

STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

1100 Patricia Blvd. | Prince George, BC, Canada V2L 3V9 | www.princegeorge.ca

DATE: June 30, 2022

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Walter Babicz, City Manager

SUBJECT: City Brand Project

ATTACHMENT(S): None

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated June 30, 2022, from the City Manager titled, "City Brand Project".

PURPOSE:

To provide Council with information regarding a City brand project being undertaken by the Communications division.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Prince George has a logo, as shown on the top of this report. The Y-shaped base of the logo signifies the convergence or confluence of rivers, railways, and highways, and the fraise accentuates the importance of the confluence and its hub-and-spoke shape symbolizes Prince George as a hub city in our region.

However, the City of Prince George does not have a brand. Brands represent people's perceptions and feelings about a product, service or organization. The value of a strong brand is its power to capture consumer preference and loyalty. The logo is one recognizable piece of a brand but a brand is much more than a logo.

Businesses are keenly aware of their image, and work to manage their brand. However, a brand is not just for marketing purposes for companies - cities can benefit from an effective branding strategy as well. A brand for our city is not just about who we are, but also who we want to be. It sets a tone, a look, and a direction for the city's communications and actions. The City's brand would be evident in visual things like reports, websites, and signage, but it could also be apparent in the tone used in reports, the website, and even social media.

For example, Tourism Prince George has a brand that says something to prospective visitors about why they should visit Prince George. According to Tourism Prince George, Prince George is a Basecamp. So, when those visitors arrive and when they choose to live here, there should be a connection between the tourism brand that got them here and the look and feel of the City's brand.

Creating a city brand can provide dividends. The City's brand would be for our residents and businesses and would help with our identity and community pride. It is intended to help shape and promote growth and revitalization. In addition, defining and extending the City's brand personality,

brand promise, and brand look will assist administration in the production of communication materials, to be used by all divisions to ensure a consistent look and voice for the City of Prince George. The brand project can be broken down into the following two phases:

Phase One

The work in Phase one is operational in nature to provide staff with the guidance needed to ensure consistent voice from the City in our communications. Phase one of the project will begin with the assistance of a local brand professional. We have started with some research of what already exists in our community such as the Tourism PG brand and work from the City's economic development division and comments on hundreds of social media posts and comments on our page and other community pages.

The next steps in this phase are:

- a community survey on what we love most about our city,
- community workshops, and
- social media conversations and polls.

Phase one will provide:

- A summary of the feedback on who our citizens think we are and what is best about PG.
- A brand identity including proposed language, brand story, and brand personality.

Administration will report back to Council at the conclusion of phase one regarding a proposed brand identity.

Phase Two

Subject to Council's direction, phase two will begin in 2023 and will provide a brand strategy with objectives and actions to further develop the brand.

Phase two will contain some action items that may have budget implications, and accordingly will be brought back to Council for approval before initiating. The budget items can be things like replacement of signage, public benches, or public artwork. Those items are optional and can be phased in over time or as items (like signs or park benches) are in need of replacement. There are many non-budget items that will come from phase two such as the images we use on the website, how we tell our story of Prince George, or the template for the annual report.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

A clearly defined city brand contributes to Council's values of Civic Pride and Vitality.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The consulting costs for phase one will be managed through the existing budget for the Communications division.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

This project could provide the City with a unified message, look and a personality that can help shape and promote growth, and be used in the development of communications resources.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Julie Rogers, Communications Manager
Meeting Date: July 11, 2022