



CITY OF MILPITAS AGENDA REPORT (AR)

Item Title:	Receive Report on the Community Identification and Brand Study Public Engagement and Outreach and Provide Direction on Community Mark/Logo
Category:	Community Development
Meeting Date:	8/17/2021
Staff Contact:	Charmaine Angelo, Public Information Officer, 408-586-3055
Recommendations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receive report on the Community Identification and Brand Study Public Engagement and Outreach.2. Provide direction to staff on the Community Mark/Logo for Citywide use.

Background:

In 2019, the City engaged the firm Articulate Solutions to conduct a Community Identification and Brand Study. The purpose of this Study was to understand the unique attributes and impressions of the City as seen through the lens of various groups during this time of transformation. The City's fast pace of growth has resulted in significant changes in demographics as the City welcomes new members to the community while nurturing those who have resided here for decades. The Study also provides an essential foundation for understanding the history, values, unique attributes, and overall personality of the City of Milpitas. The consultant team from Articulate Solutions was asked to develop a strong and modernized brand to support economic development, guide placemaking in the City, and complement the implementation of several other long-term planning initiatives.

Phase 1 Summary

The consultant team-initiated Phase 1 of the Brand Study in 2019 with a citywide tour of Milpitas and in-depth research into the history and socio-economic growth and development of the community. The consultant team engaged various stakeholders and target audiences, including staff, residents, businesses, non-profits, community partners, and other cities and regional partners, through focus group discussions, online surveys, and community meetings. Stakeholders were broadly categorized in the following groups:

Based on stakeholder input and the consultant team's research, the following key themes rose to the top:

1. **Diversity** was a theme that came up repeatedly in conversations and was the top word used to reflect Milpitas. The City of Milpitas includes a diverse mix of races, cultures, ages, and backgrounds. This spirit of integration and inclusiveness has been part of this community since its earliest days.
2. Milpitas is also a very **Friendly** community with the people of Milpitas being very friendly, down-to-earth, and welcoming.
3. Another key aspect of Milpitas is that it has always been a **Crossroads**. Main Street was once the main connecting road between Oakland and San Jose. The City is now located between two major freeways (I-680 and I-880) and between two major cities (San Jose and Fremont) in the heart of Silicon Valley. And the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) extension to Milpitas will provide a vital new connection between the South Bay, San Francisco, and East Bay.

In addition to these three top themes, the consultant also heard from the stakeholders that this is an exciting time of opportunity for Milpitas and that the history of the origins of the City is strongly woven into its fabric. Other top archetypes for the City's character included compassion, wholesomeness, and a progressive attitude. Stakeholders also identified the following unique attributes and key assets of the City: restaurants, shopping at the Great Mall, undeveloped hillsides, parks and open spaces, golf courses, good schools, and fun activities for families.

On May 19, 2020, Council provided staff direction to proceed with [Phase II of the Community Identification and Brand Study](#).

Based on Council direction, City staff and the consultant provided a presentation on the community mark/logo top contender options at the May 4th, 2021 meeting. In the presentation, staff also shared the various community outreach initiatives lined up to help encourage public engagement and input on the community mark that best represents the City of Milpitas.

At the May 4, 2021, meeting, Council provided preliminary feedback on the logos and directed staff to bring back the community mark/logo item at a later time. Council also provided direction to not pursue any work on updating the City seal.

On August 5, 2021, City staff presented the results of the Community Identification and Brand Study Public Engagement and Outreach. The presentation highlighted the community's preference for Alternative C. City Council provided staff direction to present qualitative community input associated with Alternative C at the next meeting. Additionally, staff was also asked to explore modifying the community mark to address City Council feedback associated with adjusting the execution of the rolling hills, improving the overall logo color scheme to make it more colorful, and replacing the visual representation of Milpitas' agricultural history.

Analysis:

This section provides information on the result of the Community Identification Public Engagement and Outreach. Staff is seeking Council direction on the presented Community Mark/Logo top contenders for Citywide use.

The top three contender community marks/logos are:



In order to gain an understanding of the opinions and sentiments of the community towards a new modernized brand, the City implemented a multi-pronged Public Engagement and Outreach program designed to reach various audience groups and segments in the City. This was done through identifying strategic venues, events and platforms that will allow the City to gather relevant input online and offline. It is important to note that various media outlets such as The Mercury News, Milpitas Beat and Milpitas Post featured the Community Identification and Brand Study initiative and encouraged the community to participate in the online survey. Additionally, an e-mail blast was sent to various stakeholder groups that include community-based organizations, businesses, City employees, Commissions, etc. to help get the word out about the study. City staff also worked closely with MUSD (Milpitas Unified School District) and the Santa Clara County Library District/Milpitas Library for further outreach. Lastly, information about the survey and in-person activities was shared across all City-owned online platforms.

For the month of July, the City capitalized on various communication tools to secure community feedback. Participants who cast their votes are comprised of residents (70%), people who work in Milpitas (20%), and “others” who represent people who work with the City as vendors or contractors, visitors, etc. (10%). Below are the total votes by initiative, which shows the undeniable trend that indicates the community’s consistent preference for Alternative C.

Initiative	Number of Respondents	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Open Townhall Online Survey	520	119	90	311
Senior Movie Night In-Person Outreach (July 9)	21	3	2	16
Senior Lunch Service	61	10	17	34
Sports Center	36	1	16	19
Performing Arts Concert (July 18)	30	2	8	20
Police Department Lobby	19	2	3	14
Fire Station 1 Lobby	29	2	19	8
Movies in the Park (July 23)	41	3	17	21
Beautify Milpitas (July 24)	14	2	5	7
Milpitas Library	245	37	87	121
Total	1016	181	264	571

Out of 1,016 community participants, more than half (571) selected Alternative C. Of the 571 community members, fifty qualitative comments were submitted. A majority of the comments reinforce the Milpitas community’s favorable reaction and positive association with Alternative C. Community members used various terms such as “superior,” “best,” “love,” “beautiful (harmony)”, and “meaningful” to describe Alternative C. Of the 50 submitted comments, four community members mentioned corn or corn fields. Another four comments were related to adding more color to the community mark.

Below are examples of the positive remarks about Alternative C:

- “When I think of a logo for a city, I'm thinking about what's going to look good & stay fresh 30 years from now. For me, Alternative C is the most like a current city logo. I'm impressed with how many different ideas and how much Milpitas culture it conveys in one logo.”
- “I Like how history is represented on Alternative C. Yes, make progress forward but never forget the past.”
- “Alternative C is the perfect community mark because it illustrates the scenic backdrop of the city, rich history, and family environment of Milpitas.”
- “I select Alternative C because the logo represents City of Milpitas well by all the following: Unity, High Tech, History, Family & Safety!”
- “Alternative C demonstrates a beautiful harmony between nature and the people who call Milpitas their home. Nature and People coming together!”
- “I believe a mix of the history Milpitas, as well as symbolizing growth and forward progress will best suit the current Milpitas logo (Alternative C).”
- “Alternative C ultimately gets the vote. The primary reasons are that it's compact, contains more grounded elements, and is more intuitive.”
- “Alternative C fits the city and community spirit the most.”

Below are suggested modifications to Alternative C:

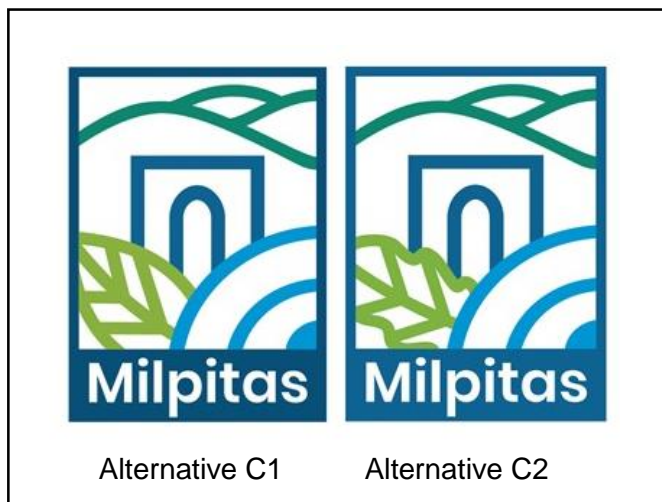
- “The hills: Right Side of the mountains should be a rolling hill, not mountains. Smooth out just the right mountain to a hill (shows diversity) Maybe change the green color to a different shade. Colors should be vibrant colors. Try the Wi-Fi a teal color or blue green.”
- “Suggest relooking at the Milpitas text font on Alternative C and possibly integrating more colors to indicate the diversity in our city.”
- “Even though Alternative C is my favorite, I like the colors of the other 2 logos, to show diversity. Can we incorporate more color?”
- “What about the corn? Milpitas grew corn. Corn in a laptop. Never forget where you came from.”
- “Milpitas means little corn fields. I'm surprised that wasn't incorporated into the logo.”
- “Milpitas means little cornfields in the Native tongue of the Ohlone Indians I believe. I wish a corn and stalk would have been incorporated in the new improved symbol. I believe it shows respect to the Natives that once inhabited this land as well show respect for the current diversity. My friends growing up in Milpitas still refer to the little cornfield”.
- “I'm not sure Wi-Fi is a great symbol for the city. What happens if technology evolves, or Wi-Fi falls out of favor for better wireless connectivity? I think something that represents the feel of our community, hopes for the future, and geography would be best.”
- “The only feedback I have is that in the logo the word Milpitas can be made slightly more colorful & brighter (Fuchsia, Yellow or Purple). Thank you.”

A complete report of the community input associated Alternative C comments can be found in the attachment.

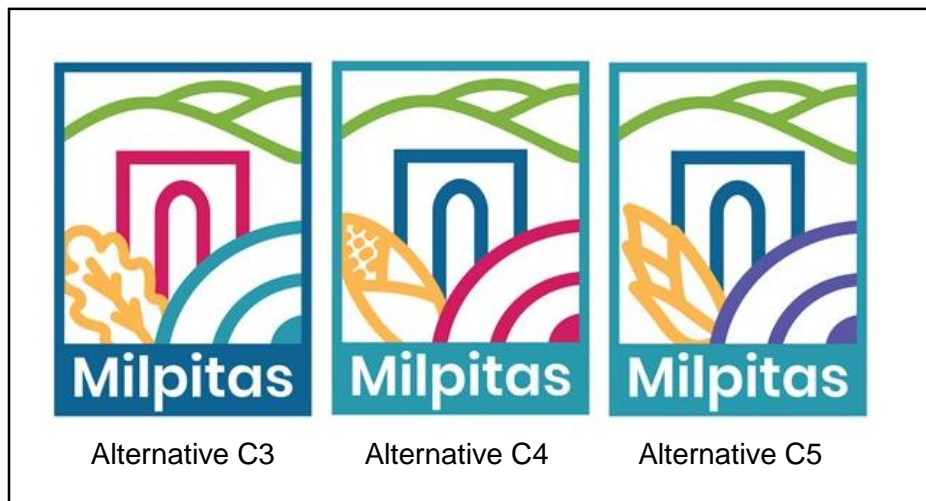
This section provides community mark updates on Alternative C based on City Council feedback at the August 5, 2021 meeting. City staff worked with the consultant team to address three specific themes: (1) improving the visual of the rolling hills, so that it doesn't look like a mountain; (2) adding more color to the community mark to make it more vibrant; and (3) including alternative elements to help represent Milpitas' agricultural history (i.e., corn or oak leaf). Staff is seeking Council direction on the updated Community Mark/Logo options for Citywide use.



Below are five revised community marks, All the Alternatives include an updated version of the rolling hills. Two Alternatives include an oak leaf (C2 and C3). Another two Alternatives feature a visual representation of corn (C4 and C5). Alternatives C3 to C5 include additional colors, compared to the original Option C and modified Alternatives C1 and C2, which have a blue and green color palette.



Alternatives C1 and C2 are recommended because the color scheme, combined with the various elements, provides a more focused and balanced logo. More importantly, the executions are very similar to the mark that the community selected.



Alternatives C3 to C5 are not recommended because the multicolored elements and various logo elements result in designs that are busy and not very cohesive. Also, these alternatives are very different from the original version presented to the community.

Additional Considerations

If the City Council decides to move forward with any of the updated community marks, the final logo will not be identical to the version that the community selected during the extensive public engagement and outreach process. However, alternatives C1 and C2 are very similar to the original concept C so another round of outreach will not be required. If any of the other alternatives are selected, a second round of public outreach is recommended.

Any additional changes or logo exploration will also require additional staff and consultant resources and will impact the timeline for the roll out of the new community mark.

Formalizing the City's Community Mark/Logo

Upon receiving Council direction on the community mark/logo for Citywide use, the consultant team will formalize the brand through the creation of a Style Guide. This will be a comprehensive document that will include a revised logo mark, color palette, recommended fonts, and other core brand elements. Once established, these guidelines will be applied to all City communications including business stationery, flyers, posters, newsletters, and other materials. A multi-phased approach will be pursued in the application of the new community mark/logo. This means that any future cost will not be fully funded by the City. Staff will be looking at grants, sponsorships, future CIP and development projects as well as funding through Main Street initiatives.

Using the Style Guide as a reference, the City's website design and City-owned social media accounts will be refreshed so that it aligns with the City's updated brand and other materials. Gateway and wayfinding signage are effective ways to create a sense of "place" that helps to define boundaries, boost community pride, welcome visitors, and drive business growth. A comprehensive plan for new gateway signage at key entry points as well as wayfinding signs to important landmarks would be a powerful way to reinforce the new City of Milpitas brand.

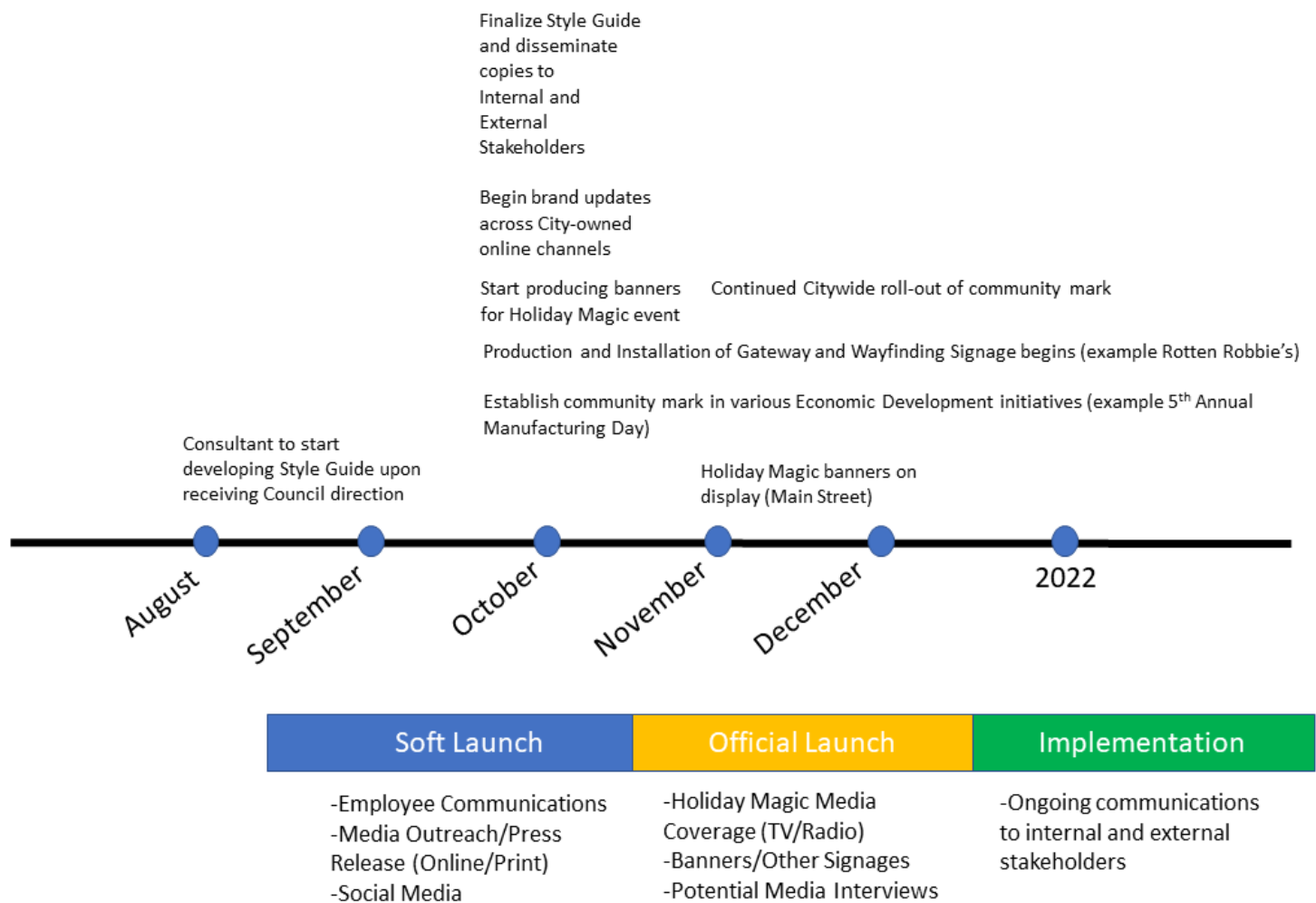
The new City brand will essentially provide a meaningful connection to existing residents and business community, attract potential home buyers and business investors, instill a sense of community pride and cohesion, and enhance economic vitality.

Tag Line/Slogan

City staff and the Consultant have expended time and effort into developing a modernized Milpitas brand. Equally important to the identification of a community mark/logo is the articulation of an authentic message that reflects the City's identity. Once the community mark/logo has been finalized, staff will evaluate options for tag lines, including potentially retaining existing ones such as "Crossroads of Silicon Valley" and "Gateway to Silicon Valley" or developing a new one which reflects the feedback received through the public engagement and outreach effort.

Proposed Timeline

The Consultant will need between 45 to 60 days to develop the Style Guide because the team will have to apply the community mark/logo to a variety of items. After securing City approval, the guide will be shared with City staff followed by external stakeholders. A soft launch will be implemented beginning October to help build momentum for the City's Holiday Magic event, which is where the new community mark will be unveiled to the public. A visual timeline that illustrates some of the initial launch elements can be found on the following page.



City Seal and The Minuteman

During the August 18, 2020 Council meeting, the City Council, at the request of Councilmember Phan directed City staff to include a discussion of “The Milpitas Minuteman” image when the Community Identification and Brand Study (Phase II) comes forward for Council discussion. Results from the Phase I study reveal that there is mixed feedback from the Milpitas community with regard to the Minuteman image.

Since any modifications to the seal will likely require extensive community outreach, staff requested for preliminary feedback from Council. At the May 4, 2021 meeting, Council did not ask staff to move forward with making any modifications to the City Seal.

Next Steps

Upon receiving Council direction on the community mark/logo designs, staff will work with the consultant to finalize the second part of the Phase II scope of work, which will include the following:

1. Creating a comprehensive communications template and style guide with guidelines and design templates for brand application to all City communications tools, to drive consistency, awareness and influence;
2. Refreshing the City website design to align with updated brand;
3. Developing a gateway and wayfinding signage guide to reinforce the new brand throughout the City and establish a sense of place and affiliation; and

4. Identifying other potential projects as needed in alignment with economic development and new development projects.

Policy Alternative:

Alternative: Do not move forward with applying any of the community mark/logo designs to a comprehensive communications template and style guide with guidelines and design templates, which will jumpstart the important work related to the City's overall placemaking strategy.

Pros: The City could divert the remaining consultant funds to other purposes.

Cons: This would delay the development of a strong and modern brand to attract economic development, support local economic recovery, enhance placemaking, and implement several long-term planning initiatives.

Reason not recommended: The community mark/logo signature will provide a meaningful connection to residents, local business owners, and visitors and instill a sense of community pride and boost economic performance. Phase II of the Study is timely since it is linked to the success of many other important long-term efforts. The consultant costs for Phase II have already been budgeted and encumbered. Using the next several months, as economic activity is expected to be in early recovery, developing a strong and modern brand will allow the City to be well positioned for the future as the development projects are complete, BART is operational, and the City facilitates local economic recovery.

Fiscal Impact:

There are no additional consultant costs for Phase II since these have already been encumbered. Any additional implementation costs will be brought forward separately as part of other projects and programs. Staff is looking at a phased rollout, which means that any future cost will not be fully funded by the City. Staff will be looking at grants, sponsorships, future CIP and development projects as well as funding through Main Street initiatives.

California Environmental Quality Act:

This action does not qualify as a "Project" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15378 as this action has no potential to result in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

Recommendations:

1. Receive report on the Community Identification and Brand Study (Phase II).
2. Provide direction to staff on the Community Mark/Logo for Citywide use.

Attachment:

1. Community Identification Logo Options (Phase II)
2. Public Engagement and Outreach Qualitative Community Input
3. Community Identification Updated Logo Options