

Title: Communications

Policy No: 7001

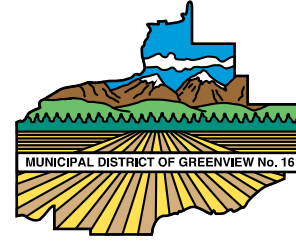
Effective Date: February 13, 2024

Motion Number: 24.02.56

Supersedes Policy No: New

Department: Communications and Marketing

Review Date: February, 2027



Legal References:

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.A 2000, c.F-25.

Cross References:

Bylaw 20-851 “Municipal Emergency Management”
 Policy 7006 “Social Media”
 Policy 1025 “Public Engagement”
 Greenview’s Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Purpose: The purpose of Greenview’s communication policy is to ensure that communications – both external and internal – are proactive, strategic, consistent, and effectively manage and respond to the diverse information needs of Greenview.

1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1. **Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)** means the Chief Administrative Officer of Greenview.
- 1.2. **Communications Manager** means the Manager of Communications and Marketing
- 1.3. **Director** means the Directors of Corporate Services, Infrastructure and Engineering, Community Services, Greenview Industrial Gateway, and Planning & Economic Development.
- 1.4. **Greenview** means the Municipal District of Greenview No 16.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1. The Communications and Marketing Department’s functions are governed and guided by policies, practices, acts, plans, and related procedures to ensure professional and ethical conduct, and alignment with other municipal requirements. These include:
 - A) Greenview’s Strategic Plan;
 - B) Greenview’s Corporate Values;
 - C) Council Code of Conduct Bylaw;
 - D) Employee Code of Conduct Policy;
 - E) Access to Information Policy;
 - F) Social Media Policy;
 - G) Public Engagement Policy; and the
 - H) Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- 2.2. It is the endeavour of Greenview, in accordance with its Strategic Plan to:
 - A) Inform citizens about Greenview’s policies, programs, services, projects, and initiatives through communication that is effective, timely, accurate, and consistent.

- B) Consult and inform stakeholders when establishing or developing priorities, policies, programs, and services where reasonable and practical.
- C) Anticipate the needs of the community, Council, and Administration for timely and relevant information.
- D) Engage in a proactive communications program that uses a variety of formats to accommodate diverse needs and that reflects the diversity of the community.
- E) Ensure Greenview is visible and responsive to the citizens it serves.
- F) Communicate activities with neighbouring jurisdictions, industry and other partners, where possible, in an effort to communicate more effectively and efficiently with the public.
- G) Ensure all strategic communications plans and activities comply with existing municipal, provincial and federal laws and regulations.

2.3. Clear and consistent corporate identity will help the public in recognizing and accessing programs and services. The Greenview logo will appear on all publications and information produced by the organization, with the support of the Communications Department.

2.4. Greenview recognizes that effective communication is key in the time of crisis or emergency. Greenview is committed to communicating information that will protect the health, safety, security and property of its citizens. In the confines of the Greenview Emergency Management Plan, the Communications Department will strive to ensure citizens receive accurate, timely and relevant information to prevent, mitigate, respond to, or recover from an emergency.

3. EXTERNAL INQUIRES

3.1. Media Inquiries

- A) The media play an important role in disseminating information to the public. Due to the delicate balance that must be struck between freedom of information and protection of privacy when dealing with the media, all media inquiries shall be directed to the Communications Manager, CAO or designate.
- B) In accordance with Council Code of Conduct Bylaw, the Reeve is Council's official spokesperson. In the absence of the Reeve, it is the Deputy Reeve. The Communications Manager shall direct all appropriate inquiries regarding Council matters to the Reeve and CAO.
- C) The CAO is the spokesperson for administrative and operational matters but may direct inquiries of a technical nature to the director of individual departments, programs, or projects. With the approval of the CAO, directors may designate technical experts to present information on specific programs or projects with which they are intimately familiar.

3.2. Legal, Personnel, and Election Inquiries

- A) Inquiries regarding pending litigation or involving a significant exposure to litigation should be directed to the CAO.
- B) Inquires regarding personnel-related information should be directed to the CAO.
- C) Inquiries regarding municipal election and campaign issues should be directed to the Returning Officer or the CAO.

4. COUNCIL MEMBER INQUIRIES

4.1. Inquiries made to Council members, whether by phone, email, social media, letter, or in person, must be addressed as soon as reasonably possible.

4.2. Formal Inquiries

- A) If citizens are requesting action from Greenview or wish to ensure their communication is addressed formally by all of Council, they must submit their inquiry or request in writing.
 - i. Formal inquiries received by a member of Council must be forwarded to the CAO or designate as soon as reasonable.
 - ii. All formal inquiries requesting Council decision or policy formulation shall be forwarded to Council, or the appropriate committee for recommendation to Council, as an agenda item at the meeting following the date of the request was received by the CAO.
 - iii. Any formal inquiries that can be handled internally will be dealt with by the CAO. The formal inquiry and information regarding action taken by Administration will be forwarded as information to Council at a subsequent meeting.

4.3. Informal Inquiries

- A) Any informal inquiry would be defined as citizens communicating verbally with any member of Council where the discussion is general in nature and does not require any action.
 - i. Informal inquiries may be responded to by the Council member who receives the request.
 - ii. Where a response is provided to an informal inquiry that is expected to attract media attention or become part of a Council or committee agenda in the future, the response shall be provided to all members of Council and the CAO.
 - iii. The will of Council must be represented in response to all informal inquiries, unless explicitly prefaced as an individual Council member’s personal opinion.

5. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

5.1. Inquiries made by Members of Council:

- A) The CAO shall be the primary contact for Councillor inquiries.
- B) Councillor inquiries by any medium must be addressed promptly.
- C) Formal inquiries are directed to the CAO.
- D) Informal inquiries may be delegated to individual staff members who are knowledgeable in the specific area of inquiry.
- E) Where a response is required to an inquiry that is expected to attract media attention, the response shall be provided to all members of Council and the CAO.
- F) At no time should a member of Council direct the operations or any employee of Greenview, excluding the CAO.

6. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- 6.1. The CAO is responsible for the overall coordination of communications and the carrying out of this policy.
- 6.2. The Manager of Communications and Marketing or designate is normally responsible for carrying out external and internal communications.
- 6.3. General guidelines for external communications include:
 - A) Respect the authority and responsibility of Greenview’s Council, whose members are entitled to learn about proposed policy initiatives, major new services, programs or initiatives before information about them is released to the general public or the media.
 - B) Consult with the CAO when preparing information campaigns or strategies, or when preparing a response to a media inquiry.

- C) Keep information that is related to matters in draft form, under investigation, before the courts, or under the jurisdiction of another authority in strict confidence.
- D) Represent the will of Council in all communications.

7. ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1. The Senior Leadership Team provides leadership to the Manager of Communications in establishing communication priorities and themes and approves corporate communications priorities. The Manager of Communications acts as the first level of response for day-to-day communications requirements and issues and is responsible for establishing and managing Greenview’s communications policies, guidelines, protocols and standards.
- 7.2. As part of keeping Greenview’s employees current on programs and services, when new information is communicated to the public, every attempt will be made to inform employees before or at the same time as the information is shared with the public. Managers are expected to communicate with their employees openly and frequently. The Communications Department will work collaboratively with all Managers to support internal communications and will strive to develop mechanisms and tools to enhance interaction.
- 7.3. Greenview supports that communication is a shared responsibility that is often coordinated within and across various departments. Departments are expected to share materials and information on key programs, decisions, and events with other departments and to maintain awareness and support corporate messages.
- 7.4. Greenview supports the use of electronic communications and views the various tools as a means to build and sustain effective communication internally and externally. To ensure alignment with all communication activities, website content will be provided to the Communications Department for review before being published. This will ensure standardization and a common look and feel throughout the website.

8. COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

- 8.1. In support of the municipality’s strategic direction, communications policy and guidelines, Greenview’s Communications Department will:
 - A) Advance the reputation and a positive image of the organization to the public through timely, accurate and integrated communications of Greenview policies, programs and activities.
 - B) Advise and assist elected officials, senior management and departmental staff in areas related to communications planning, stakeholder relations such as issues management, internal communications, and emergency and crisis communications, digital media such as websites, digital assets and social media, and production including advertising, and public engagement.
 - C) Use a variety of new and traditional methods of communication to accommodate the needs of a diverse public. To promote two-way communication. Greenview materials will provide residents with a phone number, email, mailing address, internet address and social media channel as applicable for more information or input.
 - D) Manage the effective and appropriate use of the organization’s brand and visual identity.
 - E) Collaborate with department management and staff to facilitate effective integration of individual department activities with the overall corporate objectives.
 - F) Manage the production and delivery of all advertising and creative services including writing, design, print and digital production, for organization-wide programs and initiatives, and advise and provide assistance for departmental programs and initiatives.