

Overview

Watertown can increase informed participation, enhance community pride, and improve livability through consistent and engaged communication. Having a public communication plan in place will foster an engaged, informed community, increase citizen satisfaction, and attract quality employees.

The 2023-2026 Communication Plan is a living document intended to be adapted and enhanced as Watertown continues to evolve. This plan is expected to change to meet the emerging needs of the city as communications technology and platforms for citizen engagement continue to advance. As written today, it is a snapshot of the City's current communication goals and objectives and a unified method to achieve those goals and best serve Watertown's citizens.

The Plan outlines an overall communications philosophy, structure, audience, and platforms.

This plan refers to general communication regarding the City of Watertown and its various departments, services, and programs. For disaster or emergency situations, please refer to the Emergency Management Plan for the City of Watertown.

- Communications Team
 - Media and Communications Director (FT), Media Productions Manager (FT),
 Communications Assistants (2 PT)
 - Work in cooperation with PIOs from police and fire, subject matter experts from city departments, and spokesperson
 - City officials, committee and commission members, and staff have the duty to serve as ambassadors for the city.
- Media Productions accomplishments 2021-2022
 - May 2021 hired full-time director to oversee Watertown TV, website, social media, and serve as the City's public information officer.
 - Revitalized content for Facebook account with enhanced infographics and frequency of posting, added an Instagram account.
 - Redesigned city's semi-annual newsletter to increase clarity of information and uphold brand standards
 - Increased Facebook followers by 37% and gained 371 Instagram followers
 - Replaced Council Chambers audio system with functional and updated technology to increase ease of remote meeting communication and quality of meeting recordings (November 2022)
- Demographics/Audience and current analytics
 - Demographics of Watertown (taken from 2020 US Census)
 - Total population: 22,926
 - Total housing units: 9,294
 - Employment rate: 63.7%
 - Median Household income: \$52,440
 - 7% of households speak Spanish in the home (second most commonly spoken language)
 - Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Google Analytics statistics overview as of October 2022



- City website: 43,000 visits in 2022 (From April to October. Google Analytics was connected to site in April)
- 6,902 Facebook Followers
 - 71% female-identifying followers
 - Most common age ranges are 35-44 (19.4%), 45-54 (14.4%)
- 438 Instagram followers
 - 77.8% female-identifying followers
 - Most common age ranges are 35-44 (20.2%), 45-54 (23.3%)
- 701 YouTube Subscribers

• Communications Roles

- Spokesperson: Mayor or Council President. The spokesperson faithfully represents the city's positions to the public and media.
- Public Information Officer: Media & Communications Director. The PIO is the individual responsible for communicating with the public, media, and/or coordinating with other agencies, as necessary, with incident related information requirements.
- Subject Matter Experts: Department heads, managers. Subject matter experts may be called upon when appropriate to enlighten the public regarding their area of expertise.

• Communications Structure

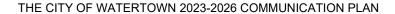
- Public (external) Communication Goal: Responsibly communicate information regarding City programs, services, news, and events through a framework of unified, layered communication methods that follow industry best practices and standards.
 - Objective 1: Regularly communicate the matters before Watertown City Council, and their decisions and actions to the public.
 - Objective 2: Make information about City programs, services, and activities readily available to the public and easy to comprehend.
 - Objective 3: Increase awareness, interest, participation, and engagement of residents, businesses, and community leaders in City government programs, services, and activities.
- Internal Communication Goal: Develop and maintain positive working relationships with members of the media on all aspects of City municipal services, programs, activities, and news.
 - Objective 1: Provide consistent, proactive news releases and public service announcements to achieve accurate coverage.
 - Objective 2: Provide timely response to media inquiries and requests.
 - Objective 3: Unify City communication outreach efforts.

Key Messages

- Core services (waste removal, streets, safety)
- Construction keeping the public abreast of changing conditions throughout construction season
- City budget implementation with a focus on the value citizens receive for their tax dollar
- Community events and recreational opportunities (share info from community organizations and groups with a focus on events that fit the city's mission statement)
- Development and business retention (featured business videos, new development announcements)



- Legal & Ethical Considerations: Media Productions aspires to high quality in our communication, but other considerations also guide us. We are careful to ensure that we implement all legal requirements and carefully consider ethical standards.
 - Wisconsin Open Meetings Law: The state's open meetings laws find and declare that all public bodies exist to aid in the conduct of the people's business. It is the intent of the law that their actions be taken openly and that deliberations are conducted openly. We take every step to ensure that our communications meet the letter and spirit of these requirements.
 - Accessibility: We make every reasonable effort to ensure that our messaging is available to all audiences, regardless of language or accessibility needs.
 - We strive to provide complete and unbiased information on emerging events. We believe that our audiences should be informed about issues before they reach decision from the Common Council, and that Media Productions will best serve the public interest by acting as responsible advocates for the Council's policy decisions when made.
- Our Communications Assets
 - Owned digital assets, including official social media outlets
 - Official City of Watertown website (ci.watertown.wi.us)
 - City of Watertown YouTube channel
 - City of Watertown Facebook
 - City of Watertown Instagram
 - City of Watertown LinkedIn
 - Watertown Park and Rec Facebook
 - Watertown TV Facebook page
 - Watertown Department of Public Health Facebook page
 - Watertown WI Police Department Facebook page
 - Watertown WI Fire Department Facebook page
 - o Print
 - City Connection newsletter (semi-annual publication printed and distributed by APG Southern WI/Hometown News Group)
 - Various other print resources created within city departments (senior center newsletter, recreation brochures, economic development brochures and informational one-sheets)
 - Cable Access Channels
 - The City owns two cable access channels (channels 984 and 985) that are available to all local Spectrum customers. These channels air city meetings, various informational productions from the city, and community contributed programming. These channels are maintained by the Media Productions Department.
- Current Communications Tools (software, services, tools, and platforms)
 - Brand and Logo Guidelines: A guidelines manual was approved by Watertown City Council in February of 2016. The manual sets out key messages, a tagline, and the guidelines for uniform logo usage in all applications. The Media and Communications Director serves and the Brand Champion of the City of Watertown brand.
 - Adobe Creative Suite: Video and photo editing. Print and other graphic design layout software.





- Canva: Online service offering premade graphic templates. The City has a limited free subscription
- o Revize: city website content management platform
- o Tip 411: Police Department tip reporting service
- Archive Social: Service which archives all social account activity for open records purposes
- Text My Gov: Service that sends out text alerts and provides limited chatbot-like assistance via SMS for certain keywords. This service will be sunset in 2023 due to low citizen usage



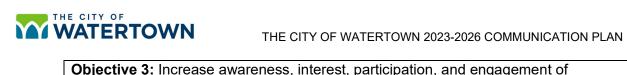
Appendix 1: Communications Plan Implementation

Americans with Disabilities

Act.

Public (external) Communication Goal: Responsibly communicate information regarding City programs, services, news, and events through a framework of unified, layered communication methods that follow industry best practices and standards.

Objective 1: Regularly communicate the matters before Watertown City Council,				
and their decisions and actions to the public.				
	Frequency/Timing	Progress Information		
Tactic 1: Provide internet	ONGOING	This has been done		
streaming video of		consistently since (at		
Common Council		least) 2019.		
Meetings and replay on				
cable channel				
Tactic 2: Distribute media	ONGOING			
releases on major projects				
and other matters.				
Objective 2: Make informat	ion about City programs, serv	vices, and activities readily		
available to the public and e		riese, and dentines readily		
Tactic 1: Work with	ONGOING			
contracted website vendor				
to maintain reliable public				
website.				
Tactic 2: Coordinate and	ONGOING	2022: Coordinated a 2-		
train departmental staff		session group website		
responsible (website		training with vendor		
coordinators) for website		representative in July.		
information updates and				
maintenance.				
Tactic 3: Work with	Assess needs and project	Last redesign/launch		
contracted vendor on	budget in 2023 with	completed in 2020.		
redesign development of	intention to budget for and			
all City sites per 4-5-year	redesign 2024.			
standard site longevity				
standards	ONICOINIC			
Tactic 4: Analyze current communication channel	ONGOING			
statistics for patterns and deficiencies.				
Tactic 5: Make	ONGOING	2022: Inclusion of image		
reasonable	ONGOING	2022: Inclusion of image descriptions in social		
accommodations available		media postings where		
and upon request in		appropriate.		
accordance with the		app. spricts.		
accordance with the				



Objective 3: Increase awareness, interest, participation, and engagement of residents, businesses, and community leaders in City government programs, services, and activities.				
Tactic 1: Oversee departmental release of information and coordinate cross promotional efforts.	ONGOING	2022: Established regular monthly communications call to coordinate efforts and awareness between departments.		
Tactic 2: Produce and circulate quality programming through Watertown TV and the City's YouTube channel.	ONGOING			
Tactic 3: Monitor and engage in official City social media outlets.	ONGOING			
Tactic 4: Produce print and digital publications for city-wide distribution, most notably the City Connection.	ONGOING	2021: Complete overhaul of City Connection publication.		



Internal Communication Goal: Develop and maintain positive working relationships with members of the media on all aspects of City municipal services, programs, activities, and news.

activities, and news.				
Objective 1: Provide consistent, proactive news releases and public service announcements to achieve accurate coverage				
announcements to acmeve		Progress Information		
Testis 4. Maintain regular	Frequency/Timing ONGOING	Progress information		
Tactic 1: Maintain regular	ONGOING			
media distribution list and				
technique for efficient				
delivery of releases and				
news tips. Tactic 2: Promote various	ONICOINIC	2022		
	ONGOING	2022 – created a		
City sources for		dedicated page on the		
information about City		city's website for press		
programs and service to		releases, setting the stage		
the media for proactive		to automate the		
media access.		distribution process.		
Objective 2. Describe time to	naananaa ta maadia kasuululaa			
	response to media inquiries	and requests.		
Tactic 1: Respond to	ONGOING			
media requests and				
inquiries in a timely				
manner Tactic 2: Coordinate	ONICOINIC			
	ONGOING			
subject matter experts as needed for media				
requests.				
requests.				
Objective 3: Unify City com	munication outreach efforts.			
Tactic 1: Establish	Examine yearly, create	2022: Press release policy		
processes for release of	new processes as	created, establishing a set		
information to media.	necessary	process for all		
Assess regularly to		departments to follow		
determine efficiency of		when releasing		
processes.		information to the public.		
Tactic 2: Utilize regular	Monthly meetings			
Leadership Team	_			
Meetings as internal forum				
to participate in an				
ongoing discussion about				
items of potential media				
interest.				



Appendix B: Digital Strategy

The Digital Strategy applies to the City's primary website and social media platforms managed by Media Operations Center. It has been developed to guide nature of content and frequency of sharing on a per-platform basis that can be managed by existing staff resources.

OUR VOICE:

- Respectful
- Good-natured
- Factual
- Professional

OUR STRATEGY:

Digital channel	Message types	Frequency
City website	 All service, facility, and event information Latest city news and announcements 	Weekly updates
Watertown TV	 Common Council Meeting coverage Other series and stand-alone programming Content from other government agencies (county, state) Public Service announcements and community event bulletins 	Biweekly meeting coverage Weekly changes in program content Weekly changes in community bulletin board
Facebook	News, updates, events, factoids, goodwill messages	10-12 posts/week
Instagram	 News, updates, events, factoids, goodwill messages Showcase images of Watertown community and events 	10-12 posts/week
YouTube	Content from Watertown TV that is original to the Media Operations Center	10-20 uploads/month
Linked In	 Recruitment messages City and employee successes Business and development-related news relating to the city 	1-5 posts/month