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South Huron Communication Strategy - final.docx

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Introduction

The Municipality of South Huron Communication Strategy (the Strategy) provides a framework for the organization to enhance its two-way communication, improve stakeholder relationships, and encourage public participation in the municipal process.

The Strategy is designed to influence all communication activities within the organization, and outlines positive and achievable practices that will help the Municipality achieve its organizational goals.

All employees have a role to play to ensure the success of the Strategy. By working collaboratively across departments to ensure communication efforts are well-co-ordinated and responsive to the needs of stakeholders, we will achieve a more informed and engaged workforce, community and Council. This is an evolving strategy for the entire organization and will help build our communications capacity.

Vision

An informed and engaged community working with responsive employees to openly share ideas and collaboratively shape the future of South Huron.

Mission

To provide a framework to enhance the Municipality of South Huron two-way communication capacity, improve stakeholder relationships, and deliver effective communications programs that help achieve organizational goals.

Guiding Principles

- Consider the information needs of stakeholders during planning and implementation of the Municipality's programs, services and special projects.
- Work collaboratively across the organization to provide information that is accurate, objective, clear, complete and timely.
- Consider the range of communication tools at our disposal and use those most appropriate to address the needs associated with each circumstance.
- Respect the access to information and privacy rights of citizens and employees.
- Support opportunities for engagement to inform public policy.
- Strive to achieve a culture of two-way communication and "communications excellence" practices.

Goals of the Communication Strategy

1. To demonstrate the relevancy of the Municipality to our stakeholders, building the organization's brand as a reliable service provider and trusted business partner.
2. To improve internal information flow and communication performance within the organization.
3. To proactively identify and respond to issues in a timely manner.
4. To foster and support an engaged community in the municipal policy process.

Implementation Plan

The implementation plan provides a map establishing objectives and tactics within the framework of the four strategic goals. The following outlines the Implementation Plan:

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GOAL 1: TO DEMONSTRATE THE RELEVANCY OF THE MUNICIPALITY TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS, BUILDING THE ORGANIZATION’S BRAND AS A RELIABLE SERVICE PROVIDER AND TRUSTED BUSINESS PARTNER.

OBJECTIVE	TACTICS	TIMELINE	SUCCESS MEASURE
Maintain high-quality, consistent information on all Municipality platforms	Develop and deliver staff training to build internal communication capacity that includes website information standards, social media content guidelines, how to make documents accessible as required by AODA standards.	September, 2018	100% of published information on website is current (assessed for R.O.T. ¹) and accessible.
Improve customer service with a redesigned website	Develop a new site for southhuron.ca (migrate onto a content management system) with enhanced online functionality.	September, 2018	New website is launched on time with staff training supports provided in advance.
Work with local media partners to publish Municipal information	Ensure inquiries from the media are given a high priority and responded to as quickly and efficiently as possible.	Ongoing	Local media request are responded to within two business days.
	Provide media training to equip our organization’s spokespersons with message delivery skills.	January – March, 2019	%100 of senior managers and council receive training.

GOAL 2: TO IMPROVE INTERNAL INFORMATION FLOW AND COMMUNICATION PERFORMANCE WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION

OBJECTIVE	TACTICS	TIMELINE	SUCCESS MEASURE
Employees consider themselves well-informed about programs, issues and initiatives.	Host quarterly information sessions for employees to keep them informed about MOSH priorities, initiatives, financial position (budget), etc.	Quarterly	Through a bi-annual survey, 80% of staff report they feel informed (<i>Not informed, Somewhat informed,</i>

¹ Redundant, obsolete, trivial information

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			<i>Informed, Very informed).</i>
	Develop a new employee/ councillor orientation that provides an overview of the organizational structure and department services.	October – November, 2018	%100 of employees and councillors receive the orientation.
Increase communication skills and enhance the communications capacity of the organization as a whole.	Develop and distribute a communication plan template for departmental use to guide staff. The template will include a recommended workflow process describing the internal approval process for information to be published.	July – August, 2018	100% of municipal programs, services and projects have an associated communication plan before 2019.
	Seek out professional development opportunities and resources for employees to improve communication skills.	Ongoing	By November, 2018, identify organizational needs as part of performance monitoring of this strategy.

GOAL 3: PROACTIVELY IDENTIFY AND RESPOND TO ISSUES IN A TIMELY MANNER.

OBJECTIVE	TACTICS	TIMELINE	SUCCESS MEASURE
Improve the organization's ability to anticipate and respond to issues	Conduct environmental scanning (news media, social media, community correspondence); review on a regular basis to identify emerging issues, top issues, etc.	Ongoing	Communication staff complete an environmental scan each day and report issues to SMT.
	With the involvement of the Senior Management Team, develop an issues management protocol to effectively identify, monitor and respond to issues.	September - October, 2018	100% of issues are monitored and responded to in 2019 using the protocol.
	Enhance the issues and emergency communication capacity of senior staff through professional development opportunities	February – April, 2018	Organize one professional workshop in the first quarter of 2019 with the CEMC.

GOAL 4: TO FOSTER AND SUPPORT AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY IN THE MUNICIPAL POLICY PROCESS.

OBJECTIVE	TACTICS	TIMELINE	SUCCESS MEASURE
Promote the importance of public participation in the Municipality's work	Develop a public engagement strategy to guide the public consultation process and create consistency across the organization. Ensure that the process for receiving and responding to feedback from the public is accessible and compliant with the AODA	Strategy adopted by September, 2018	By October 2018, %100 of Municipality's communication plans consider the techniques outlined in the engagement strategy.
	Increase awareness of existing opportunities for public engagement and dialogue	Ongoing	100% of public engagement opportunities are promoted on the website and through social media.