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Executive Summary

Place branding initiatives undertaken by cities typically fall into one of two categories: low-road policies and high-road policies. Low-road policies include the creation of slogans and logos that elicit certain emotions, associations, and thoughts. High-road policies may involve making improvements to areas that a city is lacking in or further strengthening features that are already desirable. The latter policy effort is usually seen as the more effective option because those investments generally result in real improvements to a city's quality and image, rather than making a place appear attractive through quirky taglines or idyllic logos.

Pursuing a branding initiative also forces a city to figure out what it wants to be known for and what it wants to look like in the future—whether that be a bustling technology hub or a welcoming small town. Similarly, a branding initiative would allow Bloomington to determine what kind of city it would like to be. This is beneficial because there exists a rift in how locals imagine Bloomington's future self. One side enjoys the college-town feel of Bloomington and is wary of growth. The other side sees economic growth and expansion as inevitable in order to retain and attract a talented workforce and businesses. These ideals appear to conflict with one another and Bloomington must either decide which route to take, or alternative find a method to cater to both desires.

Three cities were studied to ascertain how they branded themselves and to which stakeholders they appeased when those questions became relevant for them. These peer cities to Bloomington, each with a similar population and the presence of a major university, were Ames, IA, Ann Arbor, MI, and Boulder, CO. Ames conducted a detailed survey to identify how best to create a vision for the city. After analyzing the results of this survey, recommendations on the city's behalf were made to generate a narrative for Ames that is encapsulated by a slogan. Next, Ann Arbor's business-related efforts have been geared towards growth and development as well as attracting millennials to the area. Through the help of major non-profits, Ann Arbor has begun rebuilding its IT presence as well as making the city more urban and dense with an appealing 24/7 atmosphere. Finally, Boulder's urban development is physically constrained due to the presence of the Rocky Mountains, limits on where water service is provided, and a tax that preserves green space. As a result, Boulder's economic efforts have focused on supporting existing companies and startups by providing rebates and loans rather than attempting to attract new, large corporations.

Whether Bloomington decides to identify and convey its narrative through a logo or slogan, attract a younger workforce, or maintain its small-town feel by supporting economic activity among existing businesses—or invests in a completely different area, Ames, Ann Arbor, and Boulder exist as a model for achieving those goals. Still, each city is unique. While these peer cities can offer inspiration for Bloomington's branding efforts, Bloomington's brand must be

catered to its unique set of regional problems, strengths, and culture. Therefore, this report sought out valuable insight from both internal and external stakeholders.

First, this study took a multi-faceted approach to determine Bloomington's internal identity. Specifically, 24 stakeholders in the community—ranging from new and established businesses, to government officials, to nonprofits—were interviewed. From these interview, four major themes were identified: 1) few jobs and low salaries, 2) a lack of racial diversity, 3) affordability concerns, and 4) strong community activism. These themes were then compared to the findings from the Community Survey and the City of Bloomington's Comprehensive Plan. Many similarities as well as differences between the opinions of residents and stakeholders were discovered.

Next, the external perceptions of Bloomington held by prospective residents and businesses were assessed. Through 7 different quantitative and qualitative analyses, a narrative of external perceptions with several recurring themes was created that sheds light on the branding process. Bloomington is as a college town with attractive cultural and natural amenities. Its proclaimed progressive values bring in new residents that seek engagement with the city's supportive community. Claims to progressive values are undermined by what was often described as "provincial" politics; Bloomington's well-known "small town atmosphere" brings with it a distinct resistance to growth. This resistance to growth held by some members of the community translates to very low rates of population growth, an indicator that is crucial for a city's health and in being featured in community marketing and research sites. Search engine analytics focused on "Doing Business in Bloomington" revealed that there are unclear requirements and processes for conducting business in Bloomington, which contrasts with peer cities that have higher rates of business growth. New business development, which is crucial for sustainable growth, is stifled by unpredictable approval processes based on politics instead of transparent procedures.

Additionally, newspaper analysis examined how Bloomington is discussed on the city, state, and regional level. Results are consistent with prevailing themes: articles focused on quality of life in the city are largely positive, while those focused on economic development are more negative, on average. Crime rates are above average in Bloomington, but matters of public safety were almost entirely absent from the reasons interviewees provided for moving to Bloomington. Housing, a concern often raised by locals, is actually perceived as very affordable from an outsider's perspective. Bloomington performs very well on education in online community research sources, but education in Bloomington remains strongly associated with Indiana University, not its well-ranked public school system.

From these analyses, several actionable points emerge: (1) While the City of Bloomington is in the process of updating its zoning policies, efforts could be taken to facilitate business

development, including: Providing for initial consultation for starting business and updating the City website to make business information more readily accessible. (2) Develop a storytelling strategy across social media platforms to provide the City of Bloomington with the opportunity to "tell its own story." (3) Establish a human presence downtown to provide visitor information. (4) Encourage sustainable growth policies. (5) Capitalize on the strong association Indiana University has with the city by encouraging a larger role for IU as a community partner, perhaps through the Center for Rural Engagement. (6) Market Bloomington's affordable housing while taking steps to ensure it remains affordable for locals. (7) Take steps to improve safety and lower crime rates. (8) Involve the Monroe County School corporation in future branding efforts to bolster outside knowledge of the school system, an asset valued highly by potential residents. Assist them with their own branding initiative. (9) And build a brand around the large variety of cultural and natural amenities available in Bloomington.

Lastly, this branding analysis equips Bloomington with necessary brand management tools, empowering the city to use their brand to control the narrative in the community. From consistency in marketing to efficient communication, effective brand management will help Bloomington relay its ideas and motives faster and more clearly to its constituents. A common issue cities encounter in branding is a disconnect between key stakeholder groups, such as residents, businesses and nonprofits. Working relationships between these groups lead to long-lasting and sustainable brand management efforts. Most pertinent to Bloomington are the following: unified communication, making on-brand decisions and actions, making on-brand investments, and having a willingness to evaluate impact and effectiveness.

Why Bloomington Needs Branding

The Purpose of Place Branding

There is an increasing need for cities to improve and promote their identity in order to compete on a local, national or global scale. Much like private goods that compete in the market, place branding treats a city as though it was a product (Gauli, Nada, and Hyytiäinen, 2014). And like a product, a city must be desirable, either in quality or in perception, in order to attract and retain a variety of stakeholders.

Place branding attempts to incorporate all the positive aspects of a region that make it stand out. When it is seen or heard, and effective brand elicits positive emotions, associations, and experiences. To create a brand, a city must first identify what it would like people to think of when that city is brought up, who those target stakeholders are, and the long-term goal of that branding effort. However, creating a brand is not easy. For a multifaceted city, identifying one or even several of its key features can be challenging. Moreover, stakeholders may disagree with the medium and perceptions conveyed through the brand, or they may not agree with the future goals that the brand would help achieve. But, if curated correctly a successful brand can transform a city from simply a place on a map to a coveted destination (Gauli, Nada, and Hyytiäinen, 2014). A desirable city is able to attract industry, investors, residents, and tourists.

Achieving this can be done through a place-based branding initiative that falls into one of two general categories: "low-road" or "high-road" policies. Low-road options entail certain activities that are promulgated among a target audience. This typically includes the creation and dissemination of a slogan or logo. High-road efforts involve making improvements to one or more of a city's characteristics or marketing notable features that a city already has. These areas can include the identity that the built and natural environment provides, landmarks, an array of entertainment options, the attitudes of local government, or the culture of the populace. High-road policies tend to be more effective because they often make tangible improvements to a city that in turn produce positive externalities compared to logos or slogans that usually only make a city appear attractive (Cleave et al., 2016). These policy options can also be combined to create a suite of branding initiatives.

However, quantifying the results of a place branding effort, whether they stem from low- or high-road policies, is challenging. It may be difficult or even impossible to ascertain, for instance, whether certain economic efforts caused businesses to move into a particular city or if those businesses would have done so even without any action. This creates some uncertainty in the field as to whether or not place branding efforts are worth the investment and resources. While the results of branding initiatives may not always be quantifiable, cities and their perceptions are constantly changing over time. Therefore, it is in a city's best interest to cultivate

and shape those inevitable changes in order to create an identity that helps it stand out on a local, national, or global scale.

The Need for Branding in Bloomington, IN

It would be difficult to convince outsiders to come to a city when it is hard to retain those who are already there. Bloomington is home to Indiana University (IU), a large supplier of young talent. However, the "brain drain" phenomenon, the relocation of highly-educated individuals to big cities and urban areas where there is more perceived opportunity, affects Bloomington and Indiana as a whole. Upon graduation, only 60% of students remain in Indiana while the retention rate in the adjacent state of Ohio is 78% (Skirvin, 2012). Regardless of where students relocate to, a non-trivial share of graduates made the decision that there is something they can find or achieve in another city that is not present in Bloomington.

Moreover, there is a split in Bloomington's internal identity among locals. Bloomington suffers from a divide in what stakeholders want for the long-term outlook of the city. On one hand, some of the older population, who have been in Bloomington for a longer period of time, prefer that Bloomington retains the small-town feel with which they are familiar. On the other, some feel that Bloomington must grow economically—by creating jobs and fostering industry—in order to retain and attract a talented workforce and combat the brain drain phenomenon.

A branding initiative will force Bloomington to identify what kind of city it would like to be in the future and set forth a plan to become it. Under the high-road suite of policy options, Bloomington has the option of branding itself by improving or otherwise correcting poor or incorrect perceptions and by promoting what is already desirable. Through research and informational interviews, this study identified four common themes that stakeholders value that Bloomington can focus on: (1) low salaries, (2) low racial diversity, (3) limited affordable housing, and (4) a strong sense of community engagement. The first three themes are areas in which Bloomington can improved, while the fourth theme is one that is already seen as strong and should be capitalized on. By catering its branding efforts to these themes, Bloomington would put itself in a better position to meet the needs of its citizens, retain students, and simultaneously attract outsiders looking to make a move.

Benchmarking

Although there are many college towns that are comparable to Bloomington, three in particular were identified and studied as peer cities: (1) Ames, Iowa, (2) Ann Arbor, Michigan, and (3) Boulder, Colorado. Each of these cities resembles Bloomington in terms of their Midwest locales, population size, and the presence of a large university. They stand out, however, because they are also frequently recognized for their desirability as a place to live, work, and visit in various "best of" lists. Therefore, these cities were investigated to learn the initiatives they have taken that have made them attractive to internal and external stakeholders.

Ames boasts a "small town charm in a big city" atmosphere and has focused on cultivating a higher quality of life to attract new residents and small businesses (City of Ames, n.d.). Ann Arbor embraces its relationship with the University of Michigan and other universities in the area. The city is currently focused on attracting and retaining millennials through various efforts. The creation of innovative initiatives has contributed to Ann Arbor's appearance on a number best-places-to-live lists. Boulder takes more of an unconventional approach in its economic efforts. Geographically, Boulder is space-limited and has directed its economic support to retaining existing businesses and startups rather than trying to attract large companies. Each of these cities have varied approaches to attracting and supporting different groups of stakeholders, and those methods are investigated in greater depth through three separate case studies.

Case Study 1: Ames, IA

Background

Ames is one of a few metropolitan areas located in central Iowa. Home to Iowa State University, Ames has a population of 66,191 (City of Ames, n.d.). Located in the heart of Iowa, Ames boasts above-average public schooling system, over 55 miles of bike trails, and a variety of cultural amenities such as locally brewed beer and the Ames Public Art Commission (City of Ames, n.d.).

Ames hosts a number of large, successful industries including 3M, Barilla, and Becker Underwood—a large agricultural company. The quality of education in Ames is also high. Coupled with the medium-sized campus of Iowa State University, Ames' public schools routinely outperform those in surrounding areas (City of Ames, n.d.). Lastly, Ames' municipal government is committed to improving the quality of life for its citizens. The city is undertaking several projects, including: (1) a $18 million renovation expansion of the Ames Public Library, (2) a $75 million state-of-the-art water treatment plant, and (3) the transition from coal to natural gas in the Ames Power Plant in order to improve local air quality (City of Ames, n.d.).

Ames is similar to Bloomington in many ways. In Ames, the cost of living is lower than the national average (98.6/100), there is a steadily increasing population (12.2%), and the average household income is relatively low ($41,278) (QuickFacts, 2016). However, Ames is unique in that it is looking to move more people into the city to balance the industry-heavy environment. On the other hand, Bloomington may be more interested in attracting industry. In 2011, the City of Ames conducted several surveys to develop a vision and plan to attract these individuals.

Initiative: Unifying the Vision of Ames, IA

In 2011, cities and industries nationwide were still facing the economic stress that followed the great recession of 2009. In an attempt to distinguish itself from nearby cities, Ames hired Brand Endeavor, a company that specializes in brand research, analyzation, and management, to help the city stand out. Brand Endeavor assessed the current vision of the city (both internally and externally), what characteristics the city could capitalized on, and which initiatives would not be worthwhile for managing its brand and vision. Brand Endeavor and the City of Ames held stakeholder interviews with 15 focus groups, resulting in a total of 40 people providing valuable insight into how they, as community leaders, viewed the city. Additionally, a competitor analysis was conducted between 8 peer cities and an online survey was distributed to residents, neighbors, and outsiders of Ames. These all aided in gaining an idea of how citizens and outsiders viewed the city (Brand Endeavor, 2011).

Results

These initiatives revealed that Ames has good name recognition among the Midwest and was fairly comparable to other college towns in the region. However, the perception of Ames as a "unique" city, one in which potential, long-term residents might consider, was lower than desirable. 34% of respondents considered Ames to be either "not very unique" or "not unique at all" (Brand Endeavor, 2011). Fortunately for Ames, the city does well in providing services that current residents appreciate such as higher-education learning opportunities, strong public schools, and many employment opportunities. For instance, outside business members saw key industries in Ames, including agriculture and veterinary science, as very unique. Within the agricultural sector, Ames has made significant technological advancements that is seen as appealing to outside businesses.

Finally, Ames' quality-of-life characteristics are strong and could be used to entice people from other states or cities to become Ames residents. Meanwhile, other improvements such as increasing retail and dining spaces downtown, reviving the urban spaces, improving diversity, and highlighting environmental initiatives may also be effective at motivating external stakeholders to become residents.

Overall, Brand Endeavor identified the desires of the city, competing cities, as well as stakeholders of Ames. Through these efforts, a vision was created for Ames and is summarized with a tagline that reads: "Ames, Iowa is the Heartland's leading edge" (Brand Endeavor, 2011). A strategic platform was also generated by Brand Endeavor for Ames to keep the vision of the city on track, and how to evaluate later successes.

Case Study 2: Ann Arbor, MI

Background

Ann Arbor is a medium-sized college town located in Michigan. With a population around 120,000 residents and home to 3 universities in the area, it is a city with a thriving and diverse community of people (U.S. Census). The largest university in the area is the University of Michigan and it is evident that the school plays a significant role in the identity of Ann Arbor. Ann Arbor appears on several top-rated lists for cities in America such as one of America's 50 "greenest" cities, #1 2018 Best Place to Live, and #1 Best College Towns and Cities in America, among others (City of Ann Arbor). The city has a wide variety of festivals that take place every year, a robust theater and technology community, and is slowly becoming a hub for millennials to relocate. Due to the conscious effort of the City of Ann Arbor and other community affiliates, Ann Arbor is consistently able to attract and retain new residents and visitors as well as appear on "top rated city" lists.

Initiative 1: Business and Economic

Ann Arbor SPARK

A key player in Ann Arbor's success is a non-profit called Ann Arbor SPARK. This organization is a self-titled engine for economic development that is dedicated to the economic prosperity of the greater Ann Arbor region. Instead of Ann Arbor leading the charge for growth and development, Ann Arbor SPARK is the catalyst and works with a number of community stakeholders to complete its mission. This organization places a heavy emphasis on the importance of collaborating with other community stakeholders including the Michigan Economic Development Corp, Michigan Works, the City of Ann Arbor, and the various academic institutions (Ann Arbor Spark 2016). This is a large organization with a lot of influence in the Ann Arbor area. This is demonstrated by a diverse board that consists of university officials, business owners, and non-profit directors among others. There does not appear to be an area of economic development that is untouched.

The organization states that it is imperative to attract and retain more millennials to the region in order for Ann Arbor to continue to grow. Greater downtown housing availability, transit options, and density (and the opportunities associated with dense, urban areas) were some

recommendations that the organization proposed to keep millennials in Ann Arbor (Stanton, 2014). In response to these suggestions, Ann Arbor has taken conscious effort to satisfy these desires. Aside from the university presence, there is a strong technology sector in Ann Arbor that is good for business. There is also a technology corridor that is home to many companies such as Menlo Innovations, Barracuda Networks, Duo Security, Google, and Prime Research (2014).

Initiative 2: Branding and Tourism

Destination Ann Arbor

Although they have a significant role in Ann Arbor's growth, Ann Arbor Spark cannot receive all the credit for the city's success. There have been influential branding and tourism initiatives taking place in the city as well. The Destination Ann Arbor Tourism Marketing Sponsorship Grant Program is a community-oriented tourism marketing and development investment program that helps create economic growth by promoting Ann Arbor as a destination for overnight and day visitors. Organizations in town can receive a grant for hosting events that are geared towards attracting visitors. It is a competitive grant program with a limited amount of funds (Destination Ann Arbor). But, its existence shows that stakeholders in the city know that it takes all entities to make the city a prosperous tourism hub.

Tourism Ambassador Program

In addition to Destination Ann Arbor, there is also the Tourism Ambassador Program which is a professional-development training program geared towards increasing tourism by "training front line employees and volunteers to turn each visitor experience into a positive experience" (Ann Arbor Tourism). There are currently 725 certified ambassadors who welcome visitors by providing travel info, sightseeing recommendations, and more. Those who are trained range from airport ambassadors to realtors to retail employees (Ann Arbor Tourism). This program has a significant reach and touches many sectors of Ann Arbor.

Ann Arbor Sustainability Action Plan

One final key factor to Ann Arbor's success is its approach to the environment and "green" energy. The city has a Sustainability Plan that falls under their Master Plan that covers a variety of areas (City of Ann Arbor). This sustainability framework has 16 goals that fall under four categories: (1) Climate and Energy, (2) Community, (3) Land Use and Access, and (4) Resource Management. This plan was initiated in 2013 and seeks to identify targets and actions that fall under the city's sustainability framework; it is reviewed and updated every two years. Through this plan and other focused efforts, the Ann Arbor has been making significant strides towards a cleaner environment.

The city also employs the use of low-emission luxury motor coaches, energy-efficient LED lights throughout the downtown area, "green" certified hotels, and more than half of the transportation authority's bus fleet runs on hybrid technology (Green Initiatives). All of these factors play a role into the city's commitment to the environment and reducing energy usage.

Case Study 3: Boulder, CO

Background

Boulder, Colorado has a population just over 100,000 and is home to University of Colorado Boulder (CU), which has a student population of about 33,000 (QuickFacts, 2016; Fall Census, 2017). Situated at the base of the Rocky Mountains, Boulder is bike- and walk-friendly, has efficient public transportation, numerous outdoor opportunities, and varied commercial, art, and entertainment opportunities.

Boulder has a thriving business scene propped up by technology-based startups. Notable employers in Boulder include CU, 14 federal labs, and numerous small businesses that span industries such as aerospace, software, data storage, natural products, and outdoor recreation. In relation to Bloomington, Boulder experienced a larger population growth from 2010 to 2016 (10.6%) while maintaining a lower crime-per-capita rate across many crime metrics, has a more rapid job market growth (3.10%), and has a lower unemployment rate (2.7%) (QuickFacts, 2016). However, Boulder has a slightly longer commute time than Bloomington and although incomes are generally higher in this Colorado city, median house prices are also significantly larger (QuickFacts, 2016). This means that a non-trivial number of people, especially those in lower-wage positions, employed in Boulder can only afford to live in neighboring towns and must commute into the city for work. Still, these factors have allowed Boulder to attract talent to the area and further its image as a technological and scientific hub and a hospitable place for startups, venture capitalists, and entrepreneurs.

Initiative: Economic Vitality

Boulder has several programs in place and has pursued various initiatives that support local businesses and attempt to better understand their concerns. Boulder established an Economic Vitality program in 2003 that works to guarantee a hospitable business environment for primary employers—those who are key to supporting the city's economy and that promote growth. As of 2012, primary employers accounted for 554 businesses out of about 6,700 total (Brautigam et al., 2012).

A joint effort in 2012 between the city, CU Leeds Business Research Division, and the Boulder Economic Council resulted in the Primary Employer Study. This report surveyed the region's

key businesses to identify, better understand, and ultimately address common issues that these employers face. This study found that key employers were concerned about space constraints that prevent expansion, limited flexibility for permitted uses based on zoning districts, high land and operating expenses for conducting business, and the lack of amenities in some parts of the city (Brautigam et al., 2012).

In response to this study, the Economic Vitality initiative expanded to include the Flexible Rebates Program in 2007 and the Microloan Program in 2009 specifically aimed at those primary employers. The Flexible Rebates Program provides a rebate to meet certain permit fees and sales and use taxes that would normally be paid to the city (Economic Sustainability Strategy, 2013). In effect, this rebate program works to retain small businesses by helping with relocation and expansion efforts within Boulder, since the alternative is moving to a neighboring city (Helm, 2018). The Microloan Program provides capital to small businesses and nonprofits that may not be able to acquire funding through traditional means. As these loans are repaid, they are used for future microloan recipients (Brautigam, Winter, and Pinsonneault, 2017).

Further, the City of Boulder published its Economic Sustainability Strategy in 2013 that outlines a method for bolstering its economic sector in the long-run primarily by targeting those critical primary employers. This strategy focuses on three key areas: people, place, and process. Targeting the needs of the people includes attracting a talented workforce, maintaining a high quality of life, and responding to social issues. Addressing the place aspect includes providing the building, infrastructure, and amenity needs for businesses. Finally, the city plans on ensuring a smooth process by increasing the ease of following city regulations, codes, and procedures.

Geographic Constraints

Boulder has significant land constraints and policies that actively prevent development into the surrounding natural environment. This unconventional stance on urban growth was introduced fairly early on and has persisted ever since. In the 1950's, several national laboratories were established in Boulder, which were followed by technology companies such as IBM. Not long after, startups emerged and with them a came a supply of technology jobs and a flood of young talent. However, contrary to what most cities would do in response to this rapid expansion, Boulder established a policy in 1959 that prevented water and sewer services from being offered beyond a specific point along the surrounding mountains to preserve the natural environment and views. This effectively placed a boundary on development and prevented sprawl. In addition, Boulder is committed to preserving green spaces around the city. Residents established a tax in 1967 to purchase and reserve open space in the city (Ellis, n.d.). Together, these regulation, zoning, and development policies—along with the culture and values of Boulder—make it difficult for large companies to exist in the city and for medium-sized companies to expand.

Results

As of June 1, 2017, and since its inception in 2007, Boulder has distributed 71 rebates totaling about $3.3 million through its Flexible Rebate Program. A return on investment analysis estimates that the net return is $9.88 for every $1 approved for rebate. Further, rebate recipients must satisfy a variety of sustainability efforts set forth by the city. This includes providing benefits and above-average wages to employees, increase energy efficiency, and supporting local nonprofits and businesses. Between 2009 and June 1, 2017, the Microloan program has made 91 loans to small businesses totaling $3.5 million, which translates to the creation or retainment of 826 jobs. Recipients of these programs are then able to contribute back to the local economy through their sales, paying taxes, providing jobs, investing in facilities, and purchasing local goods and services (Brautigam, Winter, and Pinsonneault, 2017).

Conclusion

Ames, Ann Arbor, and Boulder offer three different scenarios and three different options for improving city brands. Recommendations from consultant Brand Endeavor to the City of Ames focused on creating a vision and an identity and portraying that through a medium like a logo and tagline (Brand Endeavor, 2011). Perhaps as a result of this initiative, Ames has seen steady population growth and has appeared on several "Best Places to Live" lists. For Ann Arbor, it is making a concerted effort to make the city a more attractive place to live. By embracing local universities and multiple partnerships for initiatives, the entire city seems to have a role in Ann Arbor's success. Meanwhile, Boulder first began to curate its image as a startup and technology haven back in the 1950's but that perception remains today—partly thanks to the city's economic efforts to support local companies. Both the Flexible Rebate Program and the Microloan program have purportedly resulted in positive net benefits through their efforts to support to existing businesses. The initiatives pursued by these three cities may act as a foundation for the branding initiatives pursued by Bloomington. Still, Bloomington's efforts should be in response and tailored to its unique context and goals. To better understand the demands of Bloomington's own stakeholders, the perceptions of internal community members were sought out.

Articulating Bloomington's Identity

Introduction

In order to determine Bloomington's identity and brand, it is first instructive to consider how residents view the city. The perceptions of Bloomington's citizens constitute the identity of the city—this takes into consideration perceived strengths and weaknesses, local challenges, and more. Additionally, some residents are native Bloomingtonians while others moved to the city. For the ones that moved to the city, it is important to consider what attracted them in the first place and to consider what, if anything, the city is doing to highlight these strengths.

In considering resident opinions, the difference between residents and community leaders was analyzed. To get a full picture of how residents feel, the Community Survey that the city conducted in 2017 to assess the opinion of residents was considered. Additionally, interviews were conducted with leaders from various sectors within the city in order to see how these views compare with those of residents.

This section discusses the process used to solicit views of those living within Bloomington and will proceed by: (1) discussing the Community Survey and explaining its strengths and weaknesses, (2) detailing the methodology used to identify and interview internal stakeholders and report on the major themes from those interviews, and (3) discussing the differences between the resident and stakeholder views the implications for creating a branding initiative.

Methodology

To capture the opinions of the general citizenry, the 2017 Community Survey conducted by the National Research Center on behalf of the City of Bloomington (City) was used. By analyzing this survey, we were able to determine the issues of most concern to the citizens of Bloomington. Although this survey is not a perfect reflection of the complete opinion of the local people, the study is still very comprehensive and reliable.

Next, we examined the 2018 Comprehensive Plan (Plan) for the City. By reading through it, we hoped to gain insight on the identity put forth by the City itself and consider how the City proposes to grow. Of course, the Plan is representative not only of what the City aspires to be, but also of how the Bloomington currently exists. Therefore, we believed it important to recognize the similarities and differences between the image put forth by the City and what the citizens in the area believe.

We then sought to inventory city and regional strengths and assets with the support of community leaders. We identified community stakeholders in the public, nonprofit, and private

sectors. These leaders work in a number of the most prevalent employers and service organizations in Bloomington. We requested meetings with these leaders via email. A majority of the requests were accepted, and we were able to complete 24 interviews (a list of organizations can be found in Appendix A. We began interviews in February 2018. Through these interviews, we aimed to identify the major strengths, weaknesses, and general perceptions of Bloomington's identity from the perspectives of these stakeholders. We drafted a set of questions to use as an interview guide, but, ultimately, many of the interviews resulted in a more conversational output. Nevertheless, we were able to coalesce the answers and identify a number of themes that held constant across all leaders regardless of the sectoral placement or community role. By comparing these responses to the community survey, we ascertained four major themes prevalent among the Bloomington population: 1) jobs and salaries, 2) (racial) diversity, 3) affordability, and 4) community engagement. These themes are discussed in further detail below.

Comprehensive Plan

The City's commitment to promoting a sustainable city with high-quality of life is immediately apparent through the Plan. It addresses the current economic status of the city, recognizing the problem of slow job growth rate (City of Bloomington, 2018, p. 19). This is an issue echoed by citizens and community stakeholders. Additionally, the Plan's discussion of the City's open government is reflective of community opinion as well (City of Bloomington, 2018, p. 27). Bloomington has significant levels of community engagement, a fact that is appreciated by the City itself and the citizenry at large.

Particular attention was paid to Chapter 2: Culture & Identity as it directly ties into the purpose of this project. The City recognizes the importance of Bloomington's vibrant arts and cultural activities community. The presence of IU draws many opportunities to the region for the citizens at large to enjoy. According to the Community Survey, Bloomington's cultural activities and entertainment are by far the most popular facet of the area (City of Bloomington, 2018, p. 52). Diversity is another issue lauded by the City in the Plan. The Plan describes Bloomington as home to an active LGBTQ+ community, women-owned businesses, and diverse age populations, among others. The citizens of Bloomington agree that the City is open and accepting of diverse populations (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 46). Additionally, 11% of survey respondents indicated that diversity is their favorite thing about Bloomington. However, discussions on diversity with our interviewed community stakeholders revealed differing opinions. These will be discussed later.

Affordability, particularly affordable housing, is discussed extensively throughout the Plan. The City is making concerted efforts to develop cheaper housing. Other affordability concerns mentioned in our interviews were not discussed in a detailed manner in the Plan (e.g.

affordability of childcare options and groceries). For the most part, the City appears to be extremely cognizant of the issues faced by the people of Bloomington.

Overview of Community Survey

In 2017, the National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) prepared a community survey for the City. The NRC survey focused on measuring the quality of life in Bloomington as well as the performance of the local government. Along with surveying Bloomingtonians, the survey compared their responses to those of similar communities across the country.

The major findings of the survey indicate that the respondents enjoy their quality of life; 83% of residents gave Bloomington a minimum of "Good" on this measure. (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 7). The overall positive responses are comparable to those found in peer cities. Another measure, which contributes to the positive quality of life, are the cultural and artistic activities in Bloomington. These include: Fourth Street Arts Fair, Lotus Festival, Taste of Bloomington, and Public Art. While these artistic events are high quality they are of lower importance. Public services such as fire services, emergency medical services, and park trails are also high quality and high importance (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 30)

Overall, citizens enjoy living in Bloomington and find that the government does a good job of providing services. The city's Achilles heel, according to the report, is the downtown homeless population. Homelessness is one of the top three least liked aspects of the city with 61% of respondents considering it a major challenge (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 18 & 38). The silver lining in this situation is that 7 out 10 residents show strong support of measures for the City assisting supporting housing for those experiencing homelessness (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 4).

Shortcomings of Community Survey

There are many beneficial, enlightening, and useful findings from the 2017 Community Survey that was completed by NRC for the City. However, there are some potential concerns with their methodology. While the response rate to surveys sent out was decent (21%), there are concerns regarding the demographics of individuals that did respond (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 3). For instance, do these survey results provide an adequate and true representation of the entire Bloomington community? Or, are the results somewhat skewed towards a population of people that may not necessarily view Bloomington as their permanent home in the long term?

With a population of over nearly 84,000 residents, does a survey sent out to 3,000 residents provide an adequate representation of all the citizens of Bloomington? (Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce website, 2018). Those 3,000 individuals represent 3.6% of the entire

population of the city. When collecting data, "the goal of sampling strategies in survey research is to obtain a sufficient sample that is representative of the population of interest" (Ponto, 2015, paragraph 7). Ideally, the sample would contain similar characteristics, as well as a similar distribution of those characteristics, as the broader population (Ponto, 2015, paragraph 7).

Another area of concern arises as to whether or not there is an adequate representation of the full-time and long-term residents of Bloomington—as opposed to college students who reside in Bloomington temporarily. For example, the results seem skewed towards individuals who may not necessarily stay in Bloomington for a significant period of time. 30% of the respondents (174 people) indicated that they were full-time students at IU and 22% are between the ages of 18-24 (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 43). Further, 66% (385 respondents) indicated that they rent their home (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 41). Moreover, 36% (202 respondents) indicated that they make less than $25,000 per year (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 42). And, lastly, 34% (192 respondents) said they were somewhat unlikely or very unlikely to remain in Bloomington for the next five years. All of these factors point to an abundance of respondents who are not permanent residents of Bloomington, are students studying at IU, and therefore may not be as vested in the overall future direction of the community.

There is also concern regarding responses that appear to conflict with what was deemed important in the overall results of the survey. For example, according to the survey, opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities was one of the highest rated characteristics contributing to a good quality of life in Bloomington (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 12). However, 28% (163 respondents) indicated that they did not know about opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 55). In addition, the availability of child care and preschool was one of the lowest-rated characteristics that contributes to a good quality of life in Bloomington (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 12). Strikingly, 67% (392 respondents) did not know enough about the availability of affordable childcare and preschool to be able to give a rating (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 55).

Themes

Jobs and Salaries

The one-on-one interviews conducted with some of Bloomington's most important internal stakeholders brought up several themes that were consistently heard time and time again. One of those themes, the major concern regarding a lack of high-paying jobs and competitive salaries, rang true with almost all of our interviewees regardless of the industry or sector. There is a legitimate concern that there are not enough high-paying jobs in the community that would entice people to relocate to Bloomington or retain people who currently work, live, or go to

school in the area. Many believe that while there are some strong businesses that contribute greatly to this community such as the Cook Group, IU and IU Health, there are not enough of other businesses that offer competitive salaries, including higher hourly wages, and benefits that would encourage people to want to live and work in Bloomington.

Several people referenced that there also is not enough being done to specifically retain and attract young professionals to live in Bloomington. For example, one interviewee stated that there are very few opportunities for IU graduates to literally "walk off" of the campus after graduation and find the competitive salaries and opportunities that they hear about from career placement offices at IU. Also, many mentioned that even if young professionals are offered job opportunities in Bloomington, the overall high cost of housing can deter some from accepting offer when the salary does not compensate for higher rents and expenses.

Further, there is a concern regarding trailing spouses of those hired for jobs in this community. It is not too uncommon that "while the husband or wife might have an opportunity for a new position with higher pay, the so-called trailing spouse can be left jobless in an unfamiliar city, with no connections or prospects" (Minton-Eversole, 2011, paragraph 8). If there is not an appealing opportunity for said trailing spouse in Bloomington, some may not relocate to Bloomington at all. Or, the spouse or partner may be forced to commute back and forth to Indianapolis or another nearby community that provides them with the necessary salary that makes living in Bloomington worthwhile.

Several interviewees also referenced that getting a business started in this community can be challenging because of the rules, restrictions, over-regulations and policies. Because of these restrictive rules and regulations, it appears to take longer and is more expensive to start a business in this community. These higher start-up costs may inhibit some businesses from offering higher salaries. Columbus, Indiana and Evansville, Indiana were referenced by more than one person as communities that Bloomington should look to as examples of working better together and having a more unified vision.

Moreover, several interviewees brought up the lack of progress in getting the new Tech Park in downtown Bloomington started up and running. They view the lack of perceived movement in getting things off the ground as a contemporaneous example of Bloomington not being business-friendly. According to a CNBC report from 2017, technology industry jobs are in high demand and are some of the most sought-after positions in the country (Carter, 2017, paragraph 1). While the interviewees realize the Tech Park will eventually happen, they feel as though the lack of speed and progress is not benefiting Bloomington and is perceived by people outside of the community as an issue.

With regards to the nonprofit industry, many people brought up the fact that while Bloomington is an overall very caring and giving community, there are significantly too many nonprofits competing for the same dollars. This funding challenge contributes to the difficulty of being able to offer salaries and wages that attract quality and experienced staff members. More than one interviewee offered that they would like to see greater collaboration between nonprofits and possibly sharing staff, resources, etc. to help better serve the communities that are in such crucial need for their services. "In addition to securing stability as a nonprofit, collaborations and linkages of many different kinds also prevent duplicate services leaving less room for several organizations focusing on the same resources in the same community" (Shankie, 2015, paragraph 7). Greater communication and interaction between small businesses could therefore help make resource allocation in Bloomington more efficient.

Affordability

Another concern expressed by the community stakeholders is that of affordability, especially concerning housing. With the continued growth of IU and the city in general, affordable housing options are becoming more scarce. Downtown poses a particular challenge. As the central hub of the city, downtown Bloomington is a popular place to live and work. However, the presence of many out-of-state and international students accustomed to higher rents drives up the prices in those areas outside of the range that is affordable to many of Bloomington's locals. One idea posed by a community leader is that of district development. By increasing the attractiveness of different areas of town (i.e. the College Mall area), the pressure downtown could be somewhat relieved.

While IU brings many opportunities to Bloomington, it is also the crux of the housing problem, according to many of our interviewees. IU draws students and professionals from all over the world, creating a class of "elites" that is able to afford a higher cost of living than the working class Bloomingtonians. As a result, many of the locals are worried about being driven out of the city by the continuously rising costs of housing, healthcare, groceries, and childcare. Business leaders expressed their reluctance to discuss housing with potential employees, citing the fact that many of their workers must live in the more rural parts of Monroe County due to the high costs in Bloomington proper. Furthermore, costs related to operating a business are greater than those in other places within Indiana due to Bloomington's stricter business laws and environmental regulations.

The Bloomington community is also concerned with the lack of affordable childcare options. There are few options for after-school childcare that locals can afford given their budgets. One of the most popular options is that of the local Boys and Girls Clubs (BGC). BGC serves 20% of the children in Monroe County each year, according to our interview with one of their leaders. Because the BGC operates during school breaks and over the summer, they can provide regular,

affordable childcare and development year-round. Particularly helpful is the fact that the BGC does not restrict their clientele to only low income children. As a result, the waitlist for BGC services is overflowing. This community leader's opinion is supported by the Community Survey, which found that only 37% of respondents classified the availability of affordable childcare and preschool options in Bloomington as excellent or good (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 46). When broken down by geographic area, it is evident that residents in southwest and northwest Bloomington feel the lack of affordable childcare more than the eastern residents (National Research Center, 2017, p. 95).

Ultimately, the high-cost of living in Bloomington (compared to other places in Indiana and given lack of high wages and jobs) is felt across the local community. There exists a clear dichotomy in the city: working class locals and wealthier IU students and staff. For locals, many everyday tasks are complicated by some services being apparently catered towards those affiliated with the university. For example, one interviewee expressed concern regarding the lack of bus routes on Sunday. Many Bloomington residents living in poverty must work on Sundays and cannot afford a vehicle. This split between locals and the IU community has led to a perceived socioeconomic divide. The lower-income citizens are forced to live in neighborhoods with fewer amenities and a lower quality of life. Some believe that the City's affordable housing initiatives will not be enough. These homes may be affordable only to the wealthy that are drawn to Bloomington because of IU, but not locals who reside in Bloomington year-round. In order for Bloomington to grow in a sustainable manner and provide a high quality of life for all citizens, the City must actively work to bring costs of living in line with available wages. This can attract more business and, as a result, more people.

Diversity

There are many facets of human diversity which could be used to analyze the composition of a given geographic area such as Bloomington. Among these dimensions are: racial, cultural, lingual, income, disability, and educational diversity. We decided to focus on racial diversity because this facet kept recurring through interviews when leaders were asked about diversity in Bloomington.

Resident information from census reports classifies college students as residents of the city in which they are currently attending college (Pew Research Center, 2010). This means that while IU's efforts to diversify racially have been successful and have contributed to a more diverse student population, part of this diversity may be attributed to the rules under which the census attributes residency. Students who reside in Bloomington temporarily until graduation may provide some diversity to the city, but as they leave after graduation that diversity leaves with them.

One upside is that there are signs that the City has been working towards creating a more welcoming community for Latinos. Latinos represent the largest growing minority in Bloomington and IU. This trend informed the decision to interview local leaders who cater to this demographic. Those stakeholders provided valuable information to ascertain how and where the City has been working to cultivate a more welcoming environment. The overall sentiment is that the City has created a robust support system for Latinos.

Ultimately, the conclusion from many leaders was that while Bloomington appears to be diverse, this diversity is not necessarily a strength that can solely be attributed to Bloomington. The City benefits from a positive externality by having IU as a co-inhabitant. In Bloomington, minority populations increased by 1.5% from the 2010 Census to the 2017 community estimate while the percentage of minorities in IU increased 3% over the same time frame (US Census, 2010 American Community Survey, 2016 Enrollment Diversity Bloomington, 2017). Bloomington appears to be growing more diverse as the years progress, but it is difficult to tease out if this increase in diversity is due to the City's efforts or the mutualistic relationship with IU.

Discussed in further detail in the next section, local diversity is an important characteristic that many people consider when looking to move somewhere new. The City's brand should attempt to accurately convey current community diversity and the City's efforts to attract more varied demographics. Overall, Bloomington had made efforts to encourage racial diversity but there is certainly room for improvement.

Community Engagement

Another theme that emerged out of the stakeholder interviews was the high level of activism amongst residents in government and community life; this finding parallels the results of the Community Survey. This strength was brought out strongly in conversations with political and government leaders as well as with nonprofits and local businesses.

Political and government leaders spoke approvingly of community engagement. In talking to city and county leaders, for example, it is evident that the public often attends meetings, contacts representatives, and campaigns for candidates and causes relevant to them. Moreover, Bloomington offers several opportunities for residents to run for office themselves. From county council, county commissioner, county executive positions, to city council, and township trustee and board positions, there are many ways for those interested to get directly involved with local government.

Apart from traditional political and community engagement, the Bloomington population is active in other facets of community life. Nonprofits, for example, are a large and important part of the community. Our conversations revealed that nonprofits have a strong support base and,

generally, have a good working relationship with the city. Moreover, the Monroe County Nonprofit Central allows nonprofits to collaborate so that they can employ the most effective strategies possible to provide services to the community. And encouraging finding was that nonprofits indicated that they collaborate with those working on issues in their purview so that the best possible services could be provided to the city. This type of engagement benefits the community because it helps to ensure that resources are directed in the most productive ways possible.

Finally, community engagement is evident in Bloomington businesses. Bloomington is a community in which entrepreneurship is encouraged and rewarded. One entrepreneur speculated that Bloomington may be thought of as a place in which it is difficult to start a business because of the immense resources offerings of IU. He stressed that, in reality, there is always a place for people with good ideas and that the community rewards risk taking. From cafe owners to food truck owners and more, we spoke to several entrepreneurs who are examples that the community supports entrepreneurial activities. The City should employ more messaging on how it is possible for entrepreneurs to make a living in Bloomington.

In brief, we find that the Bloomington community is highly engaged in various facets of life. Bloomingtonians have many ways to shape the community in which they live. Their voices are heard, and innovative thinking will be rewarded. Therefore, this engagement is a positive trait that should be a central part of Bloomington's identity and brand.

Themes: Community Survey versus In-Person interviews

The themes most prevalent during the interviews with Bloomington stakeholders mirrored both the positive and negative themes seen in the Community Survey. The community leaders stated their great appreciation for the atmosphere felt in the community that provided them with a great environment to raise their family. This could be attributed to the high quality of life supported by the previously discussed art, culture, and city services.

While those stakeholders interviewed enjoyed living in Bloomington, salaries and affordability were of great concern. In the Community survey the lowest rated characteristics for Bloomington included affordable childcare, affordable housing, employment opportunities, and cost of living (National Research Center, Inc., 2017, p. 13). According to some interviewees, not only did the low salaries affect their lives, but it also posed a barrier when recruiting potential employees. This was of particular concern in the nonprofit sector.

Homelessness in the community survey was another major concern—one that was also echoed in the interviews with the stakeholders. According to the stakeholders we spoke with,

it is difficult to properly support this vulnerable community due to the constant influx of homeless individuals into Bloomington from surrounding areas. This causes an increase in the homeless population in an area that is already at its limit and unable to fully support that growing community. Fortunately, as stated earlier, residents of Bloomington are willing to support policies geared towards providing support for this population. This support, combined with the strong community engagement and the strength of the nonprofit sector as gleaned from the interviews, indicates that there is an opportunity for the City to develop innovative policies on homelessness in conjunction with the nonprofit sector.

Conclusion

In determining the internals views of Bloomington, 24 interviews were conducted with various stakeholders spanning business, government and nonprofit organizations in the Bloomington community. The overall message gained from our conversations is that the local community is one that wants to see Bloomington succeed and is invested in what happens in and around the community. Our interviews brought up many important topics in Bloomington. However, for the purpose of honing in on those key issues that Bloomington should focus on for its own branding efforts, improving jobs and salaries, affordability, and diversity as well as fostering the already strong sense of community involvement were singled out due to their recurrence as pivotal factors that can retain and attract stakeholders.

An additional finding from our interviews was the mention of two versions of Bloomington. This first version of Bloomington sees an outstanding research institution prominently anchored to the city and many strong businesses and industries located within the community that contribute to the overall economy. This viewpoint also believes that there are strong central city and county government entities that encourage growth, tourism, community service, and citizen participation in government.

A second version of Bloomington, however, has a rather different viewpoint. There are individuals that believe Bloomington is anti-growth and the rules and regulations are excessively time-consuming and make things very difficult for businesses to move in. Others believe that growth is not being controlled enough which results in too many student housing units being built downtown that are out of the price range for many locals.

This version of Bloomington reflects a community that perceives that the opinions of a few, loud and outspoken individuals are given the majority of the consideration and attempts to participate in various forms of government that are not useful or rewarding. This version of Bloomington also has an unfavorable reputation around the state for being elitist and thinks very highly of itself with little regard to its neighbors. This side of Bloomington does not feel that it is very diverse, in part due to the large, but temporary, international population that attends IU.

Bloomington may want to present itself more like the version one, but simultaneously adopt the clear and realistic grasp on the many issues and concerns raised in the second version two? Until the internal issues are worked out or discussed in greater detail with viable solutions, city leaders in Bloomington should likely focus on these issues within the city itself first. By doing so, when promotion opportunities to outsiders looking to relocate for jobs or move their business to Bloomington arise, there is a more concise, appealing and somewhat singular version of Bloomington to promote to stakeholders. "A leader must never view a problem as a distraction, but rather as a strategic enabler for continuous improvement and opportunities previously unseen" (Llopis, 2013, paragraph 6).

Bloomington's External Image & Perception

Introduction

The previous section, *Articulating Bloomington's Identity*, discussed the perceptions, opinions, and identity of current Bloomington residents, businesses, and community leaders. This section will determine Bloomington's image through the lens of external stakeholders. Whether outsiders' perception of Bloomington is accurate or not, it impacts whether those external individuals and businesses move to the community. Understanding those outside perception, then, is a crucial part of forming an enduring and enticing brand and image. External stakeholders are a heterogeneous group of state legislators, prospective businesses, prospective residents, visitors, and many more, who share experiences and hear about Bloomington through a variety of sources. It could be from word of mouth, news, social media, an online Google search of a city and its resources, and using online community research and community marketing resources, such as Niche.com, Sperling's Best Places, or annual U.S. News & World Rankings of "Best Places to Live in the US" lists. Several analytical methods were thus employed in this section to capture the perceptions portrayed through these sources and improve understanding of external perspectives on Bloomington.

This section seeks to identify Bloomington's perceived strengths and weaknesses. These pros and cons are then compared with data on how Bloomington is actually performing as well as to the internal perceptions of local residents (as outlined in Section 3) in order to inform Bloomington's branding initiative and direct City policy. The methodology for each analysis is described briefly, followed by individual results and takeaways. These analyses are capable of providing insight into external perspectives, but should be critically evaluated against both the data and the internal perceptions of residents.

Methodology

Businesses, residents, and other individuals share their experiences with one another and hear about cities through a variety of sources. This exchange can occur through word of mouth, news, social media, a Google search, or online community research and community marketing resources such as Niche.com, Sperling's Best Places, or annual U.S. News & World Rankings of "Best Places to Live in the US" lists. In order to capture what outsiders would discover about Bloomington when searching for information, discover what people say about Bloomington, and identify Bloomington's external perception we conducted five different types of analysis.

Interviews with Key Stakeholders

Interviewees were identified to represent the external perspective of Bloomington within three main stakeholder categories: the developer community, the small business community, and citizenry. Each interviewee was selected because of their direct interaction with external stakeholders and familiarity with their needs, concerns, and situation, or because the interviewee has recently relocated to Bloomington.

Newspaper Analysis

Here we utilized trend and multivariate regression analysis using 100 different articles over a 5-month period from 5 regional, state and local newspapers to determine which topics were correlated to positive or negative attitudes regarding Bloomington. For each article, we extracted major topical themes addressed by the author(s) and assigned the article a score that indicates the *attitude* of the message that readers would be expected to understand after reading the article. Attitude scores are either positive (+1), neutral (+0), or negative (-1).

After scoring each article, we perform two basic analyses in order to interpret the data we gathered: an aggregate trend model and a simple multivariate regression model. The aggregate trend model sums the attitude scores (+1, +0, and -1) over time and plots them on a line graph. The multivariate regression model regresses attitude scores on a set of dummy variables representing topics discussed in the articles. The final regression model includes 9 topics, 8 of which are statistically significant at the 0.10 level of significance.

Search Engine Analyses

We conducted a myriad of different search engine analyses using Google with different search criteria and investigated search results on the first page, which is where the majority of users stop their search. We evaluated search results to document information that is commonly available as well as to compare the information with what is available for other peer cities.

❖ Doing Business Search Engine Analysis

Prospective businesses that consider operating in Bloomington have a number of legal requirements they must meet before they can be established. In addition to market analysis, revenue, and expense considerations, it is essential that owners are able to readily access business development resources, meet licensing and permitting requirements, and understand the business and regulatory environment where they seek to operate. The "Doing Business in [City] Analysis" gives a snapshot of what a prospective business owner might encounter in the course of his or her market research. Using a common search criteria, "Doing + Business + in + [City

Name] + [State Abbreviation]," we compared online research results by categorizing web pages into one of several information types, including: general business development resources, tax incentives, licenses & permits, Chamber of Commerce page, directories of businesses, regional economic development, downtown information, frequently asked questions, or not relevant.

❖ Quality of Life Search Engine Analysis

Individuals, groups, or corporations who want to move to Bloomington to open new businesses will want to know about the quality of life in this city. Knowing what the quality of life is like in one place can influence people's' decision to invest in that city. Taking into account the frequent use of search engine queries on the internet, the first-hand information available on Google about the quality of life in Bloomington shows the possible variables that are considered in relation to perceptions about the city. We use a specific search criterion, "quality + of + life + in + Bloomington + IN," to see what first-hand information is available about the quality of life in Bloomington. First, we observe the first-page results suggested by the Google search engine. Subsequently, we generated a dataset with the most relevant topics in each website. Finally, we wanted to know what the first things that people find when they look for this information are and what important aspects might be missing.

❖ Crime Search Engine Analysis

After finding that crime rates were one of Bloomington's negative indicators in rankings on the best places to live and in newspapers related to crime issues, we looked for information on the number of methamphetamine labs reported in Bloomington on Google. Methamphetamine laboratories are a major public health problem across the United States (U.S.) and impact the perception of safety in a region. We use a specific type of search criteria relevant to Indiana and Bloomington and observe maps of meth locations in Bloomington as suggested in Google searches and according to official reports. Three important websites were identified on the topic for analysis: IN.gov, Indystar.com, and drugabuse.com. These interactive websites present a point for each place in Bloomington and Indiana as a whole where the Indiana State Police website reported a meth lab location in 2018.

❖ Best Places to Live in the U.S.

Another resource that potential residents and other external stakeholders consult are widely-read "Best Places to Live in the U.S" lists. These lists are good indicators of a city's "desirability factor" and also raise awareness about burgeoning cities. Methodology varies among lists, but we found that the four most popular lists all weighed the same nine key indicators, which we then used for benchmarking against peer cities analysis (see Appendix C). Best Places to Live lists assign weights to different indicators according to the results of yearly surveys of Americans that ask what they value most when searching for a new place to reside. Performing well across

the key indicators and being featured on these lists would not only raise awareness about Bloomington, it can strengthen areas that potential residents value most.

Comparison to Peer Cities across Key Indicators

Using those nine key indicators that potential residents value most when considering moving to a new city found through the Best Places to Live analysis, we measured how Bloomington performed compared to peer cities using census data (see Appendix C). The nine key indicators are:

1. Affordability/Cost of living
2. Commute time
3. Crime rates
4. Educational attainment
5. Job market growth
6. Median home price
7. Median household income
8. Population growth
9. Unemployment rate

Understanding how Bloomington ranks in these key indicators in comparison to peer cities can help inform where to focus local policy efforts and the creation of Bloomington's brand. If Bloomington outperforms its peer cities in these key indicators but is not appearing on the same lists, then there is a disconnect between outside perception and reality. If Bloomington underperforms across certain key indicators, it can better understand where to direct its resources in order to build a successful brand. Or it could design a brand that strategically acknowledges these weaknesses and positions Bloomington for growth. Finally, improving performance across these key indicators can result in Bloomington being populated on these sites. This would then spread positive perceptions of the city, generate buzz, and encourage more people to move to Bloomington (see Appendix for complete results of benchmarking analysis).

Online Community Marketing & Community Research Firms

We examined how the community marketing firm Livability.com ranked Bloomington across key indicators and analyzed how their content about Bloomington, from three articles, portrayed Bloomington's strengths. Livability.com evaluates 20,000 cities across the U.S., has over two million average monthly page views, and half a million monthly users (Livability). Livability has been working with cities in content marketing for over thirty years, and is one of the leading online resources used for researching communities, publishing monthly and annual lists of the best places to live in the U.S.

As of February 2018, Livability is also the only online community researching site that has listed Bloomington in its "Best Places to Live in the U.S" list. This investigation analyzes Livability's unique algorithm and data points to understand why Bloomington was ranked 76 out of 100 Best Cities in the U.S. on their website, but not on others. According to Livability.com,

> *"Livability polls the nation each year to find out what matters most in communities throughout the U.S. Is healthcare most important, or affordable housing? Which matters more, commute times or climate? Then Livability experts source the best public and private data available to find the small to mid-sized cities, towns and villages that meet the survey respondents standards of a Best Place to Live."*

In 2016, when Bloomington was ranked among the Top 100, more than 2,300 cities were evaluated and given a "LivScore" using Livability's proprietary algorithm. A Livscore is based on more than 40 data points across 8 categories: economics, housing, amenities, infrastructure, demographics, social and civic capital, education and health care (see Appendix B for full list of Livability's data points and more on its methodology). The second part of the analysis uses qualitative data—how Livability describes Bloomington in its content—to understand the perception of Bloomington from outsiders trained in marketing communities. For this analysis, we analyzed all written content available about Bloomington on Livability.com as of February 2018, which consisted of three articles in total (see Appendix B). We noted each time an article mentioned an aspect each of the eight categories: Amenities, Transportation & Infrastructure, Healthcare, Education, Social & Civic Capital, Economy, Housing, and Demographics, and recorded these as "mentions." There were 75 mentions in total (see Appendix B). Our goal was to analyze how an outside community research and community marketing company writes about Bloomington to identify how they perceive Bloomington's strengths. This knowledge can then be used to inform the brand.

Understanding the perception of Bloomington versus data about Bloomington, within one company of experts in community research and community marketing, will inform the brand. If Bloomington scores well in Transportation & Infrastructure for example, but none of the online content about Bloomington mentions this category, this suggests that perception about Bloomington does not include its strong infrastructure (which incorporates data points measuring alternate options to driving, commute times, and walkable amenities, as listed above) and this could be an area to either emphasize in the brand, as it is yet undiscovered, or an area to not emphasize in the brand, as it is not emphasized by Livability's experts.

Results and Key Takeaways

In this section we share key takeaways from each analysis along six different categories: economy, amenities and quality of life, crime rates, demographics, affordability, and education.

Our research indicates these are the factors people care about most when considering moving to a place, and what employers care about when they are recruiting and retaining talent. Understanding how Bloomington is perceived across these categories, comparing it to the reality on the ground and to the internal perspective will inform future brand management efforts and direct City policy.

Economy

Interviews revealed several clear patterns about the economy in Bloomington that shed light on some of the key statistical trends in unemployment rate and affordability. Stakeholders at all levels of involvement with the local economy allude to significant barriers to enter the Bloomington market. On one hand, these barriers to entry are framed as those of a city that can be selective with new business development because of its exceptional assets including arts & culture, natural beauty, and progressive values. Through this lens, Bloomington is viewed as championing "responsible" growth guided by forward-thinking values that protect the public interest. However, these barriers to entry are far more commonly viewed as either political power plays or the result of a bureaucracy with little empathy for new business owners.

Stakeholders at all levels of involvement with economic development reported frustrating and costly interactions with the City. One leader in a nearby local government commented that when approached by new business owners his marketing slogan is "We're not Bloomington." This leader's saying translates to mean that they will work with prospective businesses to make the development process as easy as possible. He is not alone in his sentiment. From the interviews, it is clear that Bloomington has a reputation for being "selective" in business development at best, and being "power hungry" and "provincial" at worst. A Bloomington restaurateur pointed out that even a 30-minute consultation with a Bloomington official would go a long way in building trust and facilitating the development process.

Fortunately, each small business owner mentioned a healthy business environment among fellow owners. The community-mindedness that Bloomington residents are known for translates rather directly to the small business community, and several owners reported that the City could do more to facilitate these connections. In this way, rudimentary information about building ordinances or loan sources could be readily shared by those with experience, saving time and frustration. At the same time, each business owner expressed reluctance to pay membership dues for the Chamber of Commerce because of the perceived lack of tangible returns.

Each component of the Newspaper Analysis—the trend analysis and multivariate regression model—indicate that topics related to business and workforce were highly correlated with positive attitudes. On the other hand, issues related to taxes, law, environment, and transportation were correlated with negative attitudes. The economic development topic showed mixed results,

but after controlling for other topics we found it contributed more to negative attitudes, on average (see Appendix B).

We also found that Bloomington's image as a difficult place to do business is mirrored in the Doing Business Search Engine Analysis. Half of the search results for Bloomington are not relevant to prospective business looking for information, resources, or help in business development. Moreover, none of the results include information on licenses and permits, tax incentives, or basic development resources. Among Bloomington's peer cities, Ames and Boulder both have more accessible and relevant search results, though Ann Arbor also has largely irrelevant results. Bloomington could improve its ease of doing business by emulating some aspects of Ames' or Boulder's business development environment and the accessibility of resources.

Results Categories	Bloomington, IN	Ames, IA	Ann Arbor, MI	Boulder, CO
General Business Development Resources		X X	X X	X X
Tax or Business Incentives		X		X
Licenses & Permits		X		X
Regional Economic Development	X			
Articles about doing business in [City]	X	X	X	X X
Chamber of Commerce	X		X	
Downtown information	X			X
Directories of Businesses	X	X		X
Frequently Asked Questions		X		X
Not Relevant	X X X X X	X X X	X X X X X X	

*Each 'X' refers to a single article in the front page search results.

Job market growth is one of a few indicators that measure the strength of a city's economy and can attract residents and businesses. Between 2012 and 2016, Bloomington's job market grew by less than 1%. This is comparable to Ames, at 1.3%, but three times lower than Boulder and Ann Arbor's growth over that same period.

City	Population	Population Growth (percent change 2010-2016)	Job Market Growth (percent change 2010-2016)
Ames, IA	58,965	12.2%	1.30%
Bloomington, IN	80,405	5.2%	0.9%
Boulder, CO	97,385	10.6%	3.10%
Ann Arbor, MI	113,934	6.0%	3.90%

Bloomington also has the highest unemployment rate of its peer cities, at 4.7% in 2016. Unemployment rate is another key indicator of job opportunities and job market strength, and in

being featured in community research and marketing sites such as Niche.com and Sperling's Best Places. It is important to note that Bloomington's unemployment rate is also higher than the state of Indiana. In comparison, a city with an unemployment rate lower than its encompassing state signals a robust economy and job opportunities and will serve as a magnet for potential residents within the state. See below table for a comparison of unemployment rates across peer cities and their respective states.

City	City Unemployment Rate *(2016 Annual Avg)*	State Unemployment Rate *(2016 Annual Avg)*	Difference
Ames, IA *(pop. 58,965)*	2.4%	3.6%	-1.2%
Bloomington, IN *(pop. 80,405)*	4.7%	4.4%	+0.3%
Boulder, CO *(pop. 97,385)*	2.7%	3.3%	-0.6%
Ann Arbor, MI *(pop. 113,984)*	3.4%	5.0%	-1.6%

In the Livability analysis, Bloomington scored above average for economy, with a LivScore of 53, average being 50 (see table below). This suggests Bloomington is doing well, but there is room for improvement. Content about Bloomington mentions "life sciences" twice, "advanced manufacturing" three times, and "technology" three times. This suggests that outside perception of Bloomington accurately depicts its strongest sectors as life sciences, advanced manufacturing, and technology. These could be central to branding efforts. "Entrepreneurship" and "ease of doing business" were both mentioned once, suggesting this could become part of the brand if bolstered through policy (see Appendix B for full list of mentions).

Category: Data Point	**Bloomington's LivScore**	**Average LivScore** *(across 2,300 cities in U.S.)*
Economy: Growth of high-wage jobs at county level; unemployment rate; Amount households spend on food, etc.	**53**	**50**

Amenities and Quality of Life

New residents and business owners come to Bloomington to benefit from its pleasant quality of life. Bloomington is known for its "small town feel," active cultural scene, IU activities, and

natural beauty. However, a common thread among interviews was a dismay with the perceived gap between the City's projected progressive values and substantive policies. While official rhetoric proclaims Bloomington as a "welcoming" city, the most active residents are those who are resistant to change and growth. To be sure, this tension exists in every city, but it is more pronounced in Bloomington where progressive values are especially touted.

Under the Quality of Life Analysis, Education, Cost of Living and Culture were the common themes related to this search engine, with Education being the most frequent with 6 reviews. This result is understandable considering the crucial relationship that this city has with IU. Also, information about business was only highlighted in 2 of the 9 websites that spoke about the quality of life in Bloomington.

However, 9 topics of 23 identified were highlighted only once: Sports, Technology, Jobs, Veterans, Mortality, Weather, Religion, Crime, Political Ideology. Finally, information about sustainability was not clearly described in any of the 9 websites analyzed, finding that does not reflect the different programs that the city develops on sustainability with the support of IU.

Moreover, a correlation model allowed us to identify strong relationships between some variables of interest. The two variables that reflect strong positive correlations are cost of living and education. In the case of cost of living, this variable has a strong positive correlation with education (1.00), recreation (0.75), and with the resources videos, pictures, graphs (1.00) and Bloomington in rankings (1.00). Also, the education variable presents the strong positive correlation with recreation (0.75), resources videos, pictures, graphs (1.00) and Bloomington in rankings (1.00). Analyzing these results, we can find that cost of living, education and recreation are strongly related. This information means that when people want to know about quality of life, they usually receive information about these variables, instead of more useful information such as health, housing or transportation. Also, we can consider that the use of videos, pictures, graphs and reference Bloomington in ranking articles are relevant tools at the moment to promote quality of life in Bloomington on the web, instead of using other tools such as City's profile and demography, or linking them with Bloomington official websites, tools that might improve the way to provide useful information about the city.

The newspaper analysis revealed that public safety and crime topics were both correlated with negative news. These negative articles mostly referred to problems associated with drugs, the Bloomington Police Department's purchase of an armored emergency response vehicle, or sexual violence and misconduct, which affect perceived quality of life. There were also a number of topics that either received too few mentions or were statistically insignificant and were thus excluded from the final regression model. These areas include health, law, energy, sustainability, transportation, arts and nightlife, social justice, community, and homelessness. Bloomington excels in some of these areas, but this is not reflected in the number of mentions in local, state,

and national news articles. The City and its stakeholders would benefit from more positive press on quality of life topics.

Commute time is routinely ranked as one of the most important factors people weigh when deciding where to live. Bloomington has the lowest mean commute time of the peer cities with just an average of 16 minutes from home to work.

City	Population	Mean Commute Time (min.)
Ames, IA	58,965	16.1
Bloomington, IN	80,405	16
Boulder, CO	97,385	18.8
Ann Arbor, MI	113,934	20.1

According to Livability's experts, "amenities are really where cities begin to differentiate themselves and forge their own unique identities." Livability's quantitative data and the qualitative data both strongly suggest that Bloomington's amenities that will be the most effective draw for potential residents and should be central to a branding effort. Bloomington's LivScore was a 72, compared to an average of 47, and the vast majority of content Livability has written on Bloomington is about its natural and cultural amenities. Those constitute approximately 45 out of 73 total mentions. Common mentions included "Tree City USA," "shopping," "trails," "food," and "outdoor recreation" (see Appendix B).

Category: data points	Bloomington's LivScore	Average LivScore (across 2,300 cities in U.S.)
Amenities: # farmers markets, # parks, climate; air quality; impact of arts in community, etc.	72	47

Although Bloomington scored very well in the Transportation and Infrastructure category, none of the content written about Bloomington mentions transportation and infrastructure.

Category: data points	**Bloomington's LivScore**	**Average LivScore** *(across 2,300 cities in U.S.)*
Transportation & Infrastructure: alternate options to driving; commute times; walkable schools and grocery stores; broadband access; etc.	**72**	**47**

Based on these findings, one suggesting is that Bloomington builds a brand around its amenities and quality of life.

Crime Rates

There were a number of news articles relating to either crime or public safety. These articles included references to narcotics crimes, sexual violence and misconduct, and other white-collar crime. The number of mentions is not an accurate representation of crime rates, but negative press can skew nonresident perspectives of the prominence of crime in Bloomington.

Related to the Crime Analysis under number of methamphetamine lab finding, we found 7,156 methamphetamine lab location reports in Indiana, and 115 cases were found in Bloomington. One map showed several points close to IU.

Prospective residents and businesses value the safety of potential communities highly. Of the peer cities, Bloomington has the highest rate of violent crime.

City	**Population**	**Violent Crime** *(per 100,000 people)*
Ames, IA	58,965	107
Bloomington, IN	80,405	378
Boulder, CO	97,385	258
Ann Arbor, MI	113,934	213

As the table above illustrates, Boulder has 21% more people than Bloomington, but 32% less instances of violent crime while Ann Arbor has 42% more people than Bloomington, but 77% less instances of violent crime (See Appendix B for a detailed comparison of violent crime rates).

In addition, Niche.com gave Bloomington a "C+" grade on crime and safety.

According to our research on internal perception, Bloomington sees itself as an engaged, safe, and tight-knit community. However, Livability's quantitative data does not support this as demonstrated by Bloomington's LivScore of 46, compared to an average of 50. Social and Civic Capital only has two mentions in this category, out of 73 total mention—both of which were about community (see Appendix B). Also, this is the category where crime rates are factored in, and as discussed above, Bloomington has an above-average rate of crime among its peer cities. No content written about Bloomington mentions its safety.

Category: data points	**Bloomington's LivScore**	**Average LivScore** *(across 2,300 cities in U.S.)*
Social & Civic Capital: composite score of resident activity level; % pop'n in "creative class" fields; crime rate, etc.	46	50

Demographics

There is room for improvement regarding Bloomington's demographics. Population growth is the most important factor that determines whether cities and towns are featured on Best Places to Live lists and online community research resources. Population growth is also an excellent indicator of a city's desirability. Bloomington has the lowest population growth of the peer cities; between 2012 to 2016, Ames and Boulder experienced double the growth of Bloomington (see table below).

City	Population	**Population Growth** *(percent change 2010-2016)*
Ames, IA	58,965	12.2%
Bloomington, IN	80,405	5.2%
Boulder, CO	97,385	10.6%
Ann Arbor, MI	113,934	6.0%

In the Livability analysis, Bloomington performed poorly in demographics, with a LivScore of 20 and zero total mentions (see table below, and Appendix). Racial and ethnic diversity has been previously mentioned as a key area for improvement. This data suggests that Bloomington's internal perception of diversity should not be factored into branding efforts, and City policies need to support much more aggressive population growth and policies that support diversity.

Category: Data Points	Bloomington's LivScore	Average LivScore (across 2,300 cities in U.S.)
Demographics: population growth, racial/ethnic diversity, age diversity	**20**	**50**

Affordability: Cost of Living, Housing, & Healthcare

The Newspaper Analysis revealed only a few articles discussing affordability, specifically in the context of housing. There are several future or ongoing housing development projects taking place in Bloomington, but the development code has also been seen as restrictive in some ways, by reducing downtown residential density to maintain the look and feel of some neighborhoods in Bloomington.

Internal organizations that tout Bloomington's "high quality of life, low cost of living" are correct: Bloomington has the lowest cost of living among the group of peer cities.

City	Cost of Living (Base City/Average =100)
Ames, IA	98.6
Bloomington, IN	93.3
Boulder, CO	178
Ann Arbor, MI	122

The Cost of Living Index measures relative price levels for various goods and services by using 100 as the average for all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas in the U.S. So, each participating location's index is a percentage of the average (100) for all locations in the U.S. The composite index number is calculated using the pricing data gathered for categories like housing and groceries. A score of 93.3 seems low in comparison to Boulder's 178, but when compared to Lafayette, Indiana at an 87.9, or even the Indianapolis-Carmel metropolitan area, which has a 92, this does not seem as low (COLI, 2017). Cost of living in Bloomington might be perceived as low to outsiders, but inside the state Bloomington could be perceived as relatively expensive.

Housing affordability is the most crucial concern for potential residents after job opportunities. While outside perception about housing is generally positive, our research within the community and the available data suggest affordable housing is a key area for improvement (see table below).

City	Median Home Price	Median Household Income	Ratio
Ames, IA	$176,500	$41,278	4.3
Bloomington, IN	$172,100	$31,254	5.5
Boulder, CO	$554,500	$60,569	9.2
Ann Arbor, MI	$250,200	$57,697	4.3

Although Bloomington has the lowest median home price of the peer cities, it also has the lowest median income. Price to income ratio is one way to gauge a community's true housing affordability. The median home price in Bloomington, $172,100 is approximately 5.5 times more than the median household salary. In Ames, median home price is slightly higher, but a significantly higher income means the home price is about 4.4 times the home salary. In Boulder, the median home price is about 9 times the median salary, and in Ann Arbor, the ratio is about the same as Ames, at 4.3 times salary.

The real estate site Zillow has an affordability calculator that uses income, a debt estimate of $250 per month (worth noting this is lower than standard educational loan debt and standard childcare costs), and a $20,000 down payment to calculate "How much home you can afford" (See table below).

City	Median Household Income	Zillow-recommended Home Price	Actual Median Home Price	Price Difference
Ames, IA (pop. 58,965)	$41,278	$159,237	$176,500	-$17,263
Bloomington, IN (pop. 80,405)	$31,254	$114,522	$172,100	-$57,578
Boulder, CO (pop. 97,385)	$60,569	$244,189	$554,500	-$310,311
Ann Arbor, MI (pop. 113,984)	$57,697	$231,028	$250,200	-$19,172

The table illustrates the large difference between what price home a Bloomington resident making median salary could afford, compared to the actual median home price, which is a difference of $57,578 dollars. Zillow's housing price recommendations are in line with the 2017

data collected by Keith Gumbinger, Vice President of HSH.com, a popular mortgage calculator site and the author of widely-read article "The Salary You Must Earn in 27 Metros." According to this source, to afford the median-priced home in Bloomington, a family would need an income between $37,000 and $40,000, which is above the current median household income (see Appendix B for chart). Bloomington is not the worst of its peer cities, but homes are still out of range for the average Bloomington resident. It is worth noting that Niche.com rates Bloomington a "C" on housing.

In the Livability analysis, Bloomington performed well quantitatively and qualitatively in the Housing category, though not as strong as its other "strong" categories. It received a LivScore of 64 out of 50, and housing was mentioned six times out of 75 total mentions (see Appendix B). One article from 2016 did not mention Bloomington's housing market at all, but two articles from 2018 both mention "affordable housing" as a strong point, which suggests that Bloomington's housing market is increasingly perceived as affordable. Given how important affordable housing is to potential residents, housing affordability should be an area of focus for City policy and could potentially be expanded into branding efforts if the market remains strong.

Category: Data Points	Bloomington's LivScore	Average LivScore
Housing: affordability (housing costs + income + transportation costs); % households owning vs renting, etc.	64	50

The City must consider this mixed internal and external perception of affordable housing availability prior to engaging in a rebranding effort. Prospective residents heavily weigh housing availability when making decisions on where to move. Employers are unable to recruit quality talent if there is very little affordable, quality housing available.

Although Bloomington scored very well in the Healthcare category (see table below), none of the content written about Bloomington mentions healthcare affordability or access.

Category: Data Points	Bloomington's LivScore	Average LivScore
Healthcare: # of hospitals, % of children born with low birth weight; avg. spending on healthcare, etc.	71	45

Education

The Newspaper Analysis multivariate regression model indicates that both IU and education topics are correlated with positive news and could be leveraged in a brand or marketing strategy. The IU topic had the largest number of mentions in news articles over the 5-month period analyzed, with 30 mentions out of 106 articles it is the topic most associated with Bloomington. The education topic had the third most, with 25 mentions. Most external stakeholders which are interested in IU are likely prospective students, who often will attend school, graduate, then move away from Bloomington; however, prospective businesses which benefit from a quality university and skilled workforce could be intrigued by news regarding IU.

Although the majority of Bloomington's residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, and nearly all resident have a high school degree or equivalent, Bloomington still has the lowest educational attainment of its peer cities.

City	Population	% of pop. High School Graduate or Higher	% of pop. Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Ames, IA	58,965	97.40%	63.40%
Bloomington, IN	80,405	93.30%	56.50%
Boulder, CO	97,385	96.40%	72.20%
Ann Arbor, MI	113,934	96.80%	72.80%

According to Livability, "for many, one of the key times in life to move is as your children are starting school or moving from elementary to middle or high school - if you have school-aged kids and your neighborhood schools aren't up to snuff, very little else matters." Bloomington scored very well in this category, (see table below), which suggests that Bloomington/Monroe County has a successful public-school system. However, public schools only have one mention in the qualitative data, compared to IU (3 mentions), and "college town" (2 mentions). This suggests that IU is the dominant image that outsiders associate with Bloomington, not great public schools.

Category: Data Points	Bloomington's LivScore	Average LivScore *(across 2,300 cities in U.S.)*
Education: public school rankings; % of children in public school system; # accredited universities, etc.	73	45

This is not necessarily a negative thing for Bloomington's brand. As Livability states, "having a major college or research university in town can be the difference between being a good place to live and a great place to live." In addition to playing a role as a community anchor, these institutions provide stable jobs, constant turnover for the real estate market and an increased potential for start-up businesses. They also bring in cultural attractions and activities – and often outsized talent for a market that size." However, great school systems attract young families, and if the City wants to attract this demographic, policies and branding efforts aimed at spreading the word about the successful school system may be necessary.

Managing the Brand

Introduction to Brand Management

Our initial challenge was to separate "branding" from "brand management." While there are several theories and ideas for city branding, including how to establish a brand when there is none, this study looked more specifically for how cities have managed their brand and used it to their advantage. By equipping Bloomington with brand management tools, it will be able to use its brand to control the narrative in the community. From consistency in marketing to efficient communication, effective brand management will help Bloomington relay its ideas and motives faster and more clearly to its constituents.

Findings

A common issue cities encounter in branding is a disconnect between key stakeholder groups, such as residents, businesses and nonprofits. Working relationships between these groups lead to long-lasting and sustainable brand management. There are multiple principles that encourage such working relationships among stakeholders (Dinnie, 2011). Most pertinent to Bloomington are the following: unified communication, making "on-brand" decisions and actions, making "on-brand" investments, and having a willingness to evaluate impact and effectiveness (Dinnie, 2011).

- ❖ Communicating as one: A highly visible, unified brand can generate positive attention from stakeholders for the city, just by showing a city has thoughtfully organized its external image.
- ❖ Making "on-brand" decisions and actions: For decisions regarding urban planning, infrastructure, economic/social/cultural policies (e.g. the recent purchase of an armored vehicle), the decision-making process should be fully steeped in the city brand.
- ❖ Making "on-brand" investments: Similar to the principle mentioned above, this does not require additional budget or personnel resources, only careful attention to city planning.
- ❖ Willingness to evaluate impact and effectiveness: Likely the most important aspect of brand management, cities and their partners need to determine what their measures of success will be and agree on them.

Engaging stakeholders should be a cornerstone of Bloomington's brand management strategy. As a city with stakeholder groups that at times feel isolated from one another, understanding the diverse needs and interests of these groups will aid in a sophisticated city brand, allowing Bloomington to project nuanced messages to different target audiences. Ongoing, proactive engagement of Bloomington's populations by asking for public input—rather than waiting for

issues to present themselves and responding to challenges after they arise—will be key in Bloomington's brand success.

Stakeholder groups in Bloomington are incredibly varied, ranging from long-term residents to national employers, and from tourism agencies to nonprofit organizations. These agencies and organizations currently utilize different measures of success to determine Bloomington's livability for their individuals. The livability rankings analyzed in Section 4 took into account jobs and salaries, (racial) diversity, affordability, and community engagement. Collaboration among these groups, aided by consistent communication, can more actively engage these groups in the brand management of Bloomington. The objectives outlined above are invaluable to effective brand management across so many populations.

Stakeholder Engagement

The issues that Bloomington commonly faces regarding jobs and salaries, racial diversity, affordability, and community engagement are universal and strongly influence our brand management recommendations. These recommendations are for a communications framework that will ensure collaboration and consistent messaging between the department and stakeholders.

Bloomington's appearance in common search engine queries in order to attract prospective businesses can be boosted by identifying current brand management shortfalls. In the "Doing Business in [City] Analysis" in Section 4, Bloomington was compared to other peer cities with regard to what resources are displayed based on common search engine queries. Bloomington should have a web page dedicated to business development resources appear on the front page of search query results to provide specific accessible resources, such as, tax information, business incentives, a general FAQ on doing business, and licensing and permits for prospective businesses in Bloomington which ease and attract startups. Search results must be robust and relevant to prospective business, which as a city would help recruit prospective businesses.

The newspaper analysis presented in Section 4 further highlights the need to address the core issues affecting Bloomington's brand: jobs and salaries, affordability, diversity, and community engagement. Newspapers, both online and in print, can be an effective tool for the City to use in its brand management strategy. Having more effective control over the narrative surrounding issues of public interest is a priority for the city. Rather than waiting for other aggregate news sources to pick up information about Bloomington, which is at times overwhelmingly negative, the city should expand its media reach by highlighting positive local news and promoting existing benefits of living in Bloomington (such as the city's low commute time between home and work for most citizens).

Public opinion towards factors such as crime rates and diversity are reflected in newspapers and social media, and the way newspapers mention and write about Bloomington have real potential to sway said public opinion. On the other hand, newspapers can be utilized to promote positive changes in Bloomington to enhance the city's image. Stakeholders in Bloomington mentioned in interviews the strong feelings towards livability factors, including safety and diversity. Both individuals and organizations value livability factors, and the promotion of Bloomington's strengths benefits many stakeholder groups at once.

To overcome these challenges and control the local and national narrative about Bloomington, the City can highlight certain aspects of these central themes in its branding and messaging. As discovered through research presented earlier in this report, jobs and salaries impact the attractiveness of Bloomington. Bloomington has the lowest cost of living among peer cities, and the lowest commute time between home and work. Knowing this, promotion materials used by business stakeholders can tout this information.

Through discussions with government officials, business leaders, and active members of the community, a theme of false diversity emerged. While IU brings students from all over the world to south-central Indiana, this diversity does not necessarily have a spillover effect into greater Bloomington. The City should start thinking critically about how to engage minority groups in Bloomington, and how best to create opportunities for engagement and inclusion. Some local nonprofits have made pushes in this direction, already showing avenues for diversity programming.

Like many college towns, affordability is an issue for both short-term and long-term residents. As new apartment buildings shoot up downtown to accommodate a growing student population, residents of Bloomington complain that the rent prices and livability of the downtown area have diminished. When trying to welcome new residents into Bloomington while assuaging fears of current citizens, the City walks a fine line in how best to control the message of affordable housing in Bloomington. Communicating the finding that peer cities of similar size and scope are in fact much more expensive relative to median income can be a useful tool for marketing materials.

Creating buy-in for all stakeholder groups will be an integral aspect of brand management. Through research and discussion, it is clear that no single party can completely control the brand of a city. In order to have a cohesive brand image, all the various stakeholders must feel agency over it and actively contribute through on-brand decisions and actions. The City is a major piece of this brand management and will be the driving force. To create the necessary stakeholder buy-in, the City can encourage entrepreneurship and show support to local business who recruit to the area. The City can also leverage community engagement into new opportunities for residents.

The timeline and frequency of this strategic communication between departments within the city and relevant stakeholders is critical. The framework should begin by identifying which stakeholders will be in the highest frequency of communications, following with medium to low frequency communications. Prioritizing community stakeholders will help government employees to efficiently distribute information and collect information from Bloomington's major players. The city can also identify which stakeholders can play the best role in addressing the challenging themes listed above. For each theme, stakeholders that can play a long-term role engaging that issue may emerge and the city should have a plan in place to manage communication flow. On the other hand, stakeholder groups that are more suited for short-term engagements or events that address the above themes should be selected and addressed. The city should see these stakeholder groups as useful tools for spreading Bloomington's brand and who play an active role in the advancement of Bloomington's identity. Thus, this communication framework is flexible and stable enough to shape itself around different community groups and individuals to fit their specific needs best. Even though these groups function independently, the brand should ideally be impactful to each group.

This communication framework and accompanying information pack supply a mechanism for information flow, including regular delivery of content. It will take into account how the brand and messaging should be communicated to different stakeholder groups, based in part on the priority designation the city decides upon. The goal for this framework and these recommendations is for the brand to become the connecting identity between all stakeholder groups.

Collaboration Facilitation

Moving forward, our goal for Bloomington is to expand its brand to its fullest potential. After extensive research and collaboration with community organizations and individuals, the following are suggested steps to diffuse the brand among Bloomington's community. Local groups and key individual players should not be looked at as obstacles to merely move past, but rather opportunities to leverage word-of-mouth marketing and brand agency. This way, the brand starts to feel more genuine as it is disseminated through community organizations and businesses. Creating a two-way information exchange is another opportunity for Bloomington to capitalize on its stakeholders. Encouraging strategic communication that is structured in a way that all parties feel heard is important, especially in Bloomington where stakeholder groups often sit in opposition to one another. Collaborative groups of stakeholders might also lend them a more effective voice while being easy for the city to manage and oversee. These groups could combine the interests of different sectors; large scale employers and real estate business could be paired. Other examples include pairing small local business with business regulators, grouping together social welfare and human service nonprofit organizations, and organizing cultural organizations, both for-profit and nonprofit. The city can smooth this brand transition and initial communication patterns by providing materials and clearly establishing what the plan entails for

all parties. Crucial to this will be the information and content exchanges between stakeholder groups and the City. These collaborations are laid out on the next page:

Identified Theme	Potential Collaborative Groups
Jobs and Salaries	❖ Large companies and real estate companies ❖ Small business owners and business regulatory groups
Affordability	❖ Banks and real estate companies
Diversity (racial)	❖ IU (recruitment) and the City of Bloomington ❖ Arts & Culture organizations and tourism agencies (Visit Bloomington) ❖ Social Welfare organizations and small business owners
Community Engagement	❖ Facilitating long-term, or annual, collaborations and events between stakeholder groups ❖ Utilize city spaces as part of these collaborations ❖ Sponsoring events and/or connecting event planning with potential funders

Crisis Communication Plan and Crisis Management Team

The goal of the Crisis Communication Plan (CCP) is to equip the City with the necessary steps and processes to effectively deal with high-impact issues and to diffuse threats to Bloomington's brand. The people involved in applying the CCP will be identified within the client's office to be part of the Crisis Management Team (CMT). These will be the individuals selected to deal with crisis communications. Included in the Appendix of this report, the CCP works by identifying the following in order:

❖ Who is affected by the public relations crisis?
❖ Does this issue have short-term or long-term impacts, and what stakeholder group(s) does it impact?
❖ What trigger points does this public relations crisis touch on? The trigger point areas are as follows:
- ➢ Infrastructure and public works
- ➢ Legal changes and policy decisions
- ➢ Crime, safety, and security

> ➢ Investment opportunities and business issues
> ➢ Cases of high profile media interest

- ❖ What priority is this public relations crisis, out of high, medium or low?
- ❖ Does the city need to implement an emergency response? To help the city answer this question, the CCP pack includes response templates, incident logs, and other materials to aid in decisive communication.

Conclusion

Bloomington's branding strategy should encourage economic development while appealing to Bloomington's character and feel, factors important to many of the stakeholder groups identified in this report. Engaging stakeholders should be a key element of the city's branding endeavors, as this will ultimately make the brand resilient through the involvement, buy-in, and ownership felt by stakeholder groups. By identifying the factors that drive people to new cities—jobs and salaries, affordability, diversity, and community engagement—the City is equipped to focus its time and resources on these specific areas of livability. The included CCP will empower Bloomington to communicate swiftly and decisively with its stakeholder groups and enable these groups to overcome tension points and build effective relationships. These findings present Bloomington with the tools to not only create a successful brand but manage its growth and continue its development into the future.

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        base.pdf

Appendix A

Organizations Interviewed for Articulating Bloomington's Identity

Baxter Pharmaceuticals
Bloom Magazine
Boys and Girls Club
City of Bloomington Officials
City of Bloomington Farmers' Market
Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County
Downtown Bloomington, Inc.
El Centro Comunal
Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce
Herald Times
Indiana University Alumni Association
Indiana University Health
Inkwell
Ivy Tech
La Casa
Lotus Education & Arts Foundation
Nonprofit Central
One World Enterprises
Pily's Party Taco Truck
Shalom Community Center
The Cade
United Way of Monroe County

Appendix B: Bloomington's External Image

Newspaper Multivariate Regression Model

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.5855
R Square	0.3428
Adjusted R Square	0.2811
Standard Error	0.8022
Observations	106

ANOVA

	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	9	32.2193	3.5799	5.5628	0.0000
Residual	96	61.7807	0.6435		
Total	105	94			

	Coefficients*	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value**	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Intercept	-0.2449	0.1566	-1.5643	0.1210	-0.5557	0.0659	-0.5557	0.0659
dEconDev	-0.2426	0.2228	-1.0887	0.2790	-0.6848	0.1997	-0.6848	0.1997
dHousing	0.8208	0.3926	2.0907	0.0392	0.0415	1.6001	0.0415	1.6001
dIU	0.3734	0.1992	1.8749	0.0638	-0.0219	0.7687	-0.0219	0.7687
dBusiness	0.5737	0.2246	2.5542	0.0122	0.1278	1.0195	0.1278	1.0195
dCrime	-0.5853	0.2890	-2.0253	0.0456	-1.1589	-0.0117	-1.1589	-0.0117
dWorkforce	0.9789	0.3532	2.7715	0.0067	0.2778	1.6801	0.2778	1.6801
dPublicSafety	-0.4838	0.2244	-2.1559	0.0336	-0.9292	-0.0384	-0.9292	-0.0384
dPhilanthropy	0.7357	0.3901	1.8861	0.0623	-0.0386	1.5099	-0.0386	1.5099
dEducation	0.3565	0.2187	1.6302	0.1063	-0.0776	0.7906	-0.0776	0.7906

*Coefficients highlighted in green (red) indicate positive (negative) attitudes, on average.
**P-values highlighted in green indicate statistically significant results, at the 0.1 significance level.

	dIU	dEconDev	dEducation	dBusiness	dPublicSafety	dCrime	dWorkforce	dHousing	dPhilanthropy
Count	30	26	25	22	20	9	6	6	5
p-value	0.0638	0.279	0.1063	0.0122	0.0336	0.0456	0.0067	0.0392	0.0623
Coefficient	0.3734	-0.2426	0.3565	0.5737	-0.4838	-0.5853	0.9789	0.8208	0.7357

Newspaper Article Source Count

Source	Count	Unit
Herald-Times	56	Local
Indiana Business Journal	16	State
Indiana Public Media	18	State
Associated Press	9	National
Indy Star	7	State
Times-Mail	2	Local
Herald Bulletin	1	State

Unit	Count
All Local	58
All State & National	51

Newspaper Attitude Trend Analysis

Article Attitudes regarding Bloomington - All

Article Attitudes re: Bloomington - Local Only

Article Attitudes regarding Bloomington State & National Only
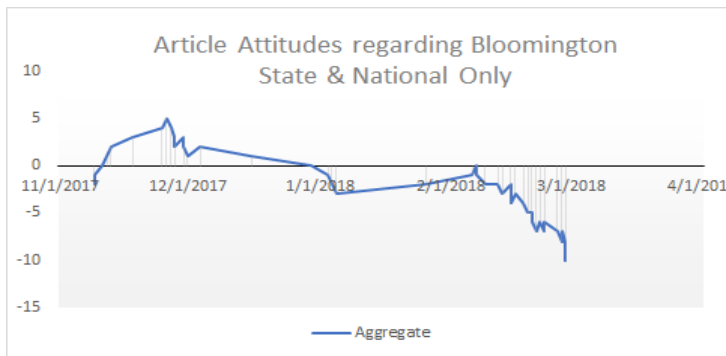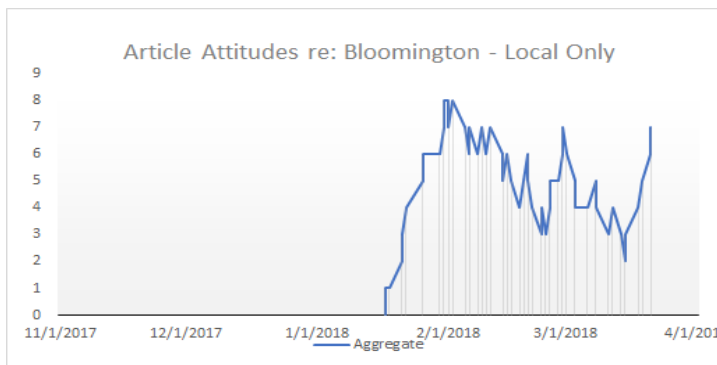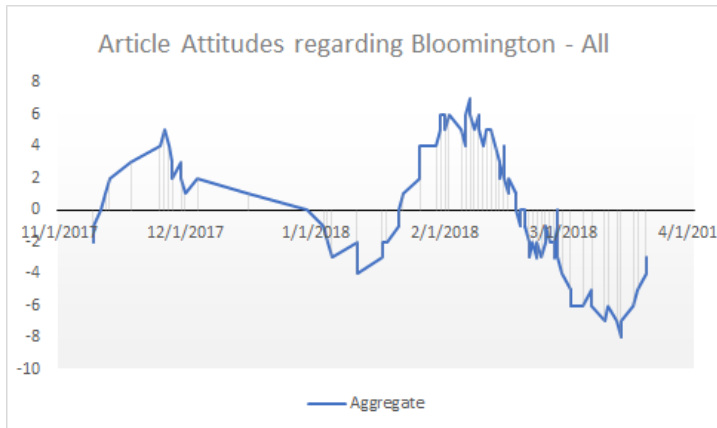
Top 5 Most Positive Topics

	Topic	Sum of Scores	No. of Mentions
1	Public Safety	-13	20
2	Crime	-7	9
3	Health	-3	18
4	Taxes	-3	3
5 - Tie	Law, Env., Transportation	-2	24

Top 5 Most Negative Topics

	Topic	Sum of Scores	No. of Mentions
1	Education	11	25
2	Business	8	22
3	IU	7	30
4	Workforce	6	6
5	Philanthropy	5	5

Quality of life in Bloomington, IN Result Summary

No.	Source	Hyperlink	YearPub
1	Bloomington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC): What makes Bloomington, IN Unique?	https://bloomingtonedc.com/quality-of-life/	2017
2	Livability: Bloomington, IN: What you need to know	https://livability.com/in/bloomington	2010-2017
3	Forbes: The Best small places for business and careers- Bloomington, IN Ranking 2017	https://livability.com/in/bloomington	2017
4	TripAdvisor: Life in Bloomington Forum	https://www.tripadvisor.com/ShowTopic-g36942-i1421-k2354132-Life_in_Bloomington-Bloomington_Indiana.html	2008
5	Numbeo: Quality of Life in Bloomington, IN, United States	https://www.numbeo.com/quality-of-life/in/Bloomington	2009-2018
6	Indiana Public Media: Study: Indiana Ranks 39th For Overall Quality of Life. The Human Development of Indiana Counties: A Policy Perspective. Center for Business and Economic Research, Ball State University	https://indianapublicmedia.org/news/study-indiana-ranks-39th-quality-life-88155/	2015
7	CLRSearch: 2012 Bloomington Quality of Life Indexes Graph	https://www.clrsearch.com/Bloomington-Demographics/IN/Quality-of-Life	2012
8	SPEA: Life in Bloomington	https://spea.indiana.edu/student-experience/bloomington-life.html	2018
9	Notre Dame Magazine - Bloomington, Indiana: Where Belonging Is a Virtue	https://magazine.nd.edu/news/bloomington-indiana-where-belonging-is-a-virtue/	2005-2006

2. Description of first page of Google search results

No.	Highlighted Topics	Results
1	Education	6
2	Cost of living	5
3	Culture	5
4	Housing availability	4
5	Recreation	4
6	Environment	3
7	Community	3
8	Transportation	3
9	Lifestyle	3
10	Location Advantage	3
11	Health	2
12	Shooping	2
13	Business	2
14	Sports	1
15	Technology	1
16	Jobs	1
17	Veterans	1
18	Mortality	1
19	Weather	1
20	Religion	1
21	Crime	1
22	Political Ideology	1
23	Sustainability	0

No.	Resources Available Websites	Results
1	Videos, Pictures, graphs	6
2	Demographics	6
3	Bloomington in Rankings	5
4	City Profile	3
5	Bloomington official website	2

Best Places to Live Output - first page of Google

Search Criteria: Best + Places + to + Live + in + US

Source	Source Type	Year Pub	Mention Bloomington	Rank	Rank Out Of
U.S. News & World Report: The Best Places to Live in the US in 2017	original algorithm	2017	0		25
Niche: 2017 Best Cities to Live in America	original algorithm	2017	0		205
Business Insider: 50 Best Places to Live in America	U.S. News & World Report	2016	0		50
USA Today: America's Best 50 Cities to Live in	24/7 Wall Street	2017	0		50
TheStreet: 15 Best Places to live in the US	Livability.com		0		15
Livability: 2017 Top 100 Best Places to Live	original algorithm	2017	0		100
Livability: 2016 Top 100 Best Places to Live	original algorithm	2016	1	76	100
Money: Best Places to Live in America	original algorithm	2018	0		100
Parade: The 10 Best Places to Live in America in 2017	Money Magazine		0		10
24/7 Wall St: America's 50 Best Cities to Live	original	2017	0		50

Five original algorithms:
1. U.S. News and World Rankings
2. Niche
3. Livability (Bloomington ranked 76/100 Best Places to Live in US)
4. Money
5. 24/7 Wall Street

Source	Methodology
U.S. News and World Rankings	❖ U.S. News assesses statistics for the country's 100 largest metro areas, including each location's job market, cost of living, crime rates, educational quality, availability of top-notch health care and more. ❖ Each category is weighted based on a survey of 2,000 people across the country, and what they said matters most to them when picking their next place to live.
Niche	❖ The 2017 Best Places to Live ranking provides a comprehensive assessment of the overall livability of an area. This grade takes into account several key factors of a location, including the quality of local schools, crime rates, housing trends, employment statistics, and access to amenities ❖ Grades include: Higher education rate; cost of living grade; housing grade; public schools grade; diversity grade; shortest commute grade; composite overall score (survey); crime and safety grade; family grade; health & fitness grade; jobs grade; nightlife grade; outdoor activities grade; weather grade ❖ Niche has gathered over 100 million reviews and survey responses from students, parents, and residents
Livability.com **(Bloomington ranked #76 Best Place to Live out of 100)**	❖ Ranked more than 2,000 cities with populations between 20,000 and 350,000

Money	❖ MONEY identified places with populations between 10,000 and 100,000. They eliminated any place that had more than double the national crime risk, less than 85% of its state's median household income, or a lack of ethnic diversity. That left 2,400 places.
	❖ MONEY's experts then collected about 170,000 different data points to narrow the list, including economic health, cost of living, public education, crime, ease of living, and amenities, all provided by research partner Witlytic.
	❖ MONEY put the greatest weight on economic health, cost of living factors, and public-school performance.
	❖ Reporters researched each spot, interviewing residents, checking out neighborhoods, and searching for the kinds of intangible factors that aren't revealed by statistics.

24/7 Wall Street	❖ To determine America's 50 best cities to live in, 24/7 Wall St. considered roughly 590 cities the U.S. Census Bureau reported as having populations of more than 65,000 in 2016.
	❖ Data were collected in nine major categories: crime, demography, economy, education, environment, health, housing, infrastructure, and leisure.
	❖ Within each category, specific measures contributed to a city's overall category score. For example, the economy category included median household income adjusted for cost of living, the ratio between a city's and its state's median household income, poverty and unemployment rates, as well as a city's three-year employment growth.
	❖ Each measure was adjusted to range from 0 to 1 using min-max normalization, with lower scores indicating better outcomes. Normalizing each measure, as opposed to aggregating category scores, allowed us to assign weight to individual measures to reflect their importance rather than entire categories.
	❖ We excluded cities with negative five- or 10-year population growth rates
	❖ Cities with crime rates lower than the national rates were rewarded, while cities with higher crime rates were penalized.
	❖ A strong economy and the health of a labor market are, for some, the only considerations when determining where to live. Our goal was to identify cities that were livable for everyone, not just the rich. Still, if incomes are too low, a city may not be desirable. To that end, we adjusted median household income for cost of living in the city.
	❖ A strong school system may be another consideration for parents looking to move. As a proxy for school system strength, we considered high school standardized test scores relative to state scores from Attom Data Solutions. Additionally, the education category included the percentage of adults with at least a bachelor's degree as well as the number of colleges and universities in a city per 100,000 residents from the Department of Education.
	❖ For people who like being outdoors — either for work or pleasure — a city's air quality and weather may be of chief importance. In this category, we included an air quality index

	to assess the levels of a variety of pollutants on a given day. Additionally, we considered an index measuring natural hazard risk as well as average monthly rainfall
	❖ Access to quality hospitals is another benefit of a desirable city. Data included 30-day risk-adjusted mortality rates of heart attacks, COPD, heart failure, pneumonia, and stroke and the rate at which individuals were readmitted to a hospital within 30 days of being discharged.
	❖ For many American homeowners, their houses constitute the vast majority of wealth. An investment of this magnitude may be the chief reason that people decide to live where they do. Our housing index considers the ratio of a city's median home value to the statewide median home value and other data.
	❖ As an additional measure of affordability, we included the ratio of median home value to median annual household income. This ratio—called a price-to-income ratio—helps identify cities that are livable for a broad audience.
	❖ We considered the percentage of commuters travelling to work by foot or public transportation. Additionally, we reviewed the average time it takes to travel to work each day.
	❖ Lastly, we included the number of airports in the metro area in which the city is located.
	❖ The leisure category can be broken into two parts: activities that take place in the city and outside of it.

Top-mentioned indicators in five original algorithms:

Word/Indicator	Number of Mentions
Job market	II
Quality of life	I
Affordability/Cost of living	IIII (4)
History	I
Job market growth/economic growth	IIIII (5)
Population growth/net migration	IIII (4)
Natural beauty/outdoors	II
Cost of living compare to mean annual salary	I
Crime rates	IIIII (5)
"Desirability"	I
Commute time	IIII (4)
Median salary/Median Household income	IIIII (5)
Unemployment rate	IIIII (5)
Percent of income spent on housing and utilities	I
Friendliness	I
College readiness of high school students/High school grad. rate	II
Poverty Rate	II
Schools	II

Amenities - restaurants, museums	III
Tech sector growth	I
Educational attainment	IIII (4)
Quality Healthcare	II
Median Home Price/Housing trends	IIII (4)
Diversity	I
Weather	II

Benchmarking Analysis

City	Population	Population Growth *(percent change 2010-2016)*	Cost of Living *(Base City/Average =100)*	Mean Commute Time (min)	Violent Crime *(per 100,000 people)*	% of pop. High School Graduate or Higher
Ames, IA	58,965	12.2%	98.6	16.1	107	97.40%
Bloomington, IN	80,405	5.2%	93.3	16	378	93.30%
Boulder, CO	97,385	10.6%	178	18.8	258	96.40%
Ann Arbor, MI	113,934	6.0%	122	20.1	213	96.80%

City	% of pop. Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Job Market Growth	Median Home Price	Median Household Income	Unemployment Rate *(2016 Annual Avg)*
Ames, IA	63.40%	1.30%	$176,500	$41,278	2.4%
Bloomington, IN	56.50%	0.9%	$172,100	$31,254	4.7%
Boulder, CO	72.20%	3.10%	$554,500	$60,569	2.7%
Ann Arbor, MI	72.80%	3.90%	$250,200	$57,697	3.4%

Violent Crime Rates (All crime per 100,000)

City	Violent Crime	Murder and manslaughter	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault
Ames, IA *(pop. 58,965)*	107	1	39	15	52
Bloomington, IN *(pop. 80,405)*	378	2	46	70	260
Boulder, CO *(pop. 97,385)*	258	0	52	30	176
Ann Arbor, MI *(pop. 113,984)*	213	1	44	43	125

Rates of **Robbery** (taking someone's property by force, injury, or threat of harm) and **Aggravated Assault** (assault punished more severely based on circumstance, e.g. use of a weapon, identity of victim, degree of injury) are disproportionately high in Bloomington in comparison to peer cities, and reflect poorly on the city

"The Salary You Must Earn in 27 Metros."
Keith Gumbinger, Vice President of HSH.com, 2017

Cities	30-Year Fixed Mortgage Rate	% Change from 4Q16	Median Home Price	% Change from 4Q16	Monthly Payment (PITI)	Salary Needed
Pittsburgh	4.29%	0.32%	$120,000	-7.69	$735	$31,500
Cleveland	4.29%	0.32%	$126,100	-3.74	$788	$33,800
Cincinnati	4.29%	0.32%	$145,400	-3.84	$852	$36,500
Detroit	4.29%	0.32%	$145,000	-11.93	$859	$36,800
St Louis	4.29%	0.32%	$154,900	-3.67	$885	$37,900
Atlanta	4.29%	0.32%	$182,800	-0.05	$950	$40,700
Phoenix	4.29%	0.32%	$237,900	0.98	$1,115	$47,800
Tampa	4.29%	0.32%	$207,500	1.22	$1,120	$48,000
San Antonio	4.29%	0.32%	$202,600	-1.79	$1,186	$50,800
Philadelphia	4.29%	0.32%	$209,000	-5.69	$1,222	$52,400
Orlando	4.29%	0.32%	$230,000	1.01	$1,230	$52,700
Minneapolis	4.29%	0.32%	$234,700	-0.21	$1,255	$53,800
Baltimore	4.29%	0.32%	$237,600	-3.38	$1,281	$54,900
Houston	4.29%	0.32%	$222,300	-0.98	$1,296	$55,500
Dallas	4.29%	0.32%	$236,500	2.56	$1,363	$58,400
Chicago	4.29%	0.32%	$228,600	0.93	$1,386	$59,400
Sacramento	4.29%	0.32%	$319,700	0.22	$1,590	$68,100
Miami	4.29%	0.32%	$318,000	2.42	$1,638	$70,200
Portland	4.29%	0.32%	$359,900	1.47	$1,728	$74,000
Denver	4.29%	0.32%	$396,100	3.8	$1,812	$77,700
Washington	4.29%	0.32%	$383,500	-0.21	$1,926	$82,500
Seattle	4.29%	0.32%	$422,100	-0.28	$2,018	$86,500
Boston	4.29%	0.32%	$414,200	-0.77	$2,133	$91,400
New York	4.29%	0.32%	$386,000	0.97	$2,234	$95,700
Los Angeles	4.29%	0.32%	$485,800	-4.11	$2,299	$98,500
San Diego	4.36%	0.26%	$564,000	-0.7	$2,606	$111,700
San Francisco	4.36%	0.26%	$815,000	-1.81	$3,759	$161,100

Source: HSH.com

Livability.com Methodology & LivScores
(Source: https://livability.com/topics/methodology-top-100-best-places-to-live)
- ❖ Livability "polls the nation each year to find out what matters most in communities throughout the U.S. Is healthcare most important, or affordable housing? Which matters more, commute times or climate?"
- ❖ Then Livability experts source the best public and private data available to find the small to mid-sized cities, towns and villages that meet the survey respondents standards of a Best Place to Live.
- ❖ Nearly 2,300 cities were ranked according to the latest data projections

- ❖ Data Sources:
  - ➢ Public-sector providers: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Affairs, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Federal Aviation Administration, the United States Golf Association, the Federal Communications Commission, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Department of Education.
  - ➢ Private-sector sources: Esri, Great Schools, and ATTOM.
  - ➢ Nonprofit sources: Institute of Museum and Library Services and County Health Rankings and Roadmaps produced by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- ❖ Livability's partners:
  - ➢ Richard Florida, one of the world's leading urban theorists and his team at the University of Toronto's Martin Prosperity Institute
  - ➢ The Initiative for Creativity and Innovation in Cities at New York University's Schools of Professional Studies
  - ➢ Ipsos, a leading global market research firm. Survey more than 2,000 American adults about what factors are most important in creating a best place. Livability uses this survey to determine how much weight to give to each data point.
- ❖ ❖ Each city is given a LivScore using Livability's proprietary algorithm. The Livscore is based on more than 40 data points across eight categories: economics, housing, amenities, infrastructure, demographics, social and civic capital, education and health care. See table below

Category Data Point	Bloomington's 2016 LivScore	Average 2016 LivScore *(across 2,300 cities in U.S.)*
Amenities:	**72**	**47**
# farmers markets		
# parks, golf courses		
Climate		
Air quality		
Drought indicator		

Impact of arts in the community		
Utilization: data on how often residents take active part in community's cultural scene		
Demographics	**20**	**50**
Projected Population Growth		
Racial/ Ethnic Diversity		
Age Diversity		
Economy: "Based on our Livability Principles of Access, Affordability, Choice and Utilization, we reward cities that are thriving economically but not leaving its residents behind."	**53**	**50**
Unemployment rate		
Growth of high-wage jobs at county level		
Gini Coefficient (Measure of income inequality)		
Projected household income growth		
Amount households spend on food		

Education	**73**	**45**
Rankings of Area Public Schools		
% of children in public school system		
# accredited colleges + universities		
% of population with a bachelor's degree or higher		
Healthcare	**71**	**45**
# of hospitals in City		
Quality Ranking-Medicare Hospital Compare Site		
# primary care providers relative to pop'n		
Avg. household spending on healthcare		
% of children born w low birth weight (county)		
Adult obesity rate (county)		
Housing	**64**	**50**
Housing affordability (housing costs + income + transportation costs)		

Projected home value growth (proxy for desirability along with population growth)		
Diversity of Housing stock available = Age + Type of Housing		
Vacancy rates		
% households owning vs renting		
Social & Civic Capital	**46**	**50**
Voter participation rates		
Composite score of resident activity level		
Crime Rate		
% of pop'n in "Creative Class" fields		
Transportation & Infrastructure	**72**	**47**
Alternate options to driving		
Commute times		
Schools, parks, grocery stores and restaurants all walkable		
Airport distance		
Broadband access		

Source: https://livability.com/best-places/top-100-best-places-to-live/2016/ranking-data
Source: https://livability.com/best-places/ranking-criteria

Livability.com Articles & Mentions

"Established in 1818, Bloomington is known as the "Gateway to Scenic Southern Indiana" for its scenic trails and outdoor recreation. Great schools like Indiana University, Big 10 sports, cultural attractions and affordable neighborhoods earned Bloomington a spot on the Best Cities for Entrepreneurs in 2016 and 2017, and on our Top 100 Best Places to Live list. The city's growing food scene has also received national accolades for local wines and eclectic dining options. Bloomington has been designated a Tree City USA for the past 30 years and is often recognized among America's best cities for doing business. The local economy is strong in areas like advanced manufacturing, education and technology, and the popular downtown district has many venues for shopping, dining and nighttime entertainment."

Source: https://livability.com/in/bloomington (2018)

Mentions:
- ❖ Amenities
  - ➢ Trails
  - ➢ Outdoor recreation
  - ➢ Big 10 Sports
  - ➢ Cultural Attractions
  - ➢ Food Scene
  - ➢ Local Wines
  - ➢ Eclectic Dining Options
  - ➢ Popular Downtown District
  - ➢ Venues for Shopping, Dining, and nighttime entertainment
  - ➢ Tree City USA
- ❖ Transportation & Infrastructure
- ❖ Healthcare
- ❖ Education
  - ➢ Great Schools
  - ➢ IU
- ❖ Social & Civic Capital
- ❖ Economy
  - ➢ Entrepreneurs
  - ➢ Often Recognized among America's Best Cities for Doing Business
  - ➢ Local Economy is Strong
  - ➢ Advanced Manufacturing
  - ➢ Education
  - ➢ Technology
- ❖ Housing
  - ➢ Affordable Neighborhoods
- ❖ Demographics

"Known as "The Gateway to Scenic Southern Indiana," Bloomington has been a Tree City USA community for 30 years and is best known as home to Indiana University Bloomington. Being a college town (picked as one of the Best College Towns in 2012) of 42,000 students, the median age for residents is less than 24 years old. Key economic sectors in Bloomington include life sciences, advanced manufacturing and technology, and entertainment venues along with shopping destinations, such as College Mall and Fountain Square Mall."
Source: https://livability.com/best-places/top-100-best-places-to-live/2016/in/bloomington
(2016)

Mentions:
- ❖ Amenities
  - ➢ Gateway to Southern Scenic Indiana
  - ➢ Entertainment venues
  - ➢ Shopping destinations
  - ➢ College Mall
  - ➢ Fountain Square Mall
  - ➢ Tree City USA
- ❖ Transportation & Infrastructure
- ❖ Healthcare
- ❖ Education
  - ➢ IU
  - ➢ College Town
- ❖ Social & Civic Capital
- ❖ Economy
  - ➢ Life sciences
  - ➢ Advanced manufacturing
  - ➢ Technology
- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Demographics
  - ➢ Median age for residents is less than 24 years old

"Why Bloomington, IN, Is a Best Place to Live:
This charming, tight-knit community offers affordable housing, great weather and amazing food for every palate. Bloomington is booming (or should we say blooming?). This charming, tight-knit community has been featured on our Best Cities for Entrepreneurs and the Top 100 Best Places to Live multiple times. Home to Indiana University Bloomington, the city also nabbed a spot on our list of the Top 10 College Towns. Despite its many accolades, living in Bloomington is surprisingly affordable. The median home price is only $173,400, more than $30,000 cheaper than the national median. Zillow refers to the Bloomington market as "very healthy" and predicts home values will grow by 3.5% in the next year alone, making a house here a sound

investment. When it comes to comfort, fun and community, Bloomington is nearly impossible to beat. Outdoor and natural amenities are abundant — Bloomington is known as the Gateway to Scenic Southern Indiana and has a Tree City designation.

Situated near Hoosier National Forest and Lake Monroe, the city boasts more than 10 parks and has high air quality with low pollution. Additionally, Bloomington residents get to experience all four seasons with average temperatures ranging from 32 to 76 degrees depending on the season. ⌷But it's not just the nature scene that makes Bloomington stand out; its cultural scene is equally superb. Bloomington has a 60-block district of galleries, theaters, music venues, restaurants and more known as BEAD (Bloomington Entertainment and Arts District). In fact, BEAD features more than 90 dining options, which is why it's no surprise that we ranked it as a Best Foodie City in 2013 and a Best Beer City in 2015.

"Farm to fork has been the norm in Bloomington always, since we're in the middle of the country and spoiled by Indiana's rich soil," Erin Erdmann White of Visit Bloomington told Livability. "We have restaurants offering Indian, Burmese, Turkish, pan-Asian, Thai, Japanese, Tibetan, Middle Eastern – it's very diverse. Bloomington is home to the only U.S. Tibetan Cultural Center, and our authentic Tibetan restaurant has served His Holiness the Dalai Lama when he visits." There are plenty other cultural attractions of note as well, like the 40,000-piece art collection of Indiana University's Art Museum; the university's Lilly Library, which features rare books including a collection of Abraham Lincoln material (and free admission); and plenty of festivals, like the Limestone Comedy Festival and Taste of Bloomington Festival. All in all, the good life is definitely in bloom in this fantastic city."

Source: https://livability.com/in/bloomington/real-estate/why-bloomington-in-is-a-best-place-to-live (2018)

Mentions:
- ❖ Amenities
  - ➢ Great weather
  - ➢ Amazing food for every palate
  - ➢ Fun
  - ➢ Outdoor and natural amenities are abundant
  - ➢ Gateway to Scenic Southern Indiana
  - ➢ Hoosier National Forest
  - ➢ Lake Monroe
  - ➢ 10 parks
  - ➢ High air quality
  - ➢ Low pollution
  - ➢ All four seasons
  - ➢ Tree City USA

- Temperature
- Cultural Scene
- BEAD (Bloomington Entertainment and Arts District)
- Galleries
- Theaters
- music venues
- Restaurants
- Best Foodie City in 2013
- Best Beer City in 2015
- Farm to fork
- International restaurants
- Tibetan Cultural Center
- Cultural Attractions
- IU Art Museum
- Lilly Library
- Festivals
- Limestone Comedy Festival
- Taste of Bloomington Festival
- ❖ Transportation & Infrastructure
- ❖ Healthcare
- ❖ Education
  - IU
  - College Town
- ❖ Social & Civic Capital
  - Tight-knit community
  - Community
- ❖ Economy
  - Life sciences
  - Advanced manufacturing
  - Technology
- ❖ Housing
  - Affordable housing
  - Median home price is only $173,400
  - Zillow refers to the Bloomington market as "very healthy"
  - Zillow predicts home values will grow by 3.5% in the next year alone
  - A house here is a sound investment
- ❖ Demographics
  - Median age for residents is less than 24 years old

1.1 Screenshot of IN.gov:
https://socratadata.iot.in.gov/Government/ISP-Meth-Lab-Locations-Map/ktyc-iiu7
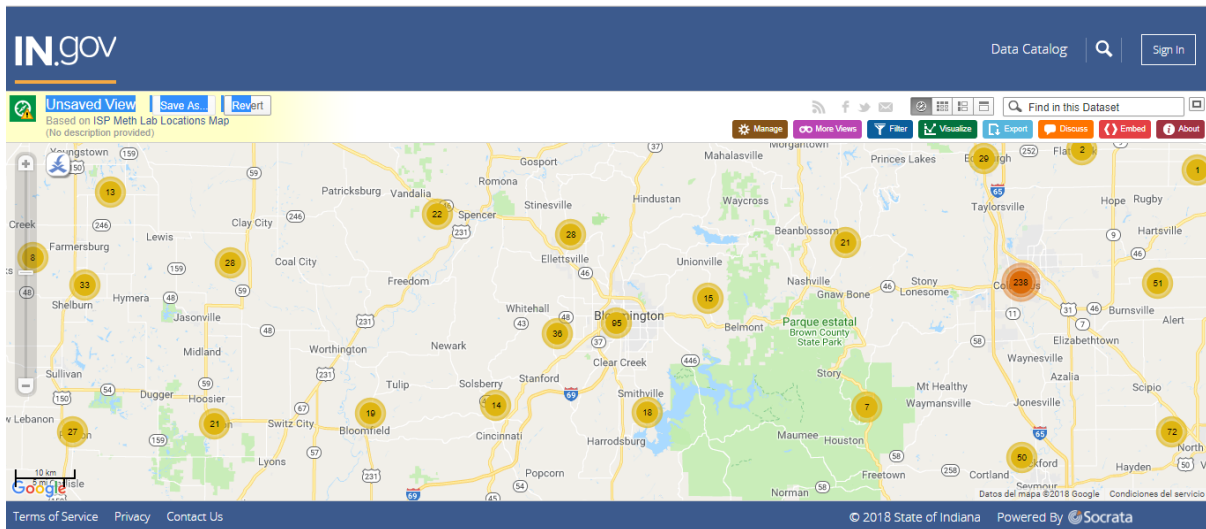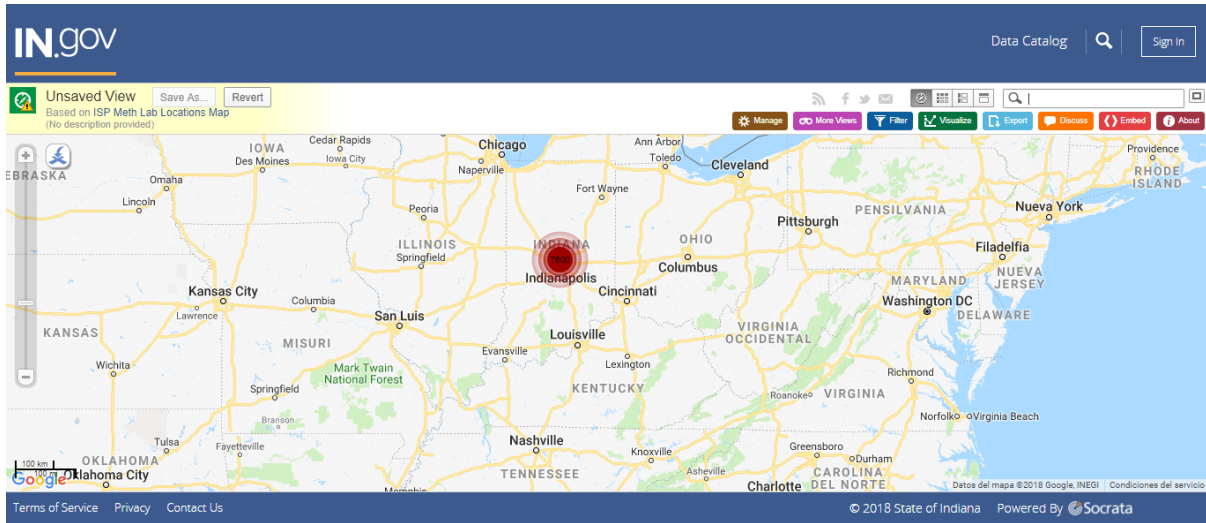
1.2 <u>Screenshot of Indystar.com:</u>
http://interactives.indystar.com/news/standing/INMethLabs/

SEARCH MAP OF INDIANA METH LAB LOCATIONS

You can now find out if a meth lab was operating in your neighborhood, thanks to a new Indiana State Police website that lists the locations of former meth lab locations by county with information dating back to 2007.
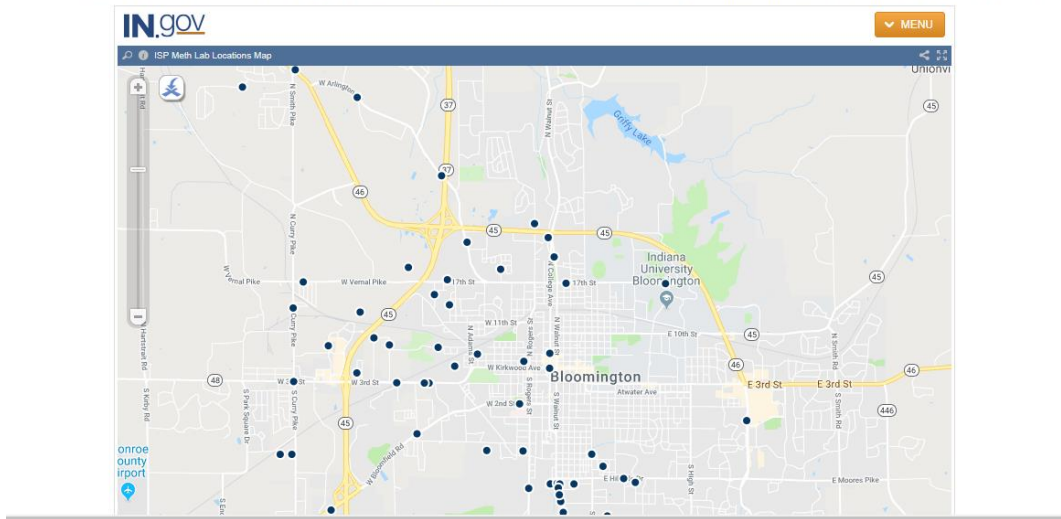
1.3. Screenshot of drugabuse.com: https://drugabuse.com/featured/10-years-of-meth-lab-explosions/

Web Methodology: They "pulled the latest addresses from the past 10 years from the DEA's National Clandestine Laboratory Register and mapped them for our interactive maps and graphics."

METH INCIDENTS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES

10 YEARS OF METH LAB LOCATIONS

SOURCE: DEA.GOV
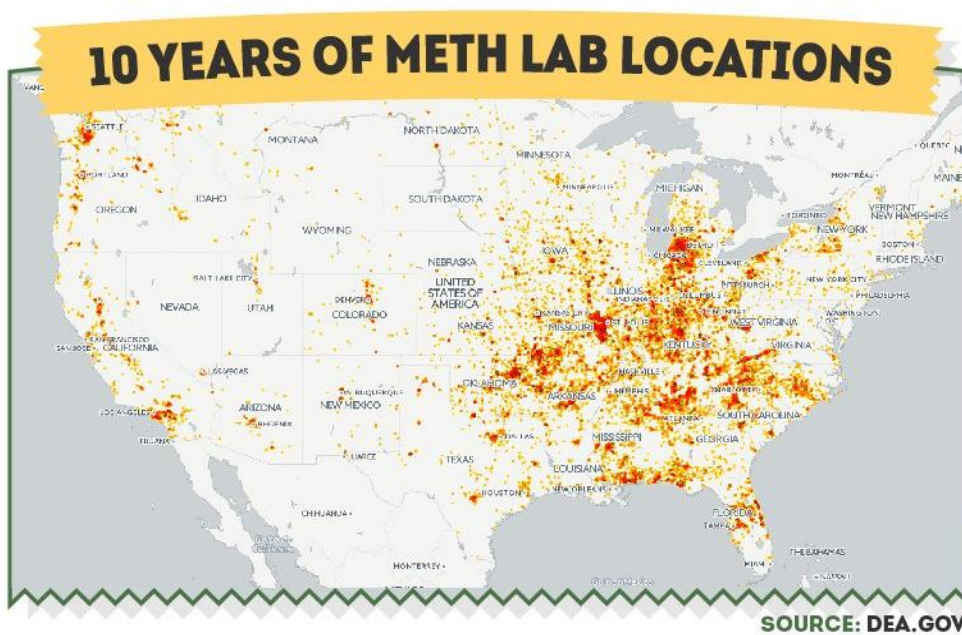
Appendix C

Communication Management Plan
Information Pack

April 2018
Version 1.0

Contents

Section 1:

1.1 Introduction

This pack provides the information that will assist the City of Bloomington Communication Management Team (CMT) to develop an effective communications and communication management plan to respond proactively in the event of a public relations incident.

1.2 Department Communication Management Team

The communications team could designate a number of people to handle each type of public relations incident both for managing the incident and with the authority and information to speak to the press. The communication team should regularly brief these individuals on protocol in dealing with the press but most importantly all other department employees should under no circumstances speak to the press regarding these incidents and be coached to provide "no comment" type statements in the event of them being contacted by a member of the press.

Below is an example of the type of incidents that may occur; the team may appoint a leader, based on area of expertise, for each type.

1. Infrastructure and public works
2. Legal changes and policy decisions
3. Crime, safety, and security
4. Investment/opportunities
5. High profile media interest

Section 2

2.1 CMP Invocation Trigger Points

The team should then identify triggers points under each of these areas that would invoke the communication management plan

1. Infrastructure and public works
    - E.g. new infrastructure project announcement, delay an on-going infrastructure project, milestone achieved for an on-going project.
2. Legal changes and policy decisions
    - E.g. changes to business registration policies, new ordinance or changes to an existing ordinance, awareness on an existing ordinance
3. Crime, safety, and security
    - E.g. an incident that affects the safety of citizens, purchasing an armored vehicle
4. Investment/opportunities
    - E.g. new investment opportunity, losing an investment opportunity
5. High profile media interest
    - E.g. Little 500

Identifying trigger points ahead of time ensures that the Department is prepared to handle both good and bad press coverage and take control of the narrative.

2.2   Invocation Process

The CMP should be invoked if the incident could impact the reputation of the City, its relationship with the lead stakeholders. Any one or a combination of the following would also trigger the invocation of the Group CMP.

The leader of each area is responsible for deciding if the incident warrants an invocation of the CMP and has to notify the communications team of this. The team should then assemble and make a collective decision on activating the CMP.
The team must determine the activation process ahead of time. For example:
The leader will contact all members text/email (whichever medium is considered top priority) to attend the initial briefing, and those not required will be asked to stand down, remain contactable and will be regularly updated.

2.2.1 Framework
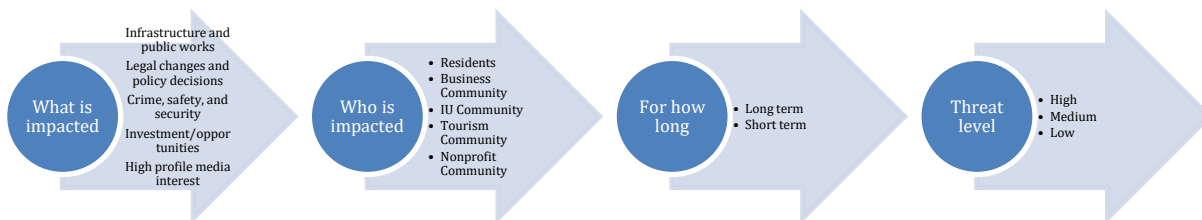
Long term can be defined as an event that will affect stakeholders for over a year, requiring periodic communication updates.
Threat level (high medium low priority)
-    High if: affects safety, infrastructure, access to government services
-    Medium if: business issues, regulations/legal changes, new projects
-    Low if: controversial but not dangerous, politics, unpopular decisions

2.3   Messages

Messages
To aid the speed of sending messages it is recommended that the communications team create pre-approved messages for the communications leaders to defer to in the event of an emergency.

For example, messages can be used to invoke the relevant teams and to advise staff as to what is happening and what to do. (Message length is limited to 200 characters). However, all other messages need to be approved by Internal Communications before being disseminated, as the context may vary according to the situation.

Example messages from a communication management plan used by London Stock Exchange Group:
All staff message
Due to restrictions in accessing our building, all staff are asked to remain at home unless advised to go to an alternative location by their managers. Please confirm you have received this text by emailing email@department.com

2.4   CMP Meeting Agenda

Below is a suggested meeting agenda for the CMP meetings:

<div align="center">

CMP

<u>Incident Meeting Agenda</u>

</div>

<u>Attendees List</u>:

All CMP members to attend initial briefing and stand down if not required

1.   Incident Overview / Review
2.   Incident Update
3.   Assessment / Status
     Type:
     1.   Infrastructure and public works
     2.   Legal changes and policy decisions
     3.   Crime, safety, and security
     4.   Investment/opportunities
     5.   High profile media interest
     6.   Infrastructure and public works
     7.   Legal changes and policy decisions
     Time Impact – long/short term
     Threat level – low/medium/ high

4.   Actions / Issues
5.   Communication plan to media and relevant communities
6.   Next Meeting

2.5   Example CMP Action List

Below is an action list. Assign an owner to each action and note when complete. This is a guide and not a finite list.

Step	Action	Owner		✓
1.	Evacuation • Do we need to evacuate the building? • Do we need to call an internal assembly? • Are we awaiting instructions from the authorities?			
2.	Staff • Are all the staff safe? • Are all staff accounted for?			
3.	Business Operation • Do we need to invoke Business Continuity?			
4.	Communications • To staff • To Department/Mayor, Group CMP Leader • To external parties (regulators / media/business community etc. / invacuate (internal stakeholders) • To media • To the Governor? • When and how often? • What is the communication message?			
5.	CMP Triggers • Have the CMP triggers been met? • Invoke the CMP?			
6.	Next Working Day • Can the department/road etc. operate tomorrow? • Communicate instructions for tomorrow?			
7.	CMP Meetings • Who to attend from CMP and How often? • Where - conference call or meeting room?			

2.6   Crisis Communications – Example Statements

Example Holding Statements
The following statements provide a foundation for sharing information with various stakeholder groups during a business crisis.

Common Statement
The following Common Statement is intended to notify specific recipient groups post incident and is common to all recipient groups. It should be edited to reflect events and supplemented with additional information in the following paragraphs. From this statement, key messages can be drawn up. The Statement should be distributed to press, customers, employees and other stakeholders, as relevant. The statement should also be posted on the Group's corporate website.

Should the Common Statement be issued – The City's full Crisis Management team will be invoked.

Common Statement:

<u>Statement by Department issued at [time] on [date]</u>

We can confirm that at [time] [today/ on [date]] that [e.g. a fire broke out] at the [headquarters] in [Bloomington].

A full evacuation of the premises was carried out and the [emergency services] were called out to [area] at their [enter location] premises to respond to this incident.

The cause of the [incident] is currently unknown but an investigation is already under way.

A [small number] of staff remain unaccounted for at present and actions are being taken to determine whether they are safely offsite or remain in the building]. An emergency helpline has been set up for family and friends of staff who maybe concerned about them. [insert number]

We would like to reassure all staff and customers that we will keep them fully informed of any developments. We will endeavour to resume the business of the exchange as soon as possible, though at this stage, there is no indication of when that might be. We would like to thank the emergency services for their hard work to date in helping us respond to this incident.

Ends.

Member and Customer-facing employees:

Due to the [incident type} we have experienced a disruption to normal working with [resources, services, assets] [extent] affected. The City's business continuity and crisis management plans have been invoked. We are confident in our ability to recover/resume [services] [though there is no indication at this stage of when that might be/ within timeframe].

In the meantime, please help us to get through this brief but challenging period by:
• Explaining to your customers and in response to other enquirers that the situation is under control, although for a short while, there may be a delay in responding to non-urgent requirements
• Using the Members Helpline for emergencies only. (Provide number)
• If customers remain dissatisfied or unduly concerned, please contact [department] directly on [xxxx xxx xxxx] who will then deal with the issue
• Don't try to log into the systems until notified to do so

Thank you in advance for your patience, tolerance and continued support.

All Staff:

Thank you for your cooperation during this time. As you are aware, we have experienced a major disruption to normal working processes, so continuity arrangements have been activated. If you have been asked to return home for this initial period, your manager or business continuity co-ordinator will contact you within 24 hours to brief you. In the meantime, the Company requires you to:

• remain at home or otherwise contactable by telephone
• follow the applicable sections of your departmental business continuity plan
• keep your normal working hours free and be ready to respond immediately to any request for assistance by the Company
• if you are not a person authorised to deal with the media, please remember that you cannot offer opinions, speculation or otherwise communicate with the press, media or anyone who is not well known to you
• avoid calling in on regular business numbers. You can check the 'Staff Information Line' (enter number) for updates. You will be contacted by your line manager if specific action is required.

Suppliers:

Due to the [incident type] we have experienced a disruption to normal working with [resources, services, assets] [extent] affected. The City's business continuity and crisis management plans have been invoked and the situation is now under control. We are confident in our ability to recover/resume [services] [though there is no indication at this stage of when that might be/ within timeframe].

 In the meantime, please help us to get through this brief but challenging period by:
- Explaining to your staff and management that the situation is under control, although for a short while, we may respectfully ask for your assistance and ask for your support, help and understanding as we seek to resolve the issues.

- Help us to continue operating. Our [procurement /facilities departments?] should be your main point of contact and will explain in more detail how to continue to supply us effectively whilst we restore normal operations.

Thank you in advance for your patience and continued support.

Ends.

Section 3:

3.1 Communication Management Team – contact details for team leaders should be available to all members

Role	Member	Mobile/Blackberry	Work	Home

3.2   Example Information Logs

3.2.1 Incident Log

No	Date	Location	Description	Actions taken	Follow up actions	Owner	Status

3.2.2 Example Telephone Log

Date	Time	Caller contact details	Message	Actions taken

3.2.3. Example Action Log

No	Activity / decision	Date / time for completion	Owner	Next update	Remarks

3.2.4. Example Business Unit Recovery Status Log

Date	Current status of recovery teams	Backlog of work %	Events that could change current status	Overall assessment of recovery

3.2.5. Example Stakeholder Communications Log

Name of organization	Priority	Communication method	Contact details	Key messages	Owner	Status