

City of Montgomery
Government Affairs Committee
November 11, 2024

Staff Present

Brian Riblet
Tracy Henao
Connie Gaylor

Council Committee Members Present

Chris Dobrozsi, Chair
Catherine Mills-Reynolds
Sasha Naiman

The meeting of the Government Affairs Committee of City Council convened in Council Chambers at 4:30 p.m., with Mr. Dobrozsi presiding.

Business Co-branding Initiative Discussion

Ms. Henao explained to that Committee that per Goal C.4.4 of the Strategic Plan, Staff has been working with Kolar Design to create a co-brand resource for businesses located within the community for promotion purposes and to potentially recruit new businesses to the community. She explained the project will help business retention and expansion by allowing existing and new businesses to benefit from the City's strong brand recognition. She explained that Kolar Design hosted a workshop to solicit feedback from key staff members (Mr. Riblet, Kevin Chesar, Matthew Vanderhorst, Amy Frederick, and herself) to define the strategic approach to the co-branding campaign and has created three potential creative directions, she referred to a report prepared by Kolar.

Ms. Henao explained that the key themes were: *Diverse Businesses*, *Unique Destinations*, *Montgomery Character*, *Charm* and to *Attract Customers*. She explained that staff would focus on marketing, economic development and community engagement when developing the themes.

Ms. Henao explained that at the workshop the group worked on developing the co-branding initiative's target audience. She explained that the focus was on smaller unique boutiques, and restaurants that may be struggling with marketing and advertising. She added that this would not be for large businesses.

Ms. Henao added that in addition to the consideration of the business audience, the group also discussed who the key customer audience for the campaign would be. She explained that typically Montgomery businesses are targeting young families, empty-nesters, and/or young adults that are attracted to a higher end product, and value shopping locally and/or value walkability/small town feel. She stated the Campaign should support more businesses that provide neighborhood retail, restaurants, entertainment, services, and high-end niche retail. The Campaign should not focus on Medical, Office, and Multi-Family Residential Businesses.

Ms. Henao explained that through the workshop that priorities of key recommendations were established as follows: create an interactive / place based activation, celebrate and activate the customer experience, and create unique and charming Co-Brand for Montgomery businesses.

Ms. Henao explained a mind mapping activity that was conducted that resulted in the following ideas:

Events / programming ideas:
- Music performance

- *Interactive large scale public mural*
- *City holiday created around campaign*
- *Family events vs. corporate events*
- *Restaurant "taste of Montgomery"*
- *Specialty products/foodbev for campaign*
- *Pub crawl or DORA party*
- *Sidewalk sales*
- *History walks, coffee + landmarks, evening event w/ drinks*

Swag/print ideas:

- *Stamps for bags of logo*
- *Stickers x3*
- *Merch*
- *Totes, clothes, dog clothes, fitness merch*
- *Magnets shirts, keychains*
- *Pins bags pens shirts signs*
- *Stickers tattoos coloring books*

Digital Ideas:

- *Facebook page / social media accounts*
- *"Try to find Tracy today"*
- *Digital Ads, digital billboards*
- *City newsletter*
- *Website*

Physical sign/art ideas

- *Window stickers*
- *Open flags with logo (melissa)*
- *Everyone gets a standard sandwich board sign provided by CIC*
- *Yards, doors*
- *Signs*
- *Play spaces*
- *Fountains / splash pads*
- *Benches*
- *Places to take photos*

Tagline ideas

- *More to get (in) Montgomery*

Ms. Henao explained that three conceptual themes were drafted as a result of the workshop.

She stated the following themes:

- Timeless Elegance in Montgomery, A blend of historic charm with contemporary flair.
- Color Your Day in Montgomery, Bold colors and dynamic patterns reflecting the diversity and energy of the city.
- Handcrafted in Montgomery, A cozy, handcrafted aesthetic inspired by Montgomery's natural beauty and community spirit.

Ms. Henao explained that she felt Theme 1-*Timeless Elegance in Montgomery* was most in line with the city brand. She stated that Theme 2-*Color Your Day in Montgomery* would be the

most outside the box as compared to the city brand. She added that Theme 3-*Handcrafted in Montgomery* fell some where in the middle.

Ms. Henao closed stating that she would like to obtain feedback on what stands out to the Committee as the next step is to focus on a theme, develop a tag line, and create the logo.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds asked if elements from each theme could be incorporated together. She stated she is interested in an interactive element.

Ms. Henao explained that in Theme 2, there was an interactive art focus that kids and adults could engage in but that elements of the themes could be incorporated into one final theme.

Mr. Dobrozsi asked if there was a collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce in the co-branding initiative.

Ms. Henao explained that she has had conversations with the Chamber and the feedback was that once the final design and plan was developed that the Chamber would help disseminate the information, however the development of the initiative was the City's project. She added that since the co-branding initiative was for Montgomery businesses only that she wants to make sure the brand was trademarked.

Mr. Dobrozsi asked what problem we were trying to solve by creating the co-brand.

Ms. Henao explained that small businesses have trouble with advertising and marketing, so this was an effort to help them and to also enhance economic development and business relationships. She stated that the City of Huber Heights was using cobranding for all their businesses and that it appeared to be successful.

Mr. Dobrozsi asked if there would be ongoing work for staff after the cobranding was established.

Ms. Henao replied that there would be but once established the businesses would order any window decals or promotional items.

Mr. Dobrozsi asked if the businesses would be able to implement the cobranding or if the City would have to aide them in getting started. Also, what type of businesses are to promote the brand.

Ms. Henao explained that she felt the cobranding would be similar to when the DORA was established where the City would provide a limited number of window decals or items to kick off the cobrand and then the businesses would pay for reorders. She added that the focus would be on the small unique businesses.

Mrs. Naiman asked Ms. Henao to provide a practical example of the use. She asked if it was primarily a design with a logo.

Ms. Henao replied that while a design has not been created yet, that when it is done it could be added to businesses websites, logos on bags, stationery, or giveaways.

Mr. Dobrozsi asked if there would be a social media campaign.

Ms. Henao replied that it was at Huber Heights through their Chamber of Commerce, but she felt that the City of Montgomery would handle that.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds asked if the Montgomery businesses were asking for this.

Ms. Henao replied that through the Chamber of Commerce there was interest by smaller businesses located in the Historic District, since there was no cost to them to create the brand.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds explained that she likes the idea but was concerned that parking could be an issue and that it needs to be considered and addressed. She stated that she felt that parking needs to be tied in so there would not be a draw to the businesses, but a lack of parking that would prevent the success of the cobranding.

Ms. Henao explained that parking is also a focus of the comprehensive plan study as well.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds added that she would love to see Montgomery Swag in the stores.

Mr. Dobrozsi stated he felt over half of the businesses that would benefit from this would be restaurants but hoped the other businesses could capitalize on it as well.

Ms. Henao explained that the focus on the unique businesses was the focus of Vegas in the Village to draw people to those unknown stores, so she felt they would take advantage of the cobrand.

Mrs. Naiman stated that it was important to get the brand trademarked so that it would only be licensed to those we give it to. She added that she liked the idea of Montgomery transitioning from tradition to experience and likes Theme 2 as it lends to "experiencing the energy" of Montgomery.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds stated that she also likes Theme 2.

Mr. Dobrozsi stated he agreed with Theme 2. He stated that while the brand has always been timeless, he felt that the City is moving away from that and is more than just the history aspect.

Ms. Henao stated that she is hearing that the majority like Theme 2 but asked for feedback on the aesthetic of the theme.

Mr. Dobrozsi stated that he liked Theme 1 and 2 for the aesthetic.

Mr. Riblet stated that he felt like the cobranding initiative should have been chamber led; however, staff do things really well and when we relinquish control it does not always meet our standards. He added that the cost is not huge, and staff can control it.

Mr. Dobrozsi stated that a city wide arts plan along the lines of "making moments" or something similar could be a message to market.

Mrs. Naiman stated that she felt it was good and a way to build community and excitement, which is often hard to find about government. She stated that an idea for the future is to combine the tagline with public art. Creating 3D art that people can incorporate in pictures.

Ms. Henao thanked the Committee for their feedback and stated that she will take all of it back to staff and Kolar and provide an update in a future meeting.

Holiday Card

Staff presented a proposed photo for consideration of the City holiday card for 2024. The Committee discussed suggested changes to the card and approved it for the holiday season.

Other Business

Mr. Riblet distributed a memo to Finance Director Maura Gray requesting various pieces of furniture in the Finance Department to be declared as surplus. Mr. Riblet estimated that the value was between \$200 to \$500 as the furniture was modular pieces that were quite old. He stated that the pieces would be listed on GovDeals.com for auction if approved.

Mrs. Naiman moved to declare the furniture surplus. Mrs. Mills-Reynolds seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

Minutes

Mrs. Naiman made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 14, 2024, Government Affairs Committee meeting. Mrs. Mills-Reynolds seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

Adjournment

Mr. Dobrozsi asked if there was any further business to discuss. As there was none, he asked for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Naiman made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Mills-Reynolds seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:18 p.m.


Chair