

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE
ON
COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Community Relations Committee with a report on the Communication and Community Engagement (CCE) Division's activities in 2020, including an engagement a road map, website statistics, social media metrics, and a summary of cyclical programs supported by the CCE Division.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

This report supports Council's strategic priorities and areas of focus regarding:

- **Governance and Accountability**
 - Community Engagement: We are committed to engaging and connecting with Kamloops residents and stakeholders.

SUMMARY

The CCE Division supports the City's internal departments and helps to ensure that communication is strategic, tied to organizational goals, and easily accessible by residents and employees. We operate on the principle that open and regular communication with residents is a priority for the City.

CCE is responsible for a wide variety of communications supports for internal City departments, including the following key services:

- strategic communications
 - advising on internal and external communications
 - supporting project teams with strategic communication advice, tools, planning, and measurements (e.g. in addition to special projects each year, the CCE team also manages strategic communications for more than 90 cyclical or ongoing projects with the intent of sharing information and engaging with residents, businesses, and employees (see Attachment "C")
 - guiding media relations, corporate social media, and strategic communication planning
- public engagement
 - supporting project teams in planning and implementing public engagement activities (e.g. open houses, information sessions, stakeholder meetings, notices to residents, surveys, polls)
 - supporting the organization with technology and strategy to promote virtual engagement during the pandemic
- creative solutions
 - maintaining the City's brand standards and corporate identity

- designing and producing material to support municipal communication campaigns
- writing and editing
 - editing, proofreading, and formatting the City's corporate documents to ensure they are clear, concise, and consistent and follow corporate standards
- emergency information
 - working with the Emergency Operations Centre as Public Information Officers in the event of a crisis and with Kamloops Fire and Rescue in the event of a two-alarm event.

To further address CCE's public engagement key service, this report provides Council with an update on engagement activities during 2020, website statistics, and social media metrics.

RECOMMENDATION:

For the Community Relations Committee information only.

SUPPORTING COUNCIL AND CORPORATE DIRECTION

- Council Policy No. GGA-34, Public Engagement - updated January 12, 2021

DISCUSSION

The City can categorize 2020 public engagement as pre-COVID engagement or COVID engagement. Before the pandemic (pre-COVID), the City executed 30 in-person engagement events in addition to other forms of engagement using online tools.

After the pandemic was declared in March, the City's primary focus shifted to communicating the impacts of COVID-19 on City operations. Public Health Orders, such as physical distancing requirements and gathering limits, restricted how we were able to communicate important information to Kamloops residents. The City made use of its Let's Talk platform to provide timely, relevant updates on changes to City operations, including facility and playground closures, and resources from the public health authorities. The City also made use of video as an accessible medium to deliver important updates from the Mayor. The Union of BC Municipalities recognized the City's efforts with an Excellence in Governance Award for engagement during a pandemic.

In June, the City sought Council's direction on resuming engagement for major projects and provided an outline of alternate methods of engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. The CCE Division, supported by the IT Division, invested in virtual engagement training and software to provide virtual alternatives to in-person engagement and offered training and support to City staff. Using Let's Talk and Zoom allowed engagement to resume on specific projects as the Province moved into Phase 2 and 3 of its restart plan. The City was even able to host some in-person engagement opportunities in the fall before Public Health Officials reintroduced province-wide restrictions in mid-November.

Overall, the City was able to host a wide range of virtual and face-to-face engagement opportunities throughout the city on numerous topics. These activities are summarized in Attachments "A" and "B".

The overview in Attachment “A” provides a timeline view of a selection of engagement achieved through meetings, open houses, information sessions, workshops, virtual engagement opportunities, and Let’s Talk projects. It also identifies some key dates of the COVID-19 pandemic that influenced engagement as well as some of the engagement tools used to support the pandemic communication needs. While it is not an exhaustive list, it signifies the range of engagement objectives detailed on the following page.

Attachment “B” offers a more comprehensive view of a wider range of engagement efforts, including activities to inform the community of important decisions or direction, to advise residents of a situation, or to seek comment on a proposal or process. The engagement summarized in Attachment “B” covers items such as Council Highlights, news releases, social posts, notices to residents, media events, and more.

This year, the City retired its outdated Public Engagement Handbook and updated its Public Engagement Policy to better reflect the principles of the International Association of Public Participation. Each engagement activity conducted by the City follows best practices and planning steps, and each engagement activity is driven by an objective to empower, collaborate, involve, consult with, or inform the community.

2020 Engagement Locations

In 2020, engagement took place in many locations, including the following:

- online/mobile
- community centres
- arenas
- shopping malls
- hotels
- Blazers games
- City facility meeting rooms
- City Hall
- Council Chambers
- Tournament Capital Centre

Communications and Community Engagement Division

The following are some of the efficiencies created in the CCE Division in 2020. Note: The number of FTEs remain the same as all of the position changes below replaced existing FTEs. In 2020, we:

- instituted a promise to the public about public participation (P2) based on best practices from the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)
- completed IAP2 Foundations training for all CCE Advisors
- updated the Council Public Engagement Policy
- increased the amount of in-house printing, which reduced external expenses (e.g. all business cards are now printed at City Hall)
- redesigned capital project signage and initiated a process to print signs in-house
- created a Communications Supervisor position to mentor and guide strategic services provided by the CCE Advisors

- created a design team of two full-time designers who now manage design work in-house, which resulted in significant savings in work previously outsourced
- created a permanent Grants and Awards Specialist position after a one-year trial and currently have \$25 million in grant applications awaiting decision
- transitioned the Communications Services Coordinator role to an Editing Specialist to review external documents and maintain style guide and written brand standards
- realigned the CCE Advisor portfolios to better reflect municipal service cycles
- generally increased efficiencies and services through use of City-owned communication tools

City Websites

The City primarily uses two websites to communicate information to the public. The main website, Kamloops.ca, is for corporate information, while Let'sTalk.Kamloops.ca focuses on City engagement projects.

Kamloops.ca - Key Website Metrics from January 1 to December 31, 2020

Kamloops.ca includes details on Council meetings and agendas, news and events, and departmental information relevant to residents and businesses.

Kamloops.ca Visits

Kamloops.ca	2018	2019	2020
Site visits	837,267	1,110,195	982,675*
Page views	1,863,511	2,199,789	1,868,759*

*Some metrics are lower due to the COVID-19 pandemic when regular activities were suspended and less traffic was directed to the website. In addition, all COVID-19 information was posted to Let's Talk.

Referral Sources

The majority of people visited Kamloops.ca through a search engine (65.9%), followed by direct visits (20.3%), referral traffic (7.4%), and social media (5.4%).

The following is a list of the top pages over the past year, excluding the homepage (calculated as a percentage of total visits to the site):

- Traffic Data and Webcams
- Career Opportunities
- Residential Garbage
- Landfills, Recycling & Yard Waste Depot
- Maps & Apps
- Tournament Capital Centre (TCC)
- Skating
- Parks & Recreation
- Activity Guide
- Waste Wise Kamloops App

The following are the most popular search terms:

- jobs
- maps
- noise
- MyCity
- MMCD
- bylaws
- flooding

LetsTalk.Kamloops.ca - Key Website Metrics from January 1 to December 31, 2020

Let's Talk is an engagement platform that began to be integrated into the City's public consultation process in June 2018 to supplement face-to-face consultation and help guide City planning and decision making. This site hosts select topics that have an opportunity for public input.

The Let's Talk platform is structured to measure engagement-based on actions web visitors take and categorizes these actions in three ways: aware, informed, or engaged. To complement in-person engagement, Let's Talk employs a variety of engagement tools, including Q&As, open forums, surveys, quick polls, mapping tools, virtual post-it notes, voting, and storytelling.

There were 19 projects featured on Let's Talk in 2020, including the following:

- COVID-19
- Kamloops Centre for the Arts Referendum
- North Shore Neighbourhood Plan
- Tranquille Road Sanitary Main Upgrade
- EV & E-Bike Strategy
- Zoning Bylaw Review and Update
- Canada Games Aquatic Centre Infrastructure Improvement Project
- Residential Suites Update
- Community Climate Action Plan
- Kamloops Housing Needs Assessment
- Budget Consultation 2020
- Victoria Street West Improvements Project
- Staff Shout Outs
- Why Engage?
- Budget Consultation 2021
- Cemetery Master Plan & Bylaw Update
- Biosolids Management
- Riverside Park Improvements
- Noble Creek Irrigation System LAS

City divisions with projects represented on Let's Talk in 2020 included the following:

- Finance Services
- Recreation, Social Development, and Culture
- Streets and Environmental Services

- Utility Services
- Capital Projects
- Parks and Civic Facilities
- Planning and Development
- Engineering (Traffic and Transportation)
- Community Planning and Sustainability
- Communications and Community Engagement
- Administration

Website Visitors

LetsTalk.Kamloops.ca	2019	2020
Site visits	42,894	96,323
Page views	109,109	177,333
Aware visitors	22,371	62,143
Informed visitors	8,834	13,866
Engaged visitors	2,333	1,621*

Key metrics are for January 1 to December 31 each year.

- Aware: visitors who viewed multiple projects on the website
- Informed: visitors who viewed a video or downloaded a document or other educational resources on the website
- Engaged: visitors who interacted with the engagement tools on the website, such as those who participated in a survey or contributed an idea. For 2020 the majority of the projects didn't allow for deep engagement because of the pandemic.

*COVID engagement was for information sharing only and was not designed for public to affect decisions/provide input into decisions.

Referral Sources

The majority of people visited Let's Talk directly by typing in the URL (46.2%), followed by search (38.8%), social media (8.4%), and referral traffic (5.1%).

The following is a list of the top projects over the past year in relation to informed and engaged participants (calculated as a percentage of total visits to the project):

- COVID-19
- Kamloops Centre for the Arts Referendum
- North Shore Neighbourhood Plan
- Tranquille Road Sanitary Main Upgrade
- EV & E-Bike Strategy
- Zoning Bylaw Review & Update
- Canada Games Aquatic Centre Infrastructure Improvement Project
- Residential Suites Update

The following are the most popular engagement tools:

- News Feeds: 3,390 visits
- Surveys: 1,460 submissions
- Quick Polls: 286 responses
- Forums: 266 contributions
- Places (Mapping): 198 pins

The following are the most popular information widgets:

- Photo and video views: 6,770
- Document downloads: 4,900
- Frequently Asked Questions review: 1,170

Social Media Engagement

The City continues to maintain and grow a strong social media presence through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

From January 1 through December 31, 2020:

Facebook

- Facebook followers increased by 695 (from 6,686 to 7,381)
- Facebook reached 1,055,478 users (the number of people who had any content from the City show up in their newsfeed, including posts, check-ins, ads, and more)
- Facebook had 1,185,972 total impressions (the number of times any content from the City entered a person's screen, including posts, stories, check-ins, and ads)

Twitter

- Twitter followers increased by 444 (from 9,586 to 10,030)
- Twitter generated 1,083,255 impressions, 19,893 engagements, and 1,090 retweets

Instagram

- total Instagram followers: 5,838
- Instagram posts generated 541,530 impressions and 5,563 interactions

LinkedIn

- total followers: 3,269
- LinkedIn posts generated 92,407 impressions and 6,600 interactions (likes, shares, video views, clicks, and comments)

Cost of In-Person Public Engagement

As discussed in the Summary section of this report, CCE supports engagement efforts that are led by City departments. CCE supports the organization by providing strategic advice, advertising solutions, hosting and facilitation support, and event coordination when needed. Attachment "B" lists 39 in-person engagement events (open houses, workshops, and neighbourhood meetings that included hard and soft costs). The estimated City-wide cost to host these in-person events is approximately \$52,767. This estimate includes hard costs such as refreshments, room and equipment rentals, advertising, display boards, facilitators, livestreaming, and other associated expenses. Public health restrictions reduced refreshment costs but increased costs for materials such as masks, pens, and other accommodations to prevent transmission. The soft costs in this estimate include staff time to attend/work the events.

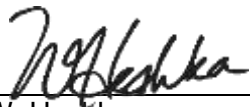
2020 Engagement Costs

In-Person engagement (39 events)	\$52,767
Kamloops.ca hosting and support	10,000
Let's Talk Kamloops licence and support	18,000
Total	<u>\$80,767</u>

Engagement Stats At-a-Glance

	2019	2020
Facebook impressions	2,528,849	1,185,972*
Twitter impressions	938,353	1,083,255
Instagram impressions	-	541,530
LinkedIn impressions	-	92,407
Kamloops.ca visits	1,110,195	982,675
Let's Talk Kamloops visits	42,894	96,323
Kamloops.ca page views	2,199,789	1,868,759
Let's Talk Kamloops page views	109,109	177,333
Open houses and neighbourhood meetings	50	39
Online engagement projects	24	19
News releases issued	110	149

*Some metrics are lower due to the COVID-19 pandemic, when regular engagement and social sharing activities were suspended.



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Attachments