



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

STAFF REPORT

To: Council
From: Director of Corporate Services
Subject: Courtenay Branding Update

File No.: 0620-20/1470-20
Date: April 26, 2023

PURPOSE:

To inform Council of the status of the Council strategic priority: City Branding Update.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Courtenay's current branding guidelines and associated templates were developed in 2014. These were the first-ever formal brand guidelines developed for the City. The 2014 branding guidelines and templates were limited in scope, and there are numerous categories of communication materials produced by the City that are either lacking formal guidelines or would benefit from an update, such as social media templates, pamphlets, forms, business cards, email signatures, council reports, and more.

Some current brand templates involve complex formatting which can require advanced software expertise, necessitating either additional support from the Communications Division or division staff time on material production. Through the brand update, time spent previously formatting templates can be dedicated to other priority work. The current limited branding guidelines have also resulted in inconsistent interpretation and application of the brand onto the wide variety of reports and publications produced by the City. There is also some overlap in the brand colours between Courtenay and other Comox Valley local governments.

The City's official crest was designed decades ago. Its complexity, colour, and detail make the crest difficult to interpret in digital and print form, particularly at small sizes. The "City of Courtenay" wordmark developed through the 2014 branding update to accompany the crest is prominently featured on the website banner, but does not visually connect with the official crest. Any adjustments to the official crest will focus on usability in print and communication platforms, and is not a re-envisioning of the City crest or identity.

As requested through Council's Strategic Priorities Update in 2022, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in December seeking submissions from qualified vendors for a refresh of the City's visual identity and branding. Following a thorough evaluation and scoring of the five proposals received, the City selected Trapeze Communications to support the City of Courtenay's branding update based on their project methodology and approach, their understanding of Courtenay's specific needs, and project budget.

DISCUSSION:

Following the award of the City Branding Project contract to Trapeze Communications, the consultant led a Branding Strategy Session in early March 2023 with staff from various City departments, to seek common ground on the City's vision for the future and how it could be expressed through an updated visual identity.

While the official City crest will be maintained, Trapeze will be preparing a simplified version of the crest to ensure it can be used more broadly and consistently across the City's many communications platforms and materials.

Trapeze will be providing the City with a more manageable and practical set of guidelines and templates from which to work with going forward, using a singular brand identity for consistency and simplicity. Elements will include updated typography, graphics, and colour palettes, and templates for a wide array of uses, including print advertisements, pamphlets, presentations, display boards, various handouts, and social media. The updated branding will also be essential prior to any major update or redesign of the City website in the future.

The roll-out of the updated branding will begin in early summer 2023.

A separate Communications Strategy project, also identified as a strategic priority of Council, will be launching in the coming weeks.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The total cost of the branding update is \$25,625, through the Corporate Services Department Communications Division. The budget for the branding update was \$25,000 which has been carried over from 2022. The remainder will be allocated from the Communications Division annual budget.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

The Communications Division is coordinating the branding update project and liaising with the consultant, senior leadership, and other departments/divisions as needed. Additional guidance on using the updated branding and templates will be provided to staff in advance of launching the updated branding. This brand update is one of the Communications Division's key projects for 2023.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

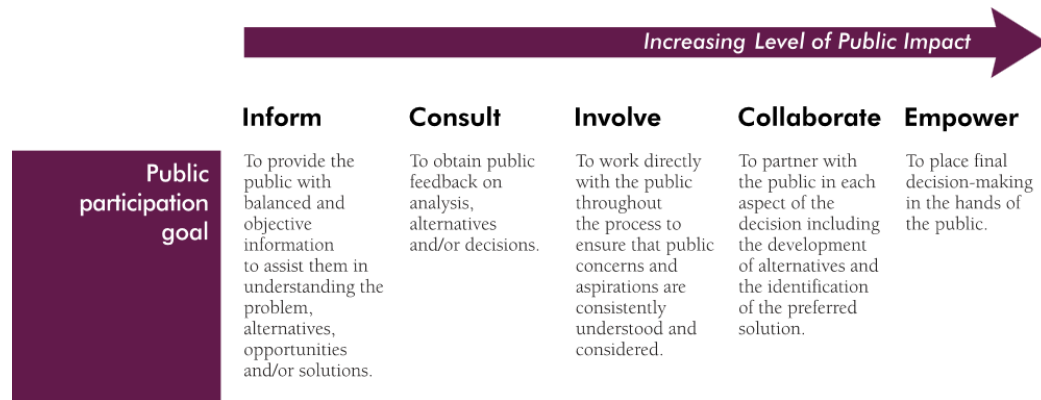
We focus on organizational and governance excellence

- Support and encourage initiatives to improve efficiencies
- Communicate appropriately with our community in all decisions we make

- **AREA OF CONTROL:** The policy, works and programming matters that fall within Council's jurisdictional authority to act
- ▲ **AREA OF INFLUENCE:** Matters that fall within shared or agreed jurisdiction between Council and another government or party
- **AREA OF CONCERN:** Matters of interest that are outside Council's jurisdictional authority to act

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Staff would inform the public based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation:



OPTIONS:

1. THAT Council receive the "Courtenay Branding Update" report.
2. THAT Council provide alternative direction to staff.

Prepared by: Anne Guillo, Manager of Communications

Reviewed by: Kate O'Connell, Director of Corporate Services

Concurrence: Geoff Garbutt, M.PI., MCIP, RPP, City Manager (CAO)