

District of Barriere
REPORT TO COUNCIL
Request for Decision

Date: March 9, 2026	File: 530.20/Rpts
To: Council	From: Deputy Corporate Officer
Re: Approval of Policy No. 44 – Communications and Engagement as amended to formally establish a District Social Media Presence.	
Recommendation: THAT Council amend Public Engagement Policy No. 44 as presented.	

Purpose

To present amended Policy No. 44 - Communications and Engagement for Council approval, following Council's direction to establish a District Social Media Presence.

Background

As part of the Strategic Plan, at the previous Council meeting, on February 23, 2026, Council reviewed a report regarding the potential realignment of the Public Engagement Policy No. 44 and to include a Social Media component as requested by Council. Subsequently Council passed the following resolution:

THAT Council direct Staff to amend and rename Policy No. 44 – Public Engagement to a Communications Policy, to update and clarify how the District communicates and shares information with residents, including the use of social media as a District communication tool, aligned with the inform level of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation and to make other general revisions as needed.

Staff have completed the requested amendments, including provisions to rebrand the existing Barriere Recreation Facebook page to share District updates, and public notices in addition to recreation information. Minor administrative updates have also been made to align with current communication practices.

Summary

The table below summarizes the amendments made:

Item	Previous Policy (Public Engagement)	Amended Policy (Communications & Engagement)
Policy Title	Public Engagement	Renamed to Communications and Engagement to better reflect scope and daily operations.
Level of Participation	Digital participation level not formally defined.	Clarifies digital platforms operate at the Inform level of the IAP2 Spectrum. Clarifies Consult level applies to in-person formats when directed by Council (e.g., Open Houses) Clarifies comment functionality on District/ Council-related posts and recreation-related posts.
Social Media	Referenced Fire Department Social Media Page only.	Formally recognizes Barriere Recreation & Information Social Media Page as a corporate communication tool.
Pamphlets	Not specifically listed.	Adds pamphlets as an approved communication tool for initiatives such as budget, programs, and services.
Development Notices	Referenced 100m radius requirement.	Updated to reference Bylaw No. 269 – Development Applications Procedures Bylaw, as amended from time to time. Removed radius clarification as new Bylaw requirement is 40m.
Administrative Updates	Original wording from 2023 adoption.	Minor wording edits for clarity, consistency, and alignment with current practices. Added definition of CAO or their designate to provide flexibility and delegation opportunity.

Benefits or Impact

General

The amended policy provides clarity regarding the District's level of participation, formalizes the use of social media as an information-sharing tool, and aligns policy language with our current communication practices.

Finances

N/A

Strategic Impact

Priority #4: General Governance and Community Engagement

Goal 3. – Enhanced Engagement with the Community and our Partners

- a. Communications regarding District projects are enhanced on the platforms that our citizens are wanting to be engaged on.

Risk Assessment

Compliance:

The amended policy remains aligned with legislative requirements and Council-approved strategies.

Risk Impact:

Risk is mitigated by clearly defining digital communications at the Inform level and outlining comment management expectations.

Internal Control Process:

Existing approval procedures and CAO oversight remain in place.

Next Steps / Communication

- Upon Council approval, the amended policy No. 44 – Communications and Engagement will replace Policy No. 44 – Public Engagement.
- The Barriere Recreation Facebook Page will be re-branded to Barriere Recreation and Information.

Attachments

- DRAFT – Policy No. 44 – Communications and Engagement
- Policy No. 44 – Public Engagement

Recommendation

THAT Council amend Public Engagement policy No. 44 as presented.

Alternative Options

1. Council could choose to direct Staff to make further revisions and bring the amended policy back for reconsideration.

Prepared by:

J.Mosdell, Deputy Corporate Officer



DISTRICT OF BARRIERE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

Page 1 of 6

Approval Date: February 21, 2023

Amended:

NO: 44
DEPARTMENT: ADMINISTRATION AND COUNCIL
SUBJECT: COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT – NO. 44

POLICY OBJECTIVE:

The District of Barriere seeks to engage citizens and provide information through a variety of communication strategies and tools. Communication from the Municipality shall be accessible, well managed, cost effective and responsive to the information needs of the public.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to municipal staff, contractors, and elected or appointed officials, including committee chairs and members. In the event that the municipal Emergency Operations Centre is activated, the Emergency Communications Plan supersedes this policy.

DEFINITION:

CAO means the Chief Administration Officer or their designate.

PRINCIPLES:

1. Provide the public with timely, clear, factual, consistent and complete information about municipal policies, bylaws, programs, services and initiatives.
2. Employ a variety of strategies to effectively communicate to and with the public.
3. Identify and address communication needs and issues as part of the development, implementation and evaluation of municipal policies, bylaws, programs, services and initiatives.
4. Manage municipal funds responsibly to obtain good value for all communication activities.
5. Meet all statutory requirements for notification and consultation.
6. Respect citizens' privacy and rights by ensuring compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and other relevant legislation such as the *BC Human Rights Code*.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Municipal staff, contractors, and elected or appointed officials share responsibility for communication with the public. All are required to treat sensitive or confidential information with discretion.

1. The designated spokesperson for communicating decisions of Council is the Mayor.
2. The ~~Chief Administrative Officer~~ CAO is responsible for ensuring the Policy Objective is met.
3. The ~~Chief Administrative Officer~~ CAO is responsible for coordinating and implementing strategic communication plans, using a variety of communication strategies and tools.
4. **If authorized by the CAO**, municipal staff and contractors may communicate with the public about policies, bylaws, programs, services and initiatives for which they are responsible. Staff and contractors are expected to provide current, accurate and impartial information.
5. Bylaw Enforcement files and land use inquiries shall only be communicated by staff authorized by the ~~CAO Chief Administrative Officer~~ CAO.

LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION:

Digital platforms, including social media, are intended for information-sharing only. Digital operations will be completed at the Inform level of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum (See page 4)

- Comment functionality on District social media platforms may be limited to maintain the Inform-level approach.
- Comments may remain enabled for recreation-related posts and will be disabled for District or Council-related content.
- The District reserves the right to modify or disable comment functionality as required.

Established in-person information sharing, as directed by Council, such as Open Houses, may be used as appropriate at the Consult level of the IAP2 spectrum.

COMMUNICATION TOOLS:

As part of communication plans, some or all of the following tools may be used. Additional tools may be included at a later date. Written and online communication from the District of Barriere typically includes the municipal logo.

Municipal Website – updated regularly. Serves as the primary online tool for communication with the public. Includes email links and e-news subscription sign up. Ensure that printed material for public distribution is published on the website.

Council and Committee Meeting Agendas and Minutes – published on the municipal website with a hard copy available for public inspection, with the exception of meetings that must be closed to the public under section 90 of the *Community Charter*.

Video Streaming of Municipal Council and Committee Meetings – livestreamed via link posted on municipal website for those wishing to attend meetings but are unable to attend in person or who

prefer to attend virtually, with the exception of meetings that must be closed to the public under section 90 of the *Community Charter*.

Other Meeting Formats – as required. Includes Committees of the Whole, public hearings, town halls, open houses, information sessions and facilitated special-purpose meetings.

Statement of Financial Information (SOFI) – submitted to Council annually prior to legislated required publication and posted on the municipal website.

Annual Reports – prepared by June 30 of each year as required under section 98 of the Community Charter. It must be available for public inspection prior to the actual public presentation. It reports on the prior year's activities, ~~includes~~ **including** the audited annual financial statements and plans for the upcoming year.

Staff Reports – prepared as needed. Identify and address communication needs and issues in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, bylaws, programs, services and initiatives. Prepared in a standard template provided by the Corporate Officer or designate.

Municipal Updates – brief summaries of Council initiatives prepared by the CAO or staff designate from time to time and published in the local newspaper. Brief summaries of Council initiatives relayed by the Mayor or Acting Mayor via local radio interview or recording from time to time.

Press Releases – Municipal announcements of significant program implementation, grant funding awards, infrastructure changes and other topics of impact may be distributed as a press release to local media and/or via E-News as deemed appropriate by the CAO or on the direction of Council. Emergency Notices forwarded to Local Area News for publishing on their respective Social Media pages.

Counter Service at Municipal Hall – ongoing.

Telephone and Voicemail – as required. Ensure voicemail messages are kept up-to-date and minimize the number of times a caller is transferred. Calls should be returned the same day whenever possible.

Ongoing Electronic Communication – prepared as needed. Include on the website a signup option: “Subscribe for E-News”, to join an electronic mail list for municipal news and notices. May also be distributed to local media, other local governments in the valley including the TNRD.

~~Barriere Star Journal~~ **Newspaper (Paid Advertising)** – Legislative Notices as well as communicating planned infrastructure works, interruption of services, health notices, municipal events, and other notices as determined appropriate by the CAO.

Local Radio – Emergency Notices, Public Health Advisories, community events, information sessions, election information and other notices that the CAO deems appropriate.

Utility/Tax Billing Inserts – as required and organized by the CAO. Annual garbage/recycling collection schedule cards included in tax billing and made available at the front desk and on the municipal website.

Pamphlets – Printed materials may be developed and distributed to provide information on municipal **including but not limited to budget, projects, programs, and services as required and organized by the CAO.**

Downtown Notice Board - website address to remain posted whenever possible. Other information posted as needed such as (but not inclusive of), service interruptions, planned infrastructure works, health notices, municipal events, and holiday well-wishes.

Door to Door Hand Delivery – as directed by the Public Works Manager for all properties, **where feasible**, subject to a boil water advisory notice and for other urgent notices when deemed necessary by the CAO.

~~**100m radius Notices regarding Development/Land Use:** notice to affected property owners will be provided in accordance as per Council Procedure Bylaw Bylaw No. 269 – Development Applications Procedures Bylaw, as amended from time to time. owners & tenants within 100m of a property subject to a Development Permit, Rezoning, OCP Amendment, or Variance will either be delivered via regular mail or a combination of regular mail and hand delivery as determined by the Corporate Officer.~~

Posters: Emergency Notices, Public Health Advisories, community events, information sessions, open-houses, election information and other notices that the CAO deems appropriate shall be posted in high traffic areas & businesses (as permitted by the business).

Barriere Recreation & Information Social Media Page – Municipal Updates, public notices, recreation programming, service disruptions, and general District information posted by Staff as directed by the CAO.

Fire Department Social Media Page – Emergency Notices posted on the Barriere Fire Department Facebook page as directed by the CAO. Fire safety related content posted via the Fire Chief or member appointed by the Fire Chief or ~~his/her~~ **their** Deputy.

Appendix A – IAP2 Spectrum is attached for reference only, to provide a visual overview of how different stages may be used when communicating and engaging with the public.

~~**Barriere Blooms Social Media Page** – Content directly related to the Barriere Blooms program only.~~

APPROVAL PROCEDURES

Routine communication relies on the good judgment and professionalism of Council and staff, contractors and committee chairs. Defined legislative procedures are in place for approval of such material as agendas, minutes and reports.

Communication such as paid advertisements, news and notices, and social media posts may also require formal approval. The typical procedure is outlined below:

Task	Responsible
1. Identify a communication need.	Council, Staff, Council or other elected or appointed officials, contractors, committee chairs and members.
2. Describe the purpose of any proposed communication and the level of public participation required.	The initiator of the communication, in consultation with the CAO
3. Determine level of approval required.	CAO

4. Develop a Communications Plan, including cost estimates.

The initiator of the communication, in consultation with the CAO

5. Develop written material, graphics and images.

The initiator of the communication, in consultation with the CAO

6. Review draft materials and edit for consistency with DoB messaging and branding.

CAO or staff ~~designate. member designated by the CAO~~

7. Send approved material to staff.

CAO or staff designate.

8. Distribute approved material to the public by means determined in the Communication Plan (as per step 4)

CAO or staff designate.

Appendix A

The spectrum of engagement

INCREASING LEVEL OF SHARED DECISION AUTHORITY →

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
GOAL OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
EXAMPLE TOOLS	Websites; fact sheets; mailing lists; social media platforms (e.g. Facebook or Twitter)	Focus groups; public comment periods; surveys; public meetings; interactive online tools	Polling; public workshops; deliberation forums	Citizen advisory committees; participatory decision-making	Citizen juries; ballots; delegated decision-making processes; participatory budgeting

Adapted from the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum



DISTRICT OF BARRIERE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

Page 1 of 4

Approval Date: February 21, 2023

NO: 44
DEPARTMENT: ADMINISTRATION AND COUNCIL
SUBJECT: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

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3. Determine level of approval required.	CAO
4. Develop a Communications Plan, including cost estimates.	The initiator of the communication, in consultation with the CAO
5. Develop written material, graphics and images.	The initiator of the communication, in consultation with the CAO
6. Review draft materials and edit for consistency with DoB messaging and branding.	CAO or staff member designated by the CAO
7. Send approved material to staff.	CAO or staff designate.
8. Distribute approved material to the public by means determined in the Communication Plan (as per step 4)	CAO or staff designate.