

Date 9 January 2013



City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor Canfield & Members of Council

Fr: Karen Brown

Re: Brand Promise and Brand Leadership Team

Recommendation:

That Council hereby adopts the new Kenora Brand, recognizing Kenora as "North America's Premier Boating Destination"; and

That Council hereby adopts the new Kenora Brand Promise, as follows:

Kenora is North America's Premier Boating Destination. We are the connection to Lake of the Woods and its 14,522 Islands.

Through our events and amenities we celebrate our history and build our future.

We are stewards of the lake, nurture its pristine environment, and live the lake life.

; and

That Council hereby acknowledges the Brand Leadership Team as a strategic partner in the implementation of the new Kenora Brand and Promise; and further

That the CAO be directed to update the City's Strategic Plan to incorporate the new Brand and Promise.

Background:

In 2011, the Lake of the Woods Development Commission (LOWDC) engaged Roger Brooks of Destination Development International (DDI) to work with a local group, known as the Brand Committee, to establish a new Brand for Kenora. This was different than work done in the past with regards to branding, wherein a new logo was developed for the LOWDC and tourism.

Preliminary work was performed by this group, including surveys seeking feedback from taxpayers and visitors was done by this group, with the intent of identifying Kenora's assets and challenges and seeking input for what Kenora should be known for and what could be done to get people to spend more time and money here. Based on the responses, and group discussion, preliminary identification of branding opportunities was performed, as well as initial feasibility analysis of the options.

Following this, a Branding Boot Camp was held in March 2012 with the Brand Committee and Roger Brooks and his Team from DDI. As a result, the new brand was developed for Kenora being recognized as "North America's Premier Boating Destination". As part of that process, an initial brand promise was drafted. The new brand was announced to the public in a public presentation on the last day of the Brand Boot Camp. The Roger Brooks team took the work done through the process, and provided the LOWDC with a report entitled "Recommendations List", a "Branding Development & Marketing Action Plan", which included recommendations for the formation of a Brand Leadership Team to champion the implementation of those recommendations.

Fast forward to today, and the Brand Leadership Team (BLT) is an active committee, meeting monthly, and working towards priorities related to developing the brand. A number of items were implemented during the balance of 2012, including, but not limited to:

- Developing and finalizing the BLT composition, responsibilities and schedules
- Finalizing the Brand Promise
- Developing a professional photo and video library
- Naming the new Whitecap Pavilion
- Confirming the downtown name as Harbourtown
- Developing a new logo to represent and evoke the feelings of the new brand (logo approved by Council at its December 2012 meeting)
- Developing a brand style guide
- Presentations to multiple groups with regards to the new logo (these are ongoing into 2013)
- Boating exhibition / rotating displays at the Discovery Centre (coordinated by Barb Manson)
- Grouping and prioritization of brand related recommendations, and assigning committee members to act as lead on behalf of the BLT on the implementation of those recommendations

In addition, work has either begun or continues within the City, on a number of initiatives and projects that also relate back to ensuring Kenora develops into and delivers on being North America's Premier Boating Destination.

Final Brand Promise:

One of the early tasks completed by the BLT was to finalize the Brand Promise. To quote the style guide for the new logo, "this promise focuses on enjoying the lake, and protecting the lake – while paying tribute to the people who lived this land before us, and those that will live it after us." The final brand promise is:

Kenora is North America's Premier Boating Destination. We are the connection to Lake of the Woods and its 14,522 Islands.

Through our events and amenities we celebrate our history and build our future.

We are stewards of the lake, nurture its pristine environment, and live the lake life.

City Council has recognized the work done by both the Brand Committee and the Brand Leadership Team. As noted previously, in December 2012, City Council adopted the new brand logo as its own helping to ensure that one consistent logo was seen as the public representation of Kenora.

What remains is for the City to formally adopt the new brand, including the brand promise. It is recommended that the City formally adopt this by Council resolution, and direct the CAO to ensure the City Strategic Plan is updated to incorporate the new Brand and Promise.

Brand Leadership Team

In conjunction with the adoption of the new Brand and Promise, it is recommended that the City recognize the new BLT as a strategic partner in moving forward with making the new Brand a reality for Kenora. This committee is comprised of the Mayor, together with a number of volunteers and City staff. The BLT, formed through recommendations made by Roger Brooks and the DDI Team, under the initiative of the LOWDC, continues to strive towards moving forward on prioritizing and implementing recommendations related to the brand. It is recommended that Council recognize the Brand Leadership Team as a strategic partner in the implementation of the new Brand and Promise.

Budget:

Any budget allocation to the Brand Leadership Team related to implementing the new Brand and Promise would be part of future budget discussions. There is no commitment being made as a result of this report.

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

Communication with the Brand Leadership Team with regards to the City's adoption of the new Brand and Promise, as well as recognizing them as a strategic partner. It is further recommended that a press release be developed to communicate these decisions to the public.