Hudson Valley Biogas
Brand & Style Guide

Color, Typography, Visual System, Voice, and Promotional Standards
(Website + Partnerships + Public Speaking)

Version 1.0 | Date: 2025-12-26
Owner: Hudson Valley Biogas Initiative

1. Brand essence

Hudson Valley Biogas (HVB) is a partner-powered initiative that turns regional organic waste and ecological maintenance into local energy, soil value, jobs, and community resilience. Our brand must feel simultaneously: (1) grounded in science and infrastructure, (2) human and community-rooted, and (3) optimistic-but-honest about the work required.

1.1 Positioning in one sentence

HVB is the Hudson Valley's grant-ready, community-trust-first project engine for circular organics infrastructure - connecting municipalities, advocates, and developers to ship pilots that can scale.

1.2 Brand pillars

- Truth-first systems thinking: show the flows, show the constraints, show the math (no greenwash).
- Local value creation: make waste and maintenance streams pay rent as local energy and soil outcomes.
- Community trust + Environmental Justice: siting and benefits designed with people, not done to them.
- Partner-powered momentum: HVB coordinates; partners execute; pilots generate proof and replication.

1.3 Brand personality

Tone characteristics (what people should feel):

- Competent and calm (we are building real infrastructure).
- Invitational and collaborative (this is a coalition, not a club).
- Plainspoken and practical (avoid consultant fog).
- Curious and systems-literate (we love complexity, but we explain it).
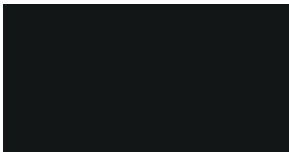
2. Visual identity

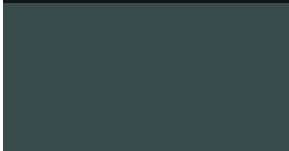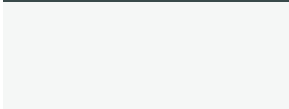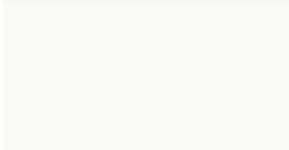The visual system should signal: Hudson Valley landscape + circular flows + infrastructure pragmatism. Avoid the generic 'leaf clipart' sustainability aesthetic. Prefer subtle textures, maps, diagrams, and honest photography.

2.1 Primary color palette

Color	Hex	Swatch	Use
Hudson Deep Green	#0E3B2E		Primary brand color. Headlines, nav, primary buttons, key highlights.

River Teal	#1F6F62		Secondary. Section accents, links, diagrams, map highlights.
Beacon Amber	#E9A923		Action accent. CTAs, highlights, badges. Use sparingly.
Soil Umber	#7A4E2D		Warm accent. Biochar/soil themes, callouts, secondary badges.

2.2 Neutrals and backgrounds

Neutral	Hex	Swatch	Use
Biochar Black	#121617		Primary text on light backgrounds; dark sections.
Slate	#394A4A		Secondary text, UI borders, subdued icons.
Mist	#F5F7F6		Primary page background.
Paper	#FAFAF7		Alt background; cards; long-form reading pages.
Fog Line	#D9E1DE		Dividers, table rules, subtle outlines.

2.3 Functional colors (UI states)

State	Hex	Swatch	Use
Success	#1F8A5B		Confirmations, positive metrics, completed stages.

Warning	#C97D1A		Cautions, pending actions, deadlines.
Error	#B42318		Form errors, failures, blockers.
Info	#1E4E5C		Informational callouts, help text, tooltips.

2.4 Accessibility rules (non-negotiable)

Use high contrast for body text and CTAs. As a rule of thumb:
- Body text should be Biochar Black (#121617) on Mist/Paper backgrounds.
- Primary buttons should be Hudson Deep Green with white text.
- Never place River Teal text on Beacon Amber without a dark outline or switching text to Biochar Black.

Before publishing, check color contrast (WCAG AA) for any new UI component.

2.5 Typography

Recommended fonts (web-safe, easy to implement):

- Headings: Sora (600-700)
- Body/UI: Inter (400-600)
- Monospace (code/data): JetBrains Mono or Courier New

Type scale (desktop baseline)

H1 48/56, H2 36/44, H3 28/36, H4 22/30, Body 16/24, Small 14/20, Caption 12/16

Copy length + readability

Aim for 60-80 characters per line on long-form pages. Use generous spacing and short paragraphs. Use lists to reduce cognitive load. Prefer concrete nouns and verbs over abstractions.

2.6 Layout & UI system

Grid and spacing:

- 8px spacing scale: 8, 16, 24, 32, 48, 64.
- Max content width: 1100-1200px for reading pages; wider hero sections allowed.
- Card radius: 12px; buttons 10-12px; inputs 10px.
- Shadows: soft and minimal (avoid heavy drop-shadows).

Primary: Hudson Deep Green background, white text. Label in verbs: 'Book a fit call', 'Propose a pilot site'.

Secondary: outline Hudson Deep Green, transparent background, dark text.

Tertiary/Ghost: text-only, River Teal hover underline.

2.7 Background textures (use to avoid flatness)

Use subtle, repeating textures in large light areas to create identity without clutter. Store textures in: website/public/assets/textures/

- tx_topo-hudson-lines_tile.svg - Signature. Use on Home hero, About, and Data/Maps sections at very low opacity.
- tx_circular-flow_tile.svg - Use on How It Works, Systems Library, Pilot pipeline pages.
- tx_biochar-grain_tile.png - Use on Biochar/soil content sections; optional card backgrounds.
- tx_water-ripple_tile.svg - Use on invasive aquatic feedstock stories, restoration content.
- tx_recycled-paper_tile.png - Use behind long-form manifesto/pledge pages for warmth.

2.8 Photography & imagery

Preferred image categories:

- Hudson Valley landscape + waterways (place identity).
- People doing real work (community, operations, restoration, facilities).
- Infrastructure close-ups (pipes, tanks, compost windrows, transfer stations) - honest, not glossy.
- Maps, diagrams, and flow visuals (make the invisible visible).

Image treatment (consistency)

Keep saturation slightly restrained. Prefer warm-neutral highlights with deep greens preserved. Avoid heavy Instagram filters. For hero images, use a dark-to-transparent gradient overlay in Hudson Deep Green to ensure legible white headings.

2.9 Iconography & illustration

Use line icons with rounded caps, 1.5-2px stroke weight, and minimal detail. Prefer icons that resemble diagrams and maps. Avoid overly cute or cartoonish styles.

2.10 Data visualization (charts and maps)

Principles: reduce noise, emphasize comparisons, and annotate assumptions.

- Use neutrals for axes/gridlines; color only for data series.
- Default series colors: Hudson Deep Green (primary), River Teal (secondary), Beacon Amber (highlight).

- Never use more than 4 categorical colors on one chart without a legend and accessible labels.
- Maps: muted base map, strong highlights, always include legend + sources + dates.

2.11 CSS variables (for implementation)

```css
/* HVB Brand Tokens */
:root{
  --hvb-green: #0E3B2E;
  --hvb-teal:  #1F6F62;
  --hvb-amber: #E9A923;
  --hvb-umber: #7A4E2D;

  --hvb-black: #121617;
  --hvb-slate: #394A4A;
  --hvb-mist:  #F5F7F6;
  --hvb-paper: #FAFAF7;
  --hvb-fog:   #D9E1DE;

  --hvb-success: #1F8A5B;
  --hvb-warning: #C97D1A;
  --hvb-error:   #B42318;
  --hvb-info:    #1E4E5C;

  --radius-card: 12px;
  --radius-btn:  12px;
  --shadow-1: 0 8px 20px rgba(0,0,0,.08);
}
```

3. Voice, messaging, and promotional style

HVB's voice must make people feel: (1) invited, (2) informed, and (3) confident that this is real work with real outcomes. We use plain language, we show our assumptions, and we avoid moralizing.

3.1 Voice rules

- Lead with outcomes and next steps, not ideology.
- Use verbs and specifics: 'divert', 'generate', 'restore', 'fund', 'build'.
- Be honest about constraints: permitting, interconnection, siting, feedstock contracts.
- Avoid buzzword overload. Use 'circular economy' and 'systems thinking' as explanations, not slogans.
- Never claim impact without a method: cite sources, ranges, and uncertainty.

3.2 Message pillars (what we repeat everywhere)

Make the invisible flows visible: We map waste and maintenance streams and show practical pathways to circular value.

Build trust, then build projects: Community trust and Environmental Justice are part of the design - not an afterthought.

Grant-ready pilots that scale: We package pilots so municipalities and developers can move fast with funding alignment.

Partners do the work; HVB coordinates: The initiative runs on partnerships and repeatable playbooks.

3.3 Taglines (options)
- From scraps to systems.
- Organics into local energy and soil value - built with the Hudson Valley.
- Circular infrastructure you can fund, permit, and replicate.
- Make the Hudson Valley's metabolism work for its communities.

3.4 Calls-to-action (standard wording)
- Book a fit call
- Propose a pilot site
- Join as a partner
- Request a speaking session
- Get the whitepapers (email access)

3.5 Social + newsletter style
Posting rhythm (suggested):

- Weekly: one 'systems win' update (progress, partner spotlight, or a simple graphic).
- Monthly: a longer briefing (pilot status, funding windows, and a specific ask).
- Quarterly: a public 'state of the initiative' summary.

Format templates
Use this structure for most posts:

Hook (1 line) -> Context (2-3 lines) -> Proof/Details (bullet list) -> Clear ask (1 line) -> Link/CTA

4. Website-specific design standards

4.1 Page look and feel
The website should feel like a high-trust civic infrastructure initiative: clean layouts, legible typography, subtle textures, and strong CTAs. Use diagrams and maps as first-class visuals. Keep animation minimal and purposeful.

4.2 Navigation and conversion
Always keep two high-priority actions visible: (1) Book a fit call (Calendly) and (2) Propose a pilot site. Every page should end with a clear next step.

4.3 Gated resources

Gating should feel like access, not restriction: 'Enter your email to receive the whitepaper pack and pilot templates.' Keep all summaries public; gate only full download bundles and any sensitive partner documents.

5. Governance (how we stay consistent)

Maintain a single source of truth for brand assets and rules.

- Store this guide in founding-documentation/ and update version numbers when changed.
- Create a shared 'Asset Register' listing official logos, textures, icons, and approved photo sets.
- When in doubt: choose clarity over cleverness, and proof over hype.

End of document.