



## NEWS RELEASE

# City Branding Program to Move Forward With Seal in Place of Logo

**FREDERICK, MD – July 29, 2019:** Mayor Michael O'Connor has heard the passionate response to the City's new branding initiative. Based on the feedback, the Mayor has determined the City will not be using the logo component of the branding. Instead, the City seal will now function as the logo.

“Response to the branding initiative is a testament to the strong civic engagement that is at the heart of our City. The program did not have the level of public involvement that it should have, and I recognize that I made a mistake,” O'Connor said. “Moving forward, the City seal will guide our visual identity. I am confident this change will not detract from the importance of the overall branding initiative.”

### Why Branding?

The City branding initiative stemmed from a need to improve citywide communications. City leadership, internal staff, and community members identified a lack of consistency across City departments. They advised that disjointed messaging and inconsistent imagery diminished the effectiveness and awareness of City services and its reputation.

The branding process was initiated to understand, measure, and manage the way The City of Frederick is recognized by all stakeholders.

The development of a logo was a piece of this broader branding initiative.

### The Process

The process to hire branding experts followed the City's standard procurement regulations. The request for quote was published on the City website and was promoted directly to both local and

national firms. A multi-departmental selection team scored applicants on applicable experience, process, strategy, and cost. Local preference was given according to scoring guidelines.

The chosen consultant's strategy to develop key messages relied on a series of visits throughout the City, meetings with focus groups and discussions with community members in education, healthcare, religion, every Neighborhood Advisory Council, large and small business, arts, youth and City staff and current and former City elected officials.

The branding professionals incorporated the City's traditions, enthusiasm for progress and visionary thinking into a brand narrative and strategy that included the recently released logo.

"I regret that I did not better engage the community on the logo element of the initiative," O'Connor said. "I sincerely appreciate the time and energy of those who met with our branding consultant during this community assessment."

## **The Brand**

The brand message, or strapline, "Join the Story," expresses the City's continuous and distinguished evolution. The line conveys Frederick's welcoming, engaged nature and captures the intrigue of Frederick's history and ongoing story of determination.

The unified brand outlined in the strategy, reflects the City's commitment to engage with cultural groups, neighborhood groups, civic groups and the business community to help them apply the invitation of "Join the Story" to their unique areas of focus.

"For me, 'Join the story' has taken on a deeper meaning. This guiding message embodies my ongoing appreciation and expectation that, in Frederick, the public will always be an active, engaged part of the community," O'Connor said.

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