



## **Communication Plan**

**September 30, 2019**

### **CONTEXT**

The entity described as the “Corporation of the Town of Hawkesbury”, hereinafter called the “Town”, constitutes the administrative level of proximity to the citizens. Its primary mission is to deliver personalized services recognized by its community as being adapted to its requirements and its overall economic situation. The Town also has for mission the emphasis and development of its natural, economic, cultural and future assets within the community in order to promote the continuous growth of its collectivity.

The vision is that, given its strategic location and bilingual status, Hawkesbury will be known as the core area for industrial, commercial, cultural, tourism and recreation activities, whose emerging synergy will characterize Hawkesbury as a place to discover in Eastern Ontario.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the municipal world, communication is there to manage the relations with the various stakeholders, actively or passively concerned, to reach a mutual understanding, the first goal being that this information circulates more quickly and therefore guiding each one of us to improve the services we offer as a municipal organization.

During the creation of this communication plan, data from different sources (such as Statistics Canada, OPRO report, other reports and conversations) were analyzed to make a diagnosis based on the facts collected. This process was to adequately define Hawkesbury, from its past and its present, as well as a projection in the future, all in order to arrive at a clear vision on the strategies to implement. It is also based on vision, mission and values defined in the “Vision 2030: strategic plan”. The information collected will be used to transmit concise, transparent and meaningful information, in order to establish a positive relationship with our citizen and social commitment to those concerned.

Put together, these statistics, analysis and conversations are the foundation of this communication plan, a plan that not only speaks to our citizens, but opens or improves channels of communication with them with a permanent, direct and timely dialogue, to reflect our current and planned projects.

### **GOVERNANCE STATEMENTS**

This communication plan is intended to be a set of guiding principles and communication objectives to be achieved for the Town, in order to articulate its communications with the various publics.

Communications are an essential tool for the continuation of the Town's mission and the achievement of its major goals.

The Town has the duty to inform its citizens about matters of public interest. Accuracy, consistency, transparency and integrity are the values of choice in all communications. To achieve this, Town employees must provide diligent, courteous and responsive services that reflect the concerns of citizens and respect the rights of the public.

Citizens must have easy and timely access to all the information they want. Access to information and the protection of personal information as well as confidentiality must be a priority.

## **WHAT HAS BEEN OBSERVED**

We will not do an exhaustive list of the geographical, economic and demographic situation of Hawkesbury. We will rather make a brief summary, these data being perfectly accessible elsewhere but were essential to the comprehension of the elements. According to Statistics Canada, in the last census (2016), the population of Hawkesbury was 10,263, down 2.7% from the previous census in 2011. However, there was an increase of 4.6 % of the population in United Counties of Prescott and Russell (UCPR). The average age of the population is 48.2 years, compared to 41 years for the rest of Canada. Native language is mostly French at 79%, compared to English at 15%.

As for the labor force profile, the level of the active and ready-to-work population is 50% in Hawkesbury, compared to 66.7% in the UCPR. The population 25-64 without a high school diploma is over 20%. In Hawkesbury, 67% of entrepreneurs have been in business for over 11 years or more. 21.4% of the population depends on various government plans to survive. The busiest areas of employment are sales, manufacturing and health care. The median annual wage for a person living alone is \$ 22,964, the poverty line being set by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing at \$ 22,217, compared to \$ 32,996 in the UCPR.

## **OUR FINDINGS**

It has been very difficult to establish political stability since 2000, not only at the mayor's level (no mayor has been re-elected consecutively), but also at the municipal councillors level, observing a disturbing turnover after each election, bringing some ideological frictions. As direct consequences: slowing down the coherent evolution of current and future affairs, as well as preventing the implementation and monitoring of development strategies.

Each department is currently in charge of its communication expenses. This approach can result in inconsistent publications and may emphasize some departments at the

expense of others. This may be due to lack of staff training or simply a different vision or approach from everyone.

The new website has been online since 2016 and has not been the subject of a general update since, except for the inclusion of news and notices, new by-laws or events. The starting points have been well implanted but the damage is done, many think it is obsolete while it is up to date from a technological point of view and adequately meets our needs.

A beautiful digital sign was installed at the entrance of the Town towards the Long Sault Bridge. Unfortunately, this sign does not belong to the Town and its content is almost entirely commercial. Of course, we have access to it, but our messages are dissolved by a mega pool of messages.

The observations made on the archives of the Town's promotion plans or communications show that they were made randomly, without any real guidelines, and most importantly, non-punctually over time.

The “Vision 2030: strategic plan” created in 2012 following a public consultation is still in place but has not been followed by any or very few administrations. In this strategic plan, several questions were asked, but what about monitoring? Here are some of the highlights of this report. They deserve further reflection because, as mentioned above, these points are the basics of this communication plan:

- We talk a lot about immigration. Why did we wait for the arrival of the CFA pilot project in 2019-2020?
- We want to break the status quo of the negative image of the Town. How? or What?
- Projects that bring a new breath. Have there been any?
- What has been done to increase entrepreneurship and innovation?
- Retention of young people and businesses;
- Attract educational centers to raise the level of education;
- Incentives for companies to settle here? Prospecting? Is the local labor force “adequate” to attract new businesses?
- Establishment of “Team Hawkesbury”;
- Make Hawkesbury a cultural attraction. A partnership with other municipalities in Prescott and Russell for a cultural and artistic network was suggested;
- Creation of a valuation / reward / price program (business and civic);
- Organization of an annual citizens' forum and a round table;
- Hiring a coordinator of the strategic plan and economic development.

## **GENERAL GOAL OF THIS PLAN**

Inform citizens, elected officials, employees, media, suppliers, and partners that the process of communication at the Town is guided by rules and procedures;

To make citizens aware of the services, activities, programs, by-laws, council decisions and facts of public interest relating to the Town by facilitating their understanding of the Town's vision through objective, planned and transparent communications;

Put in place mechanisms for monitoring and broadcasting the different plans of the Town;

Ensure the quality and use of communication tools developed by the Town, whether for external or internal communication;

Develop a procedure for organizations, associations or companies that receive support from the Town to follow to ensure compliance with the rules governing the Town' visibility;

Protect the image and distinctiveness of the Town and contribute to its development, visibility and outreach;

Foster the establishment of a relationship of trust between the Town, its stakeholders and partners;

Maintain a dynamic balance between audiences and foster constructive exchanges;

Ensure a reception and a diligent and proactive follow-up of the requests and complaints made by the citizens;

Introduce the notion of meetings and public consultations so that citizens and organizations can comment on their needs and the important issues of the Town;

Adopt a consistent and effective approach to press relations.

## **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

Create a two-way communication culture between the Town and its citizens to foster a trustful relationship;

Coordinate all citizen communication activities;

Provide consistent, accurate, clear, accessible and verifiable information;

Prepare a range of communication tools and use them appropriately to meet the needs associated with each circumstance;

Work closely across the various departments of the municipal organization to ensure that information is complete, factual and timely;

Respect access to information and the privacy rights of citizens and employees;

Develop and implement an annual overall communications plan based on the priorities established annually by Town Council;

Develop and manage a set of communication tools to carry out the entrusted projects.

## **BROADCASTING INFORMATION**

Broadcasting information is carried out according to two approaches. Information of a political nature is transmitted directly by the Mayor and the Municipal Council, while administrative information is broadcasted by the Chief Administrative Office / Communication.

Communication of a political nature is one that has not yet been the subject of a Municipal Council decision at a public meeting. The Mayor is the Town's official spokesperson and the primary liaison for communication, unless he has given a specific mandate to the Chief Administrative Officer or a Council member to make public statements (see Policy SC-P-00-01, section 3.4.1.)

Council members have the privilege of making statements, but these interventions are personal unless they have received the Mayor's official mandate to speak on behalf of all Council members.

Administrative communication is about decisions made by resolution or by by-law and / or that is authorized by the Chief Administrative Office following a formal decision by Council. Administrative communication can also be information about municipal departments as well as advisory committees and which does not require the attention or the intervention of the elected representatives.

The Chief Administrative Officer plays the leading role in the staging of the administrative image of the Town. He/She becomes the person in charge of the communication activities of all departments. However, he/she entrusts this work to the Communications Coordinator.

The Chief Administrative Officer, along with the Communications Coordinator, must therefore ensure the implementation of a communication policy defining the role of each employee regarding what information can be disclosed and by whom.

The Chief Administrative Officer is authorized to make any public statement of an administrative nature.

Chief Administrative Officer / Communication also provides authorized visual elements related to the image of the Town.

When requests for information come from outside, it does not require the intervention of the Communications Coordinator, the department heads can communicate the requested information.

Department heads may, with the authorization of Chief Administrative Officer, grant an interview and / or make a public statement. However, they must inform the Communication Coordinator for a follow up with the media.

Moreover, when it comes to implementing a major communication intervention, the process must be done in collaboration with the Mayor, the Chief Administrative Officer, the Communication Coordinator and the department head responsible for the file.

## **ROLE OF THE COMMUNICATION COORDINATOR**

The Communication Coordinator is the link between the Town Council and the public administration in broadcasting information and ensures the image of the Town. He/She is the coordinator of the communication activities of all the departments of the Town. He/She establishes the internal and external communication mechanisms. His/her mandate is:

- Manage all publications, public relations, promotion, branding and advertising;
- Ensure that information is transmitted in a clear and consistent manner to citizens;
- Manage the website and interactions in social networks;
- Participate in the shining of the Town by implementing effective means of communication;
- Vulgarize and inform the citizens on the decisions of the Council as well as any other subject relating of the Town;
- Implement and ensure compliance with the graphic standards of the Town;
- Coordinate press relations for all municipal departments;
- Coordinate communications during emergency measures (except fire department).

Each matter requiring communication is dealt with by the Communication Coordinator in the same manner. In order to avoid errors with technical publication, the proper wording, both in French and English, must be received from the concerned department.

### **Preliminary steps**

- Research and writing (reading, exchange of information with staff or externally);
- Graphic design (creation of logos and templates of documents, search of images and photos);
- Confirmation and authorization.

### **Following steps**

The choice of steps varies from one subject to another, depending on whether it is permanent information or one-off information, so the same subject may require more than one communication step:

- General description (explanation of a subject);
- Novelty (recent developments, news, announcements of changes);
- Invitation to register (for activities and events that require registration of participants or exhibitors);

- Invitation to participate (an activity or an event);
- Holding (preparation of material and communications required for the day of the activity or event);
- Conclusion (summary of the holding of an activity or event, usually accompanied by photos);

Publishing.

## **INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Internal communications must enable the Chief Administrative Officer / Communication to communicate with employees in a timely and appropriate manner. It serves to convey its direction, mission and values, and contributes to the improvement of work relationships, in addition to building employees' sense of belonging.

They concern:

- Town Council ;
- Senior staff and departments heads;
- Unionized staff;
- Firefighters and volunteers;
- Contractual and casual;
- Front line staff (person who has direct contact with the population).

The Communication Coordinator works closely with the each department head, who are responsible for providing the data needed to transmit the various tools, such as:

- Social events;
- General or particular information;
- E-mail to all or small groups, transmission of documents, instructions and memos;
- Meeting with the staff;
- Meeting of the departments.

Heads must:

- Ensure that staff members are familiar with internal policies and apply them;
- Promote communication in their department as well as with other municipal departments;
- Promote the exchange of information;
- Encourage employees to maintain good relations with colleagues and citizens;

- Provide required training to employees according to the training policies in effect.

The goals to reach:

- Organize information sessions with employees to keep them informed about the Town's priorities and initiatives;
- Creating a simple and effective Intranet to mobilise employees and provide additional resources and relevant information;
- Develop general information and key messages for employees on major projects;
- Inform employees about the role of communications;
- Implement annual needs assessment sessions between communications and Town departments;
- Develop tools to use throughout the organization;
- Standardize communications within the organization;
- Foster a change in culture allowing employees to better understand their role in the organization and the organizational structure;
- Training and behavior change;
- Work with employees and board members to develop key messages and be more proactive.

Expected impacts:

- Better work organization;
- Better coordination between the different departments;
- Better circulation of in-house information;
- Improvement of delays of achievements.

## **EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

External communication is all means of communication that the Town possesses to broadcast externally information and defines the means for achieving this. Therefore, it was important to review all communication activities and programs that the Town has developed in the past and to analyze their impacts. They affect:

- Any citizen (residents, owners, tenants, merchants);
- Potential residents (attraction campaign);
- Owners but not residents. ;
- Community partners (community associations, social groups, recreation organizations, regional and provincial stakeholders and organizations, clients, library subscribers, newsletter subscribers (coming soon), subscribers of the online registration

sports activities, recreational and cultural, suppliers, surrounding communities, United Counties of Prescott and Russell and anyone visiting Hawkesbury).

In general, the Communication Coordinator designs and uses the following means of communication:

- The website offers all information related to municipal departments. It is considered as the main vector of communication. The website is managed by the Communication Coordinator, who works in close partnership with other departments to update the content.
- The Communication Coordinator and the Recreation Department are responsible for social media publications, particularly Facebook. They regularly monitor exchanges affecting the Town and publish or share any information deemed relevant.
- The Town should focus on the use of animated and dynamic multimedia visual aids for major events it organizes. Video is also gaining in popularity and the creation of a YouTube channel that quickly shares videos between the website and Facebook is in order.
- Although some projects still require the use of printed materials, the Town favors, as much as possible, the broadcast of information in electronic form, such as the website, e-mail as well as through social media. On the other hand, brochures and leaflets are produced at the request of the departments and according to the projects and needs. This in order to reduce the ecological footprint of the communication tools and to limit the costs.
- New residents receive an information document containing the Town's most recent publications and all information deemed relevant.

The goals to reach:

- Ameliorate practices for engaging with the public;
- Training for employees to select the best engagement strategies;
- Increase the promotion for the public to participate and make comments;
- Hold local public meetings that provide opportunities for the public to ask questions about the Town;
- Include a periodic and rapid poll on hawkesbury.ca to encourage informal participation on current issues to assess public perception;
- Develop a social media policy;
- Ensure that news about the Town are covered by local media;
- Explore the possibility of taking advantage of existing advisory committees;
- Raise public awareness of the Town's customer service standards, including response times to inquiries, mail, e-mail, etc.;
- Implement advertising policies to reflect the general evolution of the Town;
- Develop a document "Get to Know Hawkesbury", which includes basic service information;
- Be consistent with branding documents and promotional material internally and externally;

- Develop and deploy guidelines for outdoor signage so that all signs in the Town are consistent.

Expected impacts:

- 1- Improvement of Hawkesbury's brand image;
- 2- Web and social media broadcasting of relevant information;
- 3- Improve the quality of relations with the media;
- 4- In a view of sustainable development, reduce the ecological footprint of paper communications and reduce the use of ink cartridges by promoting digital publications.

## **SUBJECTS CONCERNING MUNICIPAL COMMUNICATION**

Departments are responsible to prepare the overall communication tools related to their respective activities but it is the Chief Administrative Officer / Communications that develops the final production, the uniformity or the use of the communication tool. Departments must provide the necessary information within a reasonable time.

Citizens' interests are varying and changing. In order to serve well the people of Hawkesbury in terms of communication, the Town must address all issues that affect municipal life with consistency and objectivity. The Communication Coordinator becomes the focal point for external communications.

For external communications, the list of topics covered, presented by category.

From a municipal point of view

- Geographical profile, demography, history and heritage, symbols, promotional items etc.;
- Development, sports complex, parks and relaxation areas, bicycle network, stores and places of business, public safety, boat ramps;
- Residual materials, waste management, wastewater management, campaigns and programs, biodiversity protection;
- Public works, drinking water supply, municipal buildings, public parking, urban transport.

From a citizen's point of view

- Town Council, Council meetings, policies and action plans, Advisory Committees, consultations and polls, public notices, elections;
- Land assessment and taxes, budget forecasts, financial situation, participatory budgeting, borrowing and financing;

- Municipal departments, communications, jobs, tenders and contracts, online services;
- By-laws, Town planning, permits and certificates, animal control, financial assistance programs.

#### Diverse activities

- Great events;
- Regular programming, free activities, leisure, day camps, water sports, activity plateaus;
- Library, activities and events, cultural directory, art collection, tourism;
- Awareness-raising activities, physical activities, sporting challenges and games, workshops, conferences and courses, competitions and public recognitions, popular festivals, exhibitions and fairs, shows and competitions

From a community point of view (this is about sharing information only, not about creating it)

- Community associations, recreation organizations, social groups, municipal distribution partners, volunteer involvement;
- Integrity of goods, health and social services, fire prevention, civil security messages, emergency measures and priority situations.

## **PUBLICATIONS AND INFORMATION DOCUMENTS**

Any publication by the Town must refer to a page on the website where more detailed content is available.

- Posters;
- Public notices;
- Brochures, leaflets and fact sheets
  - o Documentation on history, residual materials, environmental programs, emergency measures and priority situations, etc.
- Information document for new residents
  - o Portrait of the Town gathering the most useful information.
- Annual calendar
  - o Mailed to all residences and businesses in the territory (designed by Éditions Média Plus Communications).
- Press releases (give information, do not assume anything);
- Municipal guide

o Designed by Media Plus Communications Publishing.

- Forms;
- Policies and action plans;
- Programs of activities and events;
- Sports and recreation programs;
- Draft agendas and minutes of Municipal Council meetings;
- Directory of the members of the Municipal Council as well as the regular staff.

## **WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PAGE**

The Town has chosen to prioritize electronic communications in order to present all municipal issues in a comprehensive web-based manner so that users can access the information they need without the need for another traditional mode of communication.

Digital communication has two major advantages: interaction and speed. The website makes available information from municipal departments. Its content is posted and updated by the Chief Administrative Officer / Communication and the Recreation department, which share, with the staff of the various departments, the responsibility for the accuracy of its content. This is to ensure that the website is up to date for citizens.

The Facebook page is a useful, timely and a non-exhaustive information hub for the entire population, in order to maintain consistent communications. Its content is managed exclusively by the Chief Administrative Officer / Communication and the Recreation department, whether original content or shared one from another source.

## **VISUAL IDENTITY**

The purpose of this section is to guide the use of the Town's coat of arms, logo, signature and tagline by the Town Council, Committees, departments, Local Boards and Commissions and all other organizations that have no business relationship with the Town. This protocol aims to protect and enhance the Town's coat of arms, logo, signature and tagline and ensure that they are professionally and consistently represented.

The Town has a clear and consistent brand image since its 150th anniversary in 2008. This image allows citizens to quickly find and recognize the programs and services of their Town.

The visual identity is the visual symbol that recalls, by its colors and shape, certain characteristics of the Town. Coat of arms are the symbolic emblems that represent the community of the Town. They were created in 1957. They have a historical representation and were adopted by the Municipal Council in 1959 by the regulation N ° 1053.

As for the logo and the signature, the two colors of the logo, blue and green, represent water and earth. The colors are :

<p>- Green -  Pantone PMS 7491  CMYK : 35/0/85/35  RGB : 778E1E</p>	<p>- Blue -  Pantone PMS 540  CMYK : 100/49/0/70  RGB : 002B54</p>
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The dynamic shape of the "H" illustrates growth and points to the future. It is also a road symbolizing the path of the Town. The green bars on each side represent the provinces of Ontario and Quebec linked by the bridge.

The "H" also symbolizes a building framed by two green bands representing a growing Town surrounded by a rural environment. These bands also represent the support that the Town wants to offer to its citizens.

The "H" alone represents all the roads leading to Hawkesbury.

The use of the Town Corporation's coat of arms, logo, signature and tagline is strictly limited to the Town's activities, including the Council, committees, departments, Local Boards and Commissions of the Town. It is forbidden for individuals or other organizations that do not have permission under this policy to reproduce, copy, display, publish, modify or otherwise use them at any time for any other purposes.

The use of the logo, the signature and the tagline is strictly reserved to the Town, while the coat of arms is ideally reserved for publications related to the Municipal Council and the Mayor's office.

The future promotional tagline will be the positioning of the communication statement and will be used as the graphic image of the Town.

Any document intended for public distribution and bearing the Town logo must first be approved by the Communication department.

## **DISPLAY STRUCTURES**

The Chief Administrative Officer / Communication manages all issues related to municipal signage, including current and future electronic panel structures. It may also be called upon to establish and / or maintain standards for the identification of municipal buildings and equipment, parks and green spaces, entrance signs, commemorative plaques, interpretation panels in parks and trails.

### **Digital signs**

The digital signs are managed by the Chief Administrative Officer / Communication and serve to transmit to citizens information of an administrative nature. Community organizations accredited and recognized by the Town may post their activities there, depending on the conditions of use. Paired with steles already installed at the entrances of the Town, the installation of digital signs would be desirable.

### Interchangeable fixed panels

The creation of “coroplast” style fixed panels installed on permanent bases at strategic locations should be considered. These interchangeable panels would be present in the visual landscape of Hawkesbury to emphasize the importance of a subject, event, project or other information to be broadcasted.

### Temporary banners

Creation of temporary structures for mobile and temporary display to meet a precise and specific need. Banner holders that can accommodate temporary banners are distributed on the main arteries of the territory. They are used only by the Town.

### Street banner

Garnish the downtown traffic lights with a series of interchangeable banners to create an identity for the Town and increase the sense of belonging to it by the citizens.

## **STRATEGY AND CALENDAR OF IMPLEMENTATION**

The strategy of this communication plan aims to provide citizens with a better understanding of the decisions and a better interacting experience between them and the municipal services, while enhancing the communication between the administration and the citizens.

As mentioned in the “Vision 2030: strategic plan”, *“the communication portion of the future scenario involves “sharing” the vision of change. Sharing is a key factor in the Town’s transformation to ensure the mobilization and involvement of people and territorial development stakeholders.”*

To achieve this vision, Hawkesbury must develop the best means to communicate with its citizens. Below are the timeframes to achieve each means.

### Continuous work

The website must be the main source of content and must be updated on a daily basis by providing complete information on municipal departments and the progress of public files. Update images to demonstrate that the website is alive and active;

Feed continuously the content of the Facebook page. This page should reflect what is happening in Hawkesbury without taking a position;

Shooting and taking pictures during events to build a bank of movies and images;

Ensure a diligent reception and follow-up of citizens' requests and complaints (employee training?);

Make a daily press summary to gather any article, publication or communication to always be on the lookout for what is being said about Hawkesbury;

Ensure follow-up of meetings and public consultations so that citizens and organizations can comment on their needs and the issues facing the Town.

#### Short-term strategy

Integrate the general elements of external communication that make the Town stand out and be part of the everyday life of its people;

Find a Telmatik-specific image so that this service is used at full capacity, not only for emergencies but also for a newsletter for example. At the same time, creating effective mailing lists becomes a priority;

Creation of the template of a monthly newsletter.

In parallel to Telmatik, the website and Facebook, regularly feed other social networks like Instagram and Twitter to reach a larger layer of the population and all different age groups.

#### Medium-term strategy

Develop and standardize the visual identity to make Hawkesbury shine;

Creation of a YouTube channel to make Town Council meetings available on video and / or any other videos produced by the Town;

Improve displays at the entrances of the Town. Consider adding one or more digital signs. Strategically placed new banners that can be updated regularly;

Develop a specific annual agreement with a local media;

Develop a welcome document containing the Town's most recent publications and any information deemed relevant by new residents after their arrival;

Developing a plan and designing media ads;

Preparing a standard PowerPoint template for presentations;

Facilitate accessibility to the programming of recreation and culture;

Facilitate industrial, commercial and community networking.

#### Long-term strategy

Produce a series of videos;

Creation / update of various communication tools: inserts and leaflets, directory of activities and hobbies;

Adopt a special visual signature along roadsides, entrances and downtown;

Develop and increase the online services for citizens (registration, permits, requests,

complaints, etc.);

Mobilize the community to improve commercial diversity;

Valuing the cultural policy in force, which must meet the different aspirations of its citizens, in terms of art and culture.