

Memorandum

To: The Board of Supervisors, CAO’s Office and County Counsel
From: Nicholas M. Pasculli, County Communications Director
Date: November 10, 2022, Revised: January 31, 2023 R3 April 25, 2023

Explanation of a popular mark in relationship to the County’s new branding policy and guidelines under development.

Popular Mark Logos

Popular Mark Logos are becoming very commonplace in local government marketing and communications practices. Most local governments (cities, counties, and state) utilize what is referred to as a seal, however, here in the County of Monterey we do not have a seal; we have a county emblem. The County emblem is the formal visual identifier of our government institution.



In recent years, governments have been moving in a direction of developing brand identification that is more approachable, and less “official” or “bureaucratic.” In addition, this



approach to branding is not intended to replace the formal visual identifier of the government entity but to create a connection with the geographic area of that entity. The most recent example of this in our County is the City of Salinas.

There are dozens of counties in California and hundreds in our nation that have moved in this direction. The idea of a popular mark is as much of a brand identifier as it is a promotion of the region, and the approachability of its government entity. Additionally, it streamlines the branding process of those departments that may want to use something other than the County emblem, while at the same time, keeping a consistent look and feel for our County. This ultimately saves time, money and resources.

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Our neighboring county to the south, the County of San Luis Obispo, has implemented a popular mark as part of their county government's branding for these very reasons. In fact, they



have already gone through the process that we are currently going through of updating our county emblem, and they have already implemented a new logo/popular mark. They have also recently completed their new branding standards which we too are in the process of doing. Depicted here is the official seal on the left and the

popular mark on the right. The biggest distinction between their process and ours is that they spent upwards of \$23,000; other counties have spent upwards of \$30,000 due to utilizing outside professional services. We here in the County of Monterey are doing all the work internally, and not relying on outside vendors. That is a huge savings to the County, and most importantly, to our taxpayers.

Rational & Recommendation

Moving forward, the County Communications Director is recommending that the official County of Monterey emblem should be used on its own in all formal, ceremonial and/or official contexts that relate specifically to official Board of Supervisors and CAO's Office correspondence, legal documents, notices, mandates, PowerPoint presentations, and/or resolutions approved by the Board of Supervisors.

By default, the official emblem should not be used when the purpose is everyday communication to the general public, such as social media, department news releases, e-mail footers, government vehicles, business cards, letterhead, etc., unless otherwise approved by the County Communications Director in the CAO's Office.

The popular mark, unlike the seal which must be used in all formal and official contexts directly related to the Board of Supervisors and CAO's Office, will represent the County in informal or departmental public communications and in internal County communications. As such, it is the primary point of visual contact for the general public with respect to the County's identity.

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The popular mark must be used in all official County contexts *not relating to the County Board of Supervisors*. These contexts include internal County correspondence, news releases, internal and external departmental memos, digital media, e-mail signatures, social media, printed outreach and marketing materials, government vehicles, public PowerPoint presentations, etc., wherein personable appeal and/or everyday communication to the general public is desired.

The popular mark should be the default logo in nearly all instances. When in doubt, contact the County Communications Director in the County Administrative Office.

Below is the rendering of the popular mark developed by a group of County employees and County Communications which will be presented to the Board of Supervisors on March 16, 2023 for adoption. This popular mark, along with the updated County emblem and revised County ordinance regulating the use of the official emblem, will complete the final components of the County’s Brand Identity Policy and Style Guidelines.

