

# Hope Branding Initiative

The branding initiative in Hope is a collaborative effort on the part of the District of Hope, the Chamber of Commerce, and AdvantageHOPE. The aim of this undertaking is to define the spirit and personality of Hope, and to articulate the unique attributes that make Hope an attractive place to visit, relocate, or bring business. The outcome of the first stage of the branding process will be a Brand Book (including a logo set + guidelines). This book will contain elements such as community values, personality, audience(s), value proposition (unique attributes of Hope), and strategic positioning to name a few.

## Branding... that's a logo, right?

**Wrong.** But not entirely. Think of a brand as a reputation to the outside world. It is a combination of the spirit, personality, values, and associations that *other people* hold about a place.

When you go through the process of branding, you actively dig deep into the true identity of a place, and define what it is that makes it a unique and attractive place to visit, invest, or move to.

Once a brand is articulated on paper, the next step is to bring it to life with the development of the visual identity (yes, that includes a new logo). The logo is simply a visual thumbprint reflecting the intangible essence of a brand.

## Place Branding Defined

*“A **place brand** is the totality of thoughts, feelings, and expectations that people hold about a location. It's the reputation and the enduring essence of the place and represents its distinctive promise of value, providing it with a competitive edge.*”

***Place branding** provides a framework and toolkit for differentiating, focusing, and organizing around the location's competitive and distinctive identity. It is grounded in truth and reality.”*

## Why should we brand?

A community with a strong brand is more competitive when it comes to attracting visitors, government investment, new businesses, and new residents. This all translates into more business for the existing businesses; more money flowing into the local economy by attracting new events, conferences and government programs; a stronger and more diversified population base (increasing the local tax revenue); and new businesses and services. The list could go on, but you get the drift. Currently, Hope does not have a

clearly defined brand. There are many ideas in people's minds as to what Hope represents. Are we the Highway Through Hell? Are we the place where Rambo was filmed? Are we the Chainsaw Capital of Canada? Are we about the Fraser River & Canyon? Are we about an active outdoor lifestyle? The messages going out into the world are inconsistent, making the reputation of Hope a fractured and schizophrenic one. Do these snippets of who we are make Hope a **compelling enough** place to visit, move to, or invest in?

## What's happened so far

In July 2012, an informal Branding Committee was struck to explore the idea of branding in Hope, and options for how it may be done. This informal group was comprised of leaders from the Hope & District Chamber of Commerce, AdvantageHOPE, and the District of Hope. A few of the members have significant experience with branding. As it became clear that the effort needed to be collaborative, with “buy-in” from each of the three organizations involved, each committed to participate in the initiative by providing leadership and financial contribu-

tions. In September 2012, a memorandum of understanding was signed by all three parties, matching funds were secured, and the acting Branding Committee was formalized. Currently, the Branding Committee is working with Boldfish Creative, a local branding and marketing communications company, to create a roadmap, timelines, and deliverables for this stage of the branding initiative. The group continues to meet several times a month to keep the process moving ahead. Background research is already underway (see below).

### The Branding Committee

**Glen Ogren**

Chamber of Commerce (President)

**Tammy Shields**

Chamber of Commerce (Vice President)

**Tyler Mattheis**

AdvantageHOPE (Executive Director)

**Wes Bergmann**

AdvantageHOPE (Director)

**John Fortoloczky**

District of Hope (CAO)

**Gerry Dyble**

District of Hope (Councillor)

**Alison Harwood**

Boldfish Creative (branding contractor)

### Creating the Brand - Phase One

Creating a brand is only the first step in a much bigger and ongoing process. Once a brand and identity are developed, the stakeholders must lay out a strategy for how the brand will be used and communicated to its target audiences. Phase One of the Hope Branding Initiative will include defining what Hope will stand for, its character traits, community values, and defining attributes that will give it a competitive advantage in the marketplace. It will culminate with a “Brand Book” that will be a shared document and include the brand platform, messaging, and visual identity (including logo, colour palette, fonts, usage guidelines). Below are some of the steps in Phase One:

**BRANDING PLAN (COMPLETED)** - this is the roadmap for the branding activities for Phase One.

**BACKGROUND RESEARCH** - Currently underway. Boldfish Creative will deliver a report that looks at previous visioning and positioning efforts done in Hope, the OCP, outside + internal perceptions, history of Hope, and other relative research. Completion in early February.

**COMMUNITY SURVEY + STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS** - Members of the community will contribute to how we define Hope as an attractive place to visit, live, and invest in. Taking place during February.

**VISUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT** - Working from the branding document from the previous stages, a visual identity will be created, including a logo, primary colour palette, fonts & typography.

**THE BRAND BOOK** - This will be the end of Phase One of branding, to be completed for June 2013.

### Stay Involved...

Stay involved with the branding initiative by visiting the Chamber of Commerce website at the link below, where regular updates will be posted. Sign up for our newsletter to ensure you receive an invitation to participate in our survey in February. Also keep your eye on the monthly Chamber section in the Hope Standard for updates.

[hopechamber.net/about/hope-branding-initiative](http://hopechamber.net/about/hope-branding-initiative)

