Community Partners Roll Out Regional Rebrand

Local government and key business groups launch new marketing and economic development effort

BAKERSFIELD (September 9, 2019) – Today Kern County, the City of Bakersfield, Greater Bakersfield Chamber, Kern EDC and Visit Bakersfield revealed their organizations’ new brands as part of an integrated effort to spur economic development, tourism and talent attraction in Kern County and Greater Bakersfield. The brand launch is the culmination of a two-year process led by the partner organizations and a group of 15 private sector funders to improve the external image of Bakersfield and Kern County.

This effort has been data driven, focusing on feedback on the City and County and their strengths and weaknesses. With a strong foundation of research, the team developed strategies and creative cornerstones for two brand families. They are all distinct yet connected.

Following today’s launch, the partners are committed to incorporating the new looks across their external and internal communications as well as buildings, vehicles and other infrastructure. The partners anticipate an 18-month implementation period.

The partner organizations worked with North Star Destination Strategies to conduct the research and distill their findings into art and action. The team at North Star is renowned as experts in place and destination branding and have worked with states, counties and cities (including the city of Tehachapi) to increase awareness, tourism and economic development.

In late 2017 and early 2018, an intensive amount of research and data was collected including:

- A situational analysis of current marketing and economic development efforts
- A vision survey of over 80 community leaders with a broad geographic and demographic representation
- A community survey in English and Spanish completed by over 1,000 residents
- A Consumer Awareness and Perception (CAP) poll with responses from Los Angeles, Central Valley (excluding Kern County), and Bay Area residents

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• Over 100 meetings with local leaders and stakeholder groups
• Feedback from regional and statewide tourism, economic development, and policy opinion leaders/external influencers (outside Kern County)

This focused effort enhanced understanding about how the region is perceived, providing the following insights:
• Visitors have a more positive view of the communities than residents
• Influencers view the Bakersfield and Kern County economy with awe and envy
• Natives and transplants alike agree – you can find the “American Dream” in Bakersfield and Kern County
• The assets significantly outweigh deficits
• The region’s history – and how it impacts its worldview – is inspiring

With a clear understanding of the region and how it is perceived, new taglines were developed, which helped guide the logo development:
• Kern County: **Grounded & Boundless**
• Kern EDC: **Kern County, California; Where Business is Boundless**
• City of Bakersfield & Visit Bakersfield: **The Sound of Something Better**
• Greater Bakersfield Chamber: **Building Something Better**

The hope is that this integrated economic development strategy will not only improve overall effectiveness at business and talent attraction, but also inspire fellow citizens and neighbors to appreciate the quality of life, affordability and opportunity in Kern County and Bakersfield.

“The new brand strategies position Bakersfield for growth and help write a new narrative about our City and County.” Said Bakersfield Mayor Karen Goh. “Our communities power California in so many ways – we’re proud of our heritage and optimistic about the future”

“This isn’t about a logo or a new color palette”, according to David Couch, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. “It’s about telling our story in a different way that highlights what Kern County embodies. It’s about bringing new businesses, new people, and new opportunities to our County.”

“We’re very excited to have a powerful and bold marketing message to promote Kern County’s economic vitality and potential to the outside world,” said Kern EDC President & CEO Richard Chapman. “I have no doubt that this unprecedented collaborative effort will yield significant dividends for the region.”

“This project was a true collaboration and indicative of how we get things done in Bakersfield and Kern County,” said Nick Ortiz, Greater Bakersfield Chamber President & CEO. “We work together to improve our community, economy and quality of life.”

Going forward, this initiative will work to leverage our region’s assets to ensure our community has the talent, industries and attributes to thrive.

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