



## Marketing Plan

### Communications and Advertising for the City of Van Meter

#### Introduction

Van Meter is in a prime location and point in time to begin experiencing some growth. This plan is intended to take a look at what Van Meter has to offer at present, how Van Meter should be viewed, how we can reach others, and what tactics we should use to build brand equity. This is a marketing plan to promote Van Meter to current and prospective residents and businesses.

#### Situation Analysis

The population in Van Meter at the 2010 census was 1016 people and 382 households. Majority of residents live here for the “small town feel,” school system, and proximity to Des Moines, as was determined in a visioning survey by RGD. Van Meter is approximately 10 minutes away from West Des Moines. 59.6% of the Van Meter population works in Des Moines or West Des Moines. 60.1% of residents have 2 or more children. 42.6% of the current population has lived in Van Meter for 10+ years, but 28.7% has lived in Van Meter for just 1-4 years, which is runner up and the quickest growing demographic. 75.2% say they plan on continuing to live in Van Meter for another 10+ years. Nearby communities with the same or closer proximity to Des Moines have a population range between 4,000 and 16,000.

#### Goals

1. Attract New Residents  
Total Population of 2500
2. Attract Site Selectors  
Bring businesses offering high-quality jobs

Lots are for sale and continue to be developed throughout Van Meter. These lots need to be sold and homes need to be built on them. Targeting prospective residents that will provide a tax base and return to the community will be critical to affording expanded infrastructure and amenities that will be needed for a growing population.

Site selectors bringing businesses that provide high-quality jobs offering salaries that can support middle class families will bring more residents and keep more people in Van Meter long term.

#### Audience

1. Prospective residents with young families
2. Sight selectors bringing businesses offering high-quality jobs

The lots at Crestview are for \$200,000 to \$400,000 homes to be built on. The audiences seeking out these homes are

young, established families with children, looking for well-paying jobs that can support this lifestyle. Generally, the children are young and the family is primarily attracted to Van Meter for the “small town feel,” safety, and the quality school with small class sizes.

## Core Competencies

Van Meter has quite a few selling points. Below are the major attributes that have attracted and continue to attract new residents.

### 1. Van Meter School

- Small
- Low student-to-teacher ratio
- Technology leader among public schools in Des Moines Area

### 2. Proximity to Des Moines

- I-80
- 10 minutes away

### 3. Recreation

- Beaver Creek
- Multiple Parks
- Sidewalk-friendly
- Recreation Complex,

### 4. Community Involvement and Unity

- Similar Priorities
  - Veterans
  - Education
  - Religion
- Similar Activities
  - Many organizations
  - Legion activities
  - Community events

## Tools and Tactics

There are many different tools available in marketing Van Meter and building brand equity and reputation. The tools and tactics selected are those that most effectively serve these purposes and are budget-friendly.

### 1. Website

The website is the professional digital face of the city. The content should be structured in a fashion that is readable and easy to navigate for our audiences. Content should be organized in an order that prioritizes our goals. The material that prospective residents and sight selectors seek out should be located first and organized in fashion that is easy to navigate.

### 2. Electronic print

ISSUU and other digital publications (Newsstand, etc.) may be utilized to create the look and feel of a digital publication without the cost of print and distribution. Print puts information directly in someone’s hands, but digital publications serve a similar purpose with a further lifespan and a cheaper cost.

### 3. Social Media

Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Flickr, etc. should be utilized effectively with one voice. Consistency is key for

building brand equity. Each department of the city government should actively participate in this. Further detail on how to approach social media marketing is explained separately in the social media marketing plan.

#### 4. Blog

The city blog reel is located directly on the home page of the website. This is a slightly more professional avenue of communication than social media but offers similar benefits. All blog posts should be synced with social media. This attracts additional traffic and trains the public on where to find relevant news. Not all social media posts, though, need to be represented on the blog.

#### 5. Email

Constant Contact, Mail Chimp, and other email marketing service providers offer easy-to-use graphic template email designs for mass communication. They perform direct mail services similar to mail-out print at a fraction of the cost. This should be utilized on a regular basis to communicate significant information, such as events. This should also be utilized as a digital newsletter, cutting down on printing costs every month.

#### 6. Referral

A significant population of Van Meter residents discovered Van Meter or moved to Van Meter due to knowing family or friends that already live in the city. Effective advertising often sells ideas or products by “being” in the same demographic as their audience. There is no better way to emulate this than to have the real demographic sell this for you. A personal friend or family member’s opinions are trusted more than an advertisement’s. Constantly educating the current residents on what positive attributes Van Meter has to offer is key. They will then be the messengers, sharing these pride points with their circles of individuals in the same demographic. Any of the above mediums would serve this tactic well.

## Track

#### 1. Website analytics

Wordpress, the content management system that the city website is built in, offers simple analytics, recording the stats of the site. Hits, referrals, feedback, and search engine terms are all recorded in Wordpress. This provides quantitative and some qualitative feedback on what is and isn’t doing well with our audiences.

#### 2. Social media analytics

Similar to the statistics tracked by Wordpress, various social media tracking sites offer analytics on the broader spectrum of web content. Google Analytics is a very thorough quantitative view but costs. Other sites like SocialMention.com offer a more qualitative view for free. SocialMention.com searches subjects or phrases across all social media platforms and provides links to all hits and broadly reports on the percentage of positive and negative feedback.

## Evaluate and Adjust

After tracking this material and gaining an understanding of how our audiences are responding to it, we can adjust future content. Focusing on content that receives high levels of attention and positive feedback, we will be able to better reach and promote communication and engagement