APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2020.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact Gage Harter.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Montgomery

Program Title: New Logo and Branding Launch

Program Category: Communications

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Jennifer T. Harris

Title: Public Information Director

Department: Public Information

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: F. Craig Meadows

Title: County Administrator

Signature: _F. Craig Meadows_

Executive Summary | New Logo and Brand Identity, Montgomery County, Va.

Montgomery County, Va., has been steadfast and industrious throughout its rich history in agriculture, manufacturing, and technology. Over time, there are several narratives that have organically developed to tell Montgomery County's story. While these organic narratives are authentic, an effort to review them, find common themes, and then establish the values, visuals, and voice for Montgomery County was necessary. As a result, an internal Montgomery County Brand Committee was formed to develop an effective, consistent, and clearly defined identity.

The committee met several times and sought feedback from employees while working to discover Montgomery County's story in an effort to identify and define the logo and brand. The committee also identified guidelines and parameters for using the existing Montgomery County Seal, which held the place of logo. In addition, the committee explored numerous logo options before selecting one that proved relevant and relatable to Montgomery County: the Huckleberry. As the logo for Montgomery County, the Huckleberry represents the past by sparking nostalgia; the present by reminding the community of the scenic beauty surrounding them; and the future by continuing to build a connection between communities through the desire to expand the existing recreational Huckleberry Trail, which currently connects the two towns located in Montgomery County. Finally, the committee created brand identity and logo use guidelines, complete with official fonts and color.

Overview | New Logo and Brand Identity, Montgomery County, Va.

Montgomery County formed an internal brand committee to develop a relevant and relatable logo and brand identity that highlighted existing authentic and historical narratives with a nod to the future. Since the committee completed the project internally, Montgomery County was saved the typical money spent on outside agencies to develop creative deliverables and brand guidelines. The final result included a logo and brand identity that honored the county's past, present, and future.

Once the creative deliverables were ready, the committee planned a Montgomery County Brand Open House for employees. The goal of the event was to first tell the Huckleberry logo and brand story to employees and then share it externally. This effort resulted in the majority of employees both understanding and embracing the change associated with a new logo and brand identity, paving the way for a relatively seamless external logo and brand launch.

Montgomery County, Va., has been steadfast and industrious throughout its rich history in agriculture, manufacturing, and technology. Over time, there are several narratives that have organically developed to tell Montgomery County's story. While these organic narratives are authentic, an effort to review them, find common themes, and then establish the values, visuals, and voice for Montgomery County was necessary. As a result, an internal Montgomery County Brand Committee was formed to develop an effective, consistent, and clearly defined brand identity and logo.

In his book, *The Dictionary of Brand*, Marty Neumeier defines a brand as "a person's perception of a product, service, experience, or organization." In short, a brand is much more than a logo. A brand is something that is unique and tells a story. It's something relatable and relevant to an organization. One thing the Montgomery County Brand Committee strived to do was to establish the values, voice, and visuals of Montgomery County, identifying that which was specific to the communities within Montgomery County to include all citizens whether they reside in the Town of Blacksburg, the Town of Christiansburg, or one of the six villages.

Members of the voluntary brand committee included:

- Derley Aguilar, PIO
- Emily Gibson, Planning & GIS
- Brian Hamilton, Economic Development
- Jennifer Harris, PIO
- Mitchell Haugh, Parks & Rec
- Irene Kilmer, Tourism
- Phil Martin, IT
- Clay McCoy, HR
- Ashlyn Shrewsbury, Economic Development
- Lizzie Street, PIO Intern

The committee met several times and worked through a variety of exercises to established: brand promise and voice; values; and visuals. Following are the results of the committee's efforts.

Brand Promise and Voice: Establishing the "Why?"

Montgomery County is steadfast in both its preservation of its history and the planning for its future. The County values integrity and strives to be helpful in providing superior public services and programs to citizens, businesses and visitors in an effort to build and maintain trust. The County takes pride in the all-encompassing and diverse natural resources and cultural experiences available to citizens, businesses, and visitors throughout its community.

The statement above defines Montgomery County's purpose – or its "Why?" Starting with the "Why?" allowed the committee to establish values and eventually create visuals that complemented the "Why?"

The voice of Montgomery County is courteous and authoritative. While maintaining the County's values, the voice is authoritative yet polite and respectful in every interaction.

Montgomery County Values

In January 2019, the brand committee surveyed employees to find internal themes associated with Montgomery County. Seventy-five responses were collected. In total, the employees were asked to respond to seven prompts, with the primary questions being the following:

1. How would you describe Montgomery County- the place/location?
2. What words would you use to describe Montgomery County - the local government entity?
3. What do you think the purpose of Montgomery County is? Why do you think it exists?

Once the results were in, the brand committee spent time evaluating what employees valued about Montgomery County, as well as discussing what the committee wanted citizens to see demonstrated by the county.

As a result, the following five values for Montgomery County were chosen. Please note the source for the word definitions below is Dictionary.com.

industrious | integrity | helpful | diverse | steadfast

industrious in·dus·tri·ous /in 'dəstrēəs / adj.
working energetically and devotedly;
hard-working; diligent.

Montgomery County employees are
industrious both in how they manage the
taxpayer's money and in how they approach
their position within the organization. Finding
efficient ways to manage both time and money
are valued qualities in County employees.

integrity in·teg·ri·ty /in'tegrədē/ noun
adherence to moral and ethical principles;
soundness of moral character; honesty.

helpful help·ful /'helpfəl/ adj.
giving or rendering aid or assistance; of
service.

The County values *integrity* and strives to be
helpful in providing superior public services
and programs to citizens, businesses and
visitors in an effort to build and maintain trust.

diverse di·verse /də 'vərs, dī 'vərs/ adj.
of a different kind, form, character, etc.;
unlike.

The all-encompassing and *diverse* natural
resources and cultural experiences available
to citizens, businesses and visitors in
Montgomery County provide broad and
enriching opportunities throughout our
community.

steadfast stead·fast /'sted fast/ adj.
fixed in direction; steadily directed.

The County is *steadfast* in both its preservation
of our history and the planning for our future.

Montgomery County Visuals

In keeping with colors that are already in use by the Montgomery County Seal, and the brand guides associated with the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center and Montgomery Matters, the brand committee identified the following colors for the county's overall brand. While these colors are already in use with many of the printed and digital items created by county employees, the brand committee took an extra step of matching them to Pantone colors for consistency purposes. Variations in CMYK and RGB were identified to accommodate most all print and digital needs. Below are the fonts and primary and secondary colors that were selected by the Brand Committee.

PRIMARY

NEUTRALS

ACCENT
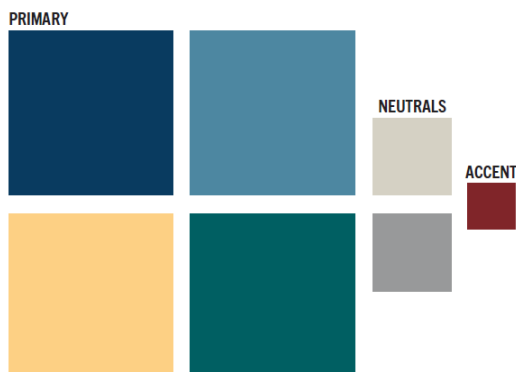
FONTS

Palatino Linotype
(acceptable substitute: Book Antiqua)

Montgomery County, Virginia
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Trade Gothic Next LT Pro
(acceptable substitute: Franklin Gothic Book)

Montgomery County, Virginia
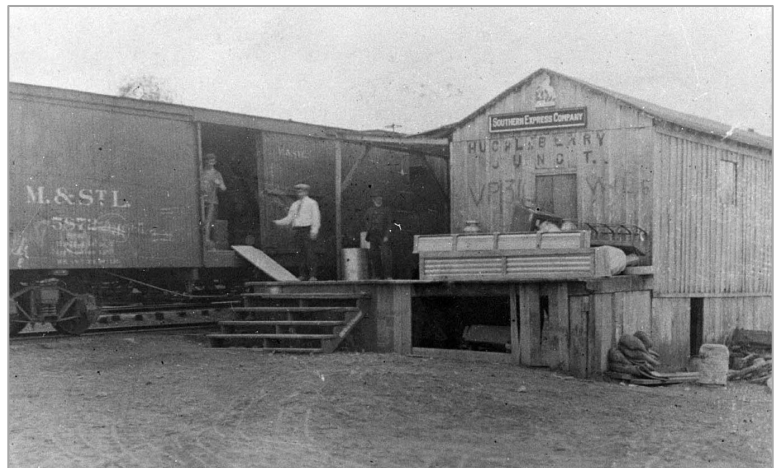MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA

PRIMARY

The recommendation of the brand committee was to continue to use the County Seal on official County business to include legal documentation, resolutions, proclamations, and other related items.

While the County Seal will remain untouched and have a defined role, the brand committee created a logo specific to Montgomery County. One thing that is relevant and relatable to Montgomery County is the Huckleberry, as it only grows in regions with elevations between 2,000 and 11,000 feet and in acidic mountain soil.
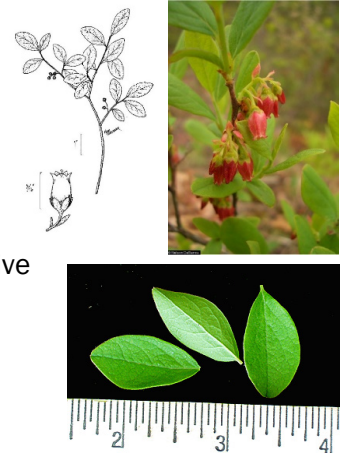
Naming things in honor of the Huckleberry is not new to Montgomery County. In fact, it all began in the early 1900s when railroad tracks were being constructed to connect Christiansburg to Blacksburg. The area along the now recreational Huckleberry Trail was a prime place to visit the build site for the promised railroad tracks to connect Christiansburg to Blacksburg in the early 1900s. At that time, citizens would pick and eat the huckleberries during their visit. In fact, on November 4, 2016, on an Appalachian history blog, Dave Tabler wrote, "These 'huckleberries' rapidly gained a wide reputation for the most delicious of pies, cobblers, and jams."

One of the earliest printed mentions of the completed railroad tracks that connected Christiansburg to Blacksburg was in May 1904, when a writer for *The Virginia Tech* publication wrote, "It appears that the 'Huckleberry System' will certainly extend their line to Blacksburg." In the years that followed, it became common to pick and eat the Huckleberries along the railroad tracks between Christiansburg and Blacksburg.

Armed with this knowledge, the brand committee decided to highlight

the Huckleberry. Montgomery County's Multimedia Producer, Derley Aguilar,

researched the Huckleberry plant native to Montgomery County and met with

Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension representatives to obtain renderings of a

Huckleberry plant. She then took the provided images of Montgomery County's native

Huckleberry plant and created a draft hand drawing of a Huckleberry logo for the

brand committee to review. What is pictured below is the final version based on

feedback both from the brand committee members and the Montgomery County

Leadership Team.

Main (Horizontal)

MONTGOMERY COUNTY VIRGINIA
EST. 1776

Vertical

MONTGOMERY
COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Square and Circle

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VA

MONTGOMERY
COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Sample **Department Variations**

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Building Inspections

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA
Parks & Recreation

The Huckleberry logo allows Montgomery County to share a relatable and

relevant story. The implications of using something as inclusive as the Huckleberry

is far reaching and can be tied to areas throughout Montgomery County. The

Montgomery County Board of Supervisors has supported the expansion of the

existing recreational Huckleberry Trail, through the Valley to Valley Trail Initiative, launched in the fall

of 2018. By way of the expansion of the existing Huckleberry Trail, the Valley to Valley Trail Initiative

VALLEY
TO
VALLEY
Trail Initiative

will help garner more recognition of the Huckleberry and provide another opportunity to share the Montgomery County story, enhancing brand awareness.

Internal Brand Launch: Sharing the Story

Once the creative deliverables were ready, the committee planned a Montgomery Brand Open House for employees. The event was held in September of 2019. Items to include a cup, a vinyl sticker, post-it notes, and an ink pen were ordered as giveaways for employees who attended the event. In addition, employees were provided light refreshments and encouraged to visit interactive displays. The goal of the event was to first tell the Huckleberry logo and brand story to employees and then share it externally.

Eighty-three employees and three Board members attended the Brand and Logo Open House, bringing the total number of attendees to 86. The feedback received from participants was very positive. Employees were engaged and interacted with the brand committee members; asking questions; and demonstrated enjoyment of the process and activities associated with learning more about Montgomery County's new branding and logo.

The employees who attended represented 22 offices and departments to include:

- Social Services
- Sheriff's Office
- Human Services/RSVP
- Animal Care and Adoption Center
- County Administration
- Parks & Rec
- Treasurer's Office

- Human Resources
- Economic Development
- Commissioner of Revenue
- Planning & GIS
- Finance
- County Attorney's Office
- IT

- Emergency Services
- HealthStat Clinic
- Voter Registration
- Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library
- General Services
- Inspections
- Environmental Services
- Housekeeping

There were three main interactive activities: a two-step interactive color naming activity; a video created by the Montgomery County Public Information Office that highlighted the history of the Huckleberry; and various presentation boards with information related to the new logo, colors, values, and County Seal.

Interactive Color Naming Activity

The interactive color naming activity was a two-step process. First, employees used provided iPads to click through the four different colors and learn more about the colors and the suggested names for each of them. Second, employees voted on each of the color names. As a result, the event attendees picked and now have ownership of the official names of the colors associated with Montgomery County's brand:

- Huckleberry Blue - 60 votes (Montgomery Blue - 20 votes)
- Riverside Blue - 46 votes (Blue Ridge Denim - 31 votes)
- Sunburst Yellow - 40 votes (Sawdust Yellow - 35 votes)
- Mountain Evergreen - 49 votes (Valley Teal - 31 votes)

To view the color name options, visit
https://indd.adobe.com/view/5de94332-104d-4357-97c1-52303bd370e7

HUCKLEBERRY BLUE

RIVERSIDE BLUE

SUNBURST

MOUNTAIN EVERGREEN

Huckleberry History video

The Montgomery County Public Information Office created a video that highlighted the history of the Huckleberry. The two minute, thirty-five second video was created and produced in-house. To view the video visit https://vimeo.com/360645486 (*Password:* huckleberry).
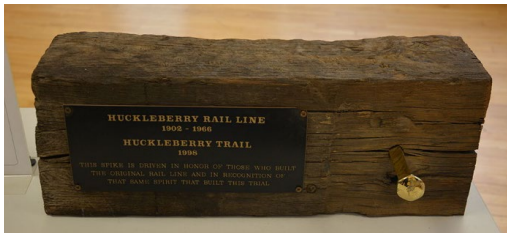
In addition to the video, an actual piece of the original Huckleberry train track that had been previously gifted to Montgomery County, was on display for the event attendees (pictured here).

Employee Giveaways

All participants were provided the following items with the new logo:

- cup,
- post-it notes,
- ink pen, and
- vinyl sticker.

In addition, attendees were entered to win one of 26 prizes that included a Huckleberry treat bag (12), which included Huckleberry hot chocolate; Huckleberry jam; Huckleberry lip balm; and sugar cookie with the new logo, or an insulated lunch bag (14) with the new logo. In addition, each brand committee member received an insulated lunch bag. The seven elected official on the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors also received a Huckleberry treat bag.

Results

After several months of work, the internal, voluntary and cross-departmental Montgomery County Brand Committee delivered a relevant and relatable logo and brand identity. This process did not cost Montgomery County the typical thousands of dollars associated with such creative

deliverables. The only cost associated with the project was applied to the internal logo and brand launch event for employees. The rationale was that first the employees needed to understand the "why" and have ownership in the process before they could help tell the Montgomery County story. In total, $2,191.69 was spent on the giveaway items; the display boards and supplies for the interactive displays; the prize items; and the refreshments. This effort resulted in the majority of employees both understanding and embracing the change associated with a new logo and brand identity, paving the way for a relatively seamless external logo and brand launch.