Village of Middleville
Marketing Strategy

Introduction
Middleville is a small quaint community and those who are familiar with the quality of life are fully aware of the resources in the Village. As a small Village, Middleville does not immediately correlate as a destination for recreation, business opportunity, family relocation, and tourism. Although several barriers exist, the Village should capitalize on the tremendous quality of life attributes such as the Thornapple River, Yankee Springs Recreational Area, Thornapple State Game Area, Paul Henry Trail and membership in the North Country Trail, Village parks, local events, and successful business ventures. The marketing strategy would enable the Village to promote itself at many local, county, and regional events, in addition to being displayed on the municipal website. The overall strategy will lead Middleville to comprehensively market the Village by taking advantage of all available resources and assets.

I. Purpose and Procedure of Marketing
   A. Goal: To actively promote and market the Village and the high quality of life, business opportunity, and redevelopment readiness via various mediums through a transparent, measurable and collaborative vision that embraces a culture of partnership and involvement.
   B. Objectives:
      i. Development of marketing materials to “tell the Village story”.
      ii. Develop a “Measurable Dashboard” to define and measure return on investment.
      iii. Track activity statistics such as retention and attraction projects.
      iv. Issue regular press releases highlighting recent Village and DDA events, major projects and policy decisions.
      v. Partner with the Barry County Chamber of Commerce (BCCC) and Economic Development Alliance (BCEDA) Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and local business community to help with creation of a Village brand.

II. Implementation
   A. Audience Outreach: The Village will actively reach out to businesses, consumers, real estate developers, and other members of the community.
      i. Businesses: The Village will reach out to local businesses when opportunities present themselves for exposure and marketing.
      ii. Consumers: The Village will market to consumers by advertising events, projects, and resources.
      iii. Real Estate Developers: The Village will actively market priority and high profile redevelopment/development sites online. Village staff will
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continuously work with listing agents and other marketing mediums to increase exposure of redevelopment sites.

iv. Schools, BCCC and BCEDA: The issuance of regular press releases, establishing an online and social media presence will enable the Village to reach audiences that are restricted by familiarity or proximity to typical media courses. The Village shall also reach out to Thornapple-Kellogg schools for participation in Village meetings and events.

B. Responsibilities: It’s imperative the Village distribute responsibilities to members of staff, appointed and elected officials for marketing efforts.

i. Staff is encouraged to take responsibility of announcing and marketing major decisions, projects, events that are the culmination of effective policy and comprehensives efforts.

ii. Elected and appointed officials, particularly the DDA, should take every opportunity to market events, such as Heritage Days, Christmas and Memorial Day Parades, and Riverbank Music Series.

C. Methodology: Village officials, staff, and other community organizations will be committed to a comprehensive and tangible marketing approach.

i. Signage. Marketing of events and projects can be listed on the Village LED sign. The Village may wish to partner with DDA for advertising on signage outside of Village limits.

ii. Regular press releases. Village staff shall issue regular press releases of important decisions, events, projects and general information that positively market Middleville.

iii. Promotional materials distributed at various community events such as the Barry County Fair, Barry County Home Show, and Barry County Chamber Events.

iv. Branding. The Village, Thornapple Trail Association, Thornapple Area Parks and Recreation Board, Thornapple Kellogg Schools, and DDA will collaborate to help establish a community brand. The brand does not need to be identical to the logo, but shall reflect the core values and attract positive attention to the community.

v. Why Middleville? Why Middleville? presentation will be displayed on the Village website, at community events, and on social media platforms.

vi. Question & Answer. Staff, Village officials will be encouraged to be present during events to help answer any questions the community may have regarding specific projects. The community engagement effort can include an information booth, displays and pop-up tent.

vii. Banners and advertising. The Village shall purchase and display a banner for public events and dedication ceremonies. The Village shall also market themselves in various local publications, such as the DDA community brochure and local newspapers.

viii. Major events. The Village can partner with major events and organizations such as the Middleville Patriots football team and 24 Hour Challenge in
promoting events, businesses, and redevelopment sites at games and other community events.

ix. Measurable Dashboard. The Village shall create a database of marketing events. The dashboard will include how the event was marketed, the cost involved, including quantitative figures to measure the return on investment. Continuous review should be implemented to effectively manage budget allocation and commitment levels towards the various approaches. The dashboard will include a business survey to be distributed annually.

III. Marketing of Redevelopment/Development Sites
   A. The Village will market redevelopment sites online with property information packages.
      i. Staff will continue to update the redevelopment sites as development occurs or priority changes, and list on Village website.
      ii. The Village will place visual depictions of major projects within Village Hall and Council Chambers. Conceptual drawings of redevelopment will also be presented at community and school events
      iii. As projects reach completion, dedication ceremonies shall be held. Partners at the state, local, and county level shall be invited.
      iv. The Village and DDA shall display signage and promotion of projects that utilized funds and incentives, such as sign grants, façade grants, low interest loans, tax abatements, etc.
      v. Staff will prepare testimonial of how specific programs, such as Redevelopment Ready Communities®, facilitated and coordinated redevelopment projects.
   B. Audience Outreach
      i. The Village shall retain transparent communication of available sites listed with real estate developers & brokers, local businesses, and other organizations. Staff will notify developers and real estate brokers of financial incentives to help market sites for potential redevelopment.
      ii. Consumers interested in redevelopment will be able to access information, such as community statistics, qualitative and quantitative data, reinforcing successful and business ventures in the Village.
      iii. Other stakeholders shall be notified of marketing efforts of sites having a direct impact, that reflects positively on the Village.
   C. Market Analysis
      The Village will partner with county, local and state officials for assistance in creating a market analysis. The purpose would provide analytical results of market needs in the Village for specific businesses, customer needs, housing and spending patterns, to effective promote redevelopment sites. The market analysis shall include details indicating sufficient support or shortfalls in market demand. The Village shall include the analytics when discussing potential redevelopments with businesses and real estate developers and how it fits with the current planning and zoning regulations for the site.

5/19/17
IV. Partnerships

A. In addition to current partnerships, the Village shall actively partner with advertising agencies, business associations, schools, BCCC, TARPC, and Thornapple Trail Association, to help effectively promote the quality of life of Middleville.

i. Business Associations: The Village shall partner with business associations to help promote local businesses and strengthen partnerships through capitalization of community assets, visions and leadership. By coordinating with business organizations, the Village can create a brand to promote the Village in a positive manner, attractive and creative design, and reflects the core values of the community (i.e. Thornapple River, Stagecoach, downtown streetscape).

ii. Thornapple Kellogg Schools: An active partnership with Thornapple Kellogg Schools is integral by taking advantage of the size, quality reputation, and multimedia opportunities the school district has to offer.

a. School events. The Village shall be permitted to display redevelopment projects, and market events at athletic, academic and community events.

b. Suitable Village equipment. The Village should be encouraged to allow the school to display and use the stagecoach for various events. The stagecoach is an important tool in establishing logo recognition.

iii. Community organizations. The Village shall seek partnerships with the Lions Club, Middleville Rotary, Charlton Park, Veterans and VFW clubs, for marketing the Village quality of life.

a. Regular meetings of service clubs should include marketing materials, and promotion of Village and community-wide events.

b. Suitable Village equipment. The Village should partner with service clubs to actively promote equipment outside the Village boundary.