

# what visual identity can do for government communications



## Issue

*Inconsistent, unclear and cluttered public sector communication does not allow citizens to see what Government is doing for them.*

## Recommendation

*Governments run their own program to design and implement better visual identities: clear, consistent, community-appropriate and with continuity.*

## Background

What is a 'visual identity system'?



## Why does it matter?

- We process and remember visual messages much quicker and more easily than text. Better identity is a quick and simple way to improve all government communications.
- Government identity covers a lot of real estate (signage, trucks, websites, mail, buildings, billboards) so lots of potential for confusion - or opportunity for consistent 'branding'.

↑ Above: The City of Montréal, Canada, uses consistent visual identity for all aspects of services it delivers to residents

## Benefits

### 1. Transparency and accountability

Consistency increases recognition. The public sees where taxes are spent when it recognizes Government collecting trash, building highways, or not performing.

### 2. Connecting government and citizen

A visible government can show it is working for the public in its everyday actions. Consistency of message engenders trust, which helps government gather support and goodwill for initiatives.

### 3. Efficient Government

One design system saves time and money across different parts of government. The Netherlands' 'Project 1Logo' program saved 5m EUR p.a. (upfront 18m EUR).

### 4. Effective Government

Government departments and agencies can unite behind a shared identity and mission, shaking them out of 'silos', for easier collaboration.

### 5. Supporting economic growth

Places able to articulate quality of life, opportunities and assets attract and retain creative and productive global talent. Strong communication supports these aims.

## In practice

The British, German, Dutch, Canadian and Australian governments, plus states of Colorado, New York, and Tennessee and City of New York and Oakland, California have strong identity programs.