



Proposal to the City of Marshall for Market Research and Civic Rebranding

January 30, 2019

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CITY OF MARSHALL RESEARCH & REBRANDING RFP

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1. INTRODUCTION

January 30, 2019

Ms. Lauren Deutz
CVB Director
City of Marshall
344 West Main Street
Marshall, MN 56258-1313

Ms. Deutz,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your RFP for the City of Marshall. We would consider it an honor to work with you.

After learning more about your situation, we believe North Star is the ideal partner to help Marshall conduct a research-based, city-wide rebrand. As a leader in place branding, all of our work is focused on helping communities identify their competitive strengths and leverage those strengths strategically, creatively, and tactically for the purposes of increasing resident recruitment, community pride, visitation, and economic viability. Our philosophy is simple: ***Your brand should connect the soul of your community to the heart of your consumers.*** The BrandPrint process we use to realize that philosophy is much more complex, as it has been refined and perfected over the past 18 years through partnerships with over 250 communities in 44 states.

Through our BrandPrint, we will be able to discover Marshall's optimum positioning, the best use of resources to leverage your equity in the brand, and the ideal creative messages to positively influence residents, visitors, and businesses. In addition to shaping and building consensus around the Marshall story, we will provide guidance for you to coordinate and deploy the brand across city departments and among key partners.

We confirm that: (1) North Star does not have a record of substandard work within the last five years; and (2) North Star acknowledges complete responsibility for the entire contract. Licenses are not applicable to our field of work.

I would love to talk more with you regarding how North Star can help Marshall leaders as they shape the city's identity. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding this proposal. Thank you once again, and I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Only the best,



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2. BACKGROUND & EXPERIENCE

The Burdette Agency, Inc. d/b/a North Star Destination Strategies is incorporated in the state of Florida. North Star Destination Strategies has been in business since the year 2000 and was acquired by The Burdette Agency, Inc. in 2018. The Burdette Agency has over 22 years of experience in marketing, strategy, place branding, and research.

THE ADVANTAGE OF A SPECIALIST

Over the last two decades, North Star Destination Strategies has partnered with more than 250 communities coast to coast, helping them become more competitive. Bottom line... communities are our passion. And we've got the success stories to prove that passion. Nationally, North Star has collaborated on high-level initiatives with the states of Florida and Mississippi; well-known cities such as Providence, Rhode Island and Jacksonville, Florida; and smaller communities like Petersburg, Alaska and Brookings, South Dakota. All that varied expertise is important for Marshall because you want a firm with the chops, credentials, and gravitas to manage your project.

Our portfolio of work and record of problem solving prove that we don't have a stock solution. Moreover, the advantage of our specialization is that our process – which a generalist agency cannot replicate – helps us obtain precisely the right insights to create the unique brand you need to influence your audiences. Despite the size and import of the initiatives we work on, North Star is a small company and our same blue-ribbon team works on every project.

PROCESS: HOW STRATEGY UNITES YOUR STAKEHOLDERS & COMMUNITY

Our process combines a proven approach with customized creativity and out-of-the-box thinking specific to your situation. It begins with detailed research and expert-driven strategy development, then it builds vivid brands in the real world through award-winning visual identity design and an action plan implementable by your team within your budget and timeline.

Given the several leaders and stakeholders with an interest in branding Marshall, our approach will prove especially advantageous: research and strategy will be paramount to reaching consensus concerning the direction of the brand well before any decisions about creative elements are made. We find that the strongest connections between a community and its brand are made when everyone understands and supports the ideas that underlie the eventual logo and strapline. Thus, **our process and guidance is centered first on creating understanding and buy-in to a DNA and strategic platform.** This critical, foundational asset will outlive any campaign because it is the underlying truth and driving force of your community. With consensus on it, the creative decisions that follow will be relatively simple for your steering committee. Time and time again, we have learned that strategy unites, inspires partner compliance, and ultimately changes behavior.

RELEVANT CASE STUDIES

The following are short summaries of work with past clients who welcomed us into their communities:

- ***Brookings, South Dakota***

With a legacy of great ideas and entrepreneurial success, Brookings is a supportive place on the prairie where creativity and innovation are prolific, an enviable place where dreams are achieved. Whether in the labs at South Dakota State University, in a garage, or in a backyard workshop, residents and students constantly question how and why things are, which led the city to ask similar questions of its stagnating brand. Despite a collection of opportunities that rival any in the Midwest – transportation access on the I-29 corridor, a renowned public research university, and business-friendly community – Brookings simply wasn't convincing graduating students, visitors, and entrepreneurs that this was the place they had always imagined. Brookings' strapline "Bring Your Dreams" was aimed at dispelling this notion, making it clear that the city's culture of innovation allows great ideas and experiences to flourish. Sure enough, each year Brookings makes an appearance on "best of" lists ranging from livability to education to economic success, showing that the city's excitement for progress and possibility remains strong.
- ***West Plains, Missouri***

Situated in the sprawling Ozarks, the environment of West Plains presents spectacular beauty but also commands resourcefulness and resilience. Fittingly, our research showed that an entrepreneurial spirit permeates this community as residents pursue a better quality of life, outdoor adventure, higher education degrees, and small business development. They also proved hopeful and optimistic as part of their nature. Together, the propensity for hard work and an eye on success leads many to "Make it happen here", in West Plains. Though the city isn't one to brag, West Plains is certainly primed for growth, from outdoor adventure calling out to millennial visitors and transplants and a ready and able workforce getting the attention of new employers.
- ***Quincy & Adams County, Illinois***

Quincy is a shining star in Adams County, Illinois. Historic and beautiful, the city and county work hard to be great. Quincy houses a renowned arts program, excellent healthcare, beautiful parks, and strong schools. It also serves as a transportation hub, with an airport, rail system, and port on the Mississippi River. But part of being great is knowing you can be even better. City leaders recognized that various public sector organizations in Quincy weren't working as a team, in large part because they all had different ideas about what made the city special. Indeed, though Quincy and Adams had some name recognition, few people could identify what exactly set the two apart from the rest. Our branding initiative focused on building consensus around the timely opportunities to market the area's Mormon history, arts and architecture, and the economic possibilities of port and riverfront development. Like Quincy, the initiative was "Right on Q"– and with everyone finally on the same page, the Quincy City Council recently passed the Quincy NEXT plan to guide the area's economic growth and prosperity.
- ***Gallatin, Tennessee***

Gallatin is that rare town that's perfectly comfortable with its own place in the world. While the town has lots going for it (history, location, nature, opportunity), most of its

attitude comes from the people who choose to live there. Strong character and strong opinions mean they do things their own way, with an eye toward what works instead of what's trending. And they're refreshingly unconcerned about trying to impress people – which is what impresses so many people who go there. In the short time since North Star's project in Gallatin, major publications like *Reader's Digest* and *American City & County* have taken notice of the city's "True Grit. Amazing Grace." brand. The city's compelling story of determination and confidence going back several generations sets a worthy example for others to follow. Through it all, *Reader's Digest* "Nicest Place in America" in 2017 remains as inviting and humble as ever.



REFERENCES

The following past clients have firsthand experience with our research and brand creation process. View testimonial videos and council responses to our work here: http://northstarideas.com/testimonials_branding

West Plains, Missouri

Mr. Todd Shanks
Community Marketing Director
City of West Plains
417.256.7176
todd.shanks@westplains.net

Brookings, South Dakota

Mr. Al Heuton
Executive Director
Brookings Economic Development
Corporation
605.697.8103
al@brookingsedc.com

3. PERSONNEL & PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Approximately a dozen North Star members will play a role in crafting the community BrandPrint for Marshall. Our team is knowledgeable and diverse: though team members may specialize in research, strategy, marketing, or design, each of us has the place-branding expertise to contribute to any survey, strategic platform, or creative execution developed as part of this project. Your project supervisor, **Ed Barlow, Senior Vice President & Director of Strategic Planning**, will be available to you for the duration of our engagement and will be tasked with directing the team's collective efforts on your behalf.

Ed Barlow

Project Supervisor

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Ed loves a good riddle. Ever since being the fastest to find the toaster in the tree in his pediatric dentist's waiting room, he has been solving marketing and operational challenges with creative and strategic instincts.

Most recently, Ed gained valuable experience on both the client and agency sides of the branding relationship as an ADDY-award-winning Director of Marketing and Communications for the parent corporation to a group of national facility services companies serving transportation, travel, aviation, retail, healthcare, and hospitality industries. He has also worked as Senior Copywriter and Marketing Strategist for a branding design firm in Nashville specializing in persuasive content for Music Row, corporate, and nonprofit clients.

Ed caters to North Star clients with creativity, effective communication and customer service. His insights and instincts lead clients to a broad, inclusive approach to successful community place branding for the long-term. He has led successful community place branding initiatives across the country for more than 10 years.

Education: Florida State University | MA, Southern Methodist University**Years of Experience:** 25**Client Work:** State of Mississippi; State of Florida; Iowa's Creative Corridor; Lima/Allen County, Ohio; Brookings, South Dakota; Jamestown, New York; Goshen, Indiana; Downtown York & York County, Pennsylvania; Johnson City, Tennessee; Sammamish, Washington; Santa Ana, California**Ginny Walthour**

Project Manager

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The love of travel and experiencing different cultures and places are some of Ginny's core passions. From studying in Spain and surviving the Running of the Bulls in Pamplona to working for *USA Today* International in London, she thrives on understanding and learning about new people and places. Relating to different types of clients and cultures is her strength. Her easy-going nature and expert listening skills allows clients to feel at ease. Having worked in both the private and public sectors, she understands the different ways in which organizations operate and can navigate through any challenge. As a mother of two, her globe-trotting ways have decreased some, and you will now likely find her cheering on her girls at their soccer games or out on the boat on Jacksonville's St. Johns River. And she would not have it any other way.

Education: University of Georgia | MBA, Georgia State University**Years of Experience:** 20**Client Work:** JAXUSA Partnership; Clay County (Florida) Economic Development; Clay County (Florida) Tourism

Amanda Trotenberg

Project and Research Manager

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Attending Tulane University in the wake of hurricane Katrina ignited Amanda's passion for community development. From backpacking the Middle East to studying with James Carville, Amanda has immersed herself in learning and discovering new communities and identifying ways to help them grow and be successful. A true people person, Amanda loves entering a room full of strangers and learning their stories. That curiosity, coupled with comprehensive know-how and an entrepreneurial spirit, allowed her to create and implement successful marketing programs for a variety of New Orleans clients. From farmers markets to fine dining restaurants, school board to a mayoral candidates, Amanda made her mark as a strategist who listens to her clients, understands their needs and delivers results. Here at North Star, Amanda manages projects and helps bring the creative vision to life. When she's not reading up on current events and worldwide issues, Amanda can be found checking out the community's local craft brew scene, soaking up a live music show, or on her yoga mat.

Education: Tulane University**Years of Experience:** 10**Client Work:** Johnson City, Tennessee; Elkton & Cecil County, Maryland; Downtown York & York County, Pennsylvania; Santa Ana, California**Roberto Muñoz**

Project Research Manager

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Writing, marketing, research—all done with careful accuracy and quick wit: Roberto is a five-tool player for the placemaking game thanks to his endless energy and versatile skill set. After a stint at a downtown Nashville marketing agency, Roberto joined North Star as a supportive teammate with a penchant for finding the right words—and numbers—to tell a community's story in vivid detail. Whether working on business development or a research presentation, he always looks to learn about unique towns and cities nationwide and about the character and voice that sets them apart. If he's not poring over commas and decimal points, Roberto is likely catching a minor league ballgame in Nashville's Germantown or making a seasonal pilgrimage to Wrigley Field in Chicago.

Education: The University of Chicago**Years of Experience:** 3**Client Work:** Johnson City, Tennessee; Elkton & Cecil County, Maryland; Downtown York & York County, Pennsylvania; Santa Ana, California

Patrick Golden

Project Creative Director

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With his background in history, passion for architecture, and love of a good story, Patrick loves learning about the place he hasn't been, a town off the beaten path, or the true heart of a city. Combined with his love of strategy and design, he is ready to distill all learnings into design marks, logos, straplines, and narratives that are as authentic as the places they represent. And he's got awards to show for it - dozens of Addys and an Effie for marketing effectiveness. Patrick even painted the art on our walls and designed our offices spaces. He's a true Renaissance man.

Mistaking Patrick for a local is the greatest compliment you can pay him. He always has a bag packed, a camera on hand, and a sketchbook in his backpack, ready to rack-up as many miles and experiences as possible.

Education: Flagler College**Years of Experience:** 28**Client Work:** Clay County (Florida) Tourism; Sammamish, Washington; Elkton & Cecil County, Maryland; Downtown York & York County, Pennsylvania; Johnson City, Tennessee; Santa Ana, California**Anita Carter**

Project Creative Services Manager

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Driven by avid curiosity—be it learning the origin of a word or phrase or everything there is to know about a place, Anita is an explorer at heart. The need to know how things work and what "makes people tick" led her to a Psychology degree with a focus in marketing. From being on the team that developed some big consumer brands like the Cadillac Escalade to overseeing an international spa skincare brand and developing place brands in her home state of Florida, the desire to know what is going on "behind the curtain" has proven a truly valuable asset. At North Star, Anita gets involved at every level digging into research to help develop sound strategic foundations and bringing those ideas to life through big ideas, expressive writing and creative expressions. When she's not busy figuring things out, Anita is exploring the world with many of her adventures taking her to wine growing regions, a passion she shares with her husband. And she is a trained massage therapist too but she only pulls that trick out of the bag in emergencies.

Education: Florida State University**Years of Experience:** 20**Client Work:** Clay County (Florida) Tourism; Sammamish, Washington; Elkton & Cecil County, Maryland; Downtown York & York County, Pennsylvania; Johnson City, Tennessee; Santa Ana, California

Don McEachern

Founder • Leadership & Strategic Oversight

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Don McEachern has been growing research based brands for more than 20 years. His experience includes working for multinational advertising agencies as well as nationally recognized creative boutiques. During his time in the ad world, Don put his stamp on some of the world's most famous brands including Goldkist, Hawaiian Tropic, Suntory Bottled Water Group, Trump Plaza, Panasonic and Lanier Worldwide. For his efforts he received numerous awards, including a prestigious national Effie for marketing effectiveness and a Clio for excellent creativity.

18 years ago, Don struck out on his own. With a dream and a dollar, he launched North Star Destination Strategies, specializing in brand marketing and research for places. More than 250 nationwide communities later, Don has become the recognized expert in the exploding field of place branding and destination research. He is a sought-after speaker on the topic and has spoken at national, regional and local conferences; served as keynote speaker, panel moderator, session leader and break-out facilitator. He has helped CVBs, mayors, city councils, governors, city managers, economic development organizations, and chambers shape their brands and futures.

Education: The University of Tennessee**Years of Experience:** 34**Client Work:** State of Mississippi; State of Florida; Dayton, Ohio; Providence, Rhode Island; Petersburg, Alaska; Downtown New Orleans, Louisiana; South Main Memphis, Tennessee; Iowa's Creative Corridor; Lima/Allen County, Ohio; Brookings, South Dakota; Johnson City, Tennessee; Santa Ana, California**Will Ketchum**

President • Leadership & Strategic Oversight

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Communities are *everything* – spirit, pride, livelihoods, ambitions, friendships, recreation, and most of all, home. With that point of view, Will is as passionate about community and place branding as they come.

From our Jacksonville office, he manages North Star operations and is always close to clients and our work. He's advised *Fortune* 1000 companies, major metros and rural counties on marketing and brand strategy over his 30 years in the agency business and has a particular focus in community economic development. He has led a community-wide visioning process to create a competitive global identity for Jacksonville which involved a wide array of city leaders, stakeholder groups and sponsors.

Will's never seen a trail he didn't want to take – whether its traveling to solve branding challenges in amazing client communities, or traveling for fun with his family.

Education: Vanderbilt University | MBA, University of North Carolina

Years of Experience: 30

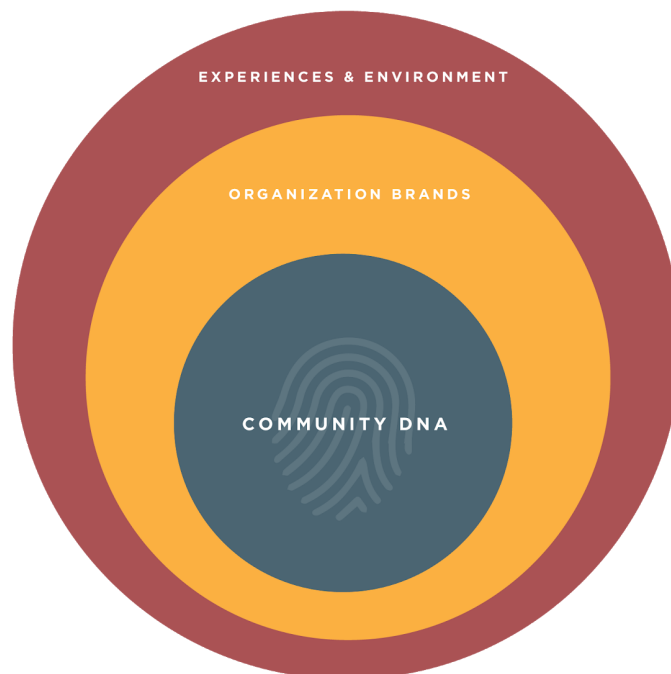
Client Work: JAXUSA Partnership; Clay County (Florida) Economic Development; Clay County (Florida) Tourism; Sammamish, Washington; Elkton & Cecil County, Maryland; Downtown York & York County, Pennsylvania; Johnson City, Tennessee; Santa Ana, California

4. APPROACH

PHILOSOPHY & APPROACH

North Star will not “create” the Marshall brand. It already exists in the very DNA of your community. Rather we will uncover the brand and bring it to life in ways that have meaning for all your constituencies.

Uncovering your unique DNA is essential to the success of the marketing and community-building efforts that follow. Just as an individual’s DNA determines everything from how that person looks to how that person acts (as well as their health and vibrancy), your DNA should be the foundational touchstone for everything from marketing to infrastructure to policy. As such, the heart of any truly impactful brand is a research-driven and authentic DNA Definition.



Once identified, this DNA Definition can drive consistent and powerful communications, focus brand development, shape experiences, impact your built environment, and more. Because the DNA is central to Marshall’s identity, it has the capacity to drive the brand for all city departments and partners.

Think of it this way: all the players in your city are like the sections in an orchestra — different instruments, different sounds, even different sheet music. Your DNA is the score that brings the diverse contributions of all these sections together into something harmonious and meaningful.

PHASE 1: MARKET RESEARCH

Research

North Star has identified the following research studies to help achieve Marshall's goals. This compiled body of data points us in the direction we need to go to craft your story. You will notice both qualitative and quantitative studies included in this recommended matrix. North Star strongly advocates a mixed method approach to research because it will tell you not just "How, When, What, and Where" but also "Why." Only through mixed methodology can your community obtain a true picture of where your brand is now, why, where it should be, and how your preferred identity can best be accomplished.

Situation Analysis: This establishes the current lay of the land from the perspective of your critical partners. We administer an online questionnaire to each internal group or organization. We then meet with members of these groups during our in-market visit to more fully understand your primary objectives, general history, political landscape, resources, competitors, etc.

Research, Data Analysis, Planning, Communications and Media Audit: We conduct a comprehensive review of any relevant research and planning documents: this includes community outreach and planning meetings, surveys, intercept surveys, and district-to-district and committee volunteer discussions. In addition, we review and analyze existing marketing materials, branding, logos, and messaging from the city and its partners as well as recent press related to Marshall.

Familiarization Tour: This is a tour of Marshall industrial and commercial sites, schools, businesses, housing developments, community center(s), retailers, restaurants, parks, arts centers, etc.

Key Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups: Some of our most valuable pieces of insight for the purposes of defining your DNA and crafting your creative work come from these intensive one-on-one interviews and focus groups. With the assistance of city staff, we want to identify and speak to key stakeholders about Marshall (including city officials, real estate developers, park officials, board members, business community members, nonprofit and civic organizations, tour operators, etc.). We also want to talk to articulate individuals who are passionate about the city (artists, writers, coaches, ministers, historians, matriarchs, patriarchs, and more).

Then, we lead focus groups with your key stakeholders and constituents: these meetings will facilitate lively conversation with diverse groups identified by your team, as each may offer a different perspective on life in Marshall (i.e., students, millennials, small business and attraction owners, etc.). We know you want us to talk to everyone, so we continue the conversations via phone once we get back to the office. Because we can react to information with original questions, these interviews often lead us down exciting discovery paths.

Vision Survey: This open-ended, right-brained survey challenges your stakeholders to provide deeper comments and opinions. We administer the survey digitally to the list you provide, guaranteeing all your valuable stakeholders are able to participate. This tool dovetails beautifully with the qualitative interviews because it extends your participant universe and allows you to layer trending opinions with in-depth perspectives.

Online Community Survey & Brand Barometer: Giving residents a forum for sharing is important. We use some of the themes identified in the vision surveys to craft a quantitative survey posted online for community-wide participation. To improve the reliability of the data, we aim for a self-selecting sample of 300 survey respondents. The brand barometer, conducted as a part of the community survey, measures the strength of Marshall's resident advocacy relative to the rest of the United States as a place to live, work, and play. In other words, how likely your residents are to advocate the city for making a home, starting a business, or planning a visit. We promote this survey using traditional and social media. Fascinating similarities and differences between leadership perspectives and resident perspectives are often revealed.

Influencer Perception Study: North Star conducts qualitative, in-depth phone interviews with professionals outside Marshall to uncover contextual perspectives. In collaboration with the city, we compile a list of identified potential interviewees from a target pool of elected officials, site selectors, relocation executives, meeting planners, tour operators, regional and state level executives in economic development and tourism, and other external influences you identify.

Competitive Positioning Review: A brand message and marketing strategy analysis to evaluate Marshall's position relative to the competition in the region.

Insights & Strategy

Our insights come from asking a number of thought-provoking questions: What brand "story" does the research tell? What emotional attachments can the brand hold? What are Marshall's core values? How does the brand fit into the consumer's lifestyle? How can the brand best be used to elicit Marshall's desired emotional/behavioral responses? It is from these insights that we determine the positioning of the comprehensive city brand.

These insight questions are gathered in a succinct storyline that leads directly to Marshall's strategic brand platform (DNA Definition). This platform is the **critical touch point for all branded activity moving forward**. For maximum brand impact, all efforts, thoughts, communications, and actions should literally and symbolically support its essence.

Situation Brief & Insight Development: We get our sharpest research and strategic minds together at one time to review all of the research findings. Data on its face has limited value, but the connections between data points open up understanding and opportunity. The entire North Star team weaves together these connections into a compelling set of insights that start to tell the Marshall story.

DNA Definition: Based on those insights, this guiding statement for the management and development of your brand is created. This definition should serve as the touch point for all Marshall activity moving forward. Many of our communities reference their DNA Definition when making decisions about everything from policy to infrastructure improvement to promotions. Included in your DNA Definition is:

Target audience: For whom Marshall has the most appeal

Frame of reference: Geographic context of Marshall

Point of difference: What makes Marshall special

Benefit: Why it should matter to the consumer

The following example shows how this construct guided our client Fargo, North Dakota and led to their “North of Normal” brand positioning:

Target audience: For cool hunters everywhere, Fargo-Moorhead,

Frame of reference: an emerging epicenter and powerhouse of young, highly educated talent

Point of difference: is a gust of fresh air across the Great Plains

Benefit: creating a dynamic energy and crafting a connection with each guest.

Research and Strategy Presentation: This represents a critical juncture in the project. We prepare a comprehensive review of all relevant research, insights, and recommended DNA Definition. A preview of this presentation is shared with key steering committee members for purposes of editing and fine-tuning. The collaboratively perfected presentation is then made at a larger stakeholder meeting. DNA Definition approval is required before proceeding.

PHASE 2: CIVIC REBRANDING

Creativity

In this stage, insight and strategy are transformed into tangible creative products that embody Marshall. An in-depth Creative Brief and a Creative Workshop guide this work. Straplines, logos, color, and messaging (with graphic standards) are created. Additional deliverables will be developed to express the new brand identity in the context of its future use.

Creative Workshop: North Star will host an interactive, virtual meeting between the North Star team and the Marshall creative team. Together, we will explore the roles of different creative elements and identify creative preferences. Our goal is to effectively hone in on the type of work you want without limiting the creative thinking of our writers, graphic designers, and art directors. This meeting is always a lot of fun for everyone involved.

Straplines & Rationale (5): A strapline is not the be-all and end-all for your brand. But it is the start of the story. Depending on how safe or edgy you want to be, the Marshall strapline can capture attention immediately and pique curiosity or it can serve as a solid, hard-working tool that starts the job of positioning Marshall in the minds of consumers. North Star will provide a minimum of five different straplines along with rationales for the strengths of each line. We also conduct trademark and Google searches to ensure the availability of each line. This is a critical step and one often overlooked by many professionals. But there is nothing more frustrating than getting to the end of the project with a strapline that is not available to you.

Logos (5): We will present a minimum of five logo options that represent a variety of concepts. We will provide two rounds of revisions to your selected logo. We further design this logo with and without the state name and with and without the strapline in vertical and horizontal lockups, representing all the different ways you will use it.

Color Palettes (3): We start by developing logos in black and white to reduce color bias. But once your decision is made, we open the possibilities visually by allowing you to select between three very different palettes. This is a key decision in how your visual brand identity will “feel” since color evokes emotion.

Looks (3): We craft three entirely different visual looks that allow you to choose how your brand messaging will be conveyed in terms of headlines, photography style, special graphic elements, or detailing and copy points. We will also provide two rounds of revisions for the look of your choice to

ensure it reflects your exacting standards. The creative committee's selected look will be applied to all subsequent deliverables.

Brand Narrative: Your DNA Definition articulates the core of what makes Marshall special. The narrative takes that core and describes it in artistic and compelling language for connecting emotionally with your different consumers. The narrative defines your personality and Marshall tone of voice. It can be woven into ad copy, placed on websites, integrated into speeches and distributed to businesses to use in their own communications about the place they call home. The more it is used, the more widely your brand is dispersed.

Brand Standards Guide: This guide contains all necessary information for using your logo, color palette, typefaces, language, narrative and other key elements to ensure consistency across all mediums and from any organization. We will provide digital versions of this guide in PDF and InDesign formats so you can edit as necessary.

Custom Deliverables (8-10): To assist in the communication of the final brand concept, we will work with you in identifying a list of 8-10 custom deliverables that target your specific goals. This is a powerful addition as it brings the logo and design to life through elements in the real world. The creative work provided is for conceptual design purposes and the files are not production-ready. The production of associated materials remains outside of this scope. Examples include:

Web & Social Media Design • Print & Online Advertising • Stationery Package • Brochures
Templates (PowerPoint, Press Release, Newsletter, Report Covers, etc.) • Interior & Exterior Signage
Complementary Organization Branding (Chamber, CVB, EDC) • Special Events Promotion
Merchandise (Apparel, Accessories, Home Goods, etc.) • Partner Co-branding

Action Plan

North Star maps out a must-do strategic action and communications plan following your brand strategy development. This plan comprises the fundamental action steps that ensure the brand gains traction in the community and maintains momentum. Many of these tasks involve setting up the organization and cooperation that will propel your brand forward. Our goal – and yours – is to make sure that the Marshall brand is the guiding principle for your future.

Communication & Delivery: With an eye to Marshall's goals and target audiences, we will consider how available marketing tactics and tools fit the desired effect and breadth of the brand rollout and subsequently provide short and long-term recommendations for incorporating the brand into your communications efforts.

Brand Implementation Ideas: These high-impact ideas are designed to raise the profile of the Marshall brand and bring it to life in every corner of your community.

Final Presentation & Report: This hour-long presentation takes participants through the high points of the branding research and strategy. Then it shares a thorough exploration of the steps of the action plan. After review with the steering committee, we will make a formal presentation to your desired audiences. The accompanying report will show the research, strategy, and action plan materials in their entirety and will be shared digitally along with raw and analyzed research data, native design files, and your brand standards guide.

Evaluation & Results Tracking

Evaluation yields new information, which may lead to the beginning of a new planning cycle. Information can be gathered from concept pre-testing, campaign impact in the marketplace, and tracking studies to measure a brand's performance over time.

Ideally, evaluation answers two basic questions: have responses to the brand among target audiences changed in the way the BrandPrint intended? And have these changes resulted in action that will achieve the desired objectives of the brand?

The research studies in this plan are designed to produce benchmarks and results that can be used for comparison with future studies. Additionally, our almost 20 years of branding experience have shown that true success can be seen in the spread of excitement, inspiration, and innovation surrounding your brand among residents and stakeholders. Lastly, we are always available to answer questions and help with later branding riddles. We have maintained an ongoing personal and business relationship with most of our clients, some for more than a decade.

12-Month Follow-Up: We follow up after a year of your brand implementation to discuss the successes you have enjoyed and hurdles that you are working to overcome. We provide suggestions and direction for next steps in your continual brand integration.

Post-Launch Brand Barometer: Getting the talk right on the street is the most important thing a community can do to bolster its development efforts. Word of mouth has always been important: in this post-digital world, it is essential. With the benchmark included in your brand study, the Brand Barometer becomes a simple and inexpensive way to track your results and validate your success in word of mouth advertising and resident advocacy. We strongly recommend a Brand Barometer measurement every year to track the progress of the community. North Star keeps a running annual average, allowing you to compare your community to the nation over time. This current national sampling mitigates swings in the economy and gives you the truest look at advocacy for Marshall.

5. PROJECT SCHEDULE

Getting started call	Week 1
Research	
Situation analysis	Weeks 1-2
Research, data, and planning audit	Weeks 1-2
Communication and media audit	Weeks 1-2
In-Market (fam tour, focus groups, presentations, interviews)	TBD
Vision survey	Weeks 4-6
Online community survey & brand barometer	Weeks 6-8
Qualitative (influencer) perception survey	Weeks 6-8
Competitive positioning review	Weeks 8-10
Insights & Strategy	
Situation brief & insight development	Week 11
DNA Definition development	Weeks 11-13
Understanding and Insights presentation (in person)	Week 14
Creativity	
Creative brief development (internal)	Week 15
Creative workshop (online)	Week 15
Foundational creative development	Weeks 16-20
Custom deliverable development	Weeks 20-22
Action	
Action plan development	Weeks 20-23
Final presentation	Week 24
Final report development	Weeks 22-24
Evaluation & Results Tracking	
Follow-Up	TBD
Brand Barometer post-study	TBD

Proposed Timeline **24 Weeks**

Timeline is dependent upon an efficient client approval process, which requires that data and feedback from client is received at key milestones. If the client approval and consensus process takes longer than 28 weeks (7 months), North Star will invoice any remaining contracted amount at that time and reserves the right to propose project extension fees at a blended hourly rate.

6. PROPOSED COMPENSATION

Partnering with the City of Marshall is not a responsibility we take lightly. As such, if it becomes necessary, we are interested in collaborating with community leaders and stakeholders to create an even more custom scope of work for perfecting this important initiative.

Phase 1: Market Research	\$20,000
Research	
Insights & Strategy	
Phase 2: Civic Rebranding	\$30,000
Creativity	
Action Plan	
PROJECT TOTAL	\$50,000

This cost proposal has been calculated with consideration to third party costs associated with the research (we subscribe to a research tool) and North Star's blended hourly rate of \$175/hr. Travel & miscellaneous are additional (pass through basis).