

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
REPORT FOR THE SPECIAL VILLAGE COUNCIL WORKSHOP
JULY 8, 2008 AGENDA

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	SUBMITTED BY:
Integrated Branding and Marketing Initiative	Resolution Ordinance Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only	Douglas Kozlowski Communications Director

SYNOPSIS

Discussion is requested about the proposed Integrated Branding and Marketing Initiative contract. The FY08 General Fund Budget includes \$100,000 for this contract. As part of the organization-wide reduction in expenditures for the remainder of FY08, staff recommends deferring the contract at the present time and including it in the budget discussions for the FY09 Municipal Budget.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

This item was discussed as a part of the Strategic Planning sessions in August 2007 and approved as part of the FY08 Municipal Budget. The Downers Grove Vision 2022 identifies *A Beautiful Village*, which means a *Recognizable Brand and Image for Downers Grove*.

FISCAL IMPACT

The FY08 General Fund Budget includes a one-time expenditure of \$100,000 for the development of a Village Brand.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends deferring the contract at the present time and including it in the budget discussions for the FY09 Municipal Budget. The Village Council may alternatively direct staff to present a resolution to authorize a contract with North Star Destination Strategies of Nashville, Tennessee, in the amount of \$95,400.

BACKGROUND

During the FY08 budget discussions, the Village Council discussed developing a Village brand and included in the General Fund Budget a one-time expenditure of \$100,000 for this purpose. As such, staff issued a Request for Proposals/Qualifications (RFPQ) in February 2008 to select a branding and marketing firm to develop and implement a community-wide brand and integrated marketing initiative. Five firms responded to the RFPQ and staff interviewed the three most responsive and qualified firms.

Following the interviews, staff recommended that North Star Destination Strategies be selected to provide this service for an amount not to exceed \$95,400.

At the Council Workshop on April 7, 2008, the Village Council requested that staff provide additional information regarding the outcomes and benefits the Village would gain as part of the marketing initiative. In order to supply that additional information and to address subsequent questions posed by the Village Council, staff has scheduled an informational session with Don McEachern, CEO of North Star Destination Strategies, on May 6, 2008. In preparation for this session, Village Council members were provided with a DVD on the North Star *BrandPrint* process. In addition, included with this week's packet is a binder featuring case studies of branding projects completed by North Star.

A primary outcome of the branding and marketing initiative process will be the ability of all stakeholders to utilize the key deliverable of a common marketing strategy for maintaining and improving the reputation of the Village. Variations on the positive themes developed from interviews, focus groups, surveys and demographic research can be integrated into the communication objectives of the stakeholders. When the approved marketing strategy from the process is faithfully implemented, it will become the focal point of a community platform from which individuals and organizations alike can articulate the attributes and priorities that make Downers Grove a great community in which to live and do business.

Through the integrated branding and marketing initiative, the Village will gain valuable insights and strategies needed to manage Downers Grove's reputation on local, regional and national levels. It is intended that the outcomes of the process be shared with all stakeholders to create a unified platform in order to consistently communicate the most important, unique and marketable aspects of Downers Grove.

These stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Downers Grove Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation
- Downers Grove Downtown Management Corporation
- Downers Grove Park District
- Downers Grove Grade School District 58
- Community High School District 99
- Downers Grove Public Library

The branding and marking initiative process developed by North Star Destination Strategies is meant to provide a comprehensive understanding of how those that live, work or travel in Downers Grove think and feel about the Village. The deliverables from North Star's process will be as follows:

1. Communication and Media Audit
2. Key Stakeholder Interviews
3. Stakeholder Focus Groups
4. Vision Survey of Community Leaders
5. Online Community Survey
6. Undercover interviews – Informal discussions with residents, visitors, and local merchants
7. Qualitative Perception Study: involves telephone interviews to gather insights from meeting planners, tour group leaders, realtors, developers and others
8. Quantitative Consumer Awareness and Perception (CAP) Study – Conducted with a random sampling of consumers from Downers Grove's key markets. This survey measures:
 - a. Awareness and perceptions of Downers Grove
 - b. Awareness and perceptions of the competition
 - c. Whether consumers have visited Downers Grove
 - d. Attitudes regarding Downers Grove's strengths and weaknesses
 - e. Measurements of Downers Grove's delivery of hospitality and quality of life indicators
9. Competitive Positioning Review – Assesses Downers Grove's position relative to competition
10. Competitive Opportunity Analysis
11. Understanding and Insights Presentation
 - a. Insights that affect the development of Downers Grove's brand identity
 - b. Brand Truths – Reason for being
 - c. Brand Promise – What can Downers Grove provide better than any other municipality
 - d. Brand Personality
 - e. Brand Platform Statement – The guiding statement for the management and development of the Downers Grove Brand
12. Brand Concepts – Three different written creative concepts for communicating the brand
13. Brand Identity Guide – Two distinct options for bringing the approved brand concept to life.

Each creative expression will contain the following:

- a. Logo creation
- b. Strap line development
- c. Color palette
- d. Environmental applications, to include but not limited to:
 - i. Stationary, business cards and collateral design
 - ii. Sample marketing message for internal and external audiences
 - iii. Website design application