



Agenda Statement

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ITEM TITLE:

Report: Update Northstar's Branding Initiative

SUBMITTED BY: Martha Barberio, Economic Development Director

FISCAL NOTES:

Expenditure Required: N/A
Unencumbered Balance: N/A
Funding Source: N/A.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Below is a report from NorthStar

North Star Research and Branding Initiative as part of larger Kimley-Horn Re-Visioning Project

North Star has completed the following tasks: February 5, 2018

- Situation Analysis (questionnaire to key partners to determine where Valdez has been as well as identifying goals and priorities)
- Research and Planning Audit (collection of any community research, strategic plans, and other guiding documents for the community and its partners)
- Communication Audit (communication materials including published guides and collateral as well as media)
- Public Educational Presentation and Community Engagement Workshop (in conjunction with Kimley-Horn on August 23 in Valdez)

- Launch informational and educational website at www.brandingvaldez.com <<http://www.brandingvaldez.com/>> where people can learn about the project and sign up for ways to participate including being a Brand Champion
- Site Visit (8 days in Valdez) including one-on-one interviews with residents, community leader, business, educators, artists, guides, etc.; group meetings; FAM tours; intercept interviews with residents and visitors; excursions; and facility tours.
- Qualitative Vision Survey (open-ended) among community and business leaders to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for the community
- 2 week ethnographic study in Valdez where ethnographer/videographer will record cultural conversations throughout the community (casual, informal conversations similar to intercepts; will include Oktoberfest). (late September-early October)
- Community-wide Quantitative Survey (multiple choice) open to everyone living and or working in Valdez (publicized online and with social media). Hard copies provided for those without internet access or preferring to fill out a printed copy (available on www.brandingvaldez.com) <<http://www.brandingvaldez.com/>>
- Brand Barometer as part of the Community-wide Survey measuring advocacy among residents
- Competitive Positioning Review of neighbors and competitors to understand the marketplace and context for the brand (tourism and economic development competitors)
- Follow up calls with City Council members and others in the community who were not available during the Site Visit. These calls will continue until all research is completed
- Influencer Perception Study including qualitative phone conversations with neighboring communities and competitors as well as state and regional officials and professionals in economic development and tourism. These will continue until all research is completed
- External Quantitative Perception Study conducted outside the Valdez community to gain an external perception. North Star will work with Valdez to determine the best markets in which to conduct the survey (perhaps one in AK and one outside the state). This will measure awareness and perceptions of Valdez from visitors and non-visitors
- Research and Strategy Presentation to Council and Commissions
- Strategy Approved
- Internal Creative Brief to initiate creative process
- Creative Workshop online with small Valdez Creative Committee to explain process and gather subjective opinions
- Strapline (tagline) Development
- Presentation of strapline options to small Creative Committee (Feb 5)

The creative and implementation phases will continue for the next 3-4 months or so. North Star is working via Webex with a small team (4-5) in Valdez to evaluate creative concepts and reach decisions on the community's behalf. A final presentation for the branding effort is expected in June 2018 based on the rate of approvals and the level of any revisions required to creative output. Valdez will have full discretion on how these elements are implemented.