



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6597
January 7, 2025
Study Session**

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6597: 2025-2026 Communications Goals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Receive report. No action necessary.	

DEPARTMENT:	Administrative Services
STAFF:	Ali Spietz, Chief of Administration Mason Luvera, Communications Manager
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	1. 2025-2026 Communications Goals Outline
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to inform the City Council about the City’s communications and engagement strategy for 2025 and 2026.

- Increasing awareness of the City’s operations and updates is a priority for staff.
- The City relies primarily on social media, the MI Weekly email newsletter, and earned media to keep the community informed.
- Staff have developed a strategy for 2025-2026 to implement process improvements, new tools, and different campaigns to grow the City’s online audience and increase engagement between residents, businesses, and workers with City messaging.
- Staff will present an overview of this strategy to the City Council on January 7.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

An effective communications platform is crucial for local government agencies to ensure clear, timely, and accurate information is delivered to the community. This fosters transparency, builds trust, and enhances public engagement which strengthens the relationship between the City and the community.

The City currently utilizes all standard communications channels to disseminate information: social media, the City website, earned media (when the City is spoken of by a third party) through local news stations and

newspapers, and strategic partnership communications. Given the ever-changing nature of the marketing and communications landscape, strategy shifts are needed on a regular basis to keep up with evolving trends and ensure the City’s communications align with the ways constituents engage and stay informed.

City staff have developed a strategy for updating the City’s communications approach throughout the 2025-2026 period. This strategy is comprised of seven key areas of focus:

1. **Better, More Engaging Content** – improvements to the City’s storytelling approach.
2. **New Content Management Tools** – implementing software to better manage the many different messages the City needs to communicate.
3. **Department Self-Service Structure** – deputizing staff within each department to help ensure updates and messages are disseminated through the City’s central storytelling.
4. **Redesigned Email Marketing** – updating the City’s newsletter to reflect changing best practices.
5. **Canva for Teams Migration** – implementing the Canva platform to manage the City’s brand and improve the quality of posters, graphics, and more.
6. **Thrift Shop Marketing Overhaul** – rebranding the Thrift Shop and equipping the staff team with new marketing tools needed for a retail operation.
7. **Photo Management System** – implementing a new software system to efficiently manage the City’s photo and video content.

These strategies will help the City improve and expand its communication work while building better efficiency for staff. The presentation on Tuesday will provide an overview of the planned strategy and allow the Council to ask questions.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will implement the strategies outlined in the 2025-2026 Communications Goals plan throughout the next two years.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive report. No action necessary.