



DEARBORN

Brand Story +Guide

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Overview

Destination: Dearborn

In early 2016, the East and West Downtown Dearborn Associations (DDAs) completed a strategic planning framework for Downtown Dearborn. Its key goals were to develop a cohesive main street, Michigan Avenue, as well as to increase the regional destination appeal of Downtown Dearborn. In addition to transforming the city's physical environment, the plan called for developing a brand story for Dearborn that would increase the city's overall appeal and perceived value to residents, business owners, visitors, students and others. The brand development effort for Dearborn commenced in summer 2018. Key brand elements were ready for public introduction by fall 2019.

Guidelines

Thank you for helping tell Dearborn's story

Inside this guide, you'll find the tools, insights and guidance you need to present, share and talk about Dearborn in a consistent, compelling way. Whether you're showcasing Dearborn directly or weaving Dearborn's brand story into another brand's, this is the place to start. These guidelines include essential brand elements that show you how to set Dearborn apart from other cities, on-target messages that drive home Dearborn's appeal, and a visual identity system that will help you bring Dearborn's distinct spirit to life across a full range of communications and experiences.

**“How can we reinvent
ourselves based on what
we already have?”**

Dearborn Brand Visioning Work Session Participant, February 1, 2019



Brand Essentials

Dearborn Brand Essentials: An Overview

The secrets to telling Dearborn's story

Like any good story, the Dearborn brand story builds on a set of essential insights that give it shape, style and consistency. These start with a powerful vision and a clear-cut mission. Think of them as the anchors for everything that follows. From there, our brand core, drivers, positioning and personality serve as the key elements of our communications platform. They do an even more direct job of shaping what our audiences see, read, experience and feel. Additional communications tools follow from them. These include our promise, descriptor and backstory as well as the visual and copy guidelines you're reading right now.



Dearborn Brand Essentials: Vision

What do we want Dearborn to become?

One of the most desirable cities in the United States in which to live.

The vision statement answers the question, “What do we want Dearborn to become?”

Like all good visions, our vision for Dearborn is big and bold. It looks beyond our role in the region to consider our role at the national level. To achieve our vision, we will need to be focused and intent, get behind ambitious initiatives, take a broad-based approach to preserving and enhancing our quality of life, and stay engaged as a community.

When Dearborn residents shared their vision of the future, they talked about a Dearborn that benefits from its strong connections to other places via auto, rail and air. They spoke of a Dearborn of vibrant neighborhoods and lively downtowns – yet also largely free of traffic due to smart mobility solutions. They pictured a Dearborn that is a talent magnet of the first order. They envisioned a Dearborn that provides the kind of diverse, responsive education from kindergarten through college that fosters success in a 21st century economy. And they imagined a Dearborn that is a national and international role model for diversity as a driver of success.

Dearborn Brand Essentials: **Mission**

How will we enable Dearborn to achieve its potential?

By creating an unforgettable image of Dearborn as a cohesive community with next-gen appeal, enriched by walkable public spaces, cultural vitality and innovative retail diversity.

The mission statement answers the question, “How will we enable Dearborn to achieve its potential?”

The Dearborn mission embodies the transformative strategies cited in the Dearborn Strategic Plan.*

**“Downtown Dearborn: Strategic Plan Overview (Draft Highlights 3-10-16)”, available from the East & West Downtown Dearborn District Associations

Brand Platform

Dearborn Brand Platform: Core

Southeast Michigan destination city

The core is the unchanging heart of what the Dearborn brand represents. Every experience, destination or asset identified as “Dearborn” should embody its core.

Destination implies a place worth aspiring to be. *City* implies a population center with a downtown and a wide array of amenities. *Southeast Michigan* establishes Dearborn’s overall geographic, historical, cultural and economic context.

Dearborn Brand Platform: Themes

What makes Dearborn unique?

Brand drivers are powerful, recurring themes or ideas deriving from the brand's core strengths.

Brand drivers help to unify and focus the story we want to tell.

Diversity

Dearborn is a culturally diverse city, and is home to the largest Arab American population in the United States. Dearborn is diverse in other ways, too: Dearborn provides a diverse array of neighborhoods and land use types, from scenic and natural to urban and industrial. Dearborn is also home to a diverse set of retailers and other businesses, and continues to attract and nurture new ones all the time. In addition, Dearborn provides a diverse range of leisure experiences from the cultural to the outdoor recreational.

Innovation

Since Henry Ford's time at least, Dearborn has been a hub of manufacturing innovation. Today, the city is home to innovative businesses of all sizes from startups to global corporations. Dearborn has a strong maker and craft culture that is well supported by the resources and amenities the city provides. Chief among these resources is an excellent school system which, combined with Dearborn's colleges and many informal learning opportunities, helps to ensure a talent pipeline of makers and innovators.

Connectedness

Dearborn affords its residents an opportunity to experience the best of city life while still feeling connected to neighbors and community. Dearborn enjoys strong physical connections to Detroit, to other cities in the region and to the world through its proximity to DTW. As a smart city, Dearborn is also advancing a vision of digital connectivity for everyone.

Dearborn Brand Platform: Positioning

The Perfect Balance

The positioning clearly summarizes what sets Dearborn apart from neighboring towns and cities. Keep in mind that this is an idea, not a slogan. Use it to guide the images you show and the messages you create, but don't use it as an actual piece of copy.

Of all the cities and towns in metro Detroit, Dearborn is the one that delivers a full city experience – without sacrificing a sense of belonging. No other regional city of comparable size has anything like the “big city” mix of cultural, social and economic amenities that Dearborn has. At the same time, Dearborn enjoys strong, well-established community traditions and civic organizations. For people who want to enjoy big-city life without all the hassles, Dearborn is a compelling option.

Dearborn Brand Platform: **Personality**

What's the vibe?

In the way Dearborn expresses itself and the way others perceive it, Dearborn will be smart, down-to-earth, diverse, creative and real.

Smart: forward-looking, enterprising, resourceful

Down-to-earth: neighborly, welcoming, accessible

Diverse: vibrant, varied, inclusive

Creative: expressive, inventive, handy

Real: honest, authentic, genuine

This personality aligns with a city that thinks about how it will lead in providing services and a good quality of life tomorrow as well as today; a city that attracts a growing class of enterprising, can-do individuals; a city that prides itself on a sense of community; and a city that values the authentic character it has developed over time.

This personality is both rich and consistent. It also sets Dearborn apart from other cities in the region.

These qualities combine to make Dearborn distinctive, interesting and ultimately hard to forget.

Dearborn Brand Platform: **Personality**

Smart

forward-looking, enterprising, resourceful

- **Looking for new ways to address issues, provide infrastructure and services**
- **Interested in applying new technologies, processes and ideas**
- **Looking to strengthen physical and social connections with other cities and the world at large**
- **Valuing education and exchange**

“Dearborn is a city that thinks ahead.”

Our smart quality supports the perception of a city that works to keep current as it pursues a progressive vision of the future.

We express our smartness through elegant, precise, economical use of content, as well as an easy way with words, symbols, data and graphic information. We explain things in clear, memorable ways. We distill the complex into the simple.

Because we are smart, here’s what we’re not: close-minded or parochial on one hand; overly technical or “statistics over people” on the other.

Dearborn Brand Platform: **Personality**

Down-to-Earth

**neighborly,
welcoming,
accessible**

- **Helpful and friendly to newcomers and outsiders**
- **Willing to share resources, ideas and information**
- **Inviting participation**
- **Easy to do business with [aspirational]**

"It doesn't matter who I am: Here, I feel relaxed and at home."

Our down-to-earth quality supports the perception of a city where individuals and their institutions tend to favor practical-mindedness over pretense, laying the foundation for a place where promise and potential can be fulfilled.

We express our down-to-earth nature by avoiding gimmicks and hyperbole and choosing images that feel grounded in the real world, not contrived or digitally manipulated. Our visual and verbal expression is well crafted and unpretentious.

Because we are down to earth, here's what we're not: shallow, lofty or pretentious on one hand; self-effacing or apologetic on the other.

Dearborn Brand Platform: **Personality**

Diverse

**vibrant,
varied,
inclusive**

- **Bringing together people of different ethnicities, viewpoints and backgrounds**
- **Offering a broad range of experiences**
- **Providing a broad range of physical environments from the natural to the urbanized**
- **Providing a stimulating and energizing social life day and night [aspirational]**

“Dearborn exposes me to a wide range of voices, tastes, viewpoints and cultures.”

Our diverse character supports the perception of a small city with a range of experiences and amenities typically found in a much larger city.

We express our diverse character through using and sharing wide-ranging subject matter, content and stylistic approaches. We like variation in form and content, and we take an inclusive approach to the voices and images we present.

Because we’re diverse, here’s what we’re not: homogenous, unvaried or monochrome on one hand; disconnected, random or mixed up on the other.

Dearborn Brand Platform: **Personality**

Creative

**expressive,
inventive,
handy**

- **Coming up with new ways to do things**
- **Valuing artistic expression**
- **Interested in making things**
- **Taking an interest in culture**

"Dearborn is a good place to get your hands dirty."

Our creative nature supports the perception of a city that attracts artists, creators and doers, and of a city that is willing to imagine bold concepts and initiatives for enhancing the quality of life it offers.

We express our creative nature through fresh language, expression and composition as well as a lively, unexpected use of materials and content. We prefer originality over imitation.

Because we're creative, here's what we're not: uninspired, dull or expected on one hand; undisciplined, madcap or "whatever sticks to the wall" on the other.

Dearborn Brand Platform: **Personality**

Real

**honest,
authentic,
genuine**

- **Comfortable with who and what one is**
- **Straightforward and direct in manner**
- **Credible with facts and information**

“Dearborn doesn’t pretend to be something it's not.”

Our quality of being real supports the perception of a city that values its people, assets, institutions and traditions for who and what they are. We don’t look elsewhere for role models.

We express our realness through photography taken in natural light and a documentary approach to content. We also look for colors and visual elements grounded in Dearborn’s architecture, physical settings and natural environment. Of course, we use real people versus models.

Because we’re real, here’s what we’re not: fake, themed or processed on one hand; grimy or raw on the other.

Dearborn Brand Platform: **Archetype**

Hands-on Creator

For our purposes, an archetype is a description of the brand as if it were a person.

The archetype is a useful shorthand tool for quickly and confidently adopting a consistent, on-target tone in brand communications.

The Dearborn archetype is informed by our five personality attributes. Together, these attributes correspond most closely to the archetype of the Hands-on Creator.

Our archetype is expressed by historical Dearborn figures such as Henry Ford, brands such as Carhartt and Ford, and businesses such as The Glass Academy, among many others.

This archetype aligns strongly with the Innovation brand driver.

Credo of the Hands-on Creator:

I find meaning and value in making things.

I like to get my hands dirty.

I show patience and perseverance in the face of adversity.

I like real people, places and experiences.

I have a restless imagination.

I appreciate a job well done.

I like to master new skills.

Dearborn Brand Platform: **Promise**

**Cosmopolitan meets
community: Access
all the amenities of
big city life – without
sacrificing a sense
of belonging.**

Our promise is the greatest value we can offer to our overall audience.

Our promise appeals specifically to next-gen individuals who don't want to sacrifice sophistication and choice for a more family- or community-oriented life. Our promise extends an invitation to explore further.

Dearborn Brand Platform: Tagline

What, no tagline?

That's right.

Dearborn has a rich, complex story to tell and a diverse community of people with whom to interact. We don't want to see all of this trivialized by a tagline that never changes. That said, we're excited by the prospect of exciting headlines and calls to action that bring Dearborn to life in creative campaigns to come.



Brand Messaging

Dearborn Brand Messaging: Framework

Let's get our story in sync

Use this framework of messages to bring consistency and power to your communications. Messaging extends from the overall Dearborn brand promise to key themes and supporting proof points. Remember to consider your specific communications goals together with your audience's priorities to adapt this messaging to copy.

Dearborn Brand Messaging: Topline

Messaging begins with brand basics

Do the elements on this page look familiar? They should.

For the most part, they're the cornerstones of our communications platform detailed in the previous section of this guide.

All of our public-facing messages build on these brand elements – though only the promise, descriptor and elevator description are recommended for use as public-facing messages in their own right. (Think of the others as behind-the-scenes tools that the public typically doesn't see.)

PUBLIC-FACING MESSAGES

Promise

Cosmopolitan meets community

Access all the amenities of big-city life – without sacrificing a sense of belonging.

Descriptor

A Southeast Michigan city defined by talent, drive and diversity.

Elevator Description

Right next to Detroit, Dearborn is a city of a 100,000 people that provides an array of amenities you might find in a much larger city and a sense of belonging you might find in a much smaller one.

BEHIND-THE-SCENES TOOLS

Core

Destination city in Southeast Michigan

Positioning

The Perfect Balance

Of all the cities and towns in metro Detroit, Dearborn is the one that delivers a full city experience – without sacrificing a sense of belonging.

Themes

Diversity, Innovation, Connectedness

Vision

To be one of the most desirable cities in the United States in which to live.

Mission

Create an unforgettable image of Dearborn as a cohesive community with next-gen appeal, enriched by walkable public spaces, cultural vitality and innovative retail diversity.

Dearborn Brand Messaging: Themes

Diversity

From people to places to experiences, Dearborn offers the diversity of a city several times its size.

Cultural Diversity

Destination implies a place worthy of aspiring to be. *City* implies a population center with a downtown and a wide array of amenities. *Southeast Michigan* establishes Dearborn's overall geographic, historical, cultural and economic context.

Retail and Business Diversity

Dearborn is a place to discover distinctive businesses that provide a mix of products and experiences you won't find anywhere else in the region.

Dining Diversity

From signature American foods done to perfection to the finest, most varied Middle Eastern cuisine in America – and lots of surprises in between – Dearborn's list of craveable food experiences is long.

Diverse Things to Experience

From world-class museums and an array of cultural offerings to green, scenic spaces where you can bike, hike and kayak, Dearborn offers plenty of ways to live richly. From charming neighborhoods and walkable downtowns to a civic center filled with amenities, Dearborn has the power to be downright diverting.

Diverse Setting

With its two-plus centuries of history, tradition of industry, contributions from many cultures and fine outdoor settings beginning with the scenic, restored Rouge River, Dearborn's character is anything but cookie-cutter.

Dearborn Brand Messaging: Themes

Hands-on Innovation

From Henry Ford to today and beyond, Dearborn has been a magnet for people who want to do something different and make their ideas happen.

Manufacturing, Product and Service Innovation

From automobiles and fashion to health care, education and culture, Dearborn is a place where new ideas go from the drawing board to the real world and catch on.

Innovative Businesses of All Kinds and Sizes

Dearborn is a place where people with business vision set up shop and find what they need to succeed from there.

Craft and Maker Innovation

From beer to bread, glassware to fishing lures and sculpture to dance, Dearborn is a place where artists, artisans and makers of all kinds feel right at home.

Pipeline of Innovation Talent

From kindergarten to college, Dearborn's superb schools produce talented young people who go on to meaningful careers, making a difference in many fields.

Dearborn Brand Messaging: Themes

Connectedness

Dearborn is the place to feel and be connected – to the rest of the world, to Detroit and the region and to the people around you.

In Touch With Detroit

In Dearborn, you're literally next door to Detroit and all that it offers. From Dearborn, it's easy to keep on top of every new thing that goes live in The D.

In Touch With the World

With the region's best air, rail and highway connections, Dearborn keeps the rest of the world within easy reach.

A Sense of Community

With all its amenities and variety, in Dearborn it's still easy to feel like you fit right in. Want to be friends with the neighbors, get connected through community networks and feel like more than just a number in line at city hall? In Dearborn, it's easy.

Dearborn Brand Messaging: Backstory

One cohesive voice

The Dearborn backstory brings together all of the elements of the Dearborn communications platform into a single, cohesive whole. Use it as a reference tool to gain a complete, overarching perspective on the Dearborn brand and the way we present it. You can also mine it for ideas and insights to apply to specific Dearborn communications.

Dearborn Brand Messaging: Backstory

Make your mark

Unmet Need

For some, city life is the ultimate draw. They find energy and inspiration in its constant activity, varied tastes and fresh ideas as well as its lively arts, culture and social scenes. For others, small towns are the setting of choice. With a slower pace and open spaces, they offer room to breathe, a chance to relax, a sense of belonging.

Positioning

And then there are those who won't settle for either – the ones who literally want it all. Sure, they could do without all the high costs, tight spaces and sense of getting lost in the crowd, but they don't want to sacrifice all the options that city living makes possible. At the same time, they feel drawn to a small town's welcome and warmth – just not the sense that they've settled for somewhere far from the action.

Descriptor

Elevator Description

Across the 2,000 square miles that make up metro Detroit, is there a place that delivers? A place that can satisfy an individual's shared love of opportunity and community? A true city, not a town – but one that stops short of being a full-on metropolis?

Discovery Brand Positioning

Turns out there is a scaled-down-yet-still-urban destination defined by talent, drive and diversity. Right next to Detroit, Dearborn's 100,000 people enjoy an array of amenities you'd expect of a much larger city together with a sense of belonging that harkens to somewhere smaller. For those in the know, Dearborn's nothing new: Detroit's next-door neighbor has perfected its role over the course of decades. And today, it's better and more distinctive than ever.

Diversity Theme

With its two-plus centuries of history, tradition of industry, contributions from many cultures and fine outdoor settings beginning with the scenic, restored Rouge River, Dearborn's character is anything but cookie-cutter. Here, proud contributions from the city's Arab American communities share the spotlight with iconic, homegrown institutions such as Carhartt and Ford. In Dearborn, you'll find products and experiences you simply won't come across anywhere else in the region. Take food for starters: From American staples done to perfection to the finest, most varied Middle Eastern cuisine in America – and lots of surprises in between – Dearborn's list of craveable experiences is long.

Diversity Theme

Dearborn Brand Messaging: Backstory

Diversity Theme

Dearborn offers no shortage of other ways to live richly, too – from world-class museums and an array of cultural offerings to green, scenic spaces where you can bike, hike and kayak, from charming neighborhoods and walkable downtowns to a civic center filled with world-class amenities.

Hands-on Innovation Theme

Since the day Henry Ford first decided to live, work and build his game-changing production plant here, Dearborn has been a magnet for people who want to do something different and make their ideas happen. From automobiles and fashion to health care, education and culture, Dearborn is a place where new ideas go from the drawing board to the real world and catch on from there.

Hands-on Innovation Theme

Today, enterprising individuals find what they need to succeed in Dearborn at a pace that has never let up. They're creating everything from beer to bread, glassware to fishing lures, sculpture to dance and beyond. The city's superb schools, extending from kindergarten to college, help to insure that Dearborn will continue to nurture not just ideas but talent – for the city and region as well as the world at large.

Connectedness Theme

In Dearborn, the feeling of being connected thrives at every level. Want to keep up with what's new in The D? In Dearborn, Detroit's right at your fingertips. Want to keep the rest of the world within easy reach? With the region's best air, rail and highway connections, that's easy, too. Yet for all the reach it extends, in Dearborn it's every bit as easy to feel like you fit right in. Want to be friends with the neighbors, get connected through community networks and feel like more than just a number in line at city hall? In Dearborn, that might just be easiest of all.

Keep your cosmopolitan outlook. Cherish your community traditions. If that's the balance you're after as you set out to make your mark in the world, then Dearborn is where you'll find it.

Dearborn Brand Messaging: The Districts

East Downtown

Community-minded, creative and multicultural, Downtown East Dearborn is centered on several diverting, walkable blocks of Michigan Avenue extending both east and west from the Smithsonian-affiliated Arab American National Museum and the nationally recognized City Hall Artspace Lofts across the street. With art showings, galleries and events in City Hall Park such as each summer's free Jazz on the Ave concert series, Downtown East Dearborn's vision of arts and culture is catching on. At the same time, century-old storefronts are advertising a lively array of new shops and restaurants, and nearby neighborhoods create a feeling of close-knit accessibility for families of all ages and backgrounds. Ongoing improvements to Michigan Avenue between Dearborn and Detroit make Downtown East Dearborn a great place to keep tabs on all that's happening down the street in The D.

West Downtown

In West Downtown Dearborn, historic charm meets the buzz of new restaurant and entertainment venues, gracious homes meet cosmopolitan lofts and condos, and new retail and office spaces add to the energizing mix. Just blocks from the activity of Michigan Avenue, parks and tree-lined streets as well as a scenic stretch of the Rouge River take the pace from revitalized to relaxing. A compact yet full-service downtown for all seasons, West Downtown Dearborn affords plenty of reasons to play, stay or announce a change of address. Year-round events include music concerts, family activities and food festivals. The summer's popular Dearborn Farmers and Artisans Market brings people together in the community while promoting healthy living and supporting local farmers and entrepreneurs. At the east end of West Downtown Dearborn, the new John D. Dingell Transit Center connects intercity Amtrak service with multiple bus, shuttle and taxi services, Detroit Metro Airport and the non-motorized pedestrian network. The center is poised to serve proposed future developments including high-speed intercity service between Detroit and Chicago, and a commuter line connecting Ann Arbor and Detroit. In Dearborn, it's easy to feel connected in every sense of the word.

Dearborn Brand Messaging: The Districts

Civic District

Connecting Dearborn's pedestrian-friendly East and West Downtowns, the Civic District gathers together many of the destinations that anchor the city's civic and cultural life. The Civic District is home to the Ford Community & Performing Arts Center, the iconic Henry Ford Centennial Library, the Dearborn Administrative Center (Dearborn's new "City Hall"), Dearborn Police Headquarters and other public service facilities. Together, they contribute to the clear impression of Dearborn as a place providing big-city amenities within a small, vibrant package. The Civic District is also home to the sleek, minimalist, 12-story Ford World Headquarters, popularly known as the Glass House, and its expanse of sunflowers that welcome passersby on Michigan Avenue.

Innovation District

Three hubs of world-class innovation anchor Dearborn's Innovation District along a stretch of Oakwood Boulevard between the Southfield Freeway and Downtown West Dearborn at Michigan Avenue. Beaumont Hospital is a major teaching and research hospital recognized for innovation in the fields of orthopedics, neurosciences and women's health as well as heart, vascular and cancer care. The Henry Ford, Michigan's most popular tourism destination, features venues that celebrate America's traditions of ingenuity, innovation and resourcefulness including Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation, Greenfield Village and the Ford Rouge Factory Tour. Across Oakwood Boulevard from The Henry Ford, Ford Motor Company is transforming its Research & Engineering Center into a flexible, high-tech environment showcasing new mobility solutions such as electric bikes, scooters and shuttles. The new facility will help Ford speed product and technology innovation and attract world-class talent.

MoCa

This cozy business district in southwest Dearborn, centered on the intersection of Monroe and Carlisle Streets, is home to a growing number of creative service businesses. Here, you'll find a distinctive range of offerings from woodworking and high-end digital art prints to state-of-the-art aesthetics and beauty care, all located steps from the Black Box Gallery, an art gallery and cafe that serves as the district's main social hub. Plentiful bike paths, nearby parks and signature events, such as the annual St. Sebastian Festival and Monroe Street Roll, help to make MoCa the anchor of a superbly livable community.

Dearborn Brand Messaging: The Districts

Souk

Throughout the Arab world, *souk* means “marketplace,” and the word is a fitting name for the Dearborn business district centered on Warren Avenue and Schaefer Road. Frequented by locals of all backgrounds, Souk is a magnet for Arab Americans and others from throughout the region and beyond who are attracted to the range and quality of the foods, specialty goods and services it offers. The unique, Middle East-inspired storefronts, signage and furnishings along the district’s main thoroughfares lend Souk an unmistakable character. Beyond shopping, Souk is a superb place to pass pleasant hours, day and night, in conversation in the district’s many authentic restaurants, bakeries, cafes and hookah lounges.

South End

Also known as the Dix-Vernor Avenue corridor, the South End pulses with the feel of making something new. The South End has developed a distinct sense of community and a welcoming neighborhood character where family building and an enterprising spirit come together. Its buildings and businesses reflect signs of the successive waves of immigrants, beginning in the 1920s, who made this district the place where they first set down roots. Today, the South End is home to many Arab American families, including a large Yemeni American community, families who have added their own cultural richness to the community’s layered history – along with sought-after places to shop and eat.

University-Fairlane

In Dearborn’s University-Fairlane District, higher learning, natural environments and an evolving mixed-use community come together in pleasing harmony. The University of Michigan-Dearborn, together with the nearby two-year Henry Ford College, make Dearborn a prestigious magnet for some of the region’s finest academics. Nearby, Fairlane Town Center, a major regional shopping, dining and entertainment hub, is preparing for a new generation of residential and office residents and a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly way of life. Ever present, more than 70 acres of preserved natural areas in and around the restored River Rouge make a pleasing setting for study, strolling, cycling or a visit to Henry Ford’s original estate.

Dearborn Brand Messaging: The Districts

Downtown Dearborn

Cosmopolitan and connected, community-minded and creative, Downtown Dearborn brings all of Dearborn's energy and diversity into high relief. Centered on Michigan Avenue, Downtown Dearborn extends from its shared boundary with Detroit on the east to Telegraph Avenue on the west. Its pleasing, highly walkable clusters of century-old storefronts combine with new retail and office spaces to provide an array of shopping, dining and entertaining options with year-round appeal. Centered on the Smithsonian-affiliated Arab American National Museum and the nationally-recognized Artspace Lofts, Downtown Dearborn's vision of arts and culture is catching on. Underscored by the newly developed, mixed-use Wagner Place, which preserves the facade of the 120-year old Wagner Hotel, Downtown Dearborn has become a vibrant place for customers, residents and employees alike. Year-round events include jazz concerts, art walks and food festivals. The summer's popular Dearborn Farmers and Artisans Market brings people together in the community while promoting healthy living and supporting local farmers and entrepreneurs. The new John D. Dingell Transit Center connects intercity Amtrak service with multiple bus, shuttle, and taxi services, Detroit Metro Airport, and the non-motorized pedestrian network. Filled with experiences to discover and new favorites to make, Dearborn affords plenty of reasons to play, stay, or announce a change of address.

Brand Voice

Dearborn Brand Voice: Overview

Coming across in copy

A brand's voice is its style and tone in writing. A good brand voice expresses the brand's personality and complements its visual style. The Dearborn brand voice is grounded in the smart, down-to-earth, diverse, creative and real way we express ourselves generally.

Dearborn Brand Voice: Smart

Smart

When we talk about our smart quality, we're talking about a city that makes smart decisions about its future and about the resources it makes available to those who live and work here. We're also talking about a city that brings together smart, enterprising individuals and organizations to accomplish great things individually and together.

In writing, this dimension of our personality comes across in a number of ways. It comes across as a superb command of information. And it comes across in the tight, well-reasoned structures that underlie all of our communications.

COMING ACROSS AS SMART

Example

"Talent is the golden word here in Dearborn. We are home to almost 100,000 residents. We have almost 50,000 people who commute in daily to work here. And 30,000 students who are attending two higher-education facilities, UM-Dearborn and Henry Ford College."

Comment

Sometimes, a telling fact or two can do the work of much lengthier blocks of copy. The specifics in this simple statement do an efficient, convincing job of communicating that Dearborn is at a significant pace with dynamic business activity and a solid higher-ed foundation.

Dearborn Brand Voice: Down-to-Earth

Down-to-Earth

When we talk about our down-to-earth aspect, we're talking about a practical-minded and unpretentious spirit that goes hand in hand with being a city filled with makers and doers. We also think of the pleasing sense of order, care and harmony that define so many of our neighborhoods and public spaces.

In writing, this dimension of our personality comes across in a number of ways, starting with a sense of craft and an eye for detail. We enjoy a good turn of phrase, but not writing that is showy or filled with hyperbole.

COMING ACROSS AS DOWN-TO-EARTH

Example

"Keep your cosmopolitan outlook. And cherish your community traditions. If that's the balance you're after as you set out to make your mark in the world, then Dearborn is where you'll find it."

Comment

The promise this statement makes is bold but the language doesn't feel hyped. A keen sense of rhythm helps keep things lively; the actual choice of wording is straightforward and sensible.

Dearborn Brand Voice: Diverse

Diverse

When we talk about the quality of being diverse, we're talking about the wide range of people, experiences and amenities we offer – and how that underlying richness comes across in the content we share.

In writing, this quality comes across most directly in the inclusive approach we take to the examples we share and the viewpoints we introduce.

COMING ACROSS AS DIVERSE

Example

"From world-class museums to green, scenic spaces where you can bike, hike and kayak. From charming neighborhoods to not one but two diverting downtowns. From the juiciest burgers to the flakiest sabayas. And we're just getting started."

Comment

Here, we convey not only diversity by presenting a sequence of short, artful contrasts but also by introducing a food item – sabayas (a popular type of Yemeni pastry) – that telegraphs the cultural and dining diversity you'll find here, too.

Dearborn Brand Voice: Creative

Creative

When we talk about our creative side, we're talking about all of the bright ideas and bold initiatives that our vibrant community of artists, entrepreneurs, makers, doers and others is continuously generating. These support memorable experiences and a rich, fulfilling quality of life.

In writing, this dimension of our personality comes across as fresh language that can include unexpected and memorable turns of phrase. In our written expressions, we prefer originality over imitation every time.

COMING ACROSS AS CREATIVE

Example

"Put more urb in your burb."

Comment

This headline is a quick, fresh, effortlessly lively way to convey our Perfect Balance positioning, which sets up a compelling story of "a city where you can find all the big city amenities you want – and still enjoy a sense of belonging, too."

Dearborn Brand Voice: Real

Real

When we talk about our real side, we're talking about the fact that we celebrate the authentic quality of our people, assets, institutions and traditions for what they are. We don't need to dress them up or downplay them. They're exciting and interesting and worthwhile in their own right.

As with our down-to-earth dimension, our real quality leads us to write in a way that is honest and direct. Where we can, we include the actual voices of Dearborn residents and business owners.

COMING ACROSS AS REAL

Example

"Beer to bread. Glassware to activewear. Paintings to podcasts. Fishing lures to F-150s. Dearborn's makers big and small are in on the insight: This is a place where ideas go from the drawing board to the real world. And then take off from there."

Comment

The power of this simple statement comes from the litany of interesting goods and cultural products that come from Dearborn. The references feel not only specific but also authentic to Dearborn.

Dearborn Brand Voice: Translation Policy

Make sure our message translates

Given the large percentage of Arab Americans who call Dearborn home, we make a concerted effort to translate key communications and promotional copy originally written in English into Arabic.

While Google Translate does a good job of rendering certain languages, it is less successful with Arabic. Some readers of Arabic find Google machine translations awkward and unnatural. Wherever practicable, allow time for a professional translator whose native language is Arabic and who has a background writing marketing copy in Arabic.

For translated communications to be as effective as possible, consider not only the copy implications of Arabic but also its visual aspects: The same text in Arabic will generally require more space than its English-language counterpart. In addition, conventional ways of laying out Arabic text tend to give it a much more open feeling on the page than English language text. Where practicable, engage a graphic designer experienced working natively in Arabic to consult on layout issues. This will help ensure both sensitivity and impact.

Of course, if you are promoting an initiative or event that is targeted to a different group of native language speakers, please take appropriate steps to translate documents into the relevant language(s) in such situations, too.

When providing a telephone number for contact information or details in Arabic, please be sure an Arabic speaker is available to answer.



Visual Language

Visual Language: Dearborn Logo

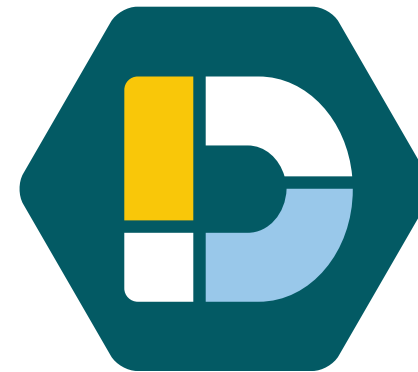
Expressing the spirit of Dearborn

Why does the logo matter?

The logo is the single most recognizable icon we use to represent Dearborn – it immediately identifies us. It also tells people that the communication or object they're looking at is informed by the standards, ideals and values of Dearborn.

The Dearborn logo consists of the mark and logotype. Varied shapes representing rich mosaics, vibrant neighborhoods, lively downtowns and diversity come together to create a united and connected logo mark. The hexagon shape is inspired by both the beehive, symbolizing community, and nuts and bolts supporting the theme of hands-on innovation. Rounded corners convey friendliness and approachability, much like the personality of Dearborn.

Using the logo clearly and consistently reinforces the Dearborn brand. The following pages outline usage rules. Position, size and color, along with the spatial and proportional relationships of the Dearborn logo elements, are predetermined and should not be altered.



DEARBORN



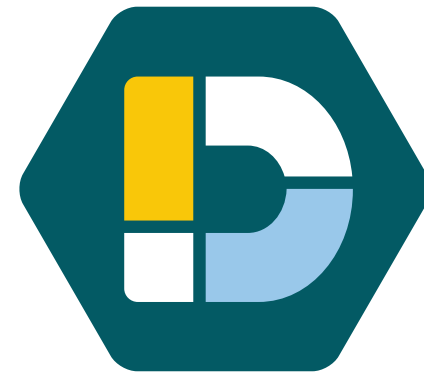
DEARBORN

Visual Language: How to Use the Logo

Choosing the right version for the right application

These signature elements of the Dearborn logo are the mark and the logotype and must be used together as the complete logo. Position, size and color, along with the spatial and proportional relationships of the Dearborn logo elements, are predetermined and should not be altered.

Use the logo to visually brand all Dearborn communications. This page shows two configurations, horizontal and vertical, of the basic logo. Together, they satisfy a wide range of needs. Choose the configuration that allows the greatest visibility in your application. Examples throughout this guide illustrate proper use.



DEARBORN

VERTICAL



DEARBORN

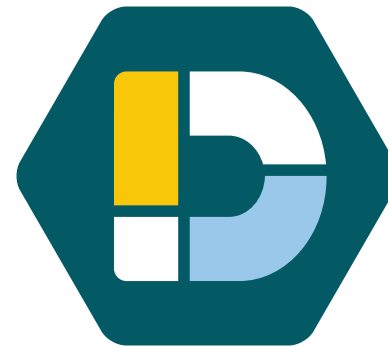
HORIZONTAL

Visual Language: Alternate Logo

Presenting a cohesive downtown

There are times when it is important to highlight a cohesive downtown. A Downtown logo is available for when you want to reference both downtowns overall. Horizontal and vertical Downtown options are shown to the right.

Never recreate the Downtown logo using another font or point size than what is provided.



DEARBORN
Downtown



DEARBORN
Downtown

Visual Language: District Logos

The vibrant and varied districts of Dearborn

There are times when one district will need to be represented, such as on light post banners within the district or in sponsorship materials. The horizontal and vertical district logos are shown to the right.

Never recreate the district logos using another font or point size than what is provided in the district logo set. Each district has its own color and it cannot be changed.



DEARBORN
East Downtown



DEARBORN
West Downtown



DEARBORN
Civic District



DEARBORN
Innovation District



DEARBORN
MoCa



DEARBORN
Souk



DEARBORN
South End



DEARBORN
University-Fairlane



DEARBORN
East Downtown



DEARBORN
MoCa



DEARBORN
West Downtown



DEARBORN
Souk



DEARBORN
Civic District



DEARBORN
South End



DEARBORN
Innovation District



DEARBORN
University-Fairlane

Visual Language: District Logos

The mosaic of our community

There are times when multiple districts will need to be represented in marketing materials. When using multiple district names locked up with the logo, use one color (dark blue or white) as shown on the right. The horizontal logo is the only version that can be used with this.

If the brand font, Avenir Next Black (see Page 56) is not available, you can download and use the Alternate font Nunito Sans Black (see Page 57). Please use the examples on the right as guides for how big the type should be and where to place it.



DEARBORN

East Downtown / West Downtown
Civic District / Innovation District / MoCa
Souk / South End / University-Fairlane

ALL DISTRICT
LOCKUP

AVENIR NEXT BOLD / LETTERSPACING: 15
NUNITO SANS BLACK / LETTERSPACING: 25

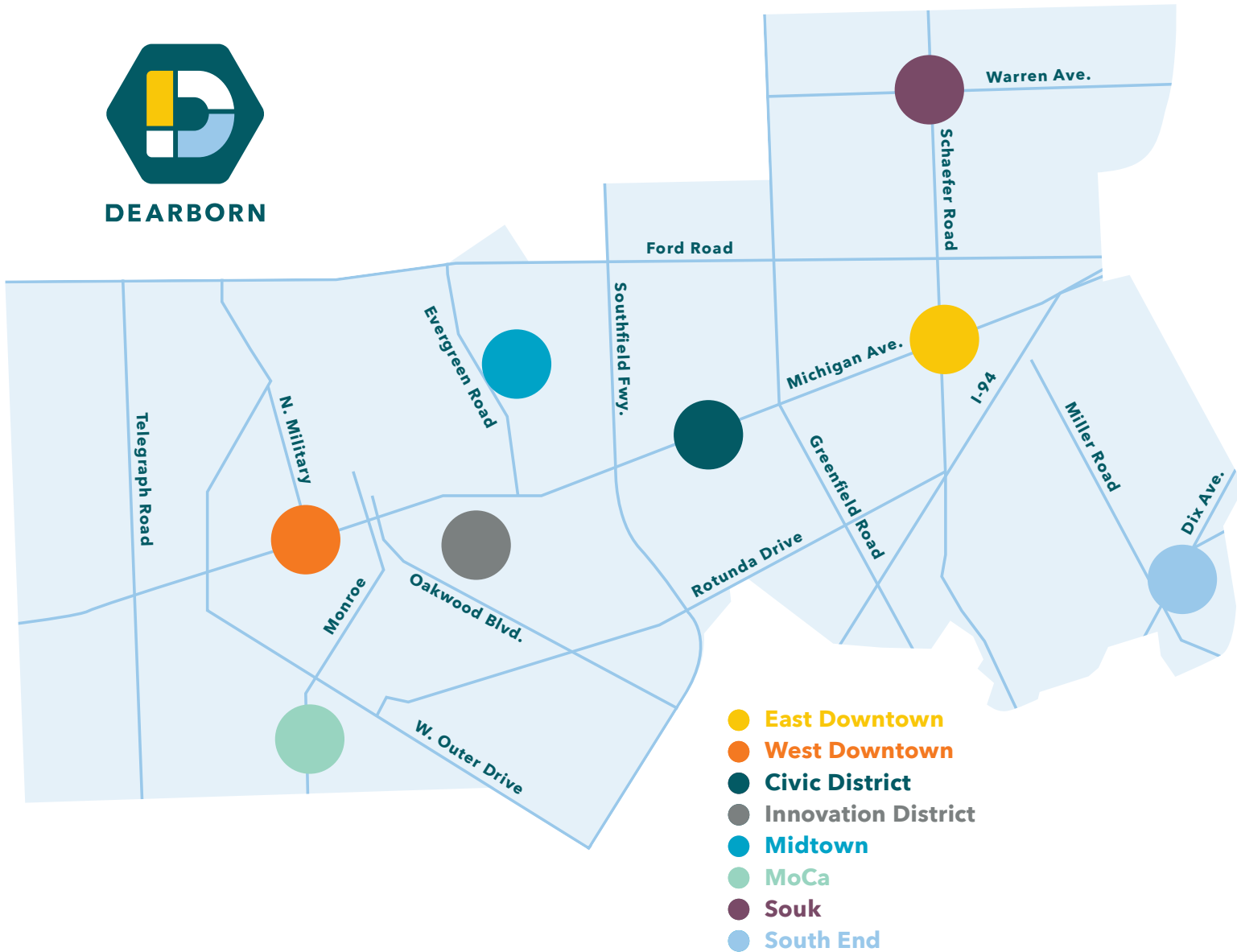


DEARBORN

East Downtown / West Downtown

EXAMPLE OF
TWO DISTRICTS
IN LOCKUP

Visual Language: District Map



Visual Language: Logo + One-Color Variations

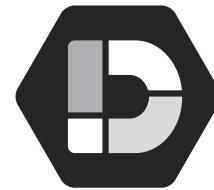
Sometimes less is more

When full color isn't an option, the grayscale version of the Dearborn logo should be used.

Use the one-color option for embroidery and silkscreen applications.

The reversed logo should only be used on PMS 5473 (Dearborn Blue) or on a suitable contrasting photograph where the logo would otherwise be unreadable.

GRAYSCALE LOGO



DEARBORN



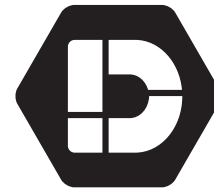
REVERSED LOGO



DEARBORN



BLACK LOGO



DEARBORN



Visual Language: Logo + Clear Space

Helping to ensure visibility

Readability matters.

Give every version of the Dearborn logo the space it needs to ensure visibility. A crowded logo is illegible and reflects poorly on our brand. Apply the rules shown in these examples.



VERTICAL: The amount of clear space should be equal to or greater than the height of one and a half "O's" in Dearborn.



HORIZONTAL: The amount of clear space should be equal to or greater than the height of one "O" in Dearborn.

Visual Language: Logo + Minimum Sizes

How big is too big (or too small)?

To maintain full legibility, never reproduce the vertical logo at a height smaller than .5" (for print) or 2" in width for the horizontal logo. In addition, never reproduce the vertical logo smaller than 54 pixels (for screen) and the horizontal logo smaller than 186 pixels. There is no maximum size limit, but use discretion when sizing the logo. It should never be the most dominant element on the page, but instead should feel natural and be seen as a clear identifying mark. If there is an instance where the logos must be smaller than the minimum sizes, use your best judgement. Is it readable? Will it be lost on the page? Keep the integrity of the logo in mind.



**MINIMUM
HEIGHT FOR
VERTICAL LOGO**



**MINIMUM WIDTH FOR
HORIZONTAL LOGO**

Visual Language: Logo + Misuse

When in doubt, don't

When using the Dearborn logo, make sure not to alter, distort or modify it in any way that would compromise its consistency. It's important to make the brand as recognizable as possible.



Do not change the transparency of the logo.



Do not change the color combinations.



Do not use drop shadows or other effects.



Do not change the size of the logo and Dearborn logotype in relation to each other.



Do not recreate the logo with a different typeface.



Do not outline the logo.



Do not distort the logo in any direction.



Do not rotate the logo on an angle.

Visual Language: Color Palette

Painting the brand

The color palette is rich and vibrant, reinforcing the persona of a welcoming, creative city. Eight solid colors are available for use.

Using the Dearborn brand color palette

While there are a variety of colors to choose from in the palette, try to use only a few at the same time. A good rule of thumb is usually no more than three at once. Try and choose colors that complement the photography it is being used with.

To ensure accurate color matching and pleasing results, please use the PMS, CMYK and web specifications in this guide. Avoid using other colors outside of the palette or creating tints of these colors.



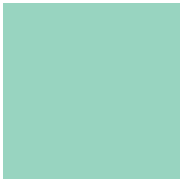
DEARBORN BLUE
PMS 5473
CMYK 86/20/32/51
RGB 17/94/103
HEX #115E67



ROUGE RIVER BLUE
PMS 632
CMYK 93/2/15/7
RGB 0/147/178
HEX #0093B2



SKY BLUE
PMS 543
CMYK 37/9/0/1
RGB 164/200/225
HEX #A4C8E1



PARKS GREEN
PMS 352
CMYK 40/0/30/0
RGB 143/226/176
HEX #8FE2B0



SUNFLOWER GOLD
PMS 7406
CMYK 0/20/100/2
RGB 241/196/0
HEX #F1C400



SUNSET ORANGE
PMS ORANGE 21
CMYK 0/65/100/0
RGB 254/80/0
HEX #FE5000



HEARTH RED
PMS 2056
CMYK 47/74/34/23
RGB 126/73/102
HEX #7E4966



MAKER GRAY
PMS 423
CMYK 22/14/18/45
RGB 137/141/141
HEX #898D8D

Visual Language: Logo on Colored Backgrounds

Making contrast your friend

You may use Dearborn logos on top of four solid colors found in our palette and to the right. The darker colors do not have enough contrast and are not acceptable to use. The only dark color acceptable is PMS 5473 (Dearborn Blue) with the reversed version of the logo.



Visual Language: Logo on Photography

Contrast is best

The full-color logo will not perform well on photography and various background colors. In those cases, the one-color reversed logo should be used.

When using the logo on a photographic background, do not display the logo over areas of strong contrast. When selecting photography, choose photos with areas of minimal detail to display the logo.

Follow the clear space rules on page 52 to ensure that no competing imagery is in the vicinity of the logo.

APPROVED



UNACCEPTABLE



Visual Language: Primary Typography

For type's sake

Specific typefaces have been selected to represent the Dearborn brand: Avenir Next Bold, Avenir Next Medium and Zilla Slab Bold. Avenir means “future” in French. This font has a harmonious and sensible appearance for texts and headlines. Zilla Slab Bold is a serif typeface that adds a personable, down-to-earth and welcoming feel to the brand.

For headlines, titles or content that requires emphasis, Avenir Next Bold should be used. Set the letterspacing to 15 and be sure to kern between letters that are not equally spaced to ensure they are visually consistent.

For decks and subheads, Zilla Slab Bold adds a nice, welcoming contrast. Set letterspacing at 20.

For body copy, Avenir Next Medium should be used with letterspacing set at 15.

HEADLINES: Avenir Next Bold / Letterspacing: 15

Avenir Next Bold is a strong and legible font.

DECKS + SUBHEADS: Zilla Slab Bold / Letterspacing: 20

Zilla Slab Bold adds a personable, welcoming and down-to-earth feel to the brand.

This is a Google font and can be downloaded
from fonts.google.com/specimen/Zilla+Slab

BODY COPY: Avenir Next Medium / Letterspacing: 15

Avenir Next Medium is a strong and legible font.

Visual Language: Alternate Typography

For type's sake

Alternate typography has been selected for when brand fonts are not available.

For headlines, titles or content that require emphasis, Nunito Sans Black should be used with a letterspacing of 25. We also recommend kerning headlines to create visually appealing and consistent spacing between characters.

For body copy, Nunito Sans Regular should be used with a letterspacing of 25.

HEADLINES: Nunito Sans Black / Letterspacing: 25

**Nunito Sans Black
is a close match
to Avenir.**

This is a Google font and can be downloaded
from fonts.google.com/specimen/Nunito+Sans

BODY COPY: Nunito Sans Regular / Letterspacing: 25

Nunito Sans Regular is a close match to Avenir.

This is a Google font and can be downloaded
from fonts.google.com/specimen/Nunito+Sans

Visual Language: Photography

A window into Dearborn

The photos we use tell a visual narrative of our city and are one of the most powerful ways to communicate.

Assigning photographers and choosing the right images

When choosing a photographer, it's important to find one that has the right style – documentary, lifestyle, using soft focus and natural light.

Photographing authentic people and environments represents real people and moments and gives a natural feel rather than staged. Show diversity through natural environments.

Think of the brand personality when selecting photos. Smart, down-to-earth, diverse, creative, real. Keep in mind Dearborn's themes: Diversity, Innovation and Connectedness. Look for vibrant colors indicative of the color palette, show action and interaction, show unexpected juxtapositions in your layouts and group photos that work well together. Be sure to have a focal point – a busy photo doesn't convey a clear message. The subject matter should be clear in communicating the message of the creative.



Visual Language: Iconography

Connecting the brand

The icon set enhances the Dearborn personality: smart, down-to-earth, diverse, creative, real. It is inspired by the city's culture, environment and values. Through varied subject and colors, we represent diversity in people and a range of experiences and environments in the community. The brand will have the opportunity to evolve and stay fresh by adding new icons to the library and changing combinations as needed based on application.

Icons should always be scaled up or down the same amount relative to each other. For example, if you choose to use the flower and gear together, scale both to 150 percent. The gear cannot be bigger. This will ensure the line weight will stay consistent across the icon set.

When using the icons, make sure not to alter, distort or modify them in any way that would compromise their consistency.

Please place or copy icons from the vector files provided.



Visual Language: Iconography with Patterns

Adding another dimension

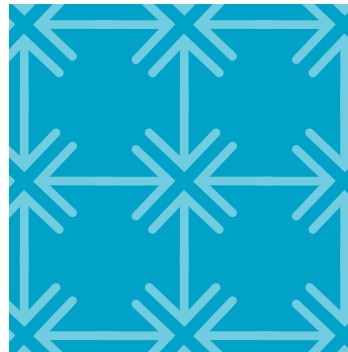
A handful of preselected Dearborn icons have been used to create icon pattern sets as a way to introduce variety within a layout.

We have created a library of pattern sets that include each of the icons to the right combined with all the colors in the brand palette. Please refrain from creating your own patterns and only use the patterns from our library.

Always scale the icon patterns proportionally. This will ensure the line weight will stay consistent across the icon set.

When using patterns, make sure not to alter, distort or modify them in any way that would compromise consistency.

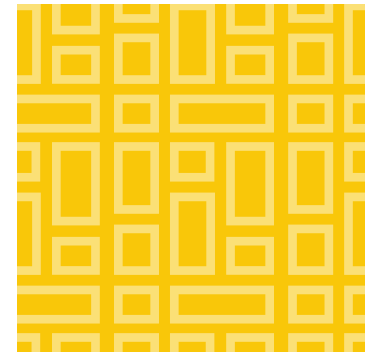
Please place or copy patterns directly from the vector files as provided.



INCLUSIVITY



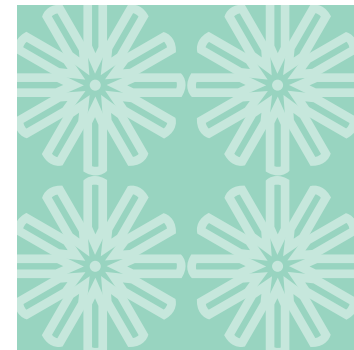
DIVERSITY



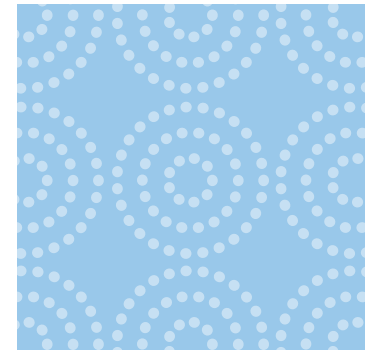
CREATIVITY



INNOVATION



MAKER



CONNECTEDNESS

Visual Language: Brand Lockups

Bringing the elements together

Various compositions of the logo, typography, photography and iconography may be used to represent the Dearborn brand. When the elements are used together, they can begin to convey the feeling of a rich, layered quilt. It's important to have the right balance – overuse of too many elements and colors in one layout can be busy. Keep it simple and be focused on your main message.



Visual Language: **Headline Style**

We're Open.
Love your local.

The headline is set in title case with a period at the end – only if it's a complete sentence.

The subhead is set in sentence case with a period at the end – only if it's a complete sentence.

Make Your Mark.

In Dearborn, good things are born.

The headline is set in title case with a period at the end – only if it's a complete sentence.

The subhead (in this instance with the font Zilla Slab Bold) is set in sentence case with a period at the end – only if it's a complete sentence.

Business Assistance Team

What are you waiting for? It's FREE.

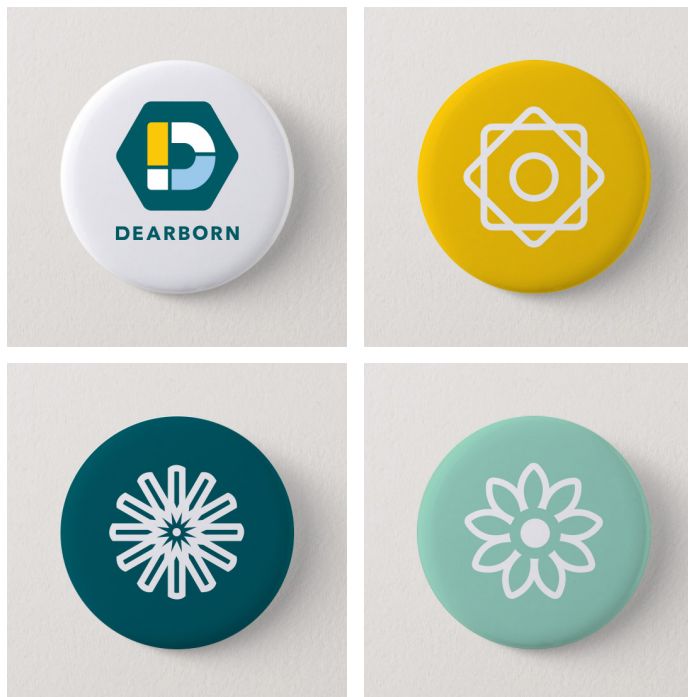
The headline is set in title case with NO period at the end because it's not a complete sentence. Another example of this instance would be an event name.

The subhead is set in sentence case with a period at the end – only if it's a complete sentence.

Visual Language: Applications of Elements

The system at work

The following pages are examples of how the system works together through various applications.



BUTTONS

Visual Language: Applications of Elements



BUS BILLBOARD

Visual Language: Applications of Elements



STREET POLE BANNERS

Visual Language: Applications of Elements



TOTE BAGS

Visual Language: Applications of Elements



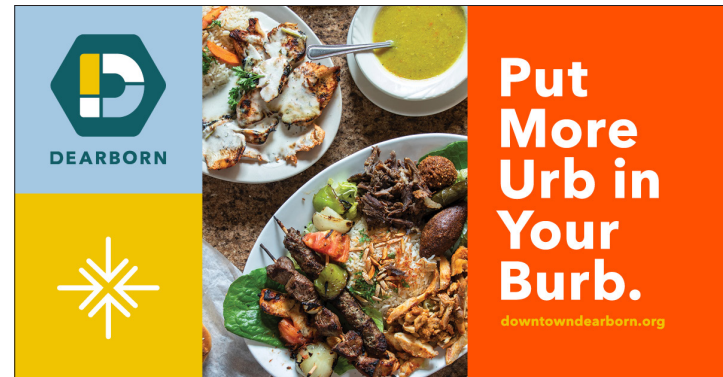
SAMPLE ADS

Visual Language: Applications of Elements



CITY VAN

Visual Language: Applications of Elements



SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS

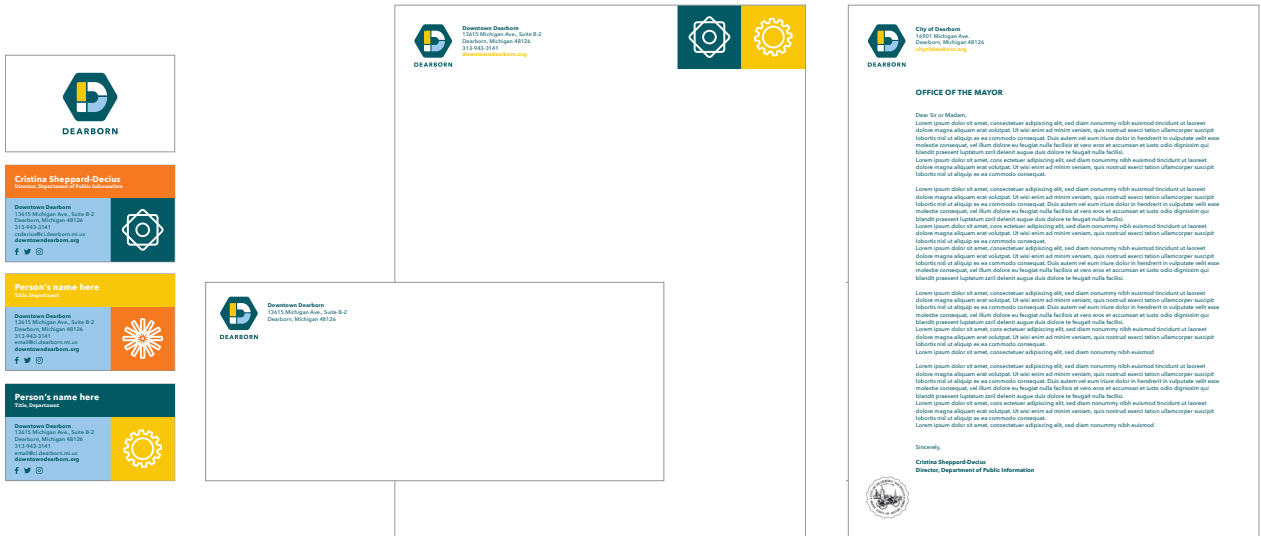
Visual Language: Applications of Elements



SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS



Visual Language: Applications of Elements



When creating a Word document on the letterhead, please start the margin at 1.4" from the left to align with the address block at the top and 1.75" down from the top. If the document needs to come from a specific department, for example, Office of the Mayor, it should be set in all caps in Avenir Next Bold or Nunito Sans Black, 11 pt.

STATIONERY

Visual Language: Applications of Elements



Cristina Sheppard-Decius, CMSM

East & West Dearborn Downtown Development Authorities

Executive Director

Executive Management provided by POW! Strategies, Inc.

m 248-760-9265

csdecius@downtowndearborn.org

downtowndearborn.org

Facebook | Instagram | Twitter

Employee name should be set in:

Font: Sans Serif; bold

Type size: large

Employee title and downtowndearborn.org

should be set in:

Font: Sans Serif; bold

Type size: normal

All other text should be set in:

Font: Sans Serif

Type size: normal

Social Media handles should be hyperlinks

All text color should be: RGB 12, 52, 61



Leverage the Brand

Leverage the Brand: 5 Simple Ways

5 simple ways to use the Dearborn brand

In addition to official promotions and campaigns that will use the Dearborn brand, we encourage organizations and companies located in Dearborn to incorporate Dearborn brand elements in their own marketing efforts. With broad, grassroots representation and support, the Dearborn brand can work even harder for everyone.

For some Dearborn-based organizations, the benefit of connecting to the Dearborn brand is obvious: If your brand has destination appeal or needs to attract and retain talent to Dearborn, syncing up with the Dearborn brand should be a simple and straightforward win/win. If you believe that being located in Dearborn confers any kind of advantage to your business, then the Dearborn brand can help drive that advantage home. Even if the benefits of aligning around the Dearborn brand don't seem all that clear-cut to you, some of the virtually effortless ways to bring the brand to life presented here can do a lot to help boost interest and appreciation for Dearborn, adding cache to your business indirectly.

Leverage the Brand: 5 Simple Ways

Fit your organization's story into Dearborn's brand backstory.

To see whether and how your organization aligns with the Dearborn brand, literally write your organization's story into the Dearborn brand backstory that appears on page 29. The few minutes you spend on this exercise will show you how you can present your brand and the Dearborn brand together. Even if you don't create any further digital or print communications based on this exercise, you will now be able to support the Dearborn brand whenever you find yourself talking about your own.

Align your "About" story.

If you use an "About Our Company" background story on your website or in presentations, consider how you might use the Dearborn brand drivers [see page 12] to shape the brand story you tell. Sometimes changing even a few sentences or phrases can create worthwhile brand synergy.

Adopt the brand photography style.

Even if you use no messages or other visual assets created for the Dearborn brand, by using photos that show

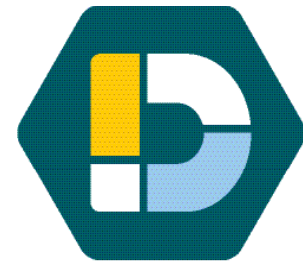
Dearborn-related subjects and that adhere to Dearborn brand photo guidelines, you can contribute to a strong, unified expression of the Dearborn brand. Imagine the effect a consistent use of images could have on individuals who encounter them every time they visit a website belonging to a Dearborn-based business, including your own!

Use the brand maps.

When you want to show the location of your Dearborn-based business, using a Dearborn brand map instead of a generic map can be a strong, virtually effortless way to put the Dearborn brand to work on your behalf. Note that we've designed the Dearborn map to be easy to click through to bring visitors to, say, a Google map that can provide them with directions or other important location details.

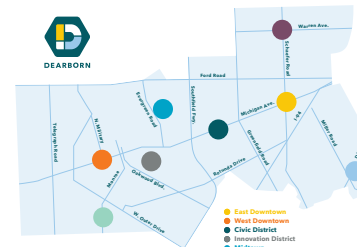
Incorporate the lockup and the link.

Don't forget what may be the single most obvious application of the Dearborn brand: placing the logo and official Dearborn brand URL in your own communications wherever it makes sense to help your customer or site visitor to learn more about Dearborn.



DEARBORN

downtowndearborn.org



Resources

Questions?

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