



City of St. Albert
CITY COUNCIL POLICY

Public Communication

AUTHORITY	APPROVED	Res. No.	mm dd	REVISED	Res. No.	mm dd
City Council		C15-2013	01 21			

Purpose

To provide guidance and direction to Council and Administration for public communication and engagement to ensure consistent, clear and appropriate practices for two-way information sharing between St. Albert residents and the City of St. Albert.

Policy

Council and Administration acknowledge the residents of St. Albert and their right to be informed and engaged in the development of the City's plans, budgets, decisions and implementation of decisions that affect them.

The City upholds as principles for public engagement and communication accountability, transparency, responsiveness, inclusiveness, commitment, standardization, accessibility, and coordination.

Definitions

"Brand" means the "The Botanical Arts City" and the tagline "Cultivate Life", which are the registered trade marks of the City.

"City" means the City of St. Albert.

"Media" means organizations and their representatives (such as, journalists, editors, publishers, photographers and videographers) including radio and television, newspapers, and magazines, and their online versions, that report news and provide editorial commentary for public consumption.

"Universal design principles for communication" means the design of information products (printed and electronic) to be usable by people of all ages and abilities.

Responsibilities

Council delegates responsibility for implementing this policy to the City Manager.



Standards

1. The City upholds the following principles for public communication and engagement:
 - a. Accountability – the City is accountable to the residents of St. Albert for its commitments and promises and follows legislative requirements for public consultation, advertising, notices and advisories.
 - b. Transparency – the processes for public input, engagement and decision making are made known and Council debates matters in public within the parameters of existing legislation.
 - c. Responsiveness – the City endeavours to listen, understand and consider varied views and needs in decision making and in implementing decisions.
 - d. Inclusiveness – the City endeavours to provide equitable opportunities for all residents to participate, be heard and provide input.
 - e. Commitment – the City delivers on its commitment to this policy through reporting, defined administrative policies and procedures related to communication, media relations, advertising, public input and engagement, and appropriate allocation of resources.
 - f. Standardization – the City endeavours to provide standardized ways to interact with its residents and stakeholders to create a predictable model of interaction, offering methods that are convenient, accessible and user-friendly.
 - g. Accessibility – the City is committed to universal design communication principles, acknowledging that in its communication and engagement efforts the need to be respectful and mindful of the varied needs of people with disabilities, as well as other variables that may pose barriers to access, such as age and language. The City acknowledges that people have different preferences or needs for how they receive and share information; therefore the City strives to offer various methods for two-way communication, consultation and engagement, within the constraints of time and availability of resources.
 - h. Coordination – the City ensures its communication and engagement activities are coordinated.
2. The City recognizes the role of the print, broadcast and digital media industry in conveying information to the public. The City strives to work proactively with the media, when appropriate, to promote public awareness and understanding of Council proceedings and decisions, policies, programs and services.



3. The City's brand encompasses all expressions and provides the framework for corporate and community messaging and visual design.
4. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Policy, the City recognizes that all records in the City's care or control must be administered in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* c.F-25 RSA 2000 (as amended) as well as any other binding privacy and/or access to information laws or directives.
5. Announcements, advertising, engagement/consultation events, and online communication, are coordinated as assigned by the City Manager.
6. Media relations:
 - a. Only authorized spokespersons speak on behalf of the City.
 - b. Only the Mayor and Council speak on behalf of Council.
 - c. The Mayor or any Councillor may be vested by Council with the authority to be its spokesperson.
 - d. No individual will discuss or disclose confidential matters, and will respect privacy rights and security needs.
 - e. Refer to the City Media Relations Protocol for procedures.
7. The City of St. Albert benchmarks practices with comparable municipalities and obtains ongoing feedback from City residents and stakeholders on their expectations and preferences with respect to communication, engagement, consultation and input.
8. Information about the application and use of the City brand and its marks is outlined in the City's Corporate Visual Identity Guidelines.

Legal References: *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

Cross References: Policy C-CG-08, Council Members' Code of Conduct; Policy C-CG-05, Council Job Description; Policy C-CG-07, Mayor's Role; Policy C-P&E-01, Public Consultation Requirements for Planning and Development Processes; City Media Relations Protocol

