



City of Waco

Strategic Communications Assessment





The Mission

In February 2021, the City of Waco sought a strategic communications consultant to conduct an audit of the City's existing strategic communications materials and processes.

The intent was to generate a report offering a third-party, candid review of the City's Municipal Information Department structure and staffing, resources, tools, processes and outcomes.

How We Got There

- Evaluation of current communications-related operations, resources and technology
- Interviews with key internal and external stakeholders
- Conducting community survey of residents' communications preferences
- Benchmarking against peer and aspirational cities in Texas and beyond



How We Got There

- Identifying gaps and opportunities
- Developing quantifiable metrics for ongoing evaluation
- Offering recommendations that may ultimately guide the future growth and direction of this established department



Key Takeaways

- Staff does good work but they're stretched thin
- Communications & Marketing functions should be centralized under Municipal Information
- Formal policies need bolstering

Key Takeaways

- Content planning is key
- Video staff needs help
- Digital Editor & Engagement Specialist can expand reach

Key Takeaways

- Website overhaul is a golden opportunity to convey brand
- Maximize internal & external partnerships to amplify messaging
- E-Newsletter should be expanded

Key Takeaways

- Widespread social media channels dilute content; additional consolidation is needed
- Priority should be placed on PEG budget utilization
- The department needs a fresh name

Key Takeaways

- Professional associations can be a tremendous boost to staff
- Internal Communications isn't a convenience; it's a necessity

Bottom Line

This venerable department, working in and for a storied City, is in need of a “refresh” to be accomplished by:

- Hiring a new Director and associated staff
- Greater attention to content planning
- Critical evaluation of existing communications channels
- Consolidation of communications & marketing functions
- A new commitment to social media and digital engagement
- Concentration on telling Waco’s story and not just delivering its news

Accomplishments

- Renamed Municipal Information to the Communications and Marketing Department
- Director hired, new positions in process
- FY22 budget inclusion for new positions, equipment, and software
- Deep dive into analytics- refresh of existing communications efforts

Questions?

