



CRESTON
VALLEY

TOWN of CRESTON

Corporate Policy

Policy #:	SER-004-001
Division:	Corporate Services
Effective Date:	June 16, 2026
Review Period:	Annually

Policy Title: Communications – Level of Service Policy

Purpose & Scope

This policy establishes the Town of Creston's commitment to defined communications service levels, including the methods used to measure performance and ensure accountability.

This policy applies to corporate communications functions delivered by the Town of Creston under the Corporate Services Division, including external communications, public information, engagement support, media relations, and digital communications. All communications must relate directly to Town business. The Town will not disseminate third-party messages or communications related to non-statutory holidays.

This Level of Service supports Council's expectations for:

- Transparency and public trust
- Timely, accurate, and coordinated information sharing
- Sustainable workload management within available organizational capacity

Definitions

Acknowledgement: Confirmation that a communications request has been received, including either a response or clear timeline and next steps provided to the requester.

Routine Communications Request: A request that does not involve immediate public safety, major service disruption, or reputational risk and can be addressed through standard business processes and timelines.

Service Variance: A temporary and approved adjustment to the level of service due to capacity constraints, emergencies, or competing organizational priorities.

Urgent Communications Request: A request requiring same day attention due to potential impacts on public safety, essential services, legal obligations, or municipal reputation.

Service Statement (what residents receive, in plain language)

The Town of Creston provides clear, accurate, and timely information to residents, businesses, media, and partners so the community understands municipal decisions, services, and events.

Residents can expect:

- Regular updates through the Town website, social media, and traditional media
- Clear advance notice of Council decisions, public meetings, and service changes
- Timely responses inquiries addressed to Corporate Services
- Honest, coordinated messaging during emergencies or service disruptions

Performance Targets

KPI 1: Social Media Content Delivery

Target: Maintain a consistent and responsive social media presence by delivering 3 social media posts per week (150 posts annually).

Definition: Measures the consistency and reliability of the Town's social media activity by tracking the total number of posts published across official platforms within the reporting period.

KPI 2: Website Engagement Trend

Target: Website engagement annual and three-year trend.

Definition: Measures traffic to the Town of Creston official website through sessions and average engagement time.

KPI 3: Council Meeting Recording Access

Target: Number of unique views of Council meeting recordings via the Town's website.

Definition: How many people view Council meeting recordings on the website, based on website visits and time spent watching.

KPI 4: Social Media Engagement Trend

Target: Social media engagement annual and three-year trend.

Definition: Measures engagement through reach, impressions and interactions

KPI 5: Timely Delivery of Communications Responses and Materials

Target:

- Routine/ Public communications requests tracked using a standardized intake log: ≥90% acknowledged within 2 business days
- Urgent communications requests: 100% acknowledged within same business day

KPI 6: In person Participation and Reach

Target: Conduct a minimum of five (5) in person public engagement sessions annually.

Definition: Measures the Town's effectiveness in engaging residents through the Annual Open House, Council Talks, Project Engagement Sessions and all other non-regulatory public engagement.

Measurement & Data Sources (systems, owners, frequency)

KPI	Data Source	System / Owner	Frequency
Social Media Content Delivery	Communications Activity Log	Corporate Services	Monthly
Website Engagement Trend	Google Analytics	Corporate Services	Monthly
Social Media Engagement Trend	Facebook Analytics	Corporate Services	Monthly
Council Meeting Recording Access	Google Analytics	Corporate Services	Monthly
Timely delivery of Communications Responses and Materials	Intake Tracking	Corporate Services	Monthly

Variance & Risk Tolerance (how/when LOS flexes; escalation & comms)

Acceptable Temporary Variance May Occur Due To:

- Emergencies or urgent public safety communications
- Staffing shortages or vacancies
- Surge demand during elections, crises, or legislative changes
- Council directed priority shifts

Variance Management Protocol:

- Communications Coordinator assesses workload and risks
- Director of Corporate Services authorizes temporary LOS adjustment
- CAO notified if variance is significant or prolonged
- Public messaging adjusted, where required, to manage expectations

Roles & Responsibilities (Council/CAO/Director/Managers)

Council

- Approves the Communications Level of Service Policy
- Sets strategic expectations for transparency and engagement
- Receives performance reporting

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

- Provides organizational oversight
- Ensures alignment with corporate priorities and Council direction

Director of Corporate Services

- Accountable for communications service delivery
 - Oversees performance, risk management, and continuous improvement
- Reports to Council

Communications Coordinator

- Delivers day to day communications services
- Manages channels, content, and analytics
- Tracks KPIs and supports reporting

Reporting (monthly internal; quarterly Council; annual public)

Monthly (Internal Ops Dashboard)

- KPI progress, training participation, plan updates.

Quarterly (Council)

- Program status, major risks, exercise outcomes, trends

Annual Public Report

- High-level summary of preparedness, performance, improvements.

Continuous Improvement (how targets evolve; lessons learned)

- KPIs reviewed annually and adjusted based on lessons learned;
- After-Action Reviews drive plan and training updates;
- Committee integrates new best practices, legislative updates, and risk trends.

Appendix A

Service Areas and Responsibilities

This appendix defines the service areas delivered through the Town's Corporate Communications function and the mandated (assigned) responsibilities established.

The Corporate Communications department in Local Government plays a vital role in managing internal and external communication to ensure transparency, engagement, and effective dissemination of information. The key responsibilities follow:

Public Relations & Media Management

Manage media relationships, issue public statements, respond to media inquiries, and support accurate external representation of the Town.

Digital Communications (Website and Social Media)

Manage the Town's website and social media platforms and ensure public information is accurate, accessible, and up-to-date. Social media posts may include:

- Service updates and operational notices
- Public information and awareness messaging
- Council related communications and engagement initiatives
- Emergency or urgent communications
- Promotion of municipal events, programs, and community engagement opportunities

Community Engagement Communications Support

Facilitate communication between the Town and residents through communication channels, promote community initiatives, and support engagement activities including feedback mechanisms.

Crisis / Emergency Communications

Develop and implement communication plans during emergencies and ensure timely and accurate information is shared with the public.

Internal Communications

Inform employees about policies, updates, and organizational changes and support effective internal communication across the organization.

Brand Management

Maintain a consistent and professional image of the Town by overseeing branding, messaging, and use of corporate identity materials.

Service Ownership and Governance

Corporate Communications is a strategic function within the Corporate Services Division, responsible for supporting transparency, engagement, and effective communication of municipal services and decisions.

Appendix B

Key Actions – Corporate Communications Strategy

The Communication Strategy focuses on modernizing and strengthening how the Town delivers information and engages residents. Key actions include expanding digital communication channels, improving public awareness, enhancing two-way engagement, and providing timely, accurate information to reduce misinformation. The strategy formalizes communications planning through data-driven analysis and establishes a framework for continuous improvement, aligning with Council's Service Excellence objectives.

1. Strengthen and Expand Communication Channels

- Continue enhancing existing channels:
 - Town website (recent redesign)
 - Social media platforms
 - Quarterly newsletter
 - Let's Talk Creston engagement platform
 - Radio Ads (3 times 365 days per year).
- Improve visibility and awareness of digital tools, as current awareness is low among residents

Intent: Ensure residents can easily access information through multiple, preferred channels.

2. Improve Public Awareness and Access to Information

- Increase efforts to ensure residents are:
 - Aware of Town activities
 - Informed on decisions and services
- Provide information that is easy to find and understand
- Address gaps in communication effectiveness identified in survey results

Intent: Create a more informed community and improve transparency.

3. Enhance Community Engagement and Two-Way Communication

- Expand opportunities for residents to:
 - Provide feedback
 - Participate in decision-making
- Leverage engagement tools like Let's Talk Creston

- Move beyond one-way communication toward interactive dialogue

Intent: Build trust and strengthen relationships with the community.

4. Reduce Misinformation and Build Trust

- Provide timely, accurate, and consistent messaging
- Ensure communications are:
 - Thoughtful
 - Targeted to the right audience
- Proactively communicate key information to prevent misinformation

Intent: Support an informed electorate and strengthen public confidence in Council and administration.

5. Formalize Strategic Communications Planning

- Use structured planning informed by:
 - SWOT analysis
 - Staff and Council workshops
 - Citizen Satisfaction Survey results
- Identify recurring themes and prioritize actions for implementation

Intent: Shift from ad hoc communications to a strategic, data-informed approach.

6. Continuous Improvement of Communications

- Recognize communications as an ongoing, evolving function
- Regularly evaluate effectiveness and refine approach
- Align communication improvements with Council's Strategic Plan (Service Excellence pillar)

Intent: Ensure communications remain responsive to changing community expectations.