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Reinventing Indonesia's City Branding Strategy Through Conceptual Frameworks

Providing Ready to Use Tools for the Municipal Governments

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Abstract: City branding has gained increasing importance in recent years due to its perceived economic and political implications, necessitating the involvement of city governments and stakeholders in developing a successful cross-sectoral branding strategy. In this study, the researcher conducted a literature review and identified three critical dimensions - *politics and compliance, socioeconomics, and sustainability* - that must be considered when creating an implementation checklist for city regulators and executives. To address the research gap, the researcher developed a conceptual and practical framework that introduces three new terms - *city branding image objects, artifacts, and infrastructure* - essential in implementing city branding strategies in Indonesia. This study provides a comprehensive implementation framework checklist for city governments to ensure their branding strategy meets the three-dimensional criteria and has an appropriate implementation plan. Furthermore, the researcher expects that this article will initiate and stimulate a discussion on city branding strategies, anticipate that this study will offer an alternative perspective on city branding strategy and provide a valuable implementation tool for regulators, executives, and academics involved in city branding in Indonesia.

Keywords: city branding; regional branding; branding places; city brand strategy; city branding measurement; city branding implementation

1. Introduction

City branding has been raising concern lately in the quest to build a measurement model on the effectiveness and suitability of particular models in different settings and places (Florek et al., 2019). Involving the conceptual branding scheme is a matter of promoting the city and defining the identity of the place and community (Kavaratzis, 2007). Many researchers around the globe have been under rising hype about building such a measurement system (Florek et al., 2019) to cope with regional and area diversity (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019). Literature reviews on the Indonesian context the city branding has been cited on various implementations and showed the classic vulnerability of coordination mismatch between implementing agencies (Lestari et al., 2020). This classical problem creates a detrimental effect on the objective of city branding (Lestari et al., 2020). The convex views on comprehensive city branding benefit resulted in limited logos and jargon, not exceeding its benefit on societal perception of regional pride and even benefitted the industries (Govers, 2013).

As a vast archipelagic country comprised of a thousand islands (Ollivaud & Haxton, 2019), Indonesia deposited cultural diversities (Soekarba, 2018); the uniqueness of each region provides a potential for each region to build a distinctive and unique identity branding. As an agent of change, the municipal government is expected to initiate and formulate a relevant city branding strategy to create value-added benefits for the regional industry (Mihardja et al., 2019), providing a bolder communal identity (Riza et al., 2012) and a better impact on their future sustainability (Ripoll Gonzalez & Gale, 2023). Furthermore, the nuance of the Indonesian autonomous system offers greater flexibility for local governments to promote their respective identity into regional brands (Riyadi, 2009).

The city-branding potential theoretically represents the area or localities via a public mental image (Gretzel & Collier De Mendonça, 2019) nurtured by general knowledge (Anana & Nique, 2010) and visitors' experience (Kusumawati & Rahayu, 2022; Mostafa & Kasamani, 2020). These theoretical views explain how the brand itself could socially represent the brand's object by procuring public knowledge via various brand transmitters, namely imagery objects (Castillo-Villar, 2018; Dinnie, 2011), language jargon (Ladegaard & Jenks, 2015) and even circular information powered by word of mouth (Özmen & Ögel, 2020). This theory views brands as a social representation of an object, utilizing a collective social construct within the society and formed by social communication, education, and communal traditions (Castillo-Villar, 2018). Moreover, revising Ahn's model, which explicates the three primary steps the brand creation, Ahn mentioned brand evidence, brand hearsay influenced the distinctiveness of the brand and significantly brands' citizenship behavior (Ahn et al., 2016). The contextuality of the Ahn Model explains how the brand implementation exists within the brand object and is determined by the brand's evidence and hearsay. Both play essential roles in brand distinctiveness creation. Ahn highlights the importance of transmitted information nurtured by circular information and controlled communication (Ahn et al., 2016), explaining the importance of efforts in realizing the city branding key success factors. Both theory and model explain how the evidence and municipal effort play crucial roles in city brand creation and success strategy.

Revisiting five prominent municipal websites, Jakarta, Surabaya, Jogjakarta, Malang, and Denpasar, still showed limited transparency on how the municipal governments promote and procure their city-branding strategies. The Jakarta, Surabaya, and Denpasar provide adequate information on city intros and information

relevant to branding audiences. But the other two websites instead bustled their information by providing news on local government's leads, with a bold pictorial image of the regional leader rather than providing a distinctive city-brand image, introducing the natural and/or landscape feature representing the city. Moreover, the municipal websites also lack information relevant to the regional history and cultural information available to the public. The city-branding municipal regulations also show the average templates on brand evidence rather than promoting comprehensive implementation strategies for procuring and maintaining their city brand. The regulation set generally concentrates on using imagery objects and rarely or never discloses the effort to build their brand. These two phenomena highlight how city-brand commitment is subtle even within the city government-owned media.

The alternative study reveals the detailed implementation strategy for city branding is still relatively inconclusive (Florek et al., 2019; Zenker & Braun, 2017, 2010). Moreover, the demand for a macro-level strategy for promoting city branding implementation policy is expected to establish a more prominent solution for national regulators (Guler, 2017). In the Indonesian context, the vast socio-geographical diversity creates a challenge in formulating such applicable strategies in nurturing and supervising the municipal government to build city branding effectively (Lestari et al., 2020). The existence of prior regulations concerning city branding in Indonesia is formulated, mandated, and obliged in such a way for the municipal government to build their city branding, but those regulations set were not entitled to such nurturing feature – allowing the flexibility to the autonomy system to creates their challenge – forming discrepancies among municipal city-branding (Rining & Herlina, 2019). Further research on the city branding case studies also shows there still existing challenges to regulation city branding regulation framework concerning the city branding implementation roadmap (Pasande & Suhendra, 2017).

The common quest for rather macro-level regulation provided by the ministries or other strategic agencies on city branding in Indonesia also shows absence, highlighting the need for such regulation infrastructure at the practical strategic level. In the current condition, most city branding strategy and implementation roles were secured by local municipal government regulations, and the ministerial or national level endorsed no such uniform commitments to nurture city branding in Indonesia. Unfortunately, the vast potential of city branding for city communities throughout Indonesia has yet to be fully realized, despite the diversity of managerial capabilities in local governments. However, the acceleration of city branding implementation in Indonesia can be facilitated through strategic management at the national level, particularly concerning uniform regulation and implementation.

This study aims to mediate the events by providing a literature review on city branding, more specifically, to answer the challenge in the Indonesian context. The literature reviews revisit generic and common views of city brands as a representation of social and communal identity. Theoretical views are expected to give better and more comprehensive views explaining the city branding construct and introducing the needs and the importance of building a strong city brand. The branding model is also provided in the literature review in the hope of providing a better understanding of the importance of a step-by-step guide to procure and maintain the effectiveness of the city brand.

This study also tries to conclude three essential aspects attributed to the city branding strategy: regulation, compliance, socioeconomics, sustainability, and upcoming issues. The three aspects are registered and derived from literature to adapt and adopt the common and essential aspect of good governance on local

government practices. The three aspects, which are further reflected as dimensions, would eventually promote dimensional consideration in both procuring and maintaining the city branding sequence.

The article also tries to develop the city branding implementation strategy by providing clear assignments on various aspects, from the statement of city branding objectives, formulation, implementation, monitoring, and city branding measurement/audit to the availability of public transparency regarding city branding implementation. Finally, the city branding strategy matrix is translated into a detailed sequence to give the municipal government a bird's eye view of the major and minor considerations of city branding strategy, allowing practical guidance to the municipal executives.

A practical checklist was also provided regarding giving detail on sequential city branding aspects. The checklist is also expected to provide better-mitigating strategies in such upcoming issues regarding the inclusivity of the stakeholders, the environmental/sustainability issues, and the comparative aspect of city branding measurements. These ready-to-use tools could benefit the municipal government in building its tailored city branding strategy. The supplementation of this practical guide should answer the challenge of building a uniform development model in city branding in the context of highly diversified regional characteristics. Furthermore, at a higher strategic level, this tool could benefit city branding coordinators such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs or other related government agencies to provide better supervisory and measurement systems in city branding assessment.

In academic rationale, this article also sparks discussion of city branding implementation strategy, in both Indonesian and global contexts, especially in building such practical guidelines available to the municipal governments. Inviting scholars to discuss such themes in the hope of formulating better city branding-related solutions, especially to answer the challenge of regional and socio-cultural diversity.

2. Methods

Various academic articles have been analyzed and summarized to answer the article headlines on the city branding implementation strategy. The theoretical views and the model reconstruction on city branding are investigated through several articles published within the range of city branding themes to answer the crucial dimensional aspect attributed to the city branding procurement and continuous maintenance strategy. The Implementation flow diagram and implementation checklist were made in accordance with the various consideration aspects of city branding literature.

The following research sequence includes: (1) revisiting the major theoretical views on city branding and model to provide a deeper comprehension of the nature of city branding and the importance of a step-by-step building process in lieu of city branding objectives, (2) finding the prominent critical factors on municipal governments best practice regarding city-brand and common practices, (2) assigning the aspect of city branding, (2) procuring the two major conceptual differences between the city branding "evidence" and the infrastructure of city branding strategy infrastructure, (3) formulating the sequence of city branding implementation matrix entitling major aspect of city branding essential considerations, projecting each phase by adopting and adapting the city branding model, (4) developing city branding implementation checklist by providing common objectives, methods, mitigation issues, and references. The research sequence is qualitative. By standing on the

semantical assignment of each research construct and theoretical explanation of each relationship, the researcher tries to amalgamate the common conception of city branding issues, highlighting the common aspects and commenting on each construct related to the notion of Indonesian context.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Conceptual Development

City brand as the social representation of the areal and communal construct has stood out as the common theory ground for practical aspects (Castillo-Villar, 2018). The representation theory projects the city or areal brand as a medium of mental representation of the brand object to the public (Bıçakçı & Genel, 2017). The representation includes all qualitative measures on the perceived mental construct regarding the areal or communal identity (Novikova et al., 2018). Via the brand's identity, the communal or areal was simply perceived into two qualitative polarities of good or bad (Marshall, 2014). Utilizing this brand could benefit communal or areal development, both culturally (Ozer, 2017) and economically (Dejanović & Čedomir, 2015; Herget et al., 2015). Some researchers contextualized city branding as a system of connections formed in the minds of consumers regarding a particular place, which is influenced by various visual, verbal, and behavioral expressions of the place and its stakeholders (Kemp et al., 2012). The impact of these associations within the network can vary, as can their significance for shaping the attitudes and behaviors of place consumers (Zenker & Braun, 2010).

The city branding objective is derived on the pragmatic level as a potentially viable option to increase city economics (Dejanović & Čedomir, 2015; Herget et al., 2015) and provide stronger identity pride (Collins, 2019; Morrison, 2016; Wilson et al., 2021). The city brand is often cited as an area or place brand utilizing the perceived public image to attract tourism (Herget et al., 2015; Kusumawati & Rahayu, 2022) and elevate the regional economy via a trickle-down effect on the industry (Maski et al., 2020). The effect of city brand on the industry is highlighted not only by tourist visitation but also could potentially increase the good perception of certain local products, this also adding the benefit of the city branding as an alternative option for marketing of certain local products (Raszkowski, 2012), and additionally, by building stronger local industry brand would eventually increase local investments (Middleton, 2011), and even some cited could attract skilled workers into city industry (Schade et al., 2018).

Pride is also regularly cited as a common attribute of city branding (Collins, 2019; Wilson et al., 2021). Local pride as a sociocultural benefit of the city brand is potentially beneficial to build stronger social bonding within the city community (Morrison, 2016). Brand citizenship behavior is also frequently cited as the positive impact of a strong city brand (Ahn et al., 2016) highlighting the benefit of local industry loyalty toward local products, voluntary marketing benefits, and better brand acceptance. The term brand citizenship behavior is often cited in some research representing the general objective construct which summarizes all aspects of brand effectiveness toward the brand's consumer – *in this context, city community* – highlighting the voluntary loyalty effect. Brand citizenship behavior represents a novel concept that aims to examine the voluntary activities and behaviors performed by consumers, with a specific focus on the organization's brand promotion (Nirmali et al., 2017).

The brand objective pragmatically polarized into two main sections, namely socio-cultural impact and economic impacts, but revisiting the city brand

contextually, which is related to the local communities and their relationship with nature, is an important thing to consider the environmental and sustainability impact (De Jong et al., 2019; Ripoll Gonzalez & Gale, 2023). The novel environmental aspect of city branding is related to the indirect effect of city brand to persuade public awareness on natural preservation, and grow public attention on specific environmental concerns, e.g., natural disasters and other related phenomena that need social attention.

City brand application follows sequential steps to market the brand object to the public (Van Ham, 2008). This delivery scheme would apply various strategies and be tailored (Oliveira, 2014). Municipal cities often employ strategies using heuristic programs (Kavaratzis, 2004) rather than applying or following specific universal directional guidance available by the government (Florek et al., 2021). The political nature of municipal government is also involved in the implementation strategy formulation and actions (Vanolo, 2017), make it city branding become more complicated rather than just applicating a practical branding sequence compared to the commercial brand (Dinnie, 2011; Kavaratzis, 2004). Some research also shows the diversity of the city brand implementation process, further highlighting the common quest for the universal model (Florek et al., 2021).

The city diversity across the nation mentioned in the introduction provided potential and created challenges for the municipal governments. In the context of city branding, varied organizational capabilities can lead to diverse financial (Lucarelli & Olof Berg, 2011), human resources (Fafurida et al., 2021), and expertise (Kholis et al., 2017). The uniqueness of each city contributes to its strengths and weaknesses. Cities with higher fiscal capacity may leverage this advantage to implement more cost-effective strategies compared to those with limited financial resources.

In the Indonesian context of heterogenous regional autonomy, where different financial endowments and flexible budgeting can create more challenges for municipal executives (Guler, 2017; Mihardja et al., 2019; Riyadi, 2009). Indonesian cities are diverse not only through their organizational resources but also through their natural and other branding resources. This diversity is evidenced by the variety of natural features, landscapes, traditions, and social characteristics, which contribute to different branding capacities (Shoaib & Keivani, 2015). Cities endowed with diverse and distinct natural resources have greater potential to develop a better city image than those without such resources. This challenge is also anticipated for developing or newly established cities.

Prior research has identified coordination issues as the primary barriers to implementing city branding (Lestari et al., 2020). However, these barriers are limited to the challenge of coordinating the implementation of city branding artifacts, neglecting the deeper aspects of the city and how these artifacts can be effectively introduced to the public.

This study introduces a new term, "city branding infrastructure," to focus on the details of implementing city branding. This term encompasses all organizational resources and parties involved in the process, taking into account the political and complex nature of the city branding process. The city branding infrastructure includes political efforts, such as regulations and provisions that bind government agencies involved in city branding, and organizational resources such as budgets, human resources, and expertise (Lestari et al., 2020). The coined term considered the following linguistic approach to gain understanding on city branding terms (Hanna & Rowley, 2008).

Based on prior research, coordination issues have been identified as the primary barriers to implementing city branding (Lestari et al., 2020). However, these barriers are limited to the challenge of coordinating the implementation of city branding artifacts, neglecting the deeper aspects of the city and how these artifacts can be effectively introduced to the public (Pasande & Suhendra, 2017).

This article introduces a new term, "city branding infrastructure," to focus on implementing city branding. This term encompasses all organizational resources and parties involved, the political aspects, and the complex nature of the city branding process. The city branding infrastructure includes political efforts, such as regulations and provisions that bind government agencies involved in city branding. In addition, it includes the whole organizational resources, such as budgets, human resources, and expertise involved in the process.

The primary goal of the city branding infrastructure is to promote the city branding image and artifacts to the public while meeting the objectives of city branding. In contrast to the commercial sector, where a specialized team can manage corporate branding, the city branding process involves a wider range of parties, including the local government, community leaders, minorities, and other groups, such as politics. The city branding infrastructure is a broad concept that requires translation into representative terms that reflect its extensive scope. The primary goal of the city branding infrastructure is to promote the city branding image and artifacts to the public while meeting the objectives of city branding. To facilitate a clearer understanding of the conceptual framework of the terminology established in this article, a conceptual chart is presented in Figure 1.
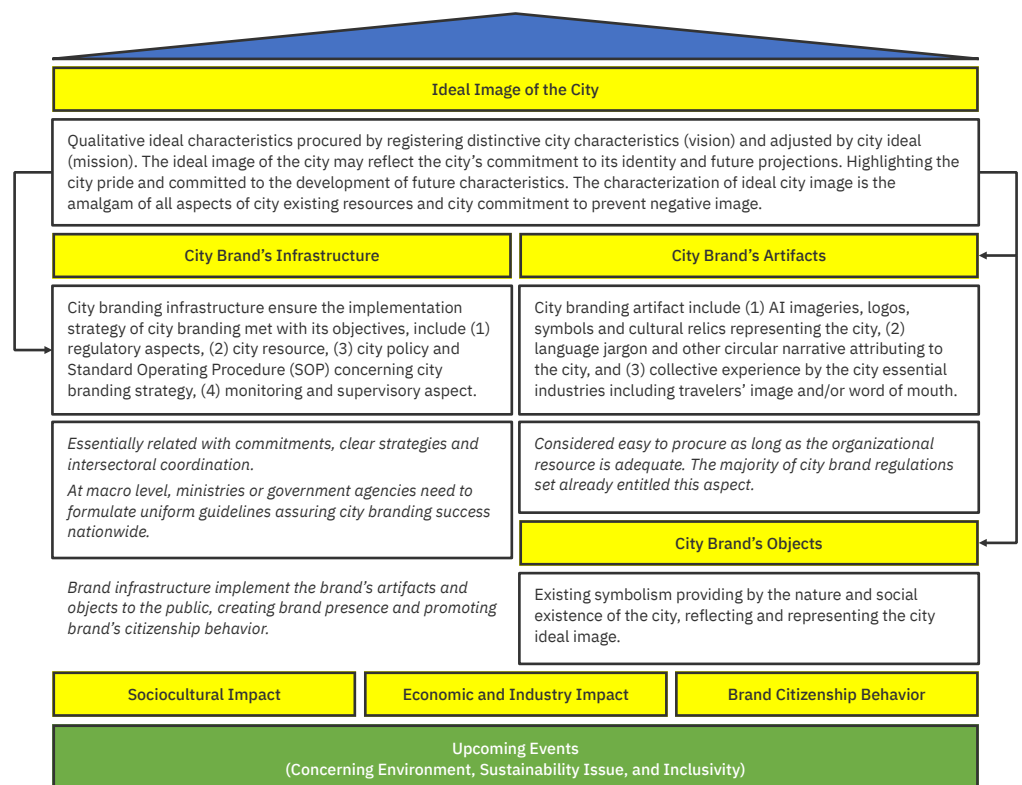

Figure 1. The City Branding Conceptual Frameworks

Source: Authors' conceptual frameworks (2023)

The first chart presented in this article elucidates four essential terminologies, namely (1) ideal city image, (2) city brand artifacts, (3) city brand image object, and (4) city brand infrastructure. These terminologies were developed by analyzing the relationship and role of each in achieving the objectives of city branding. The four components are utilized to establish city branding objectives that encompass improving the cultural and communal livelihood of the city community, fostering economic growth and local industries, and influencing behavioral aspects, as reflected in brand citizenship behavior. In this context, brand citizenship behavior refers to the community's and the public's loyalty to the city's distinctiveness and identity.

Furthermore, the framework introduces three new projective aspects related to the environment, sustainability, and inclusivity, which are increasingly significant considerations in the branding field. This framework aims to provide a more organized and practical approach to comprehending the concepts and aspects of city branding.

The first component of the conceptual framework introduced in this article is the city brand image, which refers to the ideal condition or constructs perceived by the municipal government. This condition represents the natural characteristics of a city that are combined in a way that creates an amalgamation of ideal conditions and attributes. Sometimes, a city may also have a negative image that results from unfavorable perceptions from visitors or experiences and narratives that foster such an image. These two conditions must be translated comprehensively to separate the opportunities and challenges in forming city branding. Hence, to address negative image challenges, sustainable city branding missions must be directed to form an ideal city image.

Therefore, the terminology of the ideal image of a city can be translated into ideal qualitative characteristics, which are derived by registering distinctive city characteristics (vision) and adjusted by city ideals and commitment (mission). The ideal image of the city may reflect the city's commitment to its identity and future projections, highlighting city pride and a commitment to the development of future characteristics. Characterizing the ideal city image is the amalgamation of all aspects of existing city resources and the city's commitment to preventing negative image formation.

The second aspect of the conceptual framework refers to the city brand artifact, which can be defined as any tangible manifestation of a city's marketing efforts that embodies aesthetics, values, and other abstract aspects of the city's identity. This element has received considerable attention in city branding research and is often emphasized in regulations related to city branding in Indonesia. However, it appears that many definitions of city branding still focus narrowly on the attractiveness of city artifacts without fully considering their broader functions and utility in city branding.

Examples of city branding artifacts include all visual representations of the city, such as logos, symbols, and cultural artifacts, as well as the language and narratives associated with the city. They can also include the collective experiences of essential industries related to travel and tourism. Procuring city branding artifacts requires a sociological interpretation of the philosophical meanings that underlie the city's identity. The distinctive designs of city branding artifacts are expected to effectively communicate the abstract meanings behind the symbols and visual aspects of the object to the public. Moreover, the utility of city branding artifacts can contribute to changing negative perceptions of a city's image and realizing the ideal vision of the city.

The second aspect of the conceptual framework is the city brand artifact, which refers to any tangible form of a city's marketing brand designed to represent its aesthetics, values, and complex abstract aspects of its identity. This aspect of city branding is widely discussed in research and city branding regulations in Indonesia. However, the emphasis on city branding is often limited to creating city artifacts rather than their function and utility in city branding. City-branding artifacts encompass all imagery, logos, symbols, and cultural relics that represent the city and the language, jargon, and other narrative elements that contribute to the city's identity. In addition, the collective experience of a city's essential industries, including travelers' experiences, is also considered part of the city-branding artifacts.

The procurement of city branding artifacts involves a sociological interpretation of the philosophical meaning that represents the identity of a city. Therefore, the distinctive designs in city brand artifacts are expected to communicate the abstract meaning behind the symbols and visual aspects of the object to the public. Furthermore, it is expected that the utility of city brand artifacts will not only change negative perceptions about the city's image but also facilitate the realization of the ideal image of the city.

In contrast to the city brand artifacts, the city brand image object is a gift of the city, bestowed upon it by its natural landscape beauty, tradition, culture, ethnic identity, language, and traditional monuments that can represent the city's identity. The city brand image object is an existing symbolism provided by the nature and social existence of the city, reflecting and representing the ideal image of the city. These objects represent the mental perception of the public when they are mentioned, for instance, the Monas monument in Jakarta and the historical monument in Jogja. Every city has such features that represent concrete aspects of the landscape or objects directly attributable to the city and can also communicate extensive identity aspects of the city itself. For instance, the historical monument representing Jogja is also attributed to its cultural history, which represents the city's cultural experience expectations.

The city brand image also includes natural aspects that traditionally represent the identity of the city, such as the natural landscape, ethnic and cultural identity, and traditions that were naturally formed as a result of natural factors and cultural evolution over time. Unlike city brand artifacts, city brand image objects are not developed through the translation of values via a series of design objects but rather objects that are selected through public experience and public knowledge.

Conceptually, the city brand artifact and image can be interpreted as marketing materials employed by municipalities in implementing city branding to the public. These branding elements encapsulate the city's identity, expectations, and commitments of the parties involved in developing the city's progress. To carry out marketing efforts for these two aspects, a tailored city branding infrastructure can be developed in accordance with the city's conditions and resources. Implementation of these branding efforts can involve conventional strategies that engage the city community, community leaders, and other groups representing diverse interests.

Moreover, as a government apparatus bound by compliance and good governance, the municipal government must also consider essential considerations when implementing city branding. Compliance with relevant regulations and guidelines is of utmost importance. Additionally, socio-economic aspects, which summarize the mutual relationship between the city community and its economic side, must be considered, as well as environmental aspects, sustainability, and inclusivity. These three aspects will be explained in the next section.

3.2. Three Dimensional Aspects: Compliance, Socioeconomics, and Upcoming Issues

The legal aspects involved in the formulation and execution of policies for municipal governance pose significant challenges (Von Luebke, 2009). These legal aspects encompass all considerations, risk analyses, and potential impacts involved in developing plans, strategies, accountability, and public disclosure to pursue transparency. While city branding that reflects a city's identity may not present a major litigation risk, compliance consequences may arise due to implementation and strategy factors, e.g., procurement (Adeniyi et al., 2020) and implementation strategy (Pirnar et al., 2017). Further examination is required to determine the legality of local governments mandating external parties or specific business groups to incorporate city brand assets into their products. The municipal government plays a crucial role in mediating the political and bureaucratic coherence of city branding implementation (Guler, 2017; Mihardja et al., 2019).

Socioeconomics encompass all factors that influence the implementation of city branding strategies concerning the communal and economic aspects of the city community (Merrilees et al., 2014). City branding is essentially the implementation of an identity that can enhance the city's objective of improving the livelihoods of its local community, including its economic aspects (Cleave et al., 2016; Pasquinelli, 2015). In addition to considering the cultural identity aspect that represents the city community, municipal governments must also determine the primary aspect that represents the largest economic support industry of the city. This includes assessing the economic magnitude, frequency, and number of communities involved. These three considerations are important since the economic side of the city has unique characteristics that can impact the industrial side. For example, the largest economic contributor may be a minority group that holds the most capital but does not reflect the community. Conversely, small industries that reflect the economic style of the average city resident may not reflect the economic magnitude of capital. Therefore, municipal governments need to carefully consider this phenomenon. Socio-economic relations encapsulate the interaction between the city's people and the economic activities that take place in the city, and this interaction can shape the city's identity and vice versa.

Implementing city branding policies can influence other sociocultural aspects, such as promoting city awareness of future issues. Municipal governments must exercise caution in this matter since it can affect the city's risks and challenges in the future. Specifically, municipal governments should consider three main aspects: sustainability (Pirnar et al., 2017; Rehan, 2014; Ripoll Gonzalez & Gale, 2023), environment (Braiterman, 2011; De Jong, 2019), and social inclusiveness (Paganoni, 2012). Sustainability is a complex concept encompassing three interconnected elements: social, environmental, and economic (Sakalasooriya, 2021). The local government must commit to building a more sustainable city identity by encouraging sustainable practices. The connection between these three elements represents the concern and commitment of urban communities to their future (Rehan, 2014).

Environmental aspects should not only be an objective of the city branding strategy but should also be considered in implementation strategies (Braiterman, 2011; De Jong, 2019). City branding, which was once only focused on identity, is now being transformed into a tool for environmental sustainability. City branding can promote environmental awareness for conservation and communal safety, especially for cities prone to natural disasters. Safety aspects should be collectively known and mitigated.

In Indonesia, social inclusiveness is rarely discussed in the city branding literature. Municipal governments should pay attention to the importance of social inclusivity because eliminating social friction and segregation can form a cohesive city community (Paganoni, 2012). Inclusivity has emerged as a crucial aspect of the social struggle (Mirzoev et al., 2022). Municipal governments must ensure that the strategy and implementation of city branding does not harm any inclusive groups based on ethnicity, religion, race, gender, disabilities, or other groupings. A negative bias towards any group is a warning sign for municipal governments to formulate equitable policies.

3.3. The Path Toward Implementation: The Flow-Diagram

This article introduces a framework for implementing city branding, which involves a series of processes that municipal governments can carry out to develop all aspects of city branding. The framework consists of four stages: observation and planning of city branding, imaging and formulation, implementation, and measuring and monitoring the impact. These stages are based on a practical approach that summarizes the journey of the city brand implementation process in general and also includes the concepts of city branding and key considerations that require further attention and study by municipal executives.

The first stage of the framework involves the earliest activities in implementing city branding. It takes the form of observation and planning to produce a city branding vision summarizing the city's identity's overall construct or image, derived from visible and invisible elements. In this stage, city brand management faces two observation conditions: natural conditions and conditions that seek to change the face of the city. This concept is similar to the philosophical term "das Sollen vs. Das sein," which pertains to deciding what identity should bridge the two. Another intrinsic feature of this formulation phase is the inclusion of economic pathways previously neglected in city brand planning, which explore how the objective of city identity can permeate the socioeconomic development of the city community.

Figure 2 in this article acknowledges the two-dimensional nature of city brand objects, specifically focusing on their visibility and ideal characteristics. City brand objects can be categorized into concrete objects, which are tangible and easily observable, such as natural features or cultural relics that symbolize or represent the qualitative essence of the city. On the other hand, the subtle nature of city brand objects is represented by cultural ideas, word of mouth (WoM), and other intangible sources that contribute to the circular and perceptual information surrounding the city's image.
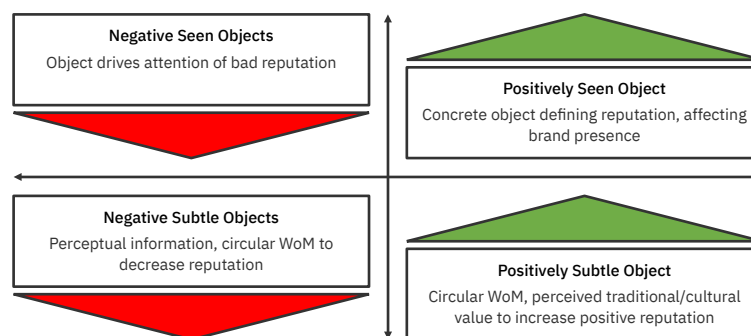

Figure 2. City Brand Objects Observation Matrix

Source: Authors' conceptual frameworks (2023)

It is important to note that city brand objects' seen, and subtle aspects can have positive or negative connotations. Municipal governments should not only register these aspects but also actively manage and transform city brand objects more utilitarianly. The conceptual framework depicted in Diagram 1 encompasses four aspects related to the nature of city brand objects. The horizontal axis represents the unfavorable and favorable impacts associated with each characteristic, while the vertical axis illustrates the visibility nature of these characteristics.

The second phase of the framework focuses on the technical stage of selecting natural elements that can serve as assets of the city identity to represent the objective ideal side of the city brand and formulating the qualitative elements of the city brand artifacts. The selection of objects that represent the city image is critical in utilizing the characteristics and effectiveness of the built branding narrative (Ripoll Gonzalez & Gale, 2023). In this case, determining the criteria for city artifacts becomes a crucial component for procuring city artifacts in the subsequent process. The selection and formulation of criteria for the city brand image and brand artifacts serve two main purposes: creating a social representation of the city's identity and providing utility in bridging the communication of identity to the public, thus enabling control over public understanding, knowledge, and experience of the city.

In the implementation stage of city branding, it is crucial to develop the city branding infrastructure, which involves establishing regulations and operational standards and preparing organizational resources. This infrastructure plays a pivotal role in ensuring the consistency of policy implementation, facilitating inter-agency cooperation, providing detailed work guidelines for city branding, and allocating resources such as financial resources, personnel, facilities, and expertise to achieve the city branding objectives. Therefore, a comprehensive city branding infrastructure is essential for managing the entire city branding implementation process.

The city branding implementation framework comprises a cyclical and final stage that involves monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the branding implementation process. Measuring the effectiveness of city branding has been widely debated in academic literature, and a universal measurement system is still not established. Therefore, this article proposes a pragmatic approach for measuring the effectiveness of city branding based on a practical "philosophy" and conceptual measures. The proposed framework should define the difference between the pre- and post-implementation of a city branding strategy and provide qualitative and quantitative differences between two successive events. This measurement should be supported by an appropriate measurement system that considers academic integrity, diligence, and technical applicability and should be appropriate for the context and strategy. The measurement object should not only encompass the construct of branding presence and behavioral aspects of brand citizenship but also provide an adequate measurement of city branding strategies' effects on the city's social, communal, economic, and industrial aspects. In order to enhance comprehension of the implementation framework, this article provides a visual representation of the framework in the form of a diagram, which is included in Appendix 1.

3.4. The Implementation Checklist

The implementation framework is presented as a conceptual checklist structured according to the phases of city branding implementation. The tools are designed to guide users through the relevant conceptual components, with detailed explanations that include technical directions and notes for policymakers. The aim is for municipal governments and strategic policymakers to utilize the tools to facilitate the

implementation of city branding policies. Ministries or other government agencies can also use the tools to create uniformity in national city branding implementation across municipalities. Additionally, the tools contain important notes to consider for risk mitigation and other relevant matters. Further details of the tools can be found in Appendix 2.

4. Conclusion

This article presents a conceptual framework that addresses the challenges encountered in developing city branding in Indonesia, particularly regarding the lack of detailed and generally applicable implementation procedures. In addition, the framework focuses on the conceptual separation between the city brand image object, city brand artifact, and city brand infrastructure, which is expected to offer a novel perspective for formulating policies and regulations in Indonesia.

Moreover, the article introduces an implementation framework considering the flows and cyclical process of developing a comprehensive city brand, including addressing sustainability, the environment, and social inclusiveness. The framework provides practical tools for municipal executives and other stakeholders to answer the challenges of city branding in Indonesia. It contributes to realizing the broad impact of national policies on city branding.

Furthermore, we expect this article to initiate and stimulate a discussion on city branding strategies, particularly on developing an effective implementation plan. The checklist provided in this study can serve as a starting point for further exploration and improvement of city branding initiatives in Indonesia and other countries. Additionally, introducing the new terms - *city branding image objects, artifacts, and infrastructure* - may spark further research and analysis on their significance in implementing city branding strategies. We hope this study will encourage policymakers, practitioners, and academics to work together toward creating innovative and sustainable city branding strategies that positively impact the city's development and growth.

While the conceptual and implementation frameworks and operational tools developed in this article offer a promising approach to city branding in Indonesia, they are far from perfect. Further scientific critique and research are necessary to refine the frameworks and improve the implementation tools. This development is expected to generate more detailed research discussions that focus on critiquing approaches, refining conceptual frameworks and models, and addressing more complex and detailed aspects to support the objective of city branding in Indonesia. The authors hope that future research will provide practical improvements that will have a direct impact on stakeholders in the field of city branding.

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Appendix 1. Proposed Implementation Frameworks

Continuous Adjustment

Strategic Recommendation on City-Branding Continuous Implementation

Planning and Observation

Provide clear and explicit narrative on City-Branding objectives:
(1) Social Identity (Uniqueness);
(2) Public Mental-Representation;
(3) Projective Views;
(4) Economics Impact Pathway.

City image are conceptually driven by future expectation and ethical driven.

Expected to grasp common aspects of:

Social Identity should provide unique identification representing the city in both internal and external audiences (by name, by symbols, and verbal communication).

Public and mental representation reflect the mental experience transmitted through public knowledge including conventional narrative build by the public audience.

City projective view represent the city-future expectation including the municipal projective planning. The public audience should be addressed mutually comprehend on city-future expectation (development and image).

Economics pathway comprise of the clear path of city-branding objective to the city, including the clear path on economic trickle down effect on industry, society and environments.

Imaging and Formulation

Observing the City Nature and Potential by examining the city profiles through:
(1) Environmental Feature;
(2) Socio-Anthropology;
(3) Demographic Trend;
(4) Economic Feature;
(5) Culture and Traditions;
(6) City-history and cultural relics.

The image and formulation should be provided in clear statements and narrative to represent adequate representation of each aspect which could potentially representing the city-image.

(1) Visual Representation
(2) Narrative Representation
(3) Symbolism and Language Jargon
(4) Collective Experience

City-Image Distinction

Existing city image which is translated into two conceptual image (1) image which considered as good and will be embolden in the future brand strategy (2) city image considered to be obsolete or should be altered.

Projecting city image representation should be conventionally driven and formulated within the community. Rising concern on inclusivity from all stakeholders

Implementation

Formulating and procuring the city-branding infrastructure through inventing the city-branding artifacts:

Infrastructure and Artifact

City-branding infrastructure ensure the implementation strategy of city-branding met with its objectives. Include (1) regulatory aspects, (2) City resource, (3) city policy and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) concerning city-branding strategy, (4) monitoring and supervisory aspect

City-branding artifact include: (1) all imageries, logos, symbols and cultural relics representing the city, (2) language jargon and other circular narrative attributing to the city, and (3) collective experience by the city essential industries including travellers' image.

(1) Visual Representation

e.g. logos and pictural image, or videographic representing the city

(2/3) Symbolism and Language Jargon

e.g. verbal jargon representing mental image of the city

(4) Collective Experience

e.g. maintaining public experience on vital and essential sectors (pertaining city image)

What to Consider in Building City-Branding Infrastructure:

Regulatory aspect: include litigation screening on several set of city-branding regulation and compliance commentaries in city-branding strategy;

City resource comprise mainly on adequate support within municipal organisational resource supporting on the procurement and operational of city-branding strategy.

City policy and SOP ideally provide uniformed policy on various city executive agencies attributing to city-branding objectives, this consideration includes, consistent and cascaded set of regulation pertaining city branding implementation policy.

Monitoring and supervisory aspect include all supervisory system ensuring city-branding policy to stay on its track, providing dashboard to the regulatory body, and provide transparency and adequate accountability to the stakeholders.

+ Inclusivity, to consider the conventionality of city-branding nature, all stakeholders attributing to the city should be involved in matter of consultation and/or approvals

Three Dimensional Checklist

All regulations and set of implementation policy should be check in matters of compliance in both ethical and regulatory standards

City branding strategy should be consulted and analyse in such manner to conform common socio-economical issues within city stakeholders

Projective sustainability and environmental aspect should be address adequately, assuring city-branding strategy collectively mitigating such future issues.

Measuring and Monitoring The Impact

The objective of measuring and monitoring the impact include:
(1) assuring the effectiveness of city-branding;
(2) measuring the city presence;
(3) measuring the trickle down effect;
(4) provide transparency and accountability.

Providing Flow Checklist of consideration on City-Branding implementation

Qualitative and Quantitative measurement on the effectiveness of city-branding strategy

Providing adjustment and strategic recommendation on continuous city-branding implementation

Providing adequate disclosure on city-branding transparency and accountability (report/s)

Supervisory Strategy

Macro Level: To provide uniform checklist on consideration of municipal government city-branding implementation in Indonesia, including uniformly supervisory template on city-branding report/s

Micro level: to provide guidance and practical checklist to the municipal government on city-branding implementation including basic three dimensional consideration and rationales of city-branding strategy;

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Appendix 2. City Branding Implementation Checklist

Phase I : Redefining the Objectives and Narrating the Image
Description : This stage involves observation and planning aimed at producing a city branding vision that summarizes the overall construct or image of the city's identity derived from visible and invisible elements. City brand management is faced with two observation conditions: natural conditions and conditions that seek to change the face of the city. This phase includes exploring economic pathways that have been neglected in city brand planning.

No.	Sequence/s	Detailed Sequence/s	Alternative Scenario/s and Major Red-Flags
1	Redefining the common aspect of communal or regional identity through distinctive characteristics	a. Define city name including in local/native language and public/national language; b. Define the etymological meaning concerning the regional or communal name in both philosophical and historical contexts; c. What is the distinctive cultural characteristic which could differentiate the region from the others; d. Register the clear city's distinctive characteristics based on different perceptions (people and cultural identity, area, geographic location, natural features, economics and primary city industry, and demographic profiles), which could be considered attributable to the city identity.	a. Should be registered the likelihood of inclusive communal identity, which could be unintentionally omitted in the process; b. Procure the information from respective sources and involve local figures.
2	Research the existing image circulating among the public regarding the city image and formulate the ideal city image	a. Research on circular information regarding the city image includes the following themes on people's perception and experiences regarding the city characteristics, e.g., travellers' experience circulating on the media, the city characteristics in which often associated with qualitative public perception, for example, *the densely populated city may lead to the common perception of costly and overpopulated city "bustling city"*. b. Register the negative image, which may lead to a detrimental effect on the city's image, by attributing the circular information. c. Narrating the image on both positive and negative images redefines the city's existing image.	Research using online media potentially helps to find such keywords attributing to the city image. Semantical attribution also helps differentiate between positive and negative images circulating publicly. Conventional measurement using quantitative surveys is also beneficial, but in the constraint of resources, online media should suffice if supervised by experts. It is beneficial to look at the branding warnings cases such as Paris Syndrome, which highlights the gap phenomenon of expectation and experience.
3	Formulating the pathway impact of brand image	At least three primary concerns of the brand impact pathway should be considered: (1) the socio-cultural impact within the city community; (2) economic and city industry impacts; and (3) environmental issues. a. The socio-cultural impact pathway should clearly address how the city brand would eventually affect the dynamics of socio-cultural livelihood, building stronger community bonds, inviting voluntary pride and in such manner eliminating social discrepancy, social segregation, discrimination, and other social problems; b. Economics and city industry impact pathway should address how the city image would eventually trickle into the city's economics and industry life. Pathway elaborates on how the city image could potentially elevate the marketability of the local product, invite investors, and provide better economic confidence; Addressing the main "locomotives" city industry could be beneficial to focus the city image impact pathway alternatively. c. Environmental issues are becoming prominent upcoming considerations in matters of global warming and other disaster-related phenomenon in recent years. The city's image concerning environmental protection and other sustainability issues may reflect the city's commitment to mitigating myopic events. It is crucial for the region prone to natural disasters, which needs to attribute city image to developing communal mitigation and disaster-related events readiness.	Use an effect diagram to register better and identify the pathway effect on each concern.
4	Projecting and formulating the ideal image of the city	a. Formulate a clear statement on perfect identity supported by adequate quality attribution explaining the identity; b. Ideal identity should provide clear; (1) city name, (2) city identity characteristic which positively reflects the city's potential, (3) attribution to city characteristic which may translate the city's commitment to elevating public experiences;	a. The inclusive community should also be considered and conserved. The identity of minorities, religions, races and other social factors should be appropriately considered; The environmental aspect of the city brand, upcoming issues of sustainability and gender concerns should also be considered.

Phase II   : Imaging and Formulating City Brand
Description : This stage focuses on the technical selection of natural elements that can serve as assets of the city identity to represent the objective ideal side of the city brand and formulating the qualitative elements of the city brand artifacts. The selection and formulation of criteria for the city brand image and brand artifacts serve two main purposes: creating a social representation of the city's identity and providing utility in bridging the communication of identity to the public, thus enabling control over public understanding, knowledge, and experience of the city.

No.	Sequence/s	Detailed Sequence/s	Alternative Scenario/s and Major Red-Flags
1	Assigning the city image through reflective image object/s*)	After the city image has been specified, it is essential to formulate and register the following object/s which potentially represent the ideal city image: (1) Environmental Feature, e.g., natural scene or another natural feature which may represent the city. (2) Socio-Anthropology; communal and living tradition representing the city, including tribes and other native social characteristics which may reflect city culture, culinary tradition and traditional product/object signify the city. (3) Demographic Trends, e.g., youth population, drive the city pop culture, redefining city demographic as a diversified community, e.g., the melting pot of culture. (4) Economic Feature; the primary industry to become an icon of the city and expected to create an ideal image, e.g., tourism, food (Yılmaz et al., 2020), etc. (5) City-history and cultural relics; city history could reflect the city's image by defining the ancestral history related to historical figures or events. Cultural relics could become an icon representing a city which may also represent the tourism object that attracts tourist/visitor.	Finding the prominent object reflecting the city could become problematic, especially when finding the optimum representation between a city icon classically related to the city and a newly introduced icon that might need to be "marketed" before its introduction to the public. This phenomenon created a new challenge for a newly developed city that still shares commonalities with its neighbors and develops its distinctive image. The developed cities would probably find it easier to maintain their presence through historical or already present icons.
2	Assigning criteria for the city brand's artefacts *)	Assigning criteria on city brand artefacts means settling standards on various transmittal city brand artefacts, which will be procured in the later phase. Transmittal city brand artefacts include: (1) Visual representation; include, e.g., logos and pictural image, or video graphics representing the city. (2) Symbolism and Language Jargon; include, e.g., verbal jargon representing a mental image of the city. Language attribution consists of a narrative developed in a manner that could be controlled to alter public perception of the city toward the ideal image. (3) Collective experience: includes circular experience spread by word of mouth, which should maintain. The collective expertise could be fostered through the identification of essential industries, which may lead to the critical experience factor affecting the city brand, e.g., if the city's primary industry is tourism, the city should play attention to the tourism sector by providing clear quality guidelines affecting city industry to promote service excellence.	Criteria should be clear and sufficient to guide the procurement process. Much of the municipal city government procures brand artefacts through a public contest. Qualitative criteria should provide adequate guidelines on artefact specification.

*) City image objects are not procured but exist within the city. The difference between image objects and city brand artefacts is the nature of their procurements. Both are intentionally chosen as a medium to publicize the city brand via the city brand's infrastructure.

Phase III : Implementing City Brand
Description : This stage involves executing the plans for city branding, including the procurement of city artifacts that fulfil the criteria identified in the previous stage. This process also involves the dissemination of the brand narrative and image through various media channels.

No.	Sequence/s	Detailed Sequence/s	Alternative Scenario/s and Major Red-Flags
1	Assigning City Brand Infrastructure	City branding infrastructure is a bridge between the city image objects city brand's artefacts toward the public audience. Infrastructures allow municipal government managerial intervention to employ its organization resources for implementing and developing a city branding strategy. (1) Regulatory aspect: include litigation screening on several sets of city-branding regulations and compliance commentaries in city-branding strategy. (2) City resources comprise mainly adequate support within municipal organizational resources supporting the procurement and operation of city-branding strategy. (3) City policy and SOP ideally provide uniform policy on various city executive agencies attributing to city-branding objectives. This consideration includes a consistent and cascaded set of regulations pertaining to city branding implementation policy. (4) Monitoring and supervisory aspects include all supervisory systems ensuring city-branding policy stays on track, providing a dashboard to the regulatory body, and providing transparency and adequate accountability to the stakeholders. + Inclusivity, to consider the conventionality of city-branding nature, all stakeholders attributing to the city community should be involved in a matter of consultation and/or approvals.	The common issues regarding the city brand infrastructure include: (1) Inconsistent regulatory set or regulation does not entitle the program of marketisation of the brand object/artefact. (2) The mandated agency in city branding does not cascade into specifics roles or mismatch inter-sectoral coordination. (3) The infrastructure only specifies the needs of the artefact and does not entitle its objectives on the trickle-down effect to the economy, industry, or even the city community. (4) Monitoring and supervisory aspects are not included in the regulation set. (5) City branding strategy is often not supported by dedicated organizational support, e.g., dedicated planning, budget and/or unique – *ad hoc or structural* – unit on city branding program/activities.
2	Artefacts Procurement	The municipal government frequently held public contests to procure city branding artefacts. This procurement process would also follow the respective regulation on the government procurement standards. The qualitative criteria on brand artefacts should follow the result of the previous phase, highlighting the use of the artefact is important to ensure that all city brand's artefacts would provide proper design quality, availability of intellectual rights protections, and utility of each product. The city should pay attention to the distinctive quality of each product in conformity with regulations and social approval, e.g., approval by the group of people representing the city community would provide better conventional integrity rather than just approval by the municipal executives.	The crucial aspect of the city brand's artefacts is frequently showing the flaws in its design and the applicability to fit in various media and occasions. The artefacts should be suitable so that it is easy for the municipal government and any organization, community group or even industry to use. The products should provide versatility as logos, pamphlets, and even distinctive ornaments in various objects. The quality nature of the products is not easily judged, especially when dealing with esthetical attributes. The municipal government should provide approval based on communal acceptance rather than approval within municipal executive approval. Some municipal government with no dedicated budget for city brand procurement alternatively could build their brand artefacts in-house, but with several potential constraints on quality. Copyright protection is an essential aspect of protecting city brands' artefacts.
3	City Brand Marketing	The city branding strategy's crucial part lies in the city brand marketing sequence. In this sequence, municipal government and other related stakeholders should play roles in their respective niches to collaborate to market the city brand. The objective of this sequence is to bring the city image objects and brand artefacts into the public and create brand presence, expecting to create ideal public representation of the city based on the ideal city image. There were diverse strategies for implementing city branding marketing: (1) Employing municipal government internal resources to bring city brand to the public by publishing it into several municipal controlled media. This includes the municipal website, boards, and municipal aired media. (2) Involving the city community by persuasion and voluntary publication of the city branding material. The voluntary publication is unrelated to the burden of municipal cost and could also be seen as a sign of internal brand presence within the community. (3) Oblige city community or specific parties to publish city branding material, but these strategies embed the compliance risk and are detrimental to the third parties' cost.	The municipal government should concentrate on the manageable area of marketing. Revisiting several municipal websites shows that average municipal websites are still bustling with their info on municipal leader vision and mission. City branding material is still subtle and needs to consider optimizing such media to promote better brand city presence. Optimizing city branding presence means not only marketing and embedding the artefacts into as many as possible of logos and attributes but creating frequent jargon in the various media to transmit the meaning and controlling word of mouth to create a strong image. The newly developing city would probably spend more resources on introducing the city's distinctive brand to the public. Optimizing segregationally targeted marketing strategies might create efficient marketing costs, e.g., implementing logos on high-traffic media. Recent issues regarding alternative marketing strategies should also be considered, e.g., through involving pop figures and "influencers". The highly connected online crowds recently show the potential of a better brand presence by utilizing online rather than conventional platforms. Online brand marketing provides cutting-edge technology for segregating the audience and filtering into more refined marketing targets, and at the same time, online platforms offer better cost management.

Phase IV : Redefining City Brand Transparency, Accountability and Continuous Monitoring Strategy

Description : This stage involves evaluating the effectiveness of the city branding implementation by measuring and monitoring the impact of the city brand narrative and image on the public's understanding, knowledge, and experience of the city. It includes determining the degree of success in achieving the desired outcomes and adjusting as necessary.

No.	Sequence/s	Detailed Sequence/s	Alternative Scenario/s and Major Red-Flags
1	Redefining City Branding Measurement System	This phase becomes the most prominent discussion in academic literature on city branding themes. Measuring the effectiveness of city branding is somewhat dialectic in nature. Promoting the universal measuring system is still inconclusive.	Several studies highlight the effort in building city branding measurement by employing various approaches, e.g. (1) strategy specifics, (2) internal and external measurement on the effect of city branding, (3) objective and subjective measurement, (4) short and long term measurement, (5) ex and ex-ante/ before and after measurement, (6) Comparable measurement, and (7) feature of single and multiple indicators.
		Utilizing practical "philosophy" on the measurement of the effectiveness of the city brand system, the proposed conceptual measure, this article adopted more pragmatic measurement:	The approaches of measurement vary between (1) qualitative, (2) quantitative, and (3) mixed methods. Employing several aspects of measure include (1) identity image, (2) socio-political, and (3) economic impacts.
		(1) The conceptual framework on city branding measurement should, in any manner, define the difference between before and after the implementation of the city branding strategy. The frameworks should be able to assign both qualitative and quantitative distinction between two sequential events, supported by educated measurement and/or technical measurement system which complies with the consideration of academic integrity, perseverance, and technical applicability.	The comprehensive analysis on city branding measurement could refers to Florek et al. (2021) and Lucarelli (2012).
		(2) The measurement should be suitable in both contextuality, and tailored strategy implemented. In this case, the measurement method should provide suitability with the diversity and uniqueness of each city branding strategy.	The municipal city should formulate, choose, and refine effective measurement methods to settle the discussion by involving academicians in the city community.
		(3) The measurement object should not only comprise the branding presence construct and behavioral aspect of brand citizenship but also, more importantly, provide an adequate measurement of the tricked-down effect of city branding strategy on socio-communal aspects and the city economics and industry.	The measurement period should also be decided in which transparency and accountability will be settled.
2	Disclose the Sequence & the Availability of Public Information	The municipal government should disclose their sequential process in city branding implementation from the planning phase to the monitoring phase. Disclosure should adequately inform the public of the municipal government's efforts to improve their brands through several strategies. Several disclosures are obliged by the regulation, e.g., the use of municipal budget related to the city branding and all performance indicators regarding city branding activities.	The respected city branding coordinating agency should provide the template of the municipal city branding report or formulate it by the municipal government by initiative.
			The report should provide adequate information on (1) the objectives of the city branding strategy, (2) organizational resources utilized in the implementation stage, (3) inter-sectoral involvement in city branding implementation, (4) measurement result, and (5) communal remarks accommodating on the stakeholders' views on the city branding implementation.
3	Strategic Recommendation & Continuous Adjustment	The municipal government should provide adjustments on strategic recommendations from the communal stakeholders regarding the success of city branding implementation.	Forum group discussion (FGD) involving all related stakeholders should provide a good mediation strategy to form multifaced views of city branding recommendations.