



2022 - 2025
DEPARTMENT
BUSINESS PLAN
Communications

APRIL 2022
Date of last revision



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Strathcona County's communications needs are met by a network of communications, marketing and design professionals, residing within a corporate Communications department, as well as individual operational departments. Together, we provide strategic communications planning and advice and we strive to maintain and enhance the County's reputation. As much as Communications has been able to work collaboratively with many departments to adjust, support and implement rapidly changing communications efforts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the department is looking forward to not having to constantly work in crisis communications mode.

Despite the pandemic, we also managed to continue to provide business areas with high levels of support for media relations, issues management, council communications, campaigns and public engagement including hundreds of media requests and public engagement surveys. Additionally, we also conducted a communications review that allowed us to further explore current roles, supports and services in communications and public engagement, which resulted in a slight restructure of the corporate communications team and discovery of opportunities for further corporate-wide efficiencies.

Over the next business planning cycle, Communications will be focused on anchoring our County's storytelling efforts in our strategic plan, and looking at ways that we can enhance and improve our communication channels and engagement with residents, businesses and staff.

Cheryl Oxford

Director, Communications

PLANNING FOUNDATION

STRATHCONA COUNTY VISION

Living in Strathcona County

Strathcona County, located in the heart of Alberta, is an energetic and thriving community. A leader in North America’s petroleum industry and a champion for advancing diverse agricultural business, we use our energy to power our new tomorrow.

We are a specialized municipality and work cooperatively with our urban and rural residents to govern as a single municipality. Proud of our distinct governance model, we promote and demonstrate our achievements.

We are a welcoming place to live and attract people of all ages, cultures and walks of life to join us. Families thrive in our dynamic, caring and safe community.

We strive to be a model of ecological integrity, protecting our environment and preserving our agricultural heritage.

Investment in infrastructure, quality services, cultural and recreational programs, and facilities is a priority and sets us apart.



Goal 1
Build strong communities to support the diverse needs of residents



Goal 5
Foster collaboration through regional, community and governmental partnerships



Goal 2
Manage, invest and plan for sustainable municipal infrastructure



Goal 6
Provide facilities and services that are available and accessible to residents



Goal 3
Cultivate economic diversification, within the petro-chemical industry and beyond, through a business-friendly environment



Goal 7
Provide opportunities for public engagement and communication



Goal 4
Ensure effective stewardship of water, land, air and energy resources



Goal 8
Foster an environment for safe communities



Goal 9
Continuously improving the way we work, as one organization, in an agile and sustainable manner

CORPORATE MISSION

We are committed to working collaboratively, efficiently and effectively to provide quality service delivery to citizens, business and industry alike.

CORPORATE VALUES

Our values help to form our organizational identity and define our culture.

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|--------------------|---|
| Integrity | We demonstrate ethical standards and behaviours We display honest behaviour at all times We do what we say we will do |
| Respect | We treat others with care and dignity We pay attention to each other We welcome a variety and diversity of ideas |
| Safety | We consistently demonstrate safe work practices We build an environment of openness and trust We make it safe for each other to voice opinions or concerns |
| Fairness | We consider how our actions might affect others We treat everyone impartially and equitably We are willing to share the reasoning behind our thinking and decisions |
| Cooperation | We support, assist and learn from each other We give credit to others for their contributions We compromise when needed to achieve common goals |

DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

In support of Strathcona County's strategic direction and business goals, the Communications department advances the reputation and positive image of the organization through open, transparent and meaningful stakeholder communication and engagement.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Communications department is made up of 16 professionals, who operate independently as a team of specialists, and in partnership with other internal and external resources.

Communications' functions are governed and guided by all policies, practices, acts and plans (and any related procedures) to ensure professional and ethical conduct, and alignment with other corporate requirements.

Of specific interest to Communications are the following:

- [Public Engagement Policy](#) (GOV-002-025)

- [Communications Policy \(GOV-002-029\)](#)
- [Social Media Policy \(GOV-002-028\)](#)
- [Social Media Guidelines](#)
- [Visual Identity Guidelines](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

DEPARTMENT CORE BUSINESS FUNCTIONS AND PROGRAMS (SUMMARY OF OPERATIONAL PLANS)

COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTATION, PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Provide strategic communication direction, consultation and training for client departments, executive and elected officials. Assess communications needs, develop communications plans and messaging, determine best approaches to communication challenges and measure results of campaigns.

Foster positive working environments with internal and external stakeholders to meet strategic direction and business goals. Advance the organization's reputation and enhance stakeholder understanding of the organization's priorities, programs and position.

Accountable for monitoring and responding to media and social media, issues management and crisis communications and coordinating the storytelling efforts of the organization.

2022 – 2025 FORECAST

Using the revised strategic plan as its anchor, this area will collaborate with departments to further the County's storytelling to bring the strategic plan to life across communication plans and channels. This area will also support corporate and change management projects that require coordinated, cross-departmental communications focus such as Strathcona County Business Transformation, Community Safety and Well-Being, Census and COVID-19 pandemic recovery.

Updating the County's crisis communications plan including adding a communications protocol with community partners when enacting the Violence, Trauma and Suicide Prevention Protocol will also be a focus. This includes planning and executing further crisis communications training with communications staff, key crisis responders and leaders within the County as well as partners. Further media training for departmental spokespeople will also be provided.

COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS

Manage development, evolution and ongoing maintenance of County internal and external websites and social media tools, and proactively monitor the industry for trends, opportunities and challenges. Develop, advise on, and oversee standards for corporate websites, social media tools and other corporate communications channels. Administer, oversee, and provide training and support for corporate communications tools and applications (web content, event calendars, survey and electronic newsletters, Digital Asset Manager, social media tools). Provide consultation on web analytics, online marketing, web usability, accessibility, and custom website applications.

Responsible for the overarching employee communications strategy including furthering the County's People Plan in partnership with HR and other departments to ensure internal communication channels for staff are effective and help foster staff engagement.

2022 – 2025 FORECAST

The team continues to explore opportunities and to implement internal and external website improvements and enhancements to ensure our internal and external stakeholders communication needs are met.

Continued focus on web accessibility, usability and monitoring for new technological trends capable of enhancing the delivery of municipal digital communications in partnership with the Information Technology Services department.


The team will also further the development and training related to corporate digital communication tools including video creation and editing, livestreaming, finalizing an integrated digital asset management system for County photographs and video as well as shared files for creative graphic design purposes.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Guide public engagement efforts at Strathcona County, based on the Public Engagement Policy and Framework, which outlines a process for planning, implementing and evaluating these activities. Provide guidance, analysis and advice on corporate and department surveys and coordinate the County's annual public satisfaction survey. This program also manages the online research panel.

2022 – 2025 FORECAST

The team recently conducted a review of its public engagement services within the County as well as resident views on public engagement. The team will be focused on making enhancements and improvements based on this feedback.



These enhancements and improvements include but are not limited to increasing resident awareness of where their engagement input was utilized/how the information was used to make changes or final decisions, review of the County's online research panel and tools as well as improved focus on strategic public engagement to ensure reduction in engagement and survey fatigue.

The team will continue to support the County's public engagement efforts on key strategic projects requiring public engagement; however, they are also focused on longer term strategic planning for public engagement of the future.

DEPARTMENT ANNUAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

DEPARTMENT SUPPORT ROLES (ANNUAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS)

The list below includes initiatives that this department will be supporting during the 2022 – 2025 Business Plan timeline. Lead departments are responsible for providing clear plans to support departments. These plans are to advise support departments on particulars of the support required and timing.

- Annual Information Technology Corporate Infrastructure Replacement Program – Municipal
Lead: Information Technology Services
- Annual Facility Capital Lifecycle Program
Lead: Facility Services

DEPARTMENT SUPPORT ROLES (IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES)

The list below includes initiatives that this department will be supporting during the 2022 – 2025 Business Plan timeline. Lead departments are responsible for providing clear plans to support departments. These plans are to advise support departments on particulars of the support required and timing.

- Business Expense Policy Review and Update
Lead: Financial and Strategic Services
- Strathcona County Business Transformation (SCBT) Project
Lead: Financial and Strategic Services
- Service Definition Project
Lead: Financial and Strategic Services
- Enterprise Risk Management Program
Lead: Financial and Strategic Services
- Occupational Health and Safety/ Disability Management Technology Project
Lead: Human Resources
- Succession Planning Strategy
Lead: Human Resources
- New Occupational Health and Safety Legislation Implementation
Lead: Human Resources
- Corporate Inclusion and Diversity Training
Lead: Human Resources and Family and Community Services
- Digital Workplace Program
Lead: Information Technology Services
- Transportation Tactical Asset Management Plan
Lead: Transportation and Agriculture Services
- Electronic Procurement System Update
Lead: Financial and Strategic Services
- Occupational Health and Safety/Disability Management Technology Project
Lead: Human Resources

DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

DEPARTMENT SUPPORT ROLES (STRATEGIC INITIATIVES)

The list below includes initiatives that this department will be supporting during the 2022 – 2025 Business Plan timeline. Lead departments are responsible for providing clear plans to support departments. These plans are to advise support departments on particulars of the support required and timing.

- Event and sport tourism initiatives - 2023 Special Olympics Alberta Winter Games
Lead: Recreation, Parks and Culture
- Multi-Purpose Agricultural Facility Development
Lead: Recreation, Parks and Culture
- Heartland Drive - Range Road 214 and Township Road 554 Intersection Improvements
Lead: Transportation Planning and Engineering
- Wye Road Upgrade - Range Road 231, Wye Road to Hillshire Boulevard
Lead: Transportation Planning and Engineering
- Wye Road Upgrade - Sherwood Drive from Ash Street to Village Drive
Lead: Transportation Planning and Engineering
- Broadway Boulevard and Broadview Drive Roundabout Intersection Upgrade
Lead: Transportation Planning and Engineering