



# TOWN OF WARRENTON

TOWN MANAGER

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** William Semple, Vice Mayor, Chairman Transparency Commission

**FROM:** Frank Cassidy, Town Manager

**DATE:** April 3, 2025

**RE:** Outreach Initiatives for Transparency in Government

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This memo is to provide an overview of the outreach initiatives we have implemented over the last two years.

It has been a year since I was first promoted to your Town Manager, and since the publication of the 23/24 Year in Review. I would like to take this opportunity to elaborate on our efforts and successes specifically regarding public information, transparency, and outreach. This involves the active participation of every department and is a major part of our initiative of "Excellence in Action."

These are designed to develop a government that is transparent, predictable and consistent. Some of these programs are:

### Overview of Initiatives:

- A full-time Communications Manager-
  - Citizens Academy – "Your Town Academy"
  - Town Talks
  - Neighborhood Talks
  - First Friday participation
  - Improved relationships with local press
  - More active on social media and continuous push to the website for information.
  - Production of our "Town Crier" to be timely and focused on education
  - An annual report
  - EM updates and posts.
  - Projects section on the website for information and updates on the various projects to include Broadview Avenue.
  - Website improvements with additional reports available online to include financial, projects, press releases, and emergency management.
  - More use of our Town Alert system through the website to include weather, traffic impacts, and project alerts.
  - Increased public forums on various topics to include Main Street, Broadview, and Zoning Ordinance Update.

- The production of more informational documents to include brochures and booklets.
  - The creation of a “communications center” for residents in the Council Chambers for residents to get information on programs and services.
- Refine our Emergency Operations and develop an efficient response system.
  - Citizen Preparedness Guide
  - FEMA information booklets and handouts
  - Tabletop exercises
  - Collaboration with all participating agencies and departments
- Developed an action-oriented traffic safety initiative, with an active “hot line” and email for direct communication for complaints and concerns.
  - Developed a localized response stepped to address specific issues and concerns
  - Adopted Vision Zero and 20 is Plenty safety initiatives
- Have Improved Town Manager to Council Communications-
  - Weekly reports with improvements designated to each Ward outlined specific operations of a higher priority and are used as a highlight of operations.
  - Emergency response updates to include pre-event announcements, updates during events, a hotline for information, updated social media posts, and updated operational manuals.
  - Weekly Council draft agenda items to ensure ability for Council to review and to solicit input and recommendations in advance of the final agenda.
- Have improved our communications and collaboration with the County
  - Regular meetings with the County Administrator.
  - County Economic Development housed in Town Hall
  - Shared use of our government spaces.
  - Working to relocate our salt shed.
- Have improved project announcements and updates from Community Development and the Planning Commission
  - Regular monthly updates on the Council Agenda
  - Zoning rewrite committee with public forums and meetings
  - Established the Warrenton Arts Commission for public education through the arts
  - Detailed quarterly reports
  - Emails and information on new projects as they occur.
- Increased outreach regarding projects
  - Project Manager and other Town staff actively engages with businesses and residents affected by construction.
- Roads and construction- Broadview and Main St for example
  - Regular project updates as we receive them from the contractors
  - Posted project updates on website
  - Door-to-door notices and individual responses from our Project Manager
  - Public forums
  - Incorporation into Town Talks
- All Other Town Departments (Public Works, Utilities, Parks and Rec, Human Capital, Police, Finance, and IT)

- Improved overall community outreach, education, programs, and events. To name a few (can provide a full list if wanted):
  - Touch a Truck
  - Facility Tours and Ride A Longs
  - National Night Out
  - Stormwater contest
  - Warm Up Wednesdays at the WARF
  - Career Fairs

**Additional:**

A copy of last year's "Year in Review" is provided as further illustration of these initiatives.