

**MUSCATINE CITY COUNCIL
IN-DEPTH MEETING
Thursday, November 9, 2023**

Brad Bark, Mayor

Dennis Froelich, 1st Ward

Jeff Osborne, 2nd Ward

Peggy Gordon, 3rd Ward

Nadine Brockert, 4th Ward

John Jindrich, 5th Ward

Angie Lewis, At Large

DeWayne Hopkins, At Large

Carol Webb, City Administrator

Cinda Hilger, Admin. Professional

Brent Hinders, City Attorney

City Council meetings are held at 6:00 pm on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month, In-depth sessions on the 2nd Thursday of each month. All meetings are available for review on the City of Muscatine YouTube page.

The public is welcome to attend virtually using the information below.

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82551691259?pwd=NERydEJOandvWWNXbDM3UkZxZmE4QT09>

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82551691259?pwd=NERydEJOan>

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. COUNCIL DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Presentation on Landfill Gas to Energy Project and Discussion on Proceeding with Letter of Intent with Vespene Energy for Site Investigation

Presented for council discussion is a potential landfill gas to energy project and

consensus for staff, landfill engineer and City attorney to review and negotiate a letter of intent with Vespene Energy to investigate the site for its project.

B. Presentation on the Muscatine Community Heart & Soul Program

Staff will provide an overview of the Muscatine Community Heart & Soul program, including activities, findings and statements.

C. Presentation on Marketing and Branding of Muscatine.

Marketing and branding of Muscatine

5. **MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS**

6. **ADJOURNMENT**



City of Muscatine

ITEM NUMBER 2023-0528

IN-DEPTH ITEM - CITY COUNCIL

DATE: 11/9/2023

STAFF

David Popp, Solid Waste Manager
Brian Stineman, Public Works Director

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Presentation on Landfill Gas to Energy Project and Discussion on Proceeding with Letter of Intent with Vespene Energy for Site Investigation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff will present a preliminary proposal for a potential landfill gas to energy project and discussion of a letter of intent to investigate landfill site for a potential project . Direction will be sought on how the Council would like to proceed with the proposal.

GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

Is there a consensus with the Council for City staff, landfill engineer and City attorney to enter discussions with Vespene Energy regarding a letter of intent to allow Vespene Energy to investigate the Muscatine County Landfill for a potential landfill gas to energy project and bring it back to the Council for approval?

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

Over the past few years, there has been an increasing interest for landfill gas to energy projects in mid-sized landfills, or smaller producers of methane gas. These types of projects had been targeted for larger landfills prior to this, based on the amount of methane produced. Landfill gas to energy projects consist of capturing methane that is generated as a result of landfilling waste. The use of the captured methane gas in these projects is typically electric power generation for resale to power companies or to "clean" the methane gas on site and sell back to the gas companies as natural gas. With the Muscatine landfill, there is an interest in capturing the methane that is generated, using this methane to fuel electric power generators on site and using this electricity to power data processing centers that would be located at the landfill. There is the possibility of also selling excess power generated, beyond the need to power the data processing, back to the electric power grid.

The footprint needed for this proposed operation is generally smaller than the size of a football field. Placement of equipment would be in an area outside of the areas where waste is landfilled and these facilities are maintained and staffed by personnel of the energy

companies.

The concept or justification for the increased interest for a smaller gas to energy project, such as the one being proposed, are the high electricity draw that data processing has, the cost to purchase electricity verses building power generation plants, and the ability to place these data processing centers in remote locations and stream data to the cloud.

The Muscatine County Landfill has produced methane gas in small enough amounts that the gas has been under the EPA limits to capture and process. The methane produced at the landfill to date has been vented into the atmosphere. As the amount of waste landfilled increases, the probability of needing to install a methane extraction system increases.

The proposed project would include the installation, maintenance and personnel to operate a methane gas extraction system at the landfill.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Muscatine Preliminary Proposal (3)
2. Muscatine Indicative Proforma (3)
3. Landfill Gas Power Point

Muscatine Landfill Gas to Energy

11/9/2023

DAVID POPP, SOLID WASTE MANAGER



Direction Sought

Does City Council support staff negotiating a letter of intent with Vespene Energy for a future landfill gas to energy project. The letter of intent would allow Vespene to investigate the Landfill site and determine the feasibility of a future gas to energy project. The letter of intent would be brought back to Council for approval.



Agenda

1. Discuss how methane gas is handled presently and how it may need to be handled in the future at the Muscatine County landfill.
2. Discuss proposed gas to energy project for the Muscatine County Landfill.
3. Discussion for staff to work with City attorney and the landfill engineer on the proposed Letter of Intent for landfill site investigations, and bring back to Council for approval.
4. Questions



Background

The Muscatine County Sanitary Landfill can be considered a medium sized landfill in the state of Iowa. Methane gas produced as a result of landfilling waste has been low enough that the gas can be vented into the atmosphere. As more waste is deposited, the need to install a gas extraction system to capture the methane and process it to prevent it from entering the atmosphere may become necessary. The landfill engineer has begun a project to install a series of monitoring points to test the level of methane produced at the landfill. This data collected will provide an idea of how close the need for an extraction system may be.



How Methane Gas is Currently Handled and How it May Need to be Handled in the Future

Methane Gas at the Muscatine County Landfill is currently allowed to be vented into the atmosphere. Levels produced fall under the threshold that the EPA sets to capture the gas and process it, preventing it from entering the atmosphere.

As more waste is landfilled at the site, the necessity to monitor methane gas being produced will become included as part of the permit for the site. If levels produced rise above EPA regulations, a methane gas extraction system that consists of pipes, blowers and a method to process the methane gas will need to be constructed and operated for years to come.



Is a Gas to Energy Project a Possibility for the Muscatine County landfill?

Gas to energy projects have been around for many years but have been targeted more towards larger landfills. Recently the popularity for companies to look at mid to smaller sized landfills has been on the rise.

These projects use the methane gas to:

- Produce natural gas to be sold back to the gas companies
- Use the methane to fuel generators on site that produce electricity to sell back to the power companies
- Use the methane to fuel generators on site that produce electricity to power data processing centers

Initial estimates indicate that the Muscatine Landfill may support the third type of project, an investigation of actual amounts of methane being produced will need to be conducted to determine this.



Starting Discussions with a Potential Gas to Energy Company

Vespene Energy is currently interested in looking further at the Muscatine County Landfill as a proposed site to locate one of their operations.

Vespene is a company that has an interest in:

- Installing and operating a methane gas extraction system
- Using the methane gas extracted to power generators on site that produce electricity
- Using the electricity produced to power self contained data processing centers on site

Vespene would propose an agreement that would allow their company to run tests at the landfill and determine if a project could be supported by the amount of methane gas produced. This agreement would basically agree that for a period of time, Vespene would be the only company conducting a study at our landfill for any gas to energy project. This would all be at their cost. City staff, the landfill engineer and the City attorney would review and negotiate such an agreement and bring it back to Council for approval.



Next Steps

Gathering data from the methane testing points will give staff a better idea of how to plan for the future management of the methane at the landfill.

Starting negotiations with the proposed energy company to determine if a project at the Muscatine County Landfill is an option.



Direction Sought

Does the City Council support City staff, City attorney and the landfill engineer negotiating a letter of intent with Vespene Energy for a future landfill gas to energy project. The letter of intent would allow Vespene Energy to investigate the landfill site and determine the feasibility of a gas to energy project for Vespene at the Muscatine County Landfill. The proposed letter of intent would be brought back to Council for approval prior to proceeding.





City of Muscatine

ITEM NUMBER 2023-0529

IN-DEPTH ITEM - CITY COUNCIL

DATE: 11/9/2023

STAFF

Jodi Royal-Goodwin, Community Development Director

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Presentation on the Muscatine Community Heart & Soul Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past 2 years, staff has been working with residents and community groups to identify valued aspects of the community. This information has been used to create the six attached Muscatine Community Heart & Soul statements. During the meeting, staff will provide an overview of the community engagement process, data collected, the resulting statements and next steps.

GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

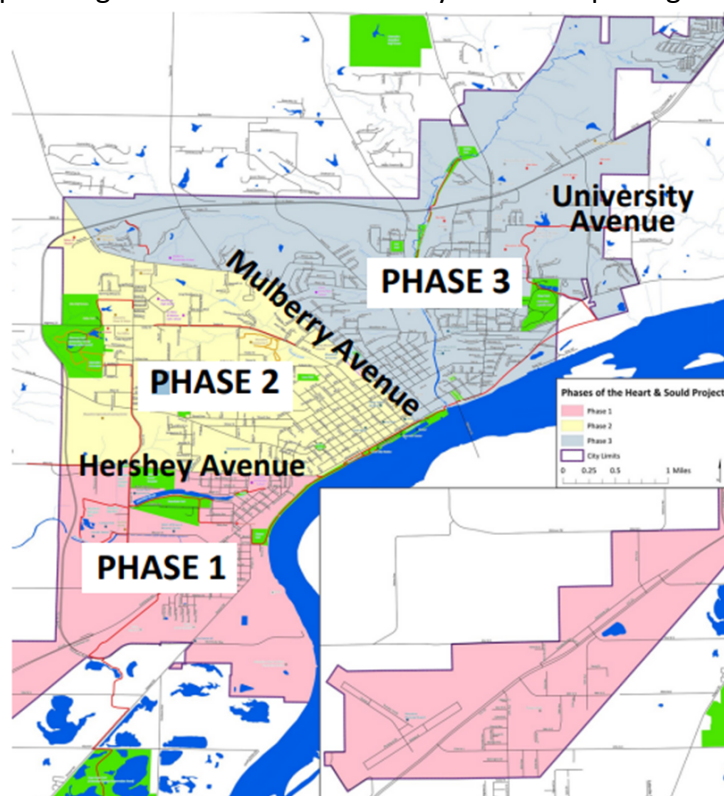
Are there any questions about the Muscatine Community Heart and Soul statements before Council can agree to recognize them as what matters most to the community?

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

The Community Heart & Soul planning model is a resident-driven initiative to collect data and input from residents regarding the positive aspects of the community by honoring the town and the emotional connections of the people who live here. Community Heart & Soul has a 4-step process of 1) building awareness and interest of community members; 2) connect with residents through their reflections about what they love about the town and shared goals; 3) residents developing action plans to guide future planning through *Heart & Soul Statements*; and 4) incorporation of *Heart & Soul Statements* into the comprehensive and other local plans.

The Orton Foundation, doing business as Community Heart and Soul, offered seed grants for communities to initiate resident engagement initiatives using the Community Heart and Soul model. The Community Development Department had been looking to utilize the Heart and Soul model to inform neighborhood revitalization efforts in the Grandview Corridor and the Comprehensive Plan update when the Foundation initiated seed grants for up to \$10,000 to implement local programs. The grant required a 1-to-1 financial match, and at the April 15, 2021, meeting of City Council submission of the grant application was approved. A grant was awarded later that year and accepted by Council at the August 5, 2021, meeting.

The Heart and Soul model focuses on smaller communities, and at that time Muscatine was the largest community to engage with this process. As a result staff proposed to implement the Heart & Soul process in three phases (see map below), utilizing an intern to guide the process. The intent was to begin with community engagement and input in the Grandview Avenue Corridor followed by the portion of the City starting at Mulberry to the eastern city boundary, and the final area would be the central portion of the City bounded by the first two planning areas to the northern city limit. Completing all areas within 36 months.



An intern was hired and the project design was conducted in those first few months, including establishing a volunteer leadership team, designing outreach materials and the website, started gathering input at community events and conducting engagement activities, and creating the first survey.

The project stalled when the intern returned to college later in the year, and it took some months to hire a new intern. In addition, the use of phases was abandoned as events often had residents from outside of the target area, and opening it up allowed for expediting the process. Within 24 months we have been able to complete the first 2 phases, data collection and writing the Heart and

Soul statements.

During these first 2 phases we gathered almost 1,500 data pieces from participants whose demographics largely reflect the residents of the city. Areas where the share of respondents does not reflect community demographics include Hispanic, males, youth, and incomes. This information was collected with initial surveys, completing the "I Heart Muscatine because..." cards, small groups and interviews.

Data collected in phase 1 was used to identify themes about what community members appreciate about Muscatine and want to build on. There were 8 main themes identified, including:

- Nature and the Outdoors
- The River
- Events and Things to Do

- People and the Community
- Civic Pride
- Diversity
- Education and Opportunities for Young People
- Businesses
-

A second survey was released and additional small group events were held to clarify what about these aspects are important to the community members. Members of the leadership team used this information to draft the following Muscatine Community Heart and Soul statements:

Businesses

We appreciate Muscatine for the business opportunities it offers from our global companies to locally owned one-of-a-kind businesses. Together they provide a strong employment environment and support entrepreneurial initiatives. The strong economic base provides the foundation for a giving and caring community.

Education and Opportunities for Young People

We appreciate Muscatine for quality education choices at every stage of learning. Dedicated volunteers and professionals provide a variety of in school and out of school activities and programs, creating a solid foundation that contributes to the growth and longevity of the city.

People and Community

Muscatine is a welcoming, caring, and friendly community that is service-oriented and engaged. We form connections with other people in town to create a strong sense of community, and we have strong familial roots while still being welcoming to newcomers.

Size, Growth, and Opportunities

The size of Muscatine allows people to feel safe and connected to each other, while also having access to resources, activities and opportunities they need and want. Muscatine is a community always seeking to be a hometown for all residents.

Nature, Outdoors and the River

The Mississippi River is an important part of Muscatine's identity. It provides recreation and scenic beauty. Residents enjoy a variety of activities along the river, in our parks, and on our trails. Muscatine is a healthier and happier place due to our access to nature and outdoor spaces.

Events and Things to do

Muscatine cherishes its events, variety of activities and the facilities that make them possible. People of all ages are able to experience fun, engaging community opportunities.

If Council agrees, staff will bring a resolution to Council recognizing Muscatine Heart and Soul

and the discovery of what matters most to the residents of our town.

This fall we initiated phase 3, creating the action plan to further the values of the community, before once again losing our intern back to higher education. Over the next few months, staff will continue to work with community members to identify actions organizations and policy makers can take to honor and build on these aspects most valued in the community. This action plan will be brought back to Council for endorsement and ultimately incorporated into the new comprehensive plan.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Heart and Soul Statements 8-8-23
2. Heart-Soul Council Update

Muscatine Community Heart & Soul



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Jodi Royal-Goodwin, Community Development Director



Agenda

1. What is Community Heart & Soul?
2. How was Muscatine Community Heart & Soul implemented?
3. What did we find?
4. Next Steps



Direction Sought

Are there any questions about the Muscatine Community Heart & Soul statements that would prevent Council agreeing to endorse them as what matters most to the community?



What is Community Heart & Soul?

- ❑ Asset-based planning model
- ❑ Resident-driven
- ❑ Involve everyone
- ❑ Focus on what matters most
- ❑ Playing the long game



How does it work?

Phase 1: Imagine

Heart & Soul teams are formed to build awareness, interest, and commitment in all segments of the community.

Phase 3: Plan

Residents develop action plans to guide future town planning based on their Heart & Soul Statements.

Phase 2: Connect

Stories are gathered from residents, leading to the development of Heart & Soul Statements that identify what matters most and reflect what they love about their towns.

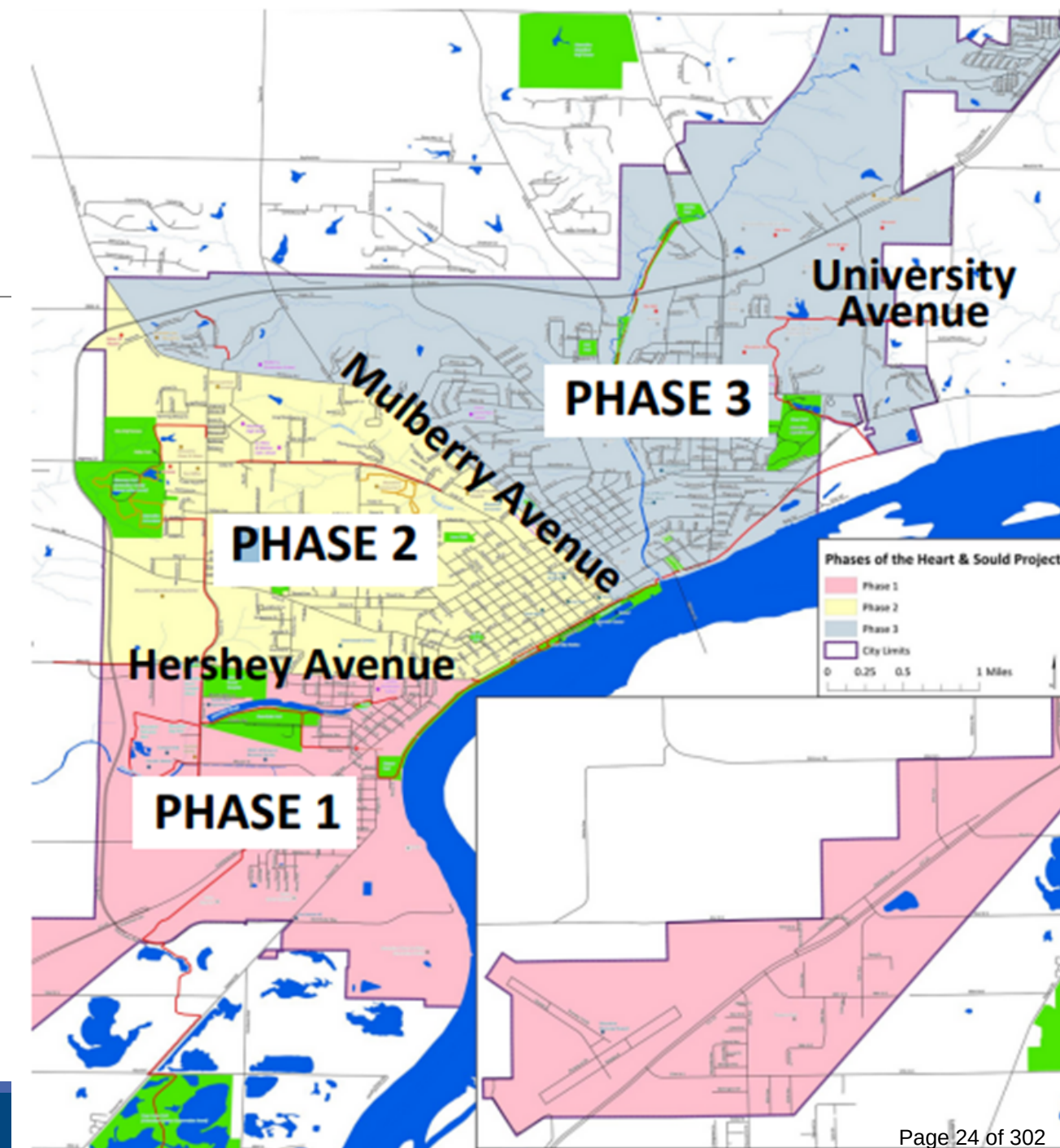
Phase 4: Act

Heart & Soul Statements are officially adopted by town and city councils, incorporated into comprehensive and other plans, and are used to guide future policies and decisions.



The Muscatine Plan

- ❑ Seed Grant
- ❑ Interns
- ❑ Leadership Team
- ❑ Coach/Training
- ❑ Focus Areas





What Happened

YOUR VOICE MATTERS.



We want to hear from you. We invite you to share your thoughts and feelings about Muscatine with us. All answers are confidential. Please be honest with us and share what you think! Surveys are available in English and Spanish.

We have a new Survey! Fill out our What Matters Most Survey to help us analyze the data found in the original survey.

**Heart and
Soul
Statements
Survey**

**Encuesta de lo
Que Más le
Importa a
Muscatine**

- ❑ Community Events
- ❑ Small Groups
- ❑ Activities
- ❑ Surveys



Outcomes – Phase 1

- Almost 1,500 pieces of data
- Demographics
- 8 Themes



Outcomes – Phase 2

Heart & Soul Statements...

*identify what matters
most and reflect what
residents love about their
towns.*

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Events and Things to do

Muscatine cherishes its events, variety of activities and the facilities that make them possible. People of all ages are able to experience fun, engaging community opportunities.

Next Steps

1. Resolution to Council recognizing Muscatine Heart and Soul and the discovery of what matters most to the resident of our town.
2. Complete phase 3, develop an action plan to further the values of the community that organizations and policy makers can use to honor and build on those aspects most valued in the community.
3. Incorporate H&S Statements and actions into the Comprehensive Plan.





Direction Sought

Are there any questions about the Muscatine Community Heart & Soul statements that would prevent Council agreeing to endorse them as what matters most to the community?





City of Muscatine

ITEM NUMBER 2023-1726

IN-DEPTH ITEM - CITY COUNCIL

DATE: 11/9/2023

STAFF

Kevin Jenison, Communication Manager
Carol Webb, City Administrator

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Presentation on Marketing and Branding of Muscatine.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Municipalities that aim to grow and differentiate from neighboring communities must understand their audience and craft a message that is unique and positions them for strategic growth. Municipalities are also constantly competing for business to stay or move to their community, ultimately bringing in new people and tax income to better support city functions – making their communities great places to live, work and raise a family. Developing the right message, sharing that message with the right audience at the right time and through the right channels is key to a marketing strategy.

A clear, compelling, and unique brand is the foundation that helps to make a place desirable as a business location, visitor destination, or a place to call home. A brand strategy is not an ad campaign or a tagline, but rather a deeper, more emotionally shared vision that influences actions such as stimulating economic growth.

To continue Muscatine's growth, City staff is investigating how to best incorporate a marketing strategy and a brand strategy into the Muscatine City Council goals of a Vibrant Community, Safe Community, Healthy Community, and a community with reliable public infrastructure.

GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

Does the City Council have any questions regarding the information presented?
Is there a marketing strategy that the City Council prefers?
What are the City Council's thoughts on the use of the City logo and tagline in branding?
Is there a need to do RFP for marketing and/or rebranding? Or keep it inhouse?

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

During the 2013-2014 academic year, senior undergraduate students in the University of Iowa College of Business' Marketing Institute completed a year-long study and evaluation of

Muscatine’s community brand as part of the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities.

In 2015, the City of Muscatine began using a revised logo with the tagline “Muscatine”.

In 2017, the Greater Muscatine Chamber of Commerce & Industry formed a core group of influencers that included the City of Muscatine, Muscatine Community School District, Muscatine Power & Water, and UnityPoint-Trinity Muscatine, to study the rebranding of Muscatine. GMCCI led the group and contracted with North Star Destination Strategies to research and develop a brand position in the minds of residents, visitors, and businesses. The proposed logo and tagline were not accepted.

Marketing and communication materials, such as letterheads, stationery, advertising and instruction manuals, must have a consistent quality and character that accurately and honestly reflects the municipality and its aims.

One of the goals established by the City Council for 2023 was to invest resources in marketing and branding the City of Muscatine (Customer Service).

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2014 IISC Report - Muscatine Insights and Rebranding (PDF)
2. 2018 North Star - Muscatine, IA Creative Report (PDF)
3. Branding Council Presentation 11-09-23 (PDF)

Muscatine: Insights and Rebranding Recommendations

Thursday, May 8th, 2014

The University of Iowa Marketing Institute

Compiled by: Kaileigh Ceurvorst, Emily Olsen, Lauren Patnoe, Bre Tobin

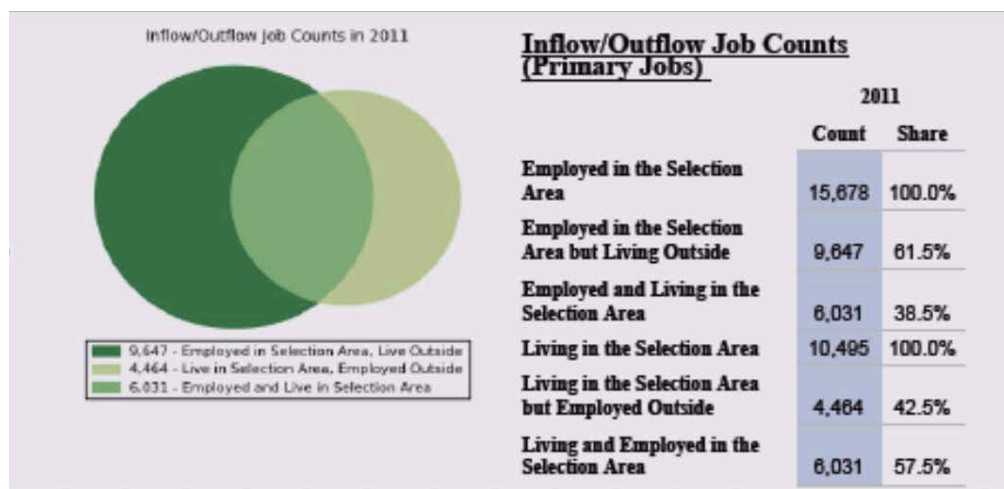
This report summarizes the key finding, implications and recommendations that emerged from an analysis done by members of The Marketing Institute at The University of Iowa.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Problem

Despite being the headquarters for well-known companies such as HNI Corporation, Kent Corporation, and numerous other companies (Bridgestone, Monsanto and Heinz to name a few), Muscatine does not appeal as a place to live for a significant portion of people employed by these companies. This has led to the phenomenon known as “import commuting.” This has become a major concern to Muscatine’s community and business leaders who have invested a great deal of resources to make the city a more attractive and self-contained community for its residents. It’s not unusual to meet workers who commute from Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, or even Dubuque (especially younger white collar workers).

Muscatine would like to understand why more of the working population does not choose to live there and start addressing those issues to reverse the trend. Furthermore, based on findings, they would like to develop a marketing plan that includes creating a brand identity.



Project Description

The project is to create a new brand identity and marketing plan for the town of Muscatine, in order to reverse the current trend of import commuting. Recommendations will be based on market research done through the use of surveys and focus groups.

Key Deliverables

1. Conduct a market research study using qualitative tools (focus groups and survey questionnaire) to find out why workers opt to commute rather than live in Muscatine; at the same time, find out how other similar size communities, either in Iowa or other areas of the USA, retain their commuters.

2. Analyze data and report key findings from the survey and focus groups; provide recommendations to reverse the trend.
3. Design/create a brand identity that is represented through a logo/slogan.
4. Provide a formal report and presentation that will include: executive summary, methodology, key findings, recommendations and implications.

II. OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

Field Research

Our team analyzed demographic data, current branding strategies, and strengths and weaknesses of the city of Muscatine and the communities it competes with including Iowa City, Dubuque, Bettendorf, and Davenport. The main take-away we found in doing this research was that Muscatine's city programming, housing, and entertainment options are not aligned with the wants and needs of the young professional workforce age group they are trying to target.

Personal Interviews

To gain direction and insight, we reached out to numerous business leaders throughout the community. These interviews consisted of phone conversations with leaders at some of the major corporations in Muscatine including HNI, Heinz, Bridgestone, Carver Pump, Muscatine Power and Water, Stanley Consultants, The Muscatine Arts Center, and Central State Bank. Topics asked about during the interviews included education, recreation, entertainment and housing options, and personal experiences in the city. The main goal of the interviews was to help us model our survey.

We also interviewed Rick Dickinson, the President and CEO of the Greater Dubuque Development Corporation. We believe that Dubuque offers a great model of various programs that would be very successful in attracting young professionals to Muscatine. Rick and his team began a campaign in 1997 based around restructuring their community, building a new brand image, and targeting young professionals, which has been very successful.

Survey

In order to collect the opinions of young professional living and/or working in Muscatine, we created a survey that was emailed to the employees at most major corporations in the city. The survey was also posted on the Chamber of Commerce's website and in the city's newspaper. The survey was set up to collect opinions that could be sorted by whether or not participants lived in Muscatine, what age group they were a part of, and what pay grade they were in. This helped us single out the results of participants in the young professional age group that Muscatine would like to focus on marketing to. We received 438 replies. We used these results to design questions for our focus group.

Focus Group

Our focus group held in Muscatine in December 2013, consisted of participants who currently work in Muscatine. We had asked those who answered our survey to provide their e-mail address if they were interested in joining us in a focus group. We were able

to use our survey results to pre-screen and select participants based on their level of education and age range. The 26 invited participants had some college education with 89% achieving a bachelor's degree or above. 65% of our group was in our target market age group of 21-35, with a few members in the age range of 41-56. The demographic provided us a mix of seasoned and young professionals. During our focus group we focused on perceived strengths and weaknesses of Muscatine.

III. KEY FINDINGS

Personal Interview Insights

Our first personal interviews were conducted with Muscatine business leaders. From these interviews we were able to determine a lot of key insights that aided us in the development of our survey. We asked the business leaders a wide variety of questions regarding living and working in Muscatine. Based on these interviews, we discovered that a majority of the young professionals working in Muscatine do commute due to a lack of entertainment options for young adults in Muscatine. In addition, the positives of Muscatine were discussed such as the ample recreation services. However, the business leaders did mention that some of the weaknesses of Muscatine are in the areas of education and residential options.

We conducted a second personal interview with Rick Dickinson, the President and CEO of Greater Dubuque Development Corp. The interview provided us with great insights regarding programs Dubuque has developed to attract young professionals to the community. Rick first discussed Dubuque's Workforce Solutions project.

Workforce Solutions started in 1997 and provides a vehicle where prospective employees can easily identify opportunities in Dubuque. To aid this project, Dubuquejobs.com was created as a page for employers to post positions they were seeking to fill. The site has been very successful and generates about 80,000 viewers per month. Mr. Dickinson emphasized the importance of seeking out young professionals who are looking at jobs. Dubuquejobs.com aims to make it as easy as possible for young professionals to find great opportunities in Dubuque.

In addition, Mr. Dickinson described a "Concierge Service" that they offer to anyone who is moving to Dubuque. The concierge service offers tours of the community, and classes. The five classes introduce newcomers to other newcomers, provide a tour of the community, and introduce different restaurants, entertainment venues, and hospitality options. Dubuque understands how important it is for young professionals to develop a network, make friends, and feel connected in the community. Furthermore, Dubuque has moved residential opportunities and new businesses to the downtown area. This has allowed Dubuque to create a live-work environment that is very appealing to young professionals. The Dubuque Greater Development Corporation also travels to different Universities to promote businesses in Dubuque and recruit soon to be college graduates.

However, the most important insight we gained from Rick Dickinson and Dubuque was learning the greatest fallacy of community transformation is that a good slogan will solve all problems. Rick claimed, "Cutesiness of verbiage does not matter. Rebuilding a

community takes hard work, study, planning, implementation, collaboration, budgeting, and staying on schedule. There is nothing wrong with a cool logo but that is not going to create any real change”. Dubuque has been working on transforming its community for almost twenty years and they are just starting to reap the success of their efforts.

In order to be successful, Muscatine needs to work on some of its key weaknesses and build from the ground up. A great logo and slogan alone will not attract new young professionals to the community. Muscatine must also be perceived as a desirable place for young professionals to start their careers. The logo and slogan are merely visual representations of this brand promise and culture.

Survey Insights

Due to privacy concerns, we distributed our Qualtrics survey through business leaders sending a link to their employees. Therefore, we were not able to determine how many people actually received our survey. However, we received 438 responses, 199 of which showed interest in participating in our focus groups. This high response provided great insights about people’s perceptions.

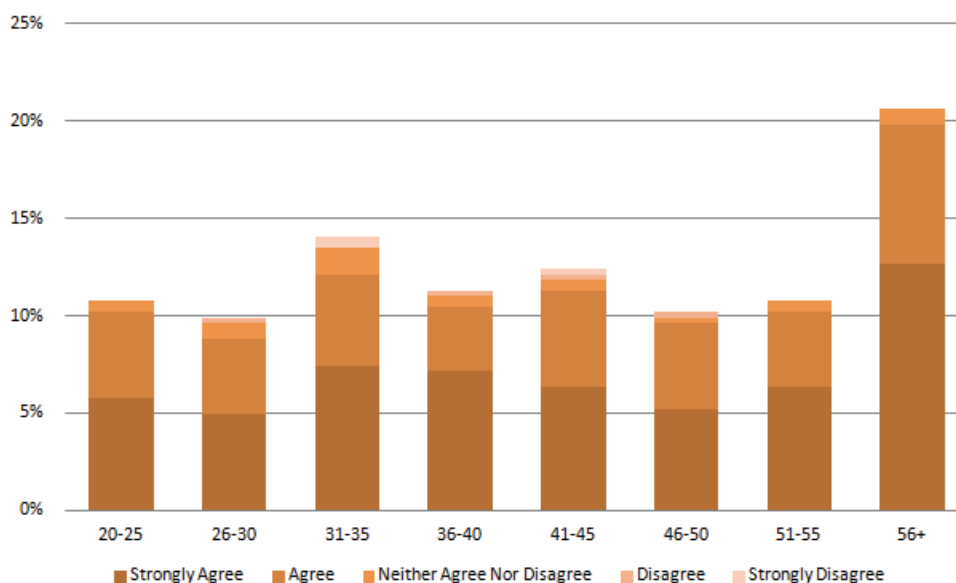
First, we found that 44% of participants that previously lived in Muscatine moved away due to proximity to their family and friends. Additionally, 72% of the respondents who currently live in Muscatine stated they have considered relocating in the near future. Along these lines, participants tended to rank employment opportunities as their top or second most important factor when considering a city to live in. On the other hand, commuters cited three primary factors to their decision to live somewhere other than Muscatine: “to be closer to family”, “there is more to do where [they] live”, and “Muscatine’s education system is lacking.”

Participants were asked to rank Muscatine’s perceived strengths and weaknesses. The top three resulting strengths were affordability, employment opportunities, and proximity to family and friends. The top three weaknesses participants listed were lack of retail, restaurants and recreation.

We conducted further analysis of information about participants’ current perceptions of Muscatine.

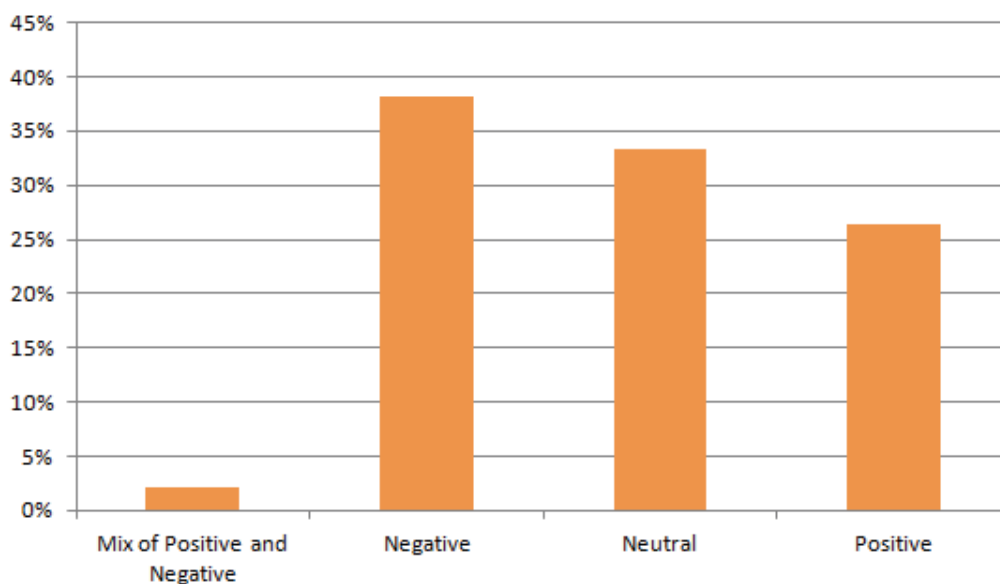
As shown in the bar graphs below, we asked participants if they thought Muscatine’s current branding, the Pearl of the Mississippi, was historical. The vast majority of participants agreed.

"Is the Current Branding 'Historical'?"



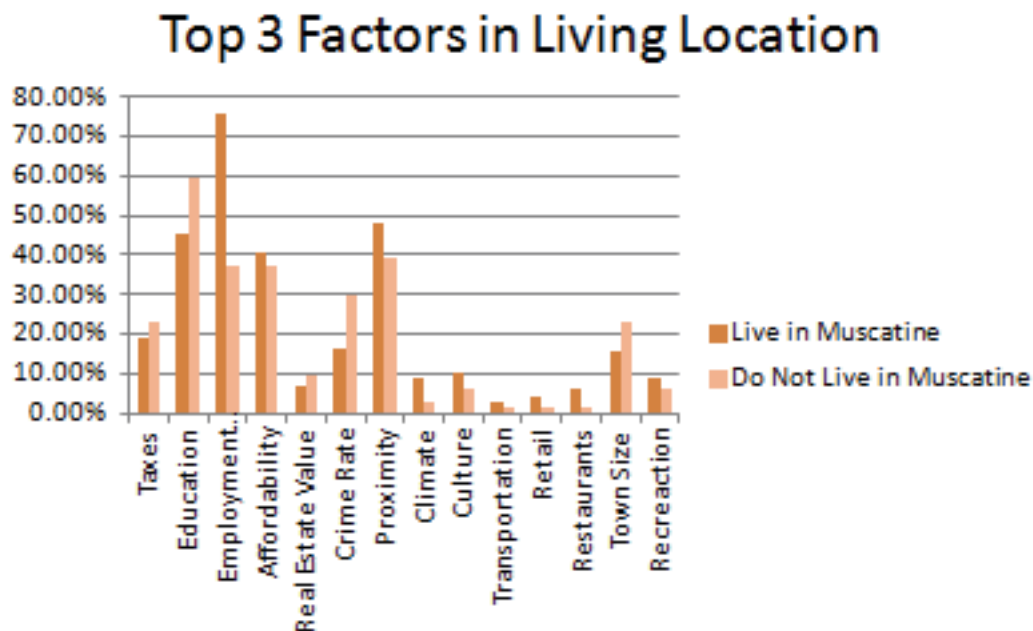
We also asked participants an open-ended question regarding their perceptions of Muscatine. Responses varied greatly and ranged from “river” or “river town” to “stinky” to “great place to live.” In order to show these results objectively we labeled responses as positive, negative, neutral, or mixed. The majority of participants responded with negative or neutral perceptions of Muscatine.

What Comes to Mind When You Think of Muscatine?

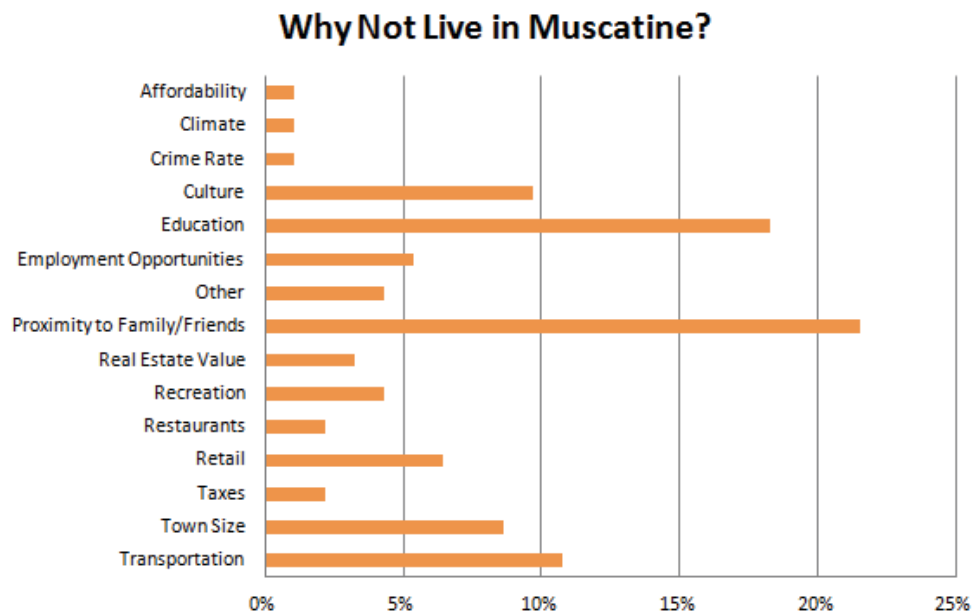


We also asked survey participants to rank criteria in order of most importance to their decision of choosing a location to live. Employment, education and proximity to family

and friends were the top three factors participants cited as factors to their decision about what city to live in.



Along those same lines, we asked participants who indicated they do not live in Muscatine to express why they chose to live elsewhere and commute to Muscatine. Participants commuting to Muscatine to work cited proximity to family and friends, education, transportation and culture as their primary reasons for choosing to live elsewhere.



Focus Group Insights

Our key findings addressed positives and negatives of Muscatine in the minds of people who live there. During our discussions, healthy living was a popular positive topic among participants. Verbatim from the participants include “There's an emphasis on healthy living.” “The YMCA provides low fees and there are other fitness centers, like Anytime Fitness too”. Participants also noted the abundant resources for outdoor fitness like trails, and the opening of Discovery Park. However, not everyone in the focus group was familiar with the new park. There was also a lack of recognition of the Blue Zones Project. We asked members in the focus group how they felt about the Blue Zone Initiative, and the majority of the participants needed the project to be explained.

Another key strength identified from the focus groups was the availability of employment in Muscatine. We were able to gather from the group, not only was there plenty of opportunities for work, but also companies that provide a great environment to work for. Quotes from participants included “I live here to be near work” and “Employers take good care of their employees” which support the positive perception those working in Muscatine have about their career opportunities.

Insights we discovered about areas of Muscatine that can be improved include options for late night transportation. We heard from participants there is no cab service, if they were hoping to be out late, and especially if they are choosing to drink. Currently Muscatine has a bus service which was not mentioned in the focus group, hinting at the issue of people being unaware of their options as well as their need of a taxi service.

Another weakness identified in our focus group included the lack of retail, restaurants, and hotel options. A quote from participant included, “We are missing big stores like Target”. The focus group remarked they travel to competitor cities like Iowa City and Dubuque to eat out and shop. They mentioned it would be beneficial if options were within walking distance, as well as their desire to have outdoor dining similar to nearby cities. Our key finding is those who work in Muscatine feel there is a trade off when deciding whether to live in Muscatine. Young professionals feel they will either need to commute on the weekends for leisure or commute during the week. Also during the discussions, people remarked they wish there were more options for their families and friends to stay when they visit. They wished there was a moderately upscale hotel in town (and not a motel). Currently, Muscatine has a bed and breakfast that does not appear to be well advertised as a viable option for this problem.

A final finding discovered in the focus group was the dismay for housing options among young professionals. They discussed the lack of housing options among those with similar financial backgrounds. Young professionals said they can not afford the nicer single family homes offered, but want something nicer than what they have lived in the past. A verbatim from the group included “I’m not in college anymore”. The group seemed to want an improvement from their college apartments until they are ready for the commitment of a home. An apartment complex mentioned as a current viable option for residents in that age range was Cottonwood.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Short-Term Recommendations

Our first short-term recommendation is to implement the Dubuque Model discussed earlier in the report. As seen from our interview with Rick Dickinson, it is of the utmost importance for Muscatine to create a community where young professionals feel connected and welcomed. We believe that by implementing a Concierge Service, young professionals will be able to see all of the great things the Muscatine community has to offer and start creating a professional and social network. In addition, a Muscatine Development group should begin recruiting at college campuses. This would allow students who will be entering the workforce the opportunity to see all of the great employment opportunities in Muscatine in a thriving community. Muscatine would also benefit from the creation of a jobs website. A website promoting all of the jobs in Muscatine would help attract new people to the area.

We also recommend that Muscatine promote and revive its downtown area. Survey results indicated Muscatine's top rated weaknesses were retail, restaurants, and recreation. In addition, from the focus group responses, we found that many young professionals working in Muscatine are looking for more entertainment options. If Muscatine could provide some financial incentives for businesses to move to the downtown area, we believe it will solve two main problems: 1) revitalization of the downtown to make it more appealing and attractive; and 2) keeping its residents in town to spend their money as opposed to surrounding cities.

Muscatine should also do more to advertise the recreation options available on the river and through the Blue Zones project. We believe that recreation opportunities could be one of Muscatine's greatest strengths; however, people need to be informed of the recreational options available. In general, it seems Muscatine can benefit from communicating to current and potential residents about the benefits of the town. As stated in the focus groups not everyone knew about the opening of the new trail or other recreational opportunities.

We think it is important to promote awareness by using social media and advertisements to promote what is great about Muscatine. Furthermore, we recommend that Muscatine create more housing options in the downtown area. This would create more housing for young professionals and would create a great work-life environment that college graduates enjoy.

Finally, Muscatine should work on improving its transportation options. Muscatine offers bus transportation, but as heard in the focus groups, many young professionals complain that there is no taxi service. We would recommend starting a taxi service. A taxi would allow people living in Muscatine and the surrounding area to stay out later and enjoy the downtown area.

Long-Term Recommendations

Our first long-term recommendation is to improve the education system, especially in the high school level. As seen from our survey results, sixty percent of non-residents

included education in their top three factors in choosing a place of residence. In 2013 Muscatine's high school had an average score of 78.2 for math and 71.5 for reading, both which are below the state's average. Muscatine ranked worse than 83% of other Iowa schools in 2013. We recommend while Muscatine is focusing on improving their education they communicate their changes with community members. It is important for the public to be aware of the new change in leadership, the recent change in principal and superintendent.

We suggest working on housing options for young professionals. As seen by our focus group, the young professional employees feel they do not have options in Muscatine. We suggest opening more apartment complexes similar to Cottonwood, but closer to the downtown area. Cottonwood currently offers amenities young professionals seek such as the ability to have different lengths on their lease, as well as modern fixtures, appliances and ambiance in the apartments. We also suggest offering more two bedrooms apartment units as an option for young professionals to offset rent payments with a roommate. We believe a similar complex closer to downtown would be a very attractive and appealing to young professionals who have a tendency to prefer a more eclectic and urban lifestyle. Young professionals seek big city amenities, which include being able to walk to local shops, restaurants, and businesses.

Another option for housing includes offering subsidies for employees of Muscatine to live in town. Currently younger professionals may not have enough to afford the nicer options in Muscatine. By making nicer homes more affordable through a subsidy, current Muscatine workers may be more likely to stay in town.

Muscatine should also seek to improve their ways of communication with the younger demographic. As seen by our focus group, people sometimes have misconceptions or are not seeing the entire story. By developing a social media presence, a conversation can develop between Muscatine and their target market. Muscatine can use their "What's Up Muscatine" as a device to communicate with those living and commuting to Muscatine. We recommend using Twitter and Facebook, in addition to the website, to update people on changes as well as all the wonderful things in the city. For example, programs related to the Blue Zone and resources on how to get involved can be shared on a Facebook post. Or the hash tag #MuscatineBlueZone can be created in order to build excitement on the achievement. When using social media, remember to be engaging with your audience, as it can be another form of market research. Posts can be used to ask questions in order to find out what your audience wants in the city. For example post, "What kind of summer events would you like to see?" This will provide ideas on programming that would be attractive to a younger demographic.

Also Muscatine should focus on developing their downtown area. From the survey results we saw over five percent of responders choose not to live in Muscatine due to the lack of retail. Muscatine can help this issue in two ways. The first is to support the current establishments in downtown Muscatine. During our focus group a few restaurants were mentioned as great places to eat. It is important to give these restaurants support in order to bring positive attention to the downtown area. These restaurants include The Brew, 101 West, and Pearl City Chop House. Finding ways to partner and market current

options will change current perceptions of a lack of restaurants, as well as increase community support. Also, to attract new business and retail, Muscatine can offer subsidies as incentives for business owners to move to Muscatine.

Proposed Branding Strategy

We think it is important to remember that a logo and slogan alone are not a brand; a brand is a culture and perception, and a logo and slogan are a visual representation of the brand's promise. We also want to emphasize that a branding campaign takes a considerable amount of time. When we spoke to Rick Dickinson from Dubuque, he told us the city began its rebranding process in 1997. It wasn't until recently, almost 20 years later, that Dubuque started marketing the rebranding materials. With this in mind, our proposed branding strategy runs parallel to our short-term and long-term recommendations.

We provided three rebranding directions, each with a different logo and slogan option. We also provided a final proposal recommendation.

Proposal 1: Pearls of Opportunity



Our first proposal is “Pearls of Opportunity.” This option references the history of the pearl button factory, but could also be interpreted similar to a “hidden gem” concept to someone who doesn’t know the history behind the pearl. On the other hand, the mentioned opportunities could be interpreted as employment, community, health, or even education opportunities.

Proposal 2: Great Opportunity. Close Community.



Great Opportunity. Close Community.

MUSCATINE

Our second proposal is “Great Opportunity. Close Community.” This option again emphasizes the many vast opportunities available to people living in Muscatine, but also aims to draw attention to the culture of Muscatine and its family-oriented programming and proposed young adult life culture. Overall, “Great Opportunity. Close Community.” aspires to generate perceptions of Muscatine as a “small big city.”

Proposal 3: Opportunity Around Every Bend



Our third proposal is “Opportunity Around Every Bend.” This option offers a subtle historical reference, but places the majority of its focus on the opportunities in Muscatine. It displays optimism and futuristic vision while being versatile and sustainable.

Final Recommendation



As previously mentioned, a brand is a culture and a promise - not logo or a slogan. The logo and slogan are visual representations of the brand promise. We feel the sunrise logo with the “Opportunity Around Every Bend” slogan represents a strong, sustainable brand promise of extensive opportunities through jobs, community involvement, environment, recreation and many other avenues and can be used alongside our short and long term recommendations. It demonstrates a forward-looking vision and the idea of “turning over a new leaf” to make positive changes to the Muscatine community such as the Blue Zones Project and our proposed short and long term recommendations.

The colors yellow, blue and green used in these logo proposals were chosen specifically for common psychology associated with them. Yellow indicates confidence and optimism while blue shows peace, integrity, trust and dependability. Additionally, green signifies harmony, balance, refreshment, health and growth. We feel these colors further represent the brand promise Muscatine should portray to its community.

Muscatine, IA

Final BrandPrint Report

5.18.2018



MUSCATINE

Where The River Takes A Turn For The Better



ABOUT NORTH STAR DESTINATION STRATEGIES

North Star Destination Strategies comprises over two dozen talented individuals dedicated to growing community brands through integrated marketing solutions. North Star offers communities a combination of research, strategy, creativity and action. This process - called Community Brandprint - provides direction for the community's brand development, like a blueprint guides the construction of a home. And just like a blueprint, the priorities and targets of each Community Brandprint are stated in clear and unambiguous language. The resulting brand personality is as revealing as an individual's fingerprint, and just as unique.

ABOUT THE BRANDPRINT PROCESS

Through the Community BrandPrint process, North Star determines Muscatine's most relevant and distinct promise. From that promise, we create a strategic platform intended to generate a brand position in the minds of residents, visitors, and businesses. We then develop a compelling creative identity to support the strategy, a range of deliverables showing that creativity in use and an integrated action plan for bringing the brand to life. Each of these tools reinforces Muscatine's strategic positioning and ensures brand equity and growth..

ABOUT THE BRANDING PARTNERS

The City of Muscatine contracted with North Star Destination Strategies to determine Muscatine's true, unique and relevant brand position and help the community stand out in the marketplace.



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Executive Summary

North Star conducted research to identify what differentiates Muscatine from its competitors. We set out to learn the perceptions and beliefs of stakeholders, consumers and influencers as well as understand the competitive situation. North Star then worked collaboratively with Muscatine's Branding Steering Committee to determine a strategy for guiding the rebranding of the community.

A community rich in manufacturing, the river town of Muscatine is anchored by its historic identity as the Pearl Button Capital of the World -- an identity it earned in the early 20th century when one third of the world's pearl buttons were produced in Muscatine. Muscatine enjoys a reputation of being a regional employment center, having well-maintained parks and green spaces, and a scenic waterfront. Conveniently located between the Quad Cities and Iowa City, residents enjoy the amenities of those larger metro areas while many people from the Quad Cities and Iowa City commute into Muscatine everyday for work.

Even with its assets and advantages --which also include controlling their own utilities through Muscatine Power & Water-- Muscatine has suffered from negative perceptions including drug-related crime, a low-performing school system, and poor air quality from pollution caused by the local industrial presence. Even its convenient location between the Quad Cities and Iowa City is a double-edged sword as it is often seen as the main reason for a lack of retail and dining concentrating in Muscatine.

Muscatine leadership has begun the hard work of updating the community's infrastructure, improving walkability, revitalizing the downtown, and figuring out ways to better utilize the river as an asset. These efforts show progress through the new downtown hotel currently under construction, the implementation of the Mississippi Drive Corridor Reconstruction Project, and Muscatine's designation as one of the nation's first Blue Zone Communities.

Muscatine lacks awareness in the Quad Cities --which given its size, proximity, and high number of commuters into Muscatine-- remains an underutilized source of opportunity for visitors and new residents. In order to take advantage of the proximity to the Quad Cities, Muscatine needs to access and engage that market to build regional awareness of Muscatine's significant advantages.



Research data was analyzed for trending insights that hone in on the Muscatine story. These insights were funneled into a strategic brand platform, also known as your strategic DNA. Just as an individual's DNA influences everything from how that person looks to how that person acts (as well as their health and vibrancy), Muscatine's DNA should be the foundational touchstone for all positive planned action in your destination from marketing to events and product development.

Target Audience:	For those with global horizons who want to watch the sunset in the Midwest,
Frame of Reference:	Muscatine, an industrial power between Iowa City and the Quad Cities,
Point-of-Difference:	is where the great bend of the Mississippi turns small town ingenuity into unbounded enterprise
Benefit:	so you can access the world stage or watch it flow by.



The final package of foundational creative tools supports the Muscatine strategic brand platform, or DNA. These tools layer personality on top of the strategy in order to make an emotional connection with the consumer. They include a strapline, a narrative, a logo family, a color palette and a creative execution look. Together they tell the Muscatine story in a consistent, compelling and memorable way.



The Brand Action Plan contains hundreds of ideas – large and small – for integrating the brand into the Muscatine community. Ideas touch on leadership, infrastructure, tourism, economic development, community outreach and more. Dozens of deliverables were designed using the visual brand identity and brand language to serve as a guide for putting the brand to work. The collage below is a sampling.



The background of the slide is a vibrant green with a dynamic pattern of white paint splashes and droplets. At the bottom, the rims of several white paint cans are visible, suggesting a creative or artistic theme.

Creativity

Brand Identity

You are about to see a range of creative expressions that will help bring Muscatine's brand to life. This Brand Identity Guide should serve as a blueprint for the creative rendering of your new brand. With the exception of the logo, files do not represent camera-ready art. Many communities choose to work with local talent for the actual refinement and production of creative communication pieces. This allows for true customization and brings local perspectives to the work.

A Creative Committee, identified by brand drivers in Muscatine, was charged with evaluating and selecting the foundational tools in the Brand Identity Guide. All creative decisions were made using the city's strategic brand platform as a guide. Those tools include:

- Strapline and narrative
- Logo and color palette
- Graphic Standards Guide
- Creative expressions of the brand (in the form of a full page ad)

Every creative element in this Brand Identity Guide represents North Star's best suggestions for how to put your new brand to work creatively. Elements included in the Creativity section influence, guide and inform the tactic-driven Action Plan that follows in the next section.

Note: *All final logos for Muscatine are included in the Google Drive folder in both JPEG and Vector/EPS format. We encourage you to share this folder with city departments, branding partners, organizations, vendors or other outlets requesting a copy of the logo. All files for the creative deliverables contained in this section are also included in your Google Drive folder.*



Muscatine...Where the River Takes a Turn for the Better

- Connects to the strategy by putting the city's river location and benefits front and center.
- Showcases not just the river location, but the town's superior location at the river's bend.
- Identifies Muscatine as a place where things "turn" for the better (using river terminology). Opportunity, careers, dreams, fun, the future . . . all takes a turn for the better.
- A "turn for the better" is unique to the consumer to hears the phrase, thus the line offers a unique value proposition based on the perspective of the audience.
- Very visual line that can work well with graphic logo.
- Uplifting tone.

North Star ran a search for Tempe's strapline on the United States Patent and Trademark Office's Trademark Electronic Search System (TESS). No conflicts for use of the line were revealed in the search. North Star highly recommends that Gallatin pursue trademark protection of the straplines along with the new logos. By trademarking the logo and line together, this will ensure that the identity is protected from usage by other communities or conflicting parties. North Star's trademark search is documented in **Appendix A in your Google Drive**.



A Brand Narrative was developed using artistic language to set the emotional tone for the brand. Its purpose is to help visitors, stakeholders, merchants, attractions and organizations connect the emotional story of the brand to their own situations. Each partner organization or attraction should develop its own brand narrative leveraging the assets and language here for the community.

The Brand Narrative is critical to successful integration of the brand for a number of reasons:

- It can serve as a guide for users working to integrate brand tone and language into their own marketing and communications.
- It helps maintain consistency of tone and message amongst all users, thus preserving the integrity of the brand.
- It provides language users can replicate verbatim in their own communications when applicable.

Because of the inherent value in brand narratives, North Star recommends wide distribution of the copy, typically in tandem with the logo. Many of our clients use the strategic brand platform and the brand narrative together as a touch point for each new project or policy they initiate. In other words, "Does this idea support and further what makes us special?"



Where the River Takes a Turn for the Better

Located on the mighty Mississippi River, where the current takes a unique and sudden turn to flow East to West, Muscatine is uncommon ground on equally uncommon waters. Just like the pearls that formed in the prolific waters of the Mississippi propelling Muscatine to become the pearl button capital, Muscatine is a rare gem . . . multifaceted, gritty, resilient, naturally beautiful and completely unique. With a fascinating history and inspiring future, this global river town allows you to shine on the world's stage, or thrive right here at home while basking in the glow of breathtaking sunsets.

With a pace right for raising a family, and the metropolitan areas of the Quad Cities and Iowa City nearby, Muscatine offers something for everyone. The town's down-to-earth roots and international connections create a unique wealth of small town charm, diversity, possibility and global vision. This hardworking enclave is proud of its manufacturing heritage and, like the free-flowing river that serves as a global gateway, Muscatine adapts to change and keeps thriving ... finding new ways to take a turn for the better.

Where Enterprise takes a Global Turn

The river brings people together while the global connections set it apart. Deemed the "Pearl Button Capital of the World", Muscatine created an industrial boom from the early 1900s through the 1950s that carried around the world. The evolution of the businesses of Muscatine has continued to foster international relationships creating opportunity and economic stability.



This might be the only place you can find so many global companies within such a small radius. Powerhouse global corporations and entrepreneurial industrialists like Bridgestone Bandag, Carver Pump, HNI Corporation, Kent Corporation, Stanley Consultants, Monsanto, Musco Lighting, Raymond of Muscatine (a Toyota Industries Company), and many others choose to call this place home thanks to the prime location, city support, and a roll-up-your-sleeves work ethic provided by residents and commuters. With global connections at your fingertips ... opportunities take a boundless turn for the better.

Where History takes a Modern Turn

History is respected, preserved and celebrated here. The town's pearl button heritage is a major influence on today's continued industrial success. Respective of tradition and smitten by innovation, the Muscatine History and Industry Center bridges the past and the present with an eye to the future. Historic downtown offers impressive waterfront real estate, primed for savvy businesses and startups to move here ahead of the crowds... and take an advantageous turn for the better.

Where Life takes a Welcome Turn

With a friendly community, a relaxed pace, and appealing affordability, the quality of life takes a turn towards perfect balance. Muscatine is a great place to start a family or extend one. Accredited as one of the first cities in the nation to be a Blue Zones Community, life here has a healthy and happy focus. Muscatine offers access to quality health care services and providers. Anchored by our local hospital, UnityPoint Health –Trinity Muscatine, the community's health and wellness needs are continually being evaluated to improve service offerings. State of the art specialty providers are close by in Iowa City and the Quad Cities.



Muscatine's education system includes Muscatine Community School District, Ss. Mary and Mathias Catholic School and Muscatine Community College. MCC is the community's college, providing two-year college transfer and career technical training for high-demand jobs. These institutions strive to provide educational excellence for every student. Housing ranges from affordable apartments and family-friendly neighborhoods to 19th Century grand waterfront homes and upscale renovations in historic downtown buildings. All of these entities provide an infrastructure capable of meeting the needs of the future. The community is proud of our award winning police and fire departments, and Muscatine City provides excellence community services to the citizens. Muscatine is also a giga-bit community. This outstanding high speed internet provided by our local municipal utility, Muscatine Power and Water, has set Muscatine up for the future.

With a small town Midwest heartbeat, it's the kind of place where ... life takes a turn for the better in ways that matter most.

Where Fun takes an Active Turn

With a diverse range of experiences on land and water, people of all ages find ways to enjoy themselves on the riverbanks and the town's well-visited parks, bike paths and trails. The river serves as an invigorating natural water park for all kinds of activities. The community is served by a beautiful harbor and boat docks from which to launch a great day of fishing, skiing or just leisure boating. The regionally renowned athletic complexes host everything from pickup games to clinics to regional tournaments, and attract baseball, soccer and softball enthusiasts from near and far. Shopping and dining ranges from mainstream to eclectic -- from popular chains and big box stores to unique spots in historic downtown to stroll, browse, sip or dine with friends and family.



In addition, Muscatine's cultural scene is well-loved and well-supported by both residents and corporations. The Muscatine Arts Center features year-round exhibits, educational programs and historic tours. It's no wonder the town is also a draw for visitors who want ... to take a creative turn for the better.

Where The River Takes A Turn for the Better

Like its famous, well-crafted pearl buttons, Muscatine is a study in natural beauty and man-made function. All the power and might where the massive Mississippi River takes its unique turn ... the grit and grace, the highs and lows, the vigor and ease ... seems to splash up on the shoreline to define the town, the people, and the community. And in the process, everything and everyone ... takes a turn for the better.





- This is an artistic abstract icon of the bend in the Mississippi river.
- The imagery in the icon feels somewhat like stained glass making the icon artistic in nature.
- There is a lot of movement to this logo making it feel very active.
- The tone of this logo is modern and fresh.
- There is enormous creative potential for brand materials with the pattern created in this logo that makes creative, memorable visuals recognizable anywhere.





Where The River Takes A Turn For The Better



Where The River Takes A Turn For The Better



Where The River Takes A Turn For The Better





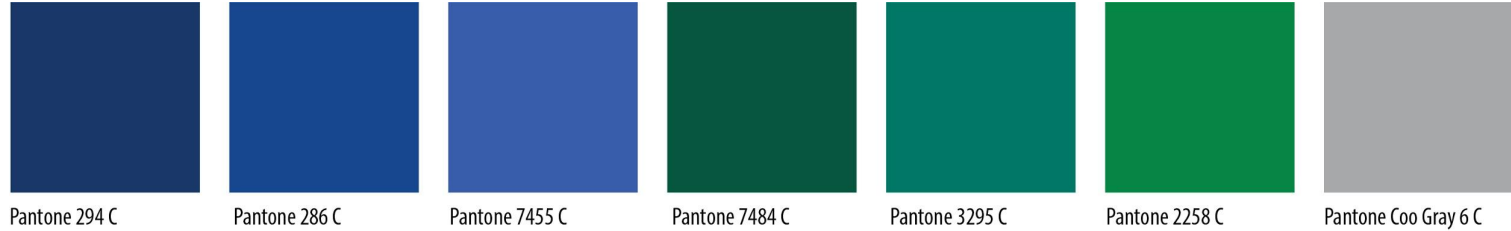




PARTNER FOR THE BETTER IN
MUSCATINE







- These tones are brighter, more vivid, and energetic.
- This palette should appeal to younger audiences as it reflects the excitement, growth and energy going on in Muscatine.



- This look is a clean, modern design addresses the consumer on an intimate level, acting as a personal invitation to take your turn, while also stating that Muscatine is the place to do that.
- The juxtaposition of two-sides offers limitless possibilities of connecting concepts like success, fun, connection, activity and so forth.
- The photo on the right would be a portrait of the individual that allows the consumer to envision themselves in Muscatine. The second photo is a more active photo that shows the person in progress of pursuing better. For an extra layered meaning, this photo can have something representative of a turn, like the wheels on a bike. In this concept, Muscatine is presented not only as a great place to open a small business, but also as a place full of opportunity for an active lifestyle.
- The body copy would allow you to expand on ideas like Muscatine's commitment to providing green spaces for the betterment of its citizens' lives.



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All creative files are included in your Google Drive folder. As you introduce the brand, be sure to show the logo in the context of an execution rather than by itself. You want to avoid making this branding effort about a logo and line. North Star has produced Muscatine's Graphic Standards Guide, available in your final report folder, which provides some rules for implementation to ensure consistency and accuracy.



Creative Deliverables

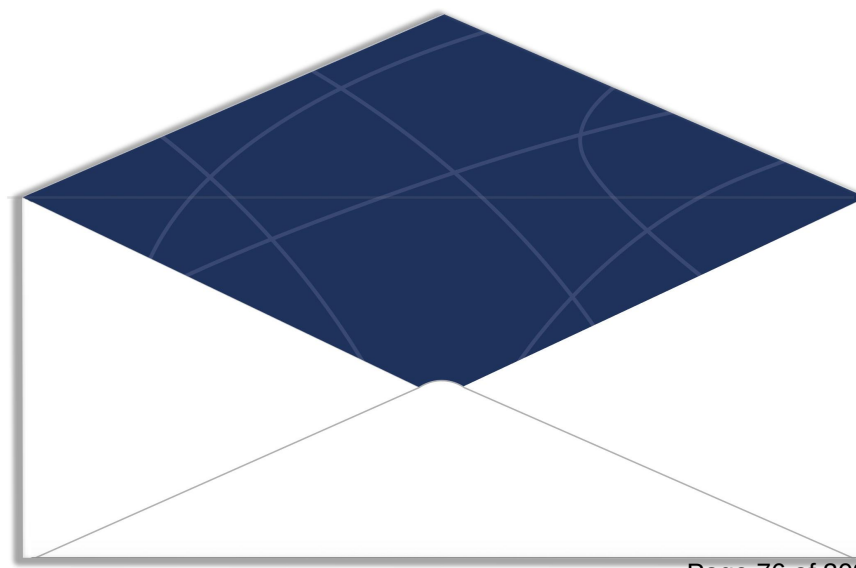
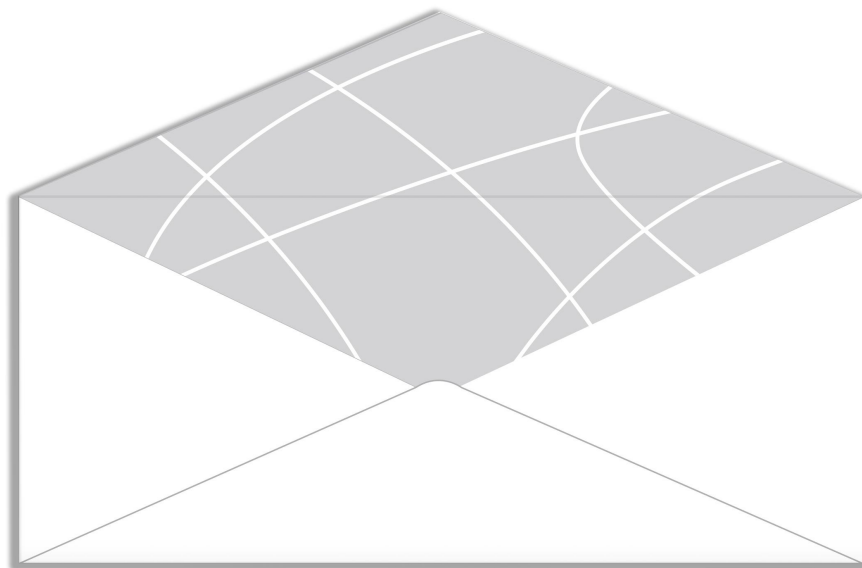
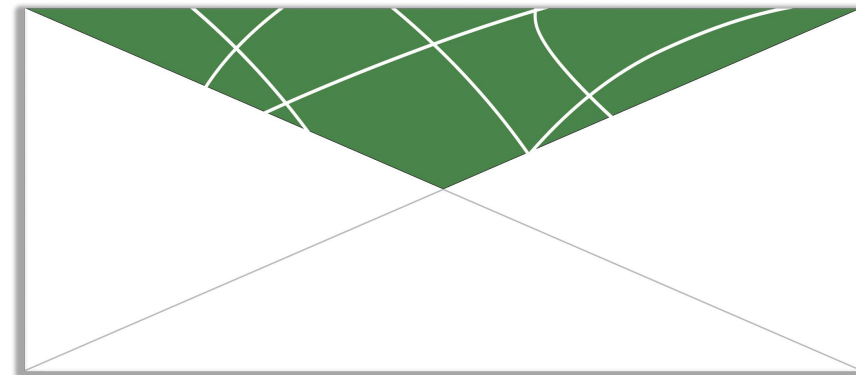
Using the foundation creative tools developed for the Muscatine Brand Identity Guide, North Star has developed a full slate of creative deliverables demonstrating how the Brand Identity can be used throughout the community. The majority of these deliverables were identified by the City of Muscatine as being priorities and some were recommendations or examples that North Star created to illustrate the tactics identified in the Muscatine Action Plan.

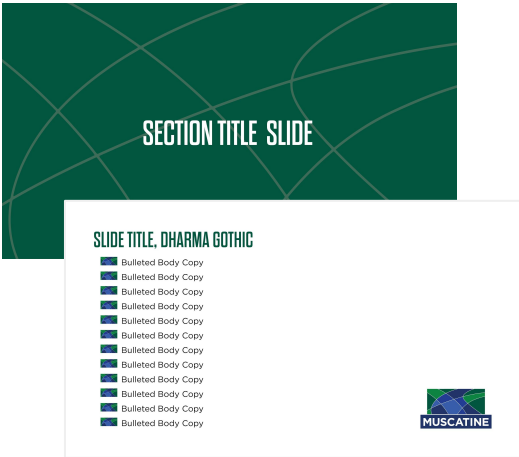
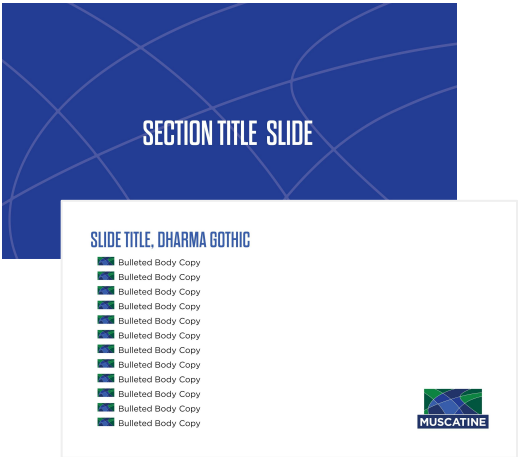
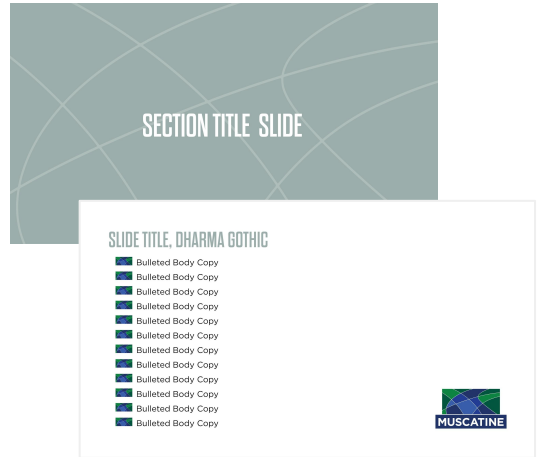
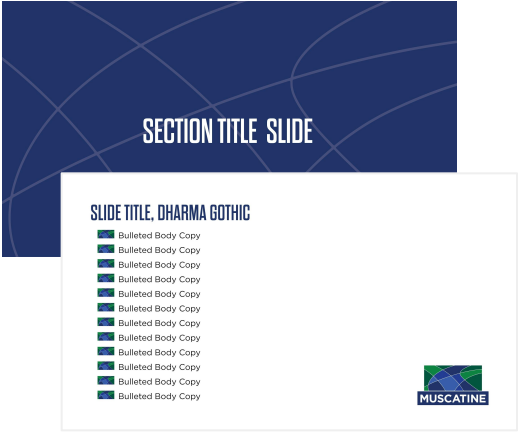
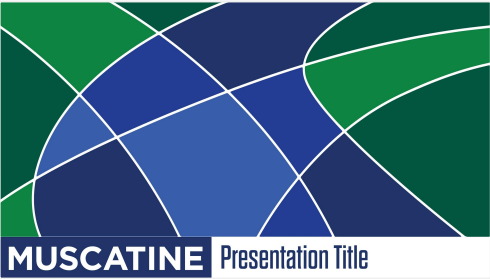
Creative deliverables are shown on the following pages.























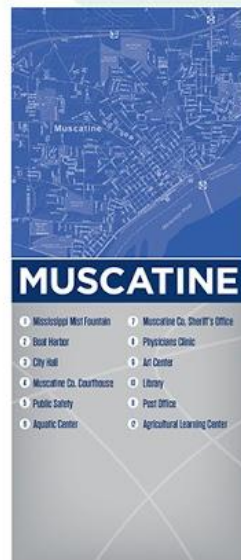
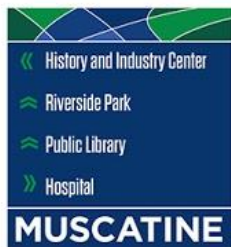
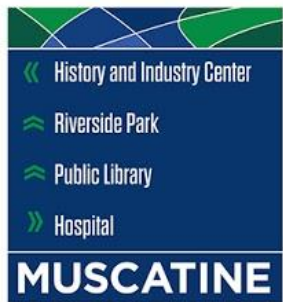


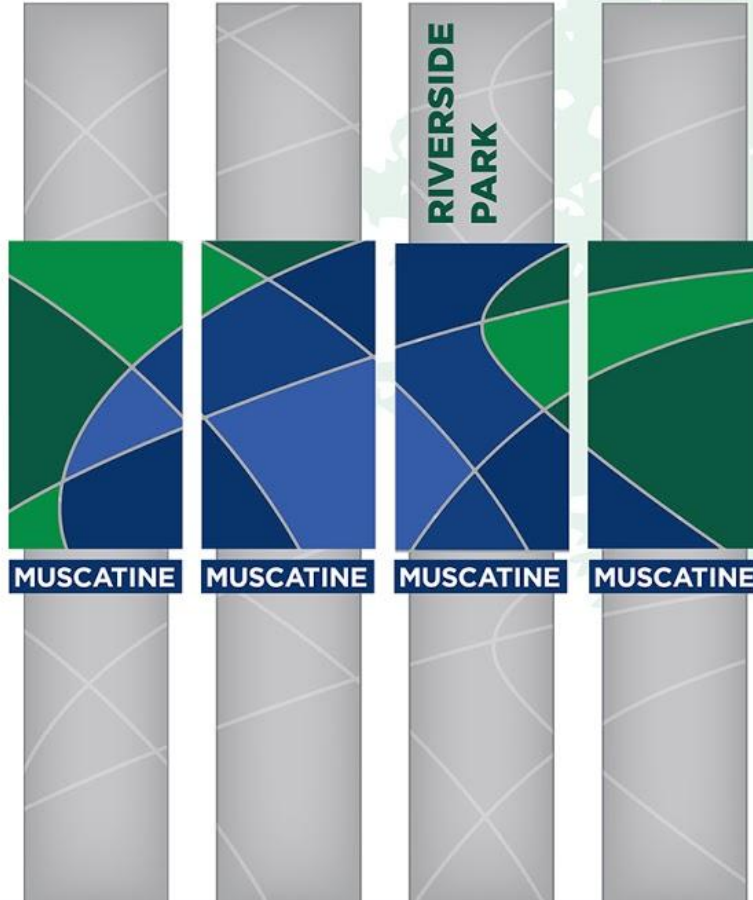




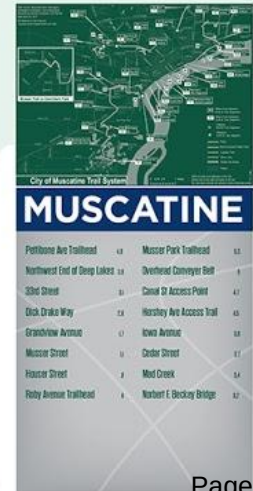
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Where The River Takes A Turn For The Better





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Where The River Takes A Turn For The Better

GO AHEAD

Judge this book
by its cover

LET US SERVE YOU

Hospitality program
raises standards

GAME
CHANGER

Business owner coaches
soccer team to the top

PUBLICATION OF THE GREATER MUSCATINE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY



JOIN
EVENTS
JOBS
MENTORING
NEWSLETTER
MAGAZINE
NEWS
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
ADVOCACY

IT'S MY TURN

HOW I TURNED MY DREAMS INTO REALITY IN MUSCATINE



SEARCH PROPERTIES

.....
CITY
BUILDING



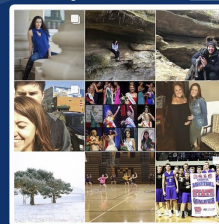
UNIVERSITY AVENUE LOT #3
This land is located in the growing corridor of Muscatine. Located directly behind Muscatine and across from Town's Park. 0.5 acres. Zoned M2 Heavy Industrial. High traffic counts. Ready for development.

EVENTS

- JUNE SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
- JUNE OIL PAINTING AT LIBRARY
- JUNE WELLNESS GROUP: GENDER SUPPORT
- JUNE FACES OF IOWA STATE
- JUNE KIDS FIRST PANCAKE BREAKFAST
- JUNE KIMBLE BROWLEY: WOBY-BICK

Instagram

subscribe





WHERE TRAINING
TURNS
INTO PROFIT

WHERE TALENT TURNS INTO TEAMWORK



- FIND A MEMBER
- EVENT CALENDAR
- JOIN CHAMBER
- REGISTER FOR EVENT
- BENEFITS OF LOCAL CHAMBER
- COMMITTEES
- MARKETING/SPONSORING OPPORTUNITIES
- MONITORING
- RIBBON CUTTINGS
- MEMBER BENEFITS
- PUBLICATIONS

INING
TURNS
INTO PROFIT

JOIN
EVENTS

JOBS

MENTORING

NEWSLETTER

MAGAZINE

NEWS

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

ADVOCACY

IT'S MY TURN

HOW I TURNED MY DREAMS INTO REALITY IN MUSCATINE



SEARCH PROPERTIES

- ☐ SITES
☐ BUILDING



UNIVERSITY AVENUE LOT #3

This land is located in the growing section of Muscatine. Located directly behind Menards and across from Farm & Fleet. 6.5 acres. Zoned M2 heavy industrial. High traffic counts. Ready for development.

EVENTS

JUNE
3

SCHOOL BOARD
MEETING

JUNE
4

OIL PAINTING
AT LIBRARY

JUNE
7

WELLNESS GROUP:
CANCER SUPPORT

JUNE
11

FACES OF
IOWA STATE

JUNE
13

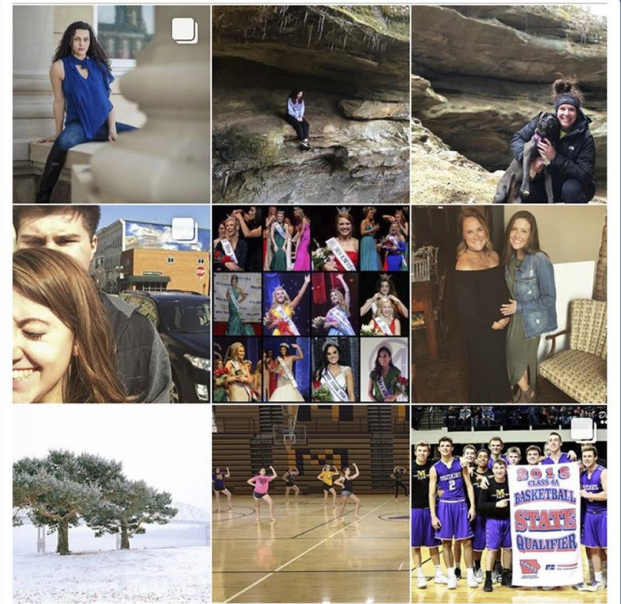
KIDS FIRST PANCAKE
BREAKFAST

JUNE
15

KIMBLE BROMLEY:
MOBY-DICK

Instagram

[subscribe](#)









PARTNER FOR THE BETTER IN



MUSCATINE

BUT
FIRST,
COFFEE.



MONDAY - SATURDAY

7 AM - 7 PM

OPEN

PULL

210



CITY



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



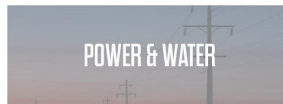
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



TOURISM



DOWNTOWN



POWER & WATER



HEALTH CARE



SCHOOL DISTRICT



COMMUNITY COLLEGE

[CITY](#)[CHAMBER OF COMMERCE](#)[ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT](#)[TOURISM](#)[DOWNTOWN](#)[POWER & WATER](#)[HEALTH CARE](#)[SCHOOL DISTRICT](#)[COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#)









TURN CAFETERIA INTO CAFE

MUSCATINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
One of the  EASTERN IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

PARTNER FOR THE BETTER IN
MUSCATINE



TURN METALWORK INTO ARTWORK

MUSCATINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
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PARTNER FOR THE BETTER IN
MUSCATINE



Action

Bringing the Brand to Life

So you've got a distinct and relevant brand, now what? Strategic implementation is the most critical, and sometimes the most challenging aspect of branding. Your brand is not just about a strapline and logo. It is even more about emotion and experience. True branding requires strategies and tactics aimed at getting your brand off the page, onto the street and into people's hearts, minds and souls. Specifically, your brand is about how more than just the Mississippi River takes a turn for the better. With an advantageous location, combined with a strong economic foundation, natural beauty, small-town charm, commerce with a global reach – and people who are welcoming, resilient, and adaptive – life and work can take a turn for the better in Muscatine.

Your brand is most vulnerable during the 24-month period following launch simply because both support and awareness are low while skepticism is high. (As you know, that is the nature of many public initiatives.) The main goal of this time period is to convert the “players” in Muscatine into brand ambassadors through education and information sharing. While numerous other brand marketing and communication initiatives can take place concurrently, this incubation period is primarily devoted to strategies that reinforce and demonstrate the value of the brand. Our goal – and yours – is to take a holistic approach to integrating the brand into the community, from policy to planning to promotions, ensuring that it becomes an integral part of your city, not just a logo and line on your letterhead.

Once everyone is on board the brand team, there is no end to the powerful things you can do with your brand. We have seen it happen in other communities across the country, and we are excited to see it happen in Muscatine.



North Star has identified 15 brand action ideas on the following pages that are designed to get your brand going. To ensure momentum, these tasks should be accomplished within the first 6 to 36 months after brand development. Many of these tasks address “organization” and are designed to evoke the cooperation that will propel your brand forward. Many are focused on simply informing residents as well as potential visitors about what Muscatine has to offer. They should serve as a way of thinking about your city and how the brand can support a variety of interests. Others are designed to give your brand the richness, texture and the three-dimensionality it needs to be fully integrated.

While North Star has prioritized the categories, there are numerous ideas presented within most categories. These should be evaluated and prioritized by the branding partners in the community, taking into account priorities and resources. You don’t have to complete all these ideas, but your branding team should complete a representative sampling in each category. This ensures that the brand becomes deeply woven into the fabric of your unique society, rather than just serving as a logo and line on your letterhead.

When helpful and relevant, the creative deliverables presented by North Star will be used to illustrate how a specific tactic could look, sound or feel. Again, these deliverables are North Star’s best recommendation and are open to revision by you based on your own interpretation of the brand.



Brands cannot grow and thrive if no one takes responsibility for them. Successful implementation of the Muscatine brand will require accountability, passion, understanding, and respect for the branding effort. It will also require cooperation and partnership with other organizations, businesses, and individuals. The most important contribution the branding partners in Muscatine can make to the ongoing success of its brand is appointing/hiring a brand leader to champion the process.

This brand leader can be:

- A brand manager whose sole job is to implement the brand. This position can be hired from inside or outside Muscatine.
- Someone already filling a position within the City of Muscatine (or the Chamber of Commerce or CVB) who would take on brand management tasks as an additional role. (However, North Star recommends against assigning this role to someone who already manages full-time job responsibilities. Establishing a brand, especially during the first two years, can require a great deal of time.)
- North Star has provided you a job description for Brand Leader (**See Appendix B**). The job responsibilities detailed in the description will give you a feeling for the tasks this individual should manage. And remember, avoid brand management by committee. The brand will fall through the cracks.
- Make sure your Brand Leader is equipped with the BrandPrint Final Report, in particular the Action Plan. It should serve as a guide for all decision making (as it pertains to the brand) moving forward the next couple of years.



Once the work of creating a brand identity is done, it becomes critically important to expand adoption of the brand so that Muscatine residents at the grassroots level understand it, buy into it, and become ambassadors for it. That means reaching out to stakeholder groups positioned to help you more fully integrate the brand into the life of the community. If you have selected/hired a brand manager, this person should make these educational presentations an early priority.

Start by creating a PowerPoint presentation that people can use to introduce and explain the brand. You should use this presentation with a variety of different groups in the community (and you can customize the presentation as appropriate for each different audience). The presentation should cover:

- Why the project was started
- Who was involved
- What you learned from the research
- An explanation of the strategic brand platform
- The creative work with an explanation of what it allows you to do, why particular colors and images were used, etc.
- How this approach helps Muscatine market its assets
- How you plan to use the brand immediately and long-term
- Planned initiatives to take the brand beyond just a logo and strapline
- Existing partnerships, activities, festivals and events that could integrate your brand messaging
- A list of ways your audience can participate in and benefit from the new brand

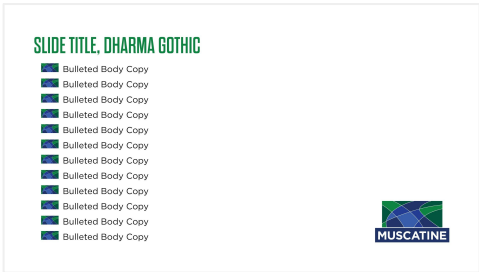
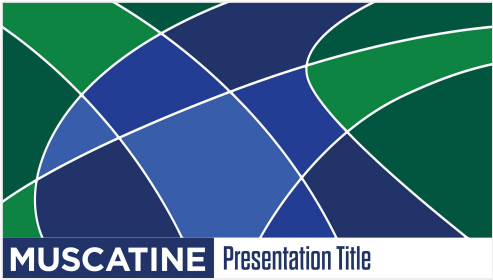


You will use the presentation over and over to recruit help, support and funding. It will be one of your hardest working deliverables as you implement the new brand. Recruit a team of brand presenters representing a broad cross section of people from within the city and the business community. These individuals will then make your brand presentation to your varied community audiences. For this task, consider first the individuals who originally were part of the branding team, as well as leaders of partner organizations and eloquent and interested voices from various sub-communities within Muscatine (business community, volunteer community, religious community). The more diverse your presentation team, the more widespread will be the passion for and use of the brand within the larger community. As an added bonus, every time you train someone on the brand presentation, it creates advocacy.

Train your presenters in explaining Muscatine's brand identity by making use of the PowerPoint. As you go along, answer their questions. Incorporate their feedback in helping you to improve sections of the presentation or to customize it for particular audiences. Brainstorm ways for various community members to get involved.



North Star has created branded templates for your presentation slides that apply the design and color palette of the logo.



A few tips on the presentation:

- Equip your presenters with branded merchandise they can display, including hats, t-shirts and lapel pins. (Encourage them to wear their lapel pins to work, not just when they make presentations, as a way of prompting conversations about the brand.)
- Have branded merchandise items such as car decals available for distribution to all audience members. Your goal should be to have every car in Muscatine announcing its affiliation with your brand identity.
- Have copies of the presentation available on branded thumb drives for any audience member interested in having one.
- At the end of each presentation, always include opportunities for the group to brainstorm on new ideas for brand integration. This will increase buy-in from partner groups by making them active participants in the process.

Once you have a team of presenters, work with them to schedule a slate of presentations over the next several months. Consider: Realtors, developers, civic groups, major business leaders, restaurateurs, retailers, church leaders, school principals, arts organizations and others.



Be sure to schedule presentations with staff of public sector departments as well as influential membership organizations. Some examples to guide your thinking:

- Chamber of Commerce members
- Neighborhood watch groups
- School board members
- Police department
- Fire department
- Public utilities
- Parks & Recreation
- Religious organizations
- Leadership at UnityPoint Trinity Hospital



The goal is to create a strong base of support for the brand among community leaders who have a stake in enhancing and advancing the community. Such meetings pay off in unexpected ways. In McKinney, Texas, for example, a brand manager met with a local developer to explain the branding initiative and various ways it could come to life. Months later, the developer contacted the brand manager, with interest in flying a flag and banners with the McKinney brand logo in his upscale retail area parking lot.



Every time employees of the City of Muscatine and partner organizations in this effort interact with the public, you have an opportunity to build the brand in the minds of residents, visitors, and other audiences (see *suggested list of obvious "touch points" below*). The Brand Leader should review and augment the following list of touch points during your first brand team meeting. Divide the list into three categories:

- 1) Easy: do immediately
- 2) Moderate difficulty: implement within the first year
- 3) Difficult: revisit later (designate a time)

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • City staff | • Newsletters | • Direct mail | • Billboards |
| • Phone Message | • Products | • Trade shows | • Posters |
| • Services | • Experiences | • Exhibits | • Buttons/Pins |
| • Websites | • Proposals | • Initiatives (like public art) | • Gifts |
| • Voicemails | • Environment | • Magazines | • Marketing partner resources |
| • E-mails sigs | • Press releases | • Presentations | • Sponsors |
| • Word of mouth | • Public affairs | • Maps | • Local, state, nat'l marketing |
| • Letterhead | • Marketing and advertising | • Nametags | • Networking |
| • Publications | • Events | • Social media | • Signage |
| • Packaging | • Annual report | | • Speeches |



A few suggestions on how to integrate the brand graphically and strategically into the following key touch points:

- **Stationery** – It's obvious but vitally important. Every letter, every envelope, every business card, every memo and every invoice issued by Muscatine should reflect the brand's graphic identity. For the sake of consistency, your brand identity should be used for all communications and materials. Give all involved a designated number of weeks/months to use up existing stocks of stationery. Require reprinting to occur in the spirit of the brand. *The recommended letterhead design is shown at right.*



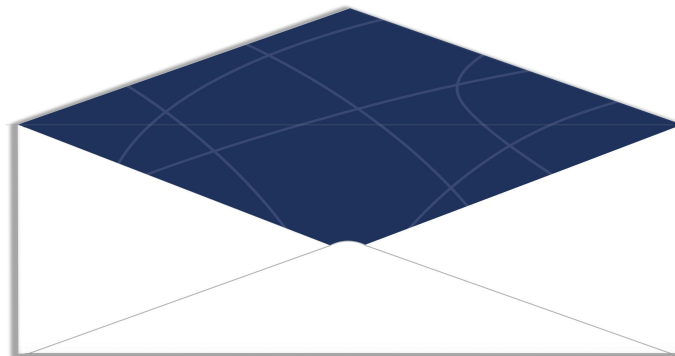
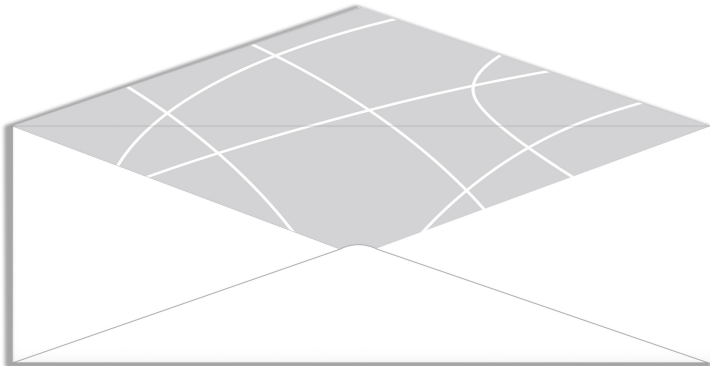
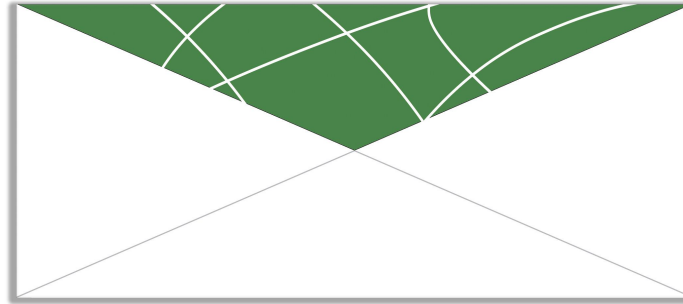
- **Stationery** – Printing the back side of the letterhead with your design and with versions in more than one color will help your stationery stand out even more.



- **Stationery** – Business cards are one of the most important tools for spreading the Muscatine brand identity because they are widely distributed and often saved. To the right see a simple design for the front of the card using brand colors and color blocks pulled from the logo icon. The color blocks both create the turn of the river and work to organize content. The full logo and line is found on the back of the card.



- **Stationery** – A branded envelope with a detailed flap design ensures that communications sent by Muscatine will stand out in stacks of mail.



Some additional suggestions:

- **Phone message** – Change any recorded outgoing messages as well as the language that employees use when they answer the phone: “You’ve reached Muscatine, where life takes a turn for the better.” One of our clients went so far as to write and record a jingle based on their brand that plays whenever callers to their offices are on hold!
- **Press releases** – All releases should contain a closing statement/paragraph that supports the essence of the brand strategy and the community. This paragraph will serve as an on-going resource to remind media about the brand message and purpose (the brand narrative can guide this language). One of the keys to successful branding (or any kind of persuasive communications) is to reiterate your essential strategy whenever possible.
- **Car decals** – When residents pay utility bills in person or get their car tags or other vehicle licensing in Muscatine, offer them a way to display their pride of place on their vehicle. Interesting car decals incite curiosity everywhere your citizens drive.



Websites

Websites are the single most effective means for spreading and reinforcing your brand identity to your various audiences – from businesses to residents to visitors and prospects in all three categories. For this reason, it is important to incorporate the brand into the websites that reach these audiences. You should consider ways to:

- Create a web portal that serves as an entry point for all of your audiences and then enables them to continue, based on their interests and needs, to the city government, Chamber, Economic Development, CVB or other sites for other partners in the brand initiative.
- Redesign the Greater Muscatine Chamber of Commerce and Industry site to align with your brand identity and strategic priorities.
- “Reskin” the City of Muscatine site to align with the brand.
- Reskin and augment the CVB’s Visit Muscatine site.
- Enhance the Economic Development content under the Chamber site.
- Make sure all of these sites link to each other without returning to the web portal.

We will offer ideas on each of these points in the following pages.



- **Create a branded web portal.**

Create a web portal to serve as the single landing spot for all things Muscatine for all of your audiences. A central portal is an ideal and inexpensive online organizational tool for getting the brand going. Such a portal would link all Muscatine-related sites (including the city government, Chamber, CVB and Economic Development sites) as well as brand partners, allowing users to more easily access comprehensive information about the city. It also enables you to quickly bring all of your diverse information and priorities under one branded umbrella. Through the portal, users should be able to:

- Access municipal services (via the link to the City of Muscatine site)
- Learn about upcoming events
- Find comprehensive information about operating/relocating a business (through the Economic Development section of the Chamber site)
- Get information about the Chamber of Commerce and local business climate
- Learn about healthcare in Muscatine
- Plan a visit to Muscatine
- Sign up for newsletters or other information
- Learn about local schools (including the community college)



- **Create a branded web portal (continued).**

The portal designed by North Star incorporates design elements from your logo, the brand color palette, details from the brand look and branded messaging.



- **Create a branded web portal** (continued).

The portal cleanly connects site visitors to “all things Muscatine.” The menu bar at top includes five broad categories that reflect the interests of your audiences.

- The City Services tab includes a scroll down menu that takes users directly to city services within the City of Muscatine site.
- The Business tab features a scroll-down menu with links to the Chamber site and the Economic Development mini-site within the greater City of Muscatine site.
- The Tourism link tab connects to the CVB site VisitMuscatine.com as well as the downtown site DowntownMuscatine.com and the tourism subsite within the larger Chamber site.
- The Volunteers link would link to volunteer opportunities in the city.
- The Recreation tab takes them to the Parks & Recreation section of the city site.

The menu at the bottom of the landing page enables users to jump directly to the home pages for the city and Chamber sites; the Economic Development section inside the existing Chamber site; the Visit Muscatine site; sites for the other four partners in the branding initiative; and the Downtown Muscatine site.



- **Create a branded web portal (continued).**

The landing page for the portal refreshes in a slideshow format to showcase each separate area from the bottom menu, with corresponding visuals. The arrows on each side of the page allow users to move backward or forward among these “billboards,” which include a brand-focused line along with each label.



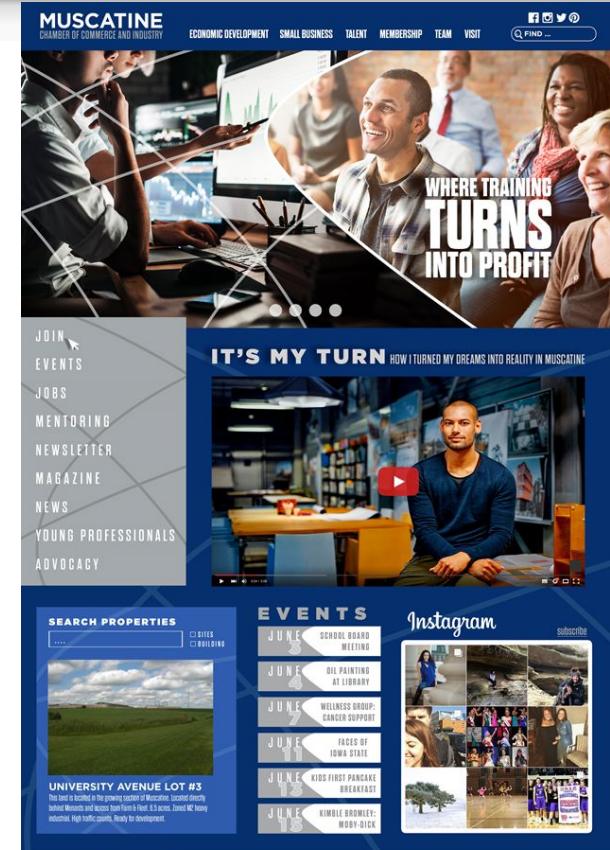
- **Some additional considerations for your web portal:**
 - Limit content on the portal, focusing instead on brand integration, ease of use and getting online audiences quickly to the information they seek.
 - You may want to add a link or create a separate microsite focused on brand engagement and recruiting brand champions. Remember, the more champions you have working on the brand's behalf the faster you will see its impact in the community. Click here to see how North Star client Quincy, IL, created a microsite for recruiting brand champions. <https://www.quincyrighntonq.com/>
 - Volunteerism is important enough to the community and to your “turn for the better” identity that North Star believes it merits its own link in the primary nav bar of the portal. This link can feature a pull-down menu with a listing of volunteer opportunities. Or, consider creating a clearinghouse website organized so that groups and individuals can list specific volunteer opportunities, and where potential volunteers can connect with the opportunities that fit their skills and interests. See example from Nashville's Hands On initiative www.hon.org
 - Vibrant downtowns are a hallmark of healthy growing cities so linking to your existing Downtown Muscatine site via the portal is a must. In the long-term consider redesigning the existing downtown site to reflect the new brand, including a custom branded downtown logo, design, color palette, headlines and messaging. The new site should easily connect users to assets downtown, including retail, restaurants, the riverfront park, and events. Enable users to link to the site from the home pages of any of the other menu tabs at the bottom of the portal home page. (Similarly, make all 9 of these menu tabs accessible from links on the landing page of each of the other partner sites and/or sub-sites.)



- **Redesign the Chamber website.**

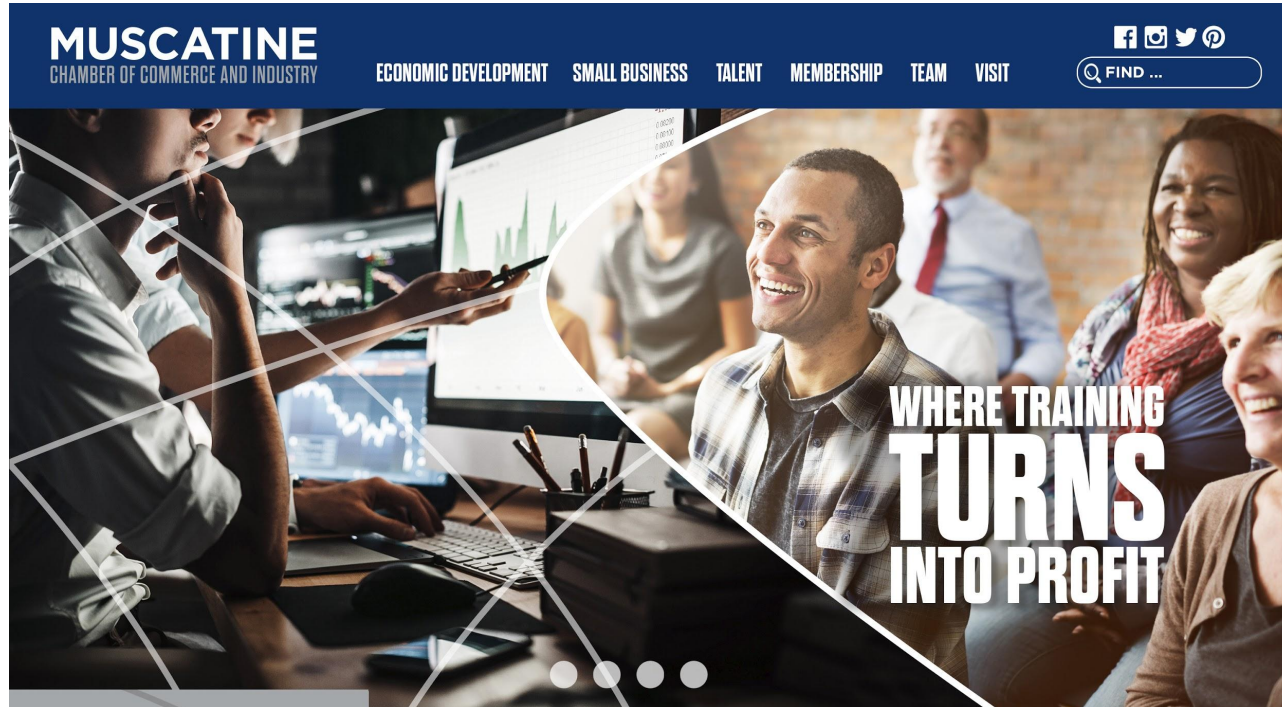
While the portal is an easy, immediate way to bring all relevant organizations together under the brand umbrella, you also will need to consider redesigning some of your actual organizational sites to reflect the new brand look and messaging. Because the Greater Muscatine Chamber of Commerce and Industry is both the leader for this brand initiative and a leader for the city, brand integration for this site should be a high priority.

North Star has designed a high-impact elongated home page (see right). The user lands on the top part of the page and scrolls down through the next two sections for more information. This helps organize content for easy reading and prevents the over cluttered feel of many municipal sites. While North Star has designed only a homepage for the updated Chamber site, inside pages should be built in a complementary fashion and using the same color palette. In creating these pages, make use whenever feasible of headlines that help reinforce the strapline and, thus, your brand identity. A headline for the Mentoring page, for example, might be “Where Experience Turns into Talent Development.”



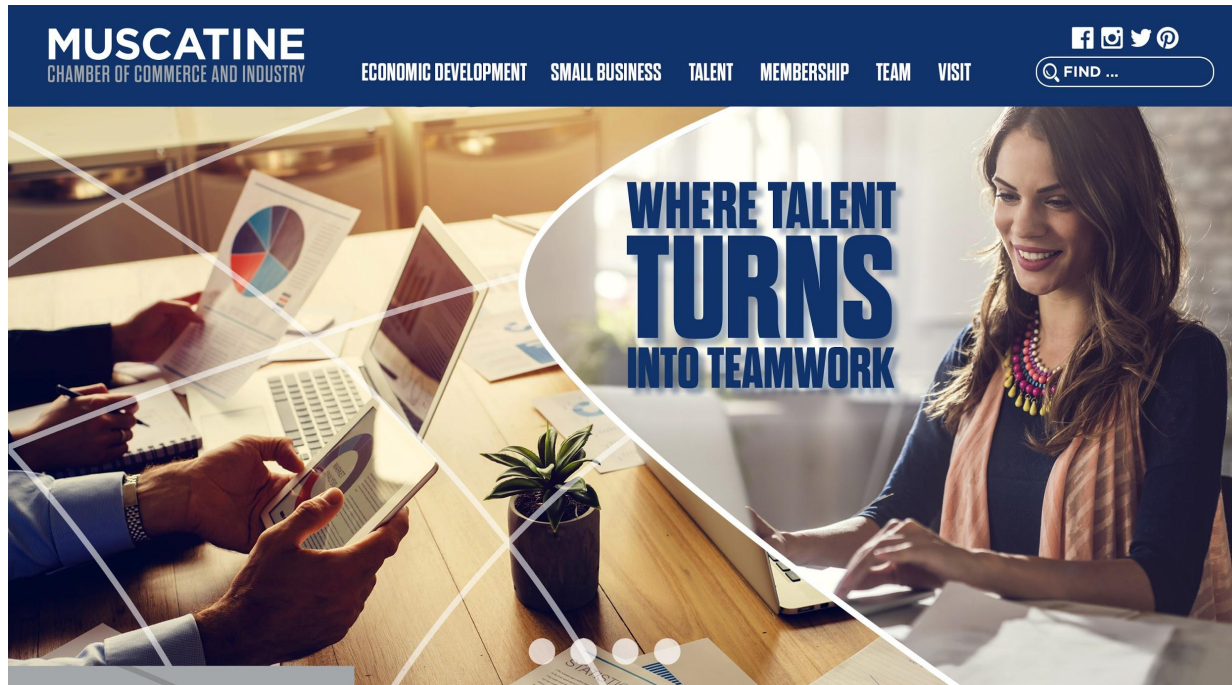
- **Redesign the Chamber website** (continued).

The landing page of the elongated homepage features a picture well that uses the abstract river design from the logo icon as a frame to hold and emphasize photography.



- **Redesign the Chamber website** (continued).

As with the web portal, visuals and headlines rotate on the home page to showcase various aspects of your message. The word “Turns” takes center stage in headline messaging, serving as an easy-to-use, recognizable branding device.



- **Redesign the Chamber website** (continued).

The navigation bar is simple, covering primary topics of interest for Chamber members including economic development, small business, talent, membership, support team information and details on visiting. Dropdown menus enable site visitors to access much more detailed information about specific areas.



- **Redesign the Chamber website** (continued).

Scrolling to the center of the site's homepage, the user finds another more interactive nav bar to the left offering opportunities to find jobs, mentors, events and the latest news; download the newsletter or magazine, or reach out to other YP's in the area. Space has been allocated for videos where members can tell their Muscatine business story. This section of the site works for everyone but in design and content is geared toward the valuable YP audience.



- Redesign the Chamber website (continued).

Scrolling to the bottom of the page the user finds a property search engine, an updated list of events and an Instagram feature that allows you to post pictures submitted by Chamber members and others in the community, adding a level of dynamism that gives people more reason to visit the site regularly. Again, social media is a great draw for YP's.



- **Redesign the Chamber website: Economic development content.**

Site selectors often do most of their research online **before** contacting an economic development group in a community. Therefore your ED website can be vital to making a shortlist while integrating the brand into that website reinforces the message that all the players in Muscatine are united in their understanding and promotion of what makes this community special. Currently, users can find economic development information about Muscatine in two different ways on two different sites: the Chamber site and the City of Muscatine site. Some of this information is duplicated on both sites (such as the community profile). Some of the information under the Business & Development tab on the City site simply redirects users via a link to the Chamber site. And some business info on the City site (such as licensing and permit information) doesn't appear to be anywhere in the Economic Development portion of the Chamber site. Since the Chamber already plans a complete redesign of its site, it makes sense that it will contain the most comprehensive and up-to-date information on economic development. Therefore, North Star recommends that the Chamber consolidate all relevant economic development content on its site. In addition, when users click the Business & Development link in the navigation bar on the City website, it should take them directly to the Economic Development section of the Chamber site. That is also what should happen when users click the Economic Development button on the Muscatine web portal. That way, no matter how users access economic development information in Muscatine, it is uniform and branded.



- **Redesign the Chamber website: Economic development content** (continued).

Since Muscatine's economic development site is contained within the Chamber site, you need to make it as dynamic and compelling as the Chamber homepage. Also, make sure you can access the landing page for Economic Development directly from the City's homepage and the portal. Some other things to consider:

- Use the Chamber logo on the ED page or consider developing a custom branded ED logo.
- Create links back to the web portal so users can easily access all things Muscatine.
- Make more of the China connection here. The current City of Muscatine site includes a page on China, but users have to find it under the Community Resources menu tab. While the content should remain on the city's site, it may be even more important to give it a prominent place on the Chamber site and the Economic Development subsite. Instead of warehousing it only under a menu tab, create a billboard for an image related to China (such as a photo of President Xi) that users can see by scrolling down on the home page and then clicking for more content. The relationship with China can be important to all audiences for economic development because it quickly represents Muscatine's dynamism and trade connections to the world.
- Create a feature whereby companies can explain how being in Muscatine works to their advantage. Build a library on the site of such content -- which could be as simple as testimonial quotes or as dynamic as short videos -- and use them as third-party endorsements of your city.
- Incorporate language drawn from the brand narrative wherever possible so that content relates to the idea of taking a turn for the better, doing a good turn, or turning something good into something even better.



- **Redesign the Chamber website: Economic development content** (continued).
 - Adhere to IEDC data standards.
 - Use Google Earth.
 - Showcase your support for, and success with, entrepreneurs, start-ups and young professionals.
 - Showcase that you are a one-stop shop to assist businesses.
 - Showcase innovative support and resources.
 - Feature change-making businesses to demonstrate prospects will be in good company.
 - Highlight transportation hub benefits.
 - Highlight quality of life accolades.
 - Focus on close relationships with institutions of higher learning. This speaks to your ability in workforce development.



Coordinate, consolidate and brand your content for visitors.

- **Visit Muscatine.** When potential visitors seek information about Muscatine, they invariably will turn first to digital media, starting with a Google search. For this reason, coordinating and branding your digital media content for visitors is especially important. Currently, as North Star found, a Google search under “Muscatine tourism” will identify two very different sources for information: the Visit Muscatine site maintained by the CVB and the “Visit Muscatine” menu tab under the Chamber site. While these two sites enable visitors to find some of the same information, they are organized differently and are so different in design and appearance that they do not appear related to each other. In addition, potential visitors intuitively may seek to access tourism information from the City of Muscatine site, where they can find a section on Events and Activities that may lead them to believe (mistakenly) that they are looking at an inventory of all there is to do in your city. The separate website for Historic Downtown Muscatine contains a section for events but does not connect potential visitors to attractions downtown that might draw them to the city. Visitors to all of these sites should be able to find information that is presented consistently and comprehensively, with the look and language of the Muscatine brand. With that goal in mind:
 - Consider a reskin of the Visit Muscatine site with the color palette and design elements of the Muscatine logo while preserving the current architecture of the site. Visitors to this site, the Chamber site and the City of Muscatine site need to see a consistent look that reflects your brand. Let this site be the main clearinghouse for information on tourism in Muscatine.
 - Instead of maintaining separate content for visitors under the Chamber site, allow the Visit Muscatine menu tab to take users directly to the re-skinned CVB site.
 - Clicking “Tourism” on the Muscatine web portal should also take users directly to the CVB’s Visit Muscatine site.



Coordinate, consolidate and brand your content for visitors (continued).

- **Visit Muscatine (continued).** The architecture of the current site appears well organized, with menu options that allow users to access a wealth of information easily. Some suggestions for enhancing the site:
 - While preserving the basic architecture of the Visit Muscatine site, add functionality that mirrors the redesigned Chamber site. For example, add an Instagram window where you can post photos that visitors have submitted, including images from selfie walls around town (see page 103).
 - Develop your content so that users not only know what they can do in Muscatine but in a way that lets them picture themselves having fun here. People-oriented photography is a great way to do this.
 - Enlist more outside bloggers. Especially for younger audiences, bloggers can be a good source of stories about tourism opportunities in your city. Cultivate them as a way to spread the word. Invite them to experience and write about particular tourism assets in Muscatine. You have made a start in this direction with your official CVB blog, #MadeInMuscatine. However, the content appears to have been mostly generated by CVB staff. To get the full benefit of a blog, enlist people not employed by the CVB or the city; this gives your blog added credibility as a third-party endorsement. In addition, encourage visitors to Muscatine to submit blog posts about their experiences; you can review these and post those that are most compelling. Consider offering incentives or starting a contest to encourage people to write about their visits to Muscatine. It's also important to keep blogs up to date with fresh content (the most recent post on your official CVB blog is from June of 2016).
 - The site already has a helpful link to TripAdvisor, where reviews of Muscatine attractions are overwhelmingly favorable. Do even more to attract readers to read these reviews -- which could be as simple as changing the menu button to "Read Our Reviews on TripAdvisor." Also actively encourage visitors to Muscatine to leave reviews on Tripadvisor about their experiences.
 - Include rotating space on the homepage for featuring the opening of new hotels, restaurants, events and videos.



Coordinate, consolidate and brand your content for visitors (continued).

- **downtownmuscatine.com:** While the Downtown Action Alliance, which operates downtownmuscatine.com, is not a formal partner in the brand initiative, and while the group's mission is to promote only one specific area rather than the entire city, it is nonetheless to everyone's benefit if the site for downtown reflects the brand. That way, users see a consistent look and message that is reinforced on all of the sites that reach out to potential visitors. Some suggestions:
 - Adopt the color palette and design elements of the Muscatine logo and/or display the Partner for the Better in Muscatine logo.
 - Consider adding a link on the downtown site to the CVB site, particularly since the Visitors Center is located downtown. Staff there can interact with visitors face-to-face and recommend things to do and places to shop and eat in the downtown district.
 - Update the events calendar (a review by North Star shows no upcoming events are listed on the downtown site).
 - Add community events on the river to the calendar (such as the Second Saturday events). In fact, it makes sense to incorporate the river more fully into the downtown site, since visitors are just as likely to come to the riverfront and then discover downtown as they are to explore the riverfront after discovering downtown.
 - Keep the blog up to date. An out-of-date blog creates the (mis)impression that nothing is happening. A review by North Star found that the only items on the blog for downtownmuscatine.com involve Girls' Getaway Weekend, and that the last entry was in 2016.



- **Re-skin the City of Muscatine website.**

For many people, the City of Muscatine site is the face of the community. While the city was not the leader in this branding initiative, it is still critical that primary city communications demonstrate the new brand identity. That said, the existing city site features modern design and only requires a simple reskin for brand integration. A re-skin retains the existing architecture but adds the brand logo, color palette, design elements and headlines within that existing framework. Use brand-appropriate language wherever feasible to reinforce the idea of making a turn for the better, especially among local audiences as you seek to speed adoption of the brand and convert residents into brand ambassadors. A few ideas:

- Change the logo, color palette, design elements and headline structure to align with the new graphic brand identity. Updating messaging in the spirit of the brand should not be difficult. Start by borrowing copy from the narrative for intros. Then evaluate features for the chance of brand integration. For example, your Community Voice feature reinforces the brand strategy because resident ideas and feedback are helping the community take a turn for the better. You could even label it, “Your Turn to Talk”.
- Make building email databases of residents, potential visitors, and business prospects a top priority. When people use the “Notify Me” and “Community Voice” features on your website, sign up for updates on construction projects, or subscribe to the City of Muscatine newsletter, the library newsletter, or the Greener Side Newsletter from the Solid Waste Division, try to gather email and cell phone contact information so you can build consolidated databases. (You also should make it much easier for people to find information about these newsletters and updates and how to sign up for them.) You will want to share branded communications with these audiences regularly. The effectiveness of your outward communications is directly related to the accuracy and depth of your databases. Building your databases and keeping them current ensures future success measurements can be calculated. These leads will be the best data start point for future brand evaluation.



- Because users so often access sites via their phones, make sure the City of Muscatine, Muscatine Chamber, Visit Muscatine and Downtown Muscatine sites can be easily read on mobile devices. Creating a downloadable app is one way to do this and may be necessary for sites like the City of Muscatine and Visit Muscatine, which are already built and programmed. Users would download the mobile app for each site from both the portal and the homepages of the sites. However, if you are developing a site from the ground up like the Chamber site, consider contracting with a company that can program the site to be mobile adaptive (in other words, content adapts to the size and screen of the device, as illustrated in the visual of the SmartPhone at right).



- **Align partner sites with your brand.**

For partner sites such as the hospital and community college with their own established brand identities, look for subtle ways to incorporate the city brand into their existing sites. A few ideas:

- Incorporate language drawn from the brand narrative wherever possible so that content on partner sites relates to the idea of taking a turn for the better, doing a good turn, or turning something good into something even better.
- Create content either on the home page or easily accessed from the home page that explains the brand; that is, what “taking a turn for the better” means for Muscatine and in the context of the specific partner’s work.
- Create cross-links on the other content areas that users can reach through the web portal.
- On homepages include the partner logo to remind users that you are all working together for a better Muscatine.



PARTNER FOR THE BETTER IN
MUSCATINE



Social media.

- Make sure to integrate your brand into social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube. The logo and line are the most obvious ways to do this. In addition, consider content that supports your strategy.
- Engage Facebook users to reinforce the brand. Ideas for how you can incorporate Facebook into your social media strategy:
 - Post consumer-oriented entries about every new restaurant, retailer, business, or service provider in Muscatine. Consider diving deeper and posting entries about new services, new dishes, new drinks, and new sales at existing businesses.
 - Invite people to share Facebook posts about anything related to making a turn for the better in Muscatine. Create a special area for such posts on your Facebook page.
 - Develop a Facebook poll in which users can nominate businesses (and individual employees) that did an outstanding job of (for example) making a turn for the better, or turning first-time customers into loyal buyers.
 - Invite people to create short, selfie videos on the theme of making a turn for the better in Muscatine. Residents could tell stories of personal experiences about something in the community that made life or business better for them; about a project that made something better for someone else; or about how someone took special pride in their skill at making something. Submissions could be reviewed and displayed on the website and on your Facebook page.



Social media (continued).

- Create a Muscatine Instagram account. Encourage users (particularly young professionals) to take over the account each week. Their posts introduce Muscatine to all of their followers, who then could become your community's followers, too.
- Establish a branded Twitter account. At #MuscaTurnForTheBetter, people could submit photos and tweets from someone bettering the community. Enable users to see the stream of tweets from your website.
- Create a presence for Muscatine on the patch.com network. Patch.com enables communities to post local news and information on upcoming events. The calendar feature provides a great way for residents and visitors to learn about events and activities that may interest them. For an example of how communities can use this site, see the "patch" for Franklin, TN, at <http://patch.com/tennessee/franklin>. A "Patch" for Muscatine can be an effective tool not only for creating interest and increasing resident involvement in the community but also for reinforcing the brand. Consider partnering with the *Muscatine Journal* and even with the high school newspaper to include elements of their content on the patch site.
- Create "Turn for the Better" feature pieces. Create a series of human-interest feature stories involving individuals, companies, and others that exemplify the idea of making a turn for the better. These stories can be displayed on the patch.com site as well as on your website (and could involve partnerships with the *Muscatine Journal* and others in creating the content). Create a mini-site within your website where users can access a growing inventory of these profiles. Some articles might be appropriate for the Chamber magazine.



Social media (continued).

- Bring together young people and creative thinkers for new ideas in using social media platforms. Let the people who use your social media help shape the content.
- Engage social media blogging to generate content and buzz about Muscatine, with a focus on making a turn for the better. In this way, people can read positive opinions and gain new information about the city that do not appear to be coming from you or other organizations whose agenda is to promote Muscatine. These blogs could be a good resource for people who are considering a move to the community as well as to start-up businesses looking for a supportive and friendly environment. You might tap into bloggers who already are in the community to provide regular content. Alternatively, you may consider (as the Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau did) paying a professional blogger for content.

For example, identify young professionals who moved to Muscatine in their late 20s. Ask them to blog about what life there is like. In what ways did they have to adjust? What do they love most? What do they enjoy in their spare time? What would other people in their age cohort find appealing? The strength of blogs such as this is their honesty. Remember, you want people to be ambassadors for a place they love, but you also need them to be real if they are going to be effective with audiences of their peers.



Social media (continued).

- Encourage people to post Muscatine selfies. This low-cost initiative works as both public art, community engagement and viral marketing. Create branded selfie walls throughout the city in places where people gather. Parks, shopping areas, schools, near hotels, boat ramps, retaining walls etc. Encourage people to take photos in front of the branded walls as they wait for a table, window shop or finish a run and then post the selfies on social media. Create a space online (i.e., #MuscatineSelfies or #MyTurnMuscatine) where you invite users to submit their selfies; then choose the best pictures to post on your Facebook page and the city's website. You can also use these selfies in promotional campaigns.



Social media (continued).

- Create a team of social media ambassadors. Nothing feels more stagnant than calendars and social media accounts that aren't updated regularly with content people care about. Create a team of committed ambassadors who are trained in working with the city on its social media efforts (and who understand your brand). Students from your high school, the community college, or young professionals are ideal candidates for this role (consider an internship). Equip these ambassadors with the ability to post content, photos, updates, status changes and more to the city's social media accounts. This will give updates a personal touch and showcase positive things going on across the city.
- On Twitter, keep track of residents and visitors who check in or tweet from Muscatine locations and attractions. Monthly or quarterly reward some with Muscatine-branded merchandise or experiences like dining, drinks, or hiking.
- Working with IT professionals in the community, consider creating an app or Snapchat filter that allows users to take selfies at spots in the city. When they send these photos to others or import them to their Facebook page, the images appear with the Muscatine logo in one corner. (Devise the app to connect with the GPS in the user's phone so that it verifies the location of the photo is within the city.) Invite users to send their MuscatineGrams to you for posting on your website. These selfie submissions can become part of a campaign with ads as simple as a photo and your logo, plus a headline such as "Turning the routine into Muscatine" or "Another good turn in Muscatine." See examples from North Star client Anna, TX on the right.



Social media (continued).

- Organize branded photography contests via Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. The photos should all illustrate some aspect of making a turn for the better in Muscatine. Encourage people to be creative. Anyone can submit an entry, but reach out specially to art students at the high school and Muscatine Community College – along with professional photographers in the area. Drive submissions to your website, where visitors can view a regularly updated display of them. To encourage participation, reward those who submit photos with free meals at local restaurants, selfie sticks or other branded merchandise. Or consider offering awards for the winning photos as determined by a panel of judges. In addition to reinforcing the brand on social media sites and your website, the photos can enjoy any number of uses beyond the realm of social media. For example:
 - Make them the basis for future PR and marketing campaigns for Muscatine. Participants should be aware that their photos may be used for community promotions.
 - Build a special event around a physical display of the photos that could be held at City Hall, the Visitors Center or a school. At these events, invite some of the photographers to tell the story behind the image: how they discovered it and how it spoke to them of Muscatine's identity and character.
 - Partner with local restaurants, coffee shops and other retailers to display framed prints of the photos that patrons can purchase.
 - Turn the photos into a coffee table book about Muscatine that can be sold through the city, the Chamber of Commerce and other entities. Give copies of the book to candidates for business relocation.



Whether it's a lapel pin, T-shirt, hat, or reusable water bottles, branded merchandise is a tangible, memorable way to keep the brand top-of-mind with visitors (and residents). Sell merchandise via your website, at specialty gift shops, at the Visitors Center, at Parks & Rec facilities and at festivals and other special events. A few ideas:

- T-shirts
- Welcome mats
- Lapel pins
- Hats
- USB or thumb drives
- Reusable shopping bags
- Car decals
- Doormats
- Selfie sticks
- Keychains and lanyards
- Reusable water bottles
- Coolers
- Soccer balls (Because Muscatine's outstanding soccer complex draws people from throughout the region for tournaments, you should leverage that asset with soccer balls based on your logo design. Offer them for sale to visitors and to players and teams in Muscatine as a memorable way to reinforce your identity.)



The Chamber is a primary driver of this branding initiative and a leading organization for change and progress in the community. As the umbrella organization managing existing businesses, new business development and tourism, the Chamber is the logical choice to take the lead among several partners in driving the branding initiative in Muscatine.

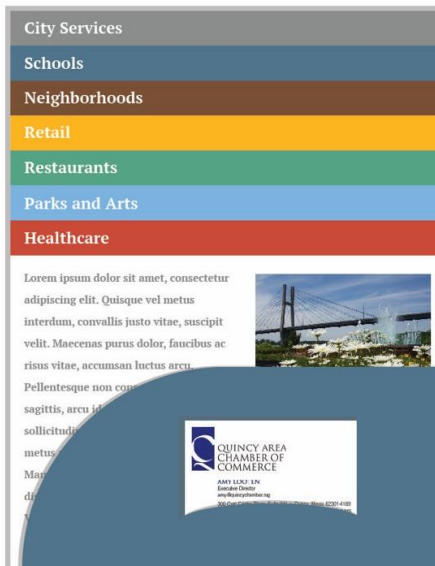
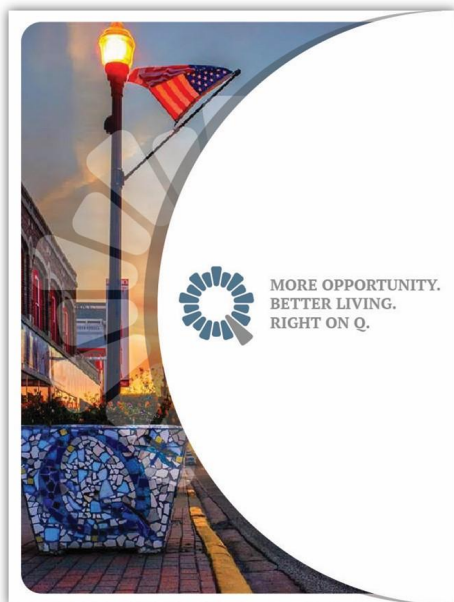
Start by adopting the Chamber version of the logo and color palette of the new logo and the new strapline. North Star has designed a version of the logo tailored for the Greater Muscatine Chamber of Commerce and Industry. (Another version, customized for the Convention and Visitors Bureau, can be seen in the subsequent section on tourism.) Below we show you two options for the custom Chamber logo. The first is four-color with the word “Greater” incorporated into the Chamber name. The second is two-color without the word “Greater” and with less contained icon on the top. Use of either version is acceptable.



We've already discussed incorporating the brand's graphic identity in the Chamber's new website. Take an inventory of all other Chamber communications including stationery, business cards and press releases to make sure they are branded as well. To get you started, North Star has created a sample cover for *Muscatine* magazine that prominently features the new strapline and incorporates elements of the logo into the design. As you look for ways to integrate the brand into existing communications, go deeper than just the look. For example, the magazine or your newsletter could include stories that help reinforce your brand identity — such as regular features on entrepreneurs who have turned ideas into opportunities, volunteers who are making Muscatine a better place to live, or people who (as the logo and the city's history suggest) are bringing Muscatine to the wider world.



Create a flexible, co-branded welcome kit that can be used for new businesses and new residents alike. The folder can contain pockets to include inserts that are appropriate for the particular audience. You can customize the folder specifically for the Chamber or use the general brand logo and create a more general folder that can be used by the city, the Chamber, the Visitors Bureau, and partner organizations. *See example of a kit created for North Star client Quincy, IL that was used for residents, business prospecting and Chamber members alike.*



Quincy is known for majestic old homes. For companies that have made names around the world. For the region's outstanding healthcare. For esteemed educational institutions. For our gentle way of living. But after you've spent a little time here, we think you'll know us best by heart. A heart for caring and the common good. A heart that leads people to give, for as long as it takes. A heart that goes the extra mile to welcome you, support you and encourage you. We give more so that you can do more. And we do it...

Right on Q.

For the Muscatine brand to work, existing businesses in the community have to believe in it and get on board. Host a series of meetings/presentations/events for businesses in Muscatine (perhaps organized by category – manufacturers, retail, restaurants, lodging, service providers, professionals, etc. – which allows presentations to be more targeted to the needs of the audience). As with other brand education presentations, the purpose is to explain the importance and impact the brand can have on business growth in Muscatine. Hosting this event at a nice restaurant will increase attendance (charge per attendee). As part of your presentations to each group:

- Show your branded PPT
- Read aloud and/or distribute copies of the Muscatine brand narrative
- Allow time for Q&A about key brand messages
- Distribute Muscatine lapel pins (an inexpensive way to create brand ambassadors)
- Allow time for participants to brainstorm ideas for incorporating the brand into their organization

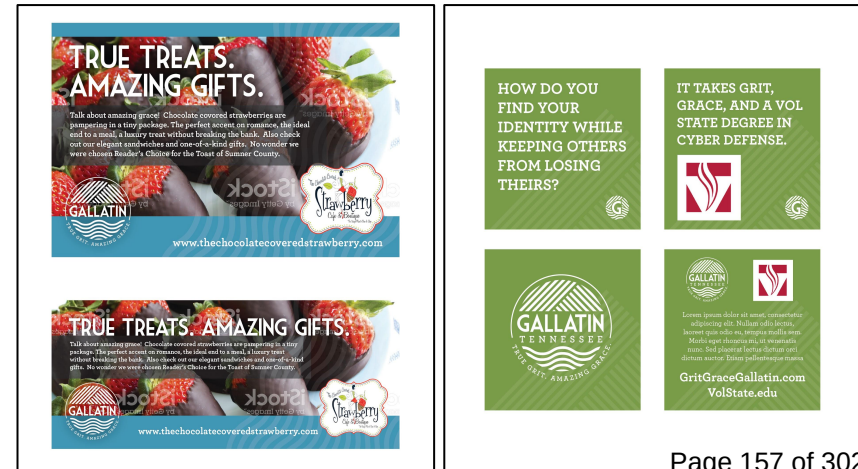


Some suggestions for the presentation:

- Do not roll out the brand to businesses until there is visible evidence of it (signage, website). The more businesses can see the brand being put to good use, the more likely they are to use it themselves.
- Hang banners at the event locale with the brand color palette and strapline. Show both the version of the logo for the Chamber and the Muscatine logo together. At every table, include tent cards with the brand narrative on one side and the logo collaboration and strapline on the other.
- Customize the brand presentation for the business community audience. Remember, a rollout is for sharing what you've learned about the new brand direction, not about unveiling the new logo.
- Have brand partners speak at the presentation, talking about their plans for the brand.
- Keep it short and simple, about 35-45 minutes with questions afterward.
- Show participants how the brand can help make business in Muscatine better in general and for their business specifically.
- Show signage and infrastructure plans — pole banners, wayfinding, selfie walls, crosswalks — that will improve the overall aesthetic of business districts.



- After the presentation, give attendees with a branded toolkit full of items they can use to promote their businesses within the context of the brand:
 - Branded partnership decals that businesses can place in windows. Such decals can be used by all businesses but are particularly effective for uniting retail-oriented stores and restaurants in the consumer's mind.
 - The brand narrative and customized copy for press releases.
 - Production-ready digital files for the logo.
 - Collaborative template ads that promote the businesses with the brand framework. Digital banner ads, print ads, and direct mail are all examples of co-op advertising. See *examples from North Star client Gallatin, TN at right.*



- Following each event, email attendees thanking them for participating and reviewing goals of the new brand. Attach the presentation for their use. Or give each attendee the presentation on a branded thumbdrive. See *branded thumb drive below from North Star client Fulton-Montgomery Counties NY promoting their connected business brand.*



After or during the meeting, present a list of simple ways businesses can start using the brand immediately that cost nothing but make a big impact:

- Place the strapline at the bottom of cash register receipts
- Include some branded narrative in their website home page copy
- Place the window decal in their front windows
- Sell branded merchandise at their stores, bars and restaurants

Big Idea! One of the best ways to get businesses excited about partnering possibilities with the brand is to show examples of how other businesses plan to use it. Later in this document we will give you ideas for how your specific branding partners (City of Muscatine Muscatine Power & Water, Muscatine Community College, UnityPoint Health - Trinity Muscatine, and Muscatine Community School District) can use the brand to promote their own organizations. It would be great to include representatives from each of those organizations in this presentation talking about their plans for the brand.

In addition, consider an iconic Muscatine business to partner with for this presentation. While they may not have developed the actual co-branded product or service yet, they can discuss plans for the future. For example, you could collaborate with HON to create a Muscatine line of office furniture. HON continues Muscatine's long-standing tradition of making products that are consumed all over the world. Creating a special line of office furniture that incorporates the brand colors and the criss-crossed, curving lines of the logo would be a notable way to fortify that tradition, while helping consumers identify HON with Muscatine (similar to the way John Deere is inextricably identified with Moline, IL).



North Star has created designs, shown below, simply to suggest what this line of furniture might look like. Work with HON to develop a name for this line — like Global Turn — that reflects the spirit of the brand. Extend this line of furniture as far as you can. Look into obtaining the chairs at cost from HON and furnishing the Chamber offices or the library with them. Promote them to Muscatine businesses as a way of showing the community spirit and identification with the brand. Consider giving executive chairs or a wall hanging as VIP gifts to top business prospects. Create a co-working space downtown that contains furniture from the line. Approach HON about equipping a mobile visitors center with some of these furnishings.

The possibility for good will and great press is huge for HON. Help out by promoting the line of furniture via press releases from the Chamber. Give them credit everywhere the furniture is shown (such as the Chamber website). Talk up HON to every prospect that receives one of the VIP chairs.

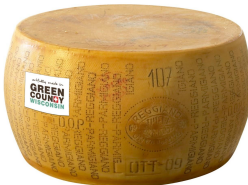


Other general ideas for working with businesses using the brand include:

- Encourage all private-sector organizations to be part of a Partnership for the Better in Muscatine. Beyond the initial partners driving the brand initiative, the adoption of the brand by other organizations in Muscatine will be important to the success of the effort. Go beyond simply making presentations about the brand to the business community. Create a partnership they can join (perhaps under the auspices of the Chamber). Members of the partnership could each make a tangible commitment to a specific action that would help make Muscatine better in some way. Create a page on the city and Chamber websites describing the partnership and listing the partners so that residents can see and reward their civic-mindedness. Under the guidance of the Brand Leader, hold regular meetings (at least one per quarter) of this partnership for it to gain momentum and make progress. Some ideas for the group:
 - Have each member of the Partnership bring a printout of their company's website homepage to the first meeting. Discuss ways to integrate ideas and language that support the brand strategy into these homepages. Use your brand narrative as a guide. Presenting a consistent message about how businesses work for the better in Muscatine helps establish a strong brand presence
 - In subsequent meetings of the partnership discuss public sector initiatives and identify opportunities for cooperative efforts with the private sector. Co-branded pole banners, signage, public art, events, merchandise, music, programming, products, etc. are just a small sampling.
 - Enlist businesses in the partnership to make presentations to businesses that are not members. Go through some of the same exercises performed in partnership meetings, and help them brainstorm how the brand relates to their own strengths and their value proposition; then help them imagine ways to incorporate making a turn for the better into the way they present themselves to their audiences.



- Develop a grant program for small business marketing needs. The grant should be awarded to those that demonstrate a priority for collaborative efforts and solutions that help things in Muscatine make a turn for the better. Recipients should be required to pursue a certain level of co-branding initiatives that advance the brand.
- Recognize a Muscatine merchant of the month who maintains his or her shop with the best branded appearance. Recognize the winner with a sign outside their shop that will transfer to the new winner at the end of the month (and on the Chamber website).
- Enlist businesses in customer service training branded around a turn for the better. Offer training opportunities for companies committed to giving customer service a turn for the better. For companies that allow their customer-facing employees to complete the program, provide a branded welcome mat.
- Create a “Better in Muscatine” sticker with the logo that can be affixed to locally sourced products, from produce to foodstuffs to craft beer to handicrafts. Offer similarly branded bags for homegrown products at the farmer’s market. In this way you can build awareness for Muscatine while building pride among residents in the way their products reach the wider world. See examples from Green County, WI and Miami County, OH [here](#).



- Support your existing retailers.
 - Offer fabulous sales during your Second Saturday events and connect them to your brand. For example, some specials can be branded as “One good turn” events in which the customer can buy one item and get another free or at a discount. Or, seasonal shopping specials could be branded as “Turn into Spring” or “Make a Great Turn into Fall.”
 - During the holidays, have city employees take shifts offering free branded gift wrapping along with hot chocolate.
 - During coordinated sales have food trucks and live music in the area so that all the shopping feels like a party.
 - Place selfie walls in heavily trafficked shopping areas and encourage visitors to take pictures with all their purchases. Feature the pictures on your website.
 - Reward retailers by giving them some perks you offer to new business prospects.
 - Incentivize retailers to join the Partnership for the Better by promoting participating businesses under the Shopping section of the CVB website.
 - Also invest some time partnering with existing retailers to elevate their business in terms of customer service and co-branded packaging like shopping bags. *See an example that North Star created for Menifee, CA, at right.* For Muscatine, a co-branded shopping bag might include the strap line or a variation, such as “Where Shopping Takes a Turn for the Better.”



- Recognize Muscatine businesses that are (and were) World Turners. From pearl buttons to office furniture, Muscatine has a heritage of businesses that carried locally made products to the world – a heritage that finds echoes in the criss-crossing lines of the new logo. Consider branding all of these companies, past and present, as World Turners – entities for which Muscatine became a crossroads for global commerce. Explore more public ways to honor this heritage beyond the walls of the History and Industry Museum. In this way, you could increase pride in Muscatine's identity and help audiences better understand part of why and how the Mississippi takes a turn for the better at Muscatine.
 - Perhaps create a portable interpretive exhibit with photos and brief text about each Muscatine company, from the earliest days of the city to the present day, with national or international reach. Rotate the exhibit among various public venues, from schools to community spaces to the Merrill Hotel.
 - Create plaques that can be installed outside present-day businesses that receive a World Turner designation – and at the spot of such companies that no longer are in operation.
 - When you launch the World Turners program, organize a banquet or some other large public event to recognize the companies that receive the World Turner designation from you (including those no longer in business). Each time you add a new company to the list, make a formal presentation and dedicate the plaque.
 - Extend the program to Muscatine schools. Create an essay or video contest involving Muscatine companies that have helped shape the world. In partnership with World Turner companies, fund a position and curriculum development for an elective course in entrepreneurship for high school students. Award a World Turner scholarship to top students in the class. Provide World Turner summer internships for high school and college students from Muscatine. Encourage the idea that anyone can become a World Turner.



Economic development, with an emphasis on talent recruitment, is a key driver for your branding initiative. Muscatine already has a number of attractive assets — including a heritage of business with global reach, a number of large employers (many of them household names), stable economy, strong work ethic and a location that simultaneously is not too congested and not too isolated. Your brand identity is designed in no small part to connect these assets to appeal to the additional residents, particularly young professionals, you need for further growth. One of the tasks in applying this brand to economic development is to help your audiences see that Muscatine is where more than just the Mississippi River takes a turn for the better. Thanks to everything Muscatine has to offer — not least, the energy and vitality in your brand identity — people can see that business and so many aspects of their lives can take a turn for the better by being here. A few ideas:

- Brand your booth. At trade shows, your booth may be the first impression of Muscatine that prospects receive. At a minimum, add your logo and strapline to the booth, but also consider designing the entire display so that messages and visuals align with and support the “take a turn for the better” identity. *An example from North Star client Petersburg, AK, is at right.*



- Make the brand part of the pitch to new business prospects. Communities naturally want to attract new businesses that will provide good jobs and boost the local economy. You should also consider how new businesses contribute to Muscatine's identity and include that message as part of your pitch to them. Show them how business takes a global turn and life takes a welcome turn in Muscatine. Make business prospects feel that the reason you seek to bring them to Muscatine is about more than economic impact; it's also because you believe they are a good fit with your identity.
- Along those same lines, develop elevator speeches. Create a short "elevator pitch" that ED employees can use to explain the Muscatine brand to prospects and site selectors. The speech is not intended to be delivered verbatim but to serve as a framework that facilitates the individual's ability to put the message in his/her own words. The pitch should succinctly describe: how the strapline is shorthand for a city where business takes a global turn and life takes a welcome turn; what the brand means to people in Muscatine and how it plays out in the work of businesses and how those businesses connect to their customers. Some of the basis for the pitch can be drawn from the brand narrative. Make these scripts available not only to Chamber officials but provide them (along with suggestions on how to use them) to employers throughout the city.



- Create business recruitment testimonial videos. Produce a series of brief testimonial videos from businesses in Muscatine. In the videos, which would serve as third-party endorsements, business leaders would talk about why they are situated in Muscatine and how it benefits them to be here. Ask them also to speak specifically to your brand identity of taking a turn for the better. The videos could form the basis for an email campaign to prospects but they also have many other applications as well, and they could be housed on the Chamber website (within the Economic Development section).
- Honor new businesses in Muscatine with something like Hollywood's Walk of Stars. Along sidewalks in a highly visible area, provide a place (perhaps downtown or around the History and Industry Center) where executives can put their handprints in cement and include a Muscatine-branded plaque with the company's name. Place the names and handprints along a curved line similar to what is in the logo. This is a distinctive, high-profile way to recognize new businesses while honoring the role that existing companies have played in the city's growth and prosperity. Be sure that business prospects have an opportunity to see the sidewalk plaques; whenever a new company moves to town, have a ceremony in which you dedicate their own plaque along the "River Walk of Stars," and be sure to publicize the event.



- Produce a branded digital newsletter that can help keep businesses and business prospects informed about all the ways Muscatine can help businesses “take a turn for the better.” A digital newsletter works like an extension of your Economic Development mini-site, reaching out to remind prospects of all the new things happening in the city. Include information on incentives, demographics, quality of life, new businesses, resources, utilities, costs, available space, success stories, testimonials, etc. Make sure to include links to awards and accolades Muscatine receives. Create a name for the newsletter aligned with the brand, such as “Where Business Turns for the Better”. And of course, design the newsletter in the spirit of your brand borrowing ideas from the look, the Chamber website and the Chamber magazine. See *example from North Star client Menifee, CA to the right.*

Keeping your various prospect databases up-to-date is critical to the success of e-newsletter programs. Be sure someone takes responsibility for ongoing database management.

7) Grow economic development using the brand

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Contact Gina: 951-723-3711

Opportunity Menifee

News to Better your Best

\$990 million
retail sales leakage to neighboring cities

97,000
Population in 2018

37,000
Households by 2021

800,000+
Trade Area

Growing Younger:
Median Age **37**

(89,000 ADT)
Commercial Corridor
Parcels along I-215

Menifee Schools #2
in Riverside County Scores!

Home to
Brandman University &
Mt. San Jacinto
Community College

New Developments Enjoy Zero Vacancy Rates in Business Friendly Menifee

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[LEARN MORE](#)

Your Talent and Consumers are Moving Here in Doves

Dream Demographics Find Dream Homes in Menifee

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STAY CONNECTED

City of Menifee Economic Development
29744 Route Road, Menifee 92586
(951) 672-6777
Email: yourbest@cityofmenifee.us
cityofmenifee.us/EconDev

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- Work with a media planner to identify national and regional digital and print publications (including *Site Selector* magazine) where placement of a business-oriented ad about Muscatine would be cost-effective.



IT'S YOUR
TURN
FOR THE BETTER



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- Use strategically placed outdoor boards to reinforce the message that Muscatine is a place where business and living take a turn for the better. Base the look of the outdoor boards on the chosen Muscatine look (see previous page). *See example above from Quincy, IL – a past North Star client.*



- Offer evenings of entertainment for site selectors. Organize special events to bring site selectors to Muscatine. Take them to dinner at a local restaurant. Take a hike as a group along your trails. Plan a dinner cruise on your river boat. Incorporate “taking a turn for the better” into the presentation in a way that is customized for the needs and interests of a particular audience. The event could include the testimonial videos from business leaders. Enlist 1-2 residents to offer their views about what makes Muscatine a great place to launch or relocate a business (and a great place to live).



- For retailers you are really interested in drawing to Muscatine, offer small branded perks for elevating the appeal of their store. (Of course, you may want to offer such perks to your existing businesses, too!) For example:
 - Offer to place branded bike racks outside a bicycle shop (see *an example from Columbus, IN*).
 - Subsidize supplies of co-branded shopping bags or drink coasters for sports bars (a great craft brew can certainly help your day take a turn for the better!).
 - Present them with branded welcome mats or “Global Turn” Hon-designed wall hangings.
 - Give retailers generous supplies of car decals to present to their consumers.



- More actively recruit talent from institutions of higher learning in eastern Iowa. Educational institutions are a renewable source of the young, talented people who are now underrepresented as permanent residents of Muscatine. Cast your talent recruitment net as wide as possible within the region. Some ideas:
 - Just as you would take a booth to trade shows around the country, adapt the Economic Development's booth and presentations to an audience of students who are potential residents. Adapt a branded van to be a literal vehicle for talent recruitment. Take it to area colleges and universities, from Iowa City to the Quad Cities. Bring information on professional positions that Muscatine employers are looking to fill. Use these presentations as an opportunity both to create awareness and sell the idea of living in Muscatine. The message on the side of booth might be something like: "Muscatine: Where careers take a turn for the better."
 - Or let your mobile visitors center (see page 151) do double duty as a recruitment vehicle that you can take to colleges, career fairs and other venues where you might recruit students. Create signage with a message such as "Take a great turn after you graduate" or "Make a great turn in Muscatine."
 - Organize regular networking events where students can meet and interact with Chamber of Commerce members and business leaders who can help "sell" the students on Muscatine and connect them with others whose occupations or specializations align with the students' career interests.
 - Fund a paid summer internship each year that enables an MBA student from the University of Iowa to work for a local company and "take a turn in Muscatine." In addition, many MBA programs seek "clients" that will allow their students to take on real business challenges for area companies. Explore opportunities to take advantage of such arrangements to expose more young business talent to Muscatine.



- Leverage partnerships with Muscatine Community College in your outreach to new business prospects. The Muscatine Learning Partnership is an innovative approach to meeting employers' workforce development needs through customized training. However, there is no mention of it in the Workforce section of the Chamber website, and only a general description of the college under the Education section. Showcase the partnership as an example of how business and education take a turn for the better in Muscatine. Make it a more prominent part of your message both to business prospects and to prospective students at MCC, who know they can receive specific training and skill development that employers in the partnership are looking for. Similarly, the partnership between the college's hospitality program and the Merrill Hotel & Convention Center should also be marketed as an example of people working to take a turn for the better in Muscatine.
- Throw parties for relocating and start-up companies that "take a smart turn" by coming to Muscatine. When you welcome new businesses, involve the whole community. Organize a public reception at Riverside Park and invite residents to come and say hello and perhaps hear a short presentation about the company from its leaders. Serve refreshments. Present the company's leaders with branded ballcaps or other items. Such participation would raise your reputation as a deeply connected community.



- Recruit (and incentivize) new businesses that in turn will attract more young professionals. For example, focus efforts on retail businesses (particularly boutiques) along with more hospitality-related businesses that help improve Muscatine's nightlife.
 - Devise incentives to encourage these businesses to locate in the city. Consider everything from property/sales tax incentives to opportunities to live above their storefronts in a retail district. Promote these incentives in media and marketplaces (such as Iowa City and the Quad Cities) where there are concentrations of younger entrepreneurs.
 - Offer business incubator space (preferably, in the downtown district) at deeply discounted rates to encourage new retailers and restaurateurs to open in Muscatine.
 - Look for less expensive ways for start-ups to get a toehold in Muscatine. For example, designate an area by the river for pop-up retail and food trucks. Provide gathering spaces with picnic tables for dining and a band for local musicians so that the pop-up place becomes the place to be.
 - Have an annual contest to reward the most promising entrepreneurial idea for a new business targeted to young professionals with a financial grant and other assistance to put the idea into practice.
 - Connect these efforts to the brand with lines such as: "Where imagination turns into enterprise" or "Smart turns."
 - Take your message to graduate and undergraduate business programs (especially those with concentrations in entrepreneurship) at area universities. Get the word out that Muscatine is all about helping young, enterprising business people in the retail, service and hospitality sectors.



- Reach out to international businesses. Products made in Muscatine already have global reach, and some of the city's leading employers have locations in multiple countries (for example, Musco Lighting has locations in Shanghai, China and Incheon, Republic of Korea; SSAB Steel has other facilities in Sweden and Finland). Leverage these advantages to augment your efforts to recruit more internationally based companies to the city. Some ideas:
 - Reflect this international presence in the Economic Development section of the Chamber website, where it is currently missing. Add a tab under the dropdown menu for Global Business. Create an interactive map showing the other nations where companies in Muscatine have operations. Animate the map with curved lines (as in the logo) connecting Muscatine with these global locations. On a similar map, show countries where businesses in Muscatine ship their products. Include a page with small icons of flags of other nations with a business presence in Muscatine, along with a branded line such as "Where Business Turns Global" in English and translated into the languages represented by the flags. Engage professional translators to translate the content of the Economic Development section into languages you identify as priorities for recruitment targets (such as Chinese, Korean or Spanish) and enable users to click a button to see the content in their chosen language.
 - Create video testimonials from leaders of companies with international operations addressing how their business takes a global turn for the better from being in Muscatine. Include these on the website and use them as the basis for a targeted email campaign.



- Reach out to international businesses.
 - To highlight Muscatine's international reach, consider creating some branded, permanent welcome signs incorporating the logo and a brief message in several different languages. Place them where international site selectors will see them.
 - Leverage the history with China and President Xi Jinping. Because President Xi originally came to Muscatine as part of a provincial trade delegation, his visit connects directly to economic development. Currently, however, there is no content in the Economic Development area of the Chamber website highlighting this connection, and the section on the City website is presented more as a curiosity than a bottom-line business advantage. Make more of this history. If international business prospects understand that Xi loved it in Muscatine, perhaps they will more readily see themselves doing business here, too. When prospects visit, present them with a golden key similar to the one Xi received on his return visit in 2012 (and be sure they understand the symbolic significance of this gesture).
 - Have Economic Development officials participate in trade delegations to China to court international business.
 - Consider hosting special site selector tours for international prospects, complete with banquets featuring appropriate international foods and decor.



- Treat employees of current companies in the city as an economic development audience. In partnership with these businesses, schedule presentations at their location touting the advantages of living in Muscatine and promoting any incentives to do so that you choose to offer them. Set up a booth and treat these potential residents like an audience at a trade show. To take this idea one step further, partner with individual companies to stage a variation on a company picnic. Designate a time in an afternoon or on a Saturday to host a “Muscatine Picnic” for employees and their families to come to a picnic where you provide food and entertainment — as well as a number of opportunities (through presentations, exhibits, booths) to tout the city as a place to live as well as work.
- Include high school and middle-school students in your efforts. While the payoff in terms of economic development may take longer, you should actively work with students in this age range to help them see a future for themselves in Muscatine after graduation.
 - Be systematic about helping young people connect their school work to careers in the city. Organize frequent field trips for middle-schoolers to tour facilities of various types of employers. Increase the number of job-shadowing opportunities that let young people get a feel for what certain jobs are like.
 - In partnership with Muscatine Community College and various employers, increase the number of programs that enable high school students to gain certifications in particular skills.
 - Form an advisory council of employers who can offer insights and guidance that help inform program offerings in your schools and promote workforce readiness.



- Give top business prospects a gift that they will remember and that reminds them of Muscatine. No coffee mugs for your prospects. Ideas include an executive chair or wall hanging from the custom HON line “Global Turn” or a branded basket full of locally sourced products like the one created by *North Star client Miami County* below.



Young adults — particularly young professionals — are a key demographic for Muscatine's future. Convincing more of them to see your community as an appealing place to live and work is important enough to your success that it deserves its own separate action section. Fortunately, a number of young people already have a reason to come into Muscatine each weekday, since they work for local companies. The challenge is to give them more reasons to stay as residents. For many, the supply of quality housing is an issue. Many perceive that there isn't enough to do after work — not enough restaurants or other entertainment options. Removing such barriers takes an investment of effort and resources. The following pages include a few ideas to help you get started.



- Make your Young Professionals Network web presence more visible and more appealing. Compared to many cities of similar size, having a Young Professionals Network already in place puts Muscatine ahead of the game. However, given the importance of YP's to Muscatine's vitality and long-term growth, you should consider ways to reflect this emphasis with a stronger web presence. Some ideas:
 - On the Chamber of Commerce website, the link to a page for Young Professionals is nearly devoid of content other than links to YPN's website and Facebook page and an email address for a contact person. Make this content much more robust with a brief explanation of what YPN involves and some basic info on the benefits of membership. Consider adding photos and quotes from YPN members of what they enjoy about the organization. There's no need to provide the level of detail that users could find by continuing on to the YPN site or Facebook page, but you should include enough to make them want to learn more. Having so little content on the designated page on the Chamber site creates an impression that young professionals are an afterthought rather than an audience you are working to cultivate.
 - As with the other areas under the Chamber's jurisdiction, be sure to incorporate the look of the brand into YPN's website. Since you have variations on the new Muscatine logo for the Chamber and CVB, you might consider developing a variation for the YPN as well. If you continue with the existing YPN logo, you could co-brand the site with the Partner for a Better Muscatine logo.



- Enhance the YPN site to give potential members a better flavor of upcoming events including what they involve and why they're fun and rewarding. Clicking the Events tab on the current YPN site takes users to a calendar on which every day for the rest of 2018 is blank except for the Third Thursday social/networking events. This creates a misimpression that the group doesn't do very much. Instead of making the calendar so prominent, focus on the activities themselves. What are the Third Thursday events like? What are attendees saying about them? Can we see photos from the events?
- Even more than with sites aimed at other demographic groups, it is critical when reaching out to young professionals -- who rely on the web and social media for so much of their information -- to keep the site up to date with lots of fresh content. A review of the YPN site suggests that there have been no new "Weekly Updates" since January 2017, which may create an impression among visitors that the group is no longer active.
- Add more special events for young professionals. In addition to the Third Thursday events (which should be Third Thursday Turn for the Better Bash), consider enhancing the frequency, variety and reach of these events. For example:
 - In addition to cocktail hours or dinner at a local restaurant, offer events with live music or party cruises on the river (the latter was actually suggested by a YPN member).
 - In addition to your own ideas, solicit input from young professionals themselves. Hold a contest where the best event and its organizer are recognized.



- To encourage those who currently live in other cities to relax and stay longer, offer deep discounts for overnight stays at your new hotel in combination with these regular Thursday “Turn for the Better” events. Encourage them to invite spouses and significant others to attend, so they can see more of what Muscatine has to offer beyond a work environment.
- Offer a “Taste of Muscatine” event where they can sample foods from a diverse variety of restaurants in the city. Or partner with the college’s Culinary Arts program to have students prepare a grand banquet for YPs.
- Encourage and incentivize attendees to bring a friend who is a fellow young professional, especially those who don’t currently live in Muscatine. This way, the YP events can also contribute to talent recruitment.
- Along with events purely for young professionals, offer some cocktail or dining events when they can network with older professionals in Muscatine — a tangible way to show that business community values and listens to them.
- Offer more skills and career development events for young professionals, perhaps with training and/or facilitation provided by partner businesses in the community.



- Add pop-up events for young professionals. Pop-up events are especially popular among young professionals, and the riverfront is an ideal place for them. Since their inception a decade ago, these events are rapidly gaining in popularity. But pop-ups are more than just a trendy, “seemingly unplanned” or temporary happenings. They have real power in building brand awareness and impressing a new audience. Make sure to get YPN members involved in event planning. Focus on offering pop-up events that presents a better twist or turn on something expected. Invite anyone interested to sponsor such an event and the city will help with the location and the pop-up infrastructure (may require some investment on your part). For example, a budding entrepreneur could partner with the city to offer goat yoga. An inflatable movie screen allows for pop-up movies almost anywhere. Events will be announced 24 hours ahead of time on the social media platforms of the event sponsor and the location. People will follow Muscatine on various social media just to see what’s popping up. Pop-up events deliver a fun, spontaneous feel. Best of all, they don’t have to be expensive. Larger than life street painting is another example of easy pop ups (see right).



- Explore creative housing ideas to attract more young professionals to live where they work. Housing connects to your ability to attract more young professionals and young families to Muscatine, and that connects to your brand. Ultimately, it won't matter much if young folks believe that Muscatine is a great place to live if there aren't enough appealing places for them actually to reside. For this reason, creatively addressing the housing issue should be part of a strategy for economic development in general and the appeal you make to young adults in particular.
 - Capitalize on opportunities for more housing downtown. The upper floors (some of them currently vacant) of old buildings near the riverfront can become loft apartments with great appeal for young professionals. Offer incentives for the property owners to convert these spaces into residences, or consider buying properties outright as part of a redevelopment effort. You might consider converting sections of this area into a zone for entrepreneurs or start-ups. Offer incentives, such as discounted or subsidized rents, to attract small business owners to open retail shops on the first floor and live upstairs.
 - Develop urban dorms. Some large cities have pioneered this concept to help younger people overcome the high cost barrier to residential life. A similar approach could help lure younger residents to Muscatine. Residents lease an apartment with a private bedroom and bath but with a common dining area and other living spaces. The concept, which draws people ranging from recent college graduates to established professionals, also helps build a sense of community. Vacant warehouses would be excellent potential sites for this kind of development, which could be accomplished in partnership with a local employee and could also qualify for state or federal grant funds.



- Partner with large employers in the city. The dearth of affordable housing in Silicon Valley has led companies such as Google and Apple to develop creative solutions. Google invested in modular, prefab housing that is built and shipped in from elsewhere by Factor OS. Apple took a different approach, creating its own 2.8 million-square-foot building to provide housing options for thousands of its employees. You could work with large employers in Muscatine to come up with similarly innovative approaches to address the housing shortage you face. Consider offering incentives (from tax abatements to direct subsidies) to employers that partner with you. As the partnerships take shape, be sure to infuse communications and signage with the Muscatine brand identity along with the identity of the partner(s).
- Court young professionals in other ways.
 - Offer “Explore Muscatine Days” several times a year when young professionals in Iowa City or the Quad Cities can sign up for an excursion that takes them to places of particular interest to younger people (such as your parks and their recreation opportunities); provide lunch for them and, most of all, make them feel wanted and courted by you.
 - Make the services of area real estate agents available to young professionals to connect them to housing options and free them from some of the legwork that might otherwise be involved.



- Take your mobile visitors center to areas in the Quad Cities and Iowa City where young professionals tend to gather, such as spots frequented by food trucks. Use the visitors center as a recruiting tool to encourage these young professionals to visit or consider working in Muscatine.
- Through the Chamber, create an annual “40 Under 40” event to honor rising stars in Muscatine. Honorees can be from any walk of life, not just in business. The actual number of honorees could be 10 or 20, depending on what you find most workable. The point is to make young professionals feel celebrated and courted by the community.
- Within the Chamber site, create a mini-site focused on attracting young professional talent (either to take a job in Muscatine or, for those who commute to work in the city, to move there permanently). Through this site, GreatTurnsMuscatine.com, anyone can learn about job openings in the community. Of equal importance, they can read perspectives from people of all backgrounds and job categories who have moved to Muscatine to live and work. These recommendations from peers are more valuable to your audiences than promotional copy coming from the city or the Chamber.
 - Build content for the site from video interviews with people who moved to Muscatine to work. Then you can take excerpts to create short segments focused on various aspects of living and working in the city. Because they are unscripted, the interviews have the feel of a conversation rather than a marketing vehicle.
 - Include people from a diverse variety of professions.
 - Create links to this mini-site from the City of Muscatine website and the Young Professional Network site.
 - Continue to build an archive of video interviews so you can rotate them onto the site and keep it fresh.
 - Be sure to create a social media campaign to direct people to the site!



- A variation of a feature on the Chamber site for Muscatine residents could be adapted easily for YPs.



Once people visit Muscatine, they are much more likely to come away with a favorable impression, and a favorable impression creates opportunities for repeat visitation, word-of-mouth promotion, and even to turn visitors into residents. Below, you will find ideas for helping you attract more visitors and connecting tourism to your brand.

- Start by aligning all of your tourism-focused communications with your new brand identity, including the VisitMuscatine.com site; the Muscatine Visitors Guide, and the Visit Muscatine e-newsletter. North Star has created variations on the Muscatine logo for the Convention and Visitors Bureau and Visit Muscatine.

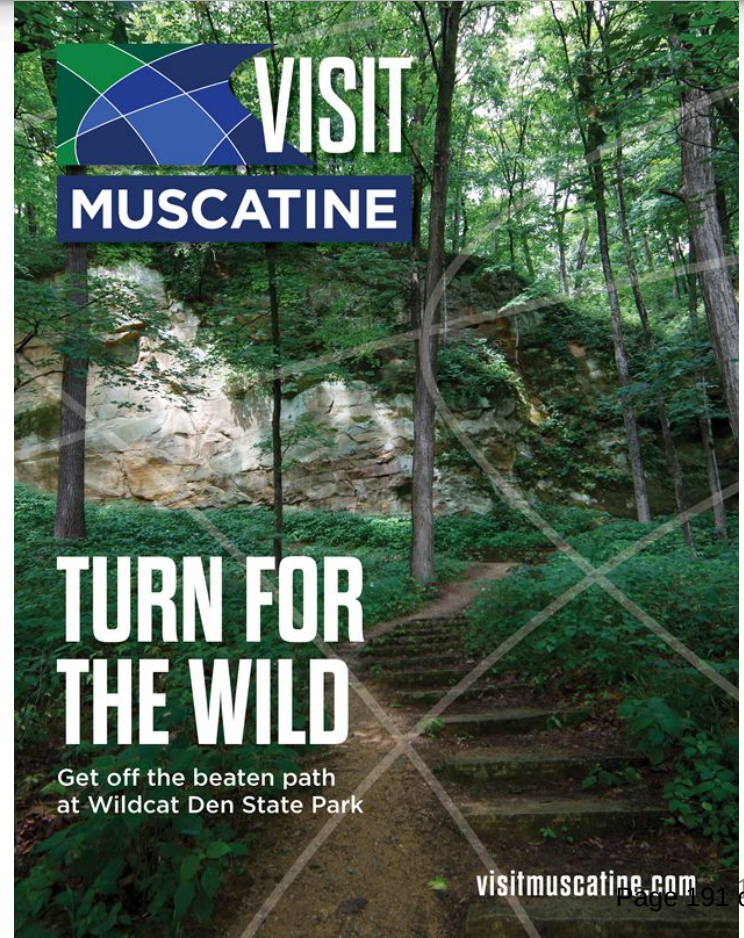


- Connect your existing tourism assets to your brand. Your existing Visit Muscatine site does a good job of listing and describing assets for visitors in Muscatine and the surrounding area. That puts you ahead of a number of cities, including many that are much larger than yours. There is no need for a complete redesign; you simply need to re-skin the site so that it is visually branded. For example:
 - Replace the current Visit Muscatine headline font with the new Visit Muscatine logo
 - For page backgrounds, apply the color palette and crisscrossing lines from the Muscatine logo
 - Consider a home page design like that of the Chamber or the web portal. Rotate the winter/spring/summer/fall visuals you have now within the format of the Chamber home page.
 - Consider adding an Instagram feature for visitors.
 - Incorporate the Muscatine or Visit Muscatine logo icon on each page listing under Things to Do, Places to Stay and Where to Eat

Then, look for ways to brand your messaging and connect your tourism assets more closely with the brand. For example, start with adding the strap line “Where the River Takes a Turn for the Better” to the home page and background templates for other pages. Incorporate branded language into pages describing individual assets, such as: “Discovery Park: Where 85 Acres Turn into Fun”; or “Riverside Park: Where Recreation Takes a Turn for the Better.” Or for the Eagle Watch in January: “When Winter Turns into Wonder.” Instead of simply inviting readers to “discover Muscatine” in the caption under the video on the home page, invite them to “discover how the river takes a turn for the better” (or “how you can take a turn for the better”) in Muscatine.



- Brand the look of your annual Visitors Guide and align that look with the Chamber magazine. North Star's design at right, for example, allows the Visit Muscatine logo to serve as the title of the publication and includes the website address so potential visitors can readily find comprehensive information.
 - As much as possible, have headlines and messaging reflect the brand, as in the example for the cover story shown.
 - Use branded language for various sections. For example, instead of "History," use "Take a Historic Turn." instead of "Attractions," use "Take a Fun Turn." Instead of "Lodging," you could use "Where to Turn in for the Night."
 - In addition to offering a downloadable version on the Visit Muscatine site, add this feature to the web portal.



- Make your Visitors Center a branded experience. Start by helping visitors know where to find you. Create branded exterior signage for your current location on 2nd Street that is visible from down the block. Consider an additional sign with a branded message such as “Where Visits Turn into Fun.” As you address the issue of exterior visibility, make sure that visitors enjoy a branded experience once they come inside. Remember, if visitors have a positive experience at your center, they are more likely to have a positive experience in the rest of Muscatine. Here are some ideas for making that happen:
 - Consider placing a three dimensional rendering of the logo, or the logo-inspired wall hanging shown earlier, on the walls. (See example from North Star client Roswell, GA.)
 - Have Visitor Center staff use branded language when they answer the phones. For example: “You’ve reached the Muscatine Visitor Center, where it’s your turn for fun.”



- Make your Visitors Center a branded experience
 - Dress staff in t-shirts with the Muscatine or Visit Muscatine logo. Create retail space for branded merchandise (see example at right from North Star client Grove City, OH).
 - Feature a closed-circuit television showing continuous loop footage of Muscatine's natural beauty, activities and attractions.
 - Add spaces, such as branded stools and tables, where visitors can sit.
 - Have local experts on hand during events or seasons that draw visitors. For example, during the Melon City Criterion, have an expert in cycling in the center. Have a naturalist available on weekends during eagle-watching season.



- Make your Visitors Center a branded experience.
 - Use colors for the interior that match the brand colors.
 - Design a welcoming front desk that prominently features the Muscatine name and perhaps the strap line. See *example at right from Grove City, OH*.
 - Consider incorporating a coffee bar with espresso drinks and light snacks for sale (perhaps one of your local coffee shops or bakeries would be interested in being a satellite vendor).
 - Each Saturday, invite a different local restaurant to provide appetizers that guests can sample. These can be a wonderful way to start a conversation about local dining options. Be sure to prominently feature each participating restaurant.



- In addition to your brick and mortar Visitors Center, consider some options that extend your tourism reach and that may be easier for guests to find.
 - Consider creating a satellite visitors center in another location where visitors are likely to congregate. This would put the information into the epicenter of visitor activity and make it clear that help is readily available throughout their traveling experience. In Muscatine's case, that might be Riverfront Park or the soccer complex. The satellite center could be as simple as a kiosk or something larger and more elaborate. Include some of the resources available at the main Visitors Center location, but don't include everything. As a way to avoid the cost of hiring more full-time staff, your satellite center could employ high school or college students (whom you have trained and oriented to the brand) during summer months and on weekends.
 - You may also want to give serious consideration to moving the main Visitors Center to a spot that is less heavily identified with Muscatine's past. For example, you might explore the possibility of partnering with the new Merrill Hotel — a natural magnet for overnight visitors — to accommodate the Visitors Center (or at least a kiosk staffed during regular business hours). Also consider relocating the Visitors Center to its own dedicated space nearer the hotel or the park on the riverfront.



- Create a mobile visitors center. Instead of relying solely on visitors to come to a stationary site, extend your reach with a mobile Visitors Center that can travel to venues, facilities, and events locally and regionally. Take the mobile center to Iowa City or the Quad Cities on Saturdays. Consider finding a spot, such as a park, where food trucks congregate — and even bringing food items produced locally (such as melons, in season) as giveaways. In this way, you can greatly increase the impact of your tourism efforts by actively creating new opportunities to share what people can enjoy in Muscatine. Stock the vehicle with items that relate to events where the mobile center is present; at a bike race, for example, include pumps and other equipment to fix bikes. For a history-themed event, bring some of the wonderful archival photos from the library's collection.



- Brand your existing events. Muscatine already hosts a number of events that draw (or have potential to draw) visitors from across the region and beyond. Be sure you take advantage of every opportunity to connect them with the brand. For example:
 - At the final turn on the course of the Melon City Criterium bicycle race, place a big sign or banner that says, “Your final turn for the better.” Use the idea of “Wheels Turning in Muscatine” to promote the event.
 - In conjunction with your Second Saturday fests, launch a promotion called Turn Second Saturday into Sunday Morning. The promotion could offer a specially priced package deal, in conjunction with local partners, so that visitors could have dinner on Saturday evening at a local restaurant, enjoy a yoga class along the river or the overlook point at sunset, stay over and have brunch at a boutique hotel, and rent bikes to ride your trails.
 - Promote the annual Girls Getaway with a message such as “It’s your turn to relax.”
 - Promote your Second Sunday concert series as a way to “Turn Sundays into Fun Days.” As with the Friday-Saturday promotions, create a package deal that offers Sunday brunch and/or dinner, an afternoon activity, tickets to the concert and then an overnight stay at the Merrill Hotel. This could be an especially attractive promotion to young professionals who commute to work in Muscatine and would have to be in town on Monday morning already.
 - Advertise Muscatine Flames baseball games as “Your Turn at Bat.” Or offer packages involving dinner and a ballgame branded as “Your Turn at the Plate.”



- Broaden your reach for local events. Muscatine has the potential to attract more visitors from across the area for a variety of existing events and attractions. For example, the Melon City Criterium bicycle race already attracts competitors from a much wider area. Many people in the Quad Cities or Iowa City might enjoy making a day trip to Muscatine for your Second Saturday fests, your Second Sunday concert series, Muscatine Flames semi-pro baseball games, the weekend farmers markets (especially during melon season), or the bald eagle watching in January. They might be even more likely to come if they were more aware of other things they could do in Muscatine in the area, such as attend the Second Saturday fest on a Saturday morning and spend the afternoon strolling along the river or taking children to Discovery Park or the Winters Buffalo Farm. There are several ways you can broaden your reach and increase awareness of these events among audiences that might attend:
 - More actively advertise Muscatine's events and other tourism assets in the Quad Cities and Iowa City markets
 - Partner with local restaurants and hotels to help create and promote discounted package deals for weekend visitors. The deals could be tied to specific events, such as Eagles & Ivories or the Girls Getaway.
 - Use the mobile visitors center to promote your local events in other cities.
 - Target non-resident employees of local companies for weekend package deals.



- Leverage your soccer complex and other sports-related assets. Muscatine Soccer Complex has been designated as a “Best Soccer Facility,” and the Kent-Stein Baseball & Softball Complex is similarly top-notch. While both of these facilities help draw people from across the region to Muscatine, you can leverage them by enticing families and friends of participants to experience more of the city while their loved ones are competing or to stay an extra day.
 - Under the auspices of the CVB, create a customized e-newsletter for teams that have registered for sports tournaments in Muscatine. Work with Parks & Rec to capture contact info on registrants. Use the newsletter to include recommended activities and events, with coupons offering discounts from various attractions and participating merchants. Another option would be to print the newsletters and make them conspicuously available at the sports complexes when participants and families arrive. Connect the newsletter to your brand with a name such as “Your Turn to Play.”
 - Highlight special events/activities/sites that might be of interest. For example, during downtime between games or as a treat for younger siblings who aren’t part of the competition, youth soccer families might enjoy a visit to the Aquatic Center, the Buffalo Farm or Discovery Center. Spouses of participants in softball or baseball tournaments might enjoy an outing to a local winery. Or, once they’re more aware of what Muscatine offers, they might opt to stay an extra day to relax and explore sections of the Great River Road. Again, brand your information about these additional opportunities -- for example, “Where Tournaments Turn Even Better.”



- Leverage your soccer complex and other sports-related assets.
 - Bring your mobile Visitor Center to the sports complexes when you host tournaments so your staff can personally interact with visitors and connect them to sites and experiences they might enjoy. Stock the center with items like energy bars (branded with a small sign that reads something like “Turn tired into wired”). Display a sign outside the center that presents Muscatine as a place “Where Tournaments Turn More Fun.”
 - Create a weekly template for check-in at hotels to inspire travelers to get out and experience Muscatine.
 - Be sure to offer Muscatine-branded items at your tournaments, from soccer balls to t-shirts and water bottles. Such items remind visitors of Muscatine and turn them into ambassadors.
 - Add content to your website pages for the soccer complex and softball/baseball complex that links them to information about activities that families or spouses might enjoy, with discount coupons for groups. Again, brand this content; e.g., “Give Your Tournament a Winning Turn.”
 - Launch a “Stay an Extra Day and Play” campaign in which people who come to Muscatine for sports tournaments can receive discounts on hotel rates and meals by adding a day to their planned stay.



- Enlist more outside bloggers. Especially for younger audiences, bloggers can be a good source of stories about tourism opportunities in your community. Cultivate them as a way to spread the word. Invite them to experience and write about particular tourism assets in Muscatine.
 - You have made a start in this direction with your official CVB blog, #MadeInMuscatine. However, the content appears to have been mostly generated by CVB staff. To get the full benefit of a blog, enlist people not employed by the CVB or the city who are willing to attach their names to what they write; this gives your blog added credibility as a third-party endorsement.
 - Some examples of possible blog topics: Ask someone to write about watching bald eagles along the river, especially if accompanied by an experienced guide. The Second Saturday event is a great experience to share, via the blog, with other potential attendees as are concerts on the riverfront. A clever blogger can make anything fun, for example, advertising a cat show as a reason for crazy cat people to rejoice!
 - Encourage visitors to Muscatine to submit blog posts about their experiences; you can review these and post those that are most compelling. Consider offering incentives or starting a contest to encourage people to write about their visits to Muscatine.
 - It's also important to keep blogs up to date with fresh content (the most recent post on your official CVB blog is from June of 2016).
 - Promote the blog especially among young professionals who work in Muscatine. This audience could also be a good source of recruits for blog writers.



- Partner with regional organizations promoting tourism and be sure they have access to your graphic elements and brand language. Brand language can be added to headlines, teasers, press releases, promotions, event listings and body copy on websites, social media and print publications (update as reprints are needed) by incorporating copy that evokes exceptional experiences, a sense of discovery, and entertainment options and so on. Provide brand elements and signage to area visitors centers.
- Work with lodging partners on brand extensions. Encourage hotels to invite guests to gather for happy hours (“A turn for the happier”) or morning coffee service (“Take a sip for the better”). Cultivate partnerships between hotels and fitness centers or even local running or sports clubs for hotel guests to exercise with local residents and meet new people: Yoga in a public space or morning runs with a local running club or master swim classes at a local fitness facility (“Where training turns social”). This will help people connect Muscatine with taking a turn for the better even while they’re traveling.
- Look for ways to increase your lodging options. For example, explore the feasibility of glamping under the stars in one of your parks on the river overlook. Glamping is like glamorous camping that takes place in semi-permanent structures. It is a way that camping takes a turn for the better.



- Create some new festivals — and think big. You already have several festivals that can appeal to diverse audiences. Consider leveraging some of Muscatine's history and assets to create new events that reach a much wider audience, perhaps even national in scope. For example:
 - Turn your history into a giant festival of foods (branded as "A Turn for the Tastier"). Muscatine has a culinary history that represents an underutilized resource. Maid-Rite holds claim to the first national restaurant franchise, going back to 1926. The face of a young woman from Muscatine appeared on boxes of oat cereal across the United States. Take advantage of this heritage by starting an annual food festival to draw people from across the country to your city. For example, you could create a Best Sandwich in America competition. Invite entrants from all over the US to come to Muscatine to prepare their sandwiches for a panel of professional judges. (Offer their products for sale to visitors who would attend the festival.) Solicit coverage from The Food Network and others, and make it a one-of-a-kind event.
 - Pearl Button Festival. Along with celebrating Muscatine's heritage as the Pearl Button Capital of the World, this event could create a nostalgic feel for a bygone era when Iowa's "river cities" each had their own brass band (as in "The Music Man") and baseball team. Make this a key attraction for the festival. Invite area high school bands to compete in a battle of the bands along the riverfront. Hold a baseball tournament, or an exhibition "retro" game featuring old-time uniforms and equipment and played by 19th-century baseball rules. Invite people to dress in period costume. Include a Best Mustache contest. Have races or parades with old-time, high-wheeled bicycles. Include other live music (both contemporary and from an earlier era). Stage the festival on the riverfront, with vendors of food and other merchandise on the strip by the river. And, of course, offer pearl buttons for sale along with exhibits about their history and role in Muscatine. Tie it all to the brand with a slogan such as "Turn Back Time" or "Where Time Flows Backwards."



- Create some new festivals.
 - Launch a music festival with national reach. Muscatine sits on US Highway 61, one of the nation's most famous highways that runs from Minnesota to New Orleans (and basically follows the Mississippi River). In Minnesota, the road is associated with Bob Dylan's famous album "Highway 61 Revisited." In Memphis, it's associated with musical genres ranging from Elvis to soul to rockabilly. In Mississippi, it's associated with blues singers and "juke joints." And in New Orleans it's associated with a little bit of everything. Why not take advantage of Muscatine's fortuitous location along this route to create a big, annual roots music festival that allows visitors to hear all of these different genres? Or focus on a different genre represented on Highway 61 each year of the festival. Spread out the event over a weekend in the summer. Set up stages along your riverfront. Come up with a catchy, branded name, like Music Time in Muscatine or River Turns (or just the Highway 61 Music Fest). As it grows with each passing year, the event could become national in appeal, like Bonnaroo in rural Tennessee. Tie the event to your brand with promotional messages like, "Where the river road turns into song." Work with concert promoters to organize the lineup and logistics. A festival with national reach could put Muscatine on the map for a huge new audience. Alternatively, you might consider a similar festival that is smaller and promoted regionally instead of nationally.



- Create some new festivals.
 - Melon Turns Festival. Take advantage of an agricultural product that's associated with your area and with summertime. While a watermelon festival was launched in 2012, it's been discontinued. But the idea is worth reviving. In addition to offering various types of melons (and other produce for sale), organize fun events like eating contests, seed spitting and melon-throwing competitions. Because various towns in the area lay claim to producing the tastiest melons, have a judged contest to determine a winner each year. Offer Melon Head hats (shaped like a watermelon or muskmelon half) for sale as souvenirs. Make it a fun event that you promote across the region, and offer hotel and dining packages to encourage visitors to come for the weekend.
 - Sister City Festival. Take advantage of Muscatine's connection with China — specifically, the Chinese city with a museum dedicated to Muscatine — by hosting a cross-cultural festival with a Chinese flavor. Invite a delegation from China to participate. Offer Chinese food. Hold a dragon boat race on the river. Use the festival as an opportunity to emphasize Muscatine's bridges to the world. Be sure to give the festival a title that's not merely a label but connects to the brand, such as "Bridges for the Better" or "Outward Turns."



- Create some new festivals.
 - Life on the Mississippi Festival. Evoking Mark Twain's memoir of the same title, organize a festival that's both fun and educational about the era of paddlewheel steamboats on the Mississippi — and invites visitors to “take a turn on the river.” In addition to the Pearl Button, invite other steamboats from up and down the river to converge in Muscatine to offer tours and cruises. Invite re-enactors to dress in period costume and offer interpretive tours that help guests understand the life and work of a riverboat pilot (and of what life was like in a riverboat town like Muscatine). Have concerts featuring an old-time brass band and a staging of a one-man show with an actor as Mark Twain. In conjunction with Muscatine Community College or the University of Iowa, include a lecture by an academic expert on the history of the period or on Twain.

Even some of your existing events that will never be national in scope could benefit from thinking bigger. A prime example is your Fourth of July parade. Every city has one, but you could turn yours into a day-long celebration that draws people from around the region. The day could begin with an expanded parade ending at the riverfront; a big cookout in the park; a semi-pro baseball game; live music and dancing; wine tastings at sunset on the scenic overlook point; and a big fireworks display over the river — complete with special hotel packages to draw more out-of-town visitors.



- Some tips on optimizing your festivals:
 - Actively promote the event throughout the region, including the Quad Cities and Iowa City. People in these markets are eager for opportunities to make a day trip for an event that's fun and distinctive.
 - Consider ways to attract out-of-town audiences by making them part of the event. For example, your festival could also include a soccer or other sports tournament that makes use of your existing assets and can draw visitors who might not otherwise come if the athletic competition weren't part of the festivities. Or, when booking live music, be sure that bands from across the area are well-represented. Those that already have a following in places like Dubuque or Iowa City are likely to attract some of their established audience to come to Muscatine to hear their favorite group.
 - Make large employers in Muscatine part of your plans. In addition to courting them as sponsors for the event (or portions of it), invite them early on to be part of the planning process and enlist them as promoters of the festival. Given the large number of their workers who live elsewhere, consider partnering with these companies to offer discounts on food or lodging (or even homestay opportunities with locals) if they buy their tickets in advance through their employer.
 - Make sure that Muscatine-branded merchandise is prominently available — along with specialty merchandise (such as caps or t-shirts) that relate specifically to the event.



- Hold a Muscatine community-wide homecoming. Invite long-lost friends and family to “make the turn for home.” A homecoming event engenders pride and a sense of nostalgia, while also attracting visitors who already have a reason to want to come to Muscatine. The event also helps deepen the imprint of your brand on current residents, who become ambassadors in reaching out to others. The event, which would span a weekend, could include tie-ins with homecomings at local schools, alumni ball games and pep rallies. Invite anyone who ever lived in Muscatine (including the president of China!) and anyone with family roots there. Use existing residents to spearhead the invitations, but advertise the event through your websites, social media and other communication channels. Hold the homecoming event at regular intervals – at least once every four years, perhaps to coincide with presidential election years, but perhaps annually. In preparing for the event:
 - Provide email templates for residents to forward to family and friends, or provide branded stationery for those who would like to write a personal letter.
 - Partner with Muscatine High School in helping to locate their former students and teachers.
 - Create exhibits of historic photographic, drawing on the resources in the archive at the library.
 - Consider beefing up your Chamber/CVB staff with temporary staff for the event.
 - In addition to special hotel packages, engage residents to home-share with visitors for the weekend.
 - Schedule dignitaries, celebrities, historians and artists with Muscatine connections as spokespersons.
 - Encourage a regional PBS station to produce a documentary about the event.
 - Consider having the first homecoming in 2020 (a nice round number that gives you plenty of time to plan the event and spread the word).



- Leverage your Sister Cities program to encourage tourism. Muscatine maintains relationships with Sister Cities in Argentina, China, Germany, Japan, Palestine, Poland, Russia and Ukraine. Given the city's heritage, reflected in Muscatine's brand identity, of extending its products and influence to the world, it would make sense to actively promote tourism to Muscatine from these sister cities. Create special package deals for visitors from these cities. In particular, it makes sense to cultivate tourism from China, given the close connections to Muscatine and the history with President Xi Jinping. Affluent Chinese tourists will want to see the house where their leader stayed and discover for themselves what he came to love about the city.
- Consider other ways to leverage your close China connection. For example, you could create a summer language immersion program, similar to the famous model at Middlebury College in Vermont, in which students could come and master Mandarin Chinese. Involve instructors from your sister city, Zhending. Partner with Muscatine Community College to provide accommodations in residence halls for students. Start modestly, and enable the program in time to grow into one that attracts students from all parts of the country. Those students in turn become brand ambassadors for Muscatine – as President Xi did.



While the branding initiative begins with the Greater Muscatine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, its success also depends on how well the brand is incorporated into the efforts of other partners in the initiative, including the City of Muscatine, the Power & Water Department, the public school district, Muscatine Community College and UnityPoint Trinity Muscatine Health System.

In this section, North Star offers some ideas and tactics for each of the branding partners. The ideas focus on how they can implement the brand to leverage the strategy for Muscatine in their communications, events and operations. These ideas also demonstrate how co-branding efforts should look for maximum appeal and efficacy.



- Collaborate on a consistent brand look. North Star has developed variations on the Muscatine logo for the Chamber, the City, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Other partners in the brand initiative, however, already have their own well-established logo identities that cannot be discarded. In the case of Power and Water, North Star has developed a logo that incorporates the color palette for the new Muscatine logo into the utility's existing logo (see page 23). For others, North Star has developed a logo that can be displayed by all partners (not just the main partners in the branding initiative) in ways that complement their own identity rather than replace it. This "Partner for the Better in Muscatine" logo can be included as an element on the partners' websites, on letterhead and even at their locations.



**PARTNER FOR THE BETTER IN
MUSCATINE**

- Educate your partners and their employees on the brand. For the brand to succeed, it is important that all of the partners in the initiative (as well as their employees) understand what you are trying to convey. For this reason, as you take your brand PPT presentation into the community, make early priorities of reaching city employees, especially department heads; Power & Water staff; key school's staff (including school board members and principals); leadership at Muscatine Community College; and leaders at the hospital (including administrators, board members, leaders of the nursing staff and key physicians).

As part of your presentations:

- Read aloud and/or distribute copies of the Muscatine brand narrative
- Allow time for Q&A about key brand messages
- Distribute Muscatine lapel pins
- Allow time for participants to brainstorm ideas for incorporating the brand into their organization. Remember, brand integration doesn't have to be difficult or costly. Partners can weave language from the narrative into their home page copy; can include branded copy at the end of every press release, can place a branded window decal in stores or businesses, or can distribute car decals in utility bills, hospital gift shops or school offices.



City of Muscatine

The city's importance as a partner in the branding initiative cannot be overstated. Previous sections have already included some of the steps that will be keys in this effort:

- Implementing the new Muscatine logo
- Branding a wide range of consumer touch points, including stationery and business cards
- Offering branded merchandise
- Branding your digital media, starting with the City of Muscatine website

Subsequent sections will include ideas on branded signage and infiltrating your city infrastructure. The following pages include ideas for integrating the brand into your various city departments.



City of Muscatine

- Motivate city employees to become brand ambassadors.

As the facilitators of the new brand identity, City of Muscatine employees and departments should be early adopters, embracing and helping to lead this brand initiative. Work to create a feeling that they are critical to the success of this initiative and that you are counting on them. They will need to understand and accept the brand (not just the logo, but the strategy), championing it both within their departments and in the outside community. This will involve both education regarding the value of the brand and engagement initiatives to get them involved and excited. Remember that word-of-mouth is one of the best ways to build awareness.

Start by presenting a city-specific version of the PowerPoint presentation to city department heads before introducing the brand to all city employees. Host the meeting in a relaxed environment to spur creative thinking. This audience is key to getting the larger group of city employees on board. Have some ideas on how each department can utilize the brand in programming or communications. And then brainstorm with them on how the brand can guide efforts within their departments. This will further buy-in.



City of Muscatine.

- Following the presentation hold a brainstorming session where department heads can identify how their departments exemplify taking a turn for the better. Some areas to consider as you prioritize where brand integration can have the biggest impact:
 - Websites, webpages and social media sites
 - Employee awards and recognition
 - Communication pieces such as brochures, program guides and newsletters
 - Trash or debris pickup
 - Public safety education and outreach programs
 - Health and wellness initiatives
 - Library programs and classes
 - Sustainability efforts (recycling, energy efficiency, green building practices)
 - City-sponsored special events

These ideas should include existing activities and responsibilities as well as new ideas. As part of this activity, specifically identify communications or publications like the annual report, newsletters, maps, blogs, etc. that can be reworked in the spirit of the brand.



City of Muscatine

- Once you've met with department heads, engage city employees, a captive group of brand ambassadors. Work to develop a program that builds excitement about the potential of the brand for both their work lives and for the community at large. It is critical that employees understand that they are pivotal to spreading the good word about the brand. To get them excited, plan a fun employee brand introduction that takes place in a large venue. It could even be outdoors by the river! Elevate this meeting above the typical department meeting to build enthusiasm and interest. The more people present, the more energy and excitement you will generate. A few ideas:
 - Serve lunch from local restaurants.
 - Following the brand presentation, have each employee identify one task they perform where simple changes would elevate it to a "turn for the better" experience.
 - Have drawings for services and merchandise from local businesses and brand partners. Give away branded merchandise like a car decal, t-shirt or hat.
 - Encourage employees to brainstorm ideas for events and initiatives that support the brand strategy and reward the best ideas.
 - Give employees a generous supply of car decals and ask them to distribute to family and friends in Muscatine.



City of Muscatine

- If resources allow, give all employees a branded t-shirt. Couple that gift with the announcement of a special casual day when all employees can wear jeans and their branded t-shirt to work.



City of Muscatine

- Focus on brand integration throughout city departments. Once city employees understand the passion and the purpose of the brand, work directly with department leaders to integrate the brand in large and small ways. Large ways include branding city department vehicles like the Muscabus to the right. Small ways include recognition awards for employees, such as:
 - “Turn for the Better” awards for employees who come up with new ideas to improve your operations
 - “Good Turn” awards for those who provide exemplary customer service. On your website, you can encourage Muscatine residents to nominate city employees for this award. Then honor those who have received this recognition with patches they can wear on a city jacket or uniform; discounts or prizes from local merchants; and a community banquet each year.



City of Muscatine

- Some additional ideas for integrating the brand throughout city departments:
 - Offer continuing education opportunities to city employees with a desire to improve their skills and careers. Brand them as “Turn for the Better” or “It’s Your Turn” grants.
 - Have every department send out “Turn for the Better” tweets to announce every time they complete an improvement project, from road resurfacing to maintaining trails in city parks.
 - Encourage teamwork by having departments participate in “Turn for the Better” volunteer efforts including those for the homeless, seniors, park cleanups, schools, etc.
 - Solid Waste Division: As an example of how individual departments can incorporate the brand into their work, brand your doggy poop scoop bags or biodegradable bags for fall leaf disposal with a message like: “Where leaves turn into mulch.” Or brand recycling bins and trash bins with your logo and line like: “Taking a turn for a better environment.” See example to the right, implemented by another North Star community. You might also consider enlisting local artists (including HS art students) to reimagine recycling bins and turn them into functional art reflecting your brand look and colors.



City of Muscatine

- Public Works:
 - When road maintenance crews are repairing city streets, equip them with small, portable signs branded with your logo and a message like “Turning Potholes into Progress.”
 - In addition to branding your MuscaBus vehicles with the logo, brand the public transit program with a line such as “Take a ride for the better” or “Where traffic turns relaxing.”



City of Muscatine

- Parks & Recreation:
 - Incorporate your brand into the Blue Zone initiative. On the city's webpage about the initiative, add a branded line such as "Taking a turn for the healthier" to accompany the Blue Zones logo. Residents who participate in the Muscatine Walking Club under this initiative could receive branded t-shirts with the message "I'm walking to turn Muscatine blue." People who submit Blue Zones-related ideas on Muscatine's Facebook page (as you urge them to do) could receive specially branded merchandise. As experts develop the "Blueprint" for making permanent environmental, social and policy changes for the sake of improved health, be sure to include brand-related messaging in the plan along with ideas that support your brand identity centered around "taking a turn for the better."
 - When your planned community dog park opens, offer "Dog Day" events at the dog park in which owners can receive or buy merchandise such as collars, leashes or ID tags with the Muscatine brand identity.
 - Create specially branded merchandise, such as water bottles for hikers or disks for the disk golf course.



City of Muscatine .

- Parks & Recreation
 - Any improvements to the park system should be touted as “a good turn” or “turn for the better.” Incorporate the brand into announcements or events involving municipal parks, whether they are as significant as future expansions to the system or as relatively small as programs allowing residents to recycle Christmas trees into mulch for hiking trails.
 - On your walking trails and in dog parks have distributors for branded doggy poop scoop bags that read, “Your Turn to Clean Up!”.
 - Create an “online suggestion box” on the parks’ web page that aligns with the brand and invites residents to submit “turn for the better” ideas for enhancements to the parks & rec system.
 - Building on the Blue Zones initiative, incorporate fitness under the brand by way of the parks. Exercise and fitness both contribute to taking a turn for the better. With that in mind, establish programs by which participants can earn “Do Your Health a Good Turn” fitness points or credits each time they use one of the parks or recreation centers to work out or for any kind of league competition. Consider incorporating such a program into the health and wellness programs of employers in Muscatine.
 - Either through such a program or through direct sales via your website, enable participants (and other residents) to purchase branded items such as t-shirts or water bottles.



City of Muscatine

- Musser Public Library - Anything the library does to improve its reach or services involves either a good turn or a turn for the better, and should be branded accordingly. Some examples:
 - Through the library, sponsor a community-wide book club “One Town. One Book.” with books focused on stories of people and groups that do a good turn for others.
 - For summer reading programs for students, focus on stories of people who take a turn for the better or do good turns for others. These could encompass everything from biographies of inventors to stories of people who work to improve the health and living conditions of others. Call it the “Page Turners Club” and create incentives for students to read books throughout the summer.
 - Invite library staff to recommend books that reflect the spirit of the brand, and merchandise these books prominently within the library in a way that clearly connects them to “A Turn for the Better.”
 - Issue new library cards that reflect the logo and brand identity. Because residents of Muscatine and several other townships are eligible to obtain cards, this is also a simple way to carry your brand beyond the city and even across the river into Illinois (to New Boston).



Muscatine Community School District

Your schools are excellent places to build the brand — not just among educators but among students who will eventually decide whether to stay within the community or leave after their schooling is complete. When you make brand presentations to school district officials and principals, explore ways to involve schools and students in the brand. Here are some initial ideas to consider:

- Brand service requirements for students in line with the idea of taking a turn for the better or doing a good turn for others. (If students at all levels in all schools are not currently required to perform a certain number of service hours per year, the brand provides a great opportunity to create such a program, because service aligns so well with the brand identity.) Instead of calling these requirements “service hours,” brand them as “Good Turn” hours. Offer awards and other recognition for students who go above and beyond the required minimum number of hours. In this way, students can grow up learning that doing a good turn for the community is an essential part of what it means to be from Muscatine.
- Sponsor an essay or video contest in which students tell the story (and what that story meant to them) of someone in their lives who has inspired them by taking a turn for the better. The contest could be tied to a scholarship program.



Muscatine Community School District

- Donate banners to Muscatine schools that celebrate the brand along with excellence and achievement. (North Star created the banner at right for Anna, TX.) These could be as simple as a banner to hang in hallways with the logo design and a message of encouragement to students such as “Take a Turn for the Better Today.” For specific departments and areas of study, you might provide banners with the “Turning ____ into Excellence” design, in which the blank is filled in with a visual. For example, in the band room of the high school, you might provide one of these banners with the image of a trumpet. In the locker room of the basketball team, you might hang a banner with the image of a basketball. As an incentive to promote excellence, you might reserve the individual team or department banners for those who win awards; then the banner becomes part of the recognition and celebration of their accomplishment.



Muscatine Community School District

- Hold “Turn your career for the better” job fairs with an emphasis on helping students get the skills they need for successful futures with local employers. Consider partnering with Muscatine Community College in this effort.
- Establish a student “think tank” to address a range of issues facing the city and the schools. Call it “Wheels Turning” and invite participation through chapters in individual schools.
- To emphasize Muscatine’s connections to the world, leverage your Sister Cities relationships to increase the number of exchange students from various countries who spend time in Muscatine (and Muscatine students who are able to study abroad in those cities). Explore opportunities to bring others from your Sister Cities (e.g., parents of exchange students, civic officials) as part of the program.
- Create branded merchandise (such as backpacks) for students that enable them to become ambassadors for the Muscatine brand. Notice how the reusable pack on the left is more branded. The pack on the right incorporates the global river lines element from the logo icon as a subtle background. The rest of the pack stays true to the School District brand.



Muscatine Community School District

- Incorporate the brand into school awards. In addition to the usual awards recognizing superlatives, create a special category of honors, similar to Most Improved, for those who “take a turn for the better.” Recipients could include a wide range of areas, such as:
 - those who demonstrate the greatest improvement in academic performance from one year to the next
 - students who improve the most in a non-academic area, such as band or choir
 - those who are most improved on each sports team
 - those whose attendance record improves most from one year to the next

In this way, “Turn for the Better” awards would highlight a valuable attribute of the brand and the community: Success is not merely about where you rank now but about how you are working steadily to improve.

- Incorporate school-related volunteer efforts into the brand. The mentoring program at elementary schools in partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Muscatine is a great example of helping children take a turn for the better. Through lapel pins, t-shirts, coffee mugs, Partnership for the Better in Muscatine window clings or other items, you should consider ways to connect the efforts of volunteers to the spirit of your brand.
- Even elementary school students can contribute ideas for taking a turn for the better. For example, through a similar program in Seattle, an 11-year-old girl came up with an idea to replace her school’s annual rummage sale with an ongoing effort to raise funds by selling donated goods online. The entire operation — including community outreach, collection of donated items and management of the sale itself — was run by students, with minimal involvement by school staff and parents.



Muscatine Community College

Muscatine Community College not only is a formal partner in the brand initiative but one in a position to play an important role in your brand's success. Some ideas on incorporating the brand into MCC's efforts:

- Because MCC also has a branded look and identity that will not be superseded by the logo and identity for Muscatine, use the Partner for the Better in Muscatine logo in various ways to connect the college with this initiative including:
 - Window clings on campus buildings
 - A small presence for the partnership logo on items from student notebooks to pages on the Eastern Iowa Community Colleges website that apply to specifically to MCC, such as the MCC homepage; the MCC Foundation page; the Muscatine Ag Center page; and the Muscatine Industrial Technology Center page.

PARTNER FOR THE BETTER IN
MUSCATINE



Muscatine Community College

- Reach out to businesses and other organizations that partner with the college. Make sure they are aware of the brand initiative and the college's role in it. Equip them with the Partnership for the Better in Muscatine logo that they can incorporate into their website and communication materials as a way of showcasing their involvement with MCC. A good example of such partners would be local companies that are involved with the college's Industrial Technology Center in Muscatine: HON, Allsteel, Bandag, Grain Processing Corp., Monsanto, Carver Pump, BT Prime Mover, HJ Heinz, and Musco Sports Lighting.
- Incorporate the brand into advertising for the college and some of its programs. North Star has developed examples of how to include the look and tone of the brand into ads that could focus on the Culinary Arts program and the Metalwork programs.



Muscatine Community College

- Turn ads into posters you can display on the MCC campus -- in cafeterias, common areas of residence halls, any spot where students regularly gather. These posters will help students understand how they connect to the brand and to embrace it as ambassadors, particularly since they connect Muscatine's identity to the ways that students are taking a turn for the better through their education.



Muscatine Community College

- Consider ways to strengthen the presence of the college downtown. MCC students in the Culinary Arts program can already take courses in downtown Muscatine in the renovated kitchen area of the former Button Factory restaurant. Look for ways to build on this presence by bringing more students downtown for a longer time. Consider partnerships that would convert currently vacant upper floors of downtown warehouses into residential space for students in the culinary apprentice programs. Explore possibilities for other programs to move from the MCC campus to space downtown that isn't being utilized. Such efforts bring more young people downtown for longer portions of the day, helping create demand that could make more restaurants and nightspots in that area viable. North Star Fargo, ND, experienced renewed vibrancy in its downtown nightlife (even during the dead of winter) after North Dakota State University relocated one of its programs to a downtown campus.
- Create incentive programs that bond MCC students to the brand. Distribute cards with the Partner for the Better in Muscatine logo to all students enrolled in programs on the MCC campus. Students then could use these cards to receive discounts on purchases from participating merchants and restaurants in Muscatine.



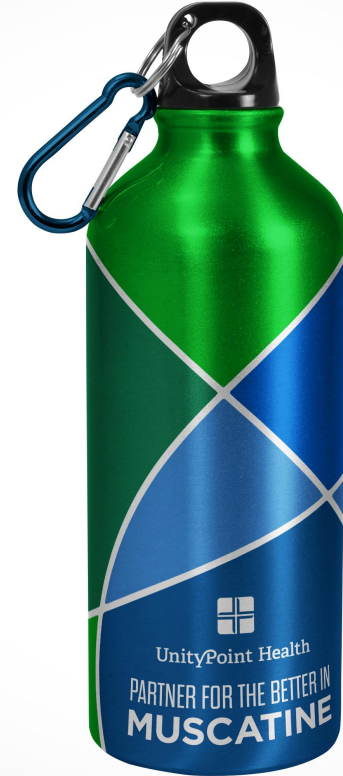
UnityPoint Health - Trinity Muscatine

- Incorporate the Partner for the Better in Muscatine logo into the website and various communications for the hospital.
- Distribute Muscatine logo lapel pins to hospital personnel, including medical and nursing staff, and encourage them to wear them when on duty (and elsewhere, of course).



UnityPoint Health - Trinity Muscatine

- Offer co-branded items such as water bottles with the UnityPoint Health logo plus the “Partner for the Better” logo and with design elements and colors of the Muscatine logo. These not only are well-suited for patients and families but can be distributed at community events, such as health screenings.
- Include a few Muscatine-branded items (such as coffee mugs or, as a baby gift, a branded onesie for newborns welcoming “The Newest Member of the Muscateam”) in the hospital gift shop.



UnityPoint Health - Trinity Muscatine

- Develop posters similar to those recommended for the campus of Muscatine Community College that can be used in various departments of the hospital (e.g., Imaging, lab services or women's health) with a corresponding visual and a line such as "Where Caring Turns into Quality Care." These could also be used at the UnityPoint clinic in Muscatine.
- Connect progress in the Muscatine County Health Improvement Plan to the brand. Areas of focus in the plan – from improvements in preventive care to community gardens and an increased number of clinics – all relate to the core idea of taking a turn for the better. As you achieve various goals in the four-year plan, communicate and celebrate them in ways that align with this core idea – taking a turn for better health.
- While it may be advisable to avoid using the line "take a turn for the better" in a hospital setting, there are other ways to incorporate the idea behind it into the health systems efforts. For example:
 - Consider branding the volunteer program as the Good Turn Club or some similar name that connects to the brand. Volunteers already receive jackets, pins and a newsletter -- all of which can be co-branded with the Partner for the Better in Muscatine logo.
 - Friends of Trinity Muscatine support a number of services through their donations, including a special day of surgery lounge, the patient information desk and flower delivery. Each of these offers opportunities to connect with the Muscatine brand and the idea of doing a good turn for others.



Muscatine Power and Water

As with city employees and groups from the other partner organizations, meet with employees of Muscatine Power and Water to build a sense of excitement about the potential of the brand for both the utility and the larger community. To help get them on board as brand ambassadors, plan an event that includes the brand presentation. Customize the presentation to the specific work of this important partner and follow all the planning steps we already outlined that ensure a fun and engaging presentation (see page 68). Other ways to get Power and Water involved with the brand:

- Apply the logo created by North Star into all communications including the website and social media. The logo synthesizes the existing Power & Water logo with the color palette of the new Muscatine logo. Include the Partner for the Better in Muscatine logo on these communications. Create a bug on the website whereby users can get to the Muscatine web portal in one click. Don't forget to incorporate the new logo and strapline for Muscatine into station identifiers and program announcements for MPW Public Access Channel 9.



Muscatine Power and Water

- Apply the updated P&W logo to everything from hard hats to patches on employee uniforms to stickers on orange cones used by work crews.
- Provide employees with a supply of “Partner for the Better” decals they can hand out to utility customers and other residents.
- Perhaps include these decals in a round of monthly billing statements, with an insert explaining what the partnership means in terms of Muscatine’s new brand identity.
- Solicit ideas from Power & Water employees on how the utility can take a turn for the better in specific ways. Offer awards for ideas that you wind up implementing.
- Develop posters similar to those for use on the campus of Muscatine Community College that can be used by the utility, such as “Where Power Turns into Progress.”



Muscatine Power and Water

- Explore innovative ways to incorporate the brand into the work of the utility. As one example, conservation programs urging residents to be mindful of water usage or not to leave on the lights unnecessarily could be accompanied with a program name such as “Turn Off for the Better.”
- Brand all Power & Water vehicles with the new identity.



Muscatine Power and Water

- Incorporate the brand into communications about improvements and enhancements. For example, progress in the new Mach-Link network could be billed as “Turning fiber-optic for you.” Upgrades that enhance transmission speed could be described as “Turning faster and faster.” Improvements to water quality could be described as “Turning cleaner for you.”
- Even as you adopt a variation on the Muscatine logo, consider also a variation on the “turn for the better” strapline that applies to Muscatine Power & Water, such as:
 - Where Muscatine Turns for Resources
 - Turning Muscatine More Resourceful
 - Always Turning Forward
- Offer branded items to Power & Water customers. Consider giving items free to new customers, such as:
 - Branded water bottles to new water customers
 - Branded surge protectors to new electricity customers
 - Branded mouse pads with the Power & Water logo to new internet subscribers
 - Branded coffee mugs
- Offer these items for sale on the Power & Water website or at your offices.
- Give out small branded items to visitors who come to MPW for tours and presentations.



Signage is a critical branding component for communities. Effective signage can positively impact both resident and visitor experiences. Sometimes, signage -- from entryway to wayfinding -- is the first impression a city makes on people. Accordingly, Muscatine should inventory all of its signage needs to develop a prioritized list and a long-term plan for implementation. The following pages contain a few ideas.

- Start by Incorporating the brand identity onto all of your city-owned buildings with exterior signage. *The example below shows prominent signage in front of the Government Center in Catawba County, NC -- a North Star client.*



- Signage updates don't have to be expensive. For example, you can update signage at government buildings by flying a simple branded flag. See example from North Star client Lake Bluff, IL below.



- In fact, consider representing Muscatine anywhere in the city flags are flown. Here's an example of how another North Star client on the Mississippi – Quincy, Illinois – did it at a riverfront park.



- Another way to represent Muscatine's new brand identity is a three-dimensional application of your new logo on blank walls in the lobbies of government buildings, as in the example below from Quincy, IL.



- Use pole banners to promote awareness of your brand, as regulations allow, in a variety of strategic locations: downtown, along main corridors, and in parking lots (at schools, parks, golf courses and retail developments).
- Dual pole banners allow you to jointly market a specific asset or event in ways that reinforce your “turn for the better” identity. For example, one banner can promote Muscatine while another next to it advertises the symphony, Discovery Center or festivals.



- Outdoor boards can do double-duty as signage and advertising that promotes your brand, as in the example below from Gallatin, TN. Situate your outdoor boards within the city or on thoroughfares leading into it (which may include on the other side of the bridge in Illinois). Base your outdoor board look on that of the brand look.



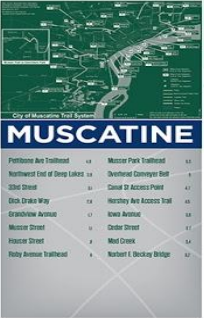
- Entryway signage is a critical identifier for travelers entering or leaving the city. As one of the first things they will see when they come into Muscatine, these signs not only tell visitors that they have arrived but give them a sense of your identity. In a real sense, they are the first impression you make.



- Incorporate the logo into directional signage in the city, no parking signs, locator maps for pedestrians, and in other applications. The examples below clearly convey the brand but are still easy to read and affordable to produce. Function is most important, then design.



- Wayfinding for parks and trails is also important. Trail kiosks can be designed similarly to kiosks downtown. The column for the signage (each side of the column is shown below) is a playful way to use the icon.



Your infrastructure provides a unique, three-dimensional medium for displaying your brand. Take advantage of the opportunities your existing infrastructure offers – and consider cost-effective opportunities to develop new infrastructure where potential for brand reinforcement is high. On the following pages you'll find ideas for incorporating your brand into local infrastructure to make it work harder for you. For example:

- All vehicles maintained by the City of Muscatine and partners including Muscabuses should prominently display the brand identity:



- Because they can be seen for miles, water towers are a great place to showcase your new logo and strapline.
- Also consider re-creating the ghost signage that is visible on some of Muscatine's historic brick buildings using the new logo. See the examples below from Newton, NC and Quincy, IL.



- As mentioned earlier, create selfie walls in Muscatine, especially at spots where people tend to congregate. On blank walls, paint the Muscatine logo (or the logo with the Muscatine name and perhaps the strap line). In time, residents and visitors will make a point of stopping to get their pictures taken. You can expand the number of selfie walls by inviting art students from the high school and community college to create murals on blank walls that illustrate the idea of making a turn for the better.



- Not only are selfie walls interesting uses of space that create public art, they encourage interaction with Muscatine consumers and visitors. For example, you can start a campaign on social media asking people to share their Muscatine selfies; choose the best ones to display on your website and to create a promotional campaign on outdoor boards.



- Elements of the logo design can be incorporated creatively into areas of your infrastructure such as crosswalks, sidewalks, and the paved trails along the river. *This example is from North Star client Menifee, CA.*



- Identify high-profile recreation installations where the Muscatine logo might work as backdrops. These could include your skate park, tennis court windbreaks, fences around your soccer and softball fields, the center of basketball courts and others. See examples on this page from North Star clients Coral Springs, FL and Lee's Summit, MO.



- Be creative in using other surfaces you own, such as roofs of picnic shelters, restrooms in city parks or even the wooden slats of park benches.
- In rural areas outside of town, you can enlist farmers, perhaps for a modest fee, to allow the roof of one side of a barn (or a silo) to be painted with your logo and strapline, similar to the famous “See Rock City” signs painted on barns across the Mid-South.
- The inter-crossing arcs of your logo make it easily adaptable to applications with a circular shape. With that in mind, you could incorporate it into branded manhole covers in targeted areas of the city.
- Light the bridge in your brand colors. Perhaps in partnership with Musco Lighting, devise new lighting for the Mississippi River bridge that aligns with the color palette of Muscatine’s new logo. The system could even be designed so that different spans of the bridge reflect the color patterns in the logo to mimic its look of intersecting arcs.
- Turn some of old photos of Muscatine in the library’s extensive collection into public art that helps instill pride in the city’s heritage. Create spots downtown, on the riverfront and elsewhere for displaying enlargements of some of the library’s photographs of people and places in old Muscatine. Pearl City Station and the Riverview Center would also make ideal locations to showcase these photographs as part of a rotating exhibit.



- Bike racks are one of the best ways to bring your brand to life. They serve as a kind of functional public art that can tie together the different areas of the city. See example to the right from North Star client Columbus, Indiana, using the flying "C" from their logo. The criss-crossing lines that define the Muscatine logo would be well suited for this purpose. Place the racks outside city-owned buildings, schools and at your parks.



Getting residents on board with the Muscatine brand is about more than just selling residents on a logo. It's about giving them a point of pride for the place they live. It's about talking to residents in the language of the brand, giving them a voice in community improvements and changes and giving them a way to share what they love about the place they live.

- Plan some activities just for residents that help them connect more with community leadership. As discussed earlier, you could hold monthly “Your Turn to Talk” walks with the Mayor, City Manager and other leaders. Every month meet on the trails, in a neighborhood, at a coffee shop, etc. The group will participate in a short one-mile walk during which participants can ask questions or just talk. Such programs are fun, interactive, interesting ways for residents to engage with their leaders.
- We've shown you the decals previously, but it should be a major goal to have every resident car in Muscatine proudly decked out with a Muscatine decal. Distribute them via libraries, government offices, schools, events, shops, restaurants . . . anywhere and everywhere that residents gather. Create a variety of decals so that residents can have some choice. Not only are they a great way for residents to display pride, they create interest for others who see them.



- In addition to the car decals, make branded merchandise accessible and desirable for residents. Display merchandise on your website so that they know what is available. Every month hold a drawing to give away Muscatine t-shirts, hats and water bottles. For more on merchandise examples, see page 106.
- Be innovative with your branded merchandise. For example, offer branded skateboards for users of your skateboard park (where lots of turns, for better or worse, happen daily). Or create branded steering wheel covers that remind residents of the brand every time they make a turn in their vehicles. See *example from North Star client Menifee, CA below*.



- Make sure that all communications to residents convey brand messaging. As part of this effort, launch a digital resident newsletter that is bright and inviting, with short, easy-to-read articles. *See example from Menifee, CA to the right. Notice the vibrant, casual difference from the business-focused, more corporate newsletter shown earlier from Menifee.* Partnering with a digital newsletter company like Constant Contact or My Emma makes it easy. Newsletters are designed using simple templates, and the company will help you manage your resident database. A few things to remember:
 - Use the language of your brand for headlines and copy points. Reference the brand narrative to set the tone.
 - Keep content consumer-oriented. Short, punchy articles about new businesses, infrastructure improvements, upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, customer service programs, etc. are all of interest to residents.
 - Keep the design bright and engaging. Whether digital or printed, the Muscatine newsletter should be as vibrant as the people who read it.
 - Look for ways to make the publication interactive. In every issue give residents a new program to sign up for, a new social media platform to use, a new restaurant or business to try. You don't just want to be talking at them, you want to be interacting with them.



Complement your newsletter with weekly tweets at #FortheBetterMuscatine that focus on events, activities, new restaurants, new stores, improvements or plans in the community.



- Muscatine has a reputation for being an awesome place to live and getting people to move to your city (or students to stay) is one of the overall goals of this initiative. As such, brainstorm ways to give new residents an extra open welcome to the neighborhood. Some ideas:
 - Create official welcome kits for new residents as well as new businesses. Inside the kits would include information about city services as well as a wide selection of money-off coupons. Also include branded window decals, a Muscatine brochure, and a brief letter from the mayor welcoming them.
 - Recruit a team of volunteers interested in delivering the packets in person. This in-person service really represents the welcoming “take a turn for the better” nature of the community.
 - Similarly, recruit a team of new resident mentors who are available to answer questions and introduce newcomers around the city.
 - Capture information about new residents and use this to provide them with personalized attention. For example, an avid gardener might receive an invitation to join a community garden along with a vase of fresh flowers or a packet of flower seeds with the card “Welcome to Muscatine. Plant Yourself Here.”
 - Hold monthly “We Turn Newcomers into Neighbors” socials for new residents to Muscatine. They are living, breathing testaments to the power of inclusivity, growth, and progress. Invite new residents (and business owners) to an informal reception where they can meet city officials and enjoy refreshments. You can use these gatherings as an opportunity to create brief videos in which people describe why they came to Muscatine.



- Organize an overarching “Friends of Muscatine For the Better” group. Invite all existing friend’s groups (library, parks, etc.) to be a part of the groundswell. Members receive benefits and perks for participating and in exchange work to promote Muscatine to friends and family and recruit more “Friends”. Benefits include:
 - A “Friends with Benefits” card offering all Muscatine’s pals discounted entry into major attractions and events. The more members use the card, the more discounts they will receive.
 - A branded lanyard for holding the benefits card, cash, and car keys, etc.
 - A “Friends of Muscatine” e-newsletter featuring special attractions and events around town.
 - Special perks such as reserved tables at restaurants and reserved seats at concerts and events.
 - Discounted entrance (and an early invitation) into select Muscatine parties, plays, events, exhibitions and more.
 - Merchandise like t-shirts, hats, bottle openers, etc.
 - The opportunity to promote Muscatine to family and friends!



- Clearly volunteerism is a key characteristic of a city where things take a turn for the better. Maximize your volunteer spirit by centralizing your volunteer efforts in a community-wide program called “For the Better”.
 - To encourage more people to get involved, develop a clearinghouse for volunteer efforts across the community. (For a model program, see HandsOn Nashville at www.hon.org.) Groups with volunteer opportunities can submit information to the clearinghouse that is posted on a special website. There, potential volunteers can find and sign up for opportunities that match their interests, talents and availability. You might want to focus first on opportunities that involve city institutions or city-owned properties — such as after-school tutoring programs at schools, clean-up crews at city parks, or volunteer efforts at the library or the animal shelter. But extend the program to include everything from food pantries and Meals-on-Wheels to tree planting, community gardens, waterway or other environmental cleanups.
 - Integrate the brand into existing philanthropic and service efforts. In addition to creating a clearinghouse for volunteers, brand existing volunteer service efforts under the idea of “Making a Turn for the Better.” Issue buttons, lanyards or other insignia that volunteers can wear to identify themselves with this campaign. Be sure to include communications to volunteer groups that explain how your brand identity plays out in the context of voluntary service. Use your communications with residents to include branded inserts urging them to become volunteers and direct those looking for information to the online clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities.



- Brand shuttle buses involved in the volunteer program. To promote the volunteer program, which connects directly to making a turn for the better, provide a couple of vans — bearing your logo and the clearinghouse's name — to shuttle volunteers to opportunities. Take volunteers to everything from beautification projects in parks and neighborhoods to meal delivery for seniors or pet therapy for homebound persons. Provide volunteers with branded t-shirts or caps they can wear to the event. Use your communications with residents to include branded inserts urging them to become volunteers and drive them to the online clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities. Kick off the program with an event involving community leaders. *See example of a branded good will bus from North Star client Greenville, IL below.*



- Incorporate fitness under the brand by way of the parks. Exercise and fitness both contribute to making a turn for the better. With that in mind, consider creating efforts to promote your parks as aligned with this core brand idea. Establish programs by which participants can earn fitness points or credits each time they use a park for hiking, running or other physical activities. Participants who accumulate enough points receive a free branded water bottle or t-shirt.



- Consider incorporating such a program into the health and wellness programs or employers in the city. Either through such a program or through direct sales via your website, enable participants (and other residents) to purchase or earn Parks & Rec-branded items with a message such as “Where Life Takes a Turn for the Better.”



- As mentioned previously, incorporate your brand into the Blue Zone initiative. There are natural tie-ins between the brand and Muscatine's Blue Zone initiative — and both could benefit from being more closely linked in residents' minds. A few ideas on bringing the brand into the program:
 - Use branded language to communicate the initiative, such as “Taking a turn for better health” or “How health takes a turn for the better.”
 - Offer items for residents with branded language to encourage them to participate in aspects of the initiative and to display their involvement. For example, you could create wristbands or bumper stickers for members of the Walking Club with the message “I’m turning Muscatine blue.”
 - Prizes that Walking Club members can earn by participating in the “Walk around the World” could be branded as “Healthy Turn” or “Turn for the Blue” awards.
 - Beyond the Walking Club, partner with Parks & Rec so that all parks & rec users — from trail walkers to participants in rec league games — can earn points under this initiative for helping their health take a turn for the better.
 - Partner with employers to incorporate the Blue Zone initiative (with your brand) into employee wellness programs, with incentives for them to exercise and eat healthy.



- Organize restaurants to offer a Turn for the Tastier Food Passport Tour. A foodie passport is a great way to get locals and folks from the greater region coming back to your restaurants time and time again. Extend your passports to include meals from food trucks of pop-up restaurants. Passports are free and can be distributed at participating restaurants, the Chamber, business districts and City Hall (and don't forget community college students). Users get a stamp every time they dine at a particular restaurant. Get a stamp for every participating restaurant and get a free meal at the place of your choice; get 5 stamps at a single restaurant and receive free drinks, desserts, two-for-one entrees or more. See *example here from North Star client New Rochelle, NY.*



- Have a “Turn for the Better” Event. In keeping with your brand, Muscatine is oriented around the idea of taking a turn for the better. As a way to celebrate and help residents internalize that identity, sponsor a contest in which people can submit ideas for helping some aspect of life in Muscatine take a turn for the better. These ideas might involve a variety of categories, from infrastructure to parks to schools to the arts. Publicize the contest throughout the community and offer adequate time for entries. Form a cross-sector committee to evaluate entries based on feasibility and the value they would add. Each year, implement the winning idea. Announce the winner at a special event you could call “Turn for the Better Day” or “Better Day” (or maybe Betterans Day!). Turn the event into a community-wide celebration with food, drink and live music on the riverfront. You could add an extra level of meaning to the event by honoring individuals who have bettered the community, themselves or the lives of others. Recipients of these “For the Better” Awards could be the year’s outstanding community volunteer, the top teacher in each school, the business recognized for most improved service or life-bettering new product, or even students who have seen the greatest improvement in their grades from the previous year.
- In keeping with this idea, anyone in Muscatine can be “For the Better”. Organize a program through which residents can receive a branded “For the Better” wristband, decal or bumper sticker for something that involves taking a turn for the better — an exercise program, continuing education, volunteerism. To qualify, residents could fill out a form on your city website documenting their “turn for the better.” Create a special section on the site where you can display names and photos that residents submit. In this way, you can help more residents internalize the Muscatine brand and become ambassadors for it.



- Regularly sponsor old-fashioned, covered-dish suppers for the community. Set up areas in Riverfront Park or indoors during colder months. Make bringing a dish of some kind the price of admission or prepare two so those less fortunate can join in the meal. Allow local restaurants to participate, if they choose, with samples of their fare. Use the events as a way to reinforce a strong sense of community and neighborliness. As a variation on this theme, have covered-dish suppers on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis, with the mayor in attendance.
- Start a “Better Turn” campaign. Solicit residents and businesses to do something good for someone and then ask them to pay it forward. Use social media to highlight the kindnesses that come out of this effort.



- Work to become known as the state's most supportive "Self-Improvement City." The connection between self-improvement and taking a turn for the better could hardly be stronger. To help cement that connection, place programming and policy designed to help residents improve themselves under a single link on the city's website. (Many of these programs, such as the Walking Club, are already in place and would need minimal massaging to reflect the brand.) The need for other programs may seem obvious once you have developed a comprehensive list of what you already have. A few ideas (some of these have been presented previously but would work well as part of the larger push) to be the Self-Improvement City:
 - In line with the Blue Zone Initiative, include health fairs for seniors, smoking cessation programs, group yoga and meditation classes, etc. under the "turn for the better" self-improvement umbrella. Work with kids too. Childhood obesity is a huge problem in this country. UnityPoint Trinity Hospital is a natural partner.
 - Include links to self-improvement podcasts on your website. Podcasts can be from well-known speakers as well as from local and regional experts. Subject matter should be diverse, from financial health to physical to spiritual health. Residents get points for listening to podcasts that can be redeemed for treats around town like free appetizers. Include middle and high school students in these programs.
 - Hold a series of local TED talks for residents focusing on all aspects of financial planning. In addition to local speakers, invite well-known experts on the topic.
 - Develop a robust mentoring program at all levels for all residents. Teaching others and learning from others is one of the surest paths to taking a turn for the better.
 - Engage institutions such as the hospital, library, parks, financial institutions and schools on board to gather additional ideas for what a "Self Improvement City" might look like.



The Mississippi River is part and parcel of Muscatine's brand. It is the reason for your city's location and has always been a major source of its prosperity. It is central to the logo and strapline that North Star has developed to reflect your identity. Nevertheless, the great river remains an underutilized resource for presenting Muscatine as an appealing place to live and to visit. "Making a turn for the better" in this regard will help positively affect perceptions of your city among potential residents and tourists who could contribute significantly to Muscatine's economy and sustainability. Here are a few ideas for showcasing the river in your brand and your appeal.

- Use the riverfront for festivals. In the section on tourism (see section 9, beginning on page 144), North Star offered a number of ideas for large festivals that could draw regional or even national audiences. Some of these festivals, such as the Highway 61 music festival (branded with a name like RiverTurns) or a Life on the Mississippi festival or Pearl Button Festival, are ideal for the riverfront. But almost any festival during the warmer months of the year could be set on the river. It is Muscatine's most iconic setting, and you should use it to full advantage.
- Turn your sunsets into gold. Many towns along the Mississippi have a connection to Mark Twain. But Muscatine has something none of the others has: a declaration from Twain himself that the sunsets in your town are the most beautiful of any point he had seen on the river. While Muscatine calls attention to this connection, you could do much more to turn the beautiful summer sunsets into events. In partnership with a local winery, offer wine tastings in the late afternoon at the Mark Twain overlook so people can watch the sunset. Or organize similar events with offerings from the Contrary Brewery and food from a local restaurant. Or offer sunset cruises on the river (the vantage point from which Twain actually observed the sunset in Muscatine that impressed him so). Promote these events to Muscatine residents as well as visitors.



- Hold regular events on the river for the community. In addition to annual events, the riverfront is an ideal setting for regular evening events that could bring more people downtown.
 - During the warmer months of the year, consider hosting monthly outdoor concerts as part of a series involving local, regional and even national acts. These events, when well advertised, have potential to draw audiences from across the region. As an example of a successful series, see what the Academy Center of the Arts has done with downtown riverfront concerts in Lynchburg, VA.
[\[https://academycenter.org/riverfrontparkconcertseries/\]](https://academycenter.org/riverfrontparkconcertseries/)
 - Create distinctive opportunities for residents and visitors by offering dinner/party cruises on barges on the river, or in a partnership for special outings with the Pearl Button paddlewheel steamboat. Each cruise could involve fine food and live music. Offer regularly scheduled cruises each week during the summer while making the party barges available to book for special events. The cruises could also be available for special occasions, such as a place for watching fireworks on the Fourth of July.
 - Hold “Turn for the Better” Evenings in Riverside Park. On these regular nights in the summer, invite people to bring picnic blankets and food and eat together. Have food trucks onsite for those who want to buy a meal instead of bringing food from home. Set up a large screen and follow the picnic with movies in the park that are suitable for all audiences (or separate picnics and movies on alternating event nights). Encourage people who commute to Muscatine to stay over for the event by offering discounted hotel rates.



- Leverage your connection to China with events that can involve the river. Muscatine's strong connections with China create opportunities for events that could draw visitors (even from China) and can be both fun and educational for local residents. In addition, connections with Chinese-owned companies in Muscatine create natural sponsorship opportunities. You can connect such events to your brand as "Global Turns for the Better." Some greater detail on some of the possibilities mentioned earlier:
 - Hold dragon boat races on the river. One way to leverage both the river and your connections with China as assets could be to stage dragon boat races on the river. The races are fun, culturally enriching opportunities for residents to experience an event few of them have probably seen before, and they have the potential to draw visitors for the day from a wider area.
 - Pursue a Sister City Festival. Take advantage of Muscatine's connection to the Chinese city with a museum dedicated to Muscatine, — host a cross-cultural festival with a Chinese flavor. Invite a delegation from China to participate. Offer Chinese food. Hold a dragon boat race. Use the festival as an opportunity to emphasize Muscatine's bridges to the world.
 - Have a Lantern Festival. Lantern festivals on the 15th day of the first lunar month — which is also the first full moon of the lunar year — mark the end of the Chinese New Year Spring Festival period. (In 2018, this occurred on March 2.) Lighting paper lanterns and setting them aloft is a major activity of any Chinese lantern festival. The lanterns symbolically carry each person's wishes for a better year and for their families. While early March may be too cold to stage the entire festival outdoors, the river is the perfect setting for the releasing of lanterns — the Chinese term for which means "illuminating the future." In Muscatine, you could connect it to the brand with a title such as "Lanterns for the Better."



All too often, a community leaves its reputation to the stories that organically appear in the 24-hour news cycle, which are typically negative and often crime oriented. A consistent, professional public relations efforts works to fill media channels with positive planned stories about your community . . . stories that are couched in your brand strategy. The goal is to be proactive with positive news rather than being reactive to negative news. The Brand Manager should develop a comprehensive media strategy for the brand to help spread the word about Muscatine far and wide.

Part of this PR effort will be a brand introduction event for the businesses and residents who call Muscatine home. Even those who live here need to know about all of your achievements and successes. As you pursue PR for the city and brand, remember that everyone will need to connect with the brand online, on their streets and on their smartphone.

A key benefit of all branding efforts will be building awareness in the region and beyond as to exactly what Muscatine offers. Repetitive efforts will be required. People have to hear something nine times before it registers. Don't miss a single opportunity to let the world know about your advantages and opportunities.

Management of such a project can be a big undertaking. It may not be realistic for the Brand Manager to both manage brand implementation and conduct an aggressive, comprehensive public relations campaign If you don't already, consider contracting with a public relations writer to manage this initiative on a part-time basis. Day-to-day management of the public relations effort, however, needs to reside in one location.



- Reinforcing your reputation as part of a coordinated PR campaign can be as important to Muscatine residents as it is to external audiences. First, such a campaign will help understand how the idea of taking a turn for the better applies to their daily lives, leading to think of themselves and the community in terms of the brand. Second, your PR efforts can help empower “resident ambassadors” who carry the message forward to external audiences. Take steps to coalesce new thinking and action citywide around your brand reputation. For example, you might create an inventory of all the ways that businesses and organizations are working to make a turn for the better in Muscatine. While the Brand Manager should launch this effort, it will require the thinking of all organizations, businesses and even individuals across the city.
 - Reach out through all your channels of communications to ask people to submit lists for this inventory.
 - Use the task as an icebreaker at meetings and presentations.
 - Make the inventory an agenda item at all organizational and department meetings. (Be alert to potential ideas for promoting and strengthening the brand that could grow out of this exercise, even if that is not the primary purpose of the activity.)



- The far-ranging inventory can include both individuals and organizations. Include examples of community-wide improvements. Include businesses that improve their products or service. Include individuals known for working for the betterment of the community or doing a good turn for others. Include historical figures whose stories can be viewed afresh through the lens of taking a turn for the better. List volunteer opportunities for efforts that help others take a turn for the better. List personal experiences. And so on. Any entity that contributes to a turn for the better in Muscatine, even if only in their own neighborhood, helps reinforce your brand identity.

Once you have compiled an initial inventory (which should never be regarded as complete), begin leveraging it in your PR efforts. For example:

- Create a series of press releases detailing some of the more newsworthy “turn for the better” efforts (such as a volunteer program that is making an impact).
- Prepare profiles to run in publications like the *Muscatine Journal* (either with editorial assistance from the paper or as paid “advertorial” content). These stories should also be housed on your website.



- Some other PR basics to consider:
 - Start with the basics. Develop a list of knowledgeable sources for interviews and quotes. Create a comprehensive media mailing list (organized by specialization) and develop personal relationships with key contacts. In addition to your regional audience, you should extend your efforts to applicable publications and markets throughout the area. A major part of motivating outsiders to take a closer look at Muscatine will be an ongoing effort to communicate your values, assets and possibilities to strategic external audiences.
 - Formulate a plan for communicating about the brand and related activities. The Brand Manager serves as the single source of contact for brand media relations for the community. This centralized approach will help you control the brand message and guarantee that the story you want to see in the media is actually the story that runs in the media. The Brand Manager should also serve as the contact for setting up interviews or arranging comments from area officials or business people asked to provide feedback regarding the brand to the media. Remember to include information from your brand research to provide background on brand development.
 - Develop talking points and graphics to use for every brand-related encounter with the press. Remember to emphasize the strategy and research behind Muscatine. Include points regarding assets that illustrate the idea that things, organizations and activities (not just the river) take a turn for the better in Muscatine: quality of life, the Blue Zone initiative, businesses that reach the world, the recreation assets, great schools, volunteer programs, etc.



- Some other PR basics to consider:
 - Develop a comprehensive editorial calendar. Comb through your most compelling stories and match them with prospective media outlets and thought leaders. Divide the stories into calendar months, remembering publication lead times. When you have matched your best stories with the best potential media coverage and developed a timeline for distribution, your general editorial calendar will be complete. Make sure to include historic stories that showcase your pearl button heritage.
 - Next, develop some targeted ideas for ongoing features with local, regional or state outlets. Approach local media to discuss a weekly “Turn for the Better” spotlight that focuses on someone helping the community, others or themselves take a big turn for the better. Contact radio stations about hosting a series of interviews or roundtables. Not all pitches have to be serious or business-related – pitch the idea of a weekly feature on what creative thinkers and makers are reading right now, what they’re listening to, or what their favorite restaurants or regional attractions might be.
 - Adapt the closing paragraph strategy for press releases using the narrative as your guide. This is an easy way to consistently push out the brand message with every media interaction.



- Along with the editorial calendar, create an accompanying contact list for press releases/media interviews. These potential contacts might include communications or public relations departments, Presidents/CEOs, research and development personnel, entrepreneurs, college students, artists, historians, environmentalists, healthcare personnel, nutritionists, fitness experts, spiritual leaders, developers, architects and so on. Those who are listed on the contact list should be prepared to provide quotes or conduct interviews on their particular area of achievement or the ideals they achieved in Muscatine. Try to gather contacts and stories from the following types of organizations, companies, professionals and institutions.
 - Industry leaders
 - Educational institutions
 - Hospitals and healthcare facilities
 - Spiritual organizations
 - Fitness facilities
 - Non-profit organizations
 - Public schools
 - Entrepreneurs, incubators and small businesses
 - Artists, historians, musicians, authors, craftsmen
 - Museums, theaters and cultural organizations
 - Multicultural voices
 - Architects and engineers
 - Restaurant owners
 - Environmental experts



- Once you have your editorial calendar in place and the recommended contacts, use the following vehicles for distributing information about the stories:
 - New releases, electronic and paper
 - Fact sheets
 - Media advisories
 - News conferences
 - Tours
 - Roundtables
 - Editorial board briefings
 - Electronic newsletters and e-blasts
 - Media outlets
 - Major corporations – including their internal employee newsletters
 - Websites
 - Social media
 - Special events



- Promote stories in regional media that showcase aspects of your brand. For example:
 - Pitch *Corridor Business Journal* or *Business Record Iowa* on stories about interesting new businesses opening in Muscatine.
 - Pitch *Little Village* magazine or the *Daily Iowan* on stories about weekend getaways to Muscatine (including new events that you develop to encourage tourism in the city).
- Create an electronic media kit. In addition to the editorial calendar, put together a comprehensive photo/video library that media can use to support their stories. Establish an official Muscatine Instagram feed and a YouTube channel. Realize the value of video press releases in terms of impact. Put your list of story ideas and photos samples on disk: one disk for general stories and separate disk for special pitches/seasonal ideas/general interest stories. Include background information on the brand initiative. This media kit should also be available online on your website.
- Create a branded “StoryCorps” project. Set up a recording booth similar to the “StoryCorps” project on public radio. Muscatine residents could come in and tell brief stories (targeted at 5 minutes or less) about some aspect of “taking a turn for the better.” This could be a story about someone in the city who exemplified the spirit of the brand by working to make things better for others; about businesses that produce a better product; about people who overcame obstacles to make life better for themselves; or about what they learned about taking a turn for the better from living in Muscatine. Archive the stories on your website. Involve high school students in seeking out and soliciting stories.



- Leverage your community access station. Your community access station (MPW Channel 9) provides a built-in outlet for airing the kinds of community-supplied stories described on the previous page. Look for other opportunities to create content for the station, such as stories of the people in Muscatine who have helped others, themselves or the community take a turn for the better.
- Use your PR program to showcase all community accolades. Send out press releases and social media announcements on each new recognition. Include accolade icons on all website home pages so people can link to more information if interested. When new accolades come in, consider higher profile recognition such as outdoor boards or ads. The idea is to make it widely known that Muscatine is the kind of community where things are regularly taking a turn for the better.
- Employ a grant writer to assist in the search for funds. If brand drivers or partners do not already have the appropriate expertise on board to pursue grant funding for the brand, explore the idea of adding a grant writer (full or part-time) to the staff to assist with sourcing on-going funds for the branding effort. North Star client Grand Rapids, MN, received \$75,000 in grant monies for brand programs and former client New Orleans Downtown Development District received \$375,000 as part of a \$1 million grant to emphasize downtown business opportunities and to attract entrepreneurs. While your initial funding will get the brand up and running, additional financial resources will be required in the years ahead.





Evaluation

How Is The Brand Performing?

Evaluation yields new information which may lead to the beginning of a new planning cycle. Information may be gathered from concept pre-testing, campaign impact in the marketplace and tracking studies to measure a brand's performance over time. These methods of evaluation should be used once a visual brand identity has been established based on the strategic brand platform.

Ideally, two basic questions will be answered when there is visible implementation of your brand in the community: Have responses to the brand among target audiences changed in the way the BrandPrint intended? And have these changes resulted in consumer action that will achieve the desired objectives of the brand? Turnkey or do-it-yourself programs are recommended depending on the needs of the community.

To begin the process of brand evaluation, North Star has set up a schedule to discuss Muscatine's brand progress. This schedule begins immediately after the delivery of your BrandPrint.

- Immediately – North Star recommends Muscatine continue efforts on growing its inquiry and visitor database.
- One year– North Star's Research Director will conduct an assessment call to outline a plan for determining brand performance moving forward. Muscatine will be contacted to determine specific measurement goals including re-measuring awareness and perception of the community amongst intended audiences.

Building your databases and keeping them current ensures future success measurements can be calculated. These leads will be the best data start point for future brand evaluation.



As stated previously, North Star will consult with the community at the proposed times to evaluate your specific needs. Keep in mind that many of the research pieces in your BrandPrint were created to act as benchmarks by which future improvements can be measured. Based on what we now know of the community, likely recommendations for success measurements at Muscatine's one-year mark may include:

- Online Community-Wide Survey
- Community Brand Barometer
- Consumer Awareness and Perception Study



Purpose

The purpose of the Online Community-wide Survey is to gain a quantitative measure of the community's perceptions of Muscatine.

Methodology & Results

This qualitative survey is fielded online and is open to all residents of the community. The study measures the following:

- Overall top-of-mind perceptions of Muscatine
- Strengths and weaknesses of Muscatine
- Resident suggestions on what is missing from Muscatine
- Measurements of Muscatine quality of life indicators

Positive resident perceptions are a strong indicator of brand success. Successful brand implementation will energize the resident base, making them more likely think of the community in a positive light.

Timing

The Online Community-Wide Survey should be conducted annually. The first survey should be conducted no sooner than one year from brand introduction (when there is visible implementation of your brand in the community).



Purpose

The Community Brand Barometer measures strength of the Muscatine brand according to:

- Resident satisfaction/advocacy with the brand as a place to live, work, and visit
- Brand satisfaction/advocacy relative to the nation.

Methodology & Results

The methodology for the Brand Barometer has been carefully developed and determined to be statistically significant. Participants answer three questions:

- Would you recommend living in Muscatine to a friend or colleague?
- Would you recommend visiting Muscatine to a friend or colleague?
- Would you recommend conducting business in Muscatine to a friend or colleague?

Resident advocacy is one of the strongest measures of brand success. Successful brand implementation will energize the resident base, making them more likely to recommend their community to others.

Timing

The Community Brand Barometer should be conducted annually. The first Brand Barometer should be conducted no sooner than one year from brand introduction (when there is visible implementation of your brand in the community).



Purpose

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into external consumer awareness, visitation, and perceptions of Muscatine.

Methodology & Results

This quantitative survey is fielded online outside of Muscatine's borders in order to obtain an outsider's perspective. The survey measures:

- Overall top-of-mind perceptions of Muscatine and immediate competitors
- Consumer visitation trends (frequency and nature of visitation)
- Consumer visitation drivers (business, leisure, friends and family)
- Strengths and weaknesses of Muscatine identified within community attributes
- Consumer suggestions on what is missing from Muscatine
- Measurements of Muscatine's delivery of hospitality
- Measurements of Muscatine's quality of life indicators

Timing

The CAP Study should be conducted annually. The first survey should be conducted no sooner than one year from brand introduction (when there is visible implementation of your brand in the community).



A scenic sunset view with a park bench in the foreground and a bridge in the background. The bench is made of dark metal with vertical slats. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and lens flare. The sky is filled with soft, orange and yellow clouds. A bridge with a truss design is visible in the distance across a body of water.

BRANDING MUSCATINE FOR THE FUTURE

Nov. 9, 2023

Direction Sought

1. Does the City Council have any questions regarding the information presented?
2. Is there a marketing strategy that the City Council prefers?
3. What are the City Council thoughts on the use of the City logo and tagline in branding?
4. Is there a need to do RFP for marketing and/or rebranding? Or keep it inhouse?

Iowa Institute For Sustainable Communities



University of Iowa Marketing Institute students issued a report on May 8, 2014, concerning a project to create a new brand identity and marketing plan for Muscatine.

Project scope was to conduct market research in order to reverse the trend of import commuting. Recommendations were based on market research done through the use of surveys and focus groups.

A brand is a culture and a promise - not logo or a slogan. The logo and slogan are visual representations of the brand promise.



Iowa Institute For Sustainable Communities

The sunrise logo with the “Opportunity Around Every Bend” slogan represents a strong, sustainable brand promise of extensive opportunities through jobs, community involvement, environment, recreation and many other avenues.

It demonstrates a forward-looking vision and the idea of “turning over a new leaf” to make positive changes to the Muscatine community.

The colors yellow, blue and green used in these logo proposals were chosen specifically for common psychology associated with them. Yellow indicates confidence and optimism while blue shows peace, integrity, trust and dependability. Additionally, green signifies harmony, balance, refreshment, health and growth.

These colors further represent the brand promise Muscatine should portray to its community.



Review of North Star Study

- North Star study was completed in 2017-2018.
- Research showed a community with a negative perception.
- Proximity to the Quad Cities and Iowa City a double-edged sword.
- Muscatine leadership working to improve quality of life.
- Need to access, engage larger markets to build regional awareness.
- Proposed logo and tagline were not accepted.



Taking Pride in Muscatine

- Strong industrial presence
- Downtown riverfront
- Athletic complexes
- Parks and public facilities
- Muscatine Community School District
- Muscatine Community College
- Muscatine Art Center
- Muscatine YMCA
- UnityPoint Trinity Muscatine
- Muscatine History & Industry Center
- Proximity to Quad Cities and Iowa City



Opportunities at every bend

- Attract the development of affordable housing.
- Attract middle-class wage employment opportunities.
- Create a community where young professionals feel connected and welcomed.
- Attract unique retail establishments and a variety of dining options to Muscatine.
- Promote and develop the waterfront.
- Continue revitalization efforts in Downtown Muscatine.
- Promote the diversity of local economy.



Focus Group Quote From North Star Study

I could see the community getting behind a brand strategy that was about entrepreneurial spirit and that kind of creativity. This is a great place to build things, if you have an idea it's a great place to develop that idea. By extension, it's also a great place to build a family.



Core Focus Group Perceptions

Regional Employment Center

- Place of employment
- Large number of commuters

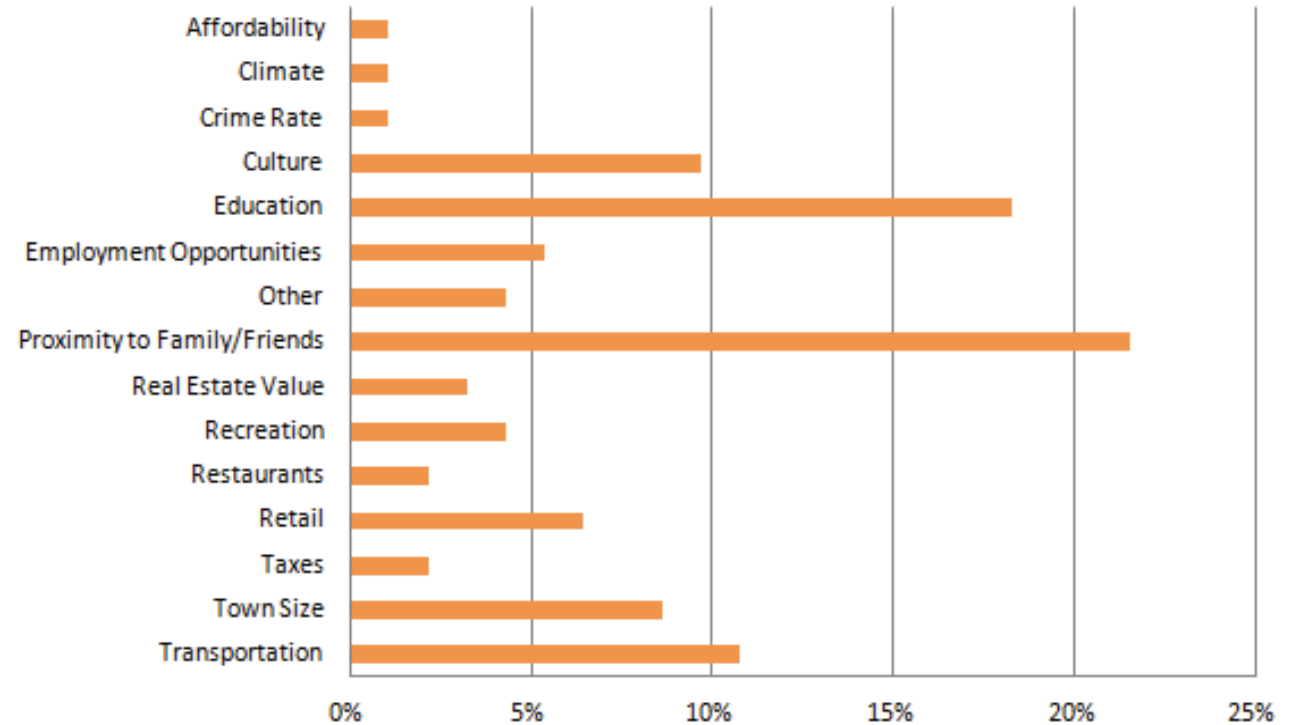
Lack of shopping

- Missing retail throughout city
- Proximity of Quad Cities / Iowa City

Misperception of nothing to do

- Sleepy river town
- Nothing for young professionals

Why Not Live in Muscatine?



Core Focus Group Perceptions



Mississippi River Essential

- River is why Muscatine is here
- Muscatine without riverfront?
- Most underutilized asset

Get-a-way Destination

- More quality hotels needed
- Historic preservation enhances visitation
- Athletic and cultural venues a plus

Develop Downtown

- More vibrant with color and light
- Increase retail and restaurants

Core Focus Group Perceptions

Healthy Lifestyle

- Abundant resources for outdoor fitness

Transportation Needs

- Promotion of MuscaBus services
- Potential addition of e-scooters
- Late night taxi service

Cultural Awareness

- Increase awareness in the diversity of the Muscatine community.



Branding For The Future



Why We Brand

- Reasons to visit
- Reasons to relocate
- Emphasizing Positive Perceptions
- Scenic Beauty
- Mississippi River and riverfront
- Small-town Atmosphere
- Central Location in region
- Recreational Opportunities
- Walkability and Gathering Places
- Downtown Muscatine
- Signature and Special Events
- Opportunities for young professionals
- Opportunities for young families

Branding For The Future

Investing In Muscatine

Muscatine is where small town ingenuity turns into unbounded enterprise.

Just as the bend in the river is unique, so is the great work that happens in the community of Muscatine because of a prevalent can-do spirit that fosters inspiration and that global connection which inspires creative thinking.



Branding For The Future

Messaging

Vibrant Community

- *Friendly community on the Mississippi River.*
- *Great place to live, raise a family, shop, eat and play.*

Healthy Community

- *Recreational opportunities for all abilities.*
- *Muscatine is a great river community focusing on walkability.*

Historic Community

- *Small river town rich in history and interesting people.*
- *Exceptional history of successful major businesses.*
- *Some of the finest museums and cultural centers in the area.*



Recommendations

1. Publish a Request for Proposal (RFP) to develop a marketing plan for the City of Muscatine that would use traditional media, social media, and other emerging media to promote Muscatine;
2. Develop a branding policy that will guide all departments in the use of the City logo, tagline, etc., on all official documents and communications;
3. Enhance branding by
 - a. Updating (modernizing) the current city logo but not changing the logo entirely;
 - i. Involve local graphic artists and community partners to suggest updates to the present logo.
 - b. Develop three to five taglines and submit them to the public for comment and voting.
 - i. “Muscatine” is the current tagline and needs to be enhanced or replaced, a process that many communities are doing to assist in economic development.

Direction Sought

1. Does the City Council have any questions regarding the information presented?
2. Is there a marketing strategy that the City Council prefers?
3. What are the City Council thoughts on the use of the City logo and tagline in branding?
4. Is there a need to do RFP for marketing and/or rebranding? Or keep it inhouse?