

Department business plan update

Communications

Department overview

Communications supports Strathcona County's strategic direction and business goals by:

- advancing the reputation and positive image of the organization
- providing open, transparent and meaningful stakeholder communication and public engagement
- having 15 professionals work in partnership with internal departments (including additional departmental communicators and staff involved in public engagement) communicating County's programs, services and achievements

Core business functions

- Communications consultation, planning and implementation - provide strategic communication direction, consultation and training
- Stakeholder relations - foster positive relationships internally and externally
- Digital communications – develop and maintain County websites, social media approaches and tools
- Brand management – preserve integrity of County brand
- Public engagement – guide public engagement efforts

Improvements to core functions

- **Communications consultation, planning and implementation** - collection of whole communications picture for the County/integration
- **Stakeholder relations** – increased scanning and reporting for internal stakeholders, increased capacity in crisis/issues management, social media improvements
- **Digital communications** – internal and external website improvements and enhancements, closer partnerships with IT
- **Brand management** – consistent templates, broader brand picture
- **Public engagement** – supporting online public engagement efforts

Progress on core function forecast

- Trending on budget for 2021
- Change in budget for 2021 was a one time increase (taken from reserves) to allow for the review of Communications through an enterprise-wide lens
 - Review committee for the design and evaluation of the RFP was cross-departmental (HR, IT, EDT, RPC, COMC, PSB)
 - Intent will be to continue to involve those contacts to ensure review process meets the needs and that recommendations are not just COMC recommendations
 - Short version – looking at roles/structure/resources/approaches/systems
 - Recommendations report for end of September 2021 (including potential budget requests/adjustments)
 - Longer-term plan for transformation/implementation of recommendations

Employee engagement update

- Regular communications from the leader and emphasis on more sharing of information from Council, E-Team, SLT to ensure team members are informed/have advance notice of communication needs
- Engaged staff in trying out a few new innovative things – virtual town halls, going to SLT to discuss internal communications, working with ITS to have team breakout sessions, new ways to do social media
- Daily virtual chats with COMC team – check-ins and celebrations
- Monthly virtual social event
- Support development of internal County staff (all postings in COMC have been offered internally first)
- Supporting personal growth development (virtual and in person)
- More opportunities for succession planning (management opportunities)

Questions?

