

Downtown Ponoka Marketing Strategy

1.0 Key Objectives and Messages

The intent of this Marketing Strategy is to inform the Committee and Town of the objectives, and tools to use to effectively implement the Downtown Action Plan. It is very important that the implementation of the Downtown Action Plan through public realm improvements and other initiatives be communicated to property owners, businesses, developers, potential end users, residents within the Plan Area and the greater community to ensure the success of the Downtown Action Plan. The purpose of this Marketing Strategy is to proactively and regularly educate and advertise the Town's planned improvements to actively support the revitalization of the Downtown.

Objectives for the Marketing Strategy:

- A. Inform property owners, business owners, and developers with regards to actions planned by the Town to improve the investment environment and conditions with the Downtown Plan Area;
- B. Promote, connect and build relationships with the Downtown community to enhance the lines of communication;
- C. Publicize recent development, business activity and success stories to enhance the image of the Plan Area;
- D. Increased tourist visitation within the Downtown area;
- E. Attract businesses and business development to the Downtown;
- F. Encourage families to relocate to the Downtown area.

2.0 Target Audience

Through discussion with the Committee and Public, two target audience groups were identified, local residents and regional consumers. The success of the Downtown Action Plan will depend on investment from within the Plan Area (existing business and property owners) and outside of the Plan Area. It will be important to market to both of these target audiences, however the best ambassadors for the Plan Area are the business and property owners located within the Plan Area. The stories and message that the business owners and property owners tell potential investors and business owners can have the greatest impact. It is very important that the Town and Heritage and Downtown Revitalization Committee regularly reach out to these groups using the marketing tools and inform them about the planned public improvements and any revitalization and development projects.

The Marketing Strategy should be targeted to:

- A. Existing property owners and business owners in the Downtown Plan Area;
- B. Residents within the Downtown Plan Area;
- C. Business owners and residents outside of the Downtown Plan Area;

- D. Business Associations outside of the Plan Area and regionally;
- E. Visitors and tourists;
- F. Potential new residents;
- G. Support Professionals, including real estate professionals, lending institutions, planning consultants and others.

3.0 Marketing Tools

The marketing of the Downtown Ponoka Action Plan should be a comprehensive multi-media campaign containing information, education and advertising components. The following key marketing tools are recommended to implement the overall Marketing Strategy:

- TOOL A.** Create a brand for the Downtown building on the logo developed for the planning project, this includes a community identity and the experience and atmosphere that visitors can expect when they enter Downtown.
- TOOL B.** Create an Asset Inventory, in order to attract new investment the Town must be able to articulate what assets are available and the competitive position, this includes land availability for development, housing statistics, tourism assets, and vacancies within the downtown including size, purpose and rent.
- TOOL C.** Social Media marketing, using Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to reach as broad of an audience as possible, this includes developing and using hashtags that can be linked to the Downtown Brand and can be used to promote sectors through weekly giveaways or competitions;
- TOOL D.** Develop a YouTube channel to create short videos promoting events, businesses or unique experiences within the Downtown.
- TOOL E.** Transition the Downtown Ponoka Action Plan website into a one-stop shop website for the Marketing of Downtown, create a page for the asset inventory so the information is easily accessible to potential investors and developers; a directory page of every business located within the Downtown and links to their webpages if available and contact information, this includes home occupations; an events page calendar showcasing every event within the Downtown area and enable anyone to submit events to the page; create an interactive page displaying all available parking with the Downtown and any restrictions if applicable; create a page to display all social media posts that have been directed to the Downtown Ponoka or have used marketing hashtags; and a page to display the Downtown Ponoka Action Plan and achievements/successes in the community.
- TOOL F.** Continue “My Downtown Ponoka” multi-media campaign initiated for the public engagement aspect of the planning project, transition the content and purpose to promoting the Action Plan improvements and successes, this includes posters in public places, signs on businesses or in windows, create a poster campaign of phrases from local residents or visitors of what “we love” about Downtown Ponoka that can easily be

incorporated into public elements; this includes a radio campaign on stations within the region to promote the Downtown Ponoka experience.

- TOOL G.** Create promotional material such as brochures created from the Downtown Ponoka website material, and pursue partner publications with other Town of Ponoka, County of Ponoka or Regional tourism promotions.
- TOOL H.** Develop themed walking tours of the Downtown (i.e. historical, Battle River Valley, Boomtown etc.) that can be delivered on branded Downtown Ponoka maps that easily accessible to the public and easy to navigate., these can be used as promotional material in visitor kiosks.
- TOOL I.** Publicize the Opportunities, Successes and Attractions happening in the Downtown through social media, local newspaper and Town publications.

4.0 Performance Measures

Performance measures are crucial to being able to determine how effective your marketing campaign has been. The following methods have been identified as performance measures for determining the effectiveness of the Downtown Ponoka Marketing Strategy:

- A.** Website Visitation Traffic, this can be used to determine the number of unique visitors to the website and number of page views; the conversion rate of visitors, being the percentage of visitors who come to your site and take a specific action that your content encourages; the bounce rate of visitors who come the site and the immediately leave or “bounce”.
- B.** The Social media reach of the marketing campaign, (i.e Facebook insights); this can tell you how many people were reached, the number of post clicks, reactions, total views and viewing behaviour.
- C.** Pre and Post-campaign surveys to determine consumer awareness, likelihood of returning or recommending to friends and family.
- D.** Sales tracking from Downtown businesses, this can determine the direct economic impact that marketing campaigns are having within the community.
- E.** Determining the amount and type of coverage in different media (broadcast, newspapers, special interest publications, websites, blogs, etc.)
- F.** Email newsletters, number of newsletters sent out, the open rate of emails, click through rates, what links are clicked on and number of forwards.
- G.** Attendee counts at community events, such as open houses, and the number of new attendees at each subsequent event.