Redevelopment Ready Communities
City of Wyoming Marketing Strategy
Best Practice 5.3

Summary
Background

In 1959, the City of Wyoming was incorporated, officially transforming Wyoming Township into the City of Wyoming. Since that time, Wyoming has grown into a thriving community and home to more than 75,000 residents. The City is now the second largest community in the Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the second largest MSA in the State of Michigan. The MSA was labeled the most rapidly growing economy in 2017 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. More recently, real estate research group Trulia ranked the Grand Rapids area as number two in its "Top 10 Markets and Neighborhoods to Watch in 2019" list. In 2019, Money.com Magazine rated Wyoming as one of the 100 Best Places to Live.

Wyoming is home to diverse industries, including commercial, manufacturing, and healthcare services. Businesses find it convenient to locate in Wyoming because the city is well connected to surrounding municipalities, the region, and the rest of the nation by easily accessed transportation networks. The City is ringed by a series of three freeways: US-131 travels north-south through the eastern edge of the community, I-196 travels northwest through and around the City, and M-6 travels east-west just outside its southern boundary. Wyoming also benefits from multiple rail lines: Grand Elk Railroad that runs alongside US-131 and CSX Transportation that cuts across the northern area of the City. Every area of the city is also within a 30-minute drive from the Gerald R. Ford International Airport. Ten Rapid routes serve the City of Wyoming, including the Silver Line Bus Rapid Transit.

Wyoming is a community characterized by unique assets, including seven school districts, a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, an array of retail and dining options, numerous parks and recreational facilities, and a mixture of new and old residential neighborhoods. The City's character distinctly transitions from postwar neighborhoods in the north to mid-20th century suburban development in its center, and newer residential development in the south. The Grand River is also a defining natural feature that runs along Wyoming's northern area, eventually flowing northwest to exit into Lake Michigan.

Within the 24.55 square miles of Wyoming, community members enjoy access to non-motorized trails, including Kent Trails, the Interurban Trail, and the Fred Meijer M-6 trail. They also enjoy 19 parks and two nature preserves that cover 663 acres and offer a variety of amenities. Over 400 recreational programs are offered through the City's Parks and Recreation Service Area.

Vision Statement
The City of Wyoming is a diverse, strong, and authentic community where all individuals have the opportunity to thrive.

Mission Statement
The City of Wyoming's mission is community, safety, stewardship.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths:	**Weaknesses:**
• Multi-agency collaborations • Talented workforce • New development in southern portion of the city • Financial stewardship, providing services people need at high level of service, without excess • Access to airport and freeways • City is welcoming, operates with integrity • Strong, diverse economy • Growing job sectors in Healthcare and Social Assistance, Wholesale Trade, Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Manufacturing • High inflow of workers who commute to Wyoming • Industrial sector as strong economic base • CALEA Accredited Department of Public Safety	• No traditional downtown • Walk score and bike score • Older neighborhoods and commercial corridors have issues with vacancies and underutilized lots as well as lacking in distinctive activity areas • Lack of affordable housing, especially workforce housing • Sign ordinance strength and enforcement
Opportunities:	**Threats:**
• Leverage industrial market • Enhance commercial corridors with concentrated retail, service, and dining options • Increase access to quality public space • Create façade incentive programs • Encourage infill and facilitate more intense development in areas where infrastructure already exists • Enhance safe pedestrian movement along corridors • Improve multimodal transportation options • Increase investment in low impact design techniques	• City revenue sources • Economic stability • High percentage of Wyoming residents work outside of the community • Aging population • Land use conflicts between industrial and residential areas • Security of large parking lots and outdoor storage in industrial areas • State restrictions for pedestrian improvements along 28th Street • Reduction of tree canopy with development

Marketing Strategy

This marketing strategy will outline the City of Wyoming's current activities and future action plan, to grow community identity, improve existing assets, and streamline development services. The strategy is to change public perception and behaviors to improve economic development. It will grow consumer   confidence and reach by sharing the economic and social value of Wyoming through a comprehensive communication plan.

Target Audience

The City of Wyoming will target current and prospective residents, property owners, community organizations, and businesses.

Community Partners

The City of Wyoming's community partners include:
- Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- The Right Place
- Urban Metro Mayors and Managers
- Michigan Municipal League
- Grand Valley Metro Council
- Local School Districts
- Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Grand Rapids Area Black Businesses
- West Michigan Asian American Association
- Grand Rapids Asian-Pacific Foundation
- Wyoming-Kentwood Chamber of Commerce
- Division Avenue Business Association
- Wyoming Business Leaders
- Hispanic Center of Western Michigan
- WKTV Community Media
- WYCE Community Radio
- Local News and Media Outlets
- Wyoming Citizen-Appointed Boards and Commissions
- Greater Regional Alliance of Realtors

Marketing Responsibilities

The strategies outlined in the marketing plan will only be successful if the City is able to have shared responsibility between staff and appointed and elected officials. The successful implementation of the strategies outlined in this plan will rest heavily on a combined effort of the City and its community partners. The goals of the Plan will only be met through a shared commitment to implement the strategies outlined below delivered to the target marketing audiences.

History of Branding and Asset Inventory

Community branding continues to be a topic that has long been discussed in the City of Wyoming. Staff, City Council and other stakeholders have perceived a lack of unified identification by our residents. One reason is that there are multiple school

districts within the city's boundaries.

The City of Wyoming updated its aspects of its branding with the development of the new Vision and Mission in 2018 as well as launching a new website platform in 2017. These initiatives lead to the development of new text-based logos incorporated on the City's letterhead and a website style guide which includes color, font, and other website guidelines.

The new logo designs and website style guide have been well-received by staff and are now widely used on business cards, letterheads, social media, and other print materials. However, it has not been fully rolled out across departments. Two older logos including the Wyoming swoosh and the oval graphical logo are all still in use. Currently, the city does not have official brand guidelines with clear branding standards and procedures.

There is unified use of the existing brand elements across letterheads and primary city social accounts. However, in review of department assets including print materials, signage, social media accounts, and external webpage platforms, departments continue using outdated branding elements and logos.

Current Branding Elements

Sample of Current Logos

Current Website Colors

#128575

#2e9e61

#383838

#f8f9fa

Current Website Fonts
- Heading Font: Work Sans
- Body Font: Merriweather

Outdated Logos (Still in Use)

Economic Development Key Messages

These key messages are overarching messages for Wyoming economic development marketing efforts and can be incorporated in the core messages listed under the goals section.

- The City of Wyoming is a safe, diverse, and welcoming place to live and work.
- With more than 75,000 residents, Wyoming is the second largest municipality in West Michigan.
- Wyoming is recognized as a leader in the state for its proactive, pro-resident utility policies.
- Wyoming is a very livable community, with housing diversity, multiple parks and green spaces and city-sponsored programs that enhance the quality of life.
- Wyoming offers city-sponsored programs that appeal to all ages and abilities.
- As one of the largest cities in Michigan, Wyoming is home to more school districts than any other municipality, offering a broad array of educational choices for residents. The city is also home to Grace Christian University which offer both graduate and undergraduate degrees.
- Wyoming focuses on customer service and its city officials are accessible to residents.
- Wyoming enjoys a diverse mix of businesses, including heavy industrial, technology, retail, services, and utilities.

Goals, Strategies, Audience, and Measurement

Below are four goals identified as a part of the RCC Marketing Strategy. These were identified as important strategic goals with accompanied tactics to address the need for core branding, business resource access, neighborhood enrichment, and marketing of priority development sites. The goals are not listed in order of priority.

Goal 1:
Have a core brand identity implemented across city service areas within 5 years

Audience
- Future and current residents, businesses, and community partners

Core Messages
- Our mission is community, safety, and stewardship
- We are a diverse, strong, and authentic community where all individuals have the opportunity to thrive
- We support businesses, intentional development, and community growth

Objective: Develop graphic logo
- *Tactics:*
  - Investigate creation of a graphic logo icon
  - Engage community and partners in brand design
  - Work with a private entity for logo implementation
- *Measurement:*
  - Track progress on overall project timeline

Objective: Develop brand identity guidelines
- *Tactics:*
  - Complete a comprehensive audit of existing branding in print, on signage, on city website, contracted web portals for city services, and on social media channels.
  - Develop voice and tone guidelines
  - Design approval processes for digital and print collateral, advertisements, and promotional items
  - Identify approved color palette, logos, and typography with standards and use guidelines
  - Build approval process for new logo designs
  - Create standards for brand use with brochures, equipment, and signage
- *Measurement:*
  - Track project progress
  - Track brand element implementation across departments
  - Create annual report of brand implementation progress

Objective: Train staff on using brand guidelines
- *Tactics:*
  - Provide access to guide on the intranet
  - Identify brand and communication liaison in each department and service area
  - Create video trainings accessible on the intranet
  - Implement annual refresher course on brand use
  - Embed brand training into new hire onboarding process
- *Measurement:*
  - Track intranet web analytics of brand guidelines
  - Track annual staff training dates

Objective: Grow portfolio of visual assets
- *Tactics:*
  - Develop digital photo and video database with appropriate tags
  - Coordinate with partners like WKTV Community Media to compile initial photo assets

- *Measurement:*
  - Track growth of photo and video assets over time

Goal 2:
Create a business resource webpage on the city website to centralize resources and programs for existing and prospective businesses and developers in the City within 2 years.

Audience
- Prospective and current businesses, developers, and community partners

Core Messages
- We are committed to supporting business, commercial, and industrial development
- We provide helpful resources that are easily accessible
- We offer a balance of residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development sites
- We offer multimodal transportation resources with easy access to the Gerald R Ford Airport, Rapid bus system, bike routes and paths, and major highways and railroad routes
- We offer low tax to high service ratio and high-quality public infrastructure

Objective: Perform audit of existing business and economic development programs available to businesses and developers
- *Tactics:*

- o Develop business and economic development agency contact list
- o Work with community and agency partners to compile digital and print resources
- o Work with City staff to identify business resources and processes
- *Measurement:*
  - o Track number of available resources by agency

Objective: Brand and compose business resource webpage to streamline service offerings
- *Tactics:*
  - o Design and implement a business resource brand identity
  - o Engage community and partners in brand design
  - o Create a marketing plan to launch webpage
- *Measurement:*
  - o Track number of participants in design process
  - o Measure web metrics over time
  - o Survey new businesses and developers on quality of available resources
  - o Track web analytics

Objective: Provide updated information as new resources are available or processes change
- *Tactics:*
  - o Develop business and developer distribution list within a Mailchimp
  - o Create a registration form for distribution list on business resource webpage
  - o Coordinate internal team to monitor for additional resources and manage communication distributions
- *Measurement:*
  - o Track growth in number of contacts in list over time
  - o Track email analytics for content engagement

Goal 3:
Develop sense of community through placemaking, special events, social media engagement, and ongoing community meetings.

Audience
- Future and current businesses, residents, school districts, and community partners

Core Messages
- We are a diverse, strong, and authentic community where all individuals have the opportunity to thrive
- We are committed to partnering with community to continuously improve our sense of place

- We keep our community updated with community and city events, programs, and activities
- We work with community members and stakeholders to provide enriching and diverse community events and programming
- We meet residents where they are at by providing digital engagement opportunities for community to come together
- We collaborate with our schools, business districts, and other partners to create synergy in our programs, initiatives, and communications

Objective: Send monthly e-newsletter and mailer to keep community members up-to date with city news, events, and offerings
- *Tactics:*
  - Develop marketing and branding for monthly e-newsletter and print
  - Design processes and procedures for content development, design, and distribution
- *Measurement:*
  - Track growth in number of contacts in list over time
  - Track email analytics for content engagement

Objective: Enhance image of neighborhood, commercial, and industrial districts
- *Tactics:*
  - Educate residents on available grants, loans and rebate programs available through community partners
  - Promote commercial mixed-use development projects
  - Work with community to identify and create gateway features
- *Measurement:*
  - Track number of Wyoming houses receiving community grants, loans, or rebates
  - Monitor web analytics for resource pages
  - Track number of gateways features implemented

Objective: Increase number and distribution of special events held within the City of Wyoming
- *Tactics:*
  - Brand and market Neighborhood Block Party Program
  - Work with Wyoming Community Enrichment Commission to expand event and activity offerings
  - Market City of Wyoming Special Event Program to existing festivals and organizations in the area
  - Cross promote events through city and partner social media and other communication channels
- *Measurement:*
  - Track changes over time for attendance and location distribution of Block Parties, CEC events, City Special Events, and private events coordinated through the City Special Events Program

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<u>Objective: Increase City social media engagement and opportunities for digital participation</u>
- *Tactics:*
    - Implement social media tracking mechanism to better analyze post performance by department, service, or content
    - Develop Civic engagement participation contests through social media networks and webpages to encourage community involvement
    - Implement annual social media content calendar
    - Increase partnerships in communication posts to create synergy in distribution
    - Sponsor social media posts that engage or perform well
    - Cross promote events through city and partner social media and other communication channels
- *Measurement:*
    - Track participation in participation contests to monitor changes over time
    - Track and monitor social media posts by department, service, and content
    - Monitor analytics and performance of content calendar posts
    - Track and report out on social media sponsored posts and engagement

<u>Objective: Coordinate regular meetings with community partners</u>
- *Tactics:*
    - Strengthen relationships with schools by creating a regular meeting with city staff and school district representatives
    - Coordinate communications and events with Kent District Library Wyoming Branch
    - Enhance cooperative relationship with WKTV community media
    - Attend existing business association meetings within the city
    - Improve relationships with minority-serving commerce and community organizations through existing or newly established meetings
    - Create a shared partner calendar share by city department heads to track meetings and staff participation
- *Measurement:*
    - Track staff participation in existing community meetings
    - Track participation in newly formed community meetings

Goal 4:
Market priority development sites

Audience
- Future and current businesses, developers, and community partners

Core Messages
- We are committed to supporting business, commercial, and industrial development
- We provide helpful resources that are easily accessible
- We offer a balance of residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development sites
- We offer multimodal transportation resources with easy access to the Gerald R Ford Airport, Rapid bus system, bike routes and paths, and major highways and railroad routes
- We offer low tax to high service ratio and high-quality public infrastructure

Objective: Identify key priority sites
- *Tactics:*
  - Use the master plan as a guide to identify priority sites
- *Measurement:*
  - Track project progress

Objective: Develop branding including digital and print assets
- *Tactics:*
  - Develop visual asset library for development sites
  - Brand and market development sites
  - Work with partners on communications and marketing sites
  - Market City of Wyoming Special Event Program to existing festivals and organizations in the area
  - Cross promote events through city and partner social media and other communication channels
- *Measurement:*
  - Track development interest and activity at priority sites over time
  - Monitor web analytics and track changes over time
  - Monitor and track earned media