

“MADE IN MANDAN”
A Proposal for a Community Marketing Theme
By the Mandan Tomorrow — Leadership, Pride & Image Committee
July 29, 2010

PURPOSE

Focus group input and public survey responses gleaned through the 2009 Mandan Tomorrow strategic visioning process point to a need for Mandan to build pride within the community and boost its external image. The latter point reinforces a recommendation to improve the image and marketing of Mandan from the 2003 URS Downtown and Memorial Highway Redevelopment Plan. Enhancing community pride and image is critical to accomplishing broader community goals of retaining and attracting residents, businesses and visitors.

SITUATION ANALYSIS



A March 2009 community assessment conducted as part of the strategic planning process revealed key themes regarding residents' vision for Mandan's future:

- “Leverage Mandan’s heritage as “Where the West Begins.”
 - Expanding Mandan’s image as a family-friendly, safe community.
 - Growing into a high-end suburb with a “village feel.”
 - Developing and investing in our existing assets: our historic downtown and unique special events.
- Maturing into a “Uniquely Western” community that is both urban and rural.
 - Overcoming challenges — Mandan can be known as the “Comeback Kid.”
 - Continuing to be a nice place where you want to grow up and retire.

Among strategies in the “Mandan Tomorrow” plan is a recommendation, “Assess the potential to initiate and coordinate marketing messages leveraging Mandan’s pioneer spirit, heritage and future.” A suggested action, “Gauge public opinion regarding replacing or adjusting Mandan’s theme ‘Where the West Begins,’ behind a new campaign.”

To follow up on this recommendation, the City of Mandan conducted an on-line poll in June 2009. The poll noted that the City logo represents the history of the community including the railroad, a blockhouse and earth lodge, and posed the question, “Should this logo and Mandan’s slogan, ‘Where the West Begins’ be changed?” Of 136 respondents, 75 percent selected “no” and 25 percent selected “yes.”

Recognizing, from this pulse poll, that the community is not likely to favor abandoning Mandan’s logo and slogan, the Mandan Tomorrow Committee on Leadership, Pride and Image instead explored options for bolstering the existing slogan with a complementary marketing theme to essentially brand Mandan as a place. Successful place branding makes a community stand above the rest and be recognized as a leader. It sets a community apart from its competition. We shouldn’t just say something that any community can say.

Currently Mandan faces the challenge of being perceived both internally and externally as inferior to Bismarck, when in fact Mandan is a growing and progressive community in its own right, to an extent that would be celebrated anywhere else were it not overshadowed by Bismarck’s growth and prosperity.

Among Mandan's strengths as identified by residents and businesses through surveys and interviews are its people, its small town atmosphere and sense of connectedness, accessibility and proximity to shopping and services, its school system, and that it is a safe community with low crime rates. Other traits and assets that Mandan boasts are that it is place to go for history, entertainment and unique shops. Mandan is home to many prosperous and innovative businesses and offers opportunities for success.

PROPOSED THEME

The proposed theme is "Made in Mandan." It plays off positive perceptions associated with the "Made in the USA" theme, but rather than focusing on products made in Mandan, the proposal is to tie the theme to an array of Mandan's positive attributes. These attributes can be both tangible and abstract, ranging from heritage and memories, to dreams and home, to opportunity and innovation.

The LPI committee tested the "Made in Mandan" theme and various graphical options for visually communicating the message with an array of people including residents and others living in the surrounding trade area. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and has helped to strengthen the proposed graphics.

The "Made in Mandan" theme is not meant to replace logos or taglines for any Mandan public entity, but rather to be paired, as appropriate, with those graphics, or used independently, in communications and marketing efforts promoting Mandan.

The theme is brief, easily understood, creative, and flexible enough to be applicable to a variety of target audiences including current residents, prospective residents, existing and potential businesses, visitors and tourists.

KEY MESSAGES

Following are sample "Made in Mandan" messages for target audiences:

- Business recruitment – executives, potential workforce
 - Success – Made in Mandan
 - Prosperity - Made in Mandan
 - Progress - Made in Mandan
 - Entrepreneurs - Made in Mandan
 - Opportunity - Made in Mandan
 - Innovation – Made in Mandan
 - Technology – Made in Mandan
 - Energy – Made in Mandan



- Residential Recruitment & Retention – people who already live here, alumni who might move back, and others considering a relocation or new home purchase



- Homes – Made in Mandan
- Dreams – Made in Mandan
- Nostalgia - Made in Mandan
- Neighbors – Made in Mandan
- Community – Made in Mandan
- Life – Made in Mandan
- Togetherness – Made in Mandan
- Tradition – Made in Mandan

- Educational Emphasis – existing and potential new residents

- Champions – Made in Mandan
- Character – Made in Mandan
- Commitment – Made in Mandan
- Empowerment – Made in Mandan
- Leadership – Made in Mandan
- Learning – Made in Mandan
- Scholars – Made in Mandan
- The Best – Made in Mandan



- Tourist & Visitor Attraction – travelers
 - Memories - Made in Mandan
 - Heritage – Made in Mandan
 - Adrenaline – Made in Mandan
 - Adventure – Made in Mandan
 - History – Made in Mandan
 - Fun – Made in Mandan
 - Summer – Made in Mandan

FIRST YEAR FOCUS

Although the theme and logo allow for great flexibility and a variety of applications, the committee recommends focusing communications on four key messages to address four primary objectives. Use of a four-sided version of the “Made in Mandan” logo will assist in conveying these four key messages:

- Business recruitment — Opportunity
- Residential recruitment & retention — Community
- Residential recruitment & retention with an education/school –oriented emphasis — Achievement
- Tourism & visitor attraction — Adventure



MARKETING STRATEGY

Overall approach

The logo has application in public information, public relations and advertising projects and activities such as community progress reports, brochures, rotating e-mail signature cards, electronic message center displays, billboards, cooperative marketing with local government entities and private business, and more.

The challenge is executing a marketing campaign on a limited budget. For this reason, this plan outlines primarily low-cost or no-cost implementation recommendations and how it can be incorporated into existing marketing and communications projects executed by public entities. Recommendations for paid advertising are included as public sector budgets, grant and private-sector sponsorship opportunities allow.

TACTIC 1 — Public Relations

No-Cost Activities

- E-mail signature cards
 - Request that leaders and staff of the City of Mandan, Mandan Parks & Recreation, Mandan Public School District use and rotate “Made in Mandan” e-mail signature cards in their e-mail templates.
- Electronic message center
 - Display “Made in Mandan” messages on the sign on east Main Street as the community calendar of activities allows.
- Public Service Announcements
 - The Business Development Office can incorporate key messages into announcements aired by Cumulus Broadcasting.
- Facebook Fan Page
 - Launch and maintain a fan page with help of LPI committee members to help explain and generate momentum for the campaign.
- Public Displays
 - Seek permission to display a “Made in ...” sign near the Mandan displays on Crying Hill.
- Existing communication vehicles
 - The City of Mandan, Mandan Parks & Recreation, Mandan Public School District, and other Mandan organizations and companies could include a “Made in Mandan” graphic on their websites, annual report covers, newsletters, brochures, bulletin boards or building wall displays, other collateral items, stationery, business cards, thank you notes.

Low-Cost Activities

- Website portal
 - Establish a connection to other Mandan websites under the URL www.madeinmandan.com.
 - URL cost - \$80 for 3 years
 - Seek a donation of web development services

- Resident attraction
 - Develop an informational brochure that focuses on community strengths including quality of life and education in Mandan while clarifying issues related to property taxes and special assessments.
 - Estimated cost for 1,000 quantity - \$500
 - Conduct annual briefing for area real estate agencies on community improvements and future plans.
- 2011 Tourism brochure
 - Work with the Mandan Progress Organization to re-vamp the annual visitor's brochure that provides information on attractions and the calendar of events to eliminate clutter, provide information on lodging and restaurants, and make available in a timely manner (no later than April 1 to be distributed to N.D. rest areas). Seek a 90% matching grant through the N.D. Commerce Department Partners in Marketing Program.
 - Estimated cost for quantity of 15,000 - \$2,600
- Business attraction
 - Incorporate theme into future business attraction marketing kits including the 2011 Mandan community profile, fact sheets and any other collateral materials developed for this purpose.
 - Estimated cost for quantity of 500 updated annually - \$2,000
 - Develop a "We Want You" postcard that Mandan residents could send to businesses located outside of Mandan indicating their wish that the business locate in Mandan.
 - Estimated cost for quantity of 1,000 - \$400

TACTIC 2 – Advertising Support

- Outdoor
 - Billboards to promote tourism and local retail and services
 - Available options include:
 - 14X48 illuminated, includes art design and production of vinyl face
 - West facing on I-94 west of Exit 152 (Sunset Avenue) = \$1,068/month on a 36-month contract
 - West facing on I-94 between Exit 152 (Sunset Avenue) and Exit 153 (Mandan Avenue) - \$1,068/month on a 36-month contract
 - East facing on I-94 between Exit 152 (Sunset Avenue) and Exit 153 (Mandan Avenue) - \$600.00/month on a 36-month contract
 - Poster face between Exits 152 and 153
 - \$705/month for a one-year term
 - Three months - \$2,295 plus \$350 production = \$2,645
 - A longer-term option may be to explore options for a sign adjacent to the interstate on public land.
 - Budget Priority
 - Primary — west-facing billboard to capture attention of travelers heading east (before they reach Bismarck)
 - Poster face for three months allowing seasonal approaches
 - Winter and summer - \$5,290
 - Secondary — Add an east facing billboard - another \$5,290 for \$10,580
 - Optimum — year-round east and west facing full-size billboards - \$21,276

- Print
 - Display ads or business card size ads in publications that reach key target audiences
 - Business recruitment
 - Prairie Business
 - 2/3 page - \$1,200 X 4 times per year = \$4,800
 - N.D. Business Report
 - 1/4 page – 4X per year - \$1,500 (\$375/ad – more w/ less frequency)
 - Business Watch (13,000 readers)
 - 1/4 page – 4X per year - \$1,400 (\$350/ad – more w/ less frequency)
 - Chamber Connection (circulation 5,600)
 - 1/4 page – 6X per year - \$2,160 (\$360/ad full color – more w/ less frequency)
 - Potential new residents
 - Hot Properties magazine (insert in Tribune last Friday of month & racks, 30,000 circulation)
 - 1/3 page – 6X per year - \$1,638 (\$273/ad – more w/ less frequency)
 - Tourism
 - 2011 N.D. Travel Guide
 - Quarter-page - \$1,760
 - Full-page - \$4,300
 - Bismarck-Mandan Convention and Visitors Guide
 - Full-page - \$2,390
 - Two-page spread - \$4,880
 - Budget priority
 - Primary — Prairie Business, Chamber Connection, Hot Properties - \$8,598
 - Secondary — Add N.D. Travel Guide full page, CVB Guide full page – \$6,690
 - Optimum — Add N.D. Business Report, Business Watch - \$2,900

TACTIC 3 — Promotional Items

Seek sponsorship or collaborative promotional opportunities with civic organizations and businesses

- Gifts for Newborn Babies
 - Provide a pink or blue t-shirt or diaper cover for newborn babies of Mandan residents
 - Seek estimate of number of babies born annually and cost of gifts
 - Explore distribution via hospitals or other options
- Custom Branding Irons
 - Could be used to brand wood, steaks, etc.
- Wearable Pride Items
 - Shirts, caps, etc.
- Custom stampers
 - Could be utilized by the school district's activities department, the Mandan Progress Organization, and others for admission to games and events.
- Auto window decals or bumper stickers
- Stickers or wash off tattoos for distribution in 4th of July Parade or at other community festivals

TACTIC 4 — Matching Funds for Private Sector Use of Logo

- Encourage use by businesses, local non-profit organizations, and events by offering a 10% match on costs for advertising, collateral materials, promotional items or other marketing activities that utilize the logo.
 - Maximum \$500 per entity that could be made available on a first-come, first-served basis for entities meeting application criteria (or alternatively could have an application deadline to allow for competitive evaluation). *Not included in budget at this time.*

BUDGET

*Dependent on matching grant

Primary

Public relations activities	As allowed within existing budgets	
Web site portal		\$80
Residential brochure		\$500
Tourism brochure		\$2,600
Business recruitment community profile & fact sheets.....		\$2,000
Business recruitment postcards		\$400
*Billboards		\$5,290
*Print ads for opinion leaders and key audiences		
*Business recruitment		\$6,960
Residential recruitment.....		\$1,638
 TOTAL		 \$19,468

Secondary

*Billboards		\$5,290
*Print ads for opinion leaders and key audiences		
*Tourism recruitment		\$6,690
 TOTAL PRIMARY & SECONDARY		 \$31,448

Optimal

*Billboards		\$10,696
*Print ads for opinion leaders and key audiences		
*More business recruitment.....		\$2,900
 Promotional items	pending sponsorships & private sector interest	
 GRAND TOTAL.....		 \$45,044

Potential funding sources:

- Public Sector
 - The Mandan City Commission, Mandan Park Board and Mandan School Board are each asked to consider funding a portion of the marketing plan as it fits their mission and goals.
 - Suggested Target (and Requested Amount Based on \$45,000 Optimal Budget)
 - City – 25% (\$11,250)
 - Park District – 15% (\$6,750)
 - School District – 10% (\$4,500)
 - Grants or Sponsorships – 50% (\$22,500)
- Grants
 - The N.D. Department of Commerce Partners in Marketing Program provides matching grants, up to \$25,000 per community or economic development entity per biennium, for up to 90 percent of the costs of projects focused on the primary sector (including tourism) and out-of-state recruitment.
 - The N.D. Tourism Division has a marketing matched grant program offering a maximum \$5,000 annually or a maximum \$15,000 for no more than 3 consecutive years for individual businesses, communities and tourism marketing organizations. The deadline to apply for 2011 funding is Sept. 3, 2010. Must be for a regional experience, activity or place unique to the state. Majority of activity should be promotional, focusing on providing travel information.
- Sponsorships
 - Invite private sector businesses and civic organizations to participate in the campaign through sponsorships.

TIMELINE

- Low cost, no cost activities to be implemented as soon as work plans and existing budgets allow.
- Majority of advertising support activities to commence in 2011.
- Rollout — Tentative launch date of October 1, 2010 to include news conference and/or news release, print advertising, and other PR activities.

POLICIES REGARDING USE OF LOGO & IMAGERY

- Develop usage standards to maintain the integrity of the logo while encouraging professional, consistent and appropriate uses
 - Include a form for requesting its use and a requirement that samples of any completed projects be provided. Point of contact to be the Business Development Office.
- Explore if the logo should be trademarked.

EVALUATION

- Internal Image
 - Gauge changes in Mandan resident perceptions via annual or semi-annual household survey. Seeking a 5% increase in the number of respondents who indicate they enjoy a good to excellent quality of life in Mandan and the percentage of comments offered regarding the image of Mandan that are positive
 - 2008 benchmark survey
 - 58% of respondents indicated they enjoy a good to excellent quality of life in Mandan
 - 44 percent of respondents offered positive comments about the image of Mandan.
 - 29% positive responses (362), 25% neutral (311), 45% negative (559)
- External Image
 - Seek to establish a benchmark, possibility through an on-line survey, and measure every other year.
- Statistics will also be monitored regarding broader goals:
 - Business recruitment (number of inquiries, number of new and expanding businesses, commercial building permits)
 - Resident retention and recruitment (population, residential building permits, school enrollment)
 - Tourist and visitor attraction (hotel occupancy tax collections, CVB statistics, park district statistics)