Branding

RAPID RECOVERY PROGRAM TOOLKIT

dhcd
Massachusetts
RAPID RECOVERY PLANS

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Why This Toolkit?

The Importance of Municipal Branding

> Branding is a visioning exercise that captures the spirit and values of a community and reimagines a visual identity for the future in an authentic way.

The importance of brand has become increasingly relevant to the growth of cities and towns. In the era of views and clicks, brand perception is determined in seconds. As we grow past the pandemic, these places need to adapt a marketing mindset to attract new families and instill confidence in their residents. Fresh visual branding for municipalities shows an investment in the future of a place people call home.

Branding is a visioning exercise that captures the spirit of a community and reimagines a visual identity for the future in an authentic way. It's important to root the process in positioning statements that the city/ town residents would agree with and develop visual qualities off those principles.

Authentic brands establish trust with residents who can see the relationship between the visual identity, tone of voice/copywriting and positioning statements. Residents and visitors alike will build positive experiences with a place if their first impression is built on a foundation of trust. This toolkit will lay out the fundamentals of brand in the context of municipalities to help design and maintain them.

This is a "How-to-Guide" intended to support implementation of Rapid Recovery Programs but is applicable to any Place Branding project. It will offer practical advice and guidance for communities as they navigate Massachusetts-specific issues associated with project implementation.

Getting Started

Getting Started

How to use this toolkit

This toolkit can help your team develop an understanding of what branding is, the different tools and brand elements you can use, and how to gain buy-in. It's also intended to guide you through the basics of creating a new brand, as well as a brand guidelines document to help reinforce the new visual identity.

Pre-Branding Checklist

The following items will likely be referenced or used and should be gathered prior to starting a rebrand or brand refresh. Gather any current or past versions to help inform the process.

- Logo files in any format
- Town seals
- Mission statement
- Brand Guidelines
- Master Plans
- Pictures of signage or banners where the town/city name is used
- Examples of common communication (brochures, mailers, email, letterhead, etc.)
- Important historic elements (photos/stories) of the town

Developing a Project Team

First, establish **who will lead the project** on the municipal side. For large cities and towns, the communication/public relation departments typically work best. Integration with other departments is encouraged at the correct time, i.e. for feedback sessions or specific questions. For smaller cities and towns, a single point of contact will work. Typically, a person who handles most of the communication will be a great resource as well as a point of contact for the project.

Think about who your **champions** are. These are the people who will advocate for you at the highest level and may have power to allocate funding. It's important to involve them in the process along the way so they understand the process.

At minimum, a hired design agency will need a main point of contact (POC) and an understanding of what group or individual(s) make the **final decision**.

Larger cities and towns may have Communications or Marketing Departments that can lead the process. For smaller cities and towns, a single point of contact will work. Typically, the person who handles most of the external communication will be the main point of contact for the project.

What is Branding?

Your brand is your identity. It is how people understand who you are, what you stand for, and largely, whether they want to be part of it. Defining your Brand Identity is an important step in creating a positive perception and increasing economic activity. There are several different aspects which you may choose to explore:

- o Marketing Strategy
- o Brand Criteria
- o Visual Identity (colors, symbols, etc.)
- o Verbal Identity (taglines, etc.)
- o Logo Design
- o City/Town Seal Updates

Brand Definitions

Brand	Any identity assigned to a product, service, place, or experience.
Brand Equity	The value of the public's brand awareness, positive perception, and loyalty.
Brand Positioning	The brand benefits combined with its competitive advantage.
Core Image	Images that communicate positive brand attributes.
Core Messages	Key messages communicated to the public.
Core Personality	Human characteristics associated with the brand.
Target Audience	The desired users, visitors, stakeholders, and community.
Demographics	The tangible descriptions of your target audiences and their preferences.

The Design Process

Very simply, any element of brand being created or refined will go through the design process. This is easily explained in a three step, looping process.

The initial **master plan phase** looks at data or content and serves as the intake. Here, we look at research, existing assets and content. Interviews are conducted with stakeholders to determine major goals and objectives. What visual elements of a brand already exist that can be built on or evolved? Organize assets and qualities into a hierarchy that can help make arguments for specific visual elements.

Launch

Refinement

PHASE 3: PRODUCTION

Testing
Brand Elements

Media
Planning

PHASE 2: DESIGN

Brand Development
Creative Development
Final Positioning

Testing
Brand Elements
-Positioning
-Message
-Image

Research
Competitor Review
Peer Review
Interviews w/ project team/
stakeholders/focus groups

PHASE 1: MASTER PLAN

Strategic Positioning
Positioning Statement
Core Personality
Core Messages

Creative Strategy
Branding Hierarchy
Communications Master Plan
-Print
-Web
-Environments
-Merchandising
-Public Relations
-Events
-Media

From the discovery phase, the design process moves to **design**. Taking findings that the team has made the case for in discovery and assigning them different visual qualities. For example, a city or town with a long historic past would likely visually resonate with a more muted color palette. Color tones used in city/town brand concepts can be linked to common house colors in the city/town. In the creation phase, the team assigns visual elements to findings from discovery.

Production follows the design phase. Test how the residents of the city/town think of these results. The demographic that will be using this new brand to represent themselves will be able to identify authentic elements and give the most useful feedback. That feedback will eventually gather in a discovery phase, and the process will cycle again.

Popular Testing Methods for Municipalities

In the context of cities and towns, branding projects most commonly elicit feedback in one of two ways:

Mayoral Feedback Process

- o In this testing method, **the city/town's Mayor is considered the key stakeholder and "voice" of the people.** This type of testing isn't exclusive to the mayor and likely includes municipal staff as stakeholders but is considered closed door to the public. This feedback method is faster and more economical in some cases, but less popular.

Democratic Feedback Process

- o A small municipal group will still be considered stakeholders, but they will shepherd the project through the Discovery and Creation phases. **Feedback is elicited through surveys and public meetings on the concepts, and that crowd sourced feedback is considered as the key stakeholder**. This feedback method is slower and can be more expensive but yields better public sentiment regarding the new brand.

Community Input Methods

Inviting input is a powerful way to build excitement and ownership among your community.

Stakeholder Interviews

o These interviews are conducted in either groups or one-on-one and consist of open-ended questions that gather qualitative data and quotes that can be referenced during the project. An example of how this input could be used in the process could be referencing a quote discussing how some qualities of a tagline resonate with a stakeholder.

Group stakeholder interviews are an efficient way to gather feedback from multiple people.

Online Surveys

o Online surveys are usually web links that can be sent to large groups of stakeholders. These are 5-to-15-minute surveys consisting of largely closed-ended questions, or multiple choice. These surveys collect quantitative data that can be used to leverage decisions, like "75% of respondents prefer logo option A."

Online survey platforms like Google Forms are fantastic, free tools to gather feedback from large groups of stakeholders like residents.

Public Meetings

o Public meetings can be either in person or held digitally, but these meetings are a more traditional format for municipalities. Smaller towns and cities are used to these types of proceedings, and they make the perfect venue to deliver a presentation regarding process or to share a new brand once completed.

Public meetings can be a more natural environment for smaller towns and cities to talk about a rebranding as a community.

Budgets and Schedule

There is no one size fits all but, in this toolkit, we will do our best to provide budget ranges and example schedules of different brand related projects to help your team understand both.

Cities/Towns wishing to incorporate a more democratic feedback approach with community input will need to plan for a longer timeframe and larger budget to accommodate this additional work. That said, the brand will have a longer life and greater impact if it is "owned" by the community.

Budget Recommendations

For budgets related to branding, we advise to expect a municipal branding effort to range in cost from **$20K – 50K or more, depending on scope**. The budget will fluctuate based on the experience of the firm, needs of the client, and the schedule for the deliverables.

A budget to roll-out the new brand should be assessed as well, as the new brand will have to be applied across a lot of different instances. This will vary, but in our experience a retainer set aside for a design firm to work out of to create new materials like stationery, infographics and small signage is highly beneficial to a new brand launch.

Below is a list of services and associated costs related to branding to help with the estimation of cost for your project.

- o Brand Strategy $5,000 – 10,000
- o Stakeholder engagement (interviews) $5,000 – 15,000
- o Public Engagement (survey – online or in person) $10,000 – 20,000
- o Logo/Identity Design $15,000 – 30,000
- o City/Town Seal $10,000 – 20,000
- o Brand Extension – supporting visuals $10,000 – $20,000
- o Print or Digital Campaign - $8,000 – $30,000
- o Website $20,000 – 100,000
- o Brand Guide - $5 – $15K

Managing a budget

Discussing your expectations with consultants prior to engaging in any effort is highly beneficial. This will set expectations on number of meetings, approval process, and rounds of revision included.

Rebranding projects are typically two phased. Firstly, a design phase culminating in a brand guide, and secondly a retainer phase where the design team develops branded assets as needed. Once a Brand is established, the roll out can be quite efficient but you may not have the resources in-house to manage this. It can be helpful to set aside an on-call contract or retainer for your designers to bill hourly to as-needed for the first year at least. Most municipalities will not have surplus budget to pull from, so appropriate planning is necessary.

Keeping on schedule

Large community-based design projects can often take months to complete just the design phase. For actual implementation of marketing collateral and signage, some of these efforts become multiple year endeavors. Teams will require tight coordination to make these plans reality.

When it comes to keeping these projects on schedule, **a re-occurring weekly or bi-weekly meeting with the project team is essential.** As the team grows and shrinks, different consultants will enter and exit the project meetings. Meeting notes from each meeting will serve as a record of the project.

Action	Page
☐ We want to learn about branding	08
☐ We want to kick off developing a new city/town brand	07
☐ We want to develop new, on-brand assets for our city/town	09
☐ We want to create a new logo for our city/town	20
☐ We want feedback on our brand concepts/ elements	21
☐ We want to develop a brand guide	21
☐ We want to know how other cities and towns have rebranded	25
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Getting It Done

Getting It Done

Developing a Foundation for Brand

Defining your City or Town

The first step in a municipal branding process is to concretely identify the place the team is rebranding. What is the population like? Is it rural or urban? Answering baseline questions like this create statements – and these statements should be agreed upon as true. An example of a valid identifying statement is below:

"Boston is an urban city on the eastern coast of Massachusetts."

By making these assumptions and testing their validity, the design team will eventually have a set of statements that give a sense of place. Eventually, as the team makes a group of these, you will start to have a mutually agreeable set of statements about the place you are designing a new brand for.

"Boston is an urban city on the eastern coast of Massachusetts. Compared to most American cities, Boston is smaller than average. Boston has a deep history, going back to the late 1600's. The landscape is largely coastal, and the city is partially defined by the Charles River, a body of water that separates Boston from Cambridge. The city is known for it's successful sports teams, distinct accent and numerous famous colleges."

These statements, once aggregated, will be tested and refined in the next step.
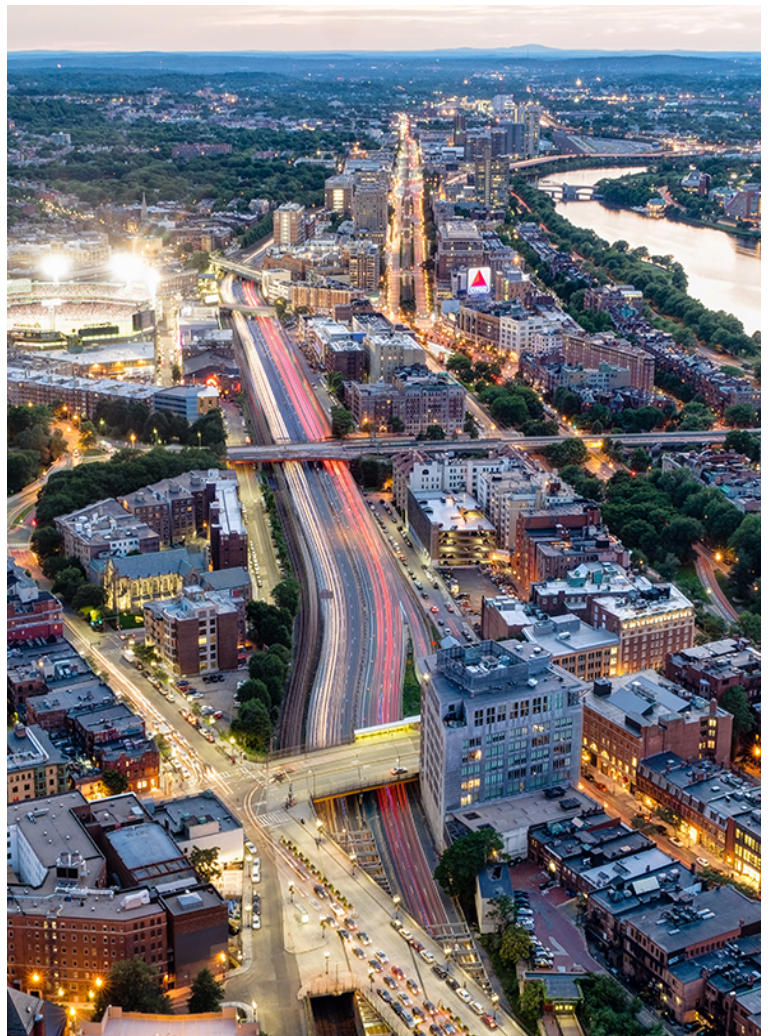
Identifying Key Attributes

Once you have a set of mutually agreeable statements about your city or town, it's time to qualify them. This means, comparing them against their peers to determine which of these statements is unique or exemplary. To compare these two places, you'll need to identify a competitive set.

A competitive set is a group of things or places whose qualities make them comparable. For example, an apple is a fruit, so an apple's competitive set would include other fruits like oranges, grapes, etc.

To revisit our contextual example of Boston, Boston's competitive set would include cities and towns from the same region: Gloucester, Plymouth, Salem, and Worcester.

Once you've got a competitive set identified for your city or town it's time to test your previous statements against them. Using this process, you will start to identify key attributes of your place that make it unique. For example, let's compare a statement about the geography:

> *Boston is an urban city on the eastern coast of Massachusetts.*

Using our competitive set, compare Boston's geography to Gloucester, Plymouth, Salem & Worcester.

> *While Worcester is not a city on the eastern coast of Massachusetts, Plymouth, Salem and Gloucester are coastal towns and cities similar to Boston.*

This means our statement about Boston being an urban city on Massachusetts's east coast isn't unique to Boston. **While still valid – this statement is not a Key Attribute.** Let's look at part of another statement:

> *"... the city is partially defined by the Charles River, a body of water that separates Boston from Cambridge. "*

When examined against Boston's competitive set, none of the examples have geography that is defined by a river. **Therefore, Boston's Charles River is a Key Attribute of Boston.** As you test your statements against a competitive set, unique attributes of your town and city will come out of the process.

These unique key attributes are what make your town or city special, and different from other places in the region. Essentially, unique key attributes are what helps entice potential residents and visitors to your town or city.

Developing a Positioning Statement

Once the design team has a set of agreed upon statements about the city/town and it's key attributes, it's time to develop a positioning statement. **A positioning statement is a piece of text that describes a place.** Positioning statements should include information, and tease out key attributes about a city or town and make it sound enticing to visit or consider home.

> *Boston is a New England city with a deep, rooted history. It's small, coastal footprint is home to numerous highly rated colleges, a bustling life science industry and championship winning teams. Bordered by the Charles River, the landscape compliments with the Emerald Necklace, a sprawling chain of luscious parks. Boston is also globally known for it's fresh, locally caught seafood cuisine and it's rough around the edges, blue collar accent.*

In the above example, unique key attributes are numerous. The copy *positions* Boston with positive qualities about its signature characteristics. This type of positioning statement, developed early in the brand design process will serve as a guiding set of copy as the rest of the brand develops around it.

As logo concepts are created – the design team should ask: "Does this logo feel like an accurate representation of a *New England city with a deep-rooted history*?" **Constantly refer to this positioning statement as a litmus test** to keep your developing brand authentic to the team's original vision. This piece of copy will serve as a lighthouse to guide the project back to a set of agreed upon, unique key attributes.

Visual Language

A process that can be run parallel to a Positioning Statement, is developing visual language. If a Positioning Statement is a piece of text that describes a place, visual language is it's look-and-feel sibling. **A Visual Language is a system of graphic or pictural standards that are consistent within a brand.** It contains (but is not limited to) standards for color, font, graphic execution and photo composition.

Visual Language ranges in its effective scale. In practice, it can be as nuanced as soft edged shapes paired with a soft toned color palette, or as bold as matching a coastal city to the color tones of its ocean. Regardless of execution, visual language should have a consistent aesthetic that mirrors defining qualities of a brand.

As the team moves from identifying and defining qualities of a place, at this point it will have to start to create based on these characteristics. To help with understanding, let's compare a piece of a brand positioning with visual language:

> *"The beauty of Boston begins with a certain boldness. A boldness of opinion. Of thought. Of diversity. A boldness to be ourselves. Even though we're all diverse, and come from different cultures and backgrounds, we are connected through our boldness. And through our City. We are Boston."*

Following that positioning, examine how the qualities of the brand assets below mirror the statement above:

When designing visual language, it's best to spend time analyzing your positioning and comparing it to material that already exists. Expansive image searches, combined with grouping similar visuals and storing them will lead to creating mood boards that should be in line with your brand. Through an iterative process of these mood boards, you will eventually discern a visual language to replicate and pair with your brand positioning.

Creating a New Logo for a City/Town

Creating Logo Concepts

When it comes to visualizing a logo the best place to start is by examining the qualities of the brand and looking at lots of inspiration. Google image searches, Pinterest, and Instagram are great places to start.

The process should be thorough and only begin to refine itself once you've collected enough inspiration. Certain aesthetics will combine or cancel each other out and sifting through will allow specific concepts to step forward.

This process should be handled by an individual that has credentials in graphic design. While plenty of brand design firms exist in Massachusetts, your city /town may have a suitable designer on staff that can ideate the beginning of this process.

The logos shown to the right show the rounds of an iterative process Selbert Perkins Design used to distill the final logo for the City of Everett.

First round logo development

Second round logo development

Refining Logo Concepts

As your concepts take shape, it's important to make them different enough to avoid redundancy. Earlier in the process, the design team should be covering a variety of aesthetic that relates to the brand.

As feedback on these logo options is collected, it should steer the design team toward creating logo concepts that look similar due to the feedback. If the feedback group is liking a more modern font, the logo concepts should encourage that in all their options moving forward.

Third round logo development

Legibility of the mark should be a primary factor in determining a successful logo. Along with being able to clearly read the mark at scale, ensuring it looks different from others in the space is standard practice.

Final selected logo

User Testing

Feedback is one of the most important elements in the process of designing brand. By this point, the design team should have identified stakeholders they want to use for feedback, whether it be the mayor or a group of staff. Sharing rounds of logo development with these stakeholders and implementing changes based on that feedback are how the brand design evolves into its final form.

Developing Brand Guidelines

What are Brand Guidelines?

Brand guidelines are a set of rules and resources to help people correctly use a brand. Brand Guidelines can be a physical book but are more commonly seen as a digital PDF or web page. These guidelines protect the integrity of the design by dictating visual standards.

In addition to these standards, Brand Guidelines can also include information as a resource. Color and font specifications, server locations where assets can be found are a small sample of information these documents hold.

Ideally, any person within a team should be able to correctly use a logo or brand asset provided they have access to a version of Brand Guidelines.

What kinds of things are in Brand Guidelines?

The list below includes the some of the most commonly used chapters and sections in brand guidelines:

1. Positioning
    a. History
    b. Positioning Statement
    c. Key Messages

2. Logo
    a. Primary Logo
    b. Logo on Backgrounds
    c. Alternate Logos
    d. Word Mark
    e. Logo Clear Space
    f. Incorrect Logo usage
    g. Sub-Branding
    h. Patterns

3. Color
    a. Primary Colors
    b. Secondary Colors
    c. Color Usage

4. Type
    a. Type Family
    b. Type Hierarchy

5. Applications
    a. Digital
    b. Environmental
    c. Advertising

6. Files
    a. Inventory
    b. Where to find brand assets
    c. How to request files

When Should a Brand be Refreshed?

The Lifespan of a Brand

Brands for cities and towns have different life cycles depending on the socioeconomic climate of the place they represent. **A brand for a small town with 2,000 people can be relevant for a much longer time than the brand for a rapidly growing city.**

Typically, large changes are catalysts for rebranding campaigns. Significant anniversaries, new building developments and other large changes can prompt municipalities to want to engage in a rebranding effort. Revitalizing the town or city's image in parallel to these major changes amplifies the effort that likely already has people looking.

Currently, an average refresh cycle for a brand is anywhere from 6-8 years. This more frequent cycle is based on the emergence and popularity of rebranding commercial brands, which has transcended to municipalities as well.

Brand Evolution vs. Brand Revolution

Some municipalities choose to evolve their brand instead of starting from scratch with an entirely new brand. **Budget, time, and public sentiment can all be drivers for this lighter lift compared to a full brand redesign.**

Brand equity also can play into the decision to evolve a brand instead of replacing it. For example, if residents respond well to a brand but there is a driver to present a more modern image, in this certain instance it makes sense to build upon an already established brand identity and evolve.

In contrast, if there isn't enough character or unique visual quality to a municipal brand it's time to start fresh. Trying to evolve something that is lackluster, or generic can be harder than starting the process with the intention of bringing a new brand to life.

How Others Are Doing It

How Others Are Doing It

City of Lancaster, California

Timeframe:
9 – 12 Months

Budget:
$50,000

Project Description:
SPD collaborated with the City of Lancaster to research, plan, design, and implement a new logo and brand for Lancaster CA. The new brand repositions Lancaster as a vibrant community at the center of innovation, technology, and nature. The logo represents the California poppy, the CA state flower, and celebrates the Lancaster poppy reserve. The research process included hundreds of community interviews, and electronic surveys that received thousands of responses to guide the design decisions. The new brand consisted of a roll-out with a coordinated marketing, PR, advertising, environmental, merchandise and public information campaign.

Challenges:
Lancaster's prior branding was difficult to use, and the softer color palette of blues and greens on top of a "+" symbol attached to the name led people to think the logo was affiliated with the medical community. The city also faced a negative perception as an unpopular desert residence.

Testimonials

"Brand is directly tied to placemaking. It's very personal—this sense of ownership—and having buy-in means we can keep the momentum going. Everyone wants to be part of it and it has started to roll-out into all aspects of our City. Our greatest naysayers are now our biggest advocates, which is amazing. We are investing a lot in our infrastructure here, so this is really good timing because now there is a shared vision and story behind why we're doing it."

Alexus Merino
Manager, Assistant to the City Manager, City of Lancaster

"Here in Lancaster, we wanted to make a statement and create a more positive perception. Being just an hour north of LA, we knew there was a huge opportunity for growth. We went through an extensive community outreach process - stakeholders were informed, aware, and interviewed – and because of that, they feel a sense of ownership that has really made the brand take hold.

Jennifer Seguin
Manager, Communications, City of Lancaster

Brand Examples
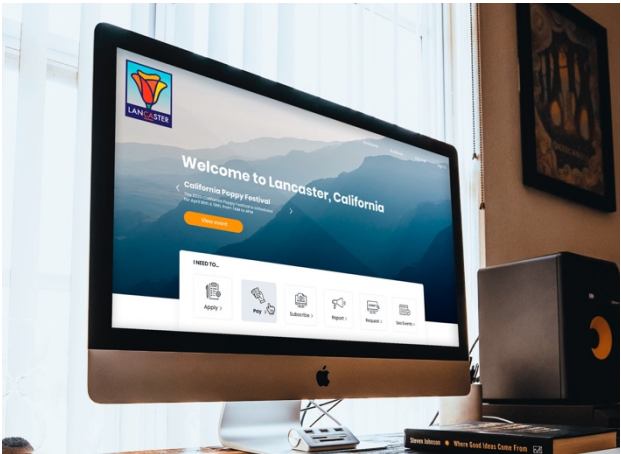
City of Everett, Massachusetts

Timeframe 4 – 6 Months

Budget $32,000

Project Description

Selbert Perkins Design worked directly with the City of Everett to create a bold new identity and brand campaign - inspired by the diverse and hard-working population of Everett. This is Everyone's Everett - close to Boston but with its own identity, built on pride and grit. A diverse but small city, Everett consists of several unique districts, including historical neighborhoods, fermentation districts and industrial zones.

Challenges

Prior to the rebranding process, Everett (like most Massachusetts cities and towns) had a brand that consisted of the town seal and some visual elements that had been inherited and modified over the years. The City of Everett had a reputation for being blue collar, and nothing but Boston's back door. Recently, a casino has been built and activated a large area in the southern tip of the city, and while economically advantageous, the city wanted to build a brand that highlighted the other positive aspects of the city and shift the focus of Everett.

Testimonials

"Once we started designing our wayfinding program, we quickly realized the need for branding. What we had was developed in house and we didn't want it on permanent fixtures. We pivoted and Selbert Perkins dove head-first into story-telling and key messages to define the brand. They developed several logo options and cleaned up our City Seal, which was not digital. Although our project was interrupted due to Covid, the Brand Guide they created continues to be a guide as items, like the new website, are rolled out."

Tess Kohanski

Small Business Owner, Park-9 *Everett*
Former Economic Development Planner, *City of Everett*

Brand Examples

Battle Road Scenic Byway,
Arlington, Concord, Lexington, and Lincoln, Massachusetts

Timeframe 6 Months

Budget $35,000

Project Description

Selbert Perkins Design planned, designed, and implemented a distinctive logo system, sign standards, and content-rich website (https://battleroadbyway.org) to inform, educate, and guide visitors through this picturesque and historic area that spans 4 towns and the Minuteman National Historic Park. This contributed in part to their recent designation as a national All American Road.

Challenges

For this project, the most notable challenge the design team faced was getting positive buy-in from the four towns that the Battle Road Scenic Byway crosses. Selbert Perkins Design was able to get team members from Arlington, Concord, Lexington, and Lincoln to a series of meetings to participate in the process, which helped the group come together to help steer the brand direction. This collaboration has contributed to a strong sense of ownership and collaboration from each town as the organization has grown.

Testimonial

"I can't underestimate the importance of having a champion – someone high enough up to advocate for the project. We had the particular challenge of coordinating with four different towns and a National Historic Park the Byway goes through. Some towns have more resources than others so, although the brand is beautiful and very easy to use, I wish we had created more guidelines about how to implement signage and other installed items in a consistent way. I'm proud to say we now have National recognition as an All American Road, which makes us eligible for Federal funding. It helped that we had a polished brand system to showcase the Battle Road Byway in our application."

Ali Carter, Economic Development Coordinator
Planning and Community Development, *Town of Arlington*

Brand Examples

Overcoming Challenges

Overcoming Challenges

Common Challenges for Massachusetts-based towns

Gathering Consensus

Everyone is entitled to their opinion but how do you get people moving in the same direction? The traditional Town Meeting public process leaves a lot of people out. The necessity of these being online during the pandemic has actually been a win for inclusion as more people are able to participate. Your Project Team will be able to work together to make decisions but whenever possible, this should be based on what you're hearing from the community.

We recommend stakeholder interviews and online surveys to gather input and hear people out before and during the design process. We have found this to be an effective way to test ideas and develop ownership and excitement. Several free and easy-to-use services exist that allow teams to create easy to use polls and presentations for sharing online, such as www.forms.google.com, www.surveymonkey.com, and Microsoft Forms (with Office 365 subscription).

Residents can also scan QR codes or log on to URLs to access these surveys and vote in real time. During the pandemic, these resources have allowed communities to continue developing projects for their municipalities in place of in-person community meetings. These polls can include multiple choice, open comment and ranked voting. This data is highly valuable to any community project and is mostly free to collect.

Inclusive Design

One of the most common issues across Massachusetts based city/towns is **balancing the old and new and making sure everyone feels welcome**. Many towns in Massachusetts have historic significance and may want to emphasize that but also feel fresh and relevant. If your project budget allows, conducting outreach to your local schools and senior centers to solicit feedback from some of the city/town's oldest and youngest residents.

Lower income folks will not have time to go to community meetings so **going to where they are is important.** If in-person outreach is possible, try to align with local celebrations. Make sure to cast your net wide and provide materials in various languages whenever possible.

Keeping Momentum

Large community-based design projects can take many months and sometimes years to complete. Engagement efforts during the design process will build excitement. When it comes to keeping these projects on schedule, a regular **bi-weekly or monthly meeting** with the project team is essential.

Key Resources

Key Resources

Funding Sources

Federal / State Grants

- **ARPA** State Fiscal Recovery Fund Allocations - $135 million earmarked to support cultural facilities and tourism assets throughout Massachusetts https://www.nlc.org/covid-19-pandemic-response/american-rescue-plan-act/arpa-local-relief-frequently-asked-questions/
- **Massachusetts Historical Commission** (MHC) Preservation Funds - pre-development projects can range from $5,000 to $30,000 https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcmppf/mppfidx.htm
- **Rural Business Development Grants** – Funds available for community economic development in Massachusetts https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/rural-business-development-grants/ma
- **Massachusetts Gaming Commission** community mitigation funds – available to host and neighboring towns to Casinos https://massgaming.com/about/community-mitigation-fund/
- MassDevelopment - Economic Development Grants
- **DHCD** Technical Assistance Grants

Development

- Developers sometimes are required to provide Community Benefits to appease the City/Town.
- Regardless, Developers have a vested interest in improving the perception of the area where they are and likely already have a budget for branding.
- We recommend including them in the process and/or asking for support, especially if it is a larger area that will help revitalize a neighborhood or district.

You can also search https://www.grants.gov and the DCHD's crowdsourced list of opportunities at https://airtable.com/embed/shrh5rVQMbVbpYLKF/tblk00qQMPM2JPpie

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For more information, visit:
www.mass.gov/info-details/rapid-recovery-plan-rrp-program

If you have questions about the RRP program, contact: