



building communities together

2020 Business Plan Communications (1011)

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Working in partnership with communities large and small to offer local, sub-regional, and regional services to ensure that the Cariboo Chilcotin is a socially, economically, and environmentally desirable region.

Department/Function Services

The Communications Department falls within the Administrative Services function and budget and provides communication services to all departments of the Cariboo Regional District.



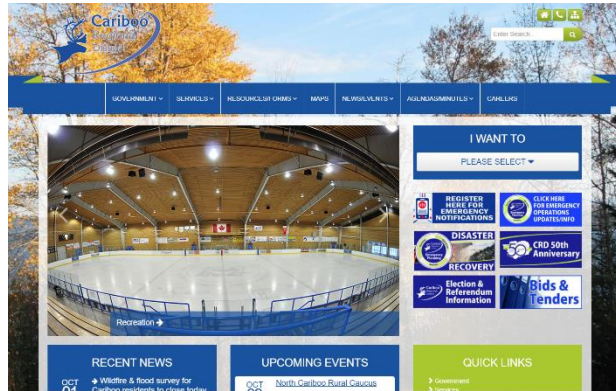
The Communications Department manages the Regional District's internal and external communications. The department publishes the spring/summer and fall/winter editions of the CRD UpFront Newsletter and news releases. Communications is also responsible for all media relations activities, corporate events such as Board on the Road meetings, news conferences, managing the CRD's social media channels, website and graphic design standards. The department also plays a key role in issues management, emergency communications and crisis communications. The Communications team provides graphic design services to all other departments and is responsible for all promotional literature and materials.

Administrative Services is a mandated service under the *Local Government Act* and as such, has no taxation limits attached. Each Electoral Area, the City of Quesnel, the City of Williams Lake, the District of 100 Mile House and the District of Wells all participate on the basis of assessed value of land and improvements.

All members of the Board are responsible for the governance of this service.

Business Plan Goals, Rationale & Strategies

- Goal:** Continue with the redesign of the Cariboo Regional District website.
Rationale: The website is one of the CRD's main communication tools and is the public face of the CRD online. As a main communication tool for the CRD, the website needs to be user-friendly with accessible information and it needs to be easily updateable, especially during emergencies.



This goal is a continuation of the related 2019 business plan goal. Funding was secured in Fall 2019 and the project will continue through 2020 and 2021. The project must be completed by Dec. 31, 2021.

Strategy: Issue a request for quotes from website developers; hire a website developer; and work with a web design company, IT and CRD departments to determine website design.

- Goal:** Develop policy and procedures for updating the website.
Rationale: This goal was identified in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan for completion by Y3:Q1 (March 2022). It makes sense for the policy and procedures to be developed concurrently with the website redevelopment throughout 2020 and 2021.
Strategy: Review and update the CRD's current *Web Posting Guidelines and Policy* to align with other recent communication policy updates and with changes to the CRD's website. Ensure that procedures for updating the website are documented and identify and train designated staff to update the website.

- Goal:** Establish a communications plan that explains what the CRD is and how it operates.
Rationale: This goal was identified in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan. The 2019-2022 Corporate Communications Plan was developed and endorsed by the Board in February 2019. The plan includes a variety of measurables to assess whether the CRD is meeting its communication objectives.

Strategy: Update the 2019-2022 Corporate Communications Plan to reflect the CRD's strategic planning objectives. Conduct a public phone survey in 2020, along with paper surveys at events and a corresponding online survey, to measure how the CRD is meeting its communication and strategic planning objectives.

- Goal:** Develop/update social media tools to ensure they have current information on the CRD and its services.
Rationale: This goal was identified in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan for completion by Y1:Q4 (Dec. 2020).
Strategy: Launch a social media campaign throughout 2020 raising awareness of the CRD and its services.

5. **Goal:** Align department filing with new corporate records management system.
Rationale: Updating the CRD's records management system is a large project and requires support from all the departments.
Strategy: Change department filing practices to align with new records management system and move old files into new system as required.
6. **Goal:** Develop and implement a system for tracking public complaints/inquiries to the CRD.
Rationale: Some of the measurables in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan include evaluating the number of complaints/inquiries received by the CRD. Currently, the CRD does not have a system for tracking positive and negative feedback.
Strategy: Work with IT, records management and management staff to develop and implement a system for tracking complaints, inquiries and positive feedback.

2021 Goals

1. **Goal:** Continue with the redesign of the Cariboo Regional District website.
Rationale: The website is one of the CRD's main communication tools and is the public face of the CRD online. As a main communication tool for the CRD, the website needs to be user-friendly with accessible information and it needs to be easily updateable, especially during emergencies.
Strategy: Work with the hired web design company, IT and CRD departments to transition and update content and launch the new website. The project must be completed by Dec. 31, 2021.
2. **Goal:** Develop and implement an annual presentation to high school classes regarding the CRD and local government careers.
Rationale: This goal was identified in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan for completion by Y2:Q2 (June 2021).
Strategy: Produce an engaging and interactive presentation that can be delivered to high school classes about the CRD and local government careers, including promotion of the CRD's annual bursary for graduating students. Connect with School District 27 & 28 staff to develop a schedule/plan for delivering the presentation.
3. **Goal:** Undertake a formal, structured branding exercise.
Rationale: This goal was identified in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan for completion by Y3:Q4 (Dec. 2022).
Strategy: Submit an RFP and hire a consultant to conduct a full branding exercise. This will be a one to two year project.
4. **Goal:** Develop a community engagement/consultation strategy and build staff capacity to conduct effective public engagement processes.
Rationale: This goal was carried forward from the 2019 business plan and identified in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan for completion by Y3:Q1 (March 2022).

The public has a growing need for information that allows them to make informed choices in their personal lives as citizens. They want and need to be involved in decisions on public issues. Developing a strategy with written procedures would ensure public engagement is done with purpose and is consistent and organized across all departments.

The CRD's strategy should reflect the standards of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2), which has become an international standard in public participation processes (www.iap2.org) and is used broadly by many local governments in B.C. Also, as identified in the strategic plan, the strategy must include communication tools that front-load information to the public, where the decision is explained and questions and concerns are anticipated. **Strategy:** Identify areas of CRD business that require community engagement/consultation and evaluate current engagement/consultation activities for their effectiveness. Begin to draft an overarching general strategy, including a strategy for AAPs and elections, along with supporting templates and procedure documents.



2022 Goals

- Goal:** Continue the CRD's formal, structured branding exercise.

Rationale: This goal was identified in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan for completion by Y3:Q4 (Dec. 2022).

Strategy: Work with the hired consultant to review the CRD's brand and produce an updated brand guide, including graphic standards.
- Goal:** Finalize the community engagement/consultation strategy and build staff capacity to conduct effective public engagement processes.

Rationale: This goal was carried forward from the 2019 business plan and identified in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan for completion by Y3:Q1 (March 2022).

Strategy: Finalize the overarching strategy, including a strategy for AAPs and elections, and the supporting templates and procedure documents. Coordinate related training and orientations for the Board and staff.
- Goal:** Evaluate the effectiveness of the 2019-2022 Corporate Communications Plan.

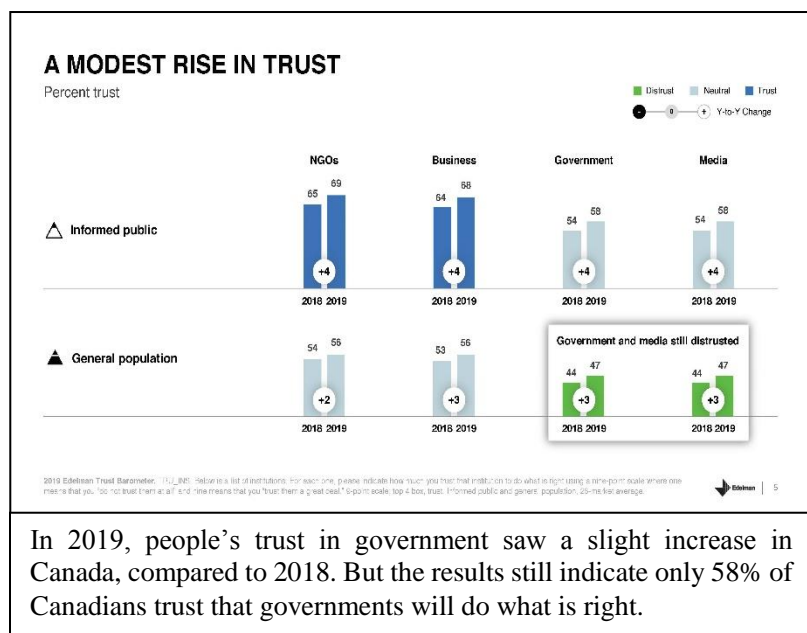
Rationale: The 2019-2022 Corporate Communications Plan was developed and endorsed by the Board in February 2019. The plan includes a variety of measurables to assess whether the CRD is meeting its communication objectives.

Strategy: Conduct a public phone survey in 2022, along with paper surveys at events and a corresponding online survey, to measure how the CRD is meeting its communication and strategic planning objectives. In addition, provide an overall evaluation of the success of the plan with considerations for the next Corporate Communications Plan, which will align with the CRD's subsequent Strategic Plan.

Significant Issues & Trends

In our 21st century reality, the public has high expectations for instantaneous communication, transparency and public engagement and has a lack of trust in government institutions.

Communicating well has a ripple effect on the organization, because the heart of communications is relationship building. Building relationships is key for transparency, connecting with the public and rebuilding trust. The need to communicate effectively and cohesively has never been more critical or demanded.



Measuring Previous Years Performance

Goal: Increase staff resourcing for the Communications Department.

- Completed. A new Communications Specialist started Aug. 13, 2019.

Goal: Seek funding for website development.

- A funding application was submitted to the Red Cross in February 2019 for the website development. In September, Red Cross confirmed they could provide 50% of contractor costs for the website, up to a max of \$50,000. Staff are working on the legal agreement to secure the funding.

Goal: Completely redesign the Cariboo Regional District website.

- The project was on hold for much of year waiting for funding confirmation from Red Cross. With funding confirmed, the project was able to start in Oct. 2019. Before the end of 2019, the goal is to gather internal feedback on website improvements, establish a staff website redesign committee and draft the RFQ.

Goal: Conduct improvements on the CRD website to streamline the process to update the website during an EOC activation.

- Completed. Improvements were tested and fine-tuned during EOC activation in July.

Goal: Develop a public engagement policy and build staff capacity to conduct effective public engagement processes.

- Work was paused on this until clarified through the Strategic Planning process. Carried forward to 2020.

Goal: Conduct media training with elected officials and key managers.

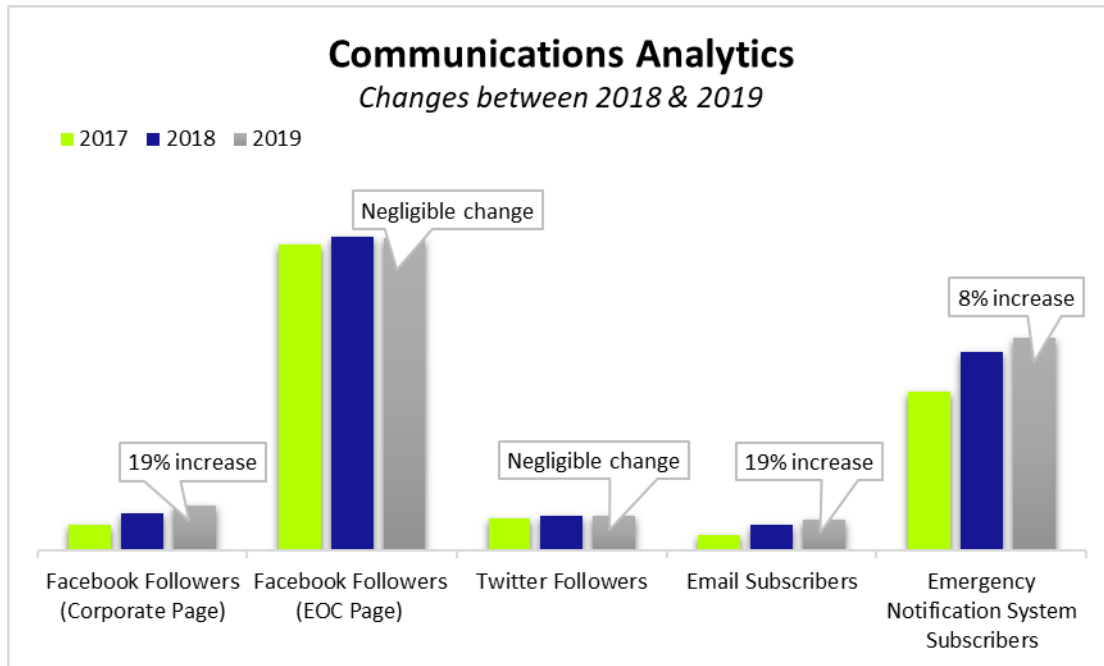
- Completed. Training was held with the Board and key staff spokespersons in February 2019.

Goal: Review the CRD's electoral area signs.

- In progress. Plan to present to Board in Fall 2019.

Other Accomplishments

- Created a Corporate Communications Plan to guide the CRD in 2019-2022, finalized a Crisis Communications Plan for the CRD, updated the CRD's social media communications policy and created a media relations policy.
- Supported communications needs for several large projects:
 - o Budget consultation survey and meetings
 - o Six Alternative Approval Processes for fire trucks
 - o Bouchie-Milburn Neighbourhood Plan
 - o Labour Market Study
 - o Cannabis policy and bylaw changes
- Coordinated several joint meetings with local government and First Nation government communications staff to coordinate emergency preparedness messaging and prepare for upcoming emergency communication.
- Launched a spring emergency preparedness campaign on social media, including a very successful Emergency Notification System campaign and sign-up week. During and immediately following the campaign, we saw 600 new people sign up for emergency notifications and 100 people logged in to update their existing profile.
- Hosted three multi-agency information fairs in the North, Central and South Cariboo.
- Delivered emergency communications during the EOC activations for spring flooding and the flooding in the East Chilcotin.
- Published the annual UpFront newsletter in spring and winter.



Communications Tactic	Measurables
Facebook (Corporate Page)	527 new followers (19% increase)
Facebook (EOC Page)	Lost 69 followers (negligible change)
Twitter	6 new followers (negligible change)
Email Subscriptions	365 new subscribers (19% increase)
Media Interviews	126 media interviews (since Jan. 1, 2019)
Emergency Notification System	1,105 new subscribers (8% increase)
News Releases	44 news releases
Website	127,100 website visits (43% less than 2018)

**Statistics are calculated from Sept. 2018-Sept. 2019, unless otherwise indicated