



# **Corporate** NO: C408

# **Report** COUNCIL DATE: Dec. 14, 1998

## **COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE**

**TO: Mayor & Council**    **DATE: December 9, 1998**

**FROM: General Manager,**    **FILE: 0860-002**  
**Parks, Recreation & Culture**

**SUBJECT: Status Report on the Graphic Standards Project**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Council receive this status report.
2. As per the Commission's motion, the Department consult with the public on the logo component of the project.

## **BACKGROUND**

During the budget preparation process in 1996, staff in the Marketing Section of the Parks and Recreation Department and staff from the Information Systems section of the Finance and Technology Department jointly prepared a capital issue paper regarding a graphic standards project.

The project originated from research conducted the previous year when the Department developed a comprehensive 5 year marketing plan. As the largest provider of leisure services in Surrey, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture had outgrown ad hoc marketing efforts. The plan was a commitment to excellence; it acknowledged the importance of coordinated marketing efforts and included strategies to maximize awareness and usage of Department facilities, services and programs. Raising the profile of services and establishing consistency in the presentation of all communications materials was a primary goal.

The project was funded and a request for proposals to deliver this work was released in July of 1997. Parallel Strategies was awarded the contract and they commenced work in January 1998.

The contract has five phases including: research, design concepts, design development, implementation and training, and evaluation. The contract cost is approximately \$62,000. Two payments have been made to date

totaling \$21,800. In addition to the work plan outlined above, two of the key deliverables are a graphic standards manual and the creation of electronic templates for staff to use when preparing promotional materials.

During the design concept stage, it was recognized that the existing slogan/logo did not reflect the addition of "Culture" to the Department's name. After extensive consultation with key internal stakeholders, the Department Steering Committee managing the project brought a proposed new logo to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission in September. After further review of the Graphics Standards Project and the logo component, the Commission recommended that staff appear before Council to explain the project.

## **DISCUSSION:**

A *graphic standards* manual outlines formats for communication materials. It sets standards for typography, logo placement, size and color. It helps to maintain a level of quality and consistency that improves image, establishes identity with services and increases awareness.

The *electronic templates* will enable staff to select fonts and images from an electronic library and instantly place them in professional quality layouts. This process will cut the preparation time for a flyer from approximately 1 hour to 10 minutes, with more consistent results. For basic flyers, invitations and posters, any staff person with an equipped computer and some training will be able to do this work thus, relieving the Department graphic designers of these routine requests.

A *logo* is a creative platform, and serves as a visual image often without words that people instantly recognize and associate with certain products or groups. Successful examples are the Nike swoosh, the Nutrasweet swirl and the golden arches of McDonalds. These images are not always a literal interpretation of the product being promoted, and they are often enhanced or changed to reflect new trends or attract new markets.

The announcement of a Department name change during the early research stage of the Graphic Standards Project was the catalyst for pursuing a new logo. Logo design by a committee is not an easy task. The Department is very diverse and all of its entities can not be portrayed in one image. Each stakeholder potentially favors certain colors, shapes and styles. It was therefore a process of consensus building that took many weeks to bring the logo to the point of recommendation to Commission.

In recent years Council has stressed through strategic planning the need for a strong positive image for the City. The adoption of the City crest as a design standard fulfilled this corporate requirement. This project does not replace the City crest on business cards, letterhead or promotional materials. It will standardize its use. It has always been applied along with a Department logo.

Research for the 5 year marketing plan identified that there was a low level of awareness of the Department's programs and facilities. One of the key recommendations was the development of a consistent identity and image. It is timely to combine this new image with the development of graphic standards for the Department; the new logo profiles the new name and signals a change.

Increased marketing efforts and a professional image translate into improved visibility in the community, higher participation rates and increased revenues from our programs. In 1998 there has been a 100 % increase in the production of promotional materials by the marketing section. In combination with new programs and enhanced facilities these marketing efforts have helped the Department to achieve a significant increase in revenues. Without new resources we cannot sustain this growth unless we develop faster and more efficient ways to produce these materials. This project is the solution to this challenge.

Commission strongly supports the graphic standards and electronic template components of this project. There has been mixed reaction to the logo with a direction to staff to spend additional time to include public input in the logo development process.

Don Hunter, General Manager

Parks, Recreation and Culture

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