Branding Refresh – Small Population (0-65,000)

City of Agoura Hills

2022 CAPIO EPIC AWARDS
Communications and Marketing Process - Branding

CITY OF
AGOURA HILLS

INTRODUCTION

In fall 2021, the City of Agoura Hills, located in northern Los Angeles County, kicked off its brand refresh, which was identified as a priority project in the City's 2021 Strategic Communications Plan. The brand refresh was an opportunity for Agoura Hills to cohesively share its story through a brand guide and supporting materials to ensure consistency in the City's identity.

The City of Agoura Hills Brand Refresh successfully and strategically allow the City to come together as a unified whole before the community and the region and highlight its unique blend of history, rural roots, natural beauty, small-town charm and vibrant community in the heart of the scenic Conejo Valley.

RESEARCH

The following primary and secondary research was reviewed during the research and discovery phase of this project as part of this engagement:

- **Strategic Plan (informal, primary research)** – Reviewed the City's 2022 Strategic Communications Plan and Goals, which included input from the city council, city staff and residents on overall communications as well as branding efforts.

- **Communications Content Analysis (informal, primary research)** – Reviewed the City's current graphics standards, logos and collateral materials as well as logos and brands of surrounding cities and public agencies.

- **1/1 Meeting (informal, primary research) –** Met to gain additional insights on the City's current branding and communications efforts as well as challenges and opportunities through a meeting.

Research Revealed:

- Effective communications with the community is a top priority for the City.

- There was inconsistency with City branding, which diluted consistency.

- The City could benefit from easy-to-use templates for collateral and social media to strengthen its brand. In addition, it would provide staff the ability to independently produce professional, branded materials.

- The current logo had no narrative to tie it back to its importance in the City, but staff enjoyed the logo and wanted to continue to use it.

PLANNING

RMG Communications worked as an extension of the City's team and handled the planning of City's brand refresh using following the comprehensive strategy:

Goal – To develop graphic standards and supporting materials that allow the City to achieve a unified and consistent visual identity and effectively communicate its story with internal and external audiences.

- **Objective –** By April 30, 2022, complete and implement the new brand standards and supporting materials across City collateral, website, videos and social media.

- **Strategy** – To develop engaging, effective guidelines and deploy associated materials.

- **Tactics –** A 37- page Brand Guideline handbook, which included an overview, brand story that is tied to the City's mission and values, logo usage, color palette, and typography. In addition, it contained sample applications for letterhead, email signature, social media, report templates, slides, Zoom backgrounds and more. Plus photo, video and writing style guidelines.

- **Budget -** Brand Guide and templates $6,500.

- **Timeline –** The project kicked off in fall 2021 and was completed in April 2022.

IMPLEMENTATION

The project team for the City's branding refresh included the City's assistant general manager and media analyst as well as team members from RMG Communications.

A new logo was not created; however, the team used insights found during the research phase to develop a brand narrative that tied in the existing logo. The new color palette was based on many of the colors (such red and green) that the City was already using as well as incorporated new colors and gradients. Altogether, this created a meaningful story that would resonate with the City and the publics it serves.

Following the completion of the brand guide, the City's internal team began deploying the new brand on City materials.

EVALUATION/RESULTS

The City of Agoura Hills **successfully met its goal** of developing graphic standards and supporting materials that allow the City to achieve a unified and consistent visual identity and effectively communicate its story with internal and external audiences.

In addition, the project **successfully met the objective** of completing and implementing the new graphic standards and supporting materials across City collateral, letterhead and website by April 30, 2022. The City's new graphic templates have been deployed across the City's website, social media, email signatures and collateral.

The City's communications team has also received positive feedback from Council as well as inquiries from several surrounding cities on how they developed and implemented their new brand.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

The following supporting materials highlight the success of the City's program in reaching its goals and objectives:

City of Agoura Hills
Brand Guidelines
Created April 2022

Table of Contents

Overview

The City of Agoura Hills' brand is the face presented to the community. It is the total effect of a logo, services, programs, official city seal, and all other key touch points that represent the City.

These standards allow the many City departments to come together in a unified voice before the community. A strong brand identity strengthens and enhances the City's reputation. In addition, residents will be able to better identify the many important services provided to the community.

The brand guide is created to maintain the integrity of the brand. When creating materials on behalf of the City, please help honor the brand by following these guidelines.

Please contact the City Manager's Office with questions.

Mission and Values: Part of Our Brand Story

Along with the City's mission and values, this brand guide helps cohesively share this story with the community, including residents, businesses, and visitors.

The logo and branding elements were thoughtfully developed to highlight Agoura Hills' unique blend of history, rural roots, natural beauty, small-town charm, and vibrant community in the heart of the scenic Conejo Valley.

CITY OF AGOURA HILLS BRAND GUIDELINES

Logo Usage: Primary & Secondary

The City's primary logo is the City's identifier and should be a consistent component in communication and outreach efforts.

To maintain the integrity of the logo, it should not be altered. Here are some other tips to use it properly:

- It should be surrounded by clear space to ensure its visibility and impact and the proportional relationship between the mark
- Logo should appear no smaller than one (1") inch wide
- Logo should not be stretched, condensed or redrawn
- Brand colors should remain the same

Please contact the City Manager's Office with questions on the logo usage.

COLOR

BLACK

WHITE

Color Palette: Primary & Secondary

The City of Agoura Hills color palette is the visual component of the brand. These colors were thoughtfully chosen for the logo and represent the brand identity. The colors of the logo should not be changed (with exception of the one-color gray scale or reversed-out white logos).

Primary Color Palette

DEEP GREEN	BRONZE	HILLSIDE GREEN	CREAM	AGOURA RED	CHOCOLATE BARK
HEX: #2d430c	HEX: #a46713	HEX: #827d29	HEX: #e1ddcc	HEX: #a62a24	HEX: #3e1707
CMYK: 56 / 67 / 98 / 72	CMYK: 7 / 50 / 100 / 34	CMYK: 49 / 38 / 100 / 15	CMYK: 11 / 9 / 19 / 0	CMYK: 24 / 96 / 99 / 17	CMYK: 30 / 72 / 74 / 80
RGB: 45 / 67 / 12	RGB: 164 / 103 / 19	RGB: 130 / 125 / 41	RGB: 225 / 221 / 204	RGB: 166 / 42 / 36	RGB: 62 / 23 / 7

Secondary Color Palette

SKY BLUE	ADOBE BEIGE	OAK LEAF	DUSK PURPLE	OCHRE
HEX: #356a8f	HEX: #ccb186	HEX: #d7cc26	HEX: #574d69	HEX: #ddab37
CMYK: 84 / 54 / 27 / 6	CMYK: 0 / 14 / 39 / 23	CMYK: 19 / 11 / 100 / 0	CMYK: 70 / 71 / 38 / 21	CMYK: 14 / 32 / 93 / 1
RGB: 53 / 106 / 143	RGB: 204 / 177 / 134	RGB: 215 / 204 / 38	RGB: 87 / 77 / 105	RGB: 221 / 171 / 55

Color Palette: Tints & Shades

C56 M22 Y98 K86 R22 G44 B0 #162c00	C7 M50 Y100 K51 R132 G82 B5 #845205	C56 M44 Y100 K28 R102 G101 B37 #666525	C31 M95 Y98 K39 R122 G29 B22 #7a1d16	C30 M72 Y74 K85 R53 G14 B0 #350e00
DEEP GREEN	BRONZE	HILLSIDE GREEN	AGOURA RED	CHOCOLATE BARK
DEEP GREEN Tint 60%	BRONZE Tint 60%	HILLSIDE GREEN Tint 60%	AGOURA RED Tint 60%	CHOCOLATE BARK Tint 60%
DEEP GREEN Tint 25%	BRONZE Tint 25%	HILLSIDE GREEN Tint 25%	AGOURA RED Tint 25%	CHOCOLATE BARK Tint 25%

Color Palette: Tints & Shades Continued

C90 M65 Y37 K19 R39 G82 B111 #27526f	C0 M14 Y39 K42 R164 G143 B108 #a48f6c	OAK LEAF	C75 M76 Y44 K38 R39 G55 B68 #41384f	C14 M32 Y93 K25 R173 G136 B40 #ad8828
SKY BLUE	ADOBE BEIGE	OAK LEAF Tint 60%	DUSK PURPLE	OCHRE
SKY BLUE Tint 60%	ADOBE BEIGE Tint 60%	OAK LEAF Tint 25%	DUSK PURPLE Tint 60%	OCHRE Tint 60%
SKY BLUE Tint 25%	ADOBE BEIGE Tint 25%	OAK LEAF Tint 10%	DUSK PURPLE Tint 25%	OCHRE Tint 25%

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Typography

The City's brand features Adelle and Avenir fonts, which are available in a variety of weights.

Here are some typography tips:

- Adelle is best suited for headings, and Avenir is best suited for body text
- Do not use all caps for anything other than headings
- Make sure size is legible. For printed items, font size should be no smaller than 11pt. For digital items, font size should be no smaller than 18px.

Pixels and Points

- Pixels (px) relates to a computer specific measurement. Each monitor or screen has a certain number of pixels it can display.
- A point (pt) is a measurement of size commonly used to measure the height of a font.

Adelle

Light	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz | 1234567890
Regular	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz | 1234567890
Semibold	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz | 1234567890
Bold	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz | 1234567890

Avenir

Light	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz | 1234567890
Book	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz | 1234567890
Roman	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz | 1234567890
Medium	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz | 1234567890
Black	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz | 1234567890

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Design Best Practices

Consistency and accuracy in branding is key for success.

Logo

- Do not alter the logo in any way. This includes changing the color, rotating it, stretching it or adding a drop shadow.
- The logo should have ample white space around it. Always put the logo on a white background.

Color

- The colors in this brand guide can be used for digital and print. The RGB and HEX codes are digital colors, and the CMYK codes are print colors.
- When in doubt, keep it simple. Black text on a white background always looks good.

Print Collateral

- When working with a professional printer, always ask for a physical printed proof before approving.
- Most printers will ask for an .eps or vector file for printing. Contact the City Manager's Office for this file type.

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Photography & Videography Guidelines

When choosing imagery for video or photography, images should reflect the City's vibrant community, natural beauty, and unique character.

It is always recommended that the City use images and video featuring Agoura Hills and its community members when available.

Licensing and Image Credits

If stock photos, videos, or music should be used, it must be properly licensed from a site such as Adobe Stock, Shutterstock or Canva. Image/video credit is used when the image/video user gives attribution to the image owner.

If you are sharing a photo/video by a videographer/photographer or different agency, you must get permission from the rights-holder and/or secure a license before using the image/video. Permission should be granted in writing via email or a signed document.

Giving credit to an image/video does not entitle the City to use the image. Images that include "all rights reserved" means no rights are granted for use. Example of a photo credit: Photo by Sam Jones.

Image and Video Quality

Images and video should convey a message and be contextually relevant. In addition, images and video should reflect a level of professional quality. Refrain from using clip art and poor-quality images that will diminish the City's brand.

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Social Media Image & Video Requirements: Instagram

Social media images/videos should adhere to the City's image/video standards above, as well as take into consideration other platform-specific requirements below. When possible, it is recommended that posts are professionally designed in graphic design platform like Canva or by a graphic designer. From time to time, social media platforms change image and video requirements. These requirements should be reviewed twice a year to ensure they are current.

Instagram Posts: Images

Orientation	Size	Aspect Ratio
Square	1080px x 1080px	1:1
Portrait	1080px x 1350px	4:5
Landscape	1080px x 608px	1.91:1

Instagram Posts: Video

Orientation	Size	Aspect Ratio
Square	1080px x 1080px 600 x 600 min. resolution	1:1
Portrait	1080px x 1350px 600 x 750 min. resolution	4:5
Landscape	1080px x 608px 600 x 315 min. resolution	1.91:1

Instagram Stories: Images & Video

Orientation	Size	Aspect Ratio
Any	1080px x 1920px	9:16

Instagram Reels

Orientation	Size	Aspect Ratio
Any	1080px x 1920px	9:16

Instagram Video Requirements:
- 30 frames per second
- 60 seconds in length
- File size of 4 GB

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Social Media Image & Video Requirements: IGTV, Twitter & Nextdoor

IGTV Posts

Orientation	Aspect Ratio
Vertical	4:5 (min) to 9:16 (max)
Horizontal	5:4 (min) to 16:9 (max)
One-minute preview	4:5 in the user feed 1:1 in 9-grid

IGTV Posts: Cover Image

Orientation	Size
Rectangle	420px x 654px

Twitter

Location	Size	Aspect Ratio
Profile Photo	400px x 400px	1:1
Header Photos	1500px x 500px	3:1
In-Stream Photos	1600px x 675px	16:9

Nextdoor

Location	Size	Aspect Ratio
Post	1080px x 608px	16:9
Video	50MB	
Thumbnail Photo	128px x 128px	1:1
Banner	540px x 180px	3:1
Cover Image	1156px x 650px	16:9
Logo Image	540px x 180px	3:1

Social Media Image & Video Requirements: LinkedIn & YouTube

LinkedIn

Location	Size	Aspect Ratio
Profile Photo	400px x 400px	1:1
Cover Photo	1584px x 396px	4:1
Blog Post Link Images	1200px x 627px	1.91:1
Stories	1080px x 1920px	9:16
Company Page Logo	300px x 300px	1:1
Company Page Cover	2228px x 376px	5:9

YouTube

Location	Size	Aspect Ratio
Profile Photo	800px x 800px	1:1
Banners	2048px x 1152px	1:7
Video	1280px x 720px	16:9
Thumbnail	1280px x 720px	16:9

Social Media Image & Video Requirements: Facebook

Facebook: Images

Location	Size	Aspect Ratio
Profile Picture	400px x 400px	1:1
Event Cover Photo	1920px x 1005px	1.91:1
Cover Group Photo	1920px x 1005px	1.91:1
Business Page Cover	1200px x 674px	16:9
Profile Cover Photo	1125px x 633px	2.7:1
Photo Post	1200px x 630px	1.91:1
Video Post	1280px x 720px	16:9
Linked Image	1200px x 630px	1.91:1
Stories	1080px x 1920px	9:16
"Our Story" Cover	1200px x 445px	2.7:1
Ad (Carousel)	1080px x 1080px	1:1
Ad (Single Image)	1200px x 628px	1.91:1
Catalog Image	1080px x 1080px	1:1

Facebook: Instant Feed Video

Orientation	Size	Aspect Ratio
Square	1080px x 1080px	4:5

4GB max file size, 1 second (min) to 241 (max) length

Facebook Stories: Video

Orientation	Size	Aspect Ratio
Square	1080px x 1080px	1:1

Accessible Design Guidelines

The City is committed to making the brand available and enjoyable to everyone.

The following is recommended to improve the accessibility of the brand:

Text size, fonts and readability

- It is recommended that website font size be at least 18px, and print or digital files be at least 11pt.
- The City brand fonts use simple fonts that are easy to read. All City materials must use the selected fonts to ensure accessibility.
- Make hyperlinks descriptive; avoid using phrases like *click here*.
- Use short, simple sentences that are in plain language to increase readability.

Color

- Maintain color contrast between text colors and background colors.
- Don't use color alone to convey information (i.e. avoid a phrase like *follow the red signs*).

CITY OF AGOURA HILLS BRAND GUIDELINES

Writing Style Guidelines

The City has established a preferred writing style to maintain the brand by providing a consistent presentation throughout all of our printed and digital communications.

When writing for the City, the tone is friendly, welcoming, clear, and concise for readers.

The City of Agoura Hills uses the **Associated Press Style** as the default writing style with few deviations. AP Style is considered the standard reference for journalists worldwide to ensure consistency and clarity.

Strive for a professional, consistent tone across the written materials. City staff reports to Council or legal documents may reflect a more formal tone than information on upcoming recreation opportunities or special events.

The tips below allow for flexibility in writing based on the City's needs and departments.

Please contact the City Manager's Office with questions.

Writing Style Guidelines: AP Style Quick Reference Tips

- **Dates should not include st, nd, rd after the date.**
- When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec.
  - Ex: The next City Council Meeting is Oct. 28, 2022.
- Spell out dates when using alone or with only a year.
  - There are two council meetings in October.

Days of the Week
- Capitalize days of the week.
- Spell out days of the week.

Hours
- Use figures except for noon and midnight.
- Use a colon to separate hours from minutes.
- Use the following format for times that start on the hour.
  - Ex: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Numbers
- Spell out numbers under 10, except for the ages of people and animals.

- Use digits for 10 and over.
- For millions, use a figure followed by "million" (13 million, 3 million).
- Ordinal numbers one through nine should be spelled out. Figures should be used for one through 9. The exceptions are geographic, military or political (ex: 7th Street or 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals)
  - Ex: He took home first place in the art contest.
  - Ex: The office was located on the 76th floor.

Percentage
- Use % not "percent"
  - Ex: 50% or 0.7%
- Spell out the percentage when used at the beginning of a sentence
  - Ex: Ninety-nine percent of people love living in Agoura Hills.

Phone Numbers
- Use the area code with phone numbers.
- Area code should be set of with dashes.
  - Ex: (818)597-0000

Writing Style Guidelines: AP Style Quick Reference Tips

Acronyms
- Avoid acronyms and abbreviations.
- If using them, the first reference to the organization or industry-specific term abbreviation or acronym should be the entire term.

Addresses
- Only abbreviate Avenue, Boulevard and Street when used with numbered address. Any similar words such as Drive, Road, Circle or Terrace are always spelled out and capitalized.
  - Ex: 125 Agoura Hills St.
- When a formal street name appears without a numbered address, spell out the full name and capitalize it.
  - Ex: Agoura Hills Street

Citizen
- Cities do not have citizens. Only countries can confer citizenship.
- City residents should be referred to as public, residents, community members or other similar terms.

City Departments
- The reference to City department is capitalized when it is the proper name only.
  - Ex: City of Agoura Hills Community Services Department
  - Ex: The department will hold a meeting.

City Departments
- Information to come

Commas
- Do not use a comma before the conjunction in a simple series.
  - Ex: The flag is red, white and blue.
- Use a comma before the conjunction in a complex series.
  - Ex: He likes turkey, peanut butter and jelly, and ham sandwiches.

Dates
- Months should be capitalized

Writing Style Guidelines: AP Style Quick Reference Tips
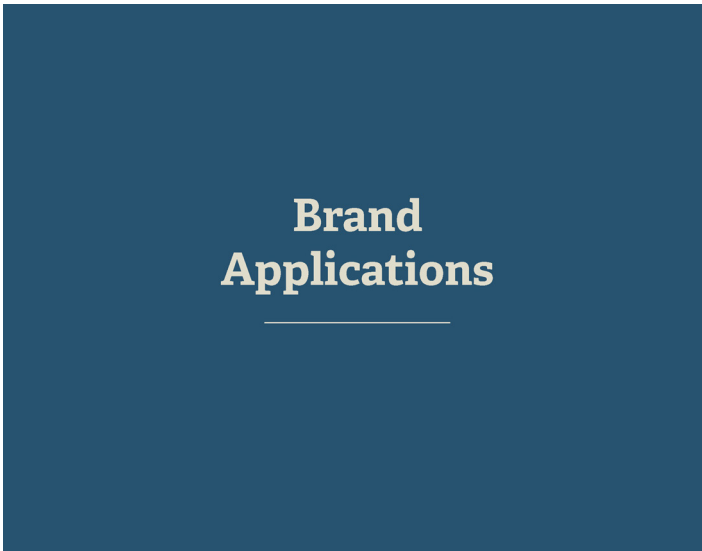
Titles
- All titles should be uppercase. This is a City style that deviates from AP Style.
  - Nathan Hamburger, City Manager, opened up the meeting.
  - City Manager Nathan Hamburger opened up the meeting.
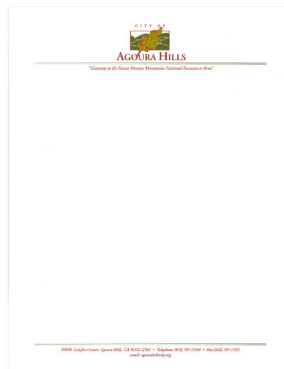
Web Addresses
- Use "www" in reference to website addresses.
- Capitalize each word in website addresses.
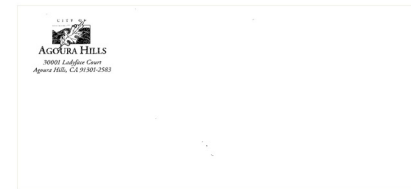 - Ex: www.AgouraHillsCity.org

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Brand Applications

Stationary: #10 Envelope

Stationary: Letterhead

Stationary: Business Card

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Stationary: Correspondence Cards & Envelopes

Digital: Zoom Background
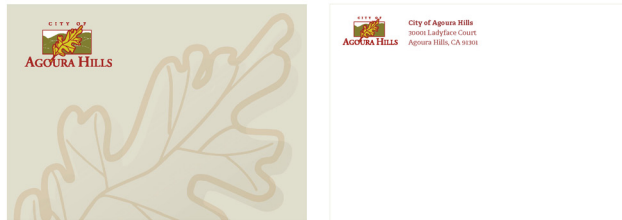
Digital: Email Signature

The City has created a 40-year logo that should
be used in the e-signature during 2022.

Collateral: Flyers

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Collateral: Official City Statements/Public Info Flyers

Collateral: PowerPoint

City General Template
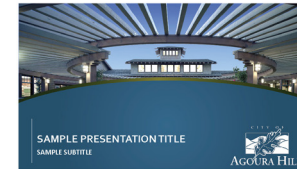
Community Services Template

Collateral: Press Releases

City Agendas & Reports: Agenda Staff Report Template
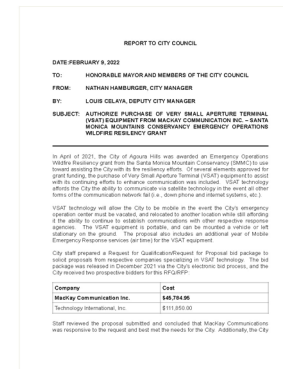
CITY OF AGOURA HILLS BRAND GUIDELINES

City Agendas & Reports: Resolution Template


City Fleet Vehicle Identification
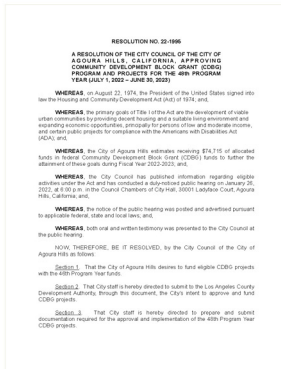
City Vendor Identification

SOCIAL MEDIA (BEFORE)

Social media posts displayed inconsistent colors, fonts and branding, which made it difficult for the public to know if this was City content or that of another agency.

SOCIAL MEDIA (AFTER)

Thanks to developing templates, a color palette and fonts as part of the brand guide, the City's social media has a polished, consistent look and feel.
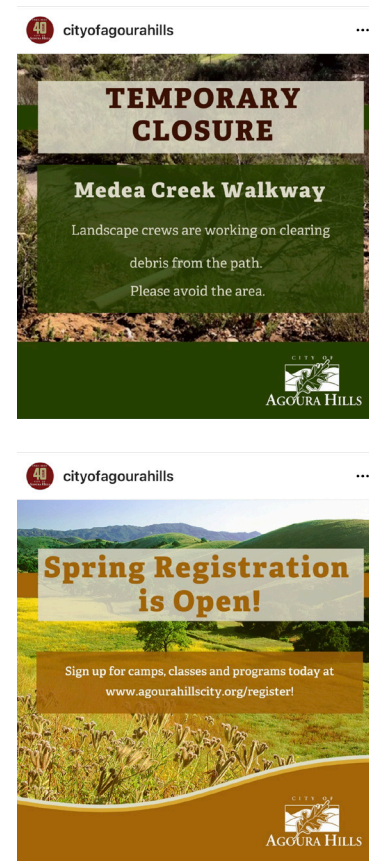
CITY OF AGOURA HILLS GENERAL PLAN (BEFORE)

Prior to the brand refresh, City reports and documents displayed inconsistent branding.

CITY OF AGOURA HILLS GENERAL PLAN (AFTER)

Now, agency reports and documents follow fonts, color and image standards set forth in the brand guide, such as this cover sheet for the City's General Plan.
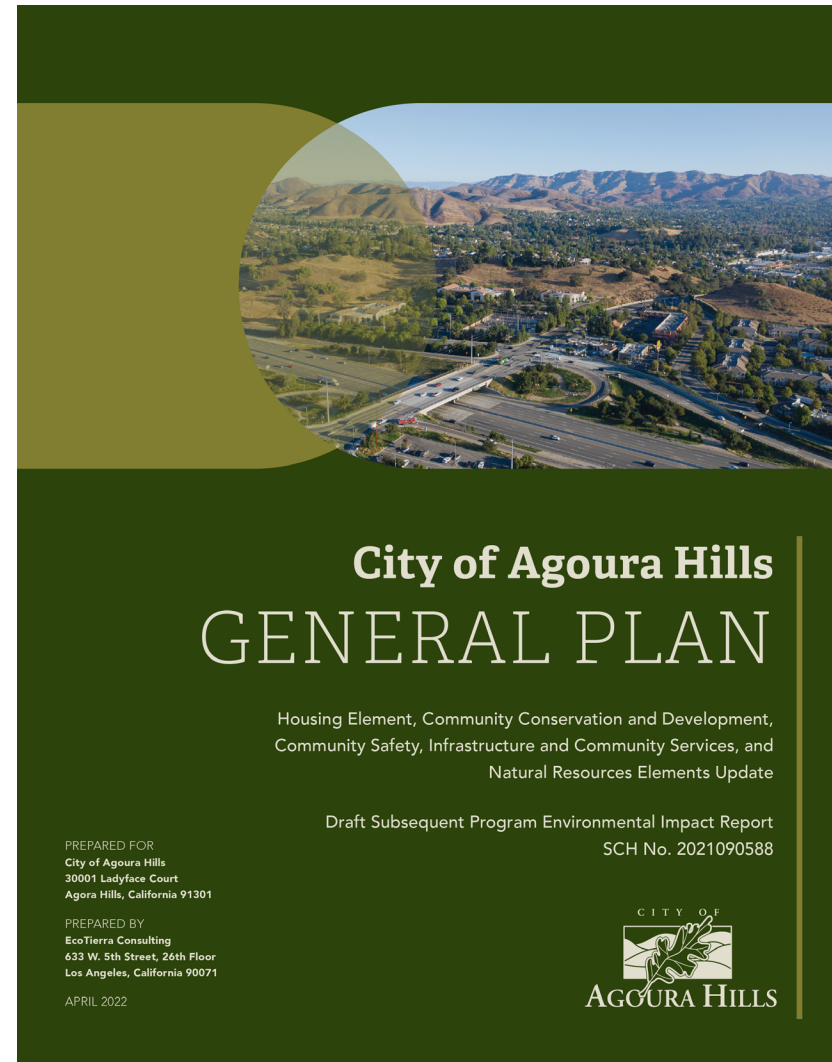
SB 1383 OUTREACH

The City's communications campaigns, such as its outreach for new organics recycling, display consistent, professional branding.

CALIFORNIA RECYCLING ORGANIC LAWS ARE CHANGING

cityofagourahills Did you know all residents and businesses in California will be required to recycle organics starting next year? SB 1383 goes into effect January 1, 2022 and will change... more

December 22, 2021

KNOW WHAT TO THROW THROUGH THE ORGANICS RECYCLING PROGRAM

MANDATORY ORGANICS RECYCLING STARTS JAN 1., 2022

MANDATORY ORGANICS RECYCLING STARTS JAN. 1, 2022
Residential and Commercial Programs Now Available

State-mandated SB 1383 goes into effect Jan. 1, 2022. There are several residential and commercial programs available. Organic waste keeps billions of dollars in uneaten food annually out of landfills and reduces greenhouse gas emissions that lead to climate change.

ORGANIC WASTE IS

Green Waste | Landscaping Waste | Food Waste

REQUIREMENTS

Residential
Place food waste directly into the green waste cart (no plastic bags allowed).

Commercial/Multifamily
Contact your trash provider to establish service.

? Contact City of Agoura Hills City Manager's Office at 818-597-7314 or the City's solid waste consultant, Solid Waste Solutions, at 805-495-7521 or visit AgouraHillsCity.org.