CITY OF
WEST CHICAGO

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

v.24.3

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1. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN OVERVIEW

The West Chicago Communications Plan establishes a clear vision and purpose for the City's communications efforts, providing context while outlining roles, responsibilities, and processes to ensure consistent and effective communication across the organization.

1.1 Vision

To establish guidelines that empower staff to disseminate information and raise public awareness in a professional, timely, and consistent manner through the City's available communications platforms.

1.2 Purpose

This Plan serves to offer comprehensive guidance to staff regarding content submission, publishing processes, and content guidelines. The objectives and initiatives within this Plan are framed by the City's Guiding Principles of Strategic Communications, detailed in Section 2.

1.3 Stakeholders

Primary Stakeholders

The primary audience, or key stakeholders, for the City comprises residents, local businesses, and organizations.

Secondary Stakeholders

Secondary stakeholders encompass visitors to the area, local and national media, other levels of government, community groups, prospective employees, as well as potential developers and businesses.

1.4 Future Edits

The Plan will undergo regular review and updating to align with stakeholder needs and evolving technologies. Feedback from department heads, staff, and the Marketing and Communications Manager will be incorporated, with the final approval of updates being determined by the City Administrator.

1.5 Operational Roles and Responsibilities

Each tier of the organizational hierarchy outlined in the City's Organizational Chart, plays a role, ensuring a collaborative approach to the City's communication efforts.

City Administrator

• Serves as liaison between City Council and staff.

• Provides primary messaging guidance during crisis situations.

• Approves new additions and revisions to the Plan.

Department Heads

• Designate staff member(s) to assist with streamlining communications efforts on behalf of their Departments.

Marketing and Communications Manager

• Serves as the City's designee for the overall management of the City's communications efforts.

• Evaluates the Communications Plan regularly; recommends new additions and revisions to Department Heads and City Administrator.

• Reviews, drafts, and publishes external content.

• Evaluates new communications platforms for organizational use..

Assistant Department Heads, Division Heads, Administrative Assistants, and Supporting Staff

• Submit content for publishing to the Marketing and Communications Manager. If designated by their Department Head, assists with the City's communications processes.

• Engages with Marketing and Communications Manager to suggest process improvements.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

The West Chicago City Council adopted the Principles of Strategic Communications in order to establish a clear framework for effective organizational communications. Encompassing four pillars—strategic vision and planning, inclusive and adaptive practices, audience engagement and understanding, and organizational collaboration and effectiveness, —these principles serve as the foundation for City staff to develop plans, policies, and strategies that enhance the City's communications efforts.

2.1 Strategic Vision and Planning

Proactive Adaptability

Enact proactive and adaptive strategies that foresee potential issues while offering flexibility to address immediate concerns.

Quality-Centric Content

Emphasize content quality over quantity, focusing on relevance, impact, and resonance while avoiding excessive information.

Brand Consistency and Coherence

Maintain brand integrity across all channels by aligning messaging, visuals, and tone with the City's established identity.

2.2 Inclusive and Adaptive Practices

Accessibility and Inclusivity

Follow appropriate accessibility guidelines and utilize various channels and formats to accommodate diverse needs and abilities.

Cultural Sensitivity

Acknowledge and respect cultural diversity within the community, ensuring that communications are sensitive to different perspectives and backgrounds.

Crisis Preparedness

Minimize potential damage and increase public awareness by regularly reviewing crisis communications plans to ensure effective response.

Strategic Use of Technology

Leverage technology, utilizing social media, websites, and other digital platforms to reach a broader audience with timely information.

2.3 Audience Engagement and Understanding

Audience-Centric Approach

Prioritize meeting the needs, preferences, and concerns of target audiences by tailoring communications effectively.

Transparency and Openness

Build trust by transparently communicating the City's activities, decisions, and policies.

Consistency and Coherence

Ensure consistency in messaging across platforms and channels, creating a unified and easily understandable narrative.

2.4 Organizational Collaboration and Effectiveness

Collaboration and Coordination

Utilize collaboration among City departments and partner agencies to ensure an efficient, and cohesive approach to communications.

Metrics and Evaluation

Utilize measurement tools to assess communications strategies, enabling continuous refinement based on data-driven insights.

3. CONTENT CREATION AND STANDARDS

The success of the City's communications relies on the quality of content shared across its platforms. High-quality content effectively conveys key messages, educates and informs stakeholders, enhances the City's credibility, increases visibility within the community, and encourages stakeholders to take action. Content Standards are established to ensure consistency and the appropriate use of the City's communication platforms, fostering a cohesive and professional image.

3.1 Appropriate Content

The following outlines appropriate and inappropriate content for official City communications, ensuring it remains professional, relevant, and respectful.

Appropriate content includes:

• City news, events, services, and programs.

• Resources for residents, businesses, and visitors.

Inappropriate content includes, but is not limited to:

• Confidential or proprietary information, such as internal discussions regarding City business or employee personal data, unless authorized by the City Administrator for disclosure.

• Commentary or personal opinions, such as expressions of individual political views or personal beliefs unrelated to City business.

• Recognition of unofficial holidays or observances, including any that are not formally endorsed by the West Chicago City Council (e.g., unofficial observances or personal observances).

• Profane, offensive, or obscene material, including discriminatory language, hate speech, or graphic violence. For example, inappropriate language or depictions that could be deemed disrespectful or harmful to any group.

• Political or religious content, including materials that support or oppose political parties, candidates, or religious causes.

• Promotion of external products, contests, or services not directly related to City services or its partners (e.g., advertising for non-City businesses).

• Discriminatory content: Any content that excludes, marginalizes, or disrespects individuals based on race, gender, religion, etc. (e.g., racially insensitive language or materials).

• Content that that may compromise the safety or security of the public, or reveals sensitive security information or exposes vulnerabilities in public systems.

3.2 Community Partner Content

Relevant information for the City's key stakeholders may be shared from the following entities, including general information on the City website, providing that content is alignment with the guidelines set within this Plan.

• West Chicago taxing bodies

• County, regional, state, and federal government entities

• Quasi-governmental entities

• Qualifying not-for-profit or community organizations located within and/or serving residents and businesses within the City limits, which aim to strengthen and enhance aspects of the community.

3.3 Content Authority

The following outlines the roles and responsibilities for content review and approval, with clear authority to edit, approve, or remove content defined within the City's organizational structure.

Marketing and Communications Manager

The Marketing and Communications Manager has the authority to edit submitted or published content for the purposes of clarity, accuracy and professionalism, and may also remove any content that violates these content guidelines.

Department Heads

In the event of an absence of submitting staff member(s) for more than three days, the review and approval process outlined in Section

2.2 defaults to the submitting staff members' Department Head, or designee.

Assistant Department Heads, Division Heads, Administrative Assistants, and Supporting Staff

All staff members submitting content to the Marketing and Communications Manager for drafting or publishing content on their own are primarily responsible for ensuring the accuracy of essential information such as dates, times, names, titles, and addresses.

3.4 Brand Consistency

The following general guidelines ensure the integrity of the City's brand:

Written Content

• The usage of first-pronouns should not be used when referencing City, or Department, initiatives or events.

• When referencing the City of West Chicago as 'the City,' the 'C' shall always be capitalized.

• When referencing a Department, commission, or board, it shall be identified as the 'City of West Chicago's' entity, excluding the City Council, which shall be identified as the "West Chicago City Council".

Logo Usage

• When using the City's branding, including the City seal, event logos, or Department logos, they should not be pixelated, altered, added to an object, cluttered with surrounding graphics, or placed in an area with low contrast.

• The City's seal should accompany the West Chicago Police Department logo on communications materials.

• No Department (excluding the Police Department), commission, board, or facility shall have a logo separate from the City seal.

3.5 Tone of Voice

The following guidelines should be adhered to in order to ensure the tone of voice in the City's communications is professional, clear, and consistent, reflecting the City's values and effectively engaging the community.

Informative Content

Content published on the City's communications platforms should maintain a consistent professional tone. As a general guide, staff may publish content that is:

• clear and concise;

• void of excessive use of exclamation and question marks, use of all capital letters, or ellipsis;

• written with proper grammar and punctuation; and

• written objectively with minimal usage of first-person pronouns (e.g., I, me, my, ours, we, etc.) when referencing the City or its Departments.

Promotional Content

Content that is published on the City's communications platforms for promotional purposes must:

• Maintain a level of professionalism that reflects the City's values and upholds the integrity of its brand while being creative and engaging. Content should be informative, but not overly persuasive or eccentric.

• Be focused on the public good, highlighting programs or services that benefit the community. For example, promoting a local event or city program is acceptable.

• Avoid excessive calls to action. Content should be informative, with a clear and simple description of the service or event, rather than forcing participation.

• Respect the boundaries of personal advertising. The City may promote internal services, events, and initiatives, but must avoid promoting businesses or personal ventures unless they are directly aligned with the City's mission (e.g., local charity events).

3.6 Visual Content

To ensure engaging and consistent content, the City will accompany written content with a visual image or video where applicable.

External Visual Content

The following guidelines apply when publishing external content with images or videos:

Review Process

All public-facing visual content, including traditional media (signage, flyers, etc.) and digital media (staff-generated social media images, digital flyers, etc.), must be reviewed by the Marketing and Communications Manager prior to publication or installation.

News Items & Images

Each published news item will have a pre-selected image associated with the content. This image will also be used for social media and digital newsletter distribution. When a link is added to social media, the corresponding image will automatically populate.

Stock Images for Recurring Content

Pre-approved stock images for cyclical items (e.g., employment announcements, seasonal leaf collection) and frequent notifications (e.g., traffic impacts, first-responder incidents) should be used for social media and digital newsletters.

Image and Video Quality for Social Media

When posting visual content on social media, images and videos should:

• Be clear and not pixelated

• Have the correct dimensions for each platform

• Feature minimal text (less than 20% of the image area)

• Prefer real people over stock images whenever possible

Internal Visual Content

Internal visual content for organizational events and initiatives created by the Employee Wellness and Engagement Committee do not require review.

3.7 Written Content Standards

To maintain clarity, consistency, and professionalism across all City communications, the following content length and formatting standards should be adhered to. These guidelines ensure that content is both accessible and easily digestible for the intended audience.

Content Length

The following is the general standard for appropriate content length in characters, including spaces.

• Website (News Item): 450-4,500*

• Digital Newsletter Item Description (Community Update): 50-200*

• Digital Newsletter Item Description (Business Update): 100-350*

• Facebook Post: 50-399

• Facebook Event Description: 450-500

• Instagram Caption: 100-250

• LinkedIn Update: 50-150

• Twitter Post: 70-100

• Marquee Sign: 75-225

• Forms & Survey: N/A

• Digital Calendar: 150-250

• Water Bill Message: 450-500*

• Community Bulletin (Article): 100-400*

• Internal Newsletter (Article): 250-2,500*

(*) Items require a title that should remain within 60 characters.

Dates, Times, Street Names, and Addresses

For consistency and clarity, the following formats should be used when referencing dates, times, and locations:

Time

Use a 12-hour clock format with hours and minutes, and include the appropriate period (a.m. or p.m.) in lowercase. Example: 12:00 p.m.

Dates

The format should include the day of the week and the date. When referencing a past or future year, include the year. Example: Monday, June 2; Monday, June 2, 2024. If only providing the date (without the day), superscript should be used. Example: June 2nd.

Street Names

Always spell out street names and suffixes in full. Example: Main Street.

Addresses

For addresses within West Chicago, only include the address number and street name. For addresses outside of West Chicago, use the same format but include the municipality. Example: 400 Duane Street in Glen Ellyn.

3.8 Hashtags, QR Codes, Memes, and Emojis

Hashtags and QR Codes

The creation and use of new hashtags or QR codes referencing or linked to City events or initiatives must be discussed with and created by the Marketing and Communications Manager. Staff are encouraged to use existing approved hashtags and QR codes without prior consultation, provided they are relevant to the content.

Memes

The City restricts the use of memes in any official communications. If a specific use is identified, it must be discussed with the Marketing and Communications Manager for approval. The Marketing and Communications Manager will assess the appropriateness of the meme based on the intended message and audience, ensuring alignment with the City's tone and professionalism.

Emojis

Emojis are limited to use in social media posts only and should be relevant to the specific topic. Their usage should enhance the message's clarity or tone and be clear and unambiguous. Emojis should not detract from the professionalism of the content.

3.8 Accessibility and Inclusivity Standards

To ensure all residents have equal access to information, the City prioritizes accessibility and inclusivity in all its communications.

Translations

In accordance with City Ordinance, which designates English as the required language for sharing information in the City of West Chicago, the following guidelines are

in place to foster inclusivity while best utilizing available resources efficiently and effectively:

Website Content

All information from the City should be available in HTML format on the City's website when feasible. The website includes a translation feature that allows users to translate all components, except images, into over 200 languages.

City-Translated Documents on the Website

In cases where notices and documents have been translated into Spanish and by City staff and distributed to residents in person (e.g., public notices, service notices, etc.), both the English and Spanish versions must be uploaded to the website and linked within the relevant content.

Third-Party Documents on the Website

City documents provided by third parties that are not initially translated are not required to be translated by City staff unless requested by the City Administrator.

Digital Signage and Community Bulletins

All digital signage and community bulletin content must be available in both English and Spanish.

E-Newsletters and Social Media

E-newsletters and social media content are required to be in English only. For residents requesting translations into Spanish, they should be privately messaged with the most current link to how to reset their browser or social media language preferences.

Accessibility

Content added to the City's website should meet WCAG 2.2 guidelines for accessibility, while visual content added to digital displays must adhere to general ADA standards for visibility. If any content does not meet these standards, it will be revised by the Marketing and Communications Manager.

4. COMMUNICATIONS PROCESSES, STANDARDS, AND PROTOCOLS

4.1: Publishing Methods

City staff may have their written content published by submitting content to the Marketing and Communications Manager, adding content to the City's communications calendar, or through an appointed department staff member. Please note, all visual content intended for external public display (excluding general social media visual content) must be reviewed by the Marketing and Communications Manager prior to publication.

Submitting Content to the Marketing and Communications Manager

The Marketing and Communications Manager is available to assist staff in publishing their content. All submissions should be sent via email and adhere to the general guidelines in Section 3.

Submitting Content for the Annual Communications Calendar

The Annual Communications Calendar is reserved for content that is published cyclically requiring minimal changes (i.e., dates, fees, times, locations, etc.).

Additional details about the Calendar are provided in Section 4.7.

Designating of Staff Members by Department Heads

Department Heads may appoint staff members to assist with the City's communications processes at their

discretion to perform specific tasks.

4.2: Submission Process for Content Publication

This section outlines the process for submitting written and visual content to the Marketing and Communications Manager to ensure proper review and publication in line with City's communications standards.

Written Content

• Written content should be provided in a Microsoft Word document that either 1) includes suggested verbatim content fully proofed, or 2) provides adequate summarized information to develop a draft.

• If submitting a news item, include a suggested title, appropriate link(s) to website content, and date(s) for when content should be published.

• If providing content for the digital forms and surveys platforms, content should include a general description outlining the goals and suggested submission fields in a bullet format.

• If providing suggested visual content to align with written content, it should be provided as a separate attachment and not be inserted within a Microsoft Word document.

Visual Content

As noted in Section 4.1, all external visual content must be reviewed by the Marketing and Communications Manager before publication. The

following guidelines apply to visual content submission:

• Appropriate formats include PDF, JPEG, and PNG.

• Content for City Hall digital displays need to be submitted at 8.5"x11" in the appropriate format.

Updating Existing Webpage

• Requests for webpage edits should clearly identify where the content is included, along with a direct link to the webpage in question.

• All appropriate text to be updated on the webpage should be included in a Word document. Links should be embedded into the Word document.

4.3: Communications Calendar Submission Process

Content can to be added to the City's Communications Calendar by coordinating with the Marketing and Communications Manager. Scope of content changes should be explained to ensure objectives can be met in a timely manner.

Initial submissions for the Calendar should follow the same submission process for "Submitting Content to the Marketing and Communications Manager" as outlined in Section 4.1. After initial submission, staff members need only provide the appropriate cyclical updates as needed.

No drafts will be provided, and all content will be published on the pre-

determined date(s) as agreed upon by the submitting staff member(s) and the Manager.

4.4: Content Submission and Review Process

This section outlines the general timeframe and review process for content submissions, ensuring that all content meets the City's guidelines and is prepared for timely publication.

General Timeframe

Although content may be published quicker, submissions should be made at least 10 business days before the intended publication date.

A tentative date for project initiation along with any initial questions will be provided within 5 business days.

Content Review

All content will be reviewed for the following:

• conflicts with content guidelines detailed in Section 3;

• essential details (dates, times, locations, etc.); and

• information is presented in a manner that is accessible and easily understood by the public.

Additional information may be requested via email. Additionally, if content is submitted with significant or redundant deviations from the Content Guidelines identified in Section 3, the Manager may return the content for corrections for submitting staff to address.

Publishing Submissions

Submitting staff member(s) will be provided with a draft for approval from the Marketing and Communications Manager within the submission timeframe. Once approved, the draft will follow the General Publishing Process identified

in Section 2.4.

4.5: General Publishing Protocol

As a general guideline, the City's website serves as the primary hub for all communications, with other digital assets serving as promotional or notification tools that guide stakeholders to the website for deeper engagement.

The following outlines the general streamlined standard operating procedure for publishing content in most scenarios.

1. **Content Added to Website:** Detailed information is published on the website.

2. **Website Content Promoted on Social Media:** Relevant website content is promoted on appropriate social media platforms with a link to the website and a brief description.

3. **Website Content Included in Digital Newsletter:** A summary and link to the website content are included in upcoming digital newsletter(s).

4. **Website Content Retirement:** Website content is archived after 30 days.

4.6: Content Retirement

Content is retired from the website in one of the three following ways.

Archived Content

This includes content that remains relevant for future reference (e.g., key announcements about city projects and initiatives, historical information, etc.) and is categorized by year in the City's news archive.

Draft Status Content

Content that is in the draft status will remain on the website backend for editing and future publication. If it's part of the Annual Communications Calendar, these drafts can be

automatically scheduled for release.

Deleted Content

Any content that is no longer relevant or timely (e.g., outdated event information or news that no longer serves the public interest) will be removed after 30 days. This content will be permanently deleted from the City's website at the beginning of the next calendar year.

4.7: Standard Publishing Schedule

Provided is a general reference for when regular items are published.

• Website (News Item): 2-3 per week

• Digital Newsletter (Community Update): Friday on the first and third full week of each month.

• Digital Newsletter (Business Community Update): Thursdays of the second full week of each month

• Facebook Post: 2-3 per week

• Facebook Events: As needed, publishing should occur no more than 3 months prior to an event

• Instagram Post: 3-4 monthly

• LinkedIn Update: 1-2 per week

• Twitter Post: 3-5 per month

• Marquee Sign: 1-2 per month

• Digital Calendar: Beginning of the calendar year, or at least 1 month prior to a new event

• Water Bill Message: January, March, May, July, September, and November

• Community Bulletin: Third week of December, March, June, and September

• Internal Newsletter: Third week of January, April, July, and October.

4.8: Social Media Publishing Guidelines

Directly Publishing Content

Authorized staff may directly publish content on the social media accounts they manage.

Scheduling Content

If not authorized to directly publish to social media, staff may use the social media scheduling platform. Staff using the platform are to input the necessary written and visual content, including appropriate links to the City's website, in addition to proposing a day and time for when the content should be published.

The Marketing and Communications Manager will review the content and proposed schedule and either approve, modify, or request changes to content and/or schedule as needed. The Police Department will have autonomy to review and schedule content on their social media platforms.

Responding to Public Comments

The City does require staff to openly respond to comments on its social media accounts. If a legitimate question or concern is identified, staff members may provide a response.

Facebook Messenger

The City does not utilize Facebook as a messaging platform. All messages sent to the City are provided an auto-generated directive to send an email. If a legitimate inquiry is sent to this email, it may be sent to the appropriate department.

Creating Facebook Event Pages

Authorized staff may create a Facebook event on the City's accounts. Staff adding events to the City's platform are to coordinate when the event will be published to not interfere with other postings.

Any event organized or sponsored by the City, or one its Departments, must include the City's primary Facebook account as the host or a partner.

Monitoring Facebook Event Discussions

Authorized staff who create a Facebook event, are to monitor content and manage publishing content on Facebook event pages to encourage engagement and answer necessary questions.

Archiving Social Media Content

All social media activity is archived on software managed by the Marketing and Communications Manager.

4.9: Media Relations Protocol

To ensure consistent, accurate, and coordinated communication between the City and the media, the following staff members may serve as spokespersons on behalf of the City:

• Elected Officials

• City Administrator

• Assistant City Administrator

• Department Heads

• Marketing and Communications Manager

City staff not listed should refrain from providing comments about City business and refer the media to the appropriate listed staff member.

Media Inquiries

Any media inquiries should be initially directed to the City Administrator or the Marketing and Communications Manager for response to ensure timely and accurate replies.

Media Statements & Releases

Media statements and press releases are coordinated by the Marketing and Communications Manager

in collaboration with relevant departments.

4.10: General Public Safety Communications Protocol

This protocol provides a standardized approach to public safety messaging for both first-responder incidents (e.g., traffic accidents) and other incidents not requiring first responders (e.g., water main breaks). For incidents involving first responders, the Community Relations Officer is responsible for initiating the protocol; for non-emergency incidents, the Marketing and Communications Manager takes initial action.

The focus of the protocol is to clearly communicate:

• What is being impacted (e.g., traffic, water supply).

• Where the impact is occurring (e.g., specific streets or intersections).

• What the public should do (e.g., avoid the area, take alternate routes).

1. Details Provided to Appropriate Staff Member

Once an immediate impact is identified, the appropriate staff member should be notified and provided with the following details:

• What is impacted (e.g., lane closure, full closure).

• Where the impact occurs (e.g., from Geneva Road to Washington Street).

• What the public should do (e.g., avoid the area, take alternate routes).

• Who is responding (e.g., Police, Public Works).

• What the incident is (e.g., traffic accident, water main break).

• Where the incident is located (e.g., specific streets, intersections).

• Optional: When the impact is

expected to end (if available).

2. Initial Notification on Social Media

As soon as details are gathered, a notification should be posted to the appropriate platform (City or Police Department social media). For incidents requiring immediate attention, the first notification should go live within 15-30 minutes.

Example 1: First-Responder Incident (Traffic Accident)

All eastbound lanes of traffic are currently closed from Geneva Road to Washington Street.

Please avoid this area as West Chicago Police Department* personnel are responding to a traffic accident near Main Street and Geneva Road.

There is no current estimate for when traffic will reopen. Updates will be provided as more information becomes available.

(*) Tag for appropriate social media account.

Example 2: Other Incident (Water Main Break)

All eastbound lanes of traffic are currently closed from Geneva Road to Washington Street.

Please use an alternate route as City of West Chicago Government* crews are working to repair a water main break near Main Street and Geneva Road.

Repairs are expected to be completed by this afternoon.

(*) Tag for appropriate social media account.

3. Initial Notification on Social Media

After the initial notification is posted, a Public Safety Alert can be issued from the City's Facebook page, alerting all users in the affected area. The alert's duration (e.g., 1 hour, 2 hours) should reflect the expected length of the impact. If no timeframe is available, a 2-hour alert should be issued and revised as more information becomes available.

4. Initial Notification on Social Media

Once the incident is resolved, the original staff member should provide a final update, if necessary. On Facebook, this update involves editing the original post; on Twitter, it's done by commenting on the original post. The update should include:

• The time and date when the update is being issued.

• A brief message confirming the incident is resolved and normal conditions have resumed.

Example of Update Format:

[UPDATE: 12/31/2023 @ 11:59 p.m.]

The incident has been resolved, and all traffic patterns have returned to normal.

4.11: Public Emergency Response Protocol

This protocol is activated for serious public threats, led by the Police Department to ensure clear, non-alarming communication. All other communications should be paused during this protocol.

1. Incident Identification

The Police Department (or other entity) identifies the event.

2. Notification

City Administrator and Police Chief are notified. Initial guidance is provided for messaging.

3. Public Notification

The Community Relations Officer, with support from the Marketing and Communications Manager, issues an initial notification to the public via the Police Department's social media platforms.

This initial notification must adhere to the guidelines outlined in Section 4.9 (General Public Safety Communications Protocol) to ensure consistent and clear messaging. The notification should include essential details, such as what is being impacted, where it is occurring, and what the public should do to stay safe.

4. Ongoing Updates

The Police Department shares updates as needed based on the situation.

5. Resolution

Once the threat level decreases, the Community Relations Officer issues a final notification confirming the situation is resolved.

6. News Item Development

The Community Relations Officer works with the Marketing and Communications Manager to prepare a news item summarizing the event for the City's website and social media, with approval from the City Administrator.

APPENDICES

Appendix 5.1: Terminology

• Alt Text: A description of an image on a webpage that aids visually impaired individuals in understanding the content of the image.

• Communications: The means by which content is disseminated utilizing either traditional or digital media.

• Content: Information related to City business presented through various formats, such as written, visual, oral, or a combination, to convey a message.

    o External vs. Internal Content: Content can be described as external, which references content that it is displayed to the general public, or internal, which references content that is displayed internally within the organization.

    o Short- vs. Long-Form Content: Content can be described as being short- or long-form content. Short-form content is concise and to-the-point, whereas long-form content is more detailed and provides a substantial amount of information about an item.

    o Curated vs. Created Content: Curated content is content provided by trusted and relevant sources, whereas created content is content created within the organization.

• Digital Media: Any form of communication that involves technology and the internet to communicate with the public.

• Dissemination: The spreading of content through the use of relevant communication platforms.

• Draft [Content]: Writing content for review and approval prior to publication.

• End-User: Describes the person, or intended person, that utilizes a service or interacts with a platform.

• E-News: A digital newsletter that provides notifications to email subscribers.

• Installation: The installment of external content on a traditional media platform.

• News Item: A detailed article added to the website that informs the public about current affairs or events. This is the City's comparable to a press release.

• Notification: A short content summary sent to the public that highlights a News Item or brings attention to a relevant event at the time.

• Platforms: Traditional or digital media used to provide information and raise public awareness.

• Publish [Content]: Directly adding content to a platform.

• Schedule [Content]: Scheduling content to be approved and published on a platform.

• Social Media: Interactive digital media platforms used to facilitate the creation and sharing of content through notifications.

• Social Media Tag: A social media account can be referenced in posts by using the '@' symbol in addition to the text associated with the account. (i.e. @westchicagopolicedeparment). Doing so allows social media users to further engage with and reference an individual or organization in their content.

• Traditional Media: Any form of communication that does not rely on the internet to convey information to the public.

Appendix 5.2: Communications Assets and Instructions for Use

Website

The City has one website, westchicago.org, that is managed using the WordPress content management system. The website is used for creating and maintaining long-form content, which includes news items, and serves as the City's primary source of public information.

Accessing the Website

Designated staff have been given access to the City website's content management system. These staff members can login using the appropriate URL using their individual username and password that is

provided by the Marketing and Communications Manager.

Creating and Publishing New Web Post

Posts on the website are used for news items, employment announcements, and required meeting notices. Once a post is created, it is designated as a new web page with a unique URL on the website. If needing to edit an existing post, staff should reference the instructions for Updating Existing Webpage Content.

The following provides basic instructions for performing this procedure.

1. Login to the City's content management system dashboard.

2. Select "Posts" from the left sidebar navigation menu.

3. Select "Add New" from the left sidebar navigation menu, or at the top of the webpage.

4. In the area "Add title", type the appropriate title.

5. Scroll through the right sidebar navigation menu and perform the following actions.

    a. In the 'Author' field, change to "City of West Chicago".

    b. In the 'Categories' field, change to either "Public Meetings", "Employment", or "News Items".

    c. In "Featured Image" field place the appropriate template image. This can be done by searching and selecting the appropriate image that correlates with "Categories" field.

6. Click "Launch Beaver Builder" button.

7. In the left sidebar menu, drag and drop the "Text Editor" module into the designated area.

8. Input appropriate text and click the "Save" button on the bottom interface.

9. Click 'Submit' in the top right navigation menu when done with edits.

Updating Existing Webpage Content

The following provides basic instructions for performing an update to website content.

1. Login to the City's content management system dashboard.

2. Hover over the 'City of West Chicago, Illinois' tab in the top navigation menu and select 'Visit Site'.

3. Navigate to the appropriate Department webpage.

4. Select "Beaver Builder" in the top navigation bar.

5. After the "Beaver Builder" interface displays, hover over the appropriate text area.

6. Click anywhere within the blue box.

7. Make necessary edits and click 'save' in the bottom of the "Beaver Builder" interface box.

8. Click 'Submit' in the top right navigation menu.

Please note, any edits involving changes to layouts and design, or edits that may require the inclusion of images, graphics or tables, are to be coordinated with the Marketing and Communications Manager.

Adding Links to Text

A link may need to be included in the text if editing content on a webpage. Links can go directly to documents on the City's website and different webpages.

1. Highlight the appropriate text where link will be added inside 'Text Editor' box.

2. Click the 'Link' (image of a chain link) button.

3. Paste appropriate URL.

4. Click blue confirmation button.

5. Click 'Save' in the bottom of the "Beaver Builder" interface box.

6. Click 'Submit' in the top right navigation menu.

Uploading Documents and Creating Links

Designated staff may upload documents to the City's website as needed. Once an item a document is uploaded to the website, that document will then generate a link that can be referenced on webpages. Please note the following:

• Files must be saved in a PDF, JPEG, or PNG file format that is less than 64MB in size.

• If a file is larger than this size, it will need to be organized into separate documents.

The following provides basic instructions for performing this procedure.

1. Login to the City's content management system dashboard.

2. Select "Media" from the left sidebar navigation menu.

3. Select "Add New" from the left sidebar navigation menu, or at the top of the webpage.

4. Click "Select Files", or drag and drop files into the designated area.

5. Scroll down to confirm document is downloaded.

6. Select "Copy URL to Dashboard" to save link.

7. Place link on appropriate page in appropriate text.

Digital Newsletter

The City distributes two digital newsletters to registered emails utilizing Constant Contact platform. Both newsletters are limited to short-form content that includes relevant links back to the City's website or appropriate curated content.

• The Community Update is targeted towards residents and provides summaries of recently published News Items in addition to service reminders and a list of upcoming public meetings.

• The Business Community Update is targeted towards local businesses and organizations. It offers a recap of relevant City-issued content along with curated content that may be beneficial to local businesses.

Instructions for Usage

The following provides basic instructions for updating an existing template and sending a newsletter.

1. Login to Constant Contact.

2. Click "View All" link near Recent Campaigns text on opening page.

3. Seek recently used template for specific e-news campaign, click "Copy" button.

4. Change Campaign Name to appropriate title.

5. Once template displays, click 'Email Settings' in top right portion.

6. Change 'Subject' and 'Preheader' to appropriate text.

7. Click 'Save' button in bottom right interface window.

8. Edit content on the email template.

9. Click 'Continue' in the top right.

10. Select appropriate 'Email List' or lists.

11. Click on the image of the e-news item under 'Preview' on the right side.

12. Under 'Send a test email' on top right window, add your email and the Marketing and Communications Manager email.

13. Click 'Send Now' and notify the Marketing and Communications Manager that a draft has been sent.

14. Review test email and make any necessary edits found or provided by Marketing and Communications Manager.

15. After edits have been saved, click 'Schedule for Later' then select date and time under 'When to Send' on the right side.

Digital Signage

The City oversees two digital signage platforms that are managed remotely: a large marquee sign along IL-59 and Main Street, and two interior displays within City Hall. Both are limited to short-form content, digital images, and auto-generated material tailored towards the City's key stakeholders.

• The IL-59 Marquee sign displays text content about upcoming seasonal City events, services, and programs.

• The City Hall Interior Displays are located in the Finance and Community Development lobbies. Both feature the same content that includes required meeting notices, general community images, digital flyers, and auto-generated details from the City's digital calendar and the City of West Chicago Facebook account.

Instructions for Usage

Designated staff can upload files to the City's facility signage, using their individual username and password. Files must be 8.5" x 11" and saved in a PDF, JPEG, or PNG file format that is less than 5MB in size. PDF files may

be multiple pages. Files are managed on the platform through different 'Playlists', which are identified by the location of the monitors (i.e. the 'City Hall' playlist manages the content on the monitors at City Hall).

The following provides basic instructions for performing this procedure.

1. Login using credentials at optisigns. com.

2. Select 'Playlists' located in top navigation bar.

3. Select appropriate playlist located in the left navigation menu.

4. Upload file by clicking the 'Upload Files' button located in the right navigation menu and following the directions.

5. Once uploaded, file icon and title will display in right navigation menu. Drag and drop the file directly over the playlist main menu to complete the process.

Social Media

The City manages 14 social media accounts across four platforms that are primarily used for directing traffic to the City's website, as well as promotion of events and initiatives, and issuing local alerts. All accounts utilize concise short-form content with links back to the City's website for comprehensive details.

Facebook

The City manages three Facebook accounts, which includes: City of West Chicago, West Chicago Police Department, and West Chicago City Museum.

• The City's Facebook account functions as the primary social media platform for both key and secondary stakeholders. This account regularly posts news items, event pages, promotional content, and local alerts.

• The West Chicago Police Department's account issues initial emergency notifications and promotes Department initiatives and highlights to the City's key stakeholders.

• The West Chicago City Museum page promotes the community through posts including nostalgic images and historical community facts.

Twitter

The City manages two Twitter accounts. A City of West Chicago account highlights recently published news items for its key stakeholders, and a West Chicago Police Department account provides initial notifications to residents about emergency response incidents.

Instagram

The City manages three Instagram accounts, which includes: City of West Chicago, West Chicago Events, and West Chicago City Museum. All Instagram accounts use aesthetically appealing, high-resolution photos and videos in addition to short-form content to highlight and promote the community to key and secondary stakeholders.

LinkedIn

The City manages one LinkedIn account, that is primarily used to engage local businesses and secondary stakeholders by promoting City employment opportunities, recognizing organizational achievements, providing local business highlights, and sharing appropriate business resources.

Digital Forms & Surveys

The City utilizes three digital registration and survey platforms for collecting information for registration or feedback initiatives. Content is limited to providing specific fields for end-users to complete.

WP Forms

WP Forms is a public-facing platform that enables the creation of custom forms that can be embedded, or integrated, into the City's website where end-users can complete the form directly from a webpage. Collected data can be exported in Excel format.

JotForm

JotForm is a public-facing platform that enables the creation of custom forms accessible via unique URLs; forms cannot be embedded on the website. Collected data can be exported in Excel or PDF formats.

Survey Monkey

Survey Monkey is utilized as an internal administrative surveying tool that facilitates the creation of custom surveys for gathering feedback from organizational staff. Collected data can be exported in Excel or PDF format.

Digital Calendar

The City uses Google Calendar to showcase required meeting notices, facility closures, and City-sponsored events for the general public. Calendar items include fields for time, date, location, and short-form content. All content is visible on the City's website and digital interior displays at City Hall.

Water Bill Message

Water bills are mailed bi-monthly to residents and businesses that utilize the City's water and sewer services. Each bill includes a section for limited short-form content, which typically features seasonal event and service reminders for key stakeholders. The billing schedule occurs in January, March, May, July, September, and November.

Community Bulletin

The City creates a brief single-page quarterly newsletter for its key stakeholders that solely highlights upcoming seasonal events, services, and programs through short-form content with URLs to more content on the City's website. The bulletin is added to the City Hall Interior Display, the City website, and is also printed in English and Spanish and made available at City Hall at the start of each quarter, including December, March, June, and September.

Internal Bulletin

The City produces a quarterly newsletter for City of West Chicago employees that highlights upcoming organizational events, services, and programs, in addition to curated safety and awareness content, City-issued news items, and employee recognition items. The newsletter is distributed via email and print at the start of each calendar quarter in January, April, July, and October.