

REPORT

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: June 12, 2023

From: Lisa Spitale, CAO
File:

Item #: 2023-400

Subject: Potential process for updating the City’s corporate logo

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council endorse, in principle, the steps outlined in this report as a process to consider a new logo for the organization;

THAT Council direct staff to incorporate the logo project into their workplans, pending prioritization of projects that directly address Council’s strategic plan, and report back to Council on a proposed timeline for project launch.

PURPOSE

This report outlines a potential process and preliminary budget estimate for considering a new corporate brand (i.e. logo) for the City of New Westminster. A proposed approach for community engagement to help inform the development of a new logo is also outlined for Council’s consideration.

BACKGROUND

In July 2022, Council passed a motion resolving *“that the City of New Westminster begin the process to update the City’s logo and phase out the use of the ‘Royal City’ moniker in our branding.”* The motion further resolved that *“the City develop a plan to engage with the community in the development of a new brand identity that is inclusive and allows for collective pride in our City.”*

The City of New Westminster’s current “brand,” or logo, consists of a gold stylized crown centred atop the words “New Westminster” in a serif font. The logo was adopted

in 2008 for use across the organization and replaced the logo that was most often used at the time, which consisted of the City's Coat of Arms with the words "Corporation of the City of New Westminster" arranged around the perimeter.

The adoption of the current logo coincided with the City taking a more formal approach to corporate communications with the creation of a communications division, and a graphic standards guide was created to govern application of the crown logo across the organization. With this, the crown logo began to appear on corporate letterhead, City notices, entrance signage, digital billboard assets, City vehicles, and uniforms.

It is important to note that implementation of the current logo took place gradually, as vehicles were replaced, existing letterhead exhausted and uniforms required replacement, enabling many of the new branding costs to be absorbed within existing departmental budgets.

In 2009, the crown logo and icon itself received trademark with the Canadian Trademark Database, which legally formalized the City's ownership of the crown logo and icon, and its related use and application.

With respect to the use of the moniker 'Royal City' in City branding, while the City, as well as several local organizations and private businesses, have prominently featured this moniker, to staff's knowledge it has never been adopted for formal use by the City of New Westminster, and has been used infrequently in City publications and materials over the past decade. The moniker is no longer used in formal City communications or messaging.

DISCUSSION

In response to the July 2022 Council motion, staff have developed a potential process for community engagement and development of a new City logo. The proposed steps are outlined below:

- 1. Conduct RFP process to select a graphic designer to develop a new logo and help guide the process.**

An RFP will be issued at the start of the project to secure a graphic design firm to work with the City on the rebranding process. The scope of work will include participation and support in the community engagement process; the creation of logo concepts for consideration; final logo assets; and a comprehensive graphic standards guide to govern logo application.

- 2. Establish community working group to help guide the process and develop the broad community engagement approach**

Public Engagement staff recommend establishing a working group of diverse community members to engage in an ongoing, deeper way on the consideration of a

new logo for the City. Setting up a working group would be the first step towards engaging the broader community in the process, as the working group would also provide advice on and help shape the community-wide engagement process. A similar approach was taken by the New Westminster School District for the naming of Skwo:wech Elementary School, where a Re-naming Committee was struck and the committee helped guide a broader engagement process. Staff's understanding is the School District's process was positive and resulted in a satisfying outcome.

Also during this stage, staff recommend that local First Nations, as Rights and Title Holders to the land, should be included in some form of outreach. The Urban Indigenous community, which includes Metis and Inuit, should also be represented on the working group. Responding to Council's direction that a new City logo should be inclusive and allow for collective pride, this must also include respect for Indigenous history and ensure New Westminster is an open and welcoming city to Indigenous communities.

There is also a role for City staff to provide their perspectives to help inform consideration of a new logo, and staff are considered an affected group for this process.

3. Council check-in and endorsement of community-wide engagement approach

An interim report to Council would be planned in order to provide a progress report and present the proposed plans for community-wide engagement.

4. Broad, community-wide engagement on the city's identity

Given the proposed approach to establish a community working group to help plan the broad community engagement, staff do not want to presuppose the broad engagement approach. However, the working group would be asked to follow the principles outlined in the City's [Public Engagement Policy](#), such as providing both online and in-person engagement options.

5. Engagement reporting and report to Council

A report on the engagement findings would be prepared and provided to participants, Council and the public.

6. New logo development

Following the engagement process, it is expected that the graphic designer will incorporate the input received and bring forward preliminary themes and design direction for the new logo. Council would have the opportunity to provide feedback at this stage. A final logo design would then be developed for consideration by Council.

Estimated Timeline

Staff estimate that the steps outlined above would take approximately 12 months from project start to adoption by Council.

At this time, City staff are working to adjust existing workplans to incorporate Council’s strategic priorities. Following this process, staff will be able to report back to Council on when workplans could accommodate this rebranding project.

NEXT STEPS

Pending workplan adjustments to address implementation of Council’s strategic plan, staff will bring forward another Council report indicating when there would be staff capacity to undertake the rebranding project.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Pending Council’s direction, staff will include a budget request in the 2024 City Budget process for the logo development project costs.

Staff estimate the project expenses to consider a new corporate logo would be approximately \$40,000. This includes designer costs and direct expenses to deliver public engagement, such as honorariums for working group members.

In response to Council’s questions regarding costs to rebrand City assets – i.e. re-decal vehicles and signage, and replace uniforms, stationary, and other branded materials – staff estimate a total cost across City departments to be approximately \$450,000. It should be noted that these costs could be accommodated over time and within existing departmental budgets, with new products only ordered as existing stocks are depleted and/or replacements are required. This was the approach followed when the existing logo was introduced in 2008. For example, some City fleet vehicles continued to feature one of the previous logos until the vehicles reached the end of their service life and were replaced.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

Staff from the Corporate Communications and Public Engagement divisions would be the lead divisions in the work related to a potential new logo for the organization. Staff from Parks & Recreation, Office of the CAO, Engineering, and Climate Action, Planning and Development have been consulted on the proposed process and cost estimates.

OPTIONS

There are three options for Council's consideration:

1. THAT Council endorse, in principle, the steps outlined in this report as a process to consider a new logo for the organization;
2. THAT Council direct staff to incorporate the logo project into their workplans, pending prioritization of projects that directly address Council's strategic plan, and report back to Council on a proposed timeline for project launch.
3. Provide staff with alternate direction.

Staff recommend Options 1 and 2.

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:

Blair Fryer, Senior Manager, Economic Development and Communications

Jennifer Miller, Manager, Public Engagement

Ashleigh Young, Communications Officer

This report was reviewed by:

Christina Coolidge, Indigenous Relations Advisor

Robert J. McCullough, Manager, Museums and Heritage Services

Zaria Alibhai, Coordinator, Public Engagement and Communications

This report was approved by:

Lisa Leblanc, Acting CAO