



LATHRUP VILLAGE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Amended and Passed [DATE]



[DATE]
CITY OF LATHRUP VILLAGE
27400 Southfield Road

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Chapter 1
Communication Plan Overview

I. Introduction

A communications plan is necessary to determine how information should be shared, and who needs to receive it in what order. Effective communication is essential for transparency, trust, and engagement between the City of Lathrup Village and its residents, businesses, and media. This becomes even more critical when considering the many functions of local government, i.e., providing police and fire protection, building playgrounds, zoning parcels, and the development of land.

Public input in planning and policy development processes is crucial to building consensus and buy-in from residents and other community stakeholders. The City seeks engaged community input to inform planning and policy outcomes.

Information is distributed to the public through newsletters, news releases, brochures, flyers, the City's public government channel, the City's website, e-mail alerts, social media, booths at local events and festivals, one-on-one communication with residents and businesses, and other various forms of communication.

This plan establishes clear guidelines for all communication channels and expectations to ensure consistent, professional, and legally sound messaging.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this communication plan is to:

- Ensure transparency and accessibility of city information, allowing for easy and clear dissemination of all relevant information in every logical scenario.
- Maintain consistency in messaging across all platforms, including in-person meetings, social media, and private/public events.
- Define roles and responsibilities for communication through every channel, scenario, and medium.
- Prevent misuse or manipulation of city communication channels by staff, councilmembers, board members, and other civic groups, either associated with the City of Lathrup Village or otherwise.
- Foster an environment of engagement and informed participation with local business owners, prospective business owners, current and prospective residents, civic groups, and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

III. Audience

This plan serves the following stakeholders:

- City Council & Staff
- Residents
- Business Owners
- Media Outlets
- Community Organizations
- Government Organizations outside of the city.
- Nongovernmental Organizations outside of the community.



Chapter 2
Purpose and Goals

I. Transparency

- Public information will be readily accessible through appropriate channels, including the official city website/mobile app, social media sites, and the city YouTube channel (when applicable or necessary).
- Information will also be available in person at the city offices on demand should such a request be made. The city identifies that not all residents have internet access or can navigate the city website, so documents and other information types will be made available by request.
- Information related to city operations, policies, and events will be communicated clearly and in a timely manner, according to the city policies.

II. Consistency

- All official communications will align with city policies and branding.
- Messaging will be uniform and professional across official platforms to avoid misinformation.

III. Clarity on Roles

- **City Council:** Provides policy direction and public statements as needed.
- **City Administrator:** Oversees and approves communications.
- **City Staff:** Responsible for executing communication strategies.
- **Residents & Business Owners:** Engaged participants in communication but not official representatives.
- **Media:** Receives and disseminates information based on city releases.
- **Community Organizations:** Serve as partners in sharing important city updates.



Chapter 3

Communication Response Expectations

I. Social Media

- Official city accounts will be monitored during business hours. In the event of an emergency, official city accounts may be used to disseminate critical information. This will be covered more in Chapter 7.
- Comments violating policy (e.g., harassment, misinformation) will be addressed following the social media guidelines. Any comments that disseminate misinformation, whether intentionally or incidentally, will be amended as soon as possible with the correct information.
- Threatening or harassing comments towards or by city staff, council, boards, its members, or any civic group, or any threatening or harassing comments made by such, will be reported to and handled by the necessary authorities.

II. Emails

- City staff will acknowledge emails within 1 business day.
- Formal responses will be provided within 3-5 business days, depending on complexity.

III. Voicemails & Phone Calls

- Voicemails will be returned within 1 business day or at the earliest possible opportunity (for when the party receiving the voicemail is out of the office for prolonged periods).
- Urgent matters will be prioritized by the voicemail recipient.

IV. Written Correspondence

- Formal letters received by the city will be responded to within 7 business days. (City asks that residents give city staff some leniency, as response times may vary by certain factors, including holidays, any changes to the Postal Service outside of the City's control, among others).



Chapter 4
Policy on Public Information Materials

I. City Meeting Documentation

- Agendas and packets will be available 72 hours before meetings and can be found on the city website.
- Draft minutes will be available for review within five (5) business days of the meeting
- Official minutes will be posted online within 5 business days after approval.
- Recordings of City Council Regular Meetings, Planning Commission Meetings, and Downtown Development Authority Meetings will be posted to the city's YouTube channel as soon as possible following the meeting's adjournment.

II. eNewsletter

- Distributed at minimum bi-weekly via email. Anyone interested in receiving the newsletter can subscribe online for updates.
- Includes upcoming events, city updates, proposed ordinance and policy changes, and civic engagement opportunities, including councilmember office hours, DDA office hours, and event dates.
- Event promotions must align with city objectives and policies.

III. Promotional Material Eligibility

- Only city-sponsored or partner events may be promoted. Governmental and Nongovernmental organizations that are not partnered with the city can still have their events promoted so long as said event coincides with city objectives and policies.
- Private or commercial promotions will not be permitted. The city may host private or commercial events in the Community Center, but it will not be promoted by the city.

IV. LVTV Videos

- Videos will be posted on YouTube and Facebook (with exceptions to be prepared for other social media channels if they become available).
- Only major city events, official meetings, and public service announcements will be recorded and published.

V. Press Releases & PSAs

- Published in newspapers, TV stations, and online platforms when applicable or available.
- Major announcements will be disseminated to all relevant media outlets.

VI. City Website & Mobile App

- Official updates, public notices, and emergency alerts will be posted on the city website homepage.
- Residents can sign up for notifications via website and app settings.



Chapter 5

Public Information Requests & Releases

I. FOIA Requests

- FOIA requests will be processed as per Michigan law.
- Fees and processing timelines will be communicated clearly to requesters.

II. Publicly Available Documents

- Meeting minutes, financial reports, and city policies will be available online.
- The eNewsletter archives will be accessible for reference.



Chapter 6
Media Engagement Policies

I. Interview Requests & Press Conferences

- Requests must be directed to the City Administrator's office, regardless of who is desired for the interview. The interviewing party must specify whom they intend to interview in their request.
- Only authorized city officials may speak on behalf of the city.

II. Public Engagement Methods

- Phone: Available during business hours.
- Email: Responses within 1-3 business days.
- Public Meetings: Open for community discussion.
- Office Visits: Available by appointment or during designated hours.

Social Media Policy & Conduct

III. City Social Media Channels

- Official accounts include Facebook, YouTube, and other city-managed platforms.
- Only authorized personnel may post on behalf of the city. Other groups or individuals claiming to speak on behalf of the city, its governing bodies, or its staff are not authorized to do so and, as such, do not speak for the city.

IV. Commenting & Posting Guidelines

- Comments violating policy (e.g., harassment, false information) will be removed.
- Comments detailing threats of violence or bodily harm, intimidation, or other acts of aggression will be reported to the proper authorities. The city claims a zero-tolerance policy regarding all threats against its staff, governing bodies and their members, and all civic groups or residents, and will take appropriate action when deemed necessary.
- Repeated violations may result in banning users from engagement. The city withholds the right to ban users from public forums if they violate these terms.

V. Guidelines for Officials' Social Media Use

- City officials should maintain professionalism in all public online interactions through official posts and channels on official pages.
- Personal accounts should not be used for city business. The city recognizes it cannot police private/personal social media accounts, but it can limit the interactions these private/personal accounts have on official social media channels.



Chapter 7
Crisis Communications Plan

I. Emergency Situations

- **Power Outages:** Updates will be provided via the website, social media, and emergency notifications. The city asks residents for patience in cases such as this, as information may be difficult to disseminate due to city staff also having to deal with power outages. Information will be posted as soon as possible on events such as these.
- **Road Closures:** Announced through social media and the city website and discussed in open meetings when relevant and/or necessary.
- **Police & Fire Updates:** Only verified information will be shared by dedicated spokespersons representing the proper authorities and will only be posted through official channels.

II. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- The communication plan will be reviewed annually to incorporate new technologies and best practices.
- Surveys and feedback mechanisms will be used to assess the effectiveness of city communication. Additionally, the city may incorporate the use of annual Public Participation Reports to justify or verify changes, revisions, or amendments to all public participation-related policies.
- Training for staff and officials on communication protocols will be conducted as needed.