



MICHIGAN MAIN STREET

CASE STUDY: BRANDING SERVICE & ROLLOUT FOR WAYLAND

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Feeling outdated, Wayland Main Street sought Michigan Main Street's help to refresh their branding, resulting in a dynamic rebranding process that embraced their identity as the "Dahlia City." The new brand, inspired by a community-painted dahlia mural, has revitalized downtown by fostering business owner and community engagement, increasing visibility, and inspiring new projects. The branding rollout has successfully boosted downtown pride, social media reach, and community involvement.

Upon receiving the new branding kit, Holli McPherson, director of Wayland Main Street, swiftly initiated a roll-out consisting of many strategic components to drive business owner and community engagement, and increase downtown visibility.

Wayland Main Street shared the branding kit with the local community, including businesses and the municipality. Each entity quickly took over ownership of the brand, creating stickers, t-shirts, and other branded products to sell in stores and use for merchandising, which in turn showcases the new brand and the district in new places and ways, outside of the organization's usual reach. It has also allowed business owners to take ownership of bringing vitality to downtown through increasing their pride in the district.



DOWNTOWN WAYLAND

The new brand inspired several new projects, including a new tourist campaign and a new volunteer incentive program. Wayland Main Street also feels that the new brand has increased its social impact, as the organization has updated their website and digital presence, which has led to an increased social media reach and increased engagement from community members in volunteering and showing pride for downtown Wayland.

The district also saw a place-focused refresh with new banners and place-making materials. The banner project was developed quickly with the new branding, serving as an impetus to pull traffic from surrounding areas adjacent to the downtown district. The new branding was the best thing the organization could have done to draw visitors as it has now made Downtown Wayland appealing and the business owners and community members are recharged and have more positivity about their downtown.

KEY SUCCESSES

Catalytic results: Banner project pulls drive-by traffic into the downtown district, increasing foot traffic

Creative Re-use: Sharing the branding kit with local business owners and the municipality increased district awareness in new and unique ways

Offered Inspiration: Inspired a new tourist campaign and a volunteer incentive program, increasing social media reach and volunteer engagement

PROJECT FUNDING

As a benefit of participating in Michigan Main Street, Wayland Main Street received the brand kit, valued at \$9,000, as one of the Technical Assistance Services provided by the program.

Wayland Main Street spent approximately \$12,000 of program funds rolling out new products and programs. This included the new banner program at the cost of about \$7,000, new volunteer shirts, playing cards, business cards, volunteer lanyards, tablecloths, polos, jackets, and backpacks.



CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

- Create a centralized list of all of the organization's collateral materials that will need to be updated with the associated cost so the organization can budget accordingly for the full rebrand
- Complete a website redesign at the same time you update your branding so the identity and perception your organization wants to portray are in sync

The main challenge in implementing the brand kit was the organization did not have a centralized list documenting all of the collateral materials that needed to be updated with the new branding, and the associated costs of updating each item. This challenge had budget implications as the organization did not have a full understanding of the costs of updating and replacing all materials at the onset of the service and has led to a phased approach to implementation. The list of collateral items should include all of the larger, more visible items like banners and wayfinding, but also the smaller items like business cards, letterhead, and name tags, to name a few.

One lesson learned through implementing the new brand-kit was to push for a website redesign simultaneously so the look and feel of the website matches the new perception the organization wants to showcase. Wayland Main Street updated their website at the same time as the branding was being implemented ensuring there is information about the downtown and organization included. In addition, one of the quickest and most impactful updates Wayland Main Street did was to immediately change the organization's social media profile picture to the new branding, ensuring their social media platforms also reflected the new look and feel the organization was aiming to portray.

