

Proposals for the implementation of Destination City - APPENDIX 1 – The Implementation Plan

Moving Forward

To fully realise the potential of Destination City, and to meet its ambitious targets for footfall and spend, high priority strategic projects will need to be undertaken over the next five months to inform and enable the long-term delivery programme.

Implementation Plan: Key Priorities for Destination City Business Plan

Project	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	March 23
1. Brand Identity						
2. Destination Website						
3. Insights Programme						
4. Commercial Partnership Strategy						
5. Destination City Delivery Programme						
6. Culture Mile Transition						
7. Stakeholder Engagement Strategy						
8. Partnership Promotion Strategy						
9. Measurement Framework						

To note: timing may change as projects evolve. This timeline assumes appointment of Head of Promotion by January 2023.

1. Brand Identity

The review recommended developing the City's identity and bringing its story to life, shining a light on its unique and diverse offer with confidence and pride. This is essential to challenge any negative perceptions that the City is closed or quiet, exclusive, expensive or just about work. Grounded in place-based research, it must be a compelling and 'distinctly City' proposition that drives local, national and global profile, increased footfall, dwell time and spend. The brand identity should capture the spirit and global significance of the City, past, present and future. It must be bold, and exceptional, to punch its weight as a global destination.

The brand will be defined by key pillars that champion our unique and rich proposition. The brand pillars will form the foundation of all outward messaging and shape the character of our tactical delivery programme. It will provide a tone of voice and visual identity to inspire, attract and engage with audiences both in the public domain and online. The brand will

create a distinct and authoritative voice for the Square Mile, ensuring it can stand out and be desirable in an increasingly crowded marketplace.

Outcome:

- i) the brand position: that is, the central message of the brand
- ii) the brand pillars: our key identity pillars and what we become known for
- iii) the brand identity; bringing our proposition to life through online and offline visualisation
- iv) the marketing strategy that communicates with and connects people to the City, giving them a reason to visit, stay, spend and return

Timings: The brand development work is due to complete in March 2023.

2. Destination Website

The review recommended that the Corporation create a new destination digital landing page or microsite to become the repository for the consumer leisure offer. Following further consideration, it was agreed to truly amplify the new brand and drive advocacy, it required a standalone website. An agency has been commissioned to design and develop the website as part of the branding project. A review of existing City branded digital channels will be undertaken and where possible these will be consolidated under the new brand to ensure clear and consistent messaging.

This will act as the gateway to the physical customer experience and should set the tone for what to expect when visiting but also improve the In Real Life experience. It will act as a showcase to the City's extensive and unique offer providing a vehicle in which to engage audiences and encourage footfall, dwell time and spend.

The website will not compete with but complement and amplify the promotional platforms of our partners including but not limited to Cultural Partners, local BIDs, SMEs, tourism and media platforms.

The website will act as an inspirational hub and directory to local workers, residents and visitors alike. Content will be dynamic so that audiences can tailor their use of the platform to their specific needs.

Outcome:

- i) A dynamic mobile optimised website with world class UX* design and functionality
- ii) An inspirational content hub that excites, inspires and converts visitors
- iii) A destination directory that enhances wayfinding and encourages dwell time
- iv) A promotional platform for Destination City activity, the wider business offering and future commercial partnerships

Timings: The website is due to complete and launch in the first half of 2023.

*user experience

3. Insights Programme

The review recommended a regular programme of benchmarking and data capture. Subsequent exploration of data sources available across the corporation and our limited access to advanced analytics from third party data providers has highlighted the need to build a Destination City insights programme. The current challenge faced is that the Corporation has limited and fragmented data sets and therefore reporting capability. For example, we do not track daily footfall data across the Square Mile but this is a target of success so this needs to be addressed.

The development of a data programme will require divisional leads to identify key data sets, gaps in reporting capabilities and define the insights brief. We recommend a taskforce is set up with representatives from the following teams: Corporate Strategy, Built Environment, Transport, Communications & Corporate Affairs, Research & Intelligence and Destination City.

We will work with key London, national and international partners across travel, tourism, media, tech and business sectors to access new and important data on market performance, customer behaviours, social and economic outlooks and future trends. This data will be critical in ensuring our decisions are made based on reliable insights over assumptions.

We will need to review best in class insights programmes that we can learn from, drawing upon their successes to inform our approach. London's West End works with PwC to gather deep dive insights that power local decision making at a BID and industry level (see: [Data Stories: New West End Company – PwC UK](#)).

Critical to the success of this programme's value at both an internal and external level will be the appointment of a data and insights intelligence operator to design, develop and manage the programme. It is intended that the brief will be drafted in December with a view to appointing a provider in early 2023. The successful supplier will advise on the approach, proposed data sets, proposed solutions to collating required data and the costings to bring together existing and new sources of data in a meaningful way to produce advanced analytics.

Whilst the programme is being developed, we will renew our membership with the GLA to continue to avail of its High Streets Data Service.

Outcomes:

- i) reliable and in-depth analysis of market and consumer performance and future trends
- ii) insight rich data to help inform strategic decisions, shape delivery programmes and KPI setting
- iii) a vehicle in which to assess performance against set targets and reassess priorities where necessary, aligning with Corporation's measurement dashboard

Timings: Data brief to be developed and strategic approach undertaken by March 2023. Dedicated Resource required for ongoing management and development of programme.

4. Commercial Partnership Strategy

The review recommended the Corporation bolster its resource through brand sponsorship and value in kind partnerships. Aspirational targets were set around the ambition to deliver a 3:1 ROI on activity.

In order to set targets and create a commercial strategy, we need to identify and differentiate fundraising avenues and partners groups based on the potential opportunity:

- 1) partners that present funding opportunities through involvement in their programmes
- 2) brands that drive value-in-kind opportunities through their promotional platforms
- 3) brands that drive budget relief through funding our infrastructure and activity
- 4) sponsor specific brands that drive commercial income through rights holder association

We will need to commission a Rights Holder Sponsorship agency to conduct an asset inventory list, create a sponsorship structure, build partnership packages, solicit sponsors, oversee negotiations and manage partner delivery against contractual agreements.

We will work closely with the Environment team to undertake the asset inventory and valuation process. This workstream should also work in conjunction with their Commercial Strategy. We will work closely with our Cultural partners and the BIDs to define the categories and criteria for partnership opportunities. All partnerships must align with our new brand pillars and complement the Square Mile's offering. Partnerships should not be focused on solely delivering revenue for the Corporation but also support our ambitions to enhance the destination's profile across key audience groups and ultimately drive footfall and conversion.

We must also carefully and clearly define our value proposition to potential partners. Well renowned brands will make decisions based on perceived brand alignment between as well as the desirability to activate in the City as a destination – asset value, potential eyeball reach etc. Data will play a key role in building out partnership packages and informing partner decision making. Commercial brands typically require a 12-month turnaround for new partnership deals and are represented by media buying agencies.

There are huge gains to be had from the realisation of establishing new and successful brand partnerships not least from a financial income and budget relief perspective but also in driving global awareness and impact, enhancing the City's brand credibility through association and building stronger audience advocacy.

Outcomes:

- i) set up sponsor brand guidelines that create a framework that members and external stakeholders agree with
- ii) create a rightsholder package that attracts and converts target sponsors
- iii) work with brands that drive impactful activations and connect with relevant customer bases to drive footfall and spend
- iv) drive additional revenue streams and budget relief to the corporation

Timings: The commercial brief will be set in December with the agency appointed in 2023. Sponsorship strategy to be finalised in 2023 and first major sponsorship deal delivered in 2024.

5. Destination City Delivery Programme

In order to drive change, we must embrace change. We propose that our brand promise – what people can always expect from us – is to be welcoming; innovative; inclusive; accessible; safe; and sustainable. This promise will run through all aspects of Destination City. Our mission is to create exceptional experiences that are distinctively city for residents, workers and visitors through a seasonal programme of Major and Mini activations and an Always On world class leisure offering.

We will work collaboratively through the Chief Officer and Officer groups to deliver our promise. We will use the City Plan as the primary way to implement approaches in cultural developments, transport, pedestrianisation, animation, safety and crime prevention, hygiene, facilities, wayfinding, the built environment and so on.

Underpinned by sustainability, inclusivity and innovation, Destination City's activation programme will be based around the brand pillars developed as part of the brand review. We will seek to create district identities around our brand pillars which will inform programming and partnership delivery across the Square Mile. These will be subject to refinement during the brand review process but seek to encompass with the below themes:

- **History and heritage.** A City dripping in treasures and stories of the past, present and future. A City founded on a spirit of enterprise and innovation, open to discovery and excited to share its story with the world.
- **Culture and creativity.** A City as comfortable with the roof top concert, as the conservatoire; the pop-up, pop-art as the gallery. A City that continues to inspire invention, making and design – and the talent who want to excel.
- **Shopping and socialising.** A City of fun, colour and lightness. With vibrant clusters and a destination retail-hospitality offer that entices people to stay.
- **Wellness.** A City where everyone is welcomed and included. A City of community and connections, education and enrichment, relaxation and renewal.

Over the next two months we will work closely with internal colleagues and partners to undertake research and development that will shape the creative ideas and programme of delivery for tactical activity. We will work with the BIDs and Cultural partners to understand their respective programmes so as to populate an umbrella calendar of activity across the City that we can promote. An overarching calendar will also enable us to identify opportunities where we can unite efforts to deliver more impact activity and drive greater footfall. A calendar of City and London activity will also enable us to identify the best times of year to active our Major Destination City activations. Working towards a more partner led ethos where 'the whole is greater than the sum of our parts.'

Our approach to delivering a successful Destination City will be to focus on:

- 1) The Welcome – promote connectivity and create a sense of arrival and atmosphere
- 2) Wayfinding – breakdown fortress like navigation barriers and create ease of discovery
- 3) Wow Factor – create a world class environment with incredible activations, events and a diverse Always On leisure offering

The aim during this period is to build a cohesive programme of animating the City to build durational consumer engagement. Integral to the research and development period is building relationships with all stakeholders including internally BIDs, Livery Companies, commercial and potential partners and consumers for realising a multi-layered and vibrant animation of the City as a global destination to work, visit and play.

Outcomes:

- i. **WELCOME:** We will build relationships with TfL, Heathrow and Central Activity Zone partnerships to leverage the Elizabeth Line opportunity. We will promote unprecedented intercity connectivity and create opportunities to drive cross-destination sharing of audiences.

Through our commercial strategy we will seek out street dressing opportunities to inject vibrancy into the public realm and create a sense of arrival. We will bring together Cultural Partners, asset managers and small businesses (through the BIDs) to set a standard for exceptional customer service across all front-of-house roles.

- ii. **WAYFINDING:** We will take a multi-layered approach to develop wayfinding across the Square Mile. We will look at animation opportunities and digital solutions to improve signposting. Drawing on the heritage on key mapping points and working with our relevant cultural partners we will commission artists to create physical and digital integrated Wayfinding around the Square Mile in the form of sculpture / soundscape / digital animation.

In addition to this Wayfinding initiative, we are working with CoL departments to map out famous film locations across the Square Mile to create instagrammable trails and encourage dwell time. These initial ideas will be grown as we develop our animation strategy and activation programme. We will work closely with colleagues in Planning and Policy to align workstreams on shared objectives.

- iii. **WOW FACTOR:** The review recommended a 'less is more' approach when it comes to delivering exceptional activations. We will work to establish a seasonal structure of animating the City, by establishing and leveraging Cultural Partner and BID level activity.

Our focus will be to create high impact seasonal activity that 1) generates global profile, 2) attracts sponsorship and 3) drives footfall and sales. Provisional timings for 2023 Activations are end of May and end of September /beginning of October. The objective is for seasonal programming in conjunction with cultural partners and attractions to create multiple events over a 2-4 week period under the umbrella of Destination City. The festival concept will maximize footfall and durational consumer engagement. The Wow Factor proposition will take time to commission to reflect the heritage, entrepreneurship and high quality that the City is renowned for.

Beyond our seasonal calendar of activations, it is essential that we reinvigorate the Always On offer to be enjoyed every day. Without this we cannot drive sustained economic growth. In order to future proof the City's desirability as a great place to invest, work, live and visit the leisure and cultural offering needs to be improved and reimaged. We will work closely with the local BIDs, developers, managing agents and colleagues to feed into the long-term retail and hospitality strategy.

In 2020, Westminster City Council work with the local BIDs to successful launch a Pilot Pop Up Programme. It was created as a necessary intervention to address the growing number of empty voids, attract new and diverse brand and ultimately improve its attractiveness as a destination to local workers and visitors. This continues to be a key priority for the West End and other central activity zone locations.

Timings: Build out Spring Programme between Oct – March. Build out Autumn Programme between March – September. Build out 2024 programme in 2023.

6. Culture Mile Transition

Over the coming months we will transition the City Corporation's existing Culture Mile project to become an integrated and significant component of Destination City.

Funded largely by the City Corporation since 2017, in its first 5 years Culture Mile has developed the credentials of the area between Farringdon and Moorgate as a culture and learning destination. As a project it has demonstrated agility, creative vision and exemplary collaboration between the partner organisations. As a project Culture Mile has provided a compelling context for the significant City Corporation led investment in the transformation, through major capital and public realm projects, of that part of the Square Mile.

The transition process will engage Culture Mile's substantial stakeholder base, explaining the positioning of Culture as a key component of Destination City. Existing Culture Mile branding and messaging will be weaved into the new Destination City brand proposition and website.

The Destination team will establish how Culture Mile's approach to using the arts and heritage to engage diverse visitor groups with places and spaces can now be scaled and strengthened as a defining aspect of Destination City.

Alongside these proposals, work continues to align the City Corporation's strategic intentions around Destination and the world class calibre of its cultural offer with the mechanisms in the planning system that can support these ambitions. A cross-departmental collaboration between Environment, Destination and Culture Mile has connected cultural expertise into planning assessment process and enabled a diverse range of commitments to culture (in the broadest sense) to be secured from developers, principally through Section 106 negotiations. Outline research has been undertaken into a Supplementary Planning Guidance document for Culture which may be proposed for adoption alongside the City Plan in 2023.

Outcomes:

- To be defined

This work is informed by the policy context of the London Plan, the City Corporation's own Planning Obligations SPD (adopted 2021) and the emerging City Plan 2040 (the development of which is informed by significant public enthusiasm, from public consultation in spring 2022, for cultural gains to be made through the planning system).

Timings: Communicate Transition to key stakeholders in November. Complete Transition by March.

7. Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

For Destination City to be successful it will require the establishment of collaborative private-public sector partnerships with a shared vision and unified approach to deliver sustained economic growth to the City of London.

We will work closely with the BIDs to shape this stakeholder plan, building in best practice processes to include more transparency in communication, longer lead times and input into

strategic and tactical programmes where relevant. We will work with them to unlock insights and budgets to fund the Destination City Programme where ideas are aligned with the BID's mandates. We cannot manage SME's directly nor should we propose doing so, rather we should work with the BIDs to create programmes that resonate with and secure participation across their respective business memberships.

Within the Destination City team, we will create a new CRM system that maps out, manages and maintains key stakeholder data sets. We will work closely with colleagues across the organisation to share important Destination City information and activities so that they can extend to relevant networks.

8. Promotional Partnership Strategy

To build upon existing audiences and attract new audiences, we will develop our relationships with key tourism bodies including the GREAT campaign and Visit London to ensure the City has a strong share of voice on a national and international level.

We will seek out opportunities to work with developers, landlords and managing agents to gain insight from, communicate with and convert local workers into advocates who not only want to spend their professional time but leisure time in the Square Mile.

We will work with travel partners and hotels to build up our hospitality offering and tourism proposition to attract overseas and domestic tourists. We will seek out opportunities to create new and exciting visitor programmes, working with our Cultural partners and using our destination channels to provide content and experiences that resonate with these audiences and their motivations.

We will work with the Communications Team to develop our marketing and communications strategy. We will seek out and develop relationships with influential media partners that have an authoritative voice and resonate with our target audiences. This will enhance Destination City's brand credibility and audience reach.

Outcomes for 7 and 8:

- i) City of London and City BIDs engagement framework
- ii) Destination City Marketing and Communications strategy

Timings: Build relationships over the next 5 months, to be implemented across the year.

9. Measurement Framework

In order to inform business planning, set targets and assess performance, we need to have a robust measurement framework in place. All KPIs must be measurable, and provisions made to address gaps in current reporting capabilities. Over the coming months, the Destination City team will work together to build out a RAG style reporting tracker in line with the development of the Insights Programme and the Corporation's measurement dashboard. It will enable projects to be benchmarked where there isn't historical data.

It will provide the team with a focused approach to delivery and measurable objectives that link strictly back to achieving our overarching goals – to increase footfall and sales.

Similarly initial targets that were set for Destination City may need to be recalibrated to ensure they are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time Bound. This approach

will help us identify the building blocks required to meet these targets. It will also offer flexibility to allow for unforeseen changes that require a realignment of priorities and supporting strategies.

Outcomes:

- i) a framework in which to assess performance against set targets and reassess priorities where necessary, presented within a dashboard, and aligning with the Corporate Performance Framework.

Timings: April 2023