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Everyday new plans are being developed that will change Brockton for the better - by Michael Gallerani

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Brockton is building a new brand image. Everyday new plans are being developed that will change Brockton for the better.

In order to successfully build the new brand image we must first collect the marketing and communication materials from all of the agencies and organizations involved in local economic development including the chamber of commerce, tourism or visitors bureau, other economic development organizations, arts groups, and the local government. We must also determine what message the private sector developers, Realtors, and financial institutions are conveying about the community to the outside world.

In an ideal world the message and look of all the materials is consistent. But we hardly live in an ideal world. Usually there are competing forces, distinct agendas, messaging that is hard to discern as representing the same place, and more often than not a failure to stay on point and tell the city story in such a way as to compel investors, decision makers, and developers to take a good look at the community.

By offering a core message, we will offer organizations external to the economic development effort the ability to build off of a consistent and coordinated strategic platform while executing their messages individually. Things such as colors and images are valuable elements when striving to build a strong locale brand identity. When a brand is managed by the local economic development agency/organization, the brand stands a significantly greater chance of working for the city as a whole and accomplishing the goal of bringing a positive image of the community to the marketplace. The key is no one entity, not the local government, not B21, not any of the participating organizations or businesses will own the brand. Rather it will be managed. A managed brand invites buy-in from others, including the private sector. Buy-in is a necessary element when building a successful branding program.

Ownership of the community's brand platform and brand identity will be held by a sizable and inclusive marketing partnership comprising local government, economic development agencies/organizations as well as big and small players from the public and private sectors.

Those that "buy-in" together form a team of brand emissaries. The brand will ultimately represent the big picture for the community.

Ultimately the brand rests in the minds and hearts of other people. It is what they say about us when we are not around. It can be influenced and shaped by marketing materials. But what has more influence over the things people say about the community, a logo or a personal experience? Those experiences are what bring the brand to life. This involves marketing. But it can not stop there. The brand will be represented in the community's architecture, in its events and attractions, in its public

art and signage, in the aesthetic overlays to development and redevelopment, in the attitudes of residents and public servants, in the community's approach to entrepreneurs, and in its educational offerings. In other words, the community will be asked to do more than advertise its new brand; it must be ready to wear it like a second skin.

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