



2022 Business Plan Communications (1011)

Chris Keam, Manager of Communications

building communities together

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 - 2022 Goals

1. **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.

2. **Goal:** Create a communications plan explaining CRD functions and operations.
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 2021, along with paper surveys at events (if possible with COVID-19 restrictions) and a corresponding online survey, to measure how the CRD is meeting its communication and strategic planning objectives.

3. **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.

- 4. 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.
- 5. 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.
- 6. Goal:** Develop and implement video updates for emergency operations updates and general CRD news.
Rationale: Video updates proved useful during the 2017 wildfires as an effective means of sharing messaging to a wide audience. With further refinement of our production process and some additional branding, video updates can also be used to reach audiences who are not interested in reading media releases, newsletters, and other printed communications methods.
Strategy: Develop a production workflow and supporting graphics to be able to shoot, edit, approve, and publish short video updates and news items with minimal turn-around time.
- 7. Goal:** Build communications channels with local indigenous organizations
Rationale: This goal is in support of the board's desire to examine the potential for First Nations representation at the board table.
Strategy: Reach out to communications personnel with local indigenous communities to examine best practices and effective methods of communicating CRD information to their members.
- 8. 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.
9. **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.
10. **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.
11. **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.

Conclusion:

The current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic complicates many of our communications efforts, particularly those with a face-to-face component such as Board on the Road, Directors' outreach efforts, public hearings, and board meetings. At this time, flexibility, creativity, and innovation will be needed to maintain and improve our communications efforts with CRD residents. We will continue our efforts on the branding initiative, building capacity for video updates, and developing communications channels with indigenous communities in the CRD.