



Villager Mall
Proposed Communications Strategy for Re-Positioning and Re-Naming the New Villager Mall
Submitted by Wood Communications Group
June 2010

Overview: In 2010, the redevelopment of the property currently known as Villager Mall will be complete, marking a significant milestone for the south side of Madison as well as the entire Greater Madison area. Upon completion of this project that was more than five years in the making and will be called home by 18 businesses, organizations and nonprofits and the constituents they serve, area residents will have a rare jewel of a community resource available to them. In celebration of this occasion and to properly mark the project completion, the Community Development Authority is seeking to re-brand the property to appropriately align it with the new, broadened mission of the collaborative development. The re-branding effort, along with all of the innovative approaches that are being used to create this dynamic community resource area, is intended to elevate the image of the city's south side while reminding residents of the cultural and geographic significance of the Park Street corridor.

Strategic Objectives:

- To position the new Villager Mall as a hub of critical resources that serves not only members of the adjacent south side neighborhoods, but of neighborhoods throughout the city and in surrounding areas.
- To elevate the image of the south side of Madison while reducing any negativity that has gained public attention in recent years.
- To create a coordinated, collaborative process for gathering input and information about how the property is viewed, what it should be, what it can be and how to ensure that it is what the city needs/wants.

Tactical Requirements:

- Position Villager Mall as:
 - An important hub of vital resources for a variety of populations;
 - A valuable community gathering point that fosters collaboration and healthy, positive outcomes;
 - An essential gateway to the heart of a community that boasts exceptional health and education resources;
 - A contributing factor to the growth and revitalization of south Madison neighborhoods as well as to neighborhoods throughout the larger community.
- Elevate the image of the south side of Madison by:
 - Replacing negative stories/images that originate from this geographic area with positive ones that demonstrate a thriving, vibrant population;
 - Providing a multitude of easily accessible education and health-related resources and services that help area residents better themselves and their families;
 - Creating ongoing opportunities and space for community collaboration.



- Gather input and create buy in from key stakeholders/target audiences:
 - Test the brand characteristics that have been identified throughout the process to make sure they resonate with key target audiences;
 - Establish and maintain on-going relationships/communication with key stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds to help ensure that the benefits of Villager Mall are understood and communicated through various channels in the Greater Madison community;
 - Develop the capacity to support continued growth and revitalization efforts in south Madison and in other parts of the community.

**Proposed
Approach/
Process Elements:**

Phase 1: Research

1. Meet with CDA (assuming that is the correct entity) to establish parameters of new brand and confirm objectives of community involvement , finalize decision making process, etc.;
2. Identify list of key stakeholders/target audiences from whom information could/should be gathered, including:
 - Local neighborhood representatives (Burr Oaks)
 - Representatives from other, nearby neighborhoods as well as other neighborhoods in the Greater Madison area (ie. Capital View, Bram's Addition, Greenbush, others, as appropriate)
 - tenants,
 - supporters/donors,
 - business partners,
 - city and county government representatives,
 - potential partners/donors/supporters
 - other key opinion leaders;
3. Host 3-4 focus groups with key target audiences to (approx. 10 – 12 people per group):
 - Identify current beliefs and perceptions of Villager Mall;
 - Identify needs and expectations for Villager Mall;
 - Identify the strengths and opportunities for the new Villager Mall;
 - Gather input and feedback on how the beliefs, perceptions, needs and expectations, strengths and opportunities could/should translate into a brand and a brand promise for the new Villager Mall.
4. Conduct a survey of all tenants of the new Villager Mall to:
 - Identify current beliefs and perceptions of Villager Mall;
 - Identify needs and expectations for Villager Mall;
 - Identify the strengths and opportunities for the New Villager Mall;
 - Gather input and feedback on how the beliefs, perceptions, needs, expectations, strengths and opportunities could/should translate into a brand and brand promise for the new Villager Mall.
5. Prepare a summary of findings from focus groups and tenant survey
6. Prepare a summary of recommendations based on findings report
7. Present findings and recommendations to CDA and/or other deciding entities.



Phase 2: Plan Design

1. Support CDA as it makes final decisions related to branding, based on research findings
2. Work with CDA to draft strategies for developing the new brand design
 - Logo design
 - Signage design
 - Other material design
3. Work with CDA to draft a roll out strategy for the new brand
 - Celebration event strategy
 - Media relations strategy
 - Public relations strategy
 - Community outreach strategy

Phase 3: Plan Execution

1. Finalize brand design
2. Produce brand materials
3. Execute celebration event
 - Identify event parameters
 - Manage event logistics
 - Identify target audience list
 - Manage invitation process
4. Execute media relations strategy
 - Draft media materials
 - Coordinate media briefings
 - Execute distribution of media materials
 - Track media coverage
5. Execute public relations strategy
 - Execute a "soft" roll out of brand with key target audiences (include communication with focus group participants and tenants who took part in research)
 - Identify opportunities for earned media coverage
 - Identify opportunities for elevating the community presence and positioning of the new Villager Mall

Phase 4: On-Going Brand Maintenance and Management

1. Set protocols for adhering to brand and brand promise
2. Design a long-term strategy for public awareness and public support of the new Villager Mall
3. Create a brand management/review team to conduct periodic brand assessments
4. Make recommendations for course corrections, if necessary, to keep brand on track



**Proposed
Timeline:**

June 2010

- Meet with CDA to confirm parameters for the process of gathering community input and coming to consensus on brand and mission
- Identify key community stakeholders from whom information/input must be gathered
- Finalize logistics of the research process
- Design survey instrument for tenant survey
- Design survey protocol for focus groups

July 2010

- Host 3-4 small group meetings/focus groups with key stakeholders
- Conduct tenant survey
- Prepare a report of findings of focus groups and tenant survey

August

- Prepare a summary of recommendations for consideration by the Community Development Authority (CDA)
- Present findings and recommendations to CDA
- Begin to design a plan to execute a brand roll out, including a community event/celebration, public relations strategy, media relations strategy and community outreach strategy
- Finalize the brand/mission (critical decision point)
- Begin brand design process
- Begin execution of public outreach plans
- Prepare plans for "soft" brand roll out

September

- "Soft" brand roll out (media/public relations initiatives kick off)
- Finalize plans for major kick off/brand unveiling celebration event
- Finalize brand design process

October

- Finalize production of signage and other critical brand materials
- Major brand roll out
- Host community celebration event

November and beyond

- Ongoing brand establishment
- Solidify long-term brand objectives
- Establish process for ensuring ongoing adherence to brand and brand promise



**Cost
Considerations:**

Estimated costs of project execution for Phase 1*:

Phase 1: Research - \$15,000 - \$18,000**

- Coordination and facilitation of 3-4 focus groups (\$9,000 – 12,000)
- Coordination and facilitation of an online tenant survey (\$3,000)
- Prepare report of focus group findings and recommendations (\$2,000)
- Present findings and recommendation to CDA (\$1,000)

**Estimates are based on the initial understanding of the scope of project and preliminary recommendation for Phase 1 and do not include expenses related to approved hard costs that would be incurred. Finalized estimates would be supplied once a final scope of work has been identified. WCG would also be happy to provide assistance with Phases 2-4 as identified in the proposal and would submit cost estimates for those phases upon request.*

****Wood Communications Group is pleased to offer a significant reduction in estimated fees for Phase 1 in the form of pro bono work on the tenant survey, preparation of initial report and presentation of findings and recommendations, and a 50% reduction of fees on focus group coordination and facilitation.*

Revised estimate with WCG contribution:

Phase 1: Research - \$4,500 - \$6,000

- Coordination and facilitation of 3-4 focus groups (\$4,500 – 6,000)
- Coordination and facilitation of tenant survey (\$0)
- Prepare report of focus group findings and recommendations (\$0)
- Present findings and recommendations to CDA (\$0)