



City of Morgan Hill Communications, Outreach, and Engagement Plan

April 2022

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
Goals	3
Principles.....	3
Audiences and Stakeholders.....	4
Issue Identification.....	6
Crisis Management and Communications	7
Strategies and Tactics	9
Measurements of Progress and Success.....	18
Key Performance Indicators.....	18
Conclusion.....	21
Appendices.....	22
Appendix A: Roles of City Council and City Leadership	23
Appendix B: Social Media Guidelines for Elected Officials	25
Appendix C: Digital Asset Overview	27

Executive Summary

Purpose

The Communications, Outreach, and Engagement Plan defines the messages, priorities, strategies, and tools the City of Morgan Hill will use when communicating with the community. In alignment with the City Council's Sustainable Morgan Hill Vision and Priorities document, this Plan helps the City Council, Commissioners, and City teammates tell the Morgan Hill story effectively and serves to improve and strengthen communication and engagement with our community.

Goals

The two primary goals of this Plan are effective community engagement and building and sustaining trust with the community. Through effective application of communication strategies, this Plan will ensure that all City Council Members, Commissioners, and teammates have the tools to provide accurate, timely, and relevant information to the community. This Plan also aligns communications resources with the goals to set clear communications expectations for the community ensuring that the City can continue providing excellent services that reflect the strength of the City's outreach initiatives while supporting the implementation of the City Council's strategic and on-going priorities.

Implementation

It is critical that for each project or activity, the City use the appropriate tools for communications, outreach, and engagement ensuring efficient and effective use of City resources by matching the tools used to the target audience and project goal.

“Democracy is interactive... It's a constant job of information, education, explanation, listening, and interactive communication.”

*Dick Gephardt
American attorney, lobbyist, and politician*

Goals

In supporting the strategic priorities of the City, the communications team will work together with the community and departments throughout the City to achieve two primary goals for the coming years:

Effective Community Engagement

Develop measurable methods for connecting with our identified constituents.

Building and Sustaining Trust with the Community

Increase public awareness of City services and roles and encourage informed participation in local government.

Principles

Fundamental beliefs about outreach and engagement

To successfully execute the strategies and tasks outlined in this Plan, the Communications Team will ensure that our communication activities match the needs of the City in both message and execution.	We will work with stakeholders within the community to develop a better understanding of the City's role and the services we provide.	We will ensure that the effectiveness of our communications will not be measured by output or distribution alone, but by the productive responses we elicit.
Coordination, consistency, and repetition will ensure our messages build value in the City's brand.	We will, in an environment of limited resources, focus our efforts on strategic partners who can help the City achieve its goals.	We will involve, educate, and seek feedback from the community on City projects and initiatives. We will close the feedback loop by sharing what was learned and how it will be used with the community.
We will operate in the knowledge that every member of the community can affect our reputation and that effective communication is everyone's responsibility, including the City Council, Commissioners, and teammates.	The services delivered by every City department play a critical role in the lives of those in our community. The Communications Team helps to both create and sustain productive connections between City services and Morgan Hill community members, businesses, and visitors to tell the City's story, and listen to and share our community's stories.	Informing vs. Persuading: It is critical for City staff to provide complete and unbiased information to residents on issues that are coming to the City Council before the Council has had the opportunity to deliberate and establish the City's official position or vote on a specific decision. Our commitment is to inform the community in a manner that is factual, relevant, and transparent.

Audiences and Stakeholders

Understanding our audiences and stakeholders is critical to ensuring that we are reaching our audience segments effectively. It is also critical that we use targeted messages and tools that reach those audiences. The different audiences and stakeholders have different needs, priorities, and concerns and require different considerations and methods be used for communications, outreach, and engagement. It is critical that the community knows where to go and how to access factual information on projects and services.

The City has a variety of groups that make up our target audiences:

- Business community
- Citizens at large
- City commissions
- City Council
- City teammates
- Community organizations
- Critics of city government
- Developers
- Environmental groups
- Faith-based organizations
- Families
- Future employees
- Future/potential business owners
- Future/potential residents
- Media; print, radio and television, internet
- Other governmental agencies; local, county, state, federal
- Partner agencies
- Property owners; residential and business
- Renters
- School District
- Seniors
- Users of city services
- Visitors
- Youth

Understanding Our Audiences

Just as City projects and initiatives should align with the Council's priorities, all communication efforts should also reflect and support City goals. This includes communication initiatives for teammates and external communications. This coordination ensures consistency, strengthens strategic message delivery, and enhances mutual understanding.

Another way of grouping our audiences is through their level of engagement: fully engaged, aware/passive, aware/disinterested, or unaware/disinterested.

We recognize that the City's most engaged audience is primarily made up of three distinct sub-groups:

- Community members who participate in the governing process either as volunteers or through participation in specific programs
- Ambassadors and those that monitor government actions to ensure that they are appropriate and ethical
- Community members looking to learn about upcoming community events and resources

We understand it is also possible for disinterested or passive audience members to shift suddenly to interested or engaged when a City policy or program directly affects them. Staff needs to keep this in mind when planning initiatives, programs, or projects. This change can occur within any audience group at any time, therefore anticipating and assuming this shift is key to ensuring that we are communicating thoroughly on all projects/initiatives, not just ones that may controversial.



Issue Identification

An important aspect of communications, outreach, and engagement is anticipating, identifying, and addressing issues of importance to the community. This is important because anticipating challenges before they become problems allows the necessary steps to be taken to educate, garner support, prepare audiences, identify potential questions, and ensure preparedness. The City has established several formal avenues for identifying emerging issues. The key mechanisms are:

- Community feedback
- Staff review of City Council agendas and City Council meetings
- Media tracking and analysis
- Bi-weekly Leadership Team meetings

City Council Members are strongly encouraged to contact the City Manager whenever they have a concern that a particular issue may need to be addressed.

There are several areas that will continue to be important for the City to communicate. These include:

Public Safety: The Police and Fire Teams are planning for the future and determining how to best provide adequate resources to protect Morgan Hill. Issues such as number and location of fire facilities, police and fire equipment, and police and fire staffing will continue to generate discussion as we develop plans and strategies to address needs.

Financial Management: An important element of this topic is the legal and contractual restrictions the City has regarding use of funds and making sure residents understand the different sources of funding. The City will continue to be financial stewards of its resources and assets to ensure long-term fiscal sustainability.

Development Services: A department which is made up of planning, building, code compliance, housing, and economic development will continue to focus on protecting the City's job-generating lands, supporting our unhoused community, implementing our Regional Housing Needs Allocation Strategy, and working with the State on High-Speed Rail to mitigate the impacts to Morgan Hill.

Public Services: Maintenance of safe and reliable City infrastructure, including the water system, wastewater system, streets, sidewalks, public buildings, street trees, flood control channels and traffic signals continues to be a priority. City Recreation facilities are operated in a system designed to balance covering significant costs while ensuring access for all. City Parks are maintained at minimum levels based on the lower prioritization by the City. Additionally, implementation of the City's Climate action, water conservation, and state environmental mandates are areas of focus.

Crisis Management and Communications

Issues, for the purposes of this discussion, are topics of concern to one or more audiences that relate directly to City policies or programs. Many issues arise over the course of a year, a minority of which may rise to the level of crisis.

There is a critical distinction between emergencies – such as floods, earthquakes, and fires – and crises. Where we recognize any threat to public safety as an emergency, a crisis is a threat to the organization’s financial health or reputation.

The City cannot predict every issue that will arise unexpectedly, nor would it be feasible to attempt to prepare for every possible contingency. Instead, in the event that a situation arises, City staff will provide informative communications with sufficient background and relevant information allowing for flexibility in evolving situations. When an issue comes up, the first step should be to determine what actions – if any – are appropriate in response.

There can be unintended consequences if the City were to attempt to proactively respond to every evolving issue; we could waste resources, diffuse our strategic messages, and potentially generate negative stories that might otherwise not have happened.

The key then, is preparation – through clear procedures and general strategies. As issues arise and are identified by the team, the first step is to determine if:

- The issue should be monitored, but no response should be made
- The issue requires a response; or
- The issue rises to the level of crisis

Issues not requiring a public response are generally routine topics generated by local media or public comment. In most cases the story may pass without much community discussion, or the individuals affected can be directly contacted to address their concerns or answer their questions. Routine exchanges have a limited impact or a very short lifespan.

Issues requiring a response are those that impact a large number of people and have a relatively long lifespan, meaning that the issue will continue to impact people over several days or longer. The standard approach should be to research and quickly develop a list of talking points that describe the issue, outline City policy regarding the issue, and describe the City’s response plan.

Appropriate staff and elected officials, if appropriate, will be briefed on the situation. Then the City should publicly respond with an explanation and the plan to address the issue.

For crises, the approach is similar, but more robust. In general, the City will respond within 24 hours – if not sooner – to the emergence of the crisis, as described below. To promote the greatest levels of transparency and credibility, the City’s response will be a factual overview of the events and the City’s plan to resolve the problem.

There are three phases in our approach to crisis management.

When a crisis arises, the first phase is **preparation**. During that time City staff will conduct research to determine:

- What has happened?
- What are the questions people might have?
- Who is our audience?
- What is our message?

As soon as possible, we will move to the **response** phase. The key here is that our messages should say what we are doing or will be doing, then we disseminate information to the elected officials and community:

- What has happened.
- What we are doing about it.
- Estimated timeline.

During the **recovery** phase we will assess the following:

- Did we reach our intended audience?
- Was our message accurate?
- Was our message credible?
- Have we solved the problem?
- What can we learn from this?

Each crisis has a “teachable moment” as anxiety starts to subside when we can deliver important information about City policies or programs. The City can leverage a crisis as an opportunity to reach higher levels of awareness and engagement if we are prepared and respond appropriately.

Strategies and Tactics

A variety of strategies and tactics will be used to attain our goals. Throughout this Plan there are a variety of available tactics to implement. The Communications Team will review and implement those that best address the City's strategic and on-going priorities.

Priority #1: Create Opportunities for Meaningful Stakeholder Participation and Collaboration

Encourage engagement through audience-appropriate, two-way communication, and ensure opportunities for constructive feedback.

STRATEGIES:

Use interactive communication approaches to maintain ongoing dialogue between constituents and City government. Provide opportunities for two-way communication whenever possible. It's important to solicit feedback on how the City is doing and how it can best serve the community and its constituencies. Put tools in place that make it easier for residents to engage with their local government, gain a better understanding of City services.

Expand outreach to audiences in targeted areas and groups. The residents of Morgan Hill are diverse and come from many cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Use a variety of communication methods and leverage partnerships to reach a broader audience. Utilize the platforms each audience prefers to more effectively share and gather information.

TACTICS:

1. Community Polls and Micro-interactions	Separate from a large, formal survey, the City will offer smaller and more manageable opportunities for public input throughout the year. It is a best practice only to ask questions about topics the City can truly influence, change, or resolve. When asking for feedback, it is important to be conscious of how the input will be used. If the City asks for feedback on projects or programs, it is assumed by the participant that their feedback will be used in decision making. Equally important to asking the right questions, is following up with the community on the results of the survey or poll, what information was learned, and what we will do with that information. This is an important step towards, building credibility and respecting and honoring the communities time and efforts.
2. External Advisory Groups, Either Formal or Informal	Continue and refine use of, as needed, issue-specific community advisory groups that can ensure the City is collaboratively reaching Morgan Hill's diverse audiences. This could include creating an advisory group or intentionally engaging with external stakeholders when an opportunity arises that calls for their unique perspective and input.

3. Customer Surveys

The City provides service to the community through permit issuance, water service, maintenance of infrastructure, recreation services, emergency response, and many other public services. We collect information on the services provided through annual surveys and provide feedback-as-you-go with the City's customers.

Priority #2: Provide Open and Timely Communication

Share accurate, non-biased information promptly through a variety of communication channels.

STRATEGIES:

Provide information that is convenient, timely, and easily accessible for the target audience. The City should be prompt in publishing information in a variety of channels appropriate for key audiences so that the public is informed as quickly as possible. Timely and effective distribution of relevant information will reinforce the City's commitment to transparency and demonstrates that public feedback is highly valued.

Promote accurate, comprehensive local and regional media coverage. Building relationships between the City and local media is helpful to the community. By working with the media to establish greater trust, the City will have more influence over the accuracy of information that is communicated to the public and increase the likelihood of stories about Morgan Hill receiving appropriate media coverage.

TACTICS:

1. Editorial Calendars	Develop an annual editorial calendar and review and update monthly to strategically plan out social media, newsletter, news media, and website content. This will help ensure communication campaigns are coordinated to reduce conflicts, bottlenecks and allow the City to be strategic about communicating important projects, overarching stories, and timely topics. Tailor messages and provide relevant content to support the varied content needs of the City's various divisions and their services and programs. This may include monthly themes or annual areas of focus like Emergency Preparedness Month or the City's Anniversary.
2. Columns, Editorials, and Paid Content Opportunities	To have a greater presence and ensure consistent messages, boosted social media posts, feature articles, guest columns, and/or editorial opportunities should be developed in coordination with the Communications Team. The City will work with local newspapers to provide regularly scheduled columns in which a City representative writes about pertinent City-related topics.
3. Identify and Engage with Hard-to-Reach Audiences	Engage with community partners, City teammates, and other leaders in Morgan Hill to identify hard-to-reach communities. Determine their barriers, which may include; mobility, language, and/or financial. Identify opportunities to surmount these obstacles and integrate these findings into strategic engagement planning.
4. Develop a Plan for Multi-Lingual Translation and	The City is missing a segment of the community by communicating principally in English. Developing a plan for multi-lingual translation services will ensure the City doesn't overlook important audience segments and is able to successfully reach non-English speaking residents more effectively. As

Interpretation Services	Morgan Hill's demographics change over time, the City will monitor language needs and adjust accordingly.
5. Standardize Communication Processes and Procedures	To ensure that a project or initiative is properly communicated, a solid communication process should be established. Through this process, standard communication steps can be outlined and then followed for each new messaging campaign. This may include sharing information on the City website, scheduling social media posts, hybrid virtual/in-person meetings or in-person meetings, distributing information to the media and City staff, and creating custom graphics for the campaign. The process will be adjusted based on the project goals and constraints, but a general approach will provide a framework for how communication tools can be used. We will continue to communicate the status of projects and provide opportunities for the community to participate in decision making.
6. Increase Use of Visuals	Text-heavy communications should be minimized in favor of visuals that make a more personal connection. Videos and infographics are popular amongst audiences as an effective way to share important information and to engage. The City's YouTube channel should be an avenue of future exploration with additional video opportunities. These may include timely program/project interviews with key City teammates/spokespeople, or community members.

Priority #3: Lead Strategic Communication Efforts

Work directly with Council, staff, and partners to ensure communication and outreach efforts, objectives, and outcomes align with the strategic goals of the City and promote community understanding.

STRATEGIES:

Create a better understanding of City Council's goals and priorities. By clearly and consistently outlining the goals and vision for the City of Morgan Hill, residents will have a better understanding of why and how public policy decisions are made, and actions are implemented by the local government, and will trust that their suggestions and feedback are considered in policies, procedures, and programs.

Work directly with department directors and division leaders to ensure messaging and communication efforts support the City Council priorities. Just as City projects and initiatives should align with Council's priorities and tie into the City's long-range planning initiatives, all communication efforts should also reflect and support City goals. This could include internal communication initiatives for employees, external communication to community members, and communication shared with partner organizations. This coordination ensures consistency, strengthens strategic message delivery, and enhances mutual understanding.

TACTICS:

1. Communicate "Who Does What?"	Foster a greater understanding of the region versus City roles through an information campaign. Distribution can be made via City teammates, community partners, Council Members and Commissioners, and media. Deliverables could include infographics showing operations and services by division, factsheet included in utility bills, stories from City teammates in different divisions, video series i.e., "Park Maintenance, We Do That."
2. Celebrate Municipal Government	Humanize the City and build trust by aligning services with the teammates that deliver them. Create a visual campaign that showcases City teammates and their positive impact on the community, from police officers to utility workers. Too often teammates have limited opportunities to engage with external audiences on the critical and essential services they provide.
3. Celebrate and Communicate Employee Accomplishments	As teams and individuals accomplish significant milestones, we will provide opportunities for the workforce and the community to understand and appreciate and celebrate these achievements. Engage in more frequent strategic storytelling that emphasizes our accomplishments; positive news stories that highlight not only City teammates, but residents and partners as well.

4. Provide On-Site Engagement

Explore a “City Hall on wheels” to connect with the community by being in the community. Create an in-person presence, such as a tabletop or roll-up display to be set up and staffed at various key locations on a rotating basis. Many community partners and organizations host community events. Where time and resources allow, teammates should attend these events. This type of personal engagement and interest is critical to partnership building.

Priority #4: Ensure a Well-Informed City Workforce

Keep City employees informed and involved in public dialogue so they can aid in telling the Morgan Hill story.

STRATEGIES:

Provide employees with regular opportunities to learn about the issues, challenges, and decisions affecting both the City's operations and the work environment. Communicate with employees as necessary ensuring employees receive consistent and timely information.

Empower employees to be good representatives of the City. Consider creating an employee group such as an Employee Engagement Committee to serve as liaisons among the employees. Every interaction a team member has with the public is an opportunity to tell the Morgan Hill story, whether it is through email, a phone call, or face-to-face interactions.

TACTICS:

1. Share Timely Information with Employees	Develop and distribute regular employee newsletters, email blasts, and messages from the City Manager and other executive team members.
2. Provide Employee Customer Service and Engagement Training	Every Council and community meeting is an opportunity for City employees to be on the record representing the City, and thus an opportunity for news media and community networks to quote them. Training for employees will strengthen their professional skills while improving their effectiveness as representatives.
3. Hold Regular Meetings with City Teammates	To strengthen familiarity within the organization, City Leadership must meet with employees, regularly. Some opportunities include all-team meetings, awards events, and shift changes. At the same time, these are opportunities for employees to ask questions and get answers. All team meetings are an opportunity to talk about communications, get updates from all divisions, take questions from teammates, and to talk openly about challenges and opportunities.
4. Quarterly Meetings with Departments	The Communications team will meet quarterly with each department to discuss the major issues and opportunities coming up in the next quarter and beyond, identify communication priorities and resources, and develop key messages and communication strategies.
5. Leadership Team Meetings	In addition to reviewing and discussing upcoming City Council items, discuss upcoming projects and associated communications plan and overall communications gaps, needs, and priorities.

Priority #5: Reinforce Brand Identity

Develop consistent messaging that builds and solidifies Morgan Hill's brand and tells the City's story with a unified voice.

STRATEGIES:

Develop and implement the City's brand. Our brand is more than our logo and style guide, it is how we are experienced by our community and the story we tell. Review and if needed, updated the City Style Guide. Provide training to teammates on how to use the City's Style Guide.

Work with employees, Commissioners, and Council Members to use the City brand correctly to tell the City's story with a unified voice. Employees can be empowered to help reinforce the City's brand by incorporating personal stories in media interactions and online engagements.

Implement effective strategies for increasing brand awareness through marketing and advertising. With the City's diverse demographics, the most communication impact will come from using both traditional and innovative digital communication tools. Reinforce the notion that the City brand is not the logo and tagline in-and-of themselves; it's our story, told in many ways over time.

TACTICS:

1. Develop Our Brand	Through stakeholder and City teammate engagement, develop the City's brand. Develop a plan for implementation of the City's brand. In addition to brand, create the City's voice/tone. Develop writing style guidelines and establish personality through a voice and tone that engages and entices audiences. Refine core messages about the City to support staff and Council efforts to tell the Morgan Hill story. When possible, tie City messages back to the City's Sustainable Morgan Hill document.
2. Brand Education for Employees	Train employees to use the City's brand and style guide. At least annually and as needed, offer training and education on the City's brand, brand pillars, and importance of brand consistency.
3. Community Organizations to Market the City for Broader Awareness	Find common interests and collaborative ways to market the City of Morgan Hill and highlight all the great amenities and attractions the community has to offer. Example partners could include Morgan Hill Chamber of Commerce, Visit Morgan Hill, Downtown Association, and non-profit and public agencies. Partnering with these types of groups can add communication channels for the City to reach a broader audience. Reach out to industry or trade groups that reflect the Morgan Hill market to align storytelling efforts.
4. City Messaging	Continue using the Weekly 411 email, Economic Development e-Newsletter, Monthly Event Calendar email, YouTube, Town Halls, and

social media to share information with the community and share our brand.

5. Media Training

Working with the media is an integral part of being an elected official. Train Council Members and City teammates on communication and media strategies to speak in a unified voice. Media needs local officials as informed sources. Interviews with local officials are an important source of information just as attending public meetings and reviewing agency documents.

Measurements of Progress and Success

Track metrics using the key performance indicators to evaluate communication efforts and effectiveness to guide future communications programs and projects.

There are a variety of standard metrics, also known as key performance indicators, which will be used to track the success of the City's communication techniques. The City will evaluate these metrics on a regular basis and compare them to earlier statistics to understand what techniques are working well and which need improvements, refinement, or further implementation.

Less standard metrics that are quite a bit more challenging to monitor include changes in behavior, attitude, and awareness. These metrics are attached to considerable effort but may give a better picture of outreach effectiveness. The Community Engagement Team will continue to look for proven methods for monitoring these metrics.

Key Performance Indicators

As this Plan is implemented, the Communications Team will evaluate the various key performance indicators (KPI) listed below to determine which KPIs are most effective at tracking our progress and identifying areas to improve.

MEDIA COVERAGE

News Releases	The number of digital releases published by the media.
News Sentiment	The sentiment of mentions, articles, interviews, or letters to the editor published by the media.
Reach	The reach of advertisements both paid and unpaid and news stories in media outlets. Examples include ads and news stories in print and online and the number of people who saw it based on the number of publications printed or the number of people who visited the webpage where the content is located.

E-BLASTS / E-NEWSLETTERS

Subscribers	The number of people who have signed up to receive the communication.
Open Rate	The average percentage of recipients who open the email or notification.
Click-Through Rate	The average percentage of recipients who click on an active link within the email or publication.

WEBSITE

Unique Visits	The number of distinct individuals visiting the site.
Page Views	The number of times a page on the site has been viewed.
Top Pages	The pages that are visited most frequently – the top 5-10 should be tracked regularly.
Bounce Rates	The percentage of people that navigate away from the site after only viewing one page. A lower bounce rate, generally under 70%, means that people are exploring the page and finding the information they need.
Search Terms	The more frequently a term is searched, the more likely it is that visitors are not finding what they need and suggest it may need to be displayed more prominently.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Followers	The number of people who subscribe to, and follow, the City's pages.
Engagement	The number of people who take action by interacting with the City's pages including likes, comments, tags, or shares.
Reach	The number of people who saw the City's posts.
Quantity and Quality of Posts	Number of posts and metrics on content, including photos, videos, events, and polls.

PRINTED MATERIALS AND PAID ADVERTISEMENTS

Distribution Rates	The number of places a printed piece can be found – both physical and online – and the actual number of pieces distributed.
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OTHER METRICS

- Quantity of survey responses
- Council feedback
- Reduction in unsolicited inquiries to departments (demonstrating that the proactive messaging is working at effectively delivering the message)
- Video views
- Poll results that demonstrate community understanding and engagement
- Consistency in brand use across departments
- Number of materials translated to Spanish or another language
- Positive employee response to storyteller program

- Positive community or industry response to advisory groups (quantity and frequency of participation)
- Quantity of community complaints
- Event and forum attendance

To help the City determine the effectiveness of communications, engagement, and outreach efforts, teammates will regularly evaluate:

- Are we communicating as much as we can?
- Are we communicating the correct information - the most important and relevant information, the information the community wants, and the information necessary to form educated and informed opinions and feedback, allowing us to carry out our mission?
- Are we using the most effective tools to communicate?
- What can we communicate more proactively and consistently in form, visual presentation, and substance?
- What can we do to improve communications, engagement, and outreach overall?

Conclusion

The City of Morgan Hill's Communications, Outreach, and Engagement Plan is in place to provide the means by which we can increase awareness of our programs and policies, encourage meaningful and productive two-way communication with the community, and generate heightened engagement of our community members. This Plan is meant to grow and change along with our community and the tools and technology available to us.

The City will achieve our goals by consistently providing current, accurate, and concise information to the community about City of Morgan Hill initiatives, City services, and local issues and events. We will foster an engaging environment with our community by soliciting and proactively implementing feedback we receive from constituents.

Appendices

- A. Roles of City Council and City Leadership
- B. Social Media Guidelines for Elected Officials
- C. Digital Asset Overview

Appendix A: Roles of City Council and City Leadership

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES MATRIX

Role	Responsibility	Accountability
City Council Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know and understand the City's Communications Plan, and City Council and Administrative Social Media Policies and Guidelines. • Respond to dis- or mis-information and share factual information about City projects, events, emergencies, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To the community ○ To each other ○ To City Manager and City Attorney ○ To the spirit of the Communications, Outreach, and Engagement Process
City Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Dept. Directors develop communications strategies and plans for their areas of responsibility in consultation with the PIO. • Ensure Dept. Directors include the Communications team in City business that requires Outreach and Engagement throughout the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To the City Council ○ To the community ○ To the City Attorney ○ To the spirit of the Communications, Outreach, and Engagement Process
City Attorney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure communications plans and strategies comply with all City policies, and county, state, and federal laws. • Ensure compliance with all outreach and engagement requirements of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) including those pertaining to CEQA case law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To the City Council ○ To the City Manager ○ To the spirit of the Communications, Outreach, and Engagement Process
Executive team Separate from Dept. Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the department communications strategies and plans along with department specific workflows by trigger in consultation with the PIO ensuring commitment to continuous improvement • Ensure department teammates act in accordance with the approved plans and strategies, in consultation with the communications team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To the City Manager ○ To the Communications team ○ To the spirit of the Communications, Outreach, and Engagement Process ○ The Community
Teammates Responsible for Project Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop project-specific outreach and communications plan based on the department workflows by trigger • Review and share communications outcomes to evaluate and adjust plans and strategies as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To Dept. Directors ○ To the Communications Team ○ The Community
PIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves as the primary leader and manager of the City's community engagement efforts, as well as internal communications among City leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To the City Manager ○ To the community

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with all Dept. Directors on communications and outreach projects and initiatives. • Develops, disseminates, and makes available clear, accurate, timely, and comprehensive information (across multiple channels) about the City's programs, services, policies, events, and major initiatives. • Cultivates relationships throughout the community to facilitate effective two-way communication between the City and residents/businesses of Morgan Hill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To the spirit of the Communications, Outreach, and Engagement Process
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Appendix B: Social Media Guidelines for Elected Officials

Social Media Guidelines for Elected Officials

Elected officials have a role at their agency that is inherently different from staff. Social media is a vital tool for developing direct communications with your stakeholders and creating informal opportunities to reach out beyond official web pages and publications. The extent to which an agency or individual uses social media varies. Before engaging you should assess your risk tolerance and make sure certain laws – such as the California Public Records Act and Brown Act – are followed.

Tips concerning the California Public Records Act and Brown Act

- Do not serial post – If a quorum of any public body merely comments on the same social media post, they could be in violation of open meeting laws.
- Be wary of deleting your own posts and those made by followers on your account – The First Amendment protects freedom of speech from government interference, and public agencies must be cautious about censoring an individual's right to free speech; if an elected official blocks a social media user, it could be argued that they are blocking future speech made by that person.

Clarifying Definitions

- Social media can include websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.
- A social platform is a web-based technology that enables the development, deployment, and management of social media solutions and services.
- A third-party system is any system maintained by another entity. This could include Twitter, Facebook, NextDoor, Instagram, WordPress, Google, phone carriers, and more.

Know When Social Media is a Public Record

It is essential to know when social media is a public record as determined by your agency's legal counsel. Retention of documents, including social media, is based on the content and not the platform.

Make a clear distinction between official accounts, campaign accounts, and personal accounts. One-way elected officials can clearly distinguish private social media accounts by adding disclaimers on election and personal accounts. City accounts may not be used for campaign-related purposes.

To keep a personal account from becoming subject to public records, consider some basic precautions.

- Post a disclaimer on your accounts that identifies the account purpose and that the opinions you express are your own
- Limit the account content to the use identified in the disclaimer
- Understand and use privacy settings to manage the account
- Have a plan in place to respond to or forward City-related comments to the agency, including how the record is retained

Crisis/Emergency Situations

As a crisis begins to emerge, it is critical that elected officials are aware of and follow best practices during an incident and understand the importance of only posting verified communication on all platforms, whether official or personal.

Tips for Using Social Media Effectively and Responsibly during a Crisis

- Public vs. private is blurred – Personal posts by elected officials will be interpreted by many as official agency posts; it is essential to only post crisis-related information that has been verified by emergency response team or other appropriate sources.
- Link to official accounts – Elected officials can ensure that those affected receive verified information by linking to/sharing/reposting official agency social media accounts.
- Coordinate all crisis-related posts with the City Manager and PIO – “Rogue” and unconfirmed posting is one of the most frequent causes of misinformation and inaccurate rumors during a crisis.

Appendix C: Digital Asset Overview

Website

MorganHill.ca.gov

The City of Morgan Hill completed a website refresh in 2020. According to the website analytics, typical behavior for users of our site is to land on the homepage then select one of these pages and drill down (Top ten pages visited as of January 2022 - listed in order of popularity):

1. Vaccine & Testing Page	6. Recreation Membership
2. Centennial Recreation Center	7. Aquatics
3. COVID-19 Landing Page	8. Recreation Guide
4. Utilities	9. Employment
5. Police Department	10. Recreation Center Rates

Social Media

Followers/Subscribers (as of January 2022)

• City of Morgan Hill Engage Facebook 5,961 followers	• Aquatics Center Facebook 7,711 followers	• NextDoor 17,730 members
• Morgan Hill Police Department Facebook 18,302 Followers	• Senior Center Facebook 517 followers	• Twitter 1,585 followers
• Recreation Facebook 3,567 Followers	• CCC Facebook 3,363 followers	• YouTube 165 Subscribers
• Environmental Programs Facebook 609 followers	• Instagram 1,932 followers	

Website Notify Me

Notifications that are currently sent out include: City Council and Commission Agendas, Commission Recruitments, the Scoop, Upcoming events, Development Project Updates. This is not an exhaustive list.

Subscribers (as of January 2022)

• City Council Agendas 524	• The Scoop 93
• Commission Agendas (all 3 commissions) 975	• Upcoming Events • 314
• Commission Recruitments 88	• Development Project Updates (various projects) 1,115

E-Communications

Emails that are currently sent out include: the Weekly 411, Monthly Event Calendar, Economic Development Newsletter, COVID Updates, City Project Updates, Special Project Updates, Development Project Updates, and Surveys. This is not an exhaustive list.

Subscribers (as of January 2022)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General Interest 12,332	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monthly Event Calendar 4,971
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental Programs Updates 1,703	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recreation Program and Event Updates 4,361
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Major City Maintenance Projects 709	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Información en Español 160