



## **CITY COUNCIL REPORT**

**11B**

**DATE: MARCH 21, 2023**

**TO: MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS**

**FROM: FIONA EPPS, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER**

**SUBJECT: REVIEW NEW CITY LOGO CONCEPTS AND PROVIDE DIRECTION**

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the City Council review new City logo concepts and provide direction on next steps regarding the adoption of a new City seal.

### **BACKGROUND**

In February 2020, the City Council adopted the City of Pinole Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025. The Strategic Plan identified four goals for the City (safe and resilient, financially stable, vibrant and beautiful, and high performance), and 22 individual strategies (special projects) to complete over a five-year timeframe. Two strategies are to “develop a strategic communication plan” (including marketing) and “develop a public engagement plan.”

The City selected the consulting firm Cerrell to create a Communication and Engagement Plan to address these two Strategic Plan strategies and executed a professional services contract with the firm in August 2021. Cerrell underwent a reorganization in 2022 and was unable to complete the work. The City then executed a professional services contract with the firm Tripepi Smith in March 2022 to complete the Communication and Engagement Plan. Tripepi Smith prepared a Communication and Engagement Plan that the City Council adopted in October 2022 and that the City is now implementing.

To enable the City to better communicate with community members, businesses, and other stakeholders, and to address the marketing aspect of the Strategic Plan strategy, the professional services agreement with Tripepi Smith (and the previous agreement with Cerrell) required Tripepi Smith to develop new City logo concepts, refine them, and develop a new City style guide and templates.

Tripepi Smith has worked with City staff to develop some new City logo concepts, upon which City Council direction is now desired.

According to Chapter 1.02.050 of the Pinole Municipal Code, the city seal and city logo are the property of the City of Pinole. The city seal and city logo are, and have been, established to identify official documents and official city personnel, facilities, property, events and other publications.

The current City of Pinole seal portrays an image of a Native American man with arms crossed against a natural background containing San Pablo Bay, rugged eastern foothills, three flying birds, sun, and sky with a floral border frame and text “City of Pinole California 1903.” This seal was adopted by the City in 1965. Current City staff has been unable to find any information regarding an official City seal predating 1965.

The original inhabitants of the area that we now know as the City of Pinole were part of the Lisjan (Ohlone) nation. There were two indigenous territories in the region, Huchiun and Carquin. Historical documents from City records report that the Ohlone population largely disappeared by the early 1800s due to foreign (European) disease and coercive displacement efforts by European settlers.

In summer 1963, the Pinole Chamber of Commerce held a contest to create a City seal. Twelve entries were submitted, and former City Engineer Lloyd Roberts’ design, which featured a Spanish conquistador facing a stone bowl of *pinolli*<sup>1</sup>, or pinole (pee-noh-lay), won. The design was criticized for the inaccurate depiction of *pinolli*. Although the design won the contest, the Pinole Chamber of Commerce used a different seal image when it published its Fiesta del Pinole program. The image it used was drawn by an unknown artist and resembled Pinole’s modern-day seal. It had an image of a bearded Native American man from an unidentified tribe standing with arms crossed beside a large sun, framed by a flowered border. The character featured in this design was believed to have been drawn based on Father Crespi’s<sup>2</sup> description of the Ohlone people written in his diary in 1772.

On November 13, 1964, the image was submitted to City Council for adoption. There was widespread disagreement around the accuracy of the portrayal of the man in the design. An anthropologist from UC Berkeley wrote a letter to Council on March 17, 1965 refuting the accuracy of the way in which the Huchiun man was represented, and, to minimize the possibility of inaccurate representation, suggested using a woman on the seal instead. Pinole became divided in opinion about the man on the seal having a beard, and if it was culturally representative. The division about the beard drew media attention, and an article titled “A Bearded Indian from Greater Pinole” by Al Martinez was published about it in the Oakland Tribune.

Another design, drawn by Daniel Harvey, a local Pinole artist, was submitted to the City Council on January 23, 1965. Harvey’s design was later adopted as the official City seal on April 5, 1965.

In the 1990s, the seal design and color scheme were slightly modernized. The City of Pinole currently uses this modern version of the seal and it can be found throughout City Hall facilities and is used in documents and media as the primary logo.

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<sup>1</sup> “Pinolli” was an indigenous word, thought to have been originated from the Aztec, for the meal made from seeds, grain, and acorns given to the explorers by the Ohlone. The Spanish explorers adopted this word, renaming as “pinole” (pee-noh-lay).

<sup>2</sup> Father Juan Crespi was a Spanish priest, one of the first missionaries to settle in the area of Pinole.

As noted above, the City recently began to re-examine the seal as part of its branding work related to the Communication and Engagement Plan.

On February 14, 2023, City staff met with Corrina Gould, a representative of the Confederated Villages of Lisjan, the organization that represents the Ohlone bands that originally inhabited the area that we now know as the City of Pinole, to gain a Native American perspective on the City's use of Native American imagery in the City seal.

Note that the terms "seal" and "logo" are sometimes used interchangeably. Cities normally have an official seal to identify official city documents. They might use that seal to identify other city materials, such as vehicles, buildings, signs, etc. Some cities have a city logo that is different from the official city seal. The City of Pinole has used its official city seal as its logo. The City's recently-adopted Economic Development Strategy directs that the City create an economic-development specific logo for marketing purposes. Staff intends to work with the economic development consultant to create an economic-development specific logo and style guide after the City decides whether to adopt a new overarching City logo/seal.

## **REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

Based on research and changing societal awareness and perspectives, City staff believes that it is appropriate for the City to consider transitioning away from the use of a human character in the City seal, to avoid all possibility of offense, exploitation, and/or inaccurate representation that can commonly result from using a mascot.

Staff proposes to gather community input on the potential new City seal designs that the City Council prefers. This would include widely advertising a new webpage containing information about the history of the City's current seal and the new seal options that Tripepi Smith has created (Attachment A), which community members could provide comment on.

Staff would return to City Council to present the community input gathered so that City Council could select a City seal. Per the Municipal Code, the City Council who may, by resolution, establish and designate the general design and details of official city logos of the city of Pinole.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact to considering a new City seal. Professional services hired to assist with the re-branding process have already been approved and allocated to the FY 2022-23 budget.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

A: A Collection of Seal Designs by Tripepi Smith

**Attachment A**  
A Collection of Seal Designs by Tripepi Smith



(Above: current seal)

Potential updates to current seal





## New seal concepts



PINOLE  
CALIFORNIA

*Option would also be available horizontally*



PINOLE  
CALIFORNIA

*Option would also be available horizontally*





*Option would also be available horizontally*



*Option would also be available horizontally*







*Option would also be available horizontally*



*Option would also be available horizontally*





*Option would also be available horizontally*



*Option would also be available horizontally*

