



Attachment C – 2023 Carrboro Brand Guidelines Update

Decision Making for Racial Equity

Tool – Pocket Questions

○ What are the racial impacts?

The racial impact of this brand update is through the establishment of new Town logos to help draw public attention and participation with seasonal observances. These include Black History Month to recognize the role Black people have played in shaping our history, and Juneteenth, a holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. In addition, the new logo suite includes an update of the *Facing Race Embracing Equity* logo, which is used by the Chief Race and Equity Office on program materials for the Town's work in diversity, equity and inclusion.

The Council also requested consideration of the “Feel Free” tagline for the Town of Carrboro. Brand developers from The Splinter Group have communicated that the intention of the tagline meaning is to express *a feeling of optimism, encouragement, a lack of judgment – and as a result of being unencumbered, inspired to take risks.*

However, freedom for some is not freedom for all. Black Americans continue to struggle for freedom, justice and equity as they face the toll of everyday racism.

In response to a question about providing additional context, we are suggesting an update: “Feel Free to Be.” Freedom to be yourself is considered critically important to happiness and personal well being. It speaks to the following: “I am enough, I am worthy, I am good, I am loved, I have what I need, or I am a success.”

The purpose of the tagline is to communicate with consumers about the Carrboro brand and create a memorable impression. The meaning expands under “Feel Free to Be” to convey that Carrboro is a community that encourages people to express themselves authentically. This is a place where you can discover your “true” self — the part of you that reflects your authentic passions and interests and find a more fulfilling life.

Also, we recognize that not everyone perceives statements in the same way. “Feel Free” without context may sound cavalier to individuals of color who struggle against racial inequity and injustice.



- **Who is or will experience burden?**

Because the new logos (as well as the tagline update) will be used in broad communications – from banners to social media posts – they will affect everyone in the community - elected officials, boards, commissions, staff, community partners, and stakeholders. The logos may be interpreted differently and/or negatively in BIPOC communities that don't identify with the tagline or feel that it speaks to their experience. Some may feel it brings out negative reactions/impacts.

- **Who is or will experience benefit?**

Because the new logos will be used in broad communications – from banners to social media posts – they will affect everyone in the community - elected officials, boards, commissions, staff, community partners, and stakeholders. The logos may be received differently and/or positively by BIPOC communities that appreciate the Town's support for seasonal observances that connect with their cultures and identities. People who connect with the tagline may find it to be witty and memorable.

- **What are the root causes of inequity?**

In the past, the Town has incorporated fun and playful logo variations for some observances (Pride Month and Bike Month) and not for others. By looking at all the seasonal observances together, we can apply interesting and innovative design treatments to all the events our community values.

- **What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?**

An unintended consequence could be that the tagline is still misunderstood.

For people of a certain age, it may also bring to mind a song popular in the 1970s. Closely connected to "Feel Free to Be" is "Feel Free to Be ... You and Me" (Marlo Thomas, 1972). Yet the connection does not seem off-putting but rather well aligns to the intent of our tagline with the following song excerpt:

*To a land where the river runs free
To a land through the green country
To a land to a shining sea
To a land where the horses run free
To a land where the children are free
And you and me are free to be
And you and me are free to be
And you and me are free to be you and me*

