



# MEMO

**To: Economic development Standing Committee**

**From: The Manager of Economic Development**

**Date: May 29, 2023**

**Subject: Elliot Lake Branded Merchandise**

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Historically, the City of Elliot Lake had printed and sold branded merchandise. Much of these sales occurred at the Welcome Centre Trailer, at the Pool and the Civic Centre. The availability of branded items serves as an opportunity to generate revenue to offset tourism initiatives, and are a very powerful promotional tool. A good, quality, City Of Elliot Lake branded piece of apparel or promotional item displayed outside of the City serves as a conversation starter and an advertisement. These items are also great gifts for dignitaries or guests of the City.

As the Economic Development Department has a mandate to focus on Tourism, staff have undertaken the responsibility to design and source a small selection of items. The first phase of this project has staff sourcing a T-shirt, hoodie, onsie and a campfire mug. There will be one colour of each and all will feature an in house designed logo. The products will be of the utmost quality in order to not tarnish the City's image. The T-shirt will feature a direct to garment printing method; while the other 2 clothing items will have a screen print. Subsequent phases of this initiative will depend on the success of phase 1. Costs on the individual pieces are forthcoming, but the goal of the project is to be profitable or cost neutral at worst.

The goal of this project is not to compete with local retailers. In order to work with our businesses, staff are proposing that all items are made available to Elliot Lake retailers at cost so they too can carry the product line and generate revenue. The increased distribution channels can also help promote the Exploreelliotlake.com brand and the City's exposure. Staff are also limiting current sourcing of the products to local suppliers.

In an effort to foster teamwork and as an employee incentive, branded items will be made available to staff at cost as an employee appreciation bonus. This along with the additional distribution through retailers should increase the volume of items ordered and therefore lowering product costs and increasing margins for both the City and for retailers.

A second design is in the works through the "Merch Design Contest". There was a call out to local artists to create a logo to be featured on the next wave of clothing. Staff will reach out to Council to have 3 members join the selection committee in the coming weeks.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Antunes