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**City of Paris Adopts Refreshed Brand, Celebrates Symbolism and Inspiration**

DATE (Paris, TEXAS) -- With pride and excitement, the City of Paris today announced the adoption of a new brand, symbolizing the history, heart and hope of the community – *Paris, Where Texans Reach Higher*.

In October 2021, four local entities – the City of Paris, Paris Economic Development Corporation, the Lamar County Chamber of Commerce, and the Visitors and Convention Council – gathered and kickstarted the initiative to discover a brand that is truly representative of the community of Paris – the people, the culture, the story.

While each organization has its own roles and responsibilities, their broader goals align in promoting Paris and Lamar County as great places to live, work, play, and do business. Branding presents an opportunity to create a unified image, and a common brand helps show that our community is working together toward these goals.

The project commenced with a survey open to all community members willing to provide insight on how they viewed the city from a brand perspective. Focus groups, individual interviews and conversational feedback were also solicited throughout the discovery process, uncovering valuable information that was then used as the jumping-off point for the brand development. From there, an advisory committee was formed, and they collaboratively worked to create a dynamic brand that celebrates the city and offers flexibility for all four entities who will be utilizing the design.

“We believed it was crucial that all in the community had the opportunity to participate and share their voice throughout the process,” said PEDC Board Member and Advisory Committee Member Dr. AJ Hashmi. “I am proud to see a refreshed brand that represents our diversity, strength and future as a city working together to reach new heights.”

**How We Got Here: A Community-Driven Process**

“As we embarked on this project, it was paramount to all involved that we gather as much feedback from as many people as possible,” City Councilman and Advisory Committee Member Mihir Pankaj said. “Paris is comprised of people from all walks of life, religions, backgrounds, beliefs, professions. Some have lived here their entire lives; others may have just settled down here. Regardless, everyone has their own view of our community based on their lived experiences. We knew right out the gate we wanted to open the survey to everyone willing to

take the time to participate, and we made it our mission to put that feedback at the center of the brand. Throughout time, we've had so many different logos that have attempted to characterize our community but didn't quite embody who we are as a *people*. I think we have finally landed on the brand that tells our story."

### **What's Next**

Paris has a storied history filled with grit, challenges, perseverance and friendship. Our citizens and infrastructure have survived disaster and sowed success alongside one another. Paris Economic Development Corporation Executive Director Maureen Hammond said the new brand both celebrates those roots and nods to the future.

"It was important to the committee that the reimagined brand celebrate our history and recognize our past while also pointing to our future as a community," Hammond said.

"Collectively, we are striving for more and putting Paris on the map with a positive, unified voice and vision; we are reaching for smart development and growth that will benefit citizens and business owners alike; we are moving forward, capitalizing on the momentum taking place now and this brand reflects that excitement and unified vision in so many ways."

"This has been such an inspiring journey as we have worked collectively as one community and come together to create something truly unique and special that will showcase who and what we are for years to come," said PEDC Board Member and Advisory Committee Member Stephen Terrell.

The project resulted in a brand comprised of a new icon, brand colors and tagline. Throughout the process, a brand narrative and a wide array of materials and brand activation ideas were developed.

Paris, Texas, is the gateway from Texas to the upper 48 states. As the community looks toward growth and prosperity, the brand must be able to equip all four entities and our citizens as they communicate and grow through municipal activities, event recruitment, culture, assets and amenities.

Lamar County Chamber of Commerce President Paul Allen noted his enthusiasm for the refreshed look, not only from the perspective of businesses, organizations, and events, but also as a lifelong resident in this community.

"There is an anatomy of a brand, just like there is an anatomy of a community," he said. "The icon in the brand draws your attention to a point, symbolic of us coming together as a city and reaching for our goals, our hopes, our dreams. There are a variety of colors and different shades of those colors, which represents the diversity of our community members, businesses and organizations and the strength we have when we all reach higher collectively. And the shape of the icon even pays homage to our beloved Eiffel Tower. I can't wait to see the creative ways we can weave this brand into the fabric of our community."

Citizens will begin to see the brand implemented in a variety of iterations. Each entity will use the branding for promotional, educational and informational purposes. Updating the brand will be an ongoing process to take place over time, making changes as existing materials, signage and equipment need replacing.

City services, for example, will be more visible and recognizable due to the brand's application on vehicles, apparel, and other city infrastructure as needed. The PEDC, Visit Paris, and the Chamber's brochures, social media, and marketing materials will use the new design to help depict the ways Paris stands out against other communities in the region.

City Manager Grayson Path represented the City of Paris and its citizens throughout the branding initiative and reiterated the value of a strong cohesive brand.

"When you have a city as active as ours, any way we can link people together is value added," Path said. "There is so much happening within the City of Paris, whether you look at business, industry, infrastructure, real estate, development, improvements, activities, or a number of other things. We are incredibly blessed to have so many people working together for the greater good of our community and our individual lives. It's a gift to be able to provide a symbol that unites us all and, furthermore, brands us in the minds of the outside entities looking at our town."

Chamber of Commerce Board President Vicki Ballard was born in Paris and has lived in the community her entire life. She is a small business owner, a volunteer and is known to be an advocate for the community, which she said is why she said she has embraced this positive change with open arms.

"The branding process is an antiquated term stemming from olden days when ranchers could brand their cattle and when craftsmen could imprint their wares, signifying their origins," Ballard said. "The terminology doesn't sound personal, but in this case it is. At the end of the day, Paris is home. Paris is you and it's me and it's 25,000 of our neighbors. It's the place we have chosen to work and to live, to fellowship and raise families. It's a part of our DNA; and my hope is that the community will adopt this new brand into *its* DNA, knowing it was created thoughtfully with pride and a vision for everything good that is to come in Paris.

Here's to the leaders who got us here and the future generations that will help us reach higher - *together.*"

Citizens can expect to see the brand begin to pop up as soon as next week and can visit [DistinctivelyParis.com](http://DistinctivelyParis.com) for additional information on the brand initiative.

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