

LADNER VILLAGE BRAND DEVELOPMENT - BACKGROUNDER

As Ladner Village looks to future growth and revitalization, it’s essential that our approach reflects community values and priorities at its core. With this in mind, we enaged the brand consultancy firm, Partners and Hawes, who specializes in Place Brand & Marketing, to develop a new brand strategy and identity that captures our community heart.

The new brand must meet the following criteria:

- Expresses our community’s character and heritage
- Can be applied consistently across physical, environmental and digital platforms
- Stimulates tourism and economic growth
- Able to enhance pedestrian and visitor experiences through improved wayfinding signage and other applications

After a discovery and engagement phase, we are ready to share early brand identity concepts (stage 5 of the process outlined below):



BASIS FOR BRAND DISCOVERY

To reach this point, P&H entered into an extensive discovery process, including document research, an in-depth immersion, and extensive engagement with local community residents and business owners:

- Ladner Village Revitalization project engagement and planning documents
- Historical archives and records
- Village immersion day
- Depth interviews with civic leaders and business owners
- On-the-ground conversations with local residents and business owners
- Review of comparative community brands

BRAND OPPORTUNITY

After Discovery, P&H articulated the following strategic opportunity for brand development:

“In this part of the world, where our towns and cities seem captured by novelty and built on impermanence, Ladner Village stands apart in its unwavering connection to its roots. Locals know that to be clear on where you’re going means being clear on where you’re coming from. So let’s get back to first principles: Why is Ladner Village here in the first place?

It all starts with the river.

The river shapes everything about Ladner Village: its origins, its history, its natural wealth, its occupations, its rhythms, its physical shape, its sight-lines, its wildlife, its peoples, both Indigenous and settler. In many ways, the river is our community’s ever-present companion, serving as anchor, guide, way-finder, connector, nurturer, and ultimate authority. While the river is our original provider (from abundant waters to rich soils), its influence is not only functional but atmospheric.

UNIFYING BRAND IDEA

P&H then developed the core brand idea, that will act as the strategic foundation for brand identity development and storytelling:

Shaped by the River

BRAND STORY EXPLORATION

In order to pressure-test the authenticity and story-telling potential of this unifying brand idea, P&H developed the following exploratory narrative. This exercise is intended to reveal how well the core idea resonates. Please note, the following paragraph represents an exploration of a potential theme that can knit together the elements that make up our place brand. These words exist independent of specific media or message (eg, website, signage etc), which are still to be developed.

Shaped By the River

The sloughs reach inland. The wharfs and float homes reach out. Sometimes, it’s hard to tell where the river ends and the village begins. But that’s the way here: we reach into the river and the river reaches into us.

We are, were and forever will be, shaped by the river. We orient our days to the water, read its moods, follow its pulse. Along these banks, our families grew: farming rich soils and harvesting the abundance carried downstream and upstream by boat, current or spawn. Knowledge of the river and its lands flows in our veins, flows from generation to generation.

And though our village stands on deep roots, change is constant. Tides reshape the banks, seasons rewrite the view. Like layers of sediment laid down in the delta, fresh ideas build on old wisdom, new endeavours mix with tradition. We move, adapt, and continue on, past and future blended in the current.

Think of the river as our most revered community elder: nurturer, guide, teacher, provider. A constant companion in an inconstant world. For though we may leave (some of us daily) the river calls us back, just as it calls back the snow geese, the cranes, and the salmon.

As the river runs through these lands, it runs through its people.

CREATIVE EXPLORATION

Having developed this strategic foundation, P&H then moved into developing the visual identity of the brand. The first stage was to create mood boards that explored potential visual expressions of the brand strategy, including potential approaches to imagery, colour and typography. Following feedback from the team, P&H proceeded to develop two potential brand identity concepts.