

# **Building a Strong Foundation for the Future of The COR**

*Marketing and Communications Plan — Summer-Fall 2010  
Revised August 27, 2010*

## Introduction

During the past year, the Ramsey City Council, Housing and Redevelopment Authority and Economic Development Authority have worked to reposition property in Ramsey's downtown area for successful development during the economic recovery. A comprehensive branding and planning process occurred, with input from local residents, businesses and economic development experts. The result was "The COR" — an area that is becoming the "center of Ramsey" commercial, retail, residential and recreational areas.

Momentum is already building at The COR, including:

- The addition of new businesses, restaurants and services to more than \$100 million in previous development.
- Parks and amenities, including the new amphitheater and the Anoka County Growers Association Farmers Market.
- Extensive development preparation work including planning, legislative approval of tax increment financing and other work for improved transit, highway and broadband access.

To continue the momentum, Ramsey announced the official launch of The COR via a July 14 news release, and invited the public to attend an outdoor concert on August 5 to open The COR's newly completed amphitheater. In addition, the city collaborated with the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Anoka County to announce the successful citing of a new VA outpatient clinic at The COR. However, these announcements are only the first steps toward building a strong foundation for the long-term success of The COR.

The following plan outlines tools, strategies and tactics for August – November, 2010 that will help Ramsey achieve the following outcomes:

- **Increase awareness of The COR**, its momentum and opportunities
- **Broaden and strengthen business relationships** to open doors for development
- **Build trust and confidence in The COR** vision and direction
- **Increase public use of The COR** amenities and businesses

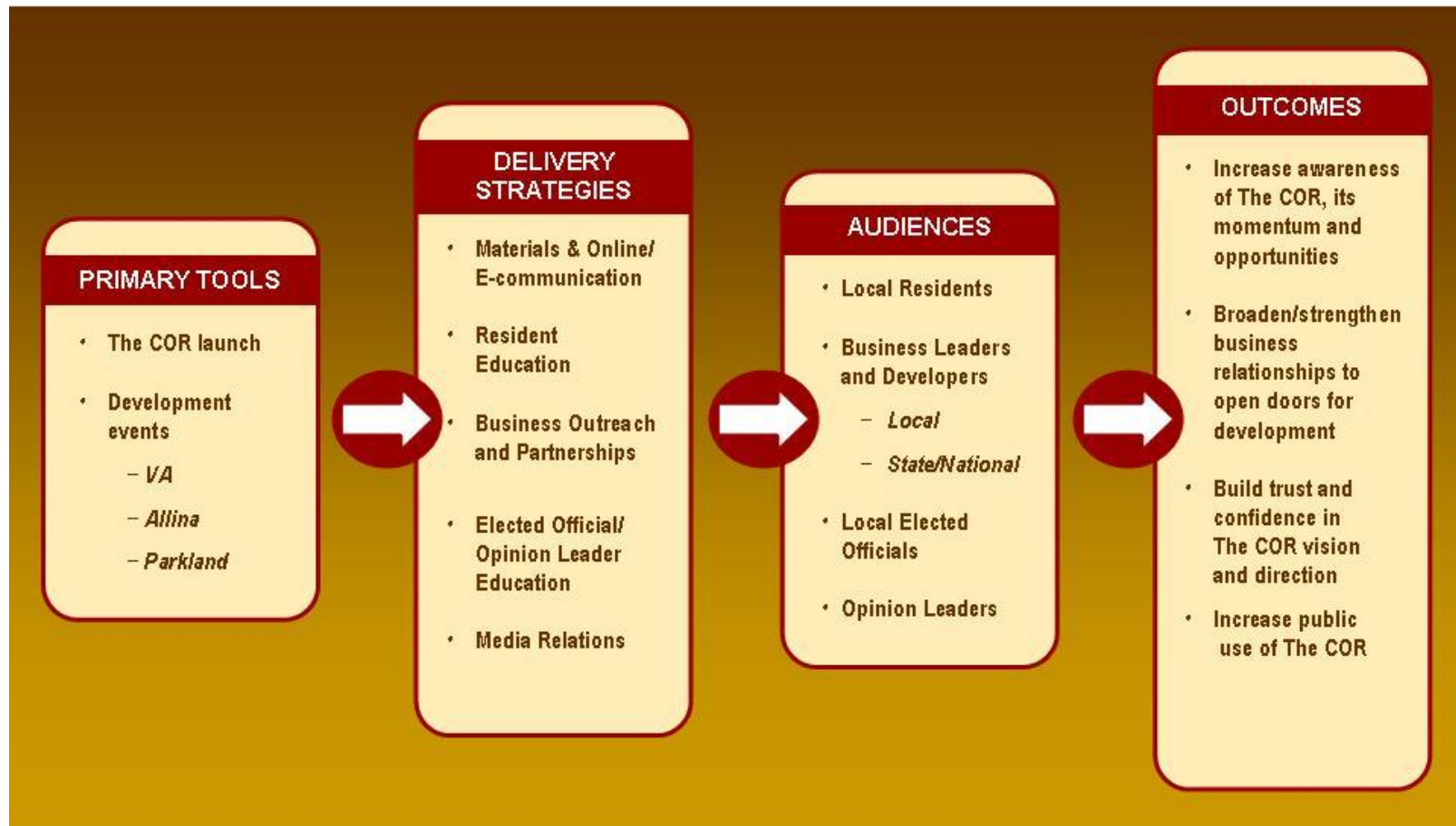
### Key Points

- *The COR offers a unique, exciting regional destination for residents and visitors alike.*
- *The COR's new and innovative vision was guided by citizen and business input and already is attracting attention.*
- *Momentum is building at The COR.*
- *The city is committed to moving forward in a way that is responsive to community needs and the marketplace.*



# LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS OF THE COR

(Initial Launch Strategy — Aug.-Nov. 2010)



## Materials and Online/E-Communication

### Outcomes:

- Increase awareness of The COR, its momentum and opportunities
- Broaden/strengthen business relationships to open doors for development
- Build trust and confidence in The COR vision and direction
- Increase public use of The COR

Activity	Audiences	Notes	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Printed materials (public)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fact sheet</li> <li>▪ Postcard – project basics, allow email sign-ups; use as leave-behind at area locations</li> <li>▪ Display banners (for City Hall, events, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residents</li> <li>▪ Local businesses</li> <li>▪ Local elected officials</li> <li>▪ Opinion leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reinforce vision, messages, amenities, etc.</li> <li>▪ Drive traffic to Web site and encourage email sign-ups</li> <li>▪ Develop drop box locations to collect sign-ups</li> </ul>	Aug.	HHI develops content
<b>Printed materials (business)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review/update marketing materials as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business leaders and developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reinforce vision, messages, amenities that will attract development attention and set The COR apart from others in the market (i.e. what are the biggest selling points?)</li> </ul>	Aug. - Ongoing	
<b>COR Web site</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete suggested launch revisions</li> <li>▪ List of previous/new projects</li> <li>▪ Develop photo gallery; update with progress/ events</li> <li>▪ Post PDFs of materials</li> <li>▪ Add email sign-up and viral marketing functions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop site into the “home base” for project communication; promote site address in all printed/other communication</li> <li>▪ Incorporate opportunities for two-way communication (e.g. email sign-up, viral capabilities, to provide feedback to project, etc.)</li> </ul>	Initial updates: Aug.  Ongoing updates	HHI develops content

Activity	Audiences	Notes	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>COR Web site (cont'd.)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Include archived list of database emails in News and Events</li> <li>▪ Ongoing updates as milestones and announcements occur</li> </ul>				
<b>Web widget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create electronic button that links to coratramsey.com</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business leaders and developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ During outreach to businesses, organizations, blogs, etc., request inclusion of the widget on Web sites and blog sites</li> </ul>		
<b>City Web site</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain centralized Web button on home page</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide easy-to-find link to The COR Web site</li> </ul>	Completed	
<b>E-Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to build database of project supporters</li> <li>▪ Use regular emails to communicate news and events</li> <li>▪ Incorporate viral component to all emails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residents</li> <li>▪ Business leaders and developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Utilize email distribution list to develop informed and engaged group of project supporters</li> <li>▪ Divide list between residents, and business leaders and developers; many messages will be sent to all emails, while some should be focused toward individual audiences</li> <li>▪ Use every interaction with audiences as an opportunity to recruit members to the database</li> <li>▪ Urge current supporters to recruit additional supporters/communicate to their networks</li> <li>▪ Communicate via email at least once per 4-6 weeks but no more than 2-3 times per month</li> </ul>	Ongoing	

## Resident Education

### Outcomes:

- Increase awareness of The COR, its momentum and opportunities
- Build trust and confidence in The COR vision and direction
- Increase public use of The COR

Activity	Audiences	Notes	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Resident publications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ramsey resident newsletter</li> <li>▪ Anoka County newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residents</li> <li>▪ Local business leaders and developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Story and photos about the VA announcement, COR launch and amphitheater event</li> <li>▪ Periodic updates on project progress, key announcements and milestones, etc.</li> <li>▪ Incorporate key points when possible</li> </ul>	<p>Aug.</p> <p>Ongoing as progress permits</p>	
<b>Events</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Distribute materials</li> <li>▪ Collect email sign-ups</li> <li>▪ Display banners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residents</li> <li>▪ Local business leaders and developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aug. 5 concert: Brief program/remarks to thank community leaders and provide update/overview of The COR; unveil brand</li> <li>▪ Use as opportunity to tell the story of The COR</li> <li>▪ Primary objectives: provide information, respond to questions and build email list</li> </ul>	<p><b>8/3:</b> National Night Out (completed)</p> <p><b>8/5:</b> Amphitheater Concert (completed)</p> <p><b>9/18 - 19:</b> Happy Days</p> <p><b>Through Oct.:</b> Farmers Market</p>	
<b>Visioning/steering committee participants</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Letter – thank you and update on project; invite to sign-up on email list; urge recruitment of others to list</li> <li>▪ Periodic project updates or additional input opportunities if available (beyond emails)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residents</li> <li>▪ Business leaders and developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participants are potentially more invested in project and may be/become opinion leaders so it's important to keep them engaged and provide more personal communication if possible</li> <li>▪ Where appropriate, include in opinion leader outreach</li> </ul>	<p>Aug.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	

Activity	Audiences	Notes	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>New residents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Letter or postcard — welcome to city; provide update on The COR; invite to sign-up on email list</li> <li>▪ Meet with and provide materials to local real estate offices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Begin to establish The COR as a <u>key</u> reason to make Ramsey home</li> <li>▪ Work with Realtors to distribute info. about The COR, link to coratramsey.com, and promote The COR in their own marketing</li> </ul>	Oct.	
<b>Social networking/other</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facebook updates, discussion starters, event invites</li> <li>▪ Twitter updates</li> <li>▪ Update Wikipedia entry/add COR info.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residents</li> <li>▪ Business leaders and developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facebook and Twitter can be effective for providing information, updates and attracting project followers. However, to be effective, it's critical to maintain these regularly.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	
<b>Outreach through COR businesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Postcard/brochure leave behinds</li> <li>▪ Table tents at local restaurants, coffee shops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Place information about The COR where residents gather. Include Web site address and promote email list</li> <li>▪ Include postcard drop boxes</li> </ul>	Nov.	

## Business Outreach and Partnerships

### Outcomes:

- Increase awareness of The COR, its momentum and opportunities
- Broaden and strengthen business relationships to open doors for development
- Build trust and confidence in The COR vision and direction

Activity	Audiences	Notes	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>PowerPoint presentation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ For business and professional audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business leaders and developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide overview and update of progress at The COR</li> <li>▪ Reinforce The COR's strengths and opportunities</li> <li>▪ For some audiences, use as opportunity to educate (e.g. why and how the city got involved, lessons learned, etc.) vs. a sales pitch</li> <li>▪ Encourage email sign-ups or direct contact for more information</li> </ul>	Aug.	
<b>Business presentations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Schedule and conduct outreach presentations to business groups (e.g. chambers, Rotaries, tourism orgs.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residents</li> <li>▪ Business leaders and developers</li> <li>▪ Opinion leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Distribute fact sheet or postcard (high-level info. that directs to Web site)</li> <li>▪ Primarily informational; avoid too much of a sales pitch</li> <li>▪ Collect email sign-ups/distribute contact info. for business opportunities</li> </ul>	Sept. – Nov.	
<b>Newsletter/e-list articles</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft project updates for inclusion in org. newsletters/e-communications</li> <li>▪ Conduct outreach to seek newsletter placement, widget link or other opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business leaders and developers</li> <li>▪ Opinion leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop 2 newsletter options (75-100 words, 150-250 words)</li> <li>▪ Include outreach to local and national organizations</li> <li>▪ Consider presentation or conference/trade show opportunities</li> <li>▪ Stay connected: provide updates on progress when warranted</li> </ul>	Early Sept.  Ongoing	
<b>Economic development outreach/networking</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bus Tour <i>ICSC</i></li> <li>▪ Submit news releases/project updates for online news</li> <li>▪ Global Shopping Center Directory</li> <li>▪ Additional networking opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business leaders and developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Invite leaders to tour The COR. Begin at new COR restaurant/other location with the business PowerPoint presentation. Continue with bus tour to highlight project approach, opportunities and lessons learned. Incorporate Ramsey Star Express bus to highlight transit connections</li> <li>▪ Tap into existing networks/memberships to connect with leaders and developers</li> <li>▪ Consider opportunities to position Ramsey as a leader in visionary TOD design in MN (building reputation and trust will increase attention)</li> </ul>	Early Oct.  Ongoing	

Activity	Audiences	Notes	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Economic development outreach/networking (cont'd.)</b> <i>Economic Development Assn. of MN</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rooftop Networking Event</li> <li>▪ Newsletter and/or web link</li> <li>▪ Other info./networking opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business leaders and developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tap into existing networks and association memberships to connect with business leaders and developers</li> <li>▪ Consider opportunities to position Ramsey as a leader in visionary TOD design in MN (building reputation and trust will ultimately increase attention)</li> </ul>	Ongoing	

## Elected Official/Opinion Leader Education

**Outcomes:**

- Increase awareness of The COR, its momentum and opportunities
- Build trust and confidence in The COR vision and direction

Activity	Audiences	Notes	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Policymaker outreach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Letter to county board, Metropolitan Council and regional state legislators and key candidates</li> <li>▪ Periodic visits/presentations to provide project updates, negotiate future improvements</li> <li>▪ Post-election letter to elected officials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Elected officials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Initial letter: Provide update on progress and thank policymakers for their support and actions to help make The COR succeed; insert one-page fact sheet</li> <li>▪ Post-election letter: Congratulate elected officials; remind/update about The COR progress (incumbents) and introduce/update about The COR (to newly elected officials); set the stage for legislative action if needed</li> </ul>	Letter: Aug.  Updates: Ongoing  Post-election letter: Mid-Nov.	

Activity	Audiences	Notes	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Legislative session planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Goals for 2011</li> <li>▪ Outline outreach/communications plan</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop goals, strategies and outreach/education plan to seek 2011 legislation if necessary</li> <li>▪ Engage The COR email list (i.e. local residents and businesses) to support legislation if necessary/appropriate</li> </ul>	Nov.	
<b>Opinion leader outreach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop/prioritize list of local and state opinion leaders</li> <li>▪ Initiate relationships via face-to-face meeting</li> <li>▪ Follow-up discussions, emails or letters as project progresses</li> <li>▪ Engage in decision-making or other opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opinion leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Build and maintain relationships that will help The COR succeed in business, local/state government and with the local community</li> <li>▪ Ultimately, engagement may include media relations, development leads, public policy or other opportunities</li> </ul>	Sept. - Ongoing	
<b>Engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Events, presentations or other opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Elected officials</li> <li>▪ Opinion leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Invite elected officials and opinion leaders, as appropriate, to participate in public events or announcements about The COR</li> <li>▪ Thank elected officials and opinion leaders for their support and leadership at every opportunity</li> </ul>	Ongoing	

## Media Relations

### Outcomes:

- Increase awareness of The COR, its momentum and opportunities
- Broaden/strengthen business relationships to open doors for development
- Build trust and confidence in The COR vision and direction
- Increase public use of The COR

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Audiences</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Events/Announcements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Amphitheater concert</li> <li>▪ Allina, VA ground-breakings</li> <li>▪ New park opening</li> <li>▪ Future COR announcements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ City-initiated events: incorporate brief program or remarks welcoming attendees to The COR, highlighting key points and building excitement about project momentum; distribute materials; collect emails</li> <li>▪ Allina, VA or other groundbreakings: Seek inclusion of city representative to welcome new business and briefly highlight The COR</li> </ul>	<p>Concert: 8/5 (completed)</p> <p>Allina: Aug. (completed)</p> <p>VA: Fall</p> <p>As scheduled</p>	
<b>News Releases</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Events/announcements</li> <li>▪ Groundbreakings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Groundbreakings or private company announcements: consider separate city news release or inclusion of city and COR info. in private company release</li> <li>▪ Work with announcing organization to coordinate media response, The COR spokespersons and other information disseminated to media</li> <li>▪ Distribute project news and updates to local and business media lists via email; make follow-up calls</li> <li>▪ Post all releases to City of Ramsey and coratramsey.com Web sites</li> </ul>	<p>Allina (completed)</p> <p>VA: Fall</p> <p>As appropriate</p>	
<b>Targeted media outreach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business columnists</li> <li>▪ Specialty publications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Businesses and developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with individual columnists and specialty/trade reporters to develop stories about The COR, development or other topics that appeal to their target audiences</li> <li>▪ Communicate about Ramsey and The COR leadership and unique approach in the region/state</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<b>MPR sponsorship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business leaders</li> <li>▪ Opinion leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opportunity to improve name recognition of The COR and promote coratramsey.com</li> </ul>	<p>Around fall announcement or ground breaking</p>	