

City of Muskegon Rebrand Project Summary

The City Commission has established a set of goals outlining a strategic direction for 2022-2027. One goal is to increase community connection by working to create a culture of mutual respect and trust between city personnel and the neighbors who are provided with city services. As the city began updating new communication policies, launching new communication tools such as community newsletters, and developing content for media outlets, a lack of consistent branding became apparent.

What's a brand?

A brand is a way to present your organization – something that makes you instantly recognizable and reminds your audience who you are. Your image. Your reputation. It's much more than just a logo. It includes both visual and non-visual aspects like written marketing messages, logos, websites, print materials, design themes, and other forms of communication. Ultimately, a brand is a feeling – one that represents our people and great city.

A strong government brand:

- Sets the tone for the community
- Is known as a trustworthy source of information and support
- Provides consistency
- Gives the municipality an identity

Why does the City of Muskegon need a rebrand?

The City of Muskegon has never had a brand. Over the past several decades the City has had over 20 variations of logos and graphics that have been used without guidance or consistency. The current City of Muskegon logo was created several decades ago and currently no brand guidelines, brand story, or brand kit exist.

One of the most important things the city can do to build trust is to be consistent. This means being consistent with our values, messaging, visuals, and overall brand identity.

Project budget and scope

To begin the rebranding process the city listed an Request for Proposals (RFP). Five firms turned in bids on time ranging from \$33,000-\$170,000. The City Commission approved a contract with Kindred Marketing Agency, a City of Muskegon marketing agency, for \$50,000 to complete the following items:

- **Development of a City of Muskegon logo and logo variations**
 - Sub logos for individual departments and divisions
 - Unique logo and badge creation for the City of Muskegon Police Department
 - Updated digital versions of Muskegon Fire Department logo and assets
- **Use of our West Michigan's Shoreline City tagline**
- **Brand Assets and Patterns**
- Written **Brand Story** capturing our city's personality and features, and several written marketing messages
- **Color Palette Creation**
 - Design a versatile color palette with high contrasting hues to provide the City with greater flexibility in creating branded material
 - Ensure that colors are high-visibility to adhere to literacy accessibility
- **Brand Guidelines**
 - Ensure the brand guidelines detail how the existing City of Muskegon brands (Trinity Health Arena, Western Market, Farmers Market etc) should work together
 - Ensure the brand guidelines detail how the city should use the Watch Muskegon brand assets alongside the new branding
 - Use standard, easy-to read fonts to improve literacy accessibility and ensure web fonts are selected

Campaign Launch

- Design template for stationery items such as business cards, nametags, etc.
- Integrate the brand into the city's website & social media
- Produce a professional video featuring the city
- Formulate a launch plan to roll out the rebranding campaign effectively in the following fiscal year (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)

Community Input Process

- Incorporate community feedback and engagement in the rebranding process to ensure inclusivity. Engage with stakeholders in the beginning of the rebranding process, prior to design, to determine major themes and tones to be used in the brand kit.
- Work alongside the City of Muskegon's Community Engagement team to gather intentional input from residents, business owners, youth, and organizations from all areas of the city.