

'Forged In': Beloit rebranded

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The City of Beloit has been forged by its past, which will continue to carry it forward.

That's the message community leaders want to send with a new branding project taken up by the city and several partner organizations including Visit Beloit, The Greater Beloit Chamber of Commerce, The Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation and the Downtown Beloit Association.

Officials from all the organizations worked on a new brand over the last year, said Monica Krysztopa, executive director for Visit Beloit. The goal was to create a unified branding vision for Beloit, and allow each participating organization to have flexibility in delivering their own message.

"What we wanted to make sure when we started is that we could all have one voice and have a cohesive look, but we also wanted to allow for each partner organization to have some individuality and creativity that they can use to help define themselves," she said.

The new logo features different shapes making up the letter B, and the tag line that will go along with the campaign is "Forged In." Each organization can use that tag line to convey its own message.

"So Visit Beloit will be using 'Forged In Adventure,'" Krysztopa said. "But we can change it based on the target market."

Krysztopa said a team of nearly 85 people started discussing the new brand in October 2013, and worked in small groups to brainstorm ideas.

"They looked at our history and wanted something that would give a nod and recognition to our history while still moving it forward," she said. "It's really a nod to our manufacturing groups."

The Beloit City Council will get its first look at the new logo and branding campaign tonight during its meeting. Shauna El-Amin, executive director for the Downtown Beloit Association, said the rebranding is more than just a new logo, but a first step in creating a new message for the city.

"We were always talking about the old Beloit Corp. and those things that have since closed," she said. "This is talking about where have we gone and where we are now. We need to forge ahead."

El-Amin said the new brand is similar to the "Be In It" tag line used by some community organizations, but it was never fully adopted by the entire city. The new "Forged In" campaign looks to bring multiple organizations together.

"It was time to revisit (the brand)," she said. "We wanted to come up with something new to be branded for the whole community. Be In It was never taken over by the city so we wanted to include the city in on the new brand."

El-Amin said all the promotions the DBA does will include the new brand, and it will hopefully be recognizable not just as the DBA, but as part of Beloit.

“If someone is going out in the community and seeing this brand being used they...will be able to identify them and see that we are all working together cohesively,” she said.

Beth Jacobsen, assistant to the city manager, said the city is excited to present the new logo to the council. She said some council members have been a part of the discussions on the new brand, but others have not seen the new logos as of yet.