



# Communications Strategy

2024-2026

Responsibility - Integrity - Respect - Transparency







# The Strategy

2024-2026 will be an exciting time for growth and brand building for the Township of Brock. By developing and implementing this plan, the Township staff and Council are committed to creating an organizational culture that understands its citizens and listens in a real way.

This means we all must understand how our roles, both individually and collectively, impact the Township and its reputation when communicating. To be successful, the Township needs to commit to understanding what information citizens want, how often they wish to receive it, and using which channels.

In May we launched a Communications and Community Engagement Survey that will help us get a clear picture of what is working well and where we need to improve. As part of this process, the Township gathered information about citizens' engagement preferences that will assist with future plans and budgets.

# Guiding Principles



## Responsibility

**Accountability to the citizens of the Township of Brock**

- Manage change and move forward while honouring our past
- All staff and Council will assist the Township in listening to citizens, incorporating feedback, and communicating information from the Township.
- Build capacity and grow individual and organizational capacity to build trusting relationships in support of effective public policy
- Support growth and provide the tools required for staff and Council to support delivery of Communication Strategy



## Integrity and Respect

**Honest, Ethical, Rational and Professional Leadership**

- Be inclusive and respect diversity, recognize various needs, and develop strategies to ensure the Township remains inclusive.
- Remain and stay responsive to the learning we do as we implement the plan and commit to evolving over time.
- Involve the public, those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.



## Transparency

**Inclusive, Communicative and Engaged Citizenry**

- Inform citizens and provide timely, accurate and clear information using the channels they prefer.
- Listen actively and engage with the public to inform the Township's decision making and communicate how their input has been considered.

# 3 Areas of Focus

## Objective One

**Communicate accurate and important information to residents in a timely and meaningful way**

## Objective Two

**Establish a formal, predictable and transparent approach to engaging with the community**

## Objective Three

**Strong and authentic internal communications**



# Measuring Success

To ensure the effectiveness of the Communications Strategy, each strategy will be tracked using the metrics below. At the end of the first year, results will be used to set a benchmark to track the success of communication efforts over the balance of the Strategy, assisting with the annual budget process and resource allocation.

## Objectives

**Establish** a communications baseline

**Cultivate** corporate communications excellence

**Develop** creative content and enhance strategic communication efforts

**Foster** engagement and uphold public trust

## Metrics

- Email analytics on e-newsletters (open rate and conversion rate)
- e-Newsletters subscribers and average open/engagement rates
- Response time to resident inquiries
- Website analytics using Google Analytics
- Social media analytics (i.e. engagement rate, impressions, likes/favourites, comments, shares/retweets, video views, optimal post times, number of followers/subscribers, traffic to website)
- Council/Committee/Meeting attendance and Livestream Analytics
- Survey participation rates
- Print Newsletter responses and identify future opportunities for resident feedback
- Distribution of communication material/information
- Analyze customer service inquiries
- Number of media releases
- Quantity of media coverage (i.e. number of news articles, radio segments, interviews, etc.)
- Analyze public engagement metrics in Township projects

# Objective One

## Communicate accurate and important information to residents in a timely and meaningful way

### Strategy 1.1 Communicate important information about Council decisions and Township services.

#### Goal

Expand awareness of Township initiatives and decision making.

Encourage a well informed community.

Proposed Actions	Implementation	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote Council and Committee meetings on website, social media, newsletters with a brief itinerary of discussions.</li> </ul>	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media analytics</li> <li>Website analytics</li> <li>Livestreams</li> <li>Council/Committee/ Meeting attendance</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance Council Highlights after meetings and promote using social media paid advertising options to target Brock residents.</li> </ul>	2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media analytics</li> <li>Website analytics</li> <li>Livestreams</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly email to community and nonprofit groups to provide key dates and information about valuable services and recreation opportunities for our residents. This email will be a dedicated line of communication to provide valuable information to these groups about municipal requirements, timelines, and upcoming events.</li> </ul>	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email analytics on e-newsletters (open rate and conversion rate)</li> <li>Identify opportunities for feedback</li> <li>Information sharing by community groups</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to expand on the organization wide communication content calendar on upcoming events, activities and DEI dates of awareness</li> </ul>	2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze customer service inquiries</li> <li>Social media analytics</li> <li>Cludo and website searches</li> </ul>

# Objective One

Communicate accurate and important information to residents in a timely and meaningful way

## Goal

Expand awareness of Township initiatives and decision making.

Encourage a well informed community.

**Strategy 1.2 Develop an insight into the type of information citizens seek, their preferred frequency of receiving information, the channels they prefer, and their desired level of involvement in Township decision-making processes.**

Proposed Actions	Implementation	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize a statistically sound methodology (example survey) to collect data, ensuring comprehensive representation of all citizens' perspectives and preferred methods of communication.</li> </ul>	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data will be measured quarterly through google analytics, Meta business suites, Hootsuite and cludo</li> </ul>

**Strategy 1.3 Maintain mutually beneficial relationships with media.**

Proposed Actions	Implementation	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update media contacts.</li> <li>All staff and Council respond to media in a timely fashion in a unified manner.</li> </ul>	<p>Annual</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response time to media inquiries</li> <li>Number of media releases</li> <li>Quantity of media coverage</li> </ul>

# Objective Two

Establish a formal, predictable and transparent approach to engaging with the community.

**Strategy 2.1 Develop a Public Engagement and Participation Framework to create consistency.**

## Goal

Increase participation and engagement in the Townships decision making.

### Proposed Actions

### Implementation

### Metrics

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt the <a href="#">International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)</a> Spectrum of Public Participation.</li> </ul>	2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course completion</li> <li>• Implementation in Communications plan</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory of all municipal communications channels. Use this information to create the public engagement and participation framework, incorporating the public's preferred communication methods.</li> </ul>	2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media analytics</li> <li>• Website analytics</li> <li>• Survey participation rates</li> <li>• Email analytics on e-newsletters</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage departments to prioritize public involvement by referencing the framework developed and include the selected engagement methods in the communications section of reports to Council</li> </ul>	2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey participation</li> <li>• Distribution of communication material/information</li> <li>• Analyze customer service inquiries</li> <li>• Public engagement in project</li> </ul>



# Objective Two

Establish a formal, predictable and transparent approach to engaging with the community.

## Goal

Increase participation and engagement in the Townships decision making.

### Strategy 2.2 Attract more resident participation in Public Engagement Activities

Proposed Actions	Implementation	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with community partners and groups to participate in well established public events.</li> </ul>	2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend Fairs, Maple Syrup Festival, Community Group AGMs, etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the pre-promotion of public involvement opportunities and feedback channels, while also offering incentives to encourage participating.</li> </ul>	2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey participation</li> <li>• Public engagement in project</li> <li>• Social Media Analytics</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage mutual information sharing between the Township and Community partners and groups on events and information.</li> </ul>	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media Analytics (i.e. comments, shares/retweets, video views, number of followers/subscribers, traffic to website)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate the purpose of the event and how the engagement will be used to support decision making using all platforms to build trust.</li> </ul>	2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public engagement in event</li> <li>• Social Media and website analytics</li> </ul>

# Objective Three

## Strong and authentic internal communications

### Goal

**Enhance internal communications and engagement with staff.**

**Strategy 3.1 Enhance individual communication skills and capacity of the organization as a whole.**

Proposed Actions	Implementation	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use Council Highlights to keep staff informed.</li></ul>	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Subscribe Staff to news posts and Council Highlights webpages</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a Crisis Communication guide and offer training to staff and Council.</li></ul>	2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Research, develop and implement a specific plan for staff and Council</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide Communication training and best practices for new and existing staff by actively pursuing and accessing external resources and internal expertise</li></ul>	2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Training will be based on the information learned during the IAP2 course and current best practices</li></ul>