produce authentic products. We're a place where lots of people and organizations like to tell us who we should be. DbD gave us the space to tell our story and brought that story to life.
- Engagement is excellent and timelines followed.