



City of Kenora

Corporate Communications Plan and Strategy

2025 - 2027

Photo Credit: Kim Pirie-Milko



Lake of the Woods
KENORA



Corporate Communications Plan and Strategy 2025 - 2027

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Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of reconciliation, the City of Kenora acknowledges that we are on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe of Treaty #3 and the Métis people. The City of Kenora was originally the land base of one collective First Nation community, which was separated into three communities now known as Wauzhushk Onigum, Niisaachewan, and Washagamis Bay First Nations.

Kenora now sustains many others, all of whom have been welcomed to peacefully share and care for these ancestral Lands and Waters. To support stewardship of the land, the City recognizes the importance of a strong relationship with our Treaty #3 partners. The City of Kenora acknowledges that our economy greatly benefits from the Anishinaabe and Métis that live in and around the City.

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Corporate Communications Plan

2025 - 2027

The Corporate Communications Plan aims to enhance internal and external communications within the City of Kenora. Its goal is to establish coordinated and effective communication that meets the needs of Council, employees, and the public. This plan is for all City employees, partners, Council, Boards, and Committees of Council who engage with the communities we serve.

Photo Credit: Kim Pirie-Milko



Introduction

The updated Corporate Communication Plan for the City of Kenora aims to enhance both internal and external communications, aligning with the goals of the City’s Strategic Plan, ‘Charting Our Course 2027’.

Key documents are frequently referenced in this Corporate Communications Plan include:

City’s Strategic Plan: Charting Our Course 2027

The City of Kenora's Strategic Plan outlines our strategic goals and plans for development. The Charting Our Course 2027 Strategic Plan makes sure the City uses resources and energy towards projects that are beneficial for everyone who lives, invests, visits, and plays in our community.

Corporate Communications Plan

The Corporate Communications Plan aims to enhance internal and external communications within the City of Kenora. Its goal is to establish coordinated and effective communication that meets the needs of Council, employees, and the public. This plan is for all City employees, partners, Council, Boards, and Committees of Council who engage with the communities we serve.

Communications Strategy

This is an evolving strategy for the entire organization that outlines specific goals, objectives, and actions. The Communications Strategy includes a three-year implementation plan that is aligned with the priorities of the City’s Strategic Plan and Corporate Communications Plan. The Communications Strategy will enable Council and Senior Administration to measure and understand how well our communication efforts are working.





Corporate Communications Plan Objective

The purpose of this Corporate Communications Plan is to enhance both internal and external communications within the City of Kenora organization. Its objective is to establish well-coordinated, effectively managed communications that address the information needs of the Council, employees, and the general public. This plan is designed for all City employees, partners, Council, Boards, and Committees of Council who engage with the communities we serve

We have recognized the growing demand for open and two-way communication, particularly as it pertains to listening to citizens, gathering feedback, and the expanding influence of technology in accessing information through social media presence.

About the Corporate Communications Plan

All City employees have a role to play to ensure the success of this Corporate Communications Plan (hereafter referred to as the 'Plan'). By working collaboratively across departments to ensure the City's communication efforts are well coordinated and inclusive to the needs of partners, we will achieve a more informed and engaged workforce, community, and Council.

While this Plan spans a three-year period, we recognize the communications landscape may not look the same year-to-year as it does today. As such, this plan is a living document. The vision and guiding principles outlined here will serve as a foundation for our efforts, providing clear direction to follow while allowing us the flexibility to adapt as necessary.



Background

In 2021, in preparation for an updated Strategic Plan, the City undertook a Community Survey launched and completed by a third-party. The survey was completed by a total of 1,007 respondents who live, work, and access services in Kenora.

The purpose of the survey was to reflect and assess the progress made by the City since its previous Strategic Plan (2015) and to better understand the needs and priorities of community members for the next five years. Most respondents were long-term residents of Kenora (having lived in Kenora for more than 20 years) and the most common household size was two people (36.7%) and four people (23.3%).

In 2022, the City initiated the development of a Strategic Plan aimed at guiding its direction through to 2027. This Strategic Plan entitled 'Charting Our Course 2027', identified priorities and action items for the City to engage in to move forward. One of the core values highlighted in the Strategic Plan is the commitment to respectful and inclusive communication with staff, the community, and partners.

Recognizing the critical role of effective communication, the City is focused on enhancing both internal and external communication strategies to better engage and inform staff, the public, and partners. This focus aligns with Goal 4.4 of the Strategic Plan, which seeks to “enhance City communications to the community on municipal services, developments, and affairs.” The development of this Plan and the Communications Strategy is guided by the vision and goals set forth in 'Charting Our Course 2027', ensuring alignment with the City's objectives to meet the communication needs of both residents and employees.





Photo Credit: Kim Pirie-Milko

The importance of communication was further emphasized through the results of the Strategic Plan Community Survey, conducted between May and August 2021. The survey revealed that communications were rated as the area the City had improved the most over the past five years. Building on this momentum and acknowledging the rapidly evolving landscape of communication, the City aims to continuously improve its internal and external communication efforts.

In Winter of 2022, the City underwent a Communications Audit, which highlighted that the Communications team is motivated and earnestly invested in enhancing their communication practises. The audit also highlighted the importance of a balanced approach to communications, with the City website identified as the primary source of information for residents, media, and partners.

Recommendations from the audit included updates to the website to improve calls-to-action, simplify access to frequently requested information, and enhance search functions and search engine optimization. For social media, the audit advised tailoring content to specific platform strategies and standardizing branding across all City social media accounts.

The audit also made several internal communication recommendations, such as expanding communication channels to reach employees without regular email access, improving interdepartmental collaboration to strengthen communication with the public, and establishing a Communications Committee, a social media sub-committee, and shared tools to optimize the use of internal resources.

These recommendations from the audit are addressed in the accompanying Communications Strategy, ensuring that the City can effectively enhance its communication practices and better serve its residents, media, and partners.

This Plan and Communications Strategy were developed through a comprehensive review of internal strategic documents, along with valuable feedback from City staff across various roles. Input was gathered through one-on-one interviews and department team discussions.

Traditional and Digital Communications

Traditional Communications

Refers to the sharing of information for any purpose via commonly used traditional tools such as media relations (media releases, advisories, interviews), print (brochures, posters, newspaper ads, direct mail through Canada Post, tax bill inserts), or radio.

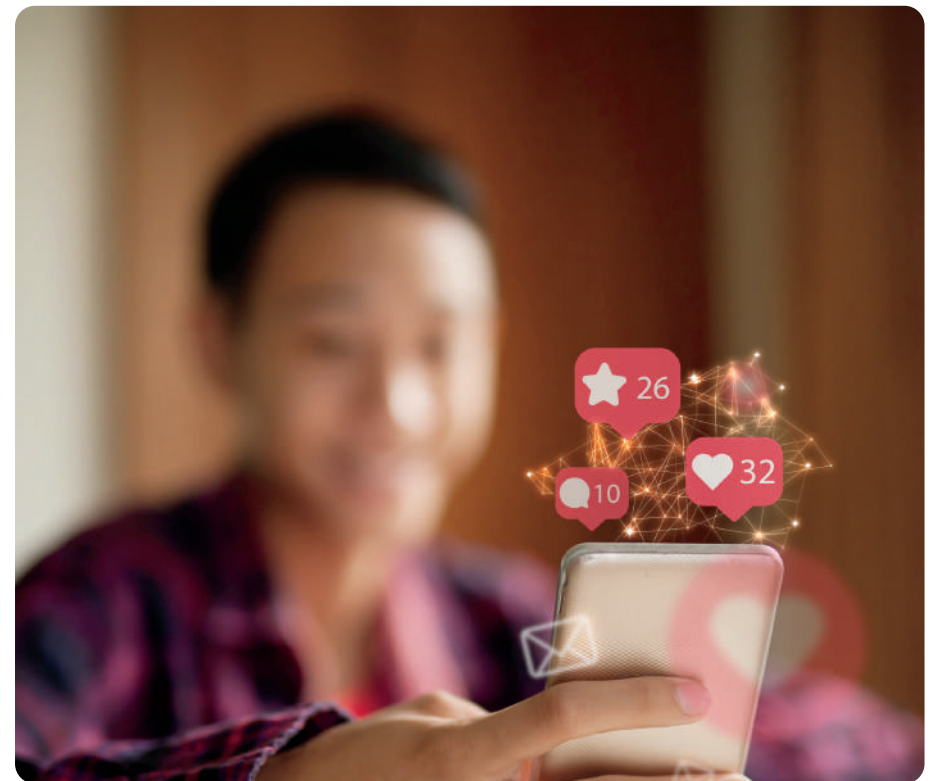
Social Media

Social media is a way for people to connect and communicate online through interactive platforms (i.e. Facebook, Instagram). These platforms allow users to create, share, and research content such as ideas, interests, and other forms of expression. Social media allows people to create virtual communities, where people with similar interests can interact, share, and learn from each other. People use social media to share idea, updates, pictures, videos, and connect with others. Users can engage by liking, commenting, or sharing posts.

Social media plays a key role in spreading information and keeping people engaged, making it an essential part of our Communication Strategy. It serves as an effective channel for disseminating routine information or urgent municipal matters, as well as a critical tool for reaching the public during emergencies. As shown in the 2021 Community Survey, 52% of respondents stated that social media is their preferred method of communication and receiving information.

Online Communications

Refers to the communications of information through the use of the Internet for any purpose (i.e.: information sharing, marketing, engagement). There are several different general categories of online communications, including, but not limited to website, email, social media, video and audio conferencing (i.e. Zoom and Teams), online advertising, and email marketing (i.e.: survey emails, newsletters, customer re-engagement).



Citizen Request Portal

In 2023, the City launched a self-reporting online tool that allows citizens to submit a Request for Service through Kenora.ca. The Citizen Request Portal is an online form where residents can log their requests directly for a specific service need or notify a City department that a scheduled service is required or was not provided on time. There are over 20 service request types including top requests: potholes, general road maintenance, snow plowing, bylaw inquiries, water and sewer issues, washroom maintenance, animal control, missed garbage and recycle pick-up, and several other service-related topics.

This tool now provides Administration with valuable data and identifies patterns of requests in areas of the City. This allows City departments to better plan long term for service delivery and areas that may require capital works. Regular public promotion for use by the public and encouraging residents to submit requests through the self-reporting portal rather than posting informally on social media will continue.



Digital Signage Messaging

In 2015, the City launched digital signage for internal messaging to reach staff across all departments. These displays, located in key staff areas, are regularly updated with important messages for staff, ensuring efficient communication for all employees, regardless of email access.

Messages include departmental updates, staff accolades, notices about events, water advisories, road closures, road work, Social Committee events, and important information for employees.

Since its successful launch in 2015, the digital signage was expanded to key public-facing locations, such as City Hall, Moncrief Construction Sports Centre, Bowman Electric Keewatin Memorial Arena, Kenora Public Library, and the Discovery Centre. This expansion allowed the City to communicate with the public through digital messaging in high traffic areas. The external displays feature a range of public-facing content, including public notices, City-ran community events, and other essential information for the general public.

In winter 2024, the digital signage systems were upgraded for improved functionality and efficiency, with plans to encourage further use by City departments for both internal and external communication.

Updated Corporate Website

In 2025, the City will be updating the Kenora.ca website to stay ahead in the evolving digital landscape. The website serves as the primary communication tool for sharing information with the public, encouraging users to visit our website for more details through various communication touchpoints. The website highlights the City's core services, with links to external webpages or microsites for departments such as Recreation, Tourism, Economic Development, the Kenora Public Library, and The Muse.

It is essential to consistently link back to the Kenora.ca website across all communication touchpoints (e.g. social media posts). This practice reinforces to the public that the website as the most reliable source for up-to-date information. Furthermore, it is crucial to regularly review your department's webpages and connect with the Communications Department to ensure that all related content related to your services and programs are current and accurate.

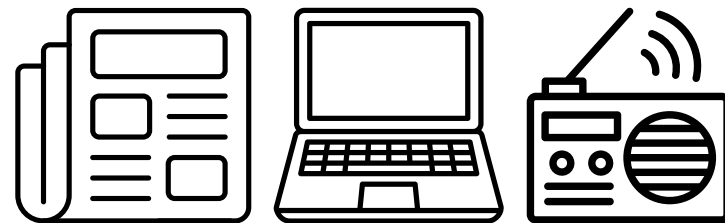
The new website will include improved search engine optimization (SEO), an intuitive user-friendly search bar, strong City branding, and improved website structure. These updates will optimize the public user experience, drive greater online traffic, and ensure that the site supports emerging technologies to provide an effective way to communicate with the public.

Integration of Traditional and Online Communications

While the trend in communications is increasingly focused on establishing a strong online presence, there remains a significant portion of the Kenora population that continues to rely on traditional methods.

A balanced approach, blending traditional established communication channels such as print with the expansive reach of social media and other digital communications is essential. This approach ensures that the City can effectively engage with a broad audience range, including both those less familiar with online tools and those with limited access to computers and the internet. It also guarantees that residents receive information in multiple formats they are comfortable with, and in ways that align with their preferences and expectations.

Additionally, by repeating the same messaging across various formats, the City can enhance the reach of key messages, ensuring they resonate more strongly with the public. This repetition helps reinforce important information and increases the likelihood of public awareness.



Commitment to the Plan

Council

Council supporting the overall Plan and Communications Strategy is the first step in the commitment to the Plan. Once the Plan and Communications Strategy are approved, it will establish the expectations for communication by City staff and the vision Council has for communication both internally and externally. The adoption by Council will provide direction to City Administration to implement the various actions recommended in the Communications Strategy.



Council can actively support the Plan and Communications Strategy in several meaningful ways:

- **Review and Adhere to Policies:** Familiarize themselves with and follow the updated Social Media Terms of Use and Social Media Policy.
- **Engage and Share City Social Media:** Actively follow the City's corporate and departmental social media channels and like and share City posts. Council members should focus on sharing and liking posts from these official City pages to promote positivity and accurate information while avoiding engagement or negative comments on non-City-owned social pages.
- **Direct the Public to Kenora.ca:** Encourage the community to visit Kenora.ca for the latest updates and information.
- **Participate in Public Engagements:** Attend and engage in public City-hosted engagement opportunities, like town halls and media scrums. This builds trust and transparency with residents, showing Council's commitment to listening to community concerns and incorporating their perspectives into decision-making.
- **Reference Key Documents:** Regularly review the Corporate Communications Plan, Communications Strategy, and the Charting Our Course 2027 Strategic Plan to stay aligned with the City's goals.
- **Engage Indigenous and Treaty 3 Partners:** Proactively involve Indigenous and Treaty 3 partners early in the planning stages of new projects and initiatives to ensure inclusive collaboration.
- **Annual Meetings with First Nations:** Commit to annual meetings with First Nations partners to discuss shared concerns and explore pathways for enhanced collaboration.

Chief Administrative Officer

As Council's single employee, it is the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)'s role to support the initiatives and strategies identified in the Plan and Communications Strategy and ensure they are implemented throughout the organization. Following the acceptance of the Plan and Communications Strategy by Council the CAO will work with the Senior Leadership Team to work with their division leads and key staff in developing, implementing and monitoring various key components of the Plan and Communications Strategy.

City Management Commitment

The success of this Plan will centre on Senior Leadership Teams commitment to the plan and the actions outlined in the Communications Strategy. Improving communication skills related to such matters as conducting effective employee and public information exchange forums, working with the news media and providing superior customer service with support Senior Managers efforts to progressively apply and promote effective two-way communication internally and externally.

The Senior Leadership Team will hold a leadership role in driving the Plan and Communications Strategy and incorporating its content into each of their departments to ensure continuity throughout the entire organization. This support will form the basis for a collaborative approach to sharing information through the processes established in the Communication Plan.



All Municipal Staff

The success of the day-to-day services that the City operates depends exclusively on municipal staff. It is essential that all staff recognize the importance of communication and positive image. Although a strong Senior Leadership Team commitment to the Plan and Communications Strategy is imperative, it is the front-line staff who interact and engage with the public daily. Their ideas and positive messages are the key to our success.

The City of Kenora encourages all municipal employees when engaging with the public, to keep communication positive about policies, programs, services and initiatives.

Transparency and openness in local government fosters a workforce and community that are more informed, trusting, and engaged. It enables informed public participation in the development of policy, ensures fairness in decision making and enables the public to assess performance. Employees serve the public best by communicating openly and responsively about the policies, programs, services and initiatives they help to administer and by ensuring citizens have ready access to similar sources of information in other Departments.



Photo Credit: Jacob Boomsma

Internal Communications

Introduction

While technology has opened endless new possibilities for communicating with staff, in practice, the best results are often achieved through a mix of traditional and contemporary methods that emphasize two-way communication. If internal communications are to be fully effective, management has to have a genuine commitment to creating dialogue with staff that involves, as well as informs them.

Communication among Senior Leadership Team, department managers and leads, and employees must be open, timely and collaborative to achieve municipal goals and to ensure quality communications services for the public.

Internal communication must be a two-way process. Inviting and listening to employee ideas, concerns and suggestions for achieving results, avoiding and resolving problems and improving service are important and proven management practices that can contribute to the maximization of staff performance and workplace satisfaction. Actively engaging employees in the processes of public communications and continuous improvement allows the City to tap into a vast pool of intelligence, knowledge and expertise. Positioned to contribute to the successful growth of the organization, employees can be valuable allies in the implementation of external communications initiatives.

To build and foster their practical knowledge, employee training, orientation and involvement in internal communications must encompass the entire process, from issue/project identification to responsibility for plan implementation. The skills development process must also involve a working appreciation for a range of communication tools, including published materials, visual elements, computer-based applications, oral presentations, staff forums, and educational events.





The City should provide its senior managers, departmental leads, and employees at all levels with an orientation of the Communications department's function and planning process, as well as of their associated role and responsibilities.

Incoming employees should also be oriented on the City's Communication department function and informed about their roles and responsibilities. See section 'Getting to Know Your Communications Department'.

All organizations aspire to create better workplaces with open employee communications, continuous learning and training opportunities along with high morale and retention rates.

The contribution that clear and effective channels of communications can make to the realization of such a positive work environment is substantial. Through effective communications, employees are better able to understand, appreciate, contribute to and support Council's goals and objectives and can be motivated to achieve maximum performance and provide superior, cost-effective service.



Photo Credit: Kim Pirie-Milko

External Communications

Introduction

External communications are central to the success of the City and the well-being of its citizens, seasonal residents, and visitors. As a function of good government, open and proactive communications ensure that the public receives clear, relevant, and timely information from the municipality regarding what must be known (e.g. By-Laws and regulations, emergency events), what should be known (e.g. key City Hall contacts, procedures for addressing Council) and what is nice to know (e.g. schedule for major community events).

At the same time, mechanisms must exist to invite, receive, and integrate input and feedback from the public into the planning, management, and evaluation of City policies, programs, services, and initiatives. Through such a process, citizens can feel confident that their involvement in civic affairs is having a positive impact on the effectiveness of local government and the quality of community life.

Trust in governments is declining, while polarization is increasing. Municipalities are struggling to combat misinformation. Communications excellence is achieved through building trusting relationships, which cannot and does not fall to one team.





Communications excellence is achieved by the whole organization. Internal and external communications within the City is a shared responsibility. Council as well as municipal employees at all levels have a role as a communicator. In every interaction, employees and elected officials represent who the municipality is, what it stands for, and how it delivers value to those it serves, shaping an individual's experience with the City. Employees and elected officials play a key role in enhancing the public's experience and building trust. Effective policy and program development, organization, and administration require cooperation and coordination throughout the City.

Cooperation and coordination between Departments are also necessary to better serve and inform the public. They ensure that municipal themes and priorities are clearly and consistently reflected in the information and messages communicated to the public.

Media Relations

Journalists, reporters, and other media representatives play an important role in the communications process; providing the public with news and information about the municipality and reporting on the public's views and opinions of the municipality. The City should continue to cultivate proactive relations with media outlets to ensure correct municipal information is provided which promotes public safety and awareness and understanding of City policies, programs, services and initiatives.

The City needs to operate and respond effectively in a 24-hour media environment. The City should also be able, on short notice, to reach and inform the media on issues of importance to the public. The City engages the media using a variety of communication tools, including media attending Council and committee meetings, personal interviews, media releases, and direct relationships.

The Senior Communications Advisor is responsible for media relations can ensure that media requests, particularly for interviews or technical information on specialized subjects, are directed to knowledgeable staff designated to speak as official representatives of the City. The Senior Communication Advisor should be kept informed on all media interactions on subject matters related to the municipality.

Getting to Know Your Communications Department

Our Team

The City’s Communications Department currently consists of three employees, having recently expanded to include a Senior Communications Advisor in June 2024. This small team manages a variety of communication responsibilities. Below are key highlights that outline their primary functions, while noting that many additional duties exist beyond this summary.

Director of Corporate Services

The Director leads and manages the operation of the Communications team.

- Oversees the Senior Communications Advisor
- Ensures the City’s reputation is positively reflected in communications
- Leads issues management and coordinates with Senior Management and elected officials
- Oversees communications budget

Senior Communications Advisor

Manages communications, marketing, and creative services. Coordinates communications and outreach activities to inform and engage the public.

- Develop and implement engagement and communication strategies
- Collaborate with departments to ensure consistent, coordinated, and brand-aligned communication activities
- Speech writing for Council, content development, and promotional writing
- Manage media inquires
- Oversees the City’s brand identity

Communications Officer

Increases awareness and understanding of the City’s services, projects, and events. Develops communication plans to improve access to municipal services.

- Manages corporate social media accounts (City of Kenora)
- Develops and manages the corporate website, ensuring content updates align with accessibility and inclusion best practices.
- Crafts and launches email marketing campaigns (e.g., public notices, emails, digital newsletters)
- Creates and coordinates traditional communication and advertising with local newspaper and radio
- Collaborates with departments to ensure up-to-date, accurate information about projects, events, and services
- Supports strategic planning and day-to-day communications

Our Service Areas

The Communications Department is responsible for effectively sharing timely and accurate City information and meaningfully engagement with the City’s employees and the community.

The Communications Department’s roles and responsibilities span three key areas:



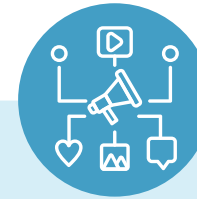
Corporate and executive communications

- Strategic communications planning
- Media relations
- Emergency communications
- Speech writing and talking points



Digital communication and experience

- Media releases, public notices, and news updates
- Website operations and governance (Kenora.ca)
- Social media standards and best practices
- Management of corporate (City of Kenora) social media accounts
- Digital newsletters
- Digital signage messaging
- Surveys
- Recycle Coach app



Communication, marketing, and creative

- Brand strategy
- Content accessibility for website, as per the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)
- Content writing
- Advertising and campaign support
- Direct mail through Canada Post support
- Traditional newspaper advertisements and formal “Municipal Memos”
- Traditional radio and Spotify ads
- City corporate event photography
- Promotional writing
- Select design of print materials (e.g. posters, brochures, cards, tax bill inserts)
- Contesting procedures



When to Contact the Communications Department

- Introducing a new program, service, or event
- Modifying existing programs, services, events, or major projects
- Updating website content
- Announcing celebrations, accolades, or awards
- Branding initiatives
- Internal employee communications
- Media inquiries
- Major projects requiring public awareness and engagement
- Community service disruptions (e.g., road closures, water advisories, event cancellations)

- Crisis or emergency situations
- Email marketing and digital Newsletters
- If sponsoring an event or initiative and the City logo is included
- Before printing mass quantities of print materials
- Before sending large direct mail campaigns through Canada Post
- When receiving frequently asked questions
- Including inserts in mailed tax bills
- Administering and testing surveys
- Information gathering



Timeframes for Tasks

Effective communication is a shared responsibility across all City Departments. The Communications Department can only achieve timely and efficient results with the cooperation and collaboration of other departments. Coordination within and between Departments is essential to ensure consistent and effective messaging for both internal and external audiences

The timeframes provided are intended as general guidelines for the average time required to complete a task. These times can vary based on several factors, including but not limited to:

- When the Communications Department is informed of the project
- The completeness of details provided (e.g., priority audience, key messages, relevant project details)
- The speed of an employee or Department’s responses to inquiries from the Communications Department

While these timeframes serve as helpful guidelines, it’s encouraged and preferred that Departments **reach out to the Communications Department well in advance** of the minimum timeline whenever possible. Early communication allows for better planning, coordination, and more effective messaging.



Note:
These timeframes are not guaranteed and depend on the level of cooperation and information provided by all involved employees, partners, and Departments.

Timelines may be subject to change due to external factors, such as adjustments made by vendors or external service providers.





Digital Newsletter - The City Compass (feature in Monthly issue)

Send content to Communications **1 week before the long weekend** (or by the second Friday of the month, in months without a long weekend).

Digital Newsletters are delivered prior to long weekend. If there is a month without a long weekend, a newsletter will be sent before that month's third weekend. (e.g. Easter can be in March or April).



Digital Newsletter - The City Compass (solo feature)

Garbage and Recycle Update: same day, within business hours

Tenders: 1 to 2 business days

Customized Email (e.g. Survey, event, project): 2 to 4 business days



Digital Signage

Communication Department to create artwork: 1 to 2 business days

Other Department creates artwork: posted same day, within business hours.

- Design specifications: 1920 px by 1080 px

Identify if to be shown internal (staff-only), external (public-facing), or both.



Local Radio and Spotify

Send request to Communications Department minimum 2 weeks before you want your message heard.

Provide: Budget spend and GL code



Media Release or Website News

3 to 5 business days

Provide: Point form notes on public-facing key messages and details



Public Notice

Urgent (e.g. boil water advisory, garbage missed, emergency): same day

Non-urgent: 2 to 4 business days

Provide: Point form notes on public-facing key messages and details



Social Media Post

1 to 5 business days

Note: Posting schedule is subject to change depending on priority, other same-day updates, and number of posts scheduled that day.



Boosted social media post (e.g. Facebook and Instagram ad)

1 to 5 business days, +1 to 2 days for Facebook to approve ad

Provide: Budget spend and GL code

Note: Posting schedule is subject to change depending on priority, other same-day updates, and number of posts scheduled that day.



Newspaper - Miner & News Municipal Memo

Newspapers arrive on shelves on Thursday afternoons.

To have your content included as a Municipal Memo, submit content to the Communications Department by **Tuesday at noon the week before the desired publication**. For example, if you submit by Tuesday, it will be included in the newspaper the Thursday after next, not the immediate Thursday.

Provide: Budget spend and GL code

Note: This deadline may change at the discretion of the newspaper.



Newspaper - Miner & News Advertisement

Newspapers arrive on shelves on Thursday afternoons.

To advertise, have details sent to the Communications Department **2 weeks before the desired publication date**. This allows us time to coordinate with the newspaper to reserve space and to do any ad creative.

Provide: Budget spend and GL code

Note: This deadline may change at the discretion of the newspaper.



Posters, flyers, brochures (e.g. for events, projects, tradeshow)

Communication Department to create artwork and does printing in-house: 3 to 5 business days

Printing done externally by professional printer: + 1 week

Provide: Budget spend and GL code

Note: This timeline may change at the discretion of the print provider.



Survey

External consultants creating and/or administering the survey: Provide the Communications 5 to 8 business days to review and coordinate changes as needed.

For Communications to create and administer survey: Provide Communications 5 business days to create and test survey.

Provide: Priority audience, survey questions, and desired format of each question (e.g. multiple choice, satisfaction scale, open-ended)



Kenora.ca Website Content

Update existing content: 1 to 3 business days

Create new page and/or add section to existing page: 2 to 12 weeks (depending on the amount of detail)



Kenora.ca Website Pop-up Alerts, Quicklinks, and Homepage Features

1 to 2 business days.

Note: Pop-up alerts are added at the discretion of the Senior Communications Advisor, who will prioritize requests accordingly. As a result, not all requests may receive an alert.



Direct Mail through Canada post (e.g. postcard mailers)

Communications Department creating artwork, proof, and coordinating with Canada Post and/or external agency: 7 to 10 weeks

Other Department creating and managing delivery, Communications providing review only: 2 to 3 business days.



Tax Bill Insert

Communication Department to create artwork and does printing in-house: 5 business days

Printing done externally by professional printer: + 1 week

Provide: GL code

Note: Please refer to Policy AF10 for guidance on applicable topics that are permitted to be included in tax bill inserts.



External consultants producing print materials for public viewing (e.g. presentation, display boards, Canada Post direct mail)

5 to 8 business days to review and coordinate changes as needed.



Photo Credit: Kim Pirie-Milko

Guiding Communications Principles

Introduction

The following communications principles are recommended to guide the City of Kenora in the development of a strong communications function.

Vision, Mission, and Corporate Values

This Plan and the Communications Strategy were developed with the [City's Strategic Plan](#) at the forefront addressing the vision, goals, and our corporate values to meet the needs of our citizens and our employees.



The City of Kenora's Vision articulates our aspirations for the community. Our Vision influences every facet of our administration and motivates City leadership and staff in serving the community.

Our vision is: Kenora provides a high quality of life for residents and unforgettable experiences for visitors by celebrating and embracing the community's rich heritage, diversity, and natural environment.



Our Mission Statement describes the City of Kenora's core mandate and ambition in meeting its responsibilities as a municipal administration and achieving our vision for Kenora.

Our mission is: To be an accountable, collaborative, and informed team that takes pride in delivering value-added municipal services.

Photo Credit: Kim Pirie-Milko



Photo Credit: Amanda Kerr

Our corporate core values are:



Collaboration

We are a key partner, connector, and voice in addressing complex community needs.



Communication

We ensure respectful and inclusive communications with our staff, community and partners.



Citizen and customer service

We put people at the forefront when delivering services.



Environmental sustainability

We are committed to being respectful of our natural environment to ensure it can continue to enrich future generations



Fiscal responsibility

We administer municipal finances in a prudent, accountable, and transparent manner that is mindful of the financial implications of our daily decisions.



Innovation

We strive for continuous service improvements through curiosity, leadership, and implementing best practices.



Readiness

We actively engage in planning, prevention, and protection to mitigate risk and address complex challenges.



Trust and respect

We act with integrity, honesty, and fairness in all our actions, fostering a corporate culture that promotes trust and respect of our staff, our community, and our partners.



Collaborative Communication between Departments

City Departments must work together to ensure clear and effective communication for citizens and staff. Effective communications is a shared responsibility involving all departments, making coordination essential for consistent messaging across the City.

Delivering coordinated and consistent messaging best serves the community and improves trust.

Identify and Address Communications Needs

Clear internal and external communications objectives must be defined when planning, managing, and reviewing policies, programs, services, and initiatives. Department leads and managers are responsible for assessing the communication needs of new initiatives and including this information in their reports to Council.

Each report must contain a dedicated "Communication" section outlining the significance of the initiative and its specific communication requirements. Managers should detail necessary communication tasks (e.g., public notices, website updates, social media). If alternative communication methods are more suitable, the Communications Department will recommend options.

Communication facilitates the exchange of information essential for a strong partnership between the public and the municipality. Gathering and sharing important information requires strategic decision-making, professional tools, and effective management.

The municipality must explain its policies and priorities to the public. Access to information is crucial for meaningful participation in decision-making and for engaging with City-sponsored programs and services.

Visible, Accessible, and Accountable City Departments

To ensure accessibility and accountability, City Departments must be visible and recognizable. Clear identification allows the public to see municipal activities, access services, and evaluate performance. The fleet department ensures all equipment displays City logos, while corporate identity programs cover vehicles, employee uniforms, signage, advertisements, correspondence, and business materials.

The City should communicate through various channels—phone, mail, print, broadcast, social media, and the Internet—using a consistent and recognizable identity. It’s important to select the most suitable communication tools for each situation and audience.

In line with the City’s Customer Service Policy HR-02-23, employees are expected to respond to customers according to established standards.



Logo Use

The City of Kenora last updated their identity and logo in 2012, accompanied by a comprehensive brand style guide for all communications.

Since then, the City has worked to establish itself as an all-seasons destination, discontinuing the 2012 branding linked to the “North America’s Premier Boating Destination” tagline. An annotated version of the brand style guide has been shared with employees to inform them of these changes, and it will be referenced for all logo use in communications and marketing. Display logos prominently, free from other visual elements and visually conflicting backgrounds.

All departments will use the City of Kenora official logo as the identifying symbol of the organization on all communication pieces. In the event a City department has their own departmental logo, wherever possible, use both logos to identify official communication from the department, as well as the City.

Staff will apply alternative forms of identification when the use of the City of Kenora logo is not possible, as with text-only applications or where layout space is constricted, such as with small digital screens. In instances where space is limited and the City logo cannot fit, the following text-only applications allowed:

- “Part of the City of Kenora”
- “A City of Kenora Department”
- “Proudly part of the City of Kenora”
- “A Service of the City of Kenora”
- “Operating under the City of Kenora”

Balance Between Traditional and Online Communications Tools

City information must be accessible to all community members, accommodating diverse abilities and language skills while meeting Provincial Accessibility Standards.

While communication trends are shifting towards a strong online presence, many residents in Kenora still rely on traditional methods.

It is crucial for information to be easily accessible, enabling citizens to understand and engage with policies, programs, and services.

A balanced approach that combines traditional channels like print with digital communications ensures the City effectively reaches a broad audience and provides information in multiple formats.

Engaging the Public

Engaging citizens for input and feedback is essential for effective municipal governance. The City must employ appropriate methods to assess public needs and opinions regarding its services, making dialogue a continuous process.

When establishing priorities, developing policies, or planning programs, citizen input is invaluable. We should actively seek feedback, as the public is often willing to contribute.

To enhance public engagement, we value:

- The right of those affected by decisions to participate.
- Assurance that public contributions will influence outcomes.
- Sustainable decisions that reflect the needs of all partners.
- Active involvement of those impacted by decisions.
- Input on how participants wish to engage.
- Providing necessary information for meaningful participation.
- Communicating how citizen input influenced decisions.

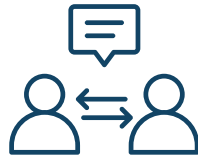
To embody these principles, the City can utilize several methods of engagement designed to foster public involvement and feedback, including:



Surveys

Gather broad feedback from the community on specific issues, services, or initiatives.

They can be distributed online or in print to reach a diverse audience.



Open Houses

Provide a forum for residents to learn about upcoming projects and initiatives in an informal setting. They allow for direct interaction between city officials and the public.



Town Hall Meetings

Public gatherings where citizens can voice concerns, ask questions, and discuss issues directly with municipal leaders. They promote transparency and foster community dialogue.



Focus Groups

Involve small, diverse groups of residents who provide in-depth feedback on specific topics. They are useful for exploring opinions and gathering detailed insights, and allowing participants to share their experiences and suggestions.



Media Relations

Engaging citizens for input and feedback is essential for effective municipal governance. The City must employ appropriate methods to assess public needs and opinions regarding its services, making dialogue a continuous process.

When establishing priorities, developing policies, or planning Journalists and media representatives are vital in communicating news about the municipality and reflecting public opinion. The City should foster proactive relationships with media outlets to enhance public safety and promote understanding of the City's policies, programs, and initiatives. In a 24-hour media environment, the City must respond effectively and inform the media promptly on important issues.

Timely Information

Delivering prompt, courteous, and responsive service that fulfills the needs and concerns of the public is the City's main goal within this plan. Information services should be citizen-centered and client-focused, delivering results for the community. The public should have timely and convenient access to municipal information and services, while ensuring that access to information and privacy rights are respected at all times.

Respect to Privacy

In our Communications, it is our goal to respect the rights of employees and citizens to information and privacy. An open municipal government implies that all employees must respect privacy rights, Council confidences and Department responsibility while treating sensitive information with the discretion it requires. Employees must be properly trained to know the extent and limits in each area. Employee access to information and privacy rights should also be respected at all times.

Agility

We are flexible and adaptive, ready to respond to the evolving needs of the organization and our community. We cultivate creativity, innovate, and experiment to find fresh approaches to communication challenges and to reach priority audiences effectively.

Key Policy Areas

Management and Coordination

The City should integrate communications into corporate management processes, ensuring it is a shared responsibility coordinated across the organization.

Senior managers and department leads must commit to open communication with employees before addressing the public, except in exceptional circumstances. Training in effective communication should be provided to these leaders.

Clear connections must be maintained between communications and core functions such as policy management, service delivery, human resources, information management, and IT management, as communications significantly impact the City's objectives.

The Communications Senior Advisor can assist in developing and implementing related activities. For departments with regular communication initiatives, such as Recreation, staff should collaborate with the Communications Officer on projects.

Recommendations for the City include:

- Ensure the communications function has the necessary management support and resources.
- Provide appropriate orientation and training for all staff to fulfill their roles in municipal communications.
- Explore ways to enhance efficiency in addressing communication issues and simplify approval processes.
- Maintain coherence and consistency in information across all communication channels.
- Integrate corporate communication planning with the annual budgeting process.
- Coordinate all communication activities, including digital applications, advertising, and media relations, for a unified public message.





Informing the Public

The City must provide public access to information about policies, programs, services, and initiatives through various appropriate media. To guarantee quality information that meets community needs, the municipality should implement the following:

- Municipal staff is trained on policies, programs, services, and initiatives within their division;
- Informing the public of changes or new developments of the municipality is kept at the forefront of priority and ensuring the information is released in a timely manner;
- A variety of new and traditional methods of communication are used to accommodate the needs of the public;
- Published information is available, upon request, in multiple formats to accommodate persons with disabilities where practical;
- Information requests or inquiries from the public are responded to promptly;
- Prompt and clear explanations are provided when information requested by the public is unavailable;
- Information is available on the standard of service the City provides to the public, including timelines for responding to inquiries and complaints;
- Opportunities are available for the public to provide feedback on major policies, programs, services and initiatives and that such feedback is carefully considered in reviews or evaluations to help make improvements;
- Public trust and confidence in the integrity of the City are upheld during all communications to the public;
- Useful, timely, accurate, clear, consistent and complete information is provided to the public;
- Communications programs and activities be evaluated against planned objectives and adjustments or improvements are made as needed.

Clear, Basic Expression of Communication Accessibility Standards

The City’s responsibility to inform the public includes the obligation to communicate effectively. Information about policies, programs, services and initiatives must be easy to understand, relevant, consistent and useful.

The City is committed to meeting the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) accessible standards and will go beyond wherever possible to meet the needs of persons with accessibility needs. Guidelines contained within the AODA compliance standards are kept at the forefront of our communications and our website is complaint including options for increased font size.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) sets specific requirements for organizations to ensure accessibility, especially in communication. For writers, understanding and implementing these standards is crucial for making written content accessible to people with disabilities. Here are the key takeaways and guidelines to follow:

- Use plain language and clear, simple sentence structures.
- Ensure content is available in multiple accessible formats.
- Make digital content compatible with assistive technologies.
- Provide captions for multimedia and transcripts for audio content.
- Create content that is logical, consistent, and easy to navigate.
- Be proactive in offering accessible communication options.
- Regularly assess and adapt content for accessibility.
- Use present style for headings.
- Use bullet points to emphasize.
- Use simple words where feasible.
- If a technical term is truly necessary, define it and use it several times so that it becomes familiar.



- Limit the use of acronyms, if necessary, define the full acronym and then use the acronym consistently
- Instructions should be positive rather than negative
- Use the active voice, not the passive voice
- Writing should seem personal and direct, not impersonal and remote (avoid the third person).
- Hyperlink to content rather than “click here”.
- Do not underline.
- Limit use of bold and italics.
- Have adequate “white space” (ample margins and family short paragraphs).
- Avoid writing too far above a grade six level (grade eight is the maximum recommended).
- Use short sentences.

By keeping these principles in mind, staff can ensure that their communication is inclusive and accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities.

While the AODA does not specify a reading level, content for a broad audience should ideally be written at an eighth-grade level or lower. Research indicates this level is accessible to many, including individuals with varying cognitive and learning styles. Given the constant flow of information in people's busy lives, clear and easy-to-understand content is essential.



Training and Professional Development

The City will provide its senior managers, department leads and employees at all levels with an orientation of the communications function and planning process, as well as of their associated role and responsibilities. Incoming employees will also be oriented on the City’s communication function and informed about their roles and responsibilities.

This will include educating staff on the City’s communications policies and strategies along with social media polices, and internal communication policies.

City's Communications Policies and Strategies

Along with the Corporate Communications Plan, the City will adhere to the Communications Policy, Social Media Policy, Social Media Terms of Use, Customer Service Standards Policy, Accessibility Standards Policy, Logo Policy, and other communications related policies which may directly affect this Communication Plan.



Photo Credit: Caitlyn Konaby

Conclusion

Communications is an integral part of the municipality and should be a priority in the development and planning of programs and services in each division of the City. Communication resources and efforts should be considered in each part of activity planning to guarantee the success of the delivery of our messages.

This Communications Plan and the Communications Strategy were developed with the City's Strategic Plan at the forefront addressing the vision, goals, and our corporate values to meet the needs of our citizens and our employees.

While this Communications Plan spans the lifetime of the City's Strategic Plan (2022 to 2027), we recognize the communications landscape may not look the same year-to-year as it does today. As such, this Communications Plan is a living document and will be review as needed and kept up-to-date by the Senior Communications Advisor.

Communications Strategy

2025 - 2027

This is an evolving strategy for the entire organization that outlines specific goals, objectives, and actions. The Communications Strategy includes a three-year implementation plan that is aligned with the priorities of the City's Strategic Plan and Corporate Communications Plan. The Communications Strategy will enable Council and Senior Administration to measure and understand how well our communication efforts are working.

Photo Credit: Shauna Creswicke



Communications Strategy

Introduction

The Communications Strategy is a complementary document to the Corporate Communications Plan. This Communications Strategy is an evolving strategy for the entire organization that outlines specific goals, objectives, and actions.

The Communications Strategy includes a three-year implementation plan that is aligned with the priorities of the City of Kenora's Strategic Plan and Corporate Communications Plan. The Communications Strategy will enable Council to measure and understand how well our communication efforts are working.

This updated Communications Strategy for the City of Kenora (hereafter referred to as the 'City') seeks to enhance both internal and external communications, aligning with the goals of City's Charting Our Course 2027 Strategic Plan.

It's important to recognize that the Strategic Plan encompasses various supplementary plans and documents, including, but not limited to, the Five Year Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, the Sustainability Action Plan, and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. We acknowledge these plans as vital guiding documents that should be regularly referenced.

This Communications Strategy and the Corporate Communications Plan were created from the City's Strategic Plan, 2021 Strategic Plan Community Survey, 2022 Communications Audit, and valuable feedback from City staff across various roles. Input was also gathered through department team discussions and one-on-one staff interviews.



Photo Credit: Kim Pirie-Milko



Adaptability

The following Communications Strategy details how the City will achieve the goals set under the Corporate Communications Plan.

While this Communications Strategy and the Corporate Communications Plan spans the lifetime of the City's Strategic Plan (2022 to 2027), we recognize the communications landscape may not look the same year-to-year as it does today. As such, this Communications Strategy is a living document and will be reviewed as needed and kept up to date by the Senior Communications Advisor.

The City's Communications Department will remain flexible and adaptable. We will regularly monitor and review progress and adjust accordingly.

Goals, Objectives, and Actions

The Communications Strategy sets four goals. Each goal includes several objectives (39 in total), with defined action items and assigned leads and supports for each objective. This strategy features a three-year implementation plan aligned with the City's Strategic Plan and Corporate Communications Plan. It enables Council and staff to measure progress and the effectiveness of our communications.

Communications excellence is achieved by the whole organization. Internal and external communications within the City is a shared responsibility.



1 Strengthening Public Awareness and Involvement



2 Improve Internal Communications and Collaboration



3 Build a Cohesive Brand Experience



4 Align All Communications to the City's Strategic Plan



Goal 1: Strengthening Public Awareness and Involvement

In a time of declining trust in government and increasing polarization, it is essential for municipalities to deepen their connection with the community. As misinformation and information overload become more prevalent, it is essential for the City to communicate effectively and provide easy to understand, accessible information.

The goal is to elevate public awareness of the City's services and programs, where to access accurate information, and fostering an informed and engaged community. By promoting transparency and education, we can build trust and enhance public services.

To achieve this, we will revamp our corporate website to serve as a reliable information hub, making it easier for the community to efficiently access information. Social media will play a pivotal role in our strategy, allowing us to launch educational campaigns that inform the public about City programs and services, updates, initiatives, and opportunities for involvement. While social media is a popular source for information, it often lacks reliability, making it important to educate the community on how to engage and where best to find accurate information on City services and programs.

It is still important to continue a balanced approach to communications that combines traditional methods with digital platforms. A combination of traditional and digital touchpoints will ensure we reach diverse audiences, including those less familiar with, or with limited access to, online tools. By consistently reinforcing the City's messages across various formats, we can enhance public awareness and trust in local governance, ultimately empowering residents to take an active role in their community.



Photo Credit: Kim Pirie-Milko



Goal 1: Strengthening Public Awareness and Involvement

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| 1.1 Revamp the corporate website, Kenora.ca. | 1.1.1 Oversee a website redesign project to modernize Kenora.ca, ensuring easy to understand language, simple navigation, accessibility, and mobile friendliness. | ★ Communications ▲ All City Departments | X | | | |
| 1.2 Promote a respectful online environment by establishing clear guidelines for respectful language and outlining appropriate channels for residents to submit complaints and requests for service. | 1.2.1 Update the Social Media Terms of Use. Updating Social Media Terms of Use on online channels (website and social media). | ★ Communications ▲ Departments with Social Media Accounts[1], Council, COA, Senior Leadership Team, Managers, Public | X | X | | |
| 1.3 Empower City staff, Council, partners, and the public to follow best social media practices, fostering respectful online interactions while being mindful of their potential impact on the City. | 1.3.1 Update the Social Media Policy. | ★ Communications ▲ Council, COA, Senior Leadership Team, Managers, All City Departments, Public | X | X | | |

See Communications Strategy Footnotes on page 75 and 76.

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>1.4</p> <p>Enhance public understanding of City programs, initiatives, and services by providing clear pathways for community involvement. Empower residents to engage constructively through official communication channels, helping to reduce the spread of negativity and misinformation on social media.</p> | <p>1.4.1</p> <p>Develop social media posts and campaigns that deliver concise, easy to understand information about City programs, initiatives, and services. Each post will guide residents on how to either find more information on our corporate website or how to participate meaningfully. Topics will be tailored to current needs and may include: where to watch Council meetings and; how to submit Requests for Service; how to get involved through surveys and meetings, open houses, town halls; and sharing interesting ‘Did You Know?’ facts about municipal infrastructure, initiatives, programs, and services.</p> | <p>★ Communications and Departments with Social Media Accounts</p> <p>▲ All City Departments</p> | X | X | X | X |
| <p>1.5</p> <p>Leverage the reach and the power of video to reinforce messaging and boost engagement.</p> | <p>1.5.1</p> <p>Seek out more opportunities to include video in our social media.</p> | <p>★ Communications and Communications Committee / Social Media Sub-Committee [2]</p> <p>▲ All City Departments</p> | X | X | | |
| | <p>1.5.2</p> <p>Create a Video Strategy that identifies priority audiences in the community, topic ideas/ priorities, and budget.</p> | <p>★ Communications and Communications Committee / Social Media Sub-Committee</p> <p>▲ All City Departments</p> | | X | | |

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>1.6 Assess the viability of continuing with X (formerly Twitter) or transitioning to an alternative platform.</p> | <p>1.6.1 Continuously monitor the City’s engagement and reach on X. Track trends in North America to evaluate whether the downward trajectory of X persists. Analyze the suitability of alternative social media platforms (e.g., Bluesky, Threads) as potential replacements.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ Departments with Social Media Accounts / Social Media Sub-Committee</p> | ✗ | ✗ | | |
| <p>1.7 Enhance public awareness and involvement by implementing regular public and customer satisfaction surveys to identify trends and areas of dissatisfaction with City services.</p> | <p>1.7.1 Create a framework for public and customer satisfaction surveys. Determine survey plan, topics, and frequency, and methods for engagement to maximize participation.</p> <p>Connect with Departments to share the insights gained from the surveys to inform decision-making and implement necessary changes to enhance city services.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ All City Departments, Departments with Social Media Accounts / Social Media Sub-Committee</p> | | ✗ | | |
| <p>1.8 Gain awareness of good news stories and accomplishments of the City and the teams/staff behind these successes.</p> | <p>1.8.1 Establish processes for staff to share department accomplishments and good news stories, and feature these in digital messaging, media releases, social media, and an annual report[3]. Taking time to highlight these successes will demonstrate that City staff care, have expertise, and demonstrate as well as taxpayer value.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ Communications Committee, All City Departments, Boards and Committees of Council</p> | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>1.9 To effectively communicate the decisions made by Council to the public, ensuring transparency, fostering trust.</p> | <p>1.9.1 Determine a timeline for communication following Council meetings to ensure timely distribution of information.</p> <p>Develop social media template and designated location on updated City website to highlight a summary of key decisions.</p> <p>Regularly assess the effectiveness of the communication strategy through metrics such as engagement rates and community feedback, making adjustments as necessary.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ City Clerks, Council, Senior Leadership Team, CAO</p> | | X | | |
| <p>1.10 Enhance the City's media relations strategy.</p> | <p>1.10.1 Implement regular media briefings to ensure local reporters have access to the information they need for accurate and timely coverage of City services and initiatives. Host special ad-hoc briefings (e.g. digital scrums) and press conferences when significant events or initiatives arise to provide reporters with the latest information.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ CAO, Senior Leadership Team, Approved City spokespeople, Council, Local Media</p> | | X | | |

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>1.11 Amplify the City’s messaging with a range of audiences and brand-aligned partners.</p> | <p>1.11.1 Build relationships with corporate aligned influencers and partners that are credible and on-brand for the City. Collaborating with influencers and partners can expand opportunities to expand message reach, engage with the community, and share City information.</p> | <p>★ Communications and Departments with Social Media Accounts / Social Media Sub-Committee</p> <p>▲ External partners</p> | | X | X | |
| <p>1.12 Increase public participation in shaping municipal priorities, services and programs.</p> | <p>1.12.1 Develop a strategy to enhance accessibility and efficiency for residents of diverse demographics to engage on topics of interest: City initiatives, programs, services, major changes.</p> <p>This could be achieved through a variety of methods, including: town hall meetings, open houses, surveys, social media polls, and focus groups, ensuring we cater to different preferences.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ All City Departments, Public</p> | X | X | | |
| <p>1.13 Create protocols for two-way lines of communication between the Communications Department and Customer Service.</p> | <p>1.13.1 Formalize process for providing the Customer Service team with notices and key messaging to support response to public inquiries, and for Customer Service to share insights with the Communications Department based on public interactions.</p> | <p>★ Communications and Customer Service</p> | X | | | |

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>1.14 Help to mitigate negative comments by actively highlighting successes, promoting inclusivity, and having regular opportunities of public engagement.</p> | <p>1.14.1 Revise the Social Media Policy and Terms of Use to ensure clarity and promote respectful engagement.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ All City Departments, Departments with Social Media Accounts, Council, CAO, Senior Leadership Team, Public</p> | ✗ | ✗ | | |
| | <p>1.14.2 Develop an Inclusive Language Guide that fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment [4].</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ All City Departments, Senior Leadership Team, Managers, Departments with Social Media, Boards and Committees of Council, Public</p> | | | | ✗ |
| | <p>1.14.3 Create a Social Media Best Practices Cheat Sheet[5] that includes best practices and a checklist of must-haves for every post.</p> <p>Establish a review and approval process to ensure all posts are consistent with City brand identity before they go live.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ Senior Leadership Team, Managers, Departments with Social Media, Boards and Committees of Council</p> | ✗ | | | |

See Communications Strategy Footnotes on page 75 and 76.

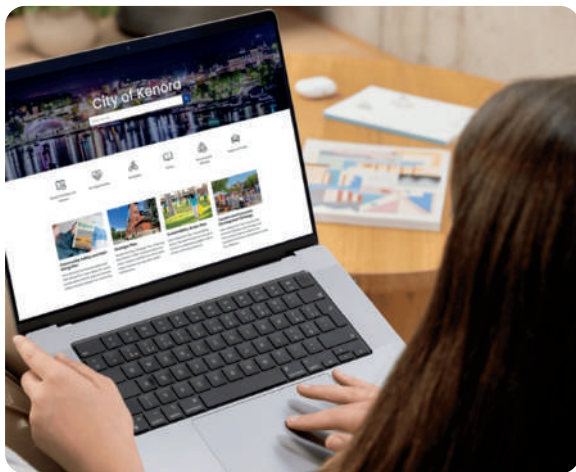
| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>1.14 Help to mitigate negative comments by actively highlighting successes, promoting inclusivity, and having regular opportunities of public engagement.</p> <p>(Continued)</p> | <p>1.14.4 Revise the Social Media Policy and Terms of Use to ensure clarity and Form a Social Media Sub-Committee that includes social media admins from various departments.</p> <p>Schedule regular meetings to discuss strategies, share insights, common questions, and receive guidance on how to best navigate handling negative comments. [6]</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ Departments with Social Media Accounts</p> | × | × | × | |
| | <p>1.14.5 Facilitate ongoing engagement opportunities with residents, such as town hall meetings, open houses, and surveys to encourage participation and gather feedback on municipal priorities, initiatives, services, and programs.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ All City Departments, Public</p> | × | × | × | × |
| | <p>1.14.6 Highlight the positive stories and accomplishments through digital messaging, media releases, social media posts, and an annual report to reinforce the City’s successes.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ Communications Committee, All City Departments, Boards and Committees of Council</p> | × | × | × | × |

See Communications Strategy Footnotes on page 75 and 76.

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>1.15 Enhance communication readiness and preparedness for major projects and events to ensure all City staff, partners, and public are informed, minimizing the chances unawareness. [7]</p> | <p>1.15.1 Departments to connect with Communications department regarding plans well in advance (recommend at least 3 months prior to launch).</p> <p>Managers and Department Leads must assess and report communication needs for each new initiative in the dedicated "Communications" section of their Council reports. Specify desired communication methods[8] (e.g., public notices, website updates, social media).</p> | <p>★ All City Departments, Managers, Boards and Committees of Council</p> <p>▲ Communications, Senior Leadership Team, CAO</p> | × | × | × | × |
| | <p>1.15.2 Regularly review webpages and collaborate with the Communications to update departmental content and project statuses, enhancing public awareness and building trust through transparency. [9]</p> | <p>★ All City Departments, Managers</p> <p>▲ Communications</p> | × | × | × | × |

See Communications Strategy Footnotes on page 75 and 76.

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>1.15</p> <p>Enhance communication readiness and preparedness for major projects and events to ensure all City staff, partners, and public are informed, minimizing the chances unawareness.</p> <p>(Continued)</p> | <p>1.15.3</p> <p>Update and standardize letter templates for outgoing communications to residents and businesses. Each department will be responsible for ensuring that their communications align with the City's branding and tone by utilizing the approved templates. The Communications team can provide guidance on the templates but will not review every letter sent out. [10]</p> | <p>★ All City Departments, Managers</p> <p>▲ Communications</p> | × | | | × |
| | <p>1.15.4</p> <p>Complete quarterly reporting on the status of programs and services as they relate to the priorities outlined in the City's Strategic Plan and supplementary plans (as they relate to the specific departments). [11]</p> | <p>★ Senior Leadership Team</p> <p>▲ All Departments</p> | × | × | × | × |





Goal 2: Improve Internal Communications and Collaboration

Communications excellence is achieved through building trusting relationships, which cannot and does not fall to one team. Every City staff member plays a vital role as a communicator, whether interacting with colleagues, the Mayor and Council, partners, or the community.

It is essential that staff are well-informed about the City's services, programs, projects, and major updates. Therefore, our goal is to improve internal communications and collaboration by cultivating a culture of ownership and accountability for the City's communications success.

Embedding this mindset throughout the organization will significantly boost staff morale, enhance organizational culture, and elevate the resident experience, ultimately strengthening the trust we build within the community.

This vision entails that City staff recognize their communication responsibilities and their impact on resident satisfaction. Managers will promote open and regular meetings with their teams (or one-on-one) to enhance departmental buy-in, encourage team cooperation, and uplift morale. Staff will have a clear understanding of expectations, standards, and processes for inter-departmental collaboration. Additionally, the Communications Department should be engaged early in projects, ensuring effective collaboration from the outset.

Together, we can create a more informed, connected, and collaborative environment that benefits both staff and the residents we serve.

Photo Credit: Kim Pirie-Milko





Goal 2: Improve Internal Communications and Collaboration

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>2.1</p> <p>Raise awareness of the Communications Plan and Communications Strategy while providing training for staff on the significance of effective communication and the role of the Communications Department.</p> | <p>2.1.1 Organize a presentation to Council and staff representatives from every department (e.g. SEADS, Communications Committee)</p> <p>Distribute a resource booklet on the Communications Plan, Communications Strategy, and policies.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> | X | | | |
| <p>2.2</p> <p>Encourage staff to review and participate in the goals and actions outlined in the Communications Plan and Communications Strategy.</p> | <p>2.2.1 Affirm the Communications Plan and Communications Strategy to All City Departments through City Council and Senior Leadership Team endorsement.</p> | <p>★ Council, CAO and Senior Leadership Team</p> | X | X | | |
| <p>2.3</p> <p>Improve cross-department information sharing.</p> | <p>2.3.1 Respond promptly to requests from the Communications Department for information to effectively inform the media and the public.</p> | <p>★ Senior Leadership Team</p> <p>▲ All City Departments, Communication Committee</p> | X | X | X | X |

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>2.3</p> <p>Improve cross-department information sharing.</p> <p>(Continued)</p> | <p>2.3.1 (Continued) Involve the Communications Department early in projects to improve public messaging and engagement.</p> <p>Continue the Communications Committee, comprised of representatives from each department, to share updates, foster understanding of ongoing City services, programs, and projects, and celebrate successes.</p> | <p>★ Senior Leadership Team</p> <p>▲ All City Departments, Communication Committee</p> | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |
| <p>2.4</p> <p>Ensure that all communications prioritize clear, accessible messaging, minimizing the use of technical jargon specific to individual department expertise.</p> | <p>2.4.1 When giving internal updates across departments, staff should adopt a public-facing perspective by prioritizing clear, straightforward messaging that avoids technical jargon. Acknowledging the diverse backgrounds of our staff and community members, it's essential to present updates in an easily understandable manner. This focus on clarity and accessibility will enhance internal communication and ensure polished messaging for when sharing information with public.</p> | <p>★ All City Departments</p> | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>2.5</p> <p>Ensure all staff are informed and share positive developments and accomplishments to boost morale and enhance company culture.</p> | <p>2.5.1 Develop an internal awareness campaign to promote participation in the City’s updated digital messaging. This initiative will enhance communication reach, particularly for staff with limited email access.</p> <p>Collaborate with departments to create eye-catching internal communications through digital messaging. This may include: welcoming new staff, sharing reminders (e.g., to-dos, tools, policies), highlighting opportunities for involvement (e.g., staff events, committees, surveys), and recognizing staff achievements gathered from social media, customer service interactions, and peer feedback.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ All City Departments</p> | ✗ | ✗ | | |
| <p>2.6</p> <p>Strengthen onboarding process to orient new City employees.</p> | <p>2.6.1 Establish an improved onboarding process and updated materials, including a refresh of the new hire onboarding presentation to reflect current branding and names of buildings (e.g., Moncrief Construction Sports Centre, Jarnel Contracting Pavilion), communication protocols, corporate and departmental websites and social media channels.</p> | <p>★ Human Resources</p> <p>▲ Communications</p> | | ✗ | | |

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>2.7 Encourage employee input and feedback.</p> | <p>2.7.1 Create staff satisfaction surveys to provide a platform for employees to voice their opinions. Participation in surveys can help leading to increased engagement and morale, encourage open communication, establish benchmarks, and identify areas of concern or dissatisfaction.</p> <p>Based on the feedback from staff throughout the process, Senior Leadership Team should identify areas within the City that require attention to improve morale.</p> | <p>★ Human Resources</p> <p>▲ Communications, Senior Leadership Team</p> | | ✗ | ✗ | |
| <p>2.8 Foster open and regular communication with staff to enhance departmental buy-in, promote team cooperation, and boost morale.</p> | <p>2.8.1 All Departments to hold regular staff meetings.</p> <p>Implement strategies that promote two-way communication between staff and management, such as open forums or one-on-one sessions where employees can express concerns, share ideas, and provide input on enhancing services and programs.</p> <p>Cultivate a workplace culture that values openness, cooperation, and consultation by actively listening to employees' views and concerns regarding workplace issues.</p> | <p>★ Senior Leadership Team and Managers</p> | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| 2.9 Ensure efficient, timely, effective, and consistent communications to partners and community members. | 2.9.1 Update the Communications Policy | ★ Communications | | ✗ | | |
| 2.10 Proactively identify and address communication needs early in the planning stages to enable the Communications Department to enhance the reach and engagement of programs, services, policies, and initiatives. | 2.10.1 Establish a routine for connecting with the Communications Department at any new project's outset (where possible, 3 months prior to launch) and clearly define internal and external communication objectives for all initiatives. Managers and Department Leads must assess and report communication needs for each new initiative in the dedicated "Communications" section of their Council reports. Specify desired communication methods (e.g., public notices, website updates, social media). The Communications Department will recommend suitable alternative communication methods as needed. | ★ All City Departments, Boards and Committees of Council, Senior Leadership Team, Managers and All City Departments ▲ Communications | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>2.11</p> <p>Enhance communication readiness and preparedness for major projects and events to ensure all City staff, partners, and public are informed, minimizing the chances unawareness. [12]</p> | <p>2.11.1</p> <p>Regularly review webpages and collaborate with the Communications to update departmental content and project statuses, enhancing public awareness and building trust through transparency. [13]</p> | <p>★ All City Departments, Managers, Boards and Committees of Council</p> <p>▲ Communications, Senior Leadership Team, CAO</p> | ✕ | ✕ | ✕ | ✕ |
| | <p>2.11.2</p> <p>Letters to residents and businesses and public communications must adhere to the established corporate logo, font, font size, and accessibility standards.</p> <p>Each department is accountable for ensuring that their letters and public communication pieces reflect the City’s corporate branding guidelines.</p> <p>The Communications team will not be responsible for reviewing and approving every outgoing letter.</p> <p>Third parties are prohibited from distributing letters and public communications without prior review by the Communications Department.</p> | <p>★ All City Departments, Managers</p> <p>▲ Communications</p> | ✕ | ✕ | ✕ | ✕ |

See Communications Strategy Footnotes on page 75 and 76.

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| 2.11 Enhance communication readiness and preparedness for major projects and events to ensure all City staff, partners, and public are informed, minimizing the chances unawareness. [12] (Continued) | 2.11.3 Complete quarterly reporting on the status of programs and services as they relate to the priorities outlined in the City's Strategic Plan and supplementary plans (as they relate to the specific departments). [14] | ★ Senior Leadership Team ▲ All Departments | × | × | × | × |
| | 2.12.1 Follow Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) best practises when creating documents and online digital content. Prioritize clear, concise, easy to understand language in public-facing documents at a reading level no higher than Grade 8. | ★ All City Departments, Boards and Committees of Council ▲ Communications, CAO, Senior Leadership Team, and Managers | × | × | × | × |
| 2.12 Help residents and City staff create a welcoming and inclusive environment that recognizes and celebrates all dimensions of diversity. | 2.12.2 Create an Inclusive Language Guide. [15] | ★ Communications ▲ All Departments, Boards and Committees of Council, External partners, Public | | | | × |

See Communications Strategy Footnotes on page 75 and 76.

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>2.12 Help residents and City staff create a welcoming and inclusive environment that recognizes and celebrates all dimensions of diversity.</p> <p>(Continued)</p> | <p>2.12.3 Actively engage Indigenous and Treaty 3 partners for input and involvement early in the planning stages of new projects and initiatives. Acknowledge and honour Indigenous traditions and processes, particularly the role of consulting Elders, feasting, and ceremonial practices. [16]</p> | <p>★ All Departments, Boards and Committees of Council</p> <p>▲ Indigenous Relations, CAO, Senior Leadership Team, Managers, Council, Indigenous and Treaty 3 Partners</p> | ✕ | ✕ | ✕ | ✕ |



See Communications Strategy Footnotes on page 75 and 76.



Goal 3: Build a Cohesive Brand Experience

In today's dynamic landscape, effective branding stands as a pillar of organizational success, serving as both a visual representation and a symbol of trust for our community. A strong brand not only enhances awareness but also instills confidence; when the public encounters the City brand, they recognize it as a reliable source of information.

To achieve a cohesive brand experience, it is imperative that we cultivate a consistent and unified brand identity across all aspects of the corporation. Enhancing the professionalism and consistency of our visual and written content is also essential. We aim to promote inclusive and accessible writing practices throughout the City, ensuring that our communications resonate our community members.

This commitment extends to our social media presence, where we will aim to improve the City corporate and departmental social media pages, aligning them with social media best practices, City policies, and the existing brand guides, whether the City corporate identity or departmental identity.

The strategic objectives outlined below aim to enhance brand visibility and strengthen community engagement. By adopting this cohesive approach, we will cultivate a unified brand identity that deepens our connection with the community we serve.





Goal 3: Build a Cohesive Brand Experience

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| 3.1 Improve the consistency of the corporate City brand across all platforms and materials. | 3.1.1 Revise the Logo Policy and distribute an updated, annotated Brand Guide to ensure adherence until a new City logo is developed. | ★ Communications | × | × | | |
| 3.2 Strengthen the consistency and professionalism of written content while promoting inclusive and accessible writing practices throughout the City. | 3.2.1 Create a City Writing Style Guide to assist staff in maintaining a unified style, voice, and tone across all City written communications, web content, and documents. | ★ Communications | | | × | × |
| 3.3 Improve brand consistency across all social media pages, corporate-owned and departmental, by standardizing social media pages and content with departmental identities and best practices, ultimately increasing brand visibility and community engagement. | 3.3.1 Conduct a social media audit of all existing social media pages, City corporate and departmental, social media best practises, and compliance with City’s Social Media Policy, Social Media Terms of Use. Emphasize the importance of using the Brand Guide, whether City corporate or departmental, and policies. | ★ Communications ▲ Senior Leadership Team, Social Media Sub-Committee, Managers, Departments with Social Media | × | × | | |

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>3.3 Improve cross-department information sharing. Improve brand consistency across all social media pages, corporate-owned and departmental, by standardizing social media pages and content with departmental identities and best practices, ultimately increasing brand visibility and community engagement.</p> <p>(Continued)</p> | <p>3.3.1 (Continued) Create and distribute a Social Media Best Practices Cheat Sheet that includes best practises and a checklist of must-haves for every post.</p> <p>Establish a review and approval process to ensure all posts are consistent with the brand identity before they go live.</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ Senior Leadership Team, Social Media Sub-Committee, Managers, Departments with Social Media</p> | ✗ | ✗ | | |
| <p>3.4 Support departments with separate social media identities by providing access to training, sharing knowledge of successful content from other departments, and fostering a collaborative community of social media admins.</p> | <p>3.4.1 Form a Social Media Sub-Committee under the Communications Committee that includes social media admins from various departments.</p> <p>Schedule regular meetings to discuss strategies, share insights, and collaborate on social media efforts.</p> <p>Organize training and workshops focused on social media best practices, content creation, and analytics, and developing audience personas to help create targeted messaging. [17]</p> | <p>★ Communications</p> <p>▲ Departments with Social Media Accounts</p> | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | |

See Communications Strategy Footnotes on page 75 and 76.

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| 3-5 Create social media content specifically designed to reach particular priority audiences, resulting in more focused and impactful content. | 3-5.1 Develop social media content based on audience personas to help deliver content that will be most relevant, useful, and likely to receive engagement from priority audiences. | ★ Communications, Social Media Sub-Committee, Departments with Social Media Accounts | X | X | | |
| 3-6 Enhance brand consistency and quality across all City communications to streamline staff efforts, reduce redundancy, and foster a unified brand identity. | 3-6.1 Establish an easily accessible online location where City staff can find and utilize shared resources. Create shared resources including: photobank, branding toolkit, presentation and report templates, and a branding tool kit. | ★ Communications ▲ IT, Tourism, The Muse, | X | X | | |
| 3-7 Conduct a thorough corporate branding audit to assess external branding touchpoints in the community and identify any inconsistencies in logo and brand usage. | 3-7.1 Catalog external-facing corporate City branding and signage where the logo is displayed. Assess these touchpoints for logo and brand inconsistencies and outdated assets. Compile a comprehensive report detailing the audit results, including visual examples, and present recommendations for addressing inconsistencies. | ★ Communications | | | X | X |

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| <p>3-8</p> <p>Enhance communication readiness and preparedness for major projects and events to ensure all City staff, partners, and public are informed, minimizing the chances unawareness.[1] [1] Note that this objective is repeated, as elements of this objective live under multiple goals (e.g. strengthen public awareness and build a cohesive brand) [18]</p> | <p>3.8.1</p> <p>Update and standardize letter templates for outgoing communications to residents and businesses. Each department will be responsible for ensuring that their communications align with the City’s branding and tone by utilizing the approved templates. The Communications team can provide guidance on the templates but will not review every letter sent out. [19]</p> | <p>★ All City Departments, Managers</p> <p>▲ Communications</p> | ✕ | ✕ | | ✕ |



Photo Credit: Redtea



See Communications Strategy Footnotes on page 75 and 76.



Goal 4: Align All Communications to the City's Strategic Plan

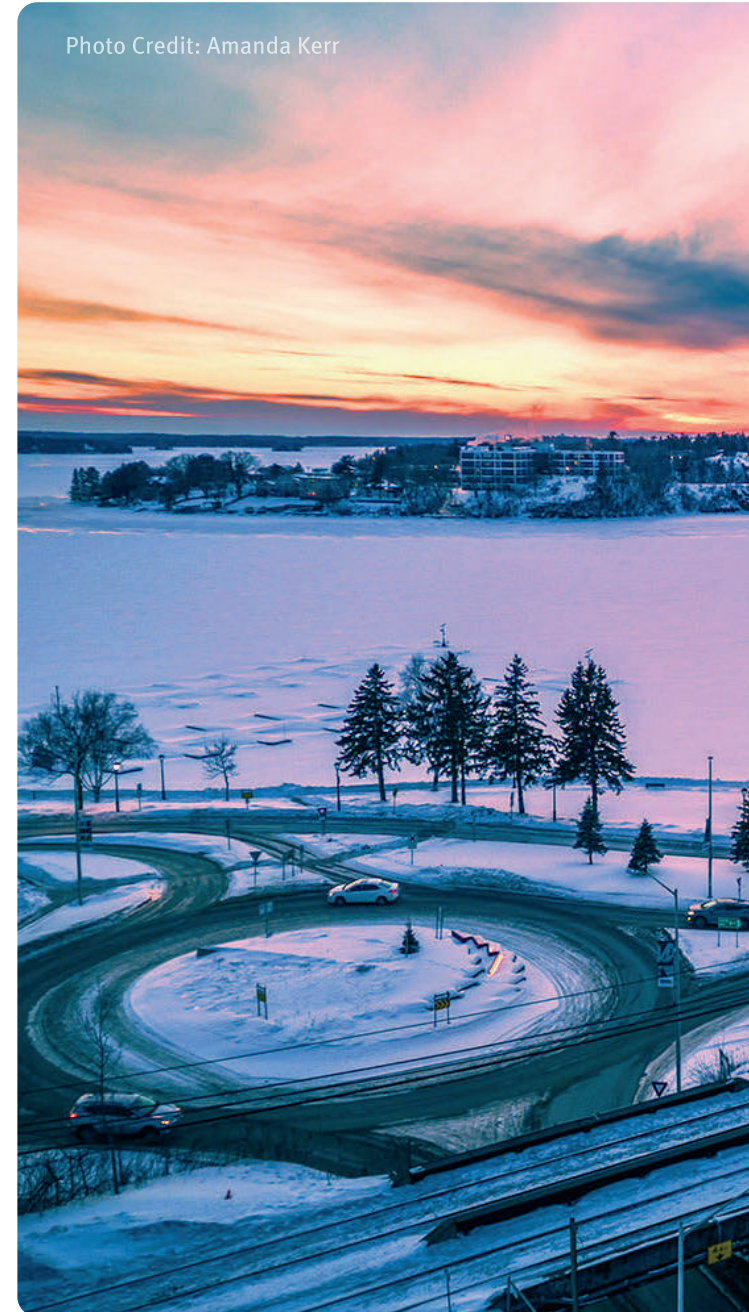
The speed of change is getting faster. The daily delivery of municipal programs and services is demanding, broad in scope, and increasing in complexity. Often, communications efforts are heavily focused on the day-to-day tasks and operational needs, and less on prioritizing the Charting Our Course 2027 Strategic Plan and supplementary plans and documents (e.g., Five Year Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, the Sustainability Action Plan, and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan that advances organizational goals.

The City is invested in completing this 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. The City sought a wide range of voices and heard from a variety of partners who told the City what matters to them and where they want to see the municipality focus its priorities in the coming years.

The City's Strategic Plan is a foundational document. It provides a framework for Council and City staff to inform strategies, actions, resources, and decision making. The City's Strategic Plan formed the foundation on which supplementary plans and documents were created. These plans are vital guiding documents that should be regularly referenced.

As such, the Senior Leadership Team should keep coming back to what the City has committed to the community with the goal to ensure that all communications efforts are focused on the highest priority actions and initiatives that move the City closer to achieving its goals.

Photo Credit: Amanda Kerr





Goal 4: Align All Communications to the City’s Strategic Plan

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| 4.1 Deliver regular reporting to the CAO and City Council. | 4.1.1 Complete quarterly reporting on the status of programs and services as they relate to the priorities outlined in the City’s Strategic Plan and supplementary plans (as they relate to the specific departments). [20] | ★ Senior Leadership Team, Board and Committees of Council ▲ All Departments | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |
| 4.2 Deliver an annual report to the CAO, City Council, and community on yearly achievements. | 4.2.1 Complete an annual report[1] focused on highlights and progress made throughout the year on each of the Strategic Focus Areas of the City’s Strategic Plan and supplementary plans (as they relate to the specific departments). [21] | ★ Senior Leadership Team, Board and Committees of Council ▲ All Departments, Communications | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |

See Communications Strategy Footnotes on page 75 and 76.

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|
| 4.3 Building relations with Treaty 3 Partners. | <p>4.3.1 The City will continue to build and strengthen our working relations with other neighbouring municipalities and our Treaty 3 First Nations partners.</p> <p>Council and Senior Leadership Team are committed to annual meetings with our First Nations partners to identify issues of common concern and to discuss pathways for closer collaboration.</p> | <p>★ Council and Senior Leadership Team</p> | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |
| | <p>4.3.2 Actively engage Indigenous and Treaty 3 partners for input and involvement early in the planning stages of new projects and initiatives. Acknowledge and honour Indigenous traditions and processes, particularly the role of consulting Elders, feasting, and ceremonial practices. [22]</p> | <p>★ All Departments, Boards and Committees of Council</p> <p>▲ Indigenous Relations, CAO, Senior Leadership Team, Managers, Council, Indigenous and Treaty 3 Partners</p> | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |

See Communications Strategy Footnotes on page 75 and 76.

| Objectives | Actions | Leads (★) & Supports (▲) | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | + |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|------|---|
| <p>4.4</p> <p>Advance reconciliation and inclusion by fostering community awareness and understanding of Anishinaabeg and Métis cultures, protocols, and available local resources.</p> | <p>4.4.1</p> <p>Create a dedicated webpage for Indigenous Relations that serves as a hub for information on Anishinaabeg and Métis culture, including protocols for attending ceremonies and pow wows. This webpage will feature educational resources and a directory of local support services, directing users to Treaty 3 partner sites and programs for further learning and assistance.</p> | <p>★ Indigenous Relations</p> <p>▲ Communications</p> | <p>✗</p> | <p>✗</p> | | |



Communications Strategy Footnotes

Goal 1: Strengthening Public Awareness and Involvement

[1] Departments with Social Media Accounts include: Communications, The Muse, Kenora Public Library, Fire and Emergency Services, Tourism, Business Development, City of Kenora Lost and Found Pound.

[2] For more details on the Social Media Sub-Committee, see ‘Goal 3: Build a Cohesive Brand Experience’.

[3] A 2025 annual report will be completed in early 2026.

[4] This Action appears in both Goal 1 and Goal 2, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

[5] For more details on the Social Media Best Practices Guide, see ‘Goal 3: Build a Cohesive Brand Experience’.

[6] This Action appears in both Goal 1 and Goal 3, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

[7] This objective is repeated, as elements of this objective live under multiple goals (e.g. strengthen public awareness and build a cohesive brand).

[8] The Communications Department will recommend suitable alternative communication methods as needed.

[9] This Action appears in both Goal 1 and Goal 2, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

[10] This Action appears in both Goal 2 and Goal 3, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

[11] This Action appears in both Goals 1, 2, and 3, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

Goal 2: Improve Internal Communications and Collaboration

[12] This objective is repeated, as elements of this objective live under multiple goals (e.g. strengthen public awareness, improved internal communications, and building a cohesive brand).

[13] This Action appears in both Goal 1 and Goal 2, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

[14] This Action appears in both Goals 1, 2, and 3, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

[15] This Action appears in both Goal 1 and Goal 2, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

[16] This Action appears in both Goal 2 and Goal 4, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

Goal 3: Build a Cohesive Brand Experience

[17] This Action appears in both Goal 1 and Goal 3, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

[18] This objective is repeated, as elements of this objective live under multiple goals (e.g. strengthen public awareness and build a cohesive brand)

[19] This Action appears in both Goal 2 and Goal 3, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

Align All Communications to the City's Strategic Plan

[20] This Action appears in both Goals 1, 2, and 3, as it fulfills Objectives in each.

[21] A 2025 annual report will be completed in early 2026.

[22] This Action appears in both Goal 2 and Goal 4, as it fulfills Objectives in each.