



**Village of Haines Junction
Report to Council**

December 6, 2023

Council Decision
 Council Direction
 Council Information
 Closed Meeting

RE: Public Communications Strategy

Recommendation

We recommend Council direct Administration to proceed with the public communications strategy, as proposed.

Background

Council identified the following priority for 2022-2024: Innovative and effective communication and public engagement. An initiative to develop a Communications Strategy, including a website refresh and meaningful political messaging, was identified as a means to advance this priority (alongside other initiatives).

At its October 25, 2023, meeting, Council approved a Communications Strategy for *New Recreation Infrastructure in Haines Junction*.

At its November 8, 2023, meeting Council was presented with a Draft Newsletter that was intended to provide an overview of current and pressing community issues and to direct readers to the Village website for more information. Council expressed a preference for more focused communications, and for Council updates to be shared separate from TREDmill-type news.

Staff were requested to prepare a Report to Council on their capacity to prepare a newsletter and with what frequency (e.g., monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly) and to explain what content would be included in this, and in the various communications tools available to staff. In addition, Council noted its priority to respond to the community's desire for an update on recreation and requested a newsletter focused on Recreation be drafted for consideration in-camera at the next Council meeting.

Current Status

The Village has a number of tools that it currently uses to communicate information to the public. The most accessed communications are the Villages' Facebook page and Website. Not all households have internet access, so it is important to consider ways to ensure essential communications are reaching this audience.

Discussion/Analysis

Administration feels it has capacity to deliver on the following approach to communications for the 2024 fiscal year.

| Communication Tool | Content | Target Audience | Frequency of distribution | Estimated cost |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Council Update Newsletter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High level update (1 page) on progress Council is making on a key priority | All Haines Junction PO Boxes | Quarterly mailout to 488+ households | \$500.00 in postage. Staff time to prepare mailout e.g., stuff and label/stamp envelopes (approx. 6-8 hours) |
| TREDMill An insert into the St. Elias Echo. A monthly Haines Junction newsletter put together by community volunteers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newsworthy items such as career opportunities, events, staffing changes. | Interested public. The Echo has a limited circulation (50-75 copies are printed and available at several locations around town). This is a key means of communication for community members without intranet. | Monthly distribution | The Village supports the volunteer newsletter by supplying photocopying and paper. The Echo costs \$0.50 to purchase, funds are used by publisher support publication costs. |
| Village of Haines Junction Page on Facebook | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The page is used to post time-sensitive information Posts include notices about upcoming public engagements or public information sessions, Council meetings, Village-sponsored opportunities such as the food cyler pilot project, arena updates, landfill hours updates, RFPs, etc.) Posts often direct readers to the Village website for more information. | Interested public. The page has 1,200 likes and 1,400 followers. Posts are often re-posted on the Happenings of Haines Junction and the Uncensored Happenings Pages (both pages have 2,100 members) | Posts are made on average 3 times/week | Free |
| Village of Haines Junction Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The website provides a historical record of Council meeting agendas and minutes, an archive of Village policies and by-laws, audited financial statements, information on funding opportunities, tenders and RFPs, information on local businesses, village services. Public notices and Events are also posted on the website. | Interested public, partners, funders, contractors. Statistics on use of the website are available. | Updates to the website are made several times a week. The website can contain historical records and reference materials for long-term access/use. | There are no additional costs than what is currently in the O&M budget. |

| Communication Tool | Content | Target Audience | Frequency of distribution | Estimated cost |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| Key Initiative Pages on the Village of Haines Junction Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Communications Strategy for <i>New Recreation Infrastructure in Haines Junction</i> outlines a new approach for using the website to provide detailed information on key Council initiatives. We proposed to adopt this approach to communicate information on other key Council initiatives, as/when directed | As above | As above | As above |
| Voyent Alert | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a relatively new service that the Village is using to communicate disruptions that affect day-to-day activities (e.g. from changes in landfill schedule). The service can also be used to communicate and local emergencies | Statistics are likely available on who has downloaded and registered for this service. | Only when necessary –this service has been used several times this fall by Administration to communicate alerts. | There are no additional costs than what is currently in the O&M budget |
| Public Notice Board – Village of Haines Junction Post Office | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Notices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents that do not use FaceBook | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notices are posted on a weekly/ monthly basis | No cost |
| Email Distribution List - | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Agenda Packages, Meeting Minutes Public Notices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested public – recipients must sign up to receive emails | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emails may be sent several times per week. | |

Draft Resolution

Administration is directed to proceed with the public communications strategy, as proposed in December 6, 2023 Report to Council. (with the following amendments)

Prepared by:
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Approved by:
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