Welcome.

Friends and Family,

Independence is a special community. In this community, you can put down roots to last a lifetime. In this community, we value our relationships with family and friends. This is what we celebrate. This is our brand.

Independence is a place where people can pursue careers, raise a family and enjoy the pleasures of a progressive community. We celebrate the deep and lasting bonds that we discover here. As we build on this brand and speak as a whole community, our message goes out to a wider audience, inviting new businesses and people to come experience Independence.

In order to represent our community we will use the details of this guide to effectively and consistently promote Independence. With everyone’s help we can invite others to come and Celebrate Our Spirit!
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Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.  

HELEN KELLER
Independence has always had a brand. It is the culmination of the thoughts, feelings and experiences of visitors and residents alike. After years of allowing our brand to evolve naturally, we are now actively shaping it to highlight the spirit and the generous relationships that we are blessed to be a part of every day.

By extension, Independence’s brand is also our own, as individuals, we each play an important role in the cultivation of its most authentic form. As we learn to embrace and showcase the unique characteristics of our city in innovative ways, we will reinforce the qualities that set us apart, and help others discover the joys of Independence!
Why is it important to have a “brand”? Before, our community’s voice was made up of many individual thoughts and we did not consistently promote the ideas which truly made us stand out. The community of Independence is rich in resources, amenities, and a tight sense of family. Independence’s very name bears the traits of strength, fortitude, and purpose. It projects who we are—a town that will stand strong through the tests of time.

We are now choosing to control this message and leverage our assets as a community. By utilizing this guide, we can align every individual to communicate about our city with the same voice and passion, strengthening the impact of our message and furthering the growth of Independence.

Defining the Brand

Independence’s brand messaging is crafted from thoughts about our city that have been discovered through extensive research, surveys and community studies. Community leaders, along with residents of Independence and surrounding areas, were given an opportunity to express their feelings about Independence. While we discovered some areas that we must work on as a community, our strengths were brought into focus and have become the foundation on which we can positively influence our brand.
A brand is a living entity—and it is enriched or undermined cumulatively over time, the product of a thousand small gestures. 

MICHAEL EISNER
Whether you work in town, are a lifelong citizen or a community leader, it is vital that we are all working toward a common goal. We want to effectively promote our community, in order, to continue raising our quality of life.
As Citizens

Believe it or not, our voices as citizens are the single most important element to improving the quality of life here. Even in this age of super-frequent media exposure, “word-of-mouth” is still the most effective form of marketing for both businesses and communities.

This means the most important thing you can do is very simple: embrace the spirit of our city and our brand. Continue to be there for others in the community when they need you. Simply smile and say “hi” to strangers or newcomers you see around the community. These simple everyday actions are the most powerful thing you can do to encourage a sense of community or belonging to residents and visitors in Independence.

There are other ways you can help too, if you feel up to it! We will have many great projects you can get involved with, from beautifying areas of town to helping coordinate community events. Your opportunities are endless.
As a Business or Organization

Your organization helps to build the structure of our community. Although every company has its own brand, you are an important part of our voice. When you promote our community as a Whole, you are simultaneously promoting your business. As our local businesses gather behind Independence’s unique brand message, we will see an increase in commerce from both visitors and residents alike. There are many opportunities for your business to be an advocate of Independence:

· Your office or retail location may be in a perfect position to enhance the experience of doing business in Independence. Check out the community elements and colors to see if there are ways to beautify your building and landscape.

· Consider joining the Independence Area Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is working to promote all area businesses and resources as one under Independence’s unique brand message. Your business will be promoted under the umbrella of Independence gaining increased exposure and providing more resources to draw in visitors and encourage local commerce.

· Align your business offerings. Does it make sense for your business to offer Independence branded merchandise? Would it be appropriate to offer a service or product which aligns with the idea of “celebration and spirit”? "We are looking for organizations to come together, to strengthen the appeal of these events and truly make us a destination for recreation and commerce.”

· Coordinate your promotions with the community. Independence will continue to align its events with the idea of “celebration and spirit.”
As Community Leaders

One major benefit of a focused brand message is that it can make planning and communications decisions much easier. The ideas expressed by our brand only become real when multiple entities of the community are working together to support them.

Beyond the ultimate question for any leader (Is this action in the best interest of the people?), there is another question leaders should now ask (Is this action supporting who we are as a community?). If the answer to the latter is “no,” that decision should be re-evaluated accordingly.

Inevitably, most community leaders and volunteers will arrive at an opportunity to support the brand with their actions. The most critical way decision-makers can strengthen Independence’s position is to allocate time and energy toward making the message of “celebration and spirit” real in Independence. While we currently have great support of both of these ideas, placing these concepts at the forefront of all decisions and initiatives will help us truly become a destination people—whether visitors or residents—will be happy to return to again and again.

What This Guide Means to You: Leaders
Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success. – Henry Ford
How We Sound

Our voice is the way we write and speak about Independence. Together as a community, we have a unique personality that comes through in every form of communication. When we consistently reflect our voice in communications, we will increase the strength of the qualities that make us unique. In advertisements, emails, signs, letters or brochures, our voice will shine through.

Some of our key communications are developed by professionals in branding and marketing. However, we cannot have all of our writing created for us. In these scenarios, it is up to us as the promoters of Independence to be the managers of the brand.
Communicating the Brand

Our community “voice” helps us understand our personality and allows us to convey our brand to people both inside and outside Independence. Whenever Independence needs to speak as a community, our voice should be consistent in its tone and messaging focus. Essentially, we should use every possible opportunity to underscore what makes our brand unique.

When Communicating

DO try to capture a spirit of positive change. It’s OK to be working toward a better tomorrow and to harness the community’s energy in messaging.

DO reference other brand-approved communications to get a feel for the voice and to maintain consistency.

DO use proper grammar, spelling and writing structure. Guide your reader through the piece for an effortless and understandable read.

DO be creative! Creativity is an essential part of our brand.

Please Don’t

DO NOT create feelings that something is wrong in Independence. Any “action” language should imply improvement to an already great place.

DO NOT speak in first person, such as “I,” “me,” and “myself,” (unless writing a personal letter).

DO NOT use phrases which could be perceived as another positioning. Use only the approved positioning statement.

DO NOT use our positioning statement in copy. Use the positioning language no more than once per piece, though it is not always necessary when our brand elements are used in accordance with this guide.

DO NOT use slang or buzz words such as “awesome,” “sweet” or “staycation.” We want our brand to be timeless and relevant for years to come.

Our Voice: Communicating the Brand

WE ARE
- authentic
- welcoming
- progressive
- practical
- simple

WE ARE NOT
- aggressive
- stale
- sappy
- flashy
- gaudy

· kind
- refreshing
- natural
· timeless
- lively
- natural
· simple
- refreshing
- natural
· practical
- simple
- timeless

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It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.  

AUDRE LORDE
How We Look

Identity Standards

Our brand communication comes in many different forms and our visual aesthetics serve a very important function in that area. The voice we give to everything that comes from Independence, from our city offices to our media releases, receives special focus with our colors and logo. It is essential that every brand ambassador understands when, where and how to use our brand’s logo and color palettes to further establish our essence.
Our Logo

The Independence logo is made up of the Independence wordmark and positioning. The logo is a unique piece of artwork and its proportions have been specifically determined. It should never be re-typeset, recreated or altered. Any changes made will cause inconsistencies, and ultimately dilute its impact. To maintain quality, use only approved digital art files.

Clear Space

Always maintain a minimum “clear space” around the Independence logo to distinguish it from distracting elements such as text, graphics or background images that may interfere with the logo’s visibility.

Minimum Size

The Independence logo retains its visual strength in a wide range of sizes. However, there are sizes at which the logo is no longer clearly legible. On this page, there is a specified minimum size for reproduction of the Independence logo when the positioning is included, and for reproduction of the wordmark on its own.
Primary Use

This is our main identity, and should be given consistent usage across all forms of communication.

Inverted Use

This version of the logo is only to be used on a dark background to help give the logo prominence over the background color.

Secondary Use

The secondary Independence logo allows for flexibility and variation in official communications, adaptable for use across the entire range of modern media—from print materials to online platforms.

One-Color Use

This style of logo usage allows the Independence logo to stand strong when limited to one color. In the event of using a single color option, please refer to the approved color palette and select a color that best suits the medium.

If possible, try using a 70% opacity/tint on the elements that were originally red.
Logo Variations

This spread contains variations for how the icon, wordmark and positioning statement can be used in conjunction or individually. If the situation calls for something other than the examples in this guide, be sure to consult a design professional to come up with a solution that stays in line with the Independence brand.
Identity Standards: Logo (cont.)

City Department Logos

To give our city a unified look, each department should strive to utilize the Independence brand. The examples on this spread show how easily a branch of the public sector could apply the city's brand. The department name should never overpower the Independence wordmark. Simply replace the positioning statement with the department.
Variations
In certain situations, such as promotional materials or certain design layouts, the positioning statement may work well when displayed apart from the logo. It displays well over white or a percentage of black, and should be included on all communications.

Minimum Size
Independently, the positioning statement loses impact and functionality when used too small. Try to choose promotional items and layouts that ensure the minimum size is upheld.

Incorrect Usage
In order to maintain the integrity of the positioning statement, avoid inconsistencies in its use.

Clear Space
Use the clear space formula to ensure the integrity and functionability of the positioning statement at all times.

Our Positioning
This simple statement is what we strive to accomplish each and every day. In Independence, we care for and about our community and the spirit that has made Independence what it is today—working diligently to develop and maintain our strong sense of community, and giving each citizen a place that can be celebrated. Meant for adoption both internally and externally, our positioning statement acts as the super-concise summation of our brand message. You will find this statement on nearly every Independence communication, from our website to our business cards.

Celebrate our spirit!

Do not display in colors other than the approved palette. Do not re-typeset the positioning statement. Use approved art files only.
Photography

A picture can say a lot about who we are as a community. Our selection of photos, as well as how they are used, is an important tool to represent us positively. We aim to be consistent and promote a similar style of images to build recognition of our brand.

As with every other tool our brand uses, images, too, seek to position Independence as the place where people Celebrate our Spirit! There are many photos which will be acceptable for use, but the most powerful images are of real community members portraying a positive spirit. Professional photos with people enjoying friends, family and nature are ideal. See the examples below for an idea of how our photos should look.

Things to Avoid

Refrain from using photos that are:
- obviously posed or “goofy”
- cartoons/clipart
- obviously not Independence
- low-resolution
- out of focus or poorly lit.

Incorrect Use

PLEASE DO NOT
- Alter or distort the logo
- Use the logo over images without sufficient contrast
- Use a low-quality, rasterized version of the logo
- Re-typeset the wordmark
- Place unauthorized text in the clear space area
- Apply a stroke around the logo

Identity Standards: Incorrect Use
Our Type

Through consistent typeface use, our materials will have another recognizable element that helps to communicate our unique brand identity. Our fonts feel classic and timeless, yet were designed in more recent years, lending a modern relevance. The juxtaposition of a serif font with a simple sans-serif subtly showcases our character as a community with traditional values blended with an enthusiasm for the future. Accessible by most designers, these typefaces enable easy compliance with our brand guidelines.

Identity Standards: Typefaces

Light
Light Italic
Regular
Italic
SemiBold
SemiBold Italic
Bold
Bold Italic

Barlow
Use for subheads, body copy, callouts, web, etc.

Roman
Italic
Bold
Bold Italic

Sabon
Use for boldness, quotes, web and city department names (when used in conjunction with the logo).
Identity Standards: Typefaces (cont.)

Barlow

Barlow Light
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow Regular
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow SemiBold
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow Bold
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow Light Italic
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow Italic
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow SemiBold Italic
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow Bold Italic
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow Light Oblique
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow Bold Oblique
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow Italic Oblique
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow SemiBold Oblique
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Barlow Bold Oblique Italic
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Sabon

Sabon Regular
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Sabon Italic
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Sabon Bold
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

Sabon Bold Italic
ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 @#$%^&*()'

While Barlow is recommended, Arial can work as a substitute if you're unable to access Barlow. Download this font for free at fontsquirrel.com/fonts/barlow

While Sabon is recommended, Times New Roman can work as a substitute if you're unable to access Sabon. You can purchase Sabon at myfonts.com/fonts/linotype/sabon

DO NOT
Please do not use any unauthorized fonts such as: Comic Sans, Papyrus, Trajan Pro

FontUsagefont疏散.png
Tones of Independence

Color is an important component of a brand, able to incite emotion and recall memory. Our colors are designed to be used across a wide variety of media. Our primary colors, Star-Spangled Blue & Red Stripes, should be used in the majority of circumstances.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>CMYK</th>
<th>RGB</th>
<th>HEX#</th>
<th>Pantone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Star-Spangled Blue</td>
<td>100/55/0/38</td>
<td>0/72/128</td>
<td>#004880</td>
<td>7693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Stripes</td>
<td>21/100/85/6</td>
<td>134/14/40</td>
<td>#860D1e</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canary</td>
<td>0/19/89/0</td>
<td>255/199/44</td>
<td>#FFC72C</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linen</td>
<td>6/13/41/4</td>
<td>221/203/164</td>
<td>#DDCBA4</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
<td>21/100/85/6</td>
<td>134/14/40</td>
<td>#860D1e</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnut</td>
<td>4/53/100/8</td>
<td>207/127/0</td>
<td>#CF7F00</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0/0/0/100</td>
<td>0/0/0</td>
<td>#000000</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>0/0/0/10</td>
<td>0/0/0</td>
<td>#FFFFFF</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>0/0/0/0</td>
<td>0/0/0</td>
<td>#FFFFFF</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accent Palette

To reinforce the brand image and escalate the brand presence, secondary colors have been carefully selected. Use these colors for backgrounds, accent colors, graphs, charts and typography.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>RGB</th>
<th>HEX#</th>
<th>Pantone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mist</td>
<td>0/19/89/0</td>
<td>255/199/44</td>
<td>#FFC72C</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvery</td>
<td>80/17/76/51</td>
<td>210/211/221</td>
<td>#D1D3D4</td>
<td>Cool Gray 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Glare</td>
<td>21/100/85/6</td>
<td>134/14/40</td>
<td>#860D1e</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0/0/0/100</td>
<td>0/0/0</td>
<td>#000000</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>0/0/0/10</td>
<td>0/0/0</td>
<td>#FFFFFF</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>0/0/0/0</td>
<td>0/0/0</td>
<td>#FFFFFF</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Physical Traits of Independence

Every community should have some unique characteristics to experience as residents and visitors explore. This by no means is an all-encompassing list, but Independence can use some of these elements as inspiration to coordinate planning and design elements across the community. By doing so, it will create a more memorable experience (and, of course, one that helps communicate our strategic brand).

**Americana**
The use of Americana elements symbolize Independence’s rich history of tradition and national pride. A blend of patriotic elements, from an obvious American flag to subtle hints of red, white and blue in a color scheme will serve as a visible reminder of our strong American spirit.

**Historical Molding**
Using “vintage” style molding in the construction of new buildings is a way to nod to the long history of Independence. When selecting a style, try to match the moldings downtown to keep a cohesive look throughout the community.

**Awnings**
Awnings provide a sense of nostalgia, reminiscent of the time when people gathered and relaxed in front of stores. Businesses can combine awnings with outdoor patios and displays of goods to extend business outside and create an inviting, natural atmosphere for consumers.

**Public Seating**
Though public seating has already been implemented to an extent, an increase in strategically placed seating options will promote community togetherness as residents get out to enjoy the natural beauty Independence has to offer.

**Murals**
Transform neglected real estate with artwork. There are many opportunities for murals around town, most of which can be created inexpensively through the help of the residents or local artists. The mural locations could range from alleyways to abandoned business windows and the sides of buildings.

**Flower Boxes**
As traditional design elements, flower boxes and planters provide instant home-like charm. They are also a relatively cheap way to bring nature into more developed areas of the city, beautifying the environment and adding an energetic pop of color.
Well-Groomed Lawns
A well-groomed lawn shows a sense of pride. Not only in your home, but the community in which you live. Applied to public spaces as well, staying on top of lawn/shrub maintenance will be one more reason that citizens are proud to call Independence home.

Public Trails
Trails are an ideal method for connecting with our community and the nature that surrounds us. Public trails could also be a great way of highlighting our historic and cultural resources.

Bike Racks
Bike racks are a great way of encouraging a healthy lifestyle and alternative methods of transportation. A reusable bike rack would allow residents to truly experience their surroundings, meeting neighbors along the way.

Outdoor Sports
Ensuring the community continues to have access to outdoor activities is crucial to the success of Independence. While the city currently has a wide variety of sporting areas in town, making sure they stay up to date and in full working order will keep people coming back for more.

Memorials
Monuments and memorials serve as an everlasting tribute to a life well-lived and life worth remembering. They provide a focal point where the community can visit and show appreciation for our history and art.

Rituals
Events and traditions strengthen bonds within families, and the same is true for communities such as ours. From the large 4th of July celebration, to a simple movie projected on the side of a building, rituals are a powerful method for establishing community connection.

Identity Standards: Community Elements
Identity Standards: Design Practices

Welcome plenty of open space. A clean, focused design is more inviting to the audience. It's important to maintain a consistency and professionalism of design throughout our communications. Over time, our visual brand will begin to build recognition and will speak powerfully in unison with all other communications created alongside it. Avoid thinking of your project as a stand-alone piece. Instead, be mindful of how it stands in relation to the entire brand.

Reference our approved pieces and craft your project’s message and communication elements to build upon, not change, what has already been established. And remember, this guide is the embodiment of how our brand should look and feel so please reference it often.

**Design Practices**

**Please Don’t**

- Don’t add strokes/outlines to unauthorized illustrations
- Don’t use clip art or unauthorized illustrations
- Don’t go overboard with colors
- Don’t overload the page with content
- Don’t design over images (even watermarked ones)

Create contrast between headlines and body copy by using both of our primary typefaces.
The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members. —CORETTA SCOTT KING
While this guide has accomplished the task of defining the brand of Independence, it is simply the foundation on which our brand will continue to grow and evolve. As we move forward, the Independence brand will require the attention and dedication of many individuals to keep it running smoothly. The following tips provide us with a distinct advantage, guiding the focus of these individuals toward a singular goal: the preservation and strengthening of our city’s brand.
Tips for Successful Community Promotion

CONSISTENCY, CONSISTENCY, CONSISTENCY. It can’t be said enough—stay true to the brand established in this guide. Visual elements are important, but the most crucial thing we can do is to stay on message. It can be easy for those close to the brand to become bored when they have to drive the message home again and again, but it is important to not change what we are working hard to build. By all means, keep it fresh, but instead of altering the message, continue to find more creative ways to express it with communication and action.

BE PATIENT. Like anything great, building an effective brand takes time. It may be years before Independence can fully own the idea of “Celebrate our Spirit” in the minds of those in the town and surrounding areas. Keep breaking through with the Independence message at every “touchpoint” available and with community projects that continue to build upon our spirit in a tangible way.

KEEP THIS GUIDE IN SIGHT. This guide should be promoted and submitted electronically to all leaders and stakeholders, as well as available for download to residents online. Also, remember to make part of the welcome packet for new arrivals. As the brand matures, keep this guide up to date and then re-submit it to the appropriate parties.

BRAND SEEMINGLY UNRELATED PROJECTS. Sure, a new attraction is an obvious way the city can support the brand, but what if the community is calling for a new park or sports field? Think creatively and find unique ways to weave our brand message through new developments whenever possible.

MONITOR RESULTS AND REMAIN PROACTIVE. The community should conduct some level of brand assessment each year to analyze where the current strengths and weaknesses lie. This will not change the core brand message, but will present new avenues to support it with communications and tangible projects. Continue to use media releases to promote the brand.

Further Reading

Destination Branding for Small Cities
by Bill Baker
Creative Leap Books; 2007
ISBN-10: 0979707610

The Brand Gap
by Marty Neumeier
Peachpit Press; 2005
ISBN-10: 0321348109

Emotional Branding: The New Paradigm for Connecting Brands to People
by Marc Gobé
Allworth Press; 2001
ISBN-10: 1581156723

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