



MEETING NOTICE

TO: AIDA Marketing Committee Members
FROM: Tracy Verrier, Staff
DATE: May 29, 2026

Greetings AIDA Marketing Committee Members,

The Auburn Industrial Development Authority (AIDA) Marketing Committee will June 9th, 2026 from 4:00-5:00pm in the 3rd floor conference room at Memorial City Hall (24 South Street, Auburn, NY). The meeting agenda is attached for your review.

The public can view this meeting live via the following Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81488731747?pwd=7gNICzmz9emT6MEkFNafE0cjPnxWXH.1>

Dial in: (929) 205-6099

Meeting ID: 814 8873 1747

Passcode: 453762

Please confirm your attendance, and don't hesitate to reach out should you have questions or need additional information.

CC: Auburn Citizen, Rob Poyer, Jennifer Haines, Chuck Mason, AIDA Board Members

Mission Statement

"To advance the job opportunities, general prosperity, sustainability and economic welfare of the people of Auburn, NY."

Strategic Priorities

- Market the benefits of doing business in Auburn and the incentives available through AIDA to eligible projects that will generate jobs and revenue for the community.
- Assist at least two (2) projects per year with AIDA benefits and/or guidance on other benefits available in the community.
- Market parcels owned by AIDA.
- Diversify deal flow.



24 South Street, Auburn, NY 13021
www.auburnida.org
Where possibility takes root.



Auburn Industrial Development Authority
 24 South Street, 3rd floor conference room, Auburn, NY
 Tuesday, June 9th, 2026 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm



The public can view this meeting via the following Zoom link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81488731747?pwd=7gNICzmz9emT6MEkFNafE0cjPnxWXH.1>

Item	Time	Presenter	Outcomes
Welcome/Roll Call	4:00	Tracy Verrier	Establish Quorum
Committee Chair	4:00-4:05	Tracy Verrier	Appoint committee chair
Review Background Information	4:05 – 4:20	Tracy Verrier	Review Strategic Framework, 2026 Workplan, previous branding work
Next Steps	4:20-4:55	Tracy Verrier	Establish priority activities and next steps
Meeting Schedule	4:55-5:00	Tracy Verrier	Establish meeting schedule / next meeting date
Adjournment	5:00	Tracy Verrier	Vote to adjourn meeting



Auburn Industrial Development Authority

Strategic Framework

created in 2025

Mission: To advance the job opportunities, general prosperity, sustainability and economic welfare of the people of Auburn, NY.

Strategic Priorities	Strategies	Actions	Steps (who)	5/15/2026
Market the benefits of doing business in Auburn and the incentives available through AIDA to eligible projects that will generate jobs and revenue for the community.	Develop Ambassadors (board members, community leaders, business owners, city staff, influential former residents)	Create consistent talking points	Compile mission statement, strategic priorities, details about IDA benefits/offerings, and key points from board discussion regarding targeted industries and outcomes (Tracy) Draft one-page of bullets, organized by topic (Grace) Refine talking points (board discussion, Tracy)	no progress
		Updated one-pager/palm card	Determine/confirm audience for one-pager/palm card (marketing committee) Determine most important information for that audience(s) (marketing committee) Gather data and bullet points related to that information, using talking points above as a resource (Grace) Refine information to provide and finalize content (marketing committee) Design one-pager/palm card (BOCES?) Add to website in appropriate area (Grace)	no progress
		Identify non-board members who interact with businesses, site selectors, community leaders from other places, etc. and invite them to be ambassadors.	Outreach to these organizations/individuals to gather more information about their outreach activities (board members with connections) Compile a list of individuals who might make connections with the right kinds of stakeholders and who we think would make good ambassadors (board members send names to Grace/Tracy) Invite these individuals to a breakfast/lunch/meeting to explore/learn about how they can be an ambassador for AIDA and Auburn (logistics Tracy, facilitation Gwen)	no progress
	Website updates	Remove links to CEDA website and replace content where needed	Determine what is available from other partners (e.g. CenterState, ESD, etc.) that we can link to instead, redirect links and update wording as needed. (Grace/Tracy) Determine what remaining info needs to be a new page on AIDA's site, can be removed, or can be a linked document (Grace/Tracy) Create new content as needed. (?)	Broken links identified. On hold until website is back up and fully functional.
		Update facts and figures where needed	Identify all data references on site (Grace) Determine which still seem relevant/helpful and what is missing (board discussion) Update and replace data as determined by board (Grace)	Data references identified. Conversation with ED coordination group about a shared data resource to point to.
		Reinstate auburnida.org and auburnida.com URLs	Reactivate redirect for auburnida.org - or redirect takeroot url to this one -, which AIDA still owns (Dan) Reacquire auburnida.com (Grace) Establish appropriate redirect for auburnida.com (Dan)	Done
		Invite past incentive recipients to board meetings, or host meetings at their business location.	Prioritize the list of past projects board would like to meet with (Board discussion) Prepare overview of what the board would like to hear from the business, as well as what to expect (board/Tracy) Reach out to business leadership to invite them to the meeting and/or ask if AIDA can hold a meeting at their place of business (Tracy/Gwen) Send meeting invitation to those who agree, and offer to meet with them in advance to answer any questions (Tracy) Greet business guest ahead of meeting and make them feel comfortable (Gwen/Tracy) Compile detailed notes/minutes of this presentation for possible inclusion/reference in a later case study, testimonial, policy discussion, advocacy, etc. (Grace)	2025: 3 site visits completed with board, except only 1 (Seminary Commons) was informative in the way intended. 2026: 1 site visit completed, 2 more scheduled.

Strategic Priorities

Strategies

Actions

Steps (who)

5/15/2026

Host and/or participate in informational and networking events and meetings

Send a representative of AIDA to meetings, events, and/or conferences (city council, school board, rotary, REDC, chamber, etc.) to share AIDA's mission, activities, and strategy.

Develop and share case studies or project highlights for past projects supported by AIDA.

Timing: post- talking points, one-pager, and case studies
Use information above to develop a slide deck and script/outline (Tracy/Grace)
Compile list of all organizations, associations, etc. that board members are active in (send to Grace)
Brainstorm stakeholder groups we want to reach, and which board members are best positioned to present to each (marketing committee/board)
Reach out to these groups to schedule presentations, ideally starting with friendly/known audiences (Gwen/Tracy)
Practice presentation with all potential presenters in advance (board)
Do presentations

Compile full list of all past projects in last 10-15 years (Tracy)
Determine current status of each project and outcomes (Tracy/board members)
Select projects across sectors that highlight the kinds of outcomes AIDA wants to promote (board)
Write case studies with project data, narrative, and outcomes, as well as photos where possible (Grace)
Design case studies (BOCES?)
Add to website (Grace)

2025: AIDA members participated in various events, conferences, and community-based initiatives.
2026: Same as 2025 so far.

no progress

Strategic Priorities

Strategies

Actions

Steps (who)

5/15/2026

Assist at least two (2) projects per year with AIDA benefits and/or guidance on other benefits available in the community.	Consistently maintain and update a list of pipeline projects and leads	Track projects and leads, including contacts, information about the proposed projects, last contact, etc.	Continue updating confidential pipeline report (Tracy) Share anonymized version with board at least quarterly (Tracy)	Pipeline report is updated regularly, not shared quarterly - perhaps twice in 2025	
		Follow up with active leads if communication ceases for 1 month without explanation.	Review pipeline report monthly (add reminder to calendar) and make note of leads that have not been in touch within the last month, particularly those that with an anticipated timeline for later communication (Tracy) Check with other partners who are working with these projects to see if they've been in communication/have updates (Tracy) Reach out to leads that have not been in touch with other partners as well, ask for updates/offer assistance (Tracy or partner as appropriate)		Regular follow up with leads as appropriate, not necessarily monthly depending on the project status
		Engage board members, City staff, and/or other economic development partners as needed to accommodate the needs of potential clients.	Tracy		
	Collaborate with City, County, and regional economic development partners to understand possible new deal flow	Director to continue attending bi-weekly economic development check-ins with reps from City, CCIDA, and SBDC.	Tracy	Tracy is regularlry attending these meetings.	
		Maintain an updated understanding of CNY REDC priorities and activities.	Draft summary of latest CNY REDC strategic plan and summary of awarded CFA projects in Auburn (Grace) Present to and share with board (Tracy) Share updates after each REDC meeting with board (Mayor/Jenny Haines?)	No progress	
	Outreach to businesses in Auburn	Conduct annual monitoring visits per monitoring policy.	Create list of businesses to monitor and monitoring survey (Tracy) Share with board to see if any members are able/willing to make any of the visits based on their familiarity - avoiding direct conflict (Tracy/board) Create preliminary visitation schedule based on board feedback, with Tracy covering any unclaimed businesses (Tracy) Outreach to business 3-4 weeks ahead of date on preliminary schedule to request and confirm visit (Tracy)	2025: Complete 2026: 3 board visits (1 complete), Tracy setting up additional visits.	
			Conduct visit, fill out monitoring survey, report to board (Tracy or board member)		
		Conduct visitations with businesses that are not currently receiving benefits. Aim for 6 in 2025.	Contact ec dev partners and ask for suggestions of businesses to visit (Tracy) Brainstorm list of businesses the board would like to know more about, and determine if any board members would like to personally conduct the visit (board discussion) Identify contacts for those businesses and create visitation survey (Tracy/board) Create preliminary visitation schedule based on board feedback, with Tracy covering any unclaimed businesses (Tracy) Outreach to business 3-4 weeks ahead of date on preliminary schedule to request and confirm visit (Tracy) Conduct visit, fill out monitoring survey, report to board (Tracy or board member)	No progress	
			Collaborate with the Chamber, Citizen, and other partners with communication networks (particularly with businesses) to share information about AIDA. Aim for 3 communications in 2025.	requirements for their publications/communicats - when do they need our content? (Tracy/Gwen) Draft communications, using the talking points, case studies, one-pager, etc. as a starting point (Tracy/Grace) Review and refine communications (marketing committee) Send content in accordance with schedule and timelines provided by parnters (Tracy/Grace)	2 press releases thus far in 2026.

Pipeline report is updated regularly, not shared quarterly - perhaps twice in 2025

Regular follow up with leads as appropriate, not necessarily monthly depending on the project status

Done regularly

Tracy is regularlry attending these meetings.

No progress

2025: Complete
2026: 3 board visits (1 complete),
Tracy setting up additional visits.

No progress

2 press releases thus far in 2026.

Strategic Priorities

Strategies

Actions

Steps (who)

5/15/2026

Market parcels owned by AIDA.	Continue to list and promote parcels	Identify and update all online listings (e.g. LoopNet) to ensure that contact information is correct	(Grace) Identify contact information for sites with incorrect information (Grace) Reach out to sites to find out how to update information and do so (Grace)	
		Send residential listings to regional homebuilder associations and continue to work with S. Baier	Tracy	Properties sent to CNY and Greater Rochester home builders associations
		Ensure information about parcels is up to date on AIDA's website	Grace	They are not on the website
		Consider listing commercial parcels with a broker	board discussion	Board in process of selecting broker
	Identify maintenance activities that could improve appeal			no progress
	Re-evaluate shovel-readiness	Explore how new DEC wetland regulations may impact development on available parcels, and how potential challenges can be mitigated		no progress
		Gather stakeholder input (City, businesses, regional ec dev partners, NYSEG) to assess future power needs at Tech Park (Tracy with help from board members and partners) Apply for FastNY to conduct any necessary assessments/design to advance needed power upgrades Apply for FastNY to fund upgrades Work with NYSEG to implement upgrades NOTE: will need assistance from City staff or others who have experience managing these kinds of infrastructure projects	Multiple conversations with NYSEG	
Continue to pursue power upgrades				
Diversify deal flow.	Advocate for more power capacity to expand the development opportunities/types throughout the City			Multiple conversations with NYSEG
	Focus some business visitation and outreach activities	Identify and define targeted industries that have not traditionally been served by AIDA, or that are thought to be underserved.	Use supply chain analysis and updated industry data to identify key and growing industries in Auburn, Cayuga County, and the broader region (Grace) Review this information and consider which are best suited to Auburn in terms of current industry mix, available space/infrastructure/resources, and workforce/workforce programming (board discussion) Select up to 3 target industries (board)	Complete
		Target at least 2 visitations to businesses in targeted industries.	Identify existing businesses in these industries, prioritize them for addition to the visitation schedule (Grace/Tracy) Prepare list of questions/survey to ask these businesses (Tracy) Outreach to company leadership to schedule visitation (Tracy/Gwen). Conduct visitations and report back to board (Tracy).	no progress
		Target at least 1 outreach through partner networks to businesses in a targeted industry.	Identify information or resources of interest to the targeted industry(ies) and draft communication. (Tracy/Grace) Refine and finalize communication (marketing committee) Share with partner for publication, and encourage other partners to share/repost if appropriate (Tracy)	no progress

Auburn Industrial Development Authority

2026 Workplan

Mission: To advance the job opportunities, general prosperity, sustainability and economic welfare of the people of Auburn, NY.

Activity	Who	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Complete
Market the benefits of doing business in Auburn and the incentives available through AIDA to eligible projects that will generate jobs and revenue for the community.													
Conduct 3 board meetings at project sites.	Board & Tracy												FALSE
Decide on sites	Board												TRUE
Schedule visits	Tracy												TRUE
Have meetings				###		###		###					Hilton (Apr), WST33 (Jun), BoMer (Aug)
Begin collaborating with partners to possibly host an economic forecast event	Marketing Committee												FALSE
Create consistent talking points	Marketing Committee												FALSE
Update outdated and broken content on site.	Tracy												FALSE <i>On hold due to malware/blacklisting issues</i>
AIDA representative to present to City Council at least once.	Tracy & Board Member							###					FALSE
AIDA board members to attend at least 2 regional or statewide conferences/events (continued from 2025).	Board Members		###		###								State of the City/County, NYSEDC Cooperstown Conference
Assist at least two (2) projects per year with AIDA benefits and/or guidance on other benefits available in the community.													
Visit at least 5 non-client businesses in 2026.	Tracy & Board Members				###	###		###	###		###		FALSE New Hope Mills
Conduct bi-annual monitoring visits per policy (at least 6).	Tracy & Board Members			###	###	###		###	###	###	###		FALSE Hilton (Apr), WST33 (Jun), BoMer (Aug), Others: PNC, Dill Street Commons; 4042 South; Carovail
Send at least 3 press releases or contributions to the Citizen.	Marketing Committee	###	###				###			###			FALSE Year in Review, marketing committee call for volunteers
Continue to track, follow up with, and engage partners on active leads.	Tracy												
Continue attending local economic development coordination, monthly regional check-in, and Micron committee meetings.	Tracy	###	###	###	###	###	###	###	###	###	###	###	
Activity	Who	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Complete
Market parcels owned by AIDA.													
Add commercial parcel information to AIDA website.	Tracy												FALSE
Consider engaging commercial broker.	Board												FALSE Underway, proposals being considered at May meeting
Budget allowing, engage contractor to do site cleanup at northern parcel.	Board (decision) & Tracy (implementation)												FALSE
Decide on whether to proceed.	Board												FALSE
Implementation.	Tracy												FALSE
Continue to engage with NYSEG on power upgrades by encouraging early contact by developers and advocating for upgrades	Tracy & Board		###										Sent Project Potato to NYSEG (March)
Continue to share commercial parcels with regional partners and submit for site inquiries from the State	Tracy		###										Project Sabre (ESD, March), Project Potato (ESD, March)

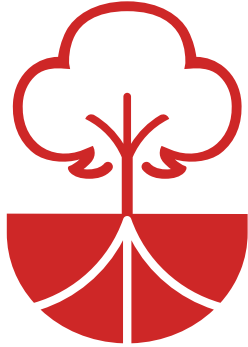
Continue to work with realtor on residential parcels.	Tracy																			
Diversify deal flow.																				
Identify 3 target industries to actively pursue/engage.	Board																			
Target at least 2 visitations to businesses in targeted industries.	Tracy																			

TRUE Micron for existing (supply chain), film for attraction

FALSE

AUBURN

Primary Logo



Secondary Mark



Primary Logo with Mark



Primary Logo with NY Flag



“Where possibility takes root.”



Primary Logo with Tag



Primary Logo with tag & NY Flag



Primary Logo with Mark & Tag



HEADERS Mulish & Libre Baskerville

Typography Sample

Auburn, NY.

BODY Mulish

Mulish is a free minimalist Sans Serif typeface, designed for both display and text typography.

It was initially drawn in 2011 by Vernon Adams and then refined until 2014, adding more weights, support for more Latin languages, tightened the spacing and kerning and made many glyph refinements throughout the family – all based on hundreds of users' feedback. In 2017 the family was updated by Jacques Le Bailly to complete the work started by Vernon after he passed away, in collaboration with his wife Allison, an artist who holds the trademark on the typeface family name. In August 2019, it was updated with a Variable Font "Weight" axis.

Auburn Brick

#CD2927

RGB

R 205 G 41 B 39

HSL

H 0.72 S 0.68 L 0.48

CMYK

C 0% M 64% Y 65% K 20%

Vintage Awning

#F58B6E

RGB

R 245 G 139 B 110

HSL

H 12.89 S 0.87 L 0.7

CMYK

C 0% M 42% Y 53% K 4%

Golden Ginkgo

#FDB94A

RGB

R 253 G 185 B 74

HSL

H 37.21 S 0.98 L 0.64

CMYK

C 0% M 27% Y 70% K 1%

Autumn Green

#ACC971

RGB

R 172 G 201 B 113

HSL

H 79.77 S 0.45 L 0.62

CMYK

C 11% M 0% Y 35% K 21%



Place Branding Research, Branding Summary and Marketing Plan

Q4 2020
via TGW Studio and the
Auburn Industrial Development Authority

TGW STUDIO

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PART I

Objective, Challenges and Opportunities

AIDA: Auburn, NY Center Place Branding Summary

TGW STUDIO



Foundation

Who is Auburn, NY? Why do we exist? What is our purpose? Who do we serve? All of these questions are answered in thinking through the place-brand foundation.



Objective

Auburn is brimming with stories - from its incredibly influential heritage to a more recent resurgence of niche businesses realizing the benefits Auburn has to offer (cost-of-living, the beauty of the Finger Lakes, world-class food and beverage, and a thriving and dedicated arts and cultural scene).

The “small but mighty” city is getting due attention for being a great place to live and work, as well.

The following summary and place brand strategy provide a roadmap and the necessary tools to create a foundation for the major changes and continued funding and investment in Auburn, NY.



The Challenge

- **Lack of City Brand Essence and "Sense of Place"**: Good news, Auburn has already committed to this step with this place branding initiative. Together, we will identify distinctive qualities that make current (and potential) residents feel like they couldn't see themselves anywhere else.

- **Auburn lacks employment options** for those who don't own businesses. Residents may travel to Syracuse, Rochester, or even Buffalo for work. In doing so, these residents aren't in town Monday through Friday to frequent whatever Auburn establishments might serve the local workers.

- While manufacturing could be the key to revitalization, smaller novel businesses are also proving to be quite promising - political backing of **opposing interests may stymie economic growth in general.**

***Other:** Residents indicate a lack in current retail offerings downtown and the lack of diversity in cuisine. Auburnians have standard socio-economic concerns all around: racism, drug use and homelessness.*

Residents with families are concerned with educational system and agree that there are limited activities for youth.

In-depth analysis of these areas continued later in this section.



The Opportunity

“Auburn is ready for its second act”

Whether individuals boomerang back to the area, or are looking to settle down and retire, now more than ever the return to micro-urban environments is happening. Auburn offers that close-knit community feel, plus its walkability are prime for a genuine sense of place.

Pride is an important aspect of Auburn, and palpable each time we walk the streetscapes of Auburn. By leveraging existing residents and businesses, we will be empowered to build and communicate this place brand work to future residents.

Auburn’s **accessibility** geographically, and its **affordability** in terms of real estate are both equal parts convenient and charming.

Auburn must continue its focus on the interplay between its **existing assets** (entertainment, art, history, natural beauty) in order to continue building an environment that is attractive to many—placing a particular focus on business owners, site-finders, and those considering a life change that includes getting some fresh air.

T A C T I C S

DISCOVERY

1. IN DEPTH FOCUS GROUP

2. ONE ON ONE INTERVIEWS

3. INFO SESSIONS WITH ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

4. EXISTING RESEARCH AUDIT

(E.G. CAYUGA COUNTY OFFICE OF TOURISM TRAVEL MARKET RESEARCH STUDY)

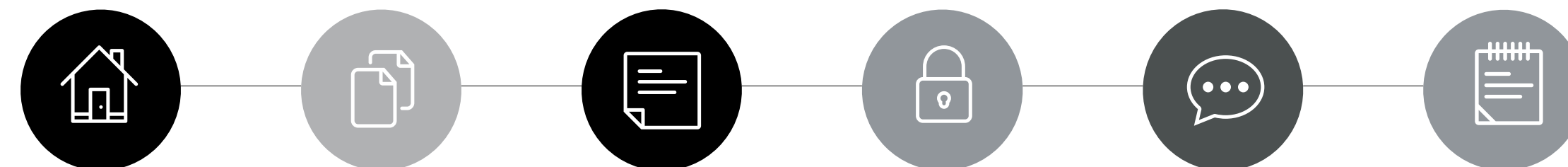
5. INDUSTRY MARKET RESEARCH

6. INDUSTRY LANDSCAPE REVIEW

7. SWOT ANALYSIS

8. COMPARISON ANALYSIS

9. SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEW





Snapshot

The city of Auburn, New York is experiencing a renaissance. The deep pride for the city's rich history and excitement for its future growth is palpable from the conversations we had with its current residents and business owners.

Both public and private leadership have a vested interest in developing the city beyond what it already offers today. The city's affordability in terms of real estate, both commercial and residential, as well as its Finger Lakes address, access to great food, craft breweries, arts and culture make it an attractive location for those who may seek to leave the larger cities in the northeast.

"Auburn is our chosen home." – Katie MacIntyre, Resident



"[Auburn] is a full-service municipality." – Jeff Dygert, Resident and City Manager

PERSONAL/BACKGROUND ROOTEDNESS: ATTITUDINAL

The primary motivator to live in the city of Auburn is proximity to family; two-thirds of the people we interviewed returned to Auburn because of it. Several of these folks never left the city, but most left for at least some length of time and returned to start careers and raise children.

The "transplants" to Auburn were relocated for jobs (1), raised in neighboring towns, attended college in the region or moved with a spouse.



"It's a beautiful, historic city to live in." – Michael DeRosa, Resident & Business Owner

PERSONAL/BACKGROUND ROOTEDNESS: ATTITUDINAL

In its current state, the city of Auburn is described by its residents and business owners in an overall positive light. The community at large has deep pride for the city's rich history and excitement for its promising future. The size of the city hits a sweet spot in its ability to foster a sense of closeness among community members and business owners, while being large enough to provide entertainment for residents and tourists alike.

Residents are proud of the diverse historical heritage of their city including its connection to important figures in the early fight for race and gender equality and civil rights, as well as Auburn's lesser known connections to the creation of motion pictures and the early United States correctional system.

Specifically, residents stated the following when asked how they would describe Auburn to non-residents and visitors...

Specifically, residents stated the following when asked how they would describe Auburn to non-residents and visitors...

"It's a beautiful, historic city to live in." – Michael DeRosa, Resident & Business Owner

"It's a hidden gem; the perfect size little city." – Katie MacIntyre, Resident

"It's a beautiful, small city with a lot of history." – Gwen Webber-McLeod, Resident & Business Owner

"It's a small, quaint town that has a lot of history." – Scott DeLapp, Resident & Business Owner

"Auburn is situated in a position of great heritage and great hope." – Melody Smith-Johnson, Resident & Business Owner



***“[There’s a] vibrant downtown scene on a Friday or Saturday night.” – Scott DeLapp,
Resident & Business Owner***

Likes

Auburnians agree that the city is a great place to raise children. Most parents are happy with the education provided in the public-school system, as well as the close proximity to top colleges and universities such as RIT, U of R, Syracuse, and Cornell. It’s affordable in terms of home ownership and relatively safe when compared to nearby Syracuse in terms of crime and public safety. Residents enjoy all that the Finger Lakes region has to offer in terms of natural beauty and outdoor activities, as well as local food, wine and beer. The city is a great “home base” for those who like to travel and the affordable cost of living allows them more freedom to do so. Those who enjoy the arts, including theater and music, are able to enjoy high-quality entertainment in their own backyard.

“We aren’t getting the foundation aid that we are entitled to.” – Anne Mlod, Resident and School Librarian

Challenges

On the flip side, the city is lacking employment options for those who don’t own businesses. Many residents have to travel to Syracuse or even Rochester or Buffalo for work. In doing so, these residents aren’t in town Monday through Friday to frequent whatever Auburn establishments might serve the local workers.

Residents are unhappy with the current retail offerings downtown and the lack of diversity in cuisine. Some would also like to see entertainment options which appeal to African Americans in terms of night life, such as music venues and clubs. Many community members complain that there are too many vacant store fronts, buildings and brown fields which drag down community morale. Pawn shops, rent-a-centers and lawyer’s offices apparently hold court in buildings primed for downtown real estate.

While parents are happy with the quality of education their children received or are receiving currently, several mentioned that the public-school district is underfunded by the state.

To get an idea of where Auburn High School ranks in the state, its graduation rate is at 82%, which is below the state’s average. To compare it with a top high school in the region, Sutherland High School in Pittsford, the graduation rate for seniors is 98%. Sutherland High has just 4% of students labeled as economically advantaged, compared with 44% of Auburn High School students. Food for thought.

Collectively, Auburnians agree that there are limited activities for youth and that their older children in particular complain of boredom. Many youth are involved in team sports, yet families travel outside of Auburn to participate in these athletic endeavors and even to purchase their uniforms and equipment. Those families who take advantage of local outdoor attractions, such as hiking and biking, are highly motivated and active together.



"I'm not sure what would happen in downtown if a bus load of African Americans showed up at once." – Gwen Webber-McLeod, Resident & Business Owner

Challenges Continued

Regardless of their personal race/ethnicity, the residents surveyed in this research mention racism to be an active undercurrent in their community, even with a positive trend towards supporting diversity and inclusion. However, there appears to be several individuals and organizations who are dedicating their time to support emerging entrepreneurs from minority and traditionally underrepresented groups.

Drug use, homelessness and mental illness are cited as a real problem in Auburn. However, current residents don't feel that the problem is bad enough to move out of the city in general, rather they would consider moving out of their downtown neighborhoods. Auburnians mostly have concerns around their children's safety and exposure.

Additional residential concerns...

"Racial discrimination still exists." – Patty Beer, Resident

"[The] drug problem intersects with crime and public safety." – Cristina Furlong, Potential Resident

"[There is a] drug problem in my neighborhood." – Katie MacIntyre, Resident

"There are families that don't have cars." – Anne Mlod, Resident and School Librarian



"I wanted to be a part of the upward trajectory." – Gretchen Christenson, Business Owner

Likes

Although business owners are often residents and share the same sentiments as their peers, some simply chose to start their business in Auburn and live in neighboring towns like Skaneateles and Weedsport. The initial attraction to Auburn for many business owners is its affordability; rents are low. The city is welcoming and supportive of new businesses versus critical. BID (The Auburn Downtown Business Improvement District) was frequently mentioned as a large support for new business owners downtown, as well as CEDA (Cayuga Development Economic Agency).

Auburn business owners collectively mention their desire to be part of the city's future growth, they "want in" and don't want to miss out.

Business Owner Insights

"[BID] does a weekly newsletter of what's going on in town; [it's] wonderful to have that resource. They look for input from us and they do their own research." – Scott & Michelle DeLapp, Residents & Business Owners

"It's important for me to anchor my business and my social service initiatives in fertile soil and I believe Auburn is fertile soil." – Melody Smith-Johnson, Business Owner & Community Activist

"[My] business has exceeded expectations." – Gretchen Christenson, Business Owner



“The goose that lays the golden egg is manufacturing.” – Legislator Tim Lattimore, Resident & Local Politician

Challenges

Small Business vs Large Scale Manufacturing

While some business owners believe that manufacturing is the key to revitalization of Auburn and other cities within upstate New York, others feel funding and supports should be directed to small, novel businesses. Some business owners feel that political backing of opposing interests may stymie economic growth in general.

Business Training and Operational Support

Even if the funding is available for entrepreneurial ventures, there is concern that emerging business owners may not have the experience and skill to operate effectively.

Business Owner Insights

“Most of the support in the county is grounded in traditional ways of doing economic development.” – Gwen Webber – McLeod, Resident & Business Owner

“It’s difficult to do business in NY state.” – Ron Weaver, Resident & Business Owner

“You’ll see people who open and fail.” – Dawn Shultz, Resident & Business Owner

***“Artists need a safe space to grow and get the business information they need.”
– Gwen Webber – McLeod, Resident & Business Owner***



“[Drug use] narrows the workforce.” – Ron Weaver, Resident & Business Owner

Challenges Continued

Homelessness/Mental Illness/Drug Use

Business owners downtown cite a problem with homeless and mentally unstable individuals approaching customers and loitering. Obviously, this can be unappealing for those considering Auburn as a potential location for business. Although current business owners feel supported by local law enforcement, they point out that several vacant hotels/motels have been converted to shelters which allows these individuals easy access to downtown. One business owner suggested increasing foot traffic and patrol by local law enforcement to address the issue.

Drug use is cited as a problem county wide and current business owners go to great lengths to create a drug-free workplace.

“Foot traffic is very important for business.” – Scott DeLapp, Resident & Business Owner

Challenges Continued

Large Box vs Small Retail

The availability of big box, affordable retail on Grant Avenue is noted as a barrier to individual brands' interest in setting up shop downtown. Similarly, with Wegmans housing its own miniature bakery and cheese counter, how could a local bakery or cheese shop compete? These are larger issues than what we can tackle in this project but worth noting from the concern of current small business owners. Drug use is cited as a problem county wide and current business owners go to great lengths to create a drug-free workplace.

Skepticism/Negative Attitude

Although it seems that *Auburnians* are enthusiastic participants in the city's growth and redevelopment, there remains a segment of residents who are either skeptical, cynical, or disinterested in change. Many families have lived in Auburn for generations and although many connect with revitalization of old landmarks out of nostalgic ideals, others are holding on to the belief that the city will never bounce back. Still others are simply closed-minded.

“People advised us not to open in Auburn but a lot is changing.”

– Gretchen Christenson, Business Owner

“People are discriminating and miss out.”

– Cristina Furlong, Potential Resident

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT + ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PERCEPTIONS

CURRENTLY TRENDING

Downtown Renaissance

started in 2004 with infrastructure improvements

Diversity and Inclusion

Social Connectedness

Facebook groups to notify residents of local events and community needs

Leveraging Historical Sites

City has a site slated for new housing

Downtown Living

turning old buildings into rentals and duplexes in a tasteful, modern way with walkability to downtown

Summer Tourism

includes buses and people coming from as far as Maryland and NYC

Manufacturing Pivot

Companies pivoting in response to Covid: Covid test kits, face shields, plexiglass barriers manufactured in Auburn



“I think that could again increase our tourism traffic and bring pride to people who have family visiting.” – Dawn Shultz, Resident & Business Owner

Opportunities

Strolling, Shopping Experience

Both residents and business owners suggest the creation of a “strolling, shopping experience” similar to what exists in neighboring Skaneateles and in towns like Saratoga Springs and Lake Placid. Although Auburn doesn’t benefit from being physically situated on a lake, the infrastructure is there to cultivate its own, unique downtown experience.

Further, there is consensus that the Owasco River could be incorporated into the downtown experience and include access to small boats such as kayaks, paddle boards and canoes.

Many residents mentioned that the downtown space is primed for a European experience akin to strolling through a piazza in Italy or through the streets of Paris with overhead string lights. This could be accomplished by closing the road traffic from Wally’s to Prison City Brewing Company; apparently this stretch was formerly this way and used as a commons. State Street Mall was also mentioned as a potential location for something like this. Beautification of sidewalks and other aesthetic upgrades could add to the experience.



“[The river provides] opportunities for people to explore in new and different ways.”
– Jeff Dygert, Resident and City Manager

Opportunities

An ice-skating rink could also be added to the downtown commons, as well as a year-round farmer’s market like the one in Syracuse.

“People who live here want to feel pride in the area and when they have something that’s attractive to people outside of the area, they want to show it off.”

– Dawn Shultz, Resident & Business Owner

A boutique hotel downtown would be welcome to attract tourists who are seeking to enjoy the Finger Lakes region during the day and looking for a place with entertainment within walking distance at night.



“Connect new entrepreneurs with seasoned ones.”
– Gwen Webber – McLeod, Resident & Business Owner

Opportunities

Downtown Commercial and Residential

With increasing interest in entrepreneurship and small business, it would be helpful to have a dedicated space downtown for learning the ropes of successful business operation.

Although development of downtown residences is underway, there is a need for renovation and construction to suit the needs of modern living. One resident suggested an apprenticeship program for master carpentry which could teach young adults a useful skill/craft, create new jobs and restore the beauty of the 1920s homes in the city.

To instill a sense of long-term community pride, several residents mentioned the idea of a homecoming parade to welcome past residents and veterans on Founders Day.

Strengths

- "Shovel ready" sites
- Increasing diversity of things to do and places to go
- Culture + Beauty/Outdoors in ~48 hours
- Small, loyal and proud community
- Centrally located in New York State
- Located in the upper north east

Opportunities

- Agriculture - supply chain + the capability to house/support
- Exploding dairy scene. #2 dairy production (Cayuga county)
- Quality of living, affordability
- Remote work ready, elbow room + fresh air
- Good downtown internet connectivity & broadband
- Incubation space, testing space
- Arts + History
- Centralized location for businesses opportunities across NYS

Weaknesses

- Critical need recreation for kids and retail for adults
- Limited availability and resources
- Syracuse absorbs much of the region
- Need unique value proposition
- Homelessness/Mental Illness/Drug Use
(Small town, big city challenges)

Threats

- The workforce and talent pool is a struggle
- Industries that are doing the best are not sexy to 20 and 30 somethings
- Branding trades needs to be better
- Fatigue from current residents experience - a greater focus needs to be placed.

Industry Landscape Review and General Impressions

The high-gloss, metropolitan vibe is out. EDO's are evolving and realizing (albeit, slowly) across the country, that affordability and quality of life are compelling in a big way. The next 15-20 years will be critical for EDO's and significant marketing dollars will need to be invested, and spent wisely.

Millennials expect more from their city/town/community. We know work/life balance is essential to them. They look for places to live that pay attention to the details, have good food, coffee and craft beer, and are turned off by the basics.



From retiree's to Gen Z's, fostering a genuine expression of the community is appreciated to business owners and those looking to relocate - both the pros and the cons, transparency is important.

In a nutshell, communities that people want to visit are places where people want to live and work. These same communities become places businesses have to be. Tourism becomes like a "first date," with marketing campaigns by tourism bureaus as matchmaker and jobs and economic growth as offspring.

— Duncan Adams, originally published in Roanoke Times

Industry Landscape Review and General Impressions: Auburn is Poised

ELEVEN SIGNS A CITY WILL SUCCEED

Slightly dated, but still highly relevant checklist of key traits of places where growth and change are happening.

1. Divisive national politics seem a distant concern
2. You can pick out the local patriots
3. "Public-private partnerships" are real
4. People know the civic story*
5. They have a downtown*
6. They are near a research university
7. They have, and care about, a community college
8. They have unusual schools
9. They make themselves open*
10. They have big plans*
11. They have craft breweries*



Auburn is extremely poised and checks many of these boxes. Several traits above are tourism related tactics (with an "*"), which continues to prove the importance for DMO's and EDO's to work together.

Other general ED key indicators:

1. Jobs created an/or retained*
2. Capital investment
3. Infrastructure improvements
4. Improve Quality of life perceptions*
5. Job to resident ratio*
6. Downtown vitality
7. Startup activity*

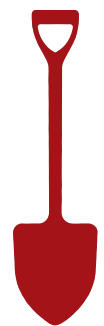


Challenge areas for Auburn have have "*", and are critical components and should be addressed. We are less confident in how "the numbers" look to site fingers.

Industry Landscape Review and General Impressions: Customization is Key to Relocation

When thinking relocation, entrepreneurs (and businesses owners) are encouraged to think about the **demos**: **Are people with those talents available for your need? Does the community have the resources to serve their needs? Is there sufficient housing in the appropriate price range? Will your employees find the schools, recreational opportunities, culture, and other aspects of the community satisfactory?*

They are encouraged to think about: **Specific Location Needs** **Is this a location that is easy for my employees to get to? Will it be cheap to ship/receive materials here from a logistics standpoint? How close is the office to the nearest airport? Does the geographic location have the type of skills in their labor pool to support our future endeavors?*



Pillow talk: We have also learned businesses owners like to locate near natural regions where transportation (air, sea, road, rail) allows access to the marketplace. Perhaps not as often considered, their partners interests and desires are also critical. More on this aspect next...

Industry Landscape Review and General Impressions: Customization is Key to Relocation

When thinking about what CEO's and business owners are looking for when it comes to relocation, no one package fits all. The natural aesthetic is surely important. Good culture and third-wave coffee is a must. Accessibility to transportation, critical.



In many ways we can start to wrap our head around communicating with *the Remotes* in a similar way.

Who are these folks, anyway?...

Industry Landscape Review and General Impressions: The Remotes

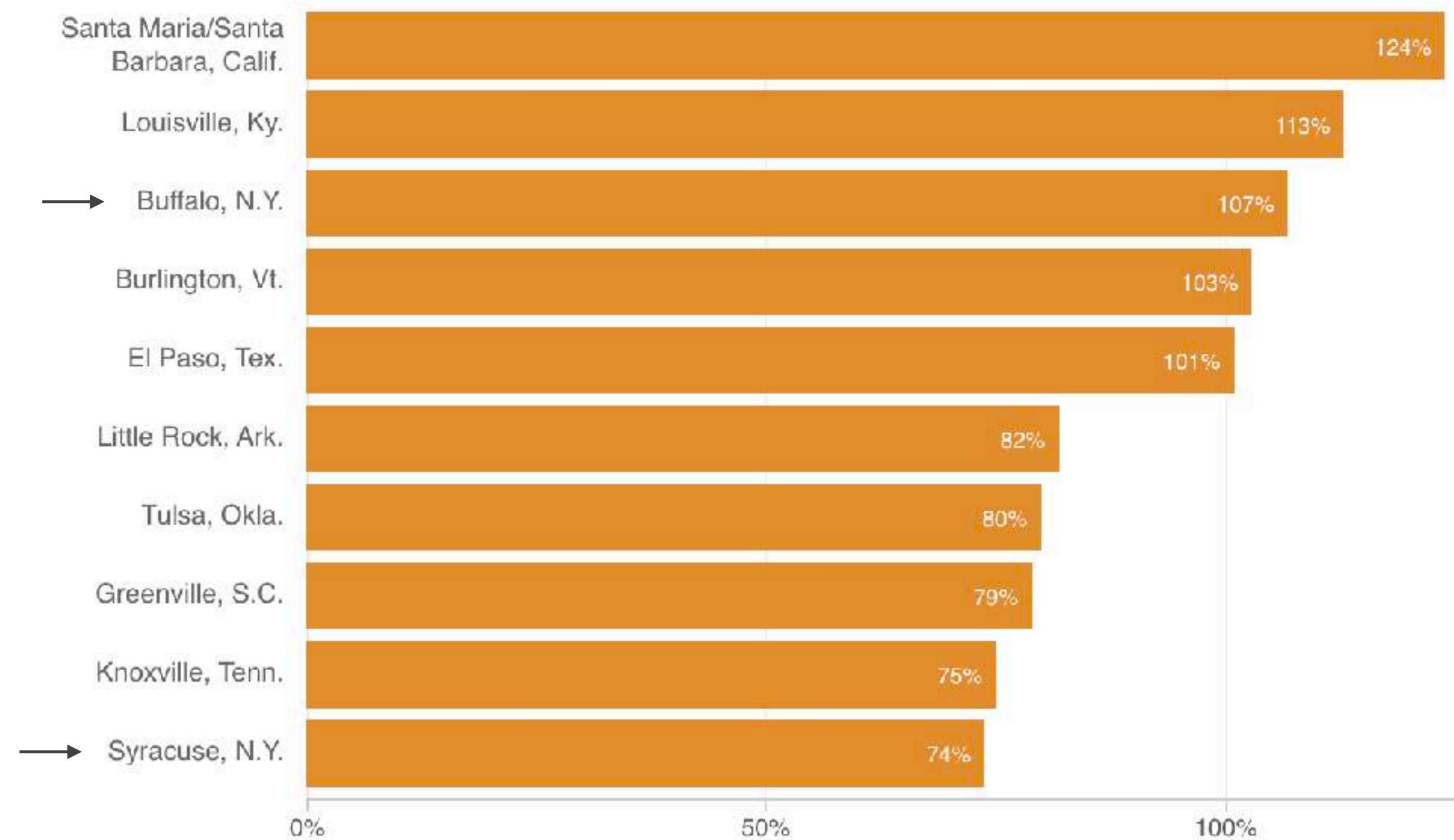
The "Remotes"

Remotes are professionals (individuals and small businesses) looking to relocate from metropolitan cities, and bring their skill set to a place that would not otherwise see that talent.

"The number of information technology postings employers specify can be done remotely is up 58% so far this year compared with the same period last year", according to the Computing Technology Industry Association.

Remotes are looking for quality of life, and a place to settle down. Small Cities fit that bill, both during the pandemic, and it is thought that this trend will remain for the long run.

On the right: 2020 Top 10 destination cities by percentage increase.



Source: Redfin national real estate brokerage

Credit: Jess Eng/NPR

Recommendations: Further Research, Marketing Support and Short-Game Tactics

- ❖ **Q1 2021** Compare feedback from this research with additional quantitative study with parents of youth attending public and private school in Auburn to unearth differentiating or supportive insights to our findings.
- ❖ **Q1, Q2 2021** Identify and plan 1-3 key initiatives to support current families with children. downtown community center or programming at the ERHC, and/or a new place for teens to hangout in the winter. This lack is a concern for courting any potentially new transplants with families along with retaining existing.
- ❖ **2021:** Identify opportunities for local colleges and universities to work with the city on various areas of study in order to attract future innovators, entrepreneurs, and residents.
- ❖ **Q1 2021** Further discuss with Carey Eidel and Angela Daddabbo as a recurring theme of them being highly connected to the city's downtown and respected by their peers.
- ❖ **2021** Discuss how to attract real estate investors and developers from outside the city to fill vacant buildings and brownfields.

Success Stories + Insights

- ❖ Carey Eidel and Angela Daddabbo from the Auburn Public Theater were mentioned frequently as key players in the city's renaissance. The arts are a primary attraction to both current and potential residents and their theater provides high-quality theatrical productions and education in the arts.

"[The Auburn Public Theater] is the heart of the renaissance that's happening downtown." – Katie MacIntyre, Resident

- ❖ Dawn and Mark Shultz, owners of Prison City Brewing, have put Auburn on the map. According to Dawn, 65% of their business is from outside the area. They're now expanding and doing so within the city limits. They experienced overwhelming support from the community.
- ❖ Grant Kyle, an Auburn developer who is spearheading the Nolan's Block redevelopment, served as an inspiration to Dawn Schultz when she was considering whether or not to stay in Auburn to start the brewery.
- ❖ (5) African American women entrepreneurs received awards from the NAACP of Central New York Auburn/Cayuga branch for their trailblazing work during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ❖ Some residents relocated to Auburn for retirement due to the affordable real estate opportunities and overall lower cost of living. These are *"critical thinkers who aren't struggling financially"* and who are *"active, capable and involved"* people.
– Legislator Heidi Nightengale, Resident & Local Politician

References:

10 Things to Consider When Choosing a Location for Your Business

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/slideshow/299849>

<https://blog.careerminds.com/company-relocation>

Eleven Signs a City Will Succeed

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/03/eleven-signs-a-city-will-succeed/426885/>

Small Cities Are A Big Draw For Remote Workers During The Pandemic

<https://www.npr.org/2020/11/16/931400786/small-cities-are-a-big-draw-for-remote-workers-during-the-pandemic>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/realestate/choosing-the-suburbs-over-city-life-during-the-pandemic/2020/10/15/01c94c5e-e716-11ea-97e0-94d2e46e759b_story.html

Around one-in-ten young adults in U.S. moved due to COVID-19 outbreak

https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/06/about-a-fifth-of-u-s-adults-moved-due-to-covid-19-or-know-someone-who-did/ft_2020-07-06_covidmove_02/

Factors Affecting Former Residents' Returning to Rural Communities (USDA)

https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/45361/52906_err185.pdf?v=0



What do they care about?

- ✓ Shovel-ready and/or broadband + tech capabilities a “must have”
- ✓ Increasingly less interested in big city amenities
- ✓ Quiet, fresh air, beauty and sustainability
- ✓ Affordability, quality of life, and “settling down”
- ✓ Potentially invested in the region via family or indirectly
- ✓ Expects sophisticated food and drink, wine, craft beer options



Target Personas

RELOCATION FOCUS

"Remote Ryan"

- Millennial
- Driven by flexibility
- From outside region, but may be connected in some way
 - Independent
- High Skill Set, Career Focused
- Looking to start family or leave "city life"
- May have significant other to consider
- Modern Expectations and available amenities
- Possibly in technology sector

ADVENTURER CEO/BIZ OWNER

"FLX Frank"

- 50 something outdoor hiker/
outdoor enthusiast
- Requires central travel accommodations
- Appreciates wine, craft beer and cuisine
- Married with opinionated SO, loves wine and requires attention
- Expects incentives, tax breaks and to play ball with ED and the state of NY.

CNY ROOTS

"Familiar Fran"

- High school grad from within ~75 miles
- Works in flexible industry (tech, healthcare or other)
 - Aging Parents to care for
- Looking for affordability and quality of life
 - Curious, potential wanderlust
- May have been impacted by pandemic
- Thoughts of retiring within 15 or so years

AG. INTELLIGENCE

"Cornell Zach"

- Cutting-edge, Agriculture and tech focus entrepreneur
- Has the means but needs the infrastructure
- Loves the FLX/Kindred for the area

Branding Strategy: Sense of Place

Natural Beauty (FLX, Owasco),
Spacious with Elbow Room

Friendly/Community
Oriented/Sense of Pride

Curious, Sustainable, Attainable,
Shovel-Ready

Harriet

History

downtown and Walkability

Arts + Culture

Affordable/Quality of Life

Craft Brewing / Food



Mission

A forward-thinking city taking pride in our roots, Auburn appreciates its rich culture, tight-knit community, and its multi-industry business economy like no other small city can.

Messaging

Values

Always Sincere

Independently Wired

Willingness to Evolve

Firmly Loyal + Proud

Welcoming and Approachable

Tone + Brand Voice

Hopeful

Charming / Warm

Honest

“Make it happen” attitude

PRIMARY TYPE LOGO AND TAG

AUBURN

AUBURN 
Where possibility takes root.

PRIMARY COLOR PALLETTE

Colors

We pumped up the intensity on the standard Auburn maroon to get to a nice brick red that is evocative of the architecture throughout the city. This acts as the primary color for the brand. Supporting colors are a little softer and speak to Auburn's small city **charm**. Almost reminiscent of a vintage ice cream shop, these colors give the brand a touch of history and quaintness.



TYPOGRAPHY

Type

The typeface pairing of Baskerville and the more modern Mulish is meant to contrast old and new, historic and contemporary, in the same way that history and modernity contrast and blend all over Auburn. Mulish's rounded forms feel friendly and sometimes bubbly, which helps to soften the austerity of the serif font, and of the logotype.

HEADERS Mulish & Libre Baskerville

Typography Sample

Auburn, NY.

BODY Mulish

Mulish is a free minimalist Sans Serif typeface, designed for both display and text typography.

It was initially drawn in 2011 by Vernon Adams and then refined until 2014, adding more weights, support for more Latin languages, tightened the spacing and kerning and made many glyph refinements throughout the family – all based on hundreds of users' feedback. In 2017 the family was updated by Jacques Le Bailly to complete the work started by Vernon after he passed away, in collaboration with his wife Allison, an artist who holds the trademark on the typeface family name. In August 2019, it was updated with a Variable Font "Weight" axis.

PHOTOGRAPHIC STYLE

Forthcoming

PART III

Executive Summary

AIDA: Auburn, NY Center Place Branding Summary

TGW STUDIO

Implications and Recommendations



Auburn is on the verge. Capture Auburn's essence and run. Utilize tools for communication and formulate the best success-stories Auburn has to offer. History? Absolutely. But, a modern-day "Auburn, where possibilities take root" provides a real promise. These stories are genuine, real and rooted in important history.



One-Two Punch. Key organic and ongoing marketing tactics working alongside AIDA and CEDA to support quick turnaround mini-campaigns when a specific tactic is working, or a need emerges from a custom conversation/lead/opportunity.



Invest in Storytelling. Success stories, inbound white-papers, BTS tours, guided field trips (digital and in-person). and beyond. Go-around traditional methods and invest in connecting with individuals customize the experience directly.



Additional Research. We recommend continuing research on getting the support a business needs to make relocation happen (while still utilizing the unavoidable, site-finders and other traditional methods). We also encourage doing more community parents of youth attending public and private school in Auburn to unearth differentiating or supportive insights to our findings.



Continue to Invest in the Community, ASAP. Financial incentives and welcome packages will not suffice for the long game. Small metros like Auburn need to invest in enriching the current community, quickly and as soon possible, to truly improve quality of life for everyone - both current residents and future ones.

Implications and Recommendations (continued)



Revitalization and jobs, jobs, jobs ... Another slightly older, relevant study continues to resonate:

“Family motivations dominated, but returning home also depended on securing a job, often involving creative strategies to overcome employment limitations. Those frequently mentioned their acceptance of financial and career sacrifices for returning home. Most nonreturnees who may have considered coming home cited low wages and lack of career opportunities as the primary barriers to their return.”


https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/45361/52906_err185.pdf?v=0

While manufacturing could be the key to revitalization, smaller novel businesses are also proving to be quite promising - political backing of opposing interests may stymie economic growth in general.

We recommend taking this exercise and finding a focus and sticking to it. These interfering opinions are problematic for planning and focus. Our research, marketing experience, and knowledge of Auburn continually point toward:


- Small business owners
- Companies under 30 employees
- Emerging Ag + technology space (leg-up on infrastructure)
- Individuals looking to relocate/potentially remote
- Ties to Auburn

Implications and Recommendations (continued)

 **Stick to the Personas: Talk to Millennials, Remotes/Individuals and Focus on AG.** Retiree's should absolutely be a focus since we know, of course, Florida is sinking, but capturing the younger generations that are just starting families is the "safest bet". Especially, to the supporting partners (AKA getting family buy-in):

"The town feels like a 1980's John Hughes movie. We have a 4th of July parade, ice cream socials, and a Halloween festival. Kids walk or ride their bikes to school, and I love falling asleep on summer nights to cicadas. Oh, and parking lots! I could have thrown my arms and twirled around like Julie Andrews in Sound of Music when I first pulled into one."

— Carrie, Chicago to Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin on moving from a big city to a small one

 **Identify "the Remotes" and court them.** Working remotely "is something that I think people in the tech world, people who code, have been rooting for for a long time," said Sierra Allred, a machine-learning engineer who does that for a tech company in Utah from Burlington, where she moved this year. "Telling people that we'll pay you this amount but you can live wherever you want is going to just be very attractive to a lot of really high-level talent."

 **Appeal to the Curious, Flexible, and those looking for Simple Living:**
We also recommend appealing to those interested in more space and a "quieter existence".

Our findings suggest movements like "cottage core" will only continue to increase, with trends that highlight "a budding aesthetic movement, where tropes of rural self-sufficiency converge with dainty décor" will only continue.

* Marketing Plan and Key Tactics to Follow

PART IV

The Marketing Strategy

AIDA: Auburn, NY Center Place Branding Summary

TGW STUDIO

2021 Brand Activation Marketing Plan Summary

SECTION OVERVIEW

Program Objectives Overview

definition of key marketing objectives

Recommended Marketing Tactics

Overview of recommended tactics and marketing channels

Content Strategy

Content strategy overview and content bucket descriptions

Overview of Analytics

definition of program KPIs and success metrics, by marketing tactic

Initial Timeline

initial/estimated program timeline

PART IV

The Marketing Strategy

Overview of Key Objectives

TGW STUDIO



Marketing Overview of Objectives

As the brand research and summary data have shown us, there are a number of different potential paths for success when it comes to marketing the City of Auburn and its newly developed brand. Setting clear objectives for Year 1 of the brand launch will be imperative.

Marketing specific to a brand launch has a inherent guidelines from a style, voice, and tactics approach, that of which is led by the new brand itself.

Objectives guide decisions on a tactical approach that result in strategic and informative use of resources, budgets, and more.

Our recommended objectives will mix exposure with action, resulting in key goals for brand activation and organizational success being met.



Marketing Overview of Objectives

OBJECTIVE I

Brand Activation and Awareness

The first objective of any successful brand development process and subsequent marketing program is brand activation. This process creates exposure and awareness of the brand. This is the phrase during which people start to see and experience the brand. They start to share the brand. They start to advocate for the brand and become ambassadors in helping to tell the story of the brand's purpose and essence.

Before any meaningful action is taken in terms of generating leads, capturing data, etc., a solid base of brand awareness must be laid. Impressions, frequency, recency, and visual storytelling are the name of the game with it comes to this primary objective.



Marketing Overview of Objectives

OBJECTIVE II

Direct Response and Information Capture

A major goal of the marketing program for the place brand program is ultimately to garner interest and conversion on key organizational goals. These goals include direct action for things like data capture (ie. Email capture, informational phone calls, etc.) and lead generation.

Ultimately, the goal is to engage businesses (primarily) and current/prospective residents (secondary) to submit information and begin conversations around growth and business development in Auburn.

PART IV

The Marketing Strategy
Recommended Marketing Tactics

TGW STUDIO

Marketing Tactics

The following section of the marketing plan outlines the key recommended marketing tactics for the 2021 brand launch and activation. While this may not represent a fully comprehensive list and other “non-brand” tactics may be utilized by AIDA/CEDA and the City of Auburn, this set of tactics should be deployed and executed to maximize the initial rollout impact and ongoing success of the new brand.

Tactics are based on a recommended path to success and many change due to unknowns in terms of overall budget, resources, etc.



Tactic: Brand Design Elements and Activation Resources/Assets

Following the fully developed brand strategy, visual identity, and guidelines, a set of creative assets will be developed using the brand as building blocks. These creative assets will set the visual path for other marketing tactics, ongoing creative development, and paid/earned/owned media endeavors.

Suite of brand activation creative assets examples include:

- ***Brand photography+design elements***
- ***Social activation package (content + creative)***
- ***Social property visuals (may include revisions to existing social properties)***
 - ***Social home header image/video, social icon/avatar creation, etc)***
- ***Print collateral direction***
- ***About/mission versioning for social, PR, etc.***
- ***Initial paid social/display ad directional examples/mocks***
- ***"Fact Sheet" for use on web and print distribution***



Tactic: New Website Launch

The launch of the new website in Q1 2021 will provide a marketing hub and home for the new Auburn place brand. It will combine the new brand identity with a modern, intuitive, and tech-forward approach.

The website will include pages, sections, and blocks that act as a channel for multiple marketing strategies, including providing resourceful education/information and capturing key data from users, prospective businesses, and more.

The website launch will allow for additional digital marketing initiatives to take place, including:

- *Development of a landing page template to be used for campaigns and marketing tactics throughout 2021 (recommended).*
- *Creation of a robust blog with backfilled content for launch and ongoing long form content*
- *Creation of a "Jobs" page to provide valuable information to prospective workers/residents and boost relationships with existing businesses by providing an additional outlet of assistance*



Tactic: Inbound Marketing

Inbound marketing is crucial for developing necessary short and longterm relationships with key business and resident prospects. Develop deep content for distribution on the new website and through organic social will allow for a better understanding of what the place brand that represents Auburn is all about and why the city is such a great place to work and live.

Inbound marketing is also a great way to check multiple marketing strategy “boxes” — from place brand awareness, to providing valuable resources and data, to getting users engaged with the city and capturing their information.

Inbound marketing examples include:

- ***Develop long form content on website (blog, etc) to boost inbound success and SEO***
- ***Create updated brochure geared specifically toward personas***
- ***Design a white paper/downloadable PDF for CEO’s and remote workers/small teams. Speak directly to them about what Auburn has to offer and why. Get their buy-in.***
- ***Create a downloadable guide/PDF to potential retirees in Auburn. Speak to why Auburn makes sense (despite the snow).***
- ***Create a downloadable guide/PDF for Auburn High grads that have moved elsewhere. This type of tool will be great to have at the ready.***



Tactic: Organic Social

Developing a robust organic social program will allow for strategic content distribution and engagement growth for the new place brand. Aside from the website, social channels should act as the main ongoing content hubs for AIDA/CEDA.

Organic social can also set the stage for development of a strong brand personality and voice based on the different key targets (primary: business, secondary: residential) and brand personas as defined by the brand strategy.

See "Content Strategy" for additional organic social direction.

Recommended platforms of focus:

- ***LinkedIn (business/commercial focus)***
- ***Facebook (business + residential focus)***
- ***Instagram (residential focus)***



Tactic: Paid Media

Paid media is crucial in the activation of any successful brand. It allows for targeted and enhanced distribution of key brand elements, valuable brand content, and more.

Depending on available resources and budgets, a paid media plan should be developed to complement and enhance other marketing efforts. This is one of the most important elements and tactics on the path to meeting marketing objectives.

As such, paid media strategy and placements should match the overall place brand marketing/activation objectives — specific media tactics for 1. Increasing place brand awareness, and 2. Driving direct response in the form of prospect data capture and lead generation for interested businesses.

Some examples of paid campaigns may include:

- ***Targeted LinkedIn ad approach — directing to key decision makers for businesses looking to move, expand, and grow***
- ***“Auburn Pride” paid media campaign on multiple channels (social + display + print) in conjunction with complementary organic content campaign during the later stages of the pandemic to build momentum and advocacy for the new brand***



Tactic: Email Marketing

Creating a strategic email campaign will allow for direct distribution to full email lists and individual segments of the available list.

The new website and inbound marketing efforts can drive additional email capture to grow the lists.

Email automations can also act as key “introductions” to the place brand and all the amazing things Auburn has to offer for businesses and residents.

Recommended platform: Mailchimp (to allow for strong web/digital integrations, automations, segmentation, and more.)



Tactic: Brand Advocacy/Ambassador Program

Identifying and leveraging key place brand ambassadors and those who represent the essence of Auburn on both a business and resident/community level can lead to wider distribution and adoption of the new place brand.

A City Ambassadors program can lead to exposure of the great pride and community-oriented sentiment of so many businesses and residents in Auburn.

Marketing initiatives can include merch/swag distribution, content sharing directives, and more.



Tactic: Podcast

The development of a podcast (with assistance/direction from TGW) can allow for additional rich content to be used and distributed through the website, social channels, and streaming services.

Interviews with key business “characters” and community members will allow for folks to hear from the heart of what makes Auburn the gem of a small city that it is.

This approach will also allow for targeted development of success stories across multiple industries and show why show much possibility lies within Auburn.



Tactic: “By The Numbers” Business/City Report

As an additional potential tactic, an annual report on the business developments that have occurred can represent the recent exploding growth (*including 11 new businesses during a global pandemic!*) and provide visually beautiful information for prospective businesses.

It is also a great way to highlight success stories, testimonials, events, and more in a deeper, more tangible way.



Tactic: “Real Estate” Style City Video

As an additional potential tactic, the development and production of a real estate “Welcome to Auburn” style video later in the year can act as an additional rich media resource for distribution on the website, through social channels, and through paid media.

PART IV

The Marketing Strategy

Content Strategy

TGW STUDIO



Content Strategy

Content is at the core of all successful marketing efforts, especially when it comes to brand activation programs. As defined by the brand personas, tone, and voice strategy, content should be strategic to maximize efficiency of development, keeping on course objectively, and making the best use of resources and budgets.

Content can and should be developed to align with different marketing program objectives. For example, awareness objectives will align with content that is informative, educational, and insightful. Direct response and action objectives require content developed to encourage engagement, data/info submission, and different calls to action.

It is recommended that a content calendar be developed on a monthly or biweekly basis to ensure content strategy stays on track for program objectives and success.

The content recommended on the following slides represents a “content bucket” approach to define areas of focus. These buckets can be used an distributed across multiple (or all) marketing tactics depending on the tactical purpose and necessary marketing objective.

R E C O M M E N D E D

CONTENT BUCKETS

Brand Asset and Storytelling

Business Spotlights and Success Stories

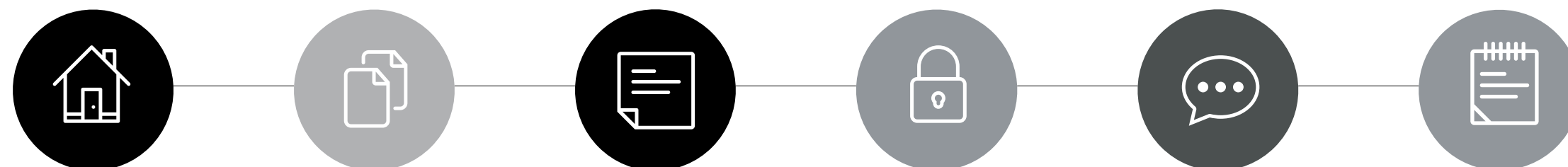
CEDA/AIDA/Auburn "Nuts and Bolts" Content

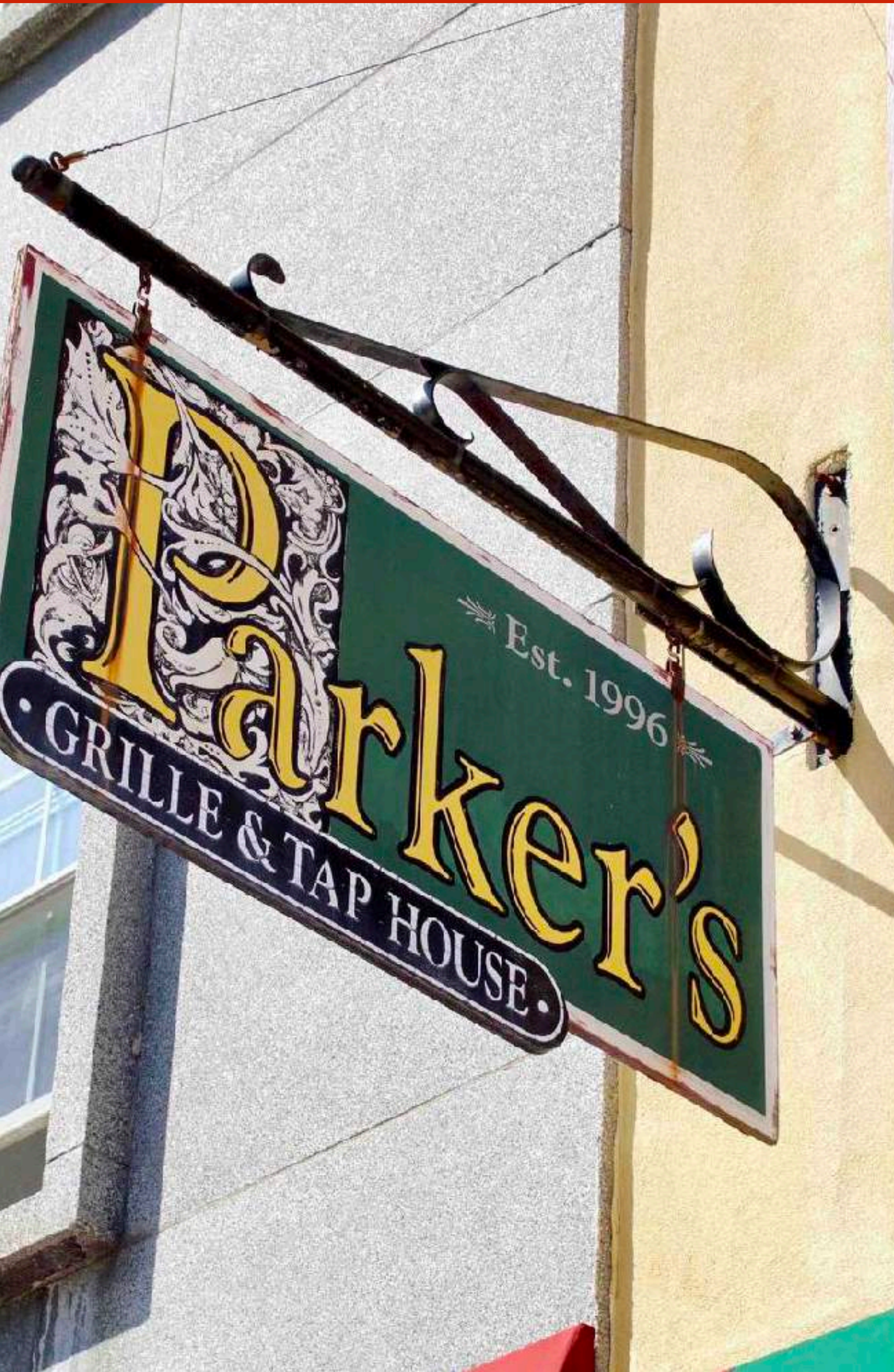
Auburn General/Natural Asset Highlights

Things to Do (general Auburn)

Events and Resource Highlights

Testimonials (Business and Residential)





Content Bucket - Brand Asset Distribution and Storytelling

Through the brand process, we have developed a key set of brand identifiers and differentiators that define Auburn. It is important to not only lay these assets out, but to develop content that helps tell this imperative story. This content should be clearly defined, visually appealing, and shareable to encourage brand advocacy and action.

Examples include:

- Development of brand visual content
- Telling the story of brand logos, marks, supporting visuals, colors, etc.
- Building content that supports the brand tagline (ie. Expanding on the story of "root" and "possibilities")
- Sharing and repurposing content from others that is representative of the brand

A comprehensive brand must include supporting materials and content to achieve complete support and advocacy for the identity that we have developed.

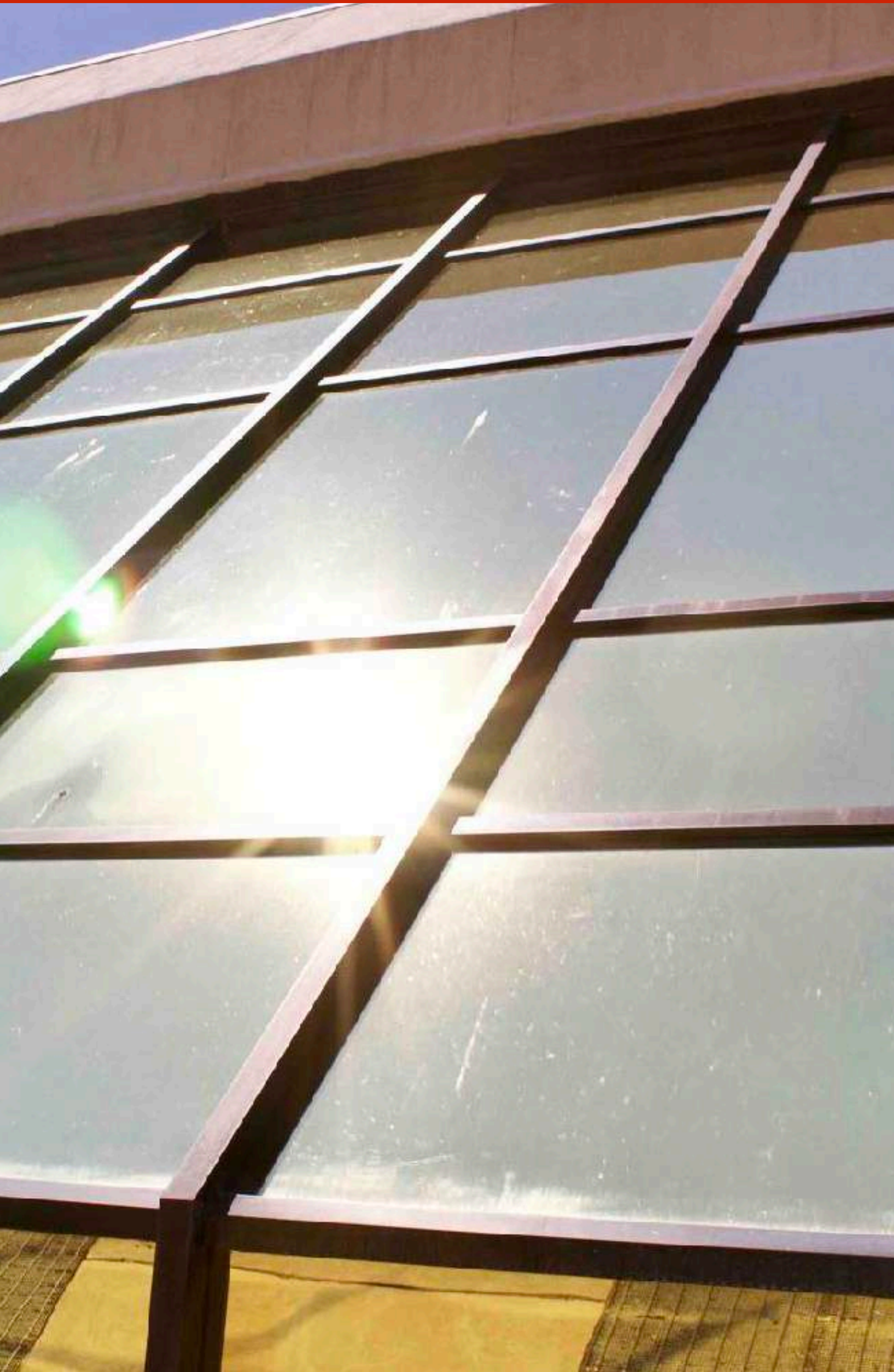


Content Bucket - Business Spotlight and Success Stories

Highlighting the recent strong success (even through Covid) of Auburn businesses will be one of the strongest marketing/content assets for the program. Showing how possibility turns to success in Auburn will allow others to know that they can relocate and/or grow in Auburn, regardless of industry and business size/type. This is also a great opportunity to connect the dots between business launches and successful growth stories with opportunities presented to them by Auburn/CEDA/AIDA.

This content can take on a number of different forms and resource levels, from quick social posts highlighting small successes to in-depth inbound techniques such as website business profiles, downloadable print highlights, Auburn business “annual report” development, and more.

Key industry strategy will be imperative from a quantity and balance perspective when highlighting businesses and industries. This will also allow for targeted distribution after content has been developed.

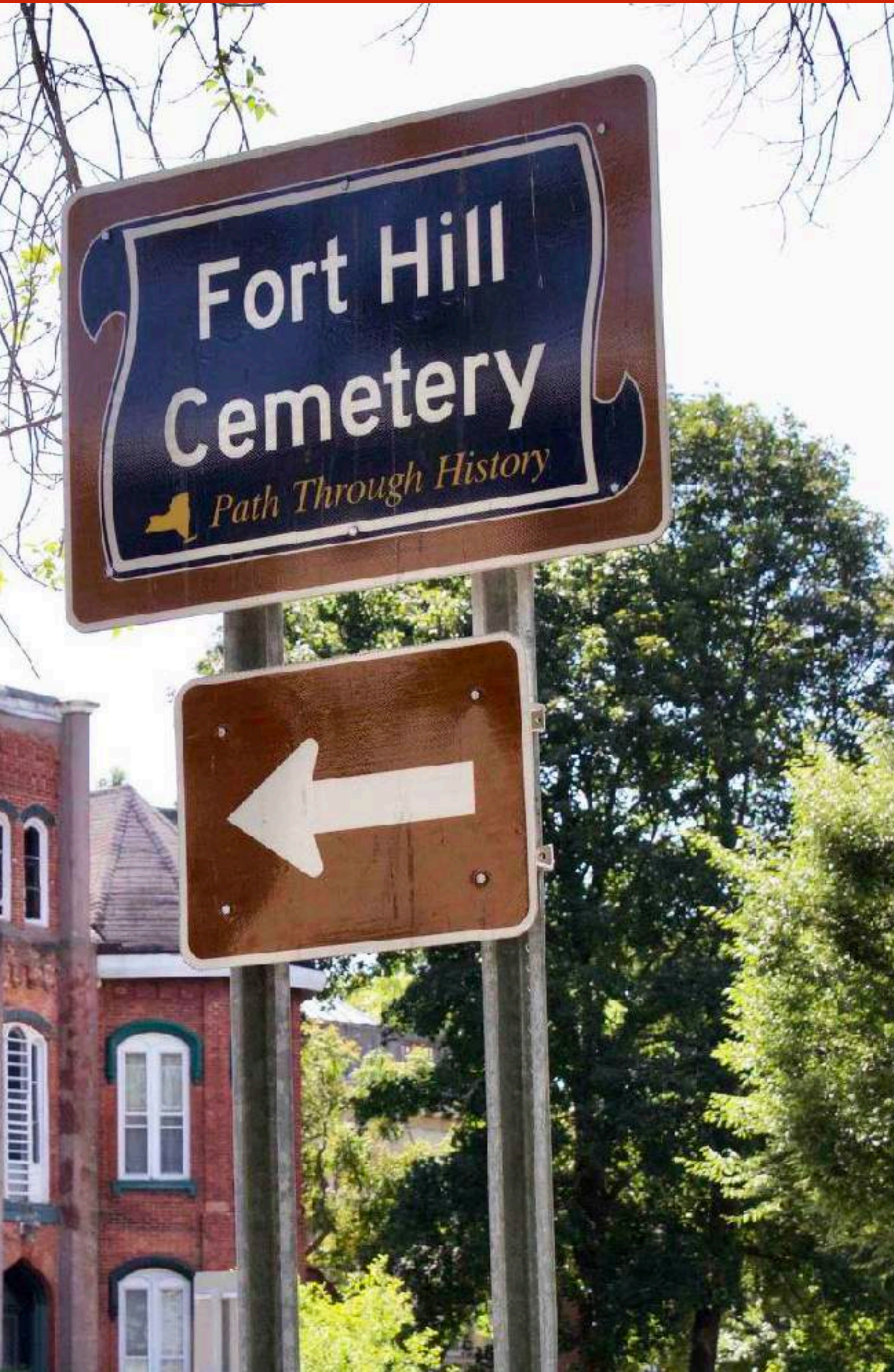


Content Bucket - Auburn/AIDA/CEDA “Nuts & Bolts” Content

There is a great deal of informative and educational information to be developed and shared that is born out of beneficial programs, incentives, and more. While there is much to be done from a general asset and storytelling perspective, businesses and key decision makers (among other members of our target audience) will be hungry for

Examples include:

- Incentive, tax, etc. programs (city, SCORE, AIDA/CEDA-specific, and other)
- Past/Current/Future project development highlights
- Site, building, and infrastructure overviews and information
- Available talent program highlights from nearby universities
- Job creation numbers



Content Bucket - Auburn General/Natural Asset Highlights

Auburn has an abundance of assets that connect the visual representation of the brand to the “real world.”

With the Finger Lakes region being one of the strongest assets of Auburn, highlighting the collection of surrounding natural assets will also help position Auburn as a great place to start/grow/expand a business and as an amazing place to live and recreate.

This is a content area in which Auburn’s beauty, spirit, and community can be shared. Examples include:

- ***cultural diversity***
- ***progressive arts/food/bev scene***
- ***parks, lake, trail, recreational activity availability***
- ***natural agriculture and food supply***
- ***proximity to nearby assets (cities, FLX, transportation/infrastructure)***



Content Bucket - Things to Do (General Auburn)

Positioning Auburn as a great place to live, while a secondary objective of the brand development program, is crucial in telling the story of the city (and its new brand). One of the most important ways to do this is through generating content that shows things to do for members of our target audience and the community at large.

This is a more general “evergreen” approach to highlighting things to do around Auburn, whether it be general business highlights, shopping the streets, visiting the lake or nearby wineries/breweries, taking in live music or an art show, and more.

There is a lot going on in and around Auburn. Let's get that out there.



Content Bucket - Events and Resources

From letting folks know about business events (virtual and eventually in-person again), digital and print business resources, informational materials, and more, the new brand entity should act as a home for this important content.

Channels like social and paid media can act as conduits for sharing bits and pieces of this type of information, with the aim of getting more participation and engagement in the larger events and resources.

Content category types within this bucket should be strategically developed to match brand activation goals and overall marketing objectives.



Content Bucket - Testimonials

Hearing from the source of other Auburn businesses and “success stories” is perhaps the best way to tell the story of Auburn’s business development and downtown growth. Reaching prospects and target audience members with this content can give them a “if they can do it, so can I” attitude toward Auburn.

There is a great deal of available testimonial “inventory” because of the growth over the past 5-7 years in Auburn.

Testimonials can take on many different forms, including:

- ***Written testimonials (shared via website, social, etc)***
- ***Video testimonials (“how Auburn helped me get here,” etc.)***
- ***Photography and informational testimonials***
- ***Podcast guest participation***
- ***And more...***

PART IV

The Marketing Strategy

Overview of Analytics and Metrics of Success (By Tactic)

Analytics/Measurement

2021 and beyond

All measurable tactics will be analyzed and optimized in an ongoing manner, with formal monthly reports developed.

Monthly Reports

It is recommended that a monthly analytics report be developed for all measurable tactics, to include an overview of program analytics pursuant to the program objectives (awareness and direct/engagement)

Visitor data to be analyzed monthly

Monthly reports to include general summaries and recommendations for ongoing program optimization

Analytics/Measurement

Measurable Tactic		Key Metrics and Performance Indicators
Organic Social Media	Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organic weekly/monthly post reach (by channel) - Organic page/profile reach (by channel) - Community size & growth (likes/follows) by channel - Total posts - General follower demographics and geography on social channels
	Engagement/Direct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total clicks - Total engagements on organic posts - Top performing creative ad sets/units - Engagement rate (social) - Total mentions, shares, likes, comments
Paid Digital Media	Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total paid social reach - Total digital impressions - Total views (video) - Frequency
	Direct Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total Clicks - CPC (cost per click) - CPE (cost per engagement) - CTR (click-through rate) - Total lead & data captures (if applicable)

Analytics/Measurement

Measurable Tactic	Key Metrics and Performance Indicators	
<p>Website Analytics (Google Analytics)</p>	<p>Awareness & Site Engagement Analytics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site referrals - Total pageviews (total and by top performing pages) - Unique visitors - Form completions / data capture - Total sessions - Pages viewed per session - Sessions per user - Time spent on site per session and user (avg. session duration) - Bounce rate - New users vs. returning users (by percentage) - SEO analytics (referring keyword data & insights) - Behavior Flow - Conversions, goals, and conversion rates
<p>Email Marketing</p>	<p>Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total email captures (on-site, up front) - Total sends - Open rate - Click rate - Behavior mapping - Landing page view and conversions

PART IV

The Marketing Strategy

Initial Timeline

2021 Marketing Program Recommended Timeline

Auburn Place Brand Recommended Marketing Timeline	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	1/2021	2/2021	3/2021	4/2021	5/2021	6/2021	7/2021	8/2021	9/2021	10/2021	11/2021	12/2021
Website												
Main Web Launch	█											
Landing page and additional element/feature build			█	█	█							
Brand Design Activation Elements												
Asset Development and Distribution	█	█										
Inbound Marketing												
Inbound Marketing Execution		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Organic Social Program												
Organic social and content development (ongoing)		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Paid Media Program												
Paid Social & Digital		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Print/Traditional/Other				█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Email Marketing												
Email Capture	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Email Marketing Distribution		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Brand Advocacy Program												
Ambassador/Advocate Program			█	█	█							
Additional Marketing Tactics												
Podcast			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
City Business "Annual Report"											█	█
"Real Estate" Style Video									█			

Why develop a place brand for Auburn, NY?

To highlight how Auburn, NY is uniquely situated among other small, rural cities as the place to live, work, and do business.

Who is this new place brand and site for?

This site targets small businesses, site selectors, and those interested in moving to a location that offers plenty of fresh air and quick access to major metropolitan areas in the northeastern U.S.

About the new tagline

The tagline, "Where possibility takes root," ties in themes central to the city's identity.

These include Auburn's natural beauty and rural location, the entrepreneurial spirit of its people, the history embedded in its culture, and its nurturing and supportive community that makes it a great place to lay down "roots".

The logomark visualizes this theme with a rooted tree, whose forms mirror that of the swooping "A" in the logotype.

About the new logotype

The new logo uses a typeface inspired by the letterhead fonts from the mid to late-19th century when much of Auburn's historical sites were established.

About the colors

We pumped up the intensity on standard auburn to get to a nice brick red that is evocative of the architecture of Auburn. This acts as the primary color for the brand. Supporting colors are a little softer and speak to Auburn's small town charm. Almost reminiscent of a vintage ice cream shop, these colors give the brand a touch of quirk and quaintness.