

# Town of Greater Napanee Corporate Communications Policy



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## 1. Introduction

The Town of Greater Napanee is committed to providing timely, transparent and factual information to citizens, Council, the media, stakeholders and Town employees.

The Town’s Communications Policy is intended to set guidelines for Town employees regarding their communications responsibilities and to establish expectations for citizens.

The Town’s Communications Policy is not a stand-alone document; it works in conjunction with provincial legislation and other Town policies and strategies. These include:

- Corporate Communications Strategy
- Corporate Communications Service Standards
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Public Notice Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Visual Identify Policy

The Communications Policy, in conjunction with other relevant policies, is intended to guide open and effective communications with citizens and internal and external stakeholders to ensure Town communications are relevant, predictable, concise and clear.

## 2. Purpose

Communications is the responsibility of all Town employees, and the manner in which information is exchanged is essential. While respecting its legislated obligations to protect personal and sensitive information, the Town will strive to be open and transparent by default across all areas of its business.

By governing how it communicates, the Town of Greater Napanee can ensure that credible information and consistent messaging are being shared with all stakeholders.

This policy is designed to support staff in their work by providing clear expectations and ensuring the Town:

- Provides clear, accurate, timely and consistent information related to Town policies, programs, services and initiatives to stakeholders.
- Uses a variety of communications methods to engage and inform citizens.
- Staff members and those who work with or on behalf of the Town understand what's expected of them.
- Legislated privacy rights are understood and expected.
- Ensures that communication regarding the official position of the Town on matters of importance reflects the decisions of Council or existing policies and bylaws that Council has adopted.

### **3. Scope**

The Town of Greater Napanee Communications Policy applies to all Town of Greater Napanee staff and any individual retained by the Corporation who is acting on the Town's behalf. This includes, but is not limited to, full-time and part-time employees, temporary and contract employees, elected officials, appointees to agencies or boards, committees, volunteers and/or contractors or consultants doing work on behalf of the Town.

The policy guides activities related to:

- Internal and external communications related to the business or operations of the Town.
- Electronic, printed and/or verbal communications.
- The use of technology and Town property for communication in compliance with all other relevant municipal policies, procedures and guidelines, as well as provincial and federal legislation.

### **Exceptions**

The Corporate Communications Policy applies to all communications issued by the Town of Greater Napanee, with the following exceptions:

- In the event of a declared emergency, the Town's Emergency Management Plan will supersede this policy.
- Legislated requirements under municipal legislation, such as public notices under the Planning Act or Municipal Act.

- Where alternative forms of communications are directed by Town Council.

#### 4. Definitions

**Council:** Refers to individuals who have been elected to the municipal Council of the Town of Greater Napanee in the current term of office.

**Responsible Program Manager:** The management staff member who oversees the daily operations of a department or division at the Town of Greater Napanee.

**External Communication:** The external transmission of information between the organization and another person or entity that is electronic, verbal or printed.

**Internal Communication:** The internal transmission of information between the organization and another person or entity that is electronic, verbal or printed.

**Media:** Includes traditional news media (print, radio, television), online (websites and social media), where an individual or organization's primary purpose is the dissemination of news and current affairs (not advertising) to members of the public. Media should have a platform/medium they can point to and proof that they have been engaging in the activity for an extended period of time.

**Media Inquiry:** A request for information by a professional journalist or an individual or outlet who is identified as media.

**Public Statement:** A declaration made by an authorized Town employee on behalf of the corporation in any forum that relates to the Town of Greater Napanee, its employees and/or its business. It includes a statement made in person, in a newspaper, by email, social networking applications and anywhere else that is a matter of public record.

**Social Media:** The various online communications channels or technologies that allow individuals to publicly share information, ideas, messages pictures, etc. Channels can include, but are not limited to, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, as well as blogs, discussion boards, websites or any other online forum where information or commentary is publicly shared and attributed to the corporation, an employee or an elected official.

**Stakeholder:** A resident, business, elected official, staff, other government,

board, committee, agency, authority, association or other party with an interest in the Town of Greater Napanee.

**Staff:** Refers to full-time, part-time, temporary, and contract employees of the Town.

**Town / Corporation:** Refers to the Corporation of the Town of Greater Napanee.

**Town Logo:** Refers to the official logo of the Town of Greater Napanee. Use of the Town Logo is governed under the Visual Identity Policy

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **5.1. Mayor**

As per Ontario's *Municipal Act, 2001*, the Mayor is the official spokesperson for the Town. This includes serving as the primary spokesperson for all media and public events and carries overall responsibility for approval of official positions taken by the Town on matters related to the Town's position on issues.

### **5.2. Members of Council**

Members of Council have the responsibility to serve as the spokesperson for their constituents on Ward-specific issues, serve as spokesperson for any committees on which they serve, and may serve as the Town's spokesperson if and when designated to do so by the Mayor, as the head of Council.

### **5.3. Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)**

The CAO holds ultimate accountability for how the Communications function at the Town performs, including the division's annual work plan and how it is supported. The CAO also serves as the administrative spokesperson to provide information and context on administrative matters, such as how policy works, facts about the municipality, and information that provides context on how Town staff are carrying out Council direction.

### **5.4. Community Engagement and Communications Coordinator**

The Community Engagement and Communications Coordinator is responsible for creating communications materials, developing messages, selecting communications tools, and scheduling communications activities. The Coordinator, in consultation with subject matter experts and the

managers responsible for program areas, is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Town's Communications Program. The Coordinator is also the primary contact point for Media Inquiries and is responsible for publishing and distributing Public Statements on behalf of the Town.

#### **5.5. Responsible Program Managers**

Responsible Program Managers are both accountable and responsible, directly or through delegation, for ensuring that communications activities are identified for Corporate Communications, and that Corporate Communications receives all required information and materials to develop and distribute communications materials. The Responsible Program Manager is also responsible for the approval of materials and may be required to act as a spokesperson for the program area they oversee, or to ensure that a Subject Matter Expert (staff members who deal directly with affected files) is available to serve in that capacity.

#### **5.6. Subject Matter Expert**

A Subject Matter Expert is the staff member closest to and/or working on a service, program or project that is the focal point of a communications effort. Subject Matter Experts are responsible for the collection and delivery of information and materials related to a communications effort. Subject Matter Experts may be appointed by their manager to serve as an administrative spokesperson to speak on their specific area of expertise.

#### **5.7. Volunteers and Advisory Committees**

Volunteers and members of Advisory Committees are not authorized to speak on behalf of the Town nor are they to serve as official spokespeople for their committees, a role that is the responsibility of the committee's Council members who can provide an overview of work performed by the Committee. Volunteers and Advisory Committee members may speak informally about the work they are performing for the Town, provided it is not in an official capacity.

#### **5.8. Human Resources**

Human Resources is the operational owner of the Town's Intranet, which is updated in cooperation with and the support of Corporate Communications. Informed through the Town's Annual Employee Survey and related engagement meetings, Human Resources will design and seek the approval of the Senior Leadership Team of an Internal Communications Strategy that is to be reviewed annually.

### **6. Policy**

#### **6.1. Communications Priorities**

The Town's Communications priorities, including areas of focus and preferred strategies and tactics, are outlined in the Town's Council-approved Corporate Communications Strategy. The Corporate Communications Strategy is to be reviewed annually, with any updates to be subject to the approval of Town Council.

## **6.2. Communications Procedures**

The delivery of corporate communications materials, including through advertising, traditional media, social media, and web communications, is the responsibility of Corporate Communications.

Requests for communications may be made by managers and subject matter experts and must be made in writing via the division's intake process, which is subject to change from time to time.

Staff requesting communications plans and materials will be expected to provide all accompanying information – data, background information etc. – to ensure that the creation and distribution of communications material can be completed in a timely manner.

The lead times required are identified in the Town's Communications Intake Process, which may change from time to time based on operational needs.

## **6.3. Visual Identity**

Visual identity, including use of the Town's logo, corporate identifiers and images, is subject to the Town's Visual Identity Policy that is approved by Town Council and overseen by Corporate Communications. All visual materials need to adhere to the visual identify policy unless otherwise approved by Council resolution.

## **6.4. Internet and Electronic Communication**

The Town's website infrastructure is overseen by the Town's website provider and all content is managed by Corporate Communications.

The Town will make every effort to provide as much information as possible available via the Town's website and will restrict all content to the Town's own information. The Town does not host third-party information that is has no involvement with. An exception to the third-party rule is an events calendar that the Town links to is hosted and overseen by the Bay of Quinte Marketing Board, that has a partnership agreement with the Town.

## **6.5. Links to Third Party Sites**

Third-party links that open a new browser may be provided for the convenience of web users. The inclusion of a link does not imply endorsement, and the Town accepts no responsibility for the content on third-party websites.

Links are subject to the approval of Corporate Communications. Factors affecting the approval or removal of third-party links may include, but are not limited to, partnership and sponsorship agreements, and information from other government agencies.

#### **6.6. External Advertising**

The Town may place advertisements or purchase advertising space or time in any medium as deemed appropriate by Corporate Communications.

Advertising decisions should be based on operational goals and audience preferences, and in recognition that different segments of Greater Napanee's population that consume advertising materials differently.

External commercial advertisements and/or logos or sponsorships will not be permitted unless formally arranged through a sponsorship agreement.

Advertising costs are the responsibility of the requesting department.

#### **6.7. Legislated Advertising**

Public notice advertisements are used to inform the public about Town actions and proposals, including but not limited to by-law changes, requests for proposals, public hearings, elections, and heritage designations. Notice requirements may be set by provincial statute or by the Town's standards in the Public Notice Policy. The specifics of each type of required timing and method of notice are detailed in the Public Notice Policy as may be amended from time to time.

### **7. Related Documents**

- Corporate Communications Strategy
- Corporate Communications Service Standards
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Public Notice Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Visual Identify Policy

### **Revision History**

Date	Number	Description
April 28, 2026	CA-2026-01	NEW