

## Marketing & Communications Strategic Plan: Foundation (2023 & 2024)

As methods, best practices, and trends for marketing and communications continue to evolve, it is important to establish a systematic approach to tackle the dynamic landscape.

The provided Marketing and Communications Strategic Plan shall serve as a clear course of action for the next two years that ensures the City is addressing current challenges while being prepared for potential changes in the field of marketing and communications. The objective of this Plan is to ensure the City is providing a high quality approach to its marketing and communications efforts that is effectively serving and promoting the City of West Chicago and its community.

### *About the Plan*

**Foundation** is the initial Strategic Plan component of a three-tiered Marketing and Communications Master Plan. The purpose of **Foundation** is to establish base from which the City can build upon in the subsequent components of the overall Master Plan.

Future components of the three-tiered Master Plan consist of **Build** and **Grow**, which will concentrate primarily on strengthening the City's brand and assisting with the community's planned growth outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The primary responsibility for executing the components of the Master Plan, including each Strategic Plan, lies with the Marketing and Communications Division, which will operate under the guidance of the City Administrator and the West Chicago City Council.

### *Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Initiatives*

The Strategic Plan is divided into two primary Strategic Priorities: Effective Communications and Strategic Marketing. Within each Priority, there are several Strategic Goals, each of which outlines a set of Strategic Initiatives that staff will need to implement over the next two years. These Initiatives are accompanied by clear objectives that outline the desired outcomes upon successful completion.

The following priorities, goals, initiatives, and outcomes will be organized in the following format.

#### A. Strategic Priority

1. Strategic Goal
  - a. Strategic Initiatives
    - i. Desired Outcome(s)

## A. Effective Communications

### 1. Empower additional City staff to assist with communications efforts

The City can empower additional staff to assist with its communications efforts by providing them with the necessary tools and resources. This includes providing access to relevant information and guidelines on how to use communications tools effectively in addition to clear policies for how to interact with the public on behalf of the City.

- a. Develop an organizational Communications Plan
  - i. Formulate guidelines that are applicable to most instances where staff members engage with the public as part of their job duties
  - ii. Institute an organizational culture that places a high priority on public communications and actively encourages all City staff to participate in the communications process
- b. Analyze and update communications policies
  - i. Confirm communications policies are relevant and effective with changing technologies and practices
  - ii. Establish clear policies that prevent misunderstandings and ensures staff are communicating effectively and efficiently with the public

## 2. Position the City as the primary source of community information

The City can build trust and improve relationships with its residents by being a reliable and trustworthy source of community information. Ensuring that community information is available on multiple secure platforms can increase transparency, which can further enhance trust and community engagement.

- a. Register the City's website as a government (.gov) domain
  - i. Reinforce the City as a trusted source for information by validating the City website as an official government website
  - ii. Increase cyber security for the City and its residents
  - iii. Increase visibility and discoverability of the City's offered programs and services
- b. Increase the City's digital presence and footprint
  - i. Measure the impact of the City's digital outreach by actively monitoring and analyzing relevant statistical data
  - ii. Improve the City's digital footprint through an established strategy
- c. Increase promotion of events, services, and programs offered by community and intergovernmental partners
  - i. Define community and intergovernmental partner organizations
  - ii. Set up guidelines and submission requirements for community and intergovernmental partners to provide content on the City's platforms
  - iii. Increase awareness of partner events, programs, and services

## 3. Enhance the user experience of the City's website

Enhancing the user experience of the City's website would make the website more user-friendly and intuitive for visitors, making it easier for them to find the information and services they need on the website. This can be achieved by improving the design and layout of current functions, adding functions that further empower residents to conduct business online with the City, and ensuring that it is accessible to all users, including those with disabilities.

- a. Develop and implement a Website Accessibility and ADA Compliance Plan
  - i. Execute a full website audit to evaluate current status of website content and its accessibility
  - ii. Formulate an Implementation Plan that outlines strategies that ensures all current and future web content is accessible and available to all members of the public
- b. Enhance the calendar and meeting records management systems on the City's website
  - i. Integrate a calendar tool that can be efficiently managed by multiple staff members and has an aesthetically pleasing front-end design for website visitors

- ii. Optimize file management processes on the City website, and integrate front-end design upgrades to improve usability for end-users
  - iii. Ensure that frequently utilized website systems' front-end designs comply with the Website Accessibility and ADA Compliance Plan
- c. Conduct a Feasibility Study to determine practicality of installing a digital help desk and a service request system on the City's website
  - i. Evaluate whether implementing a digital help desk and service request platform would be advantageous for both the organization and the community
  - ii. Assess the feasibility of adding new platforms and whether they can be effectively managed using the City's current content management system (CMS) and organizational staff

## B. Strategic Marketing

### 1. Evaluate West Chicago's visual brand

It is important to periodically assess how the City's visual brand is perceived by its residents, visitors, and stakeholders, and whether it accurately reflects the City's values, culture, and unique offerings. By conducting a thorough analysis, the City can make informed decisions about any necessary updates or revisions to its visual brand, ensuring that it effectively communicates the City's identity and resonates with its audience. This can help to build stronger connections between the City and its constituents, foster community pride, and attract new investment and visitors.

- a. Conduct a Visual Branding Study
  - i. Perform an objective analysis of the City's existing visual brand identity to develop recommendations for improvement, if necessary
- b. Develop an Implementation Plan for City's Wayfinding Master Plan
  - i. Design an implementation plan that will progressively achieve the City's Wayfinding Master Plan incrementally
  - ii. Ensure that the design elements in the current Wayfinding Master Plan accurately represent the City's visual brand identity

### 2. Promote West Chicago as a great place to live, work, and visit

Through carefully thought out strategies the City can best promote itself as a great place to live, work and visit. Attracting more visitors boosts the local economy; building and promoting a good reputation attracts new residents; and promoting the city as an attractive investment encourages development. Additionally, a city that is promoted and celebrated can help build civic pride and a sense of community with residents.

- a. Develop a Community Place Marketing Strategy
  - i. Improve marketing materials and content used to promote community-based initiatives
  - ii. Establish a strategy that highlights the City's positive reputation to attract new residents and cultivate civic pride among current residents
- b. Develop an Economic Development Place Marketing Strategy
  - i. Merge the City's website and economic development micro-site to enhance visibility and increase traffic

- ii. Improve economic development marketing materials and verify that economic development information is up-to-date for future marketing initiatives and campaigns
  - iii. Establish a strategy that actively promotes the City as an attractive investment opportunity for development
- c. Develop a Downtown Place Marketing Strategy
  - i. Establish a strategy that highlights the downtown's events, attractions, and businesses while presenting it as a lively place to visit and conduct business
- d. Develop a Public Arts Master Plan
  - i. Increase community pride and celebrate local culture through the display of public art
  - ii. Improve long-term management and planning of public art
  - iii. Ensure that public art harmonizes with the buildings, streetscapes, and open spaces of the City

|   | Jan      | Feb      | Mar | Apr      | May      | Jun | Jul      | Aug      | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---|----------|----------|-----|----------|----------|-----|----------|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| A.1.a: Develop an organizational Communications Plan  | Planning | Planning |     |          |          |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| A.1.b.: Analyze and update communications policies  |          |          |     |          |          |     | Planning | Planning |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| A.2.a: Register the City's website as a government (.gov) domain  |          |          |     | Planning | Planning |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| A.2.b: Increase and monitor City's digital presence and footprint   |          |          |     | Planning | Planning |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| A.2.c: Increase promotion of events, services, and programs offered by community and intergovernmental partners                         |          |          |     |          |          |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| A.3.a: Develop and implement a Website Accessibility and ADA Compliance Plan  |          |          |     |          |          |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| A.3.b: Enhance the calendar and meeting records management systems  |          |          |     |          |          |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| A.3.c: Conduct a Feasibility Study to determine practicality of installing digital help desk and service request system on City website |          |          |     |          |          |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| B.1.a: Conduct a Visual Branding Study  |          |          |     |          |          |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| B.1.b: Develop an Implementation Plan for City's Wayfinding Master Plan   |          |          |     |          |          |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| B.2.a: Develop a Community Place Marketing Strategy   |          |          |     |          |          |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| B.2.b: Develop an Economic Development Place Marketing Strategy   |          |          |     |          |          |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| B.2.c: Develop a Downtown Place Marketing Strategy  |          |          |     |          |          |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| B.2.d: Develop a Public Arts Master Plan  |          |          |     |          |          |     |          |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |

Planning

Development

Implementation

**Strategic Priority:** Effective Communications

**Strategic Goal:** Empower additional City staff to assist with communications efforts

**Overview:** The City can empower additional staff to assist with its communications efforts by providing them with the necessary tools and resources. This includes providing access to relevant information and guidelines on how to use communications tools effectively in addition to clear policies for how to interact with the public on behalf of the City.

**Strategic Initiative A.1.a: Develop an organizational Communications Plan**

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Formulate guidelines that are applicable to most instances where staff members engage with the public as part of their job duties
- Institute an organizational culture that places a high priority on public communications and actively encourages all City staff to participate in the communications process

| Action   | Action Plan    |          |          | Resources  |
|--|----------------|----------|----------|--|
|  | Phase          | Start    | Finish   |  |
| Seek guidance and recommendations from the City Administrator on protocols and guidelines that should be included in Plan  | Planning       | Jan 2023 | Jan 2023 | Marketing & Communications; City Administrator               |
| Conduct a review of current communications operations  | Planning       | Jan 2023 | Feb 2023 | Marketing & Communications                                   |
| Identify needs of organization   | Planning       | Feb 2023 | Feb 2023 | Marketing & Communications                                   |
| Analyze comparable communications plans  | Planning       | Feb 2023 | Feb 2023 | Marketing & Communications                                   |
| Prepare draft Plan for review  | Development    | Feb 2023 | Mar 2023 | Marketing & Communications                                   |
| Review Draft Plan with Administration Department; make necessary revisions   | Development    | Mar 2023 | Aug 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Administration                   |
| Review Draft Plan with Department Heads and relevant staff; make necessary revisions in Final Draft  | Development    | Sep 2023 | Sep 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Department Heads; Relevant Staff |
| Approve final draft for implementation; circulate Communications Plan with relevant staff  | Implementation | Sep 2023 | Oct 2023 | City Administrator   |
| Conduct individual kick-off meetings with relevant staff to discuss implementation needs and platform(s) access to ensure they are fully functional within their roles | Implementation | Nov 2023 | Dec 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                   |
| Evaluate effectiveness of Plan through quarterly reviews with relevant staff (March, June, September, December); update as necessary                                   | Implementation | Mar 2024 | On-going | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                   |

**Strategic Initiative A.1.b: Analyze and update communications policies**

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Confirm communications policies are relevant and effective with changing technologies and practices
- Establish clear policies that prevent misunderstandings and ensures staff are communicating effectively and efficiently with the public

| Action  | Action Plan |          |          | Resources                  |
|---|-------------|----------|----------|----------------------------|
|   | Phase       | Start    | Finish   |                            |
| Conduct a review of current communications policies | Planning    | Jul 2023 | Jul 2023 | Marketing & Communications |

|   |                |          |          |  |
|---|----------------|----------|----------|--|
| Analyze comparable communications policies  | Planning       | Jul 2023 | Aug 2023 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Seek recommendations for improvement from Department Heads  | Planning       | Aug 2023 | Aug 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Department Heads   |
| Prepare draft policies for review   | Development    | Aug 2023 | Aug 2023 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Review draft policies with Administration Department; make necessary revisions                      | Development    | Aug 2023 | Sep 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Administration     |
| Review draft policies with Department Heads; make necessary revisions in final draft                | Development    | Sep 2023 | Sep 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Department Heads   |
| Approve final draft for implementation  | Implementation | Sep 2023 | Sep 2023 | City Administrator                             |
| Publish policies on City communications platforms; circulate with staff; update Communications Plan | Implementation | Oct 2023 | Oct 2023 | Marketing & Communications Division            |
| Review policies annually and update as needed   | Implementation | Jan 2025 | On-going | Marketing & Communications; City Administrator |

**Strategic Priority:** Effective Communications

**Strategic Goal:** Position the City as the primary source of community information

**Overview:** The City can build trust and improve relationships with its residents by being a reliable and trustworthy source of community information. Ensuring that community information is available on multiple secure platforms can increase transparency and engagement, which can further enhance trust and community engagement.

**Strategic Initiative A.2.a: Register the City's website as a government (.gov) domain**

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Reinforce the City as a trusted source for information by validating the City website as an official government website
- Increase cyber security for the City and its residents
- Increase visibility and discoverability of the City's offered programs and services

| Action  | Action Plan    |          |          | Resources   |
|---|----------------|----------|----------|---|
|   | Phase          | Start    | Finish   |   |
| Review .gov transition process  | Planning       | Apr 2023 | Apr 2023 | Marketing & Communications                            |
| Establish project team; hold kick-off meeting to discuss roles and transition process | Planning       | May 2023 | May 2023 | Marketing & Communications; IT; Consultant            |
| Submit authorization letter to .Gov Domain Registration                               | Development    | May 2023 | Jun 2023 | Marketing & Communications; City Administrator; Mayor |
| Submit online domain request for review   | Development    | Jun 2023 | Jul 2023 | Marketing & Communications; IT                        |
| Add server addresses to .gov registrar  | Development    | Jul 2023 | Aug 2023 | IT Division; Consultant                               |
| Conduct implementation plan meeting; outline email domain server transition to .gov   | Development    | Aug 2023 | Sep 2023 | Marketing & Communications; IT; Consultant            |
| Launch new domain   | Implementation | Oct 2023 | Oct 2023 | Marketing & Communications; IT; Consultant            |
| Establish redirect from original .org URL to new .gov URL                             | Implementation | Oct 2023 | Oct 2023 | Marketing & Communications; IT; Consultant            |
| Update all communications platforms with new URL; publicize and promote new URL       | Implementation | Nov 2023 | Nov 2023 | Marketing & Communications                            |
| Update internal staff email domains   | Implementation | Nov 2023 | Dec 2023 | Marketing & Communications; IT                        |

**Strategic Initiative A.2.b: Increase and monitor the City's digital presence and footprint**

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Measure the impact of the City's digital outreach by actively monitoring and analyzing relevant statistical data
- Improve the City's digital footprint through an established strategy

| Action  | Action Plan    |           |           | Resources                                      |
|---|----------------|-----------|-----------|--|
|   | Phase          | Start     | Finish    |  |
| Identify and analyze the City's current digital platforms                                 | Planning       | May 2023  | May 2023  | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Identify key performance indicators (KPIs) for measuring success of initiative            | Planning       | Jun 2023  | Jul 2023  | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Establish annual KPI target goals   | Development    | Jul 2023  | Aug 2023  | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Develop data reporting process to track KPIs  | Development    | Aug 2023  | Sep 2023  | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Prepare Digital Communications Strategy that identifies actions to achieve targeted goals | Development    | Sep 2023  | Oct 2023  | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Initiate actions set within Strategy  | Implementation | Nov 2023  | Dec 2023  | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Report quarterly KPI metrics  | Implementation | Quarterly | Quarterly | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Identify new KPI target goals and evaluate Strategy                                       | Implementation | Annually  | Annually  | Marketing & Communications; City Administrator |



### Strategic Initiative A.2.c: Increase promotion of events, services, and programs offered by community and intergovernmental partners

#### Desired Outcomes:

- Define community and intergovernmental partner organizations
- Set up guidelines and submission requirements for community and intergovernmental partners to provide content on the City's platforms
- Increase awareness of partner events, programs, and services

| Action  | Action Plan    |          |          | Resources                                      |
|---|----------------|----------|----------|--|
|   | Phase          | Start    | Finish   |  |
| Identify relevant community and intergovernmental partner organizations; identify points of contacts      | Planning       | Nov 2023 | Dec 2023 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Review identified partners' regular communications content  | Planning       | Dec 2023 | Dec 2023 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Prepare draft submission guidelines and requirements for submitting content to the City for dissemination | Development    | Dec 2023 | Jan 2023 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Review draft guidelines with intergovernmental communications group; make necessary revisions             | Development    | Jan 2023 | Feb 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Community Partners |
| Circulate guidelines with relevant organizations; update Communications Plan with guidelines              | Implementation | Feb 2023 | Mar 2023 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Disseminate content received from approved partners   | Implementation | Mar 2023 | On-Going | Marketing & Communications                     |

**Strategic Priority:** Effective Communications

**Strategic Goal:** Enhance the user experience of City's website

**Overview:** Enhancing the user experience of the City's website would make the website more user-friendly and intuitive for visitors, making it easier for them to find the information and services they need on the website. This can be achieved by improving the design and layout of current functions, adding functions that further empower residents to conduct business online with the City, and ensuring that it is accessible to all users, including those with disabilities.

**Strategic Initiative A.3.a: Develop and initiate Website Accessibility and ADA Compliance Implementation Plan**

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Execute a full website audit to evaluate current status of website content and its accessibility
- Formulate an Implementation Plan that outlines strategies that ensures all current and future web content is accessible and available to all members of the public

| Action   | Action Plan    |          |          | Resources   |
|--|----------------|----------|----------|---|
|  | Phase          | Start    | Finish   |   |
| Establish project team; hold kick-off meeting to discuss roles and goals                   | Planning       | Aug 2023 | Aug 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Human Resources; Consultant |
| Research ADA Compliancy Guidelines and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 (WCAG 2.2) | Planning       | Aug 2023 | Sep 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Human Resources             |
| Conduct full audit of City website   | Planning       | Sep 2023 | Sep 2023 | Consultant  |
| Develop draft Website Accessibility and ADA Compliance Implementation Plan                 | Development    | Oct 2023 | Nov 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Human Resources             |
| Review draft Plan with project team; make necessary revisions in final draft               | Development    | Nov 2023 | Nov 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Human Resources; Consultant |
| Implement final Plan   | Implementation | Nov 2023 | Jan 2024 | Marketing & Communications; IT; Consultant              |
| Update City Communications Plan to include general guidelines for generating new content   | Implementation | Jan 2024 | Jan 2024 | Marketing & Communications                              |
| Bi-annually review most current ADA/WCAG guidelines; conduct audit of website              | Implementation | Jan 2026 | On-Going | Marketing & Communications; Human Resources; Consultant |

**Strategic Initiative A.3.b: Enhance city calendar and meeting records management system**

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Integrate a calendar tool that can be efficiently managed by multiple staff members and has an aesthetically pleasing front-end design for website visitors
- Optimize file management processes on the City website, and integrate front-end design upgrades to improve usability for end-users
- Ensure that frequently utilized website systems' front-end designs comply with the Website Accessibility and ADA Compliance Plan

| Action  | Action Plan |          |          | Resources  |
|---|-------------|----------|----------|--|
|   | Phase       | Start    | Finish   |  |
| Review current city calendar and meeting records management systems   | Planning    | Jun 2023 | Jul 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Consultant                 |
| Identify relevant staff who are, or may, utilize platforms within their roles   | Planning    | Jul 2023 | Jun 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff             |
| Review Initiative objectives and identify issues with current processes and software with relevant staff; seek consensus of approval to proceed with future actions | Planning    | Jun 2023 | Jul 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff             |
| Research new systems and software compatible with City's content management system (CMS)  | Planning    | Aug 2023 | Sep 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff; Consultant |

|   |                |          |          |  |
|---|----------------|----------|----------|--|
| Present suitable solution(s) based on feedback and research to relevant staff; select appropriate solution  | Development    | Sep 2023 | Sep 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff; Consultant |
| Develop draft Action Plan for installation and training of new systems  | Development    | Sep 2023 | Oct 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Consultant                 |
| Review Action Plan with relevant staff; make necessary revisions in final draft   | Development    | Oct 2023 | Oct 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff             |
| Implement Action Plan   | Implementation | Nov 2023 | Dec 2023 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff; Consultant |
| Update Communications Plan with general guidance for systems  | Implementation | Jan 2024 | Jan 2024 | Marketing & Communications                             |
| <b>Strategic Initiative A.3.c: Conduct a Feasibility Study to determine practicality of installing a digital help desk and a service request system on City website</b> |                |          |          |  |

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Evaluate whether implementing a digital help desk and service request platform would be advantageous for both the organization and the community
- Assess the feasibility of adding new platforms and whether they can be effectively managed using the City's current content management system (CMS) and organizational staff

| Action  | Action Plan    |          |          | Resources  |
|---|----------------|----------|----------|--|
|   | Phase          | Start    | Finish   |  |
| Research digital help desk and online service request systems utilized by other government organizations; develop proposal for review | Planning       | Jun 2024 | Jun 2024 | Marketing & Communications                                     |
| Present Initiative objectives to Department Heads; seek consensus of approval to proceed with future actions                          | Planning       | Jul 2024 | Jul 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Department Heads                   |
| Identify relevant staff to be involved with the development and implementation of the Initiative                                      | Planning       | Jul 2024 | Jul 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Department Heads; Relevant Staff   |
| Hold kick-off meeting with relevant staff members to discuss roles and goals in developing and implementing the Initiative            | Planning       | Aug 2024 | Aug 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                     |
| Conduct review of technical capabilities of City's CMS and Email platform   | Planning       | Jun 2024 | Jul 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                     |
| Research costs and capabilities of software platforms   | Planning       | Jul 2024 | Jul 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                     |
| Conduct survey of relevant departmental staff to evaluate interest in systems   | Planning       | Jul 2024 | Aug 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                     |
| Compile data from planning and research into draft Operational and Technical Feasibility Study  | Development    | Aug 2024 | Sep 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                     |
| Review Study with City Administrator; make necessary revisions in final draft   | Development    | Sep 2024 | Oct 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff; City Administrator |
| Present final Study to Department Heads for consideration and final direction   | Implementation | Nov 2024 | Nov 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff; Department Heads   |

**Strategic Priority:** Strategic Marketing

**Strategic Goal:** Evaluate West Chicago's visual brand

**Overview:** It is important to periodically assess how the City's visual brand is perceived by its residents, visitors, and stakeholders, and whether it accurately reflects the City's values, culture, and unique offerings. By conducting a thorough analysis, the City can make informed decisions about any necessary updates or revisions to its visual brand, ensuring that it effectively communicates the City's identity and resonates with its audience. This can help to build stronger connections between the City and its constituents, foster community pride, and attract new investment and visitors.

**Strategic Initiative B.1.a: Conduct a Visual Branding Study**

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Perform an objective analysis of the City's existing visual brand identity to develop recommendations for improvement, if necessary

| Action  | Action Plan    |          |          | Resources                                      |
|---|----------------|----------|----------|--|
|   | Phase          | Start    | Finish   |  |
| Review the City's previous branding initiatives and current visual branding components  | Planning       | Sep 2023 | Sep 2023 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Present Initiative objectives to Public Affairs Committee; seek consensus of approval to proceed with future actions                                      | Planning       | Oct 2023 | Oct 2023 | Marketing & Communications; City Council       |
| Research regional and national comparable municipalities' visual branding   | Planning       | Nov 2023 | Dec 2023 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Identify key stakeholders who will assist with Study  | Planning       | Dec 2023 | Dec 2023 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Conduct audit of City's current internal and external printed communications collateral; current online communications platforms; and experiential assets | Planning       | Jan 2024 | Jan 2024 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Conduct surveys with key stakeholders to solicit insight and feedback on current visual brand   | Planning       | Jan 2024 | Feb 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Key Stakeholders   |
| Compile data from research, audits, and surveys into draft Visual Branding Study  | Development    | Mar 2024 | Apr 2024 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Establish recommendations for consideration based on Study  | Development    | Apr 2024 | Apr 2024 | Marketing & Communications                     |
| Review draft Study with City Administrator; make necessary revisions into final draft   | Development    | May 2024 | Jun 2024 | Marketing & Communications; City Administrator |
| Present Study to Public Affairs Committee   | Implementation | Jun 2024 | Jun 2024 | Marketing & Communications; City Council       |

**Strategic Initiative B.1.b: Develop an Implementation Plan for City's Wayfinding Master Plan**

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Ensure that the design elements in the current Wayfinding Master Plan accurately represent the City's visual brand identity
- Design an implementation plan that will progressively achieve the City's Wayfinding Master Plan incrementally

| Action  | Action Plan |          |          | Resources                                    |
|---|-------------|----------|----------|--|
|   | Phase       | Start    | Finish   |  |
| Present Initiative objectives to Public Affairs Committee; seek consensus of approval to proceed with future actions                            | Planning    | Mar 2024 | Mar 2024 | Marketing & Communications; City Council     |
| Present Initiative objectives to Department Heads; seek recommendations and feedback for improvement; designate staff to assist with Initiative | Planning    | Mar 2024 | Apr 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Department Heads |

|  |                |          |          |  |
|--|----------------|----------|----------|--|
| Research and assess City's current Wayfinding Master Plan components: audience, movements, and destination; signage map; signage types; specifications | Planning       | Mar 2024 | Apr 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                   |
| Review relevant City Code to confirm proposed signage is in compliance   | Planning       | Apr 2024 | Apr 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                   |
| Update Wayfinding Master Plan where necessary based on initial review  | Development    | Apr 2024 | May 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                   |
| Conduct Needs Assessment to establish hierarchy of needed signage  | Development    | May 2024 | Jun 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                   |
| Compile research and Needs Assessment into draft Wayfinding Sign Program Implementation Plan   | Development    | Jun 2024 | Aug 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Relevant Staff                   |
| Review draft Plan with Department Heads; make necessary revisions in final draft   | Development    | Aug 2024 | Sep 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Department Heads; Relevant Staff |
| Request funding for implementation of Plan within the FY 2025 Budget   | Implementation | Oct 2024 | Oct 2024 | Marketing & Communications                                   |

**Strategic Priority:** Strategic Marketing

**Strategic Goal:** Promote West Chicago as a great place to live, work, and visit

**Overview:** Through carefully thought out strategies the City can best promote itself as a great place to live, work and visit. Attracting more visitors boosts the local economy; building and promoting a good reputation attracts new residents; and promoting the city as an attractive investment encourages development. Additionally, a city that is promoted and celebrated can help build civic pride and a sense of community with residents.

**Strategic Initiative B.2.A: Develop a Community Place Marketing Strategy**

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Improve marketing materials and content used to promote community-based initiatives
- Establish a strategy that highlights the City's positive reputation to attract new residents and cultivate civic pride among current residents

| Action  | Action Plan    |          |          |  | Resources   |
|---|----------------|----------|----------|--|---|
|   | Phase          | Start    | Finish   |  |   |
| Review current community based content on website; update content where necessary       | Planning       | Aug 2023 | Aug 2023 |  | Marketing & Communications                          |
| Define (3) key characteristics of the community to promote                              | Planning       | Aug 2023 | Aug 2023 |  | Marketing & Communications                          |
| Update new resident welcome materials   | Planning       | Sep 2023 | Sep 2023 |  | Marketing & Communications; Finance; Administration |
| Create a community culture webpage; update history webpage                              | Planning       | Oct 2023 | Nov 2023 |  | Marketing & Communications; West Chicago Museum     |
| Identify opportunities to advertise community to attract new residents                  | Planning       | Nov 2023 | Nov 2023 |  | Marketing & Communications; Economic Development    |
| Prepare Community Place Marketing Strategy that identifies annual cyclical action items | Development    | Nov 2023 | Dec 2023 |  | Marketing & Communications                          |
| Initiate actions set within the Strategy  | Implementation | Jan 2024 | Jan 2024 |  | Marketing & Communications                          |
| Review Strategy and actions annually  | Implementation | Jan 2025 | On-Going |  | Marketing & Communications                          |

**Strategic Initiative B.2.b: Develop an Economic Development Place Marketing Strategy**

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Merge the City's website and economic development micro-site to enhance visibility and increase traffic
- Improve economic development marketing materials and verify that economic development information is up-to-date for future marketing initiatives and campaigns
- Establish a strategy that ensures economic development content is current and actively promotes the City as an investment opportunity to developers

| Action   | Action Plan |          |          |  | Resources  |
|--|-------------|----------|----------|--|--|
|  | Phase       | Start    | Finish   |  |  |
| Migrate all content from economic development microsite (westchicagonow.org) to primary website            | Planning    | Jan 2024 | Jan 2024 |  | Marketing & Communications; Consultant           |
| Review and update all content on economic development page(s)  | Planning    | Jan 2024 | Feb 2024 |  | Marketing & Communications; Economic Development |
| Review and update all business based content on website  |             | Feb 2024 | Mar 2024 |  | Marketing & Communications; Economic Development |
| Define (3) key characteristics of the City that makes it attractive to potential developers and businesses | Planning    | Mar 2024 | Mar 2024 |  | Marketing & Communications; Economic Development |
| Identify opportunities to advertise the City to businesses and developers                                  | Planning    | Apr 2024 | Apr 2024 |  | Marketing & Communications; Economic Development |

|  |                |          |          |  |
|--|----------------|----------|----------|--|
| Prepare Economic Development Place Marketing Strategy that identifies annual cyclical action items | Development    | Apr 2024 | May 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Economic Development |
| Initiate actions set within the Strategy   | Implementation | Jun 2024 | Jun 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Economic Development |
| Review Strategy and actions annually   | Implementation | Jan 2025 | On-Going | Marketing & Communications; Economic Development |
| <b>Strategic Initiative B.2.c: Develop a Downtown Place Marketing Strategy</b>                     |                |          |          |  |

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Establish a strategy that highlights the downtown's events, attractions, and businesses while presenting it as a lively place to visit and conduct business

| Action   | Action Plan    |          |          | Resources  |
|--|----------------|----------|----------|--|
|  | Phase          | Start    | Finish   |  |
| Identify and catalog all downtown businesses, organizations, restaurants, and attractions/features | Planning       | Jun 2024 | Jun 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Economic Development                 |
| Identify (3) unique characteristics of the downtown area that makes it attractive to visitors      | Planning       | Jun 2024 | Jul 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Special Events; Economic Development |
| Identify regional opportunities to advertise the downtown as a place to visit and explore          | Planning       | Jul 2024 | Jul 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Special Events; Economic Development |
| Conduct aerial photo/video shoot of downtown area with drone                                       | Planning       | Jul 2024 | Aug 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Consultant; Police                   |
| Create webpage specifically highlighting the downtown area   | Planning       | Aug 2024 | Sep 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Special Events; Economic Development |
| Prepare Downtown Place Marketing Strategy that identifies annual cyclical action items             | Development    | Sep 2024 | Oct 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Special Events; Economic Development |
| Initiate actions set within the Strategy   | Implementation | Nov 2024 | Nov 2024 | Marketing & Communications                                       |
| Review Strategy and actions annually   | Implementation | Jan 2025 | On-Going | Marketing & Communications; Special Events; Economic Development |
| <b>Strategic Initiative M.2.D: Develop a Public Arts Master Plan</b>                               |                |          |          |  |

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Increase community pride and celebrate local culture through the display of public art
- Improve long-term management and planning of public art
- Ensure that public art harmonizes with the buildings, streetscapes, and open spaces of the City

| Action  | Action Plan |          |          | Resources  |
|---|-------------|----------|----------|--|
|   | Phase       | Start    | Finish   |  |
| Seek direction from the City Council for conducting a Public Arts Master Plan                           | Planning    | 2021     | 2021     | Marketing & Communications; City Council   |
| Create a comprehensive inventory of existing public art displays and programs (i.e. art banner exhibit) | Planning    | Jan 2024 | Jan 2024 | Marketing & Communications   |
| Identify and designate public and private facilities and areas appropriate for public art displays      | Planning    | Jan 2024 | Jan 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Public Works; Community Development; Community Partners; Property Owners |
| Investigate and identify potential funding mechanisms and opportunities                                 | Planning    | Feb 2024 | Feb 2024 | Marketing & Communications   |

|  |                |          |          |  |
|--|----------------|----------|----------|--|
| Identify City Code provisions for public art   | Planning       | Apr 2024 | Apr 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Community Development    |
| Identify key stakeholders and define roles and responsibilities of potential public art projects             | Planning       | Apr 2024 | May 2024 | Marketing & Communications                           |
| Establish general guidelines and criteria for the selection or submittal of acceptable public art            | Planning       | May 2024 | May 2024 | Marketing & Communications                           |
| Establish procedure and guidelines for artist submissions and commissioned artwork                           | Planning       | May 2024 | May 2024 | Marketing & Communications                           |
| Establish conservation and maintenance guidelines for public art works                                       | Planning       | Jun 2024 | Jun 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Public Works             |
| Establish procedure for deaccession of public art  | Planning       | Jun 2024 | Jun 2024 | Marketing & Communications                           |
| Identify and develop short term and long term goals for Plan   | Planning       | Jul 2024 | Jul 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Cultural Arts Commission |
| Compile planning components into draft document; review with City Administrator and make necessary revisions | Development    | Jul 2024 | Aug 2024 | Marketing & Communications; City Administrator       |
| Review draft Plan with Cultural Arts Commission; request recommendations and suggestions                     | Development    | Sep 2024 | Sep 2024 | Marketing & Communications; Cultural Arts Commission |
| Review recommendations from Commission with City Administrator; make necessary revisions into final draft    | Development    | Sep 2024 | Sep 2024 | Marketing & Communications; IT Division; Consultant  |
| Present final Plan to Public Affairs Committee for direction   | Implementation | Oct 2024 | Oct 2024 | Marketing & Communications; City Council             |