



# KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan - 2020



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>1</b>
What is a Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan?.....	1
What is a Brand?.....	1
KPB Mission and Brand .....	2
Guiding Principals.....	2
Situation Analysis .....	2
Internal Communications.....	3
External Communications.....	4
<b>AUDIENCES AND STAKEHOLDERS .....</b>	<b>5</b>
KPB Audience .....	5
Residents .....	5
Community Leaders and Partner Agencies .....	5
Business Community.....	5
Borough Employees.....	5
<b>TOOLS AND ASSETS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Internal Tools and Assets .....	6
Intranet (SharePoint).....	6
Email Updates .....	6
Employee Newsletter.....	6
External Tools and Assets .....	7
KPB Website: <a href="http://www.kpb.us">www.kpb.us</a> .....	7
KPB OEM Virtual Joint Information Center: <a href="http://www.kpboem.com">www.kpboem.com</a> .....	7
KPB Alerts Facebook: <a href="http://www.facebook.com/KPBAlerts">www.facebook.com/KPBAlerts</a> .....	7
Email Alerts (New).....	7
KPB Facebook Page <a href="https://www.facebook.com/Kenai.Peninsula.Borough/">https://www.facebook.com/Kenai.Peninsula.Borough/</a> .....	7
Service Area Facebook Pages .....	8
<b>COMMUNICATIONS STRUCTURE AND ROLES .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Current Structure Overview .....	9
Recommended Structure and Roles .....	9
Borough Assembly .....	9
Office of the Mayor.....	9
Clerk's Office .....	10
Public Relations Officer (New) .....	10
Public Information Officer* .....	10

Internal Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup (New) .....	10
Departments and Service Area Directors or Fire Chiefs .....	11
Service Area Board Members .....	11
<b>OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Objective A: Effective and Efficient Operation .....	12
Objective B: Increase Awareness and Understanding.....	12
Objective C: Improve Internal Communications .....	12
Objective D: Increase Engagement.....	12
<b>IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....</b>	<b>13</b>
Objective A: Effective and Efficient Operation .....	14
Strategy 1: Develop organizational infrastructure designed to improve and integrate effective communication at all service areas and departments.....	14
Strategy 2: Conduct regular research and evaluation of communication efforts. ....	15
Objective B: Increase Awareness and Understanding.....	16
Strategy 1: Develop Borough mission, vision, values and brand identity.....	16
Strategy 2: Align service area brands with Borough mission, vision, values and brand identity.....	17
Strategy 3: Apply branding consistently across Borough and service areas. ....	17
Objective C: Improve Internal Communications .....	19
Strategy 1: Emphasize the role of employees as “Borough Ambassadors”.....	19
Strategy 2: Provide communications/customer service training and tools to public-facing employees. ....	19
Strategy 3: Evaluate use and efficacy of internal communications tools.....	20
Objective D: Increase Engagement .....	21
Strategy 1: Continue to develop public engagement/outreach strategies.....	21
Strategy 2: Establish a key communicator network. ....	22
Strategy 3: Continue to develop a “shared leadership” style across the Borough and service areas. ....	23
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>INTERNAL SURVEY RESULTS .....</b>	<b>25</b>
Demographic .....	25
Brand Experience/Perception: .....	25
Communications Opinions:.....	27
Communications Preferences:.....	28
Communications Strengths/Weaknesses: .....	28
<b>EXTERNAL SURVEY RESULTS.....</b>	<b>29</b>
Brand Experience.....	29
Communication Efficacy .....	32
Communications Preferences.....	33

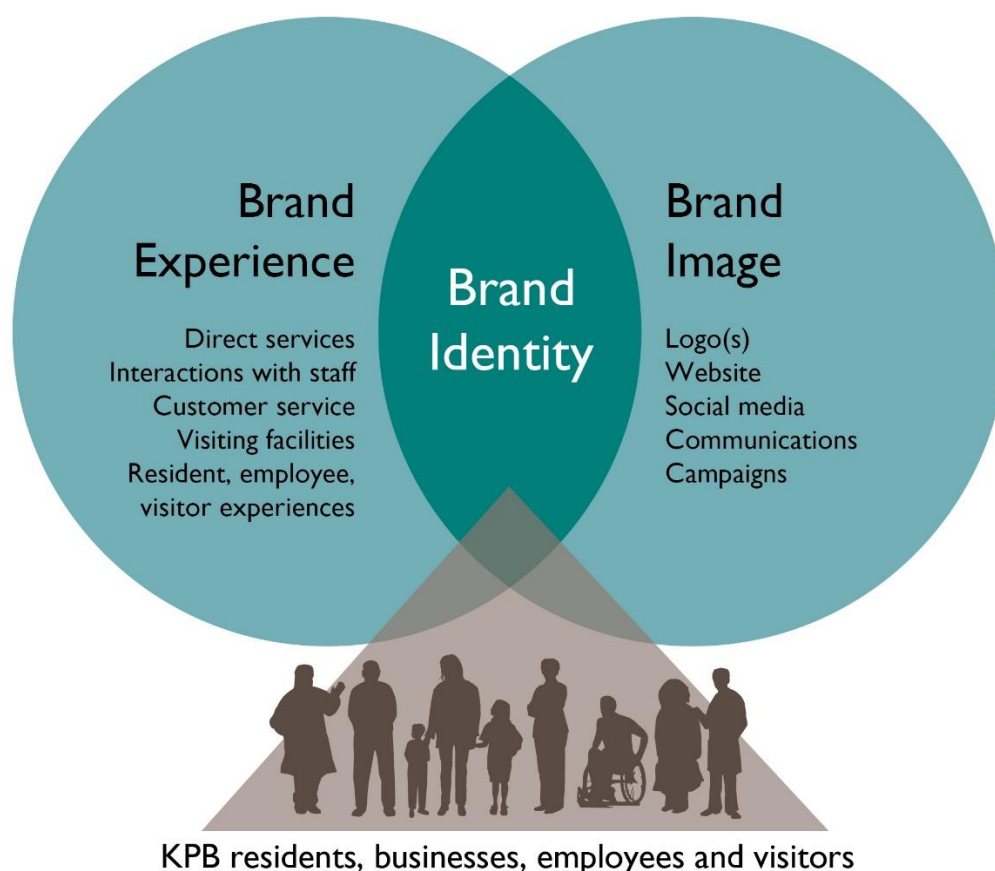
Demographics.....	33
<b>SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS.....</b>	<b>35</b>
Branding.....	35
Internal Communication.....	35
External Communication.....	35
<b>MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Kenai Peninsula Borough Policy: Media Relations.....	37
Media Relations: KPB Fire & EMS Public Information Officer Protocol.....	39
Media Relations: Public Information Officer - Qualified Training Courses .....	41
<b>COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS AND TEMPLATES.....</b>	<b>42</b>
Communications Checklist.....	42
Communication Scheduling Matrix.....	43
Communication Tools Matrix.....	44



## BACKGROUND

### What is a Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan?

The Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) Communications Strategy and Implementation plan is a tool for organizing communications about KPB initiatives and services to residents, businesses, employees and visitors. The plan prioritizes needs, identifies audiences, determines messages and delivery and measures success. The plan is assessed and updated annually and includes measurable objectives, strategies, tasks and outcomes.



### What is a Brand?

A brand is the way an organization is perceived by those who interact with and experience it. More than a name, term, design, logo or symbol, a brand is the recognizable feeling an organization evokes. The recommendations in this plan are built around creating a unique and truthful view of the KPB, its service areas and the Kenai Peninsula. This brand identity is the feeling we hope the KPB will evoke over the next five to seven years as this plan is implemented.

## KPB Mission and Brand

There is currently no clear mission that has been identified by the Borough. It is our recommendation that the Borough engage in strategic planning to establish a clear mission, vision, values and brand identity that can be used to coordinate communications and marketing efforts and establish continuity between administrations.

## Guiding Principals

This plan emphasizes the following overarching principles:

- Promote the ability of Borough employees, Assembly members and residents to access information.
- Disseminate information to the public and all audiences in a manner that is clear, concise, transparent, helpful, timely, proactive, and consistently professional.
- Implement and promote opportunities and mechanisms to obtain regular feedback from targeted audiences, especially residents and employees.
- Promote two-way communications between the Borough and residents.
- Utilize targeted communication methods and strategies that are effective and appropriate for the situation.
- Provide a unified, coherent voice for the Borough, especially as a source of information during crisis or emergency situations.
- Foster a mindset of continual planning to keep Borough communications fresh and responsive.
- Promote communications between Borough administration and the rest of the Borough government, including employees and service areas.

## Situation Analysis

Data was compiled during the information gathering and plan development phases of the Strategic Communications project. This data was used to establish an understanding of the current state of the KPB brand and the efficacy of communications. It will also serve as a snapshot and baseline that can be used to measure the impacts of the communications efforts the Borough undertakes moving forward.

The data collected and analyzed included:

- Data from existing sources, including: KPB Comprehensive Plan, KPB Community Economic Development Strategy, Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council (KPTMC) Objectives, analytics from KPB outreach tools.
- An internal brand and communications survey.
- A short external brand and communications survey.
- Fifteen (15) interviews with assembly members and heads of service areas.
- Public engagement at three community events.

Please see appendix for survey and interview data and analysis.

The data we collected suggests the following organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to Kenai Peninsula Borough communications.

## Internal Communications

### Strengths

- High rate retention of Borough employees creates continuity between administrations and historical knowledge within departments.
- Borough employees are committed and proud to work for the Borough.
- Internal emails are effective and timely.

### Opportunities

- Define mission, vision, values.
- Define brand identity.
- Increase efforts to educate the Borough employees about what the Borough does, specifically highlighting successes and services.
- Improve communications between service areas.
- Promoting or “bragging” about successes between departments could make team members more valued and create comradery.
- Supervisor training to increase consistency of communications within and across service areas and with the public.
- Hire a Public Relations Officer to provide communications expertise and support service area/department communications.

### Weaknesses

- The Borough does not have a clearly defined mission, vision, values.
- The Borough does not have a clearly defined brand identity.
- Service areas feel disconnected from each other.
- Borough is perceived as focused on the Kenai/Soldotna area.
- Borough emails are at times too in-depth and frequent.
- Borough employees are not using existing internal communication tools consistently (intranet, newsletter, email).
- Borough employees are often unable to respond to questions in a timely and thorough way.

### Threats

- Borough employees perceived the public’s opinion of the Borough to be neutral and possibly slightly negative. The danger is that employees lose confidence in the work they are doing.
- Areawide disaster responses make many of the standard communication and public engagement methods impractical or unusable.

## External Communications

### Strengths

- The public views Borough communications as reliable, high-quality and effective.
- Emergency management communications are effective.
- When the public engages with Borough employees, they generally have positive experiences.
- Borough has good working relationships with the city governments within the borough.

### Opportunities

- Brand the Borough consistently (i.e. Borough logo shows up on every service area Facebook page).
- Define mission, vision, values.
- Define brand identity.
- Educate public about services and projects (what, why, how and results).
- Brag about successes.
- Increase the use of social media.
- Pro-active engagement with media (news, radio, etc.).
- Engagement of key communicators to spread Borough communications.
- Create a Borough e-newsletter that residents can sign up for.
- Promote SMS text alert system for emergency communications.
- Create a single obvious source of information, like a Public Relations Officer, who is aware of and promoting the communications for the whole borough.
- Borough employees are seen positively and highlighting their stories can help build trust within the communities.
- Continue to develop virtual meeting tools to allow greater remote access to Borough and Assembly meetings.
- Utilize common public spaces, like libraries, to create opportunities to participate in borough focus groups, meetings and Assembly meetings.
- Increase in-person engagement in communities beyond Soldotna/Kenai for events such as town halls/focus groups.

### Weaknesses

- Borough is perceived as Soldotna-centric (Soldotna, Kenai, Sterling).
- There is a lack of a unified brand and instead the focus is on specific services.
- There is confusion related to the structure of the Borough.
- The Borough currently uses a decentralized communications model with each service area generating its own communications, which is inefficient and creates inconsistencies.
- People do not realize that a service area is a part of the Borough.

### Threats

- Areawide disaster responses make many of the standard communication and public engagement methods impractical or unusable.
- A substantial number of residents felt “Neutral” about Borough communications, leaving a possibility of forming a negative opinion.



# AUDIENCES AND STAKEHOLDERS

## KPB Audience

The Borough's audience may include: anyone who lives, works or does business within the Kenai Peninsula Borough, visitors, tribal and city governments within the borough, neighboring communities, organizations, businesses considering relocating to the Kenai Peninsula Borough, and Borough employees. As this audience represents a large group of people with different interests, we have chosen to focus on specific stakeholder groups as described below.

### Residents

The programs and services offered by the Kenai Peninsula Borough have the greatest impact on the residents that we serve. General awareness of the Borough's goals, efforts and results will be available to every individual in the borough through a variety of different streams, including the stakeholders mentioned below. Honest and responsive communication with the residents of the KPB will help build trust and credibility, increasing public engagement and overall loyalty to the Borough as an organization.

### Community Leaders and Partner Agencies

As leaders, these individuals and organizations are often trusted and held in highest regard. Active communication with identified leaders about Borough goals, efforts and results will broaden the base of awareness and understanding throughout the borough. These leaders are often capable of eliciting a great amount of public response and influence. Because of this they should be valued and included in important policy discussions. Frequent dialogue with community leaders, including tribal governments, state and federal legislators, municipal elected officials, or other identified individuals, will have a positive impact on the residents that we serve.

### Business Community

The business community, as well as businesses considering relocating or expanding into the borough, provide the economic stability that borough residents need. Clear, effective communication and dialogue with these businesses will help create a sense of confidence and trust and foster an environment where businesses are willing to invest and grow.

### Borough Employees

Kenai Peninsula Borough employees play a unique role in effective communication. As representatives of the Borough, it is essential that our employees are fully informed on the Borough's efforts, results and goals. Borough employees serve as point contacts throughout the community; therefore, a well-informed employee will lead to well-informed residents.

# TOOLS AND ASSETS

## Internal Tools and Assets

### Intranet (SharePoint)

The intranet is the Borough's central formal repository for electronic communications and documents related to Borough business policies and practices. It includes working documents, policies, and shared datasets. It does not include records and formal public documents, which are stored in paper copy and in a separate document management system. The intranet is internal only and not accessible to the public.

Average visitors per day: 79 | Page views per day: 3,904

*NOTE: The average number of visitors daily are not necessarily the same 79 people each day.*

### Email Updates

Borough employees identified email updates as one of the most effective ways for them to stay up to date with Borough initiatives and the efforts of other service areas or departments. It is recommended that the Borough look into ways to measure the rate and usage of internal updates. If this is not reasonable to accomplish, questions on the internal communications survey can provide some insight.

### Employee Newsletter

The newsletter should address what is happening in the borough and what kind of information is being produced. The public will be inquiring about this information and employees need to be informed about all happenings throughout the borough such as Hazardous Waste Day, Fire Service Volunteer Training, Elections, etc.

## External Tools and Assets

### KPB Website: [www.kpb.us](http://www.kpb.us)

In 2019, the newly redesigned KPB website went live. The redesign focused on clean design with improved menu functionality that directs users to the most relevant information. It is also fully responsive with mobile devices, making it easy to navigate on a wide range of web browsers and portable devices.

The Borough website prioritized the following goals: clear and uniform presence of who we are, easy access to municipal service provided to residents, information regarding local government, public meetings and elections.

Average monthly views: 57,023

### KPB OEM Virtual Joint Information Center: [www.kpboem.com](http://www.kpboem.com)

In 2015, the Office of Emergency Management developed a Virtual Joint Information Center on BlogSpot that functions to provide the public with coordinated and collocated information from responding agencies during an emergency on the Kenai Peninsula. During our conversations with the public, the majority of individuals had positive opinions of the Virtual Joint Information Center.

Average monthly views: 5,451

### KPB Alerts Facebook: [www.facebook.com/KPBAlerts](https://www.facebook.com/KPBAlerts)



In 2018, the Office of Emergency Management migrated to a new telephone warning system that, for the first time, included integration with social media. The KPB Alerts platform uses Facebook and Twitter to broadcast important life safety messages during emergencies, such as evacuation notices, missing persons information, law enforcement activity, and more.

Additionally, information strategies for incident response have included informational content being posted on these platforms such as live streaming of public meetings, Q&A sessions, and other video content.

Number of followers: 11,875

### Email Alerts (New)

We recommend creating a distribution list to send emails to designated media contacts including local and regional newspapers, radio and television stations, borough public schools, community library, administrative offices for local municipalities, tribal governments, the Office of the Mayor, all Assembly members, service area boards and department directors. This should also be something that residents can sign up for to stay informed about news in the borough. Analytics are available on most bulk mail software and should be set up to record rates of opens, the number of recipients and numbers of emails sent.








### KPB Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/Kenai.Peninsula.Borough/>

The KPB is active on Facebook, and residents identified Facebook as one of the primary ways they currently receive information and would like to receive information about the Borough.

Number of followers: 5,479 followers as of 08/10/20

## Service Area Facebook Pages

Several borough service areas have their own Facebook pages. Residents identified these pages as places where they receive information about the borough. We recommend continuing to use these pages because they are a trusted source of information for residents, but we recommend adjusting the branding and coordinating efforts with the Strategic Communication Advisory Committee and the PR Officer, as well as the PIO when appropriate so that there is continuity in brand and messaging between all Facebook pages. The table below provides a snapshot of current branding and Facebook information.

CURRENT BRANDING	SERVICE AREA	Facebook page and # of followers (as of 8/20/20)
	North Peninsula Recreation	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/NorthPeninsulaRecreation">www.facebook.com/NorthPeninsulaRecreation</a> 1,918 followers
	Anchor Point Emergency Services	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/anchorpointemergencyservices">www.facebook.com/anchorpointemergencyservices</a> 2,601 followers
	Central Emergency Services	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/CESalaska">www.facebook.com/CESalaska</a> 2,126 followers
	Kachemak Emergency Services	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/kesfire">www.facebook.com/kesfire</a> 1,057 followers
	Nikiski Fire Services	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/NikiskiFire">www.facebook.com/NikiskiFire</a> 2,534 followers
	Bear Creek Fire	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/bearcreekvolunteerfiredepartment">www.facebook.com/bearcreekvolunteerfiredepartment</a> 1,625 followers
	Seldovia Sea Otter Community Center	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/theSOCC">www.facebook.com/theSOCC</a> 255 followers

# COMMUNICATIONS STRUCTURE AND ROLES

## Current Structure Overview

The Borough currently has a decentralized system for generating content and has been making efforts to move towards a more coordinated distribution. Currently, departments and service areas largely produce and distribute their own public information independent of one another. Electronic distribution – primarily through social media – is done by departments or service areas sometimes in concert with the Information Technology (IT) department and/or the Public Information Officer. Departments have varying levels of capacity, expertise and need for the production and distribution of public information.

## Recommended Structure and Roles

An effort to create a more centralized process is in progress and includes the creation of a Media Relations policy. We recommend that the Borough continue to move towards a more centralized system. The creation of an internal Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup and a Public Relations Officer position will help establish clear goals, processes, and styles of communications. The strategic priorities established and maintained by the internal Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup will help to reinforce the brand, tie the departments and service areas of the borough together, provide continuity and consistency and provide clear actionable communications strategies. The specialization and capacity added by creating a Public Relations Officer position will increase the consistency and quality of communications and improve efficiency by allowing professionals for focus on their areas of expertise. Below are a recommended list of roles and responsibilities.

### Borough Assembly

- Approve periodic updates to the Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan.
- Ad hoc Assembly member position to serve annually on the internal Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup.
- Consider recommendations from the Office of the Mayor and/or internal Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup to allocate financial, staff, and technological resources to address unmet or emerging communications needs.
- Share Borough communications to their constituents in a way that is consistent with the Borough brand and communications strategies.

### Office of the Mayor

- Assign and direct staff to accomplish the strategies laid out in this plan in a timely and effective way.
- Supervise the Public Information or Public Relations functions.
- Prioritize communications work to match available resources.
- Periodically apprise the Assembly on progress in implementing this plan - including capabilities and constraints to achieving objectives, and recommendations for addressing any shortcomings.



## Clerk's Office

- Serves as a liaison between the public and the Borough Assembly.
- Serves as an additional information distribution center.
- Serves as a conduit for information both from and to the public.
- Serves as an information resource and support for public meeting bodies and administrative staff.

## Public Relations Officer (New)

We recommend the establishment of a Public Relations Officer (PR) who can focus on areas of communication that are often neglected or are fulfilled by individuals whose expertise is needed in other areas.

- Serve as liaison between the media and the Borough Assembly and Office of the Mayor.
- Serve as an information coordinator for departments and service areas.
- Convene and provide leadership for internal Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup.
- Foster strong relationships with representatives of all forms of media.
- Collaborate with the Public Information Officer (PIO). The PIO is the spokesperson for the Borough during areawide, emergency response.
- Serve as a resource for marketing and promoting KPB services.
- Functions as a guardian to identify and address potential confusion, inaccurate information and miscommunication.
- Generates content for Borough departments and service areas (media creation, copywriting, press releases, PSAs).
- Facilitates output and distribution of content.

## Public Information Officer\*

Based on the Incident Command Structure, the role of the Public Information Officer (PIO) is activated for the purpose of providing strategic advice and counsel on information matters to the incident management team while conveying accurate information to the public during areawide response. (An areawide response may be an emergency response or non-emergency event for the purpose of this PIO definition.) When so designated by the Mayor or Emergency Manager, the PIO will perform or oversee many roles and responsibilities to meet the following needs as the incident expands and contracts:

- Provide the single authoritative source for the essential duties and responsibilities specific to executing public information within the defined mission objectives.
- Ensure connection between the position responsibilities and the established operational standards for emergency or non-emergency events.
- Build consistency (organization, nomenclature, terminology) internal to each PIO function and across the inventory of positions.
- Help identify performance support needs such as job aids, training courses, and position task books for PIO team.

*\*Public Information Officer qualifications are based upon the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and National Wildfire Coordination Group (NWCG) position-specific roles and responsibilities.*

## Internal Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup (New)

We recommend the development of an internal Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup. This committee will be made up of one Assembly member (ad hoc), five liaison seats to represent the departments and services areas, the PR Officer, and a representative from the Office of the Mayor.

- Establish Borough communication priorities.
- Review and update the Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan annually.
- Conduct research into the efficacy of communications efforts, audience preferences and new communication tools.

## **Departments and Service Area Directors or Fire Chiefs**

- Establish or maintain plans or processes for executing their own communications functions in a manner consistent with the Borough's brand and communications strategies.
- Support the Office of the Mayor and other departments and service areas by sharing staff/technological/other resources when feasible to accomplish Borough communications goals and objectives.
- Establish a spokesperson(s) to respond to day-to-day inquiries or news releases as necessary in a timely manner. Spokesperson should be aware of and work to support the brand and communications strategies of the Borough and should follow the Media Relations Policy.
- Document and report inquiries that are significant, controversial or have potential to generate on-going public interest to the Office of the Mayor.
- Provide guidance to the Office of the Mayor when disseminating information to residents and other audiences regarding significant programs/policies/events/initiatives.

## **Service Area Board Members**

- Establish or maintain plans or processes for executing their own communications functions in a manner consistent with the Borough's brand and communications strategies.
- Support the Office of the Mayor and other departments and service areas by sharing staff/technological/other resources when feasible to accomplish Borough communications goals and objectives.
- Provide guidance to the Office of the Mayor when disseminating information to residents and other audiences regarding significant programs/policies/events/initiatives.

## OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

### Objective A: Effective and Efficient Operation

Strategy 1: Develop organizational infrastructure designed to improve and integrate effective communication at all service areas and departments.

Strategy 2: Conduct regular research and evaluation of communication efforts.

### Objective B: Increase Awareness and Understanding

Strategy 1: Develop Borough mission, vision, values and brand identity.

Strategy 2: Align service area brands with Borough mission, vision, values and brand identity.

Strategy 3: Apply branding consistently across Borough and service areas.

### Objective C: Improve Internal Communications

Strategy 1: Emphasize the role of employees as “Borough Ambassadors”.

Strategy 2: Provide communications training and tools to public-facing employees.

Strategy 3: Evaluate use and efficacy of internal communications tools.

### Objective D: Increase Engagement

Strategy 1: Continue to develop public engagement/outreach strategies.

Strategy 2: Establish a key communicator network.

Strategy 3: Continue to develop a “shared leadership” style across the Borough and service areas.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following pages outline specific strategies and tasks recommended to achieve the four objectives identified above. Notes about audience, budget, responsible persons and evaluation measures are included with each task. Tasks are ordered by their priority. In some cases, examples are also highlighted.

## Objective A: Effective and Efficient Operation

Strategy I: Develop organizational infrastructure designed to improve and integrate effective communication at all service areas and departments.

<b>Task A</b>	<b>Create an internal Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup that will work to define the on-going communication program and develop specific goals and action steps.</b>
Audience	Internal
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	Office of the Mayor
Evaluation measures	Creation of committee, committee meetings

<b>Task B</b>	<b>Create a Public Relations (PR) Officer position and hire a PR Officer.</b>
Audience	Internal
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	Office of the Mayor
Evaluation measures	Creation of position, hiring of PR Officer

<b>Task C</b>	<b>Purchase and utilize a social media management tool (i.e. Hootsuite) to allow greater efficiency, brand continuity and timeliness in the management of Borough social media posts, marketing and responses to comments.</b>
Audience	Internal
Budget	\$360/year
Responsible persons	PIO, PR
Evaluation measures	Completed purchase and implementation

<b>Task D</b>	<b>Develop standardized outreach checklist of actions and workflows for new communication efforts.</b>
Audience	Internal
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Completion of checklist, records of access of checklist document

<b>Task E</b>	<b>Develop matrix of communication tools and tactics, including relative cost, effort, efficacy, and time information.</b>
Audience	Internal



Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Completion of matrix, records of access of matrix document

<b>Task F</b>	<b>Create unified social media plan, establish protocols for posting content to social media accounts.</b>
Audience	Borough employees
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Creation and distribution of plan

<b>Task G</b>	<b>Establish a process to review and update the Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan on a regular basis.</b>
Audience	Internal
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Completed annual review and updates to Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan

## Strategy 2: Conduct regular research and evaluation of communication efforts.

<b>Task A</b>	<b>Conduct After Action Reviews following the completion of major communication campaigns/efforts.</b>
Audience	N/A
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, Project manager
Evaluation measures	Number of completed of reviews

<b>Task B</b>	<b>Conduct external opinion surveys on a regular basis.</b>
Audience	Residents, businesses
Budget	\$1,000 per survey
Responsible persons	Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Completion of survey annually

<b>Task C</b>	<b>Conduct internal surveys of employees and Assembly members.</b>
Audience	Borough employees
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Completion of survey annually

## Objective B: Increase Awareness and Understanding

### Strategy I: Develop Borough mission, vision, values and brand identity.

<b>Task A</b>	<b>Conduct a strategic planning session to identify and formalize mission, vision, values.</b>
Audience	Borough employees, service areas boards, Assembly members, borough residents and businesses, visitors
Budget	\$3,500
Responsible persons	Office of the Mayor, Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup, Service areas, Department leadership
Evaluation measures	Completion of mission, vision, values statements

<b>Task B</b>	<b>Define Borough brand identity.</b>
Audience	Borough employees, service areas boards, Assembly members, borough residents and businesses, visitors
Budget	\$3,500
Responsible persons	Office of the Mayor, Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup, Service areas, Department leadership
Evaluation measures	Completion of brand identity statement

<b>Task C</b>	<b>Development of materials and plan to engage and educate Borough employees about mission, vision, values and brand identity.</b>
Audience	Borough employees
Budget	\$2,000
Responsible persons	PR, Office of the Mayor, Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Increased ability of Borough staff to identify the mission, vision, values and brand identity

<b>Task D</b>	<b>Refine or redesign KPB logo.</b>
Audience	Borough employees, service areas boards, Assembly members, borough residents and businesses, visitors
Budget	TBD depending on whether the project involves a complete logo redesign or logo revisions only
Responsible persons	Office of the Mayor, Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup, Service areas, Department leadership
Evaluation measures	Completion of logo revisions or redesign of existing logo

<b>Task E</b>	<b>Strengthen and reinforce brand identity by promoting Borough projects and services that are in line with the mission, vision, values and brand identity.</b>
Audience	Residents, businesses, community leaders, partner organizations, Borough employees
Budget	
Responsible persons	PR

Evaluation measures	Press releases, Social media posts, reach of social media posts
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<b>Task F</b>	<b>Periodic review and adjustment the mission, vision, values and brand identity.</b>
Audience	N/A
Budget	\$3,500
Responsible persons	Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Updated mission, vision, values and brand identity

**Strategy 2: Align service area brands with Borough mission, vision, values and brand identity.**

<b>Task A</b>	<b>Continue to pair KPB logo with service area brands.</b>
Audience	Residents, service areas
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, service areas
Evaluation measures	KPB logo is visible on service area materials
Example	The KPB logo should be placed on all service area Facebook pages along with the service area's existing logo in order to help residents understand the connection to the Borough.

<b>Task B</b>	<b>Redesign borough service area brands to relate to the Borough brand.</b>
Audience	Residents, businesses, Borough employees
Budget	
Responsible persons	Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Logo update

**Strategy 3: Apply branding consistently across Borough and service areas.**

<b>Task A</b>	<b>Physical branding of services, building signage, uniforms/hats and vehicles.</b>
Audience	Residents, businesses, Borough employees
Budget	\$60,000
Responsible persons	PR
Evaluation measures	Elimination of old brand on physical elements (buildings, signage, uniforms/hats, vehicles, etc.)
Example	Branded KPB gear for employees to wear to display borough pride on and off the clock.

<b>Task B</b>	<b>Create and distribute branded tools and templates (brochures, ads, docs, forms, etc.).</b>
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Audience	N/A
Budget	\$3,000 – \$7,000
Responsible persons	PR, IT
Evaluation measures	Creation of templates for brochures, ads, docs, forms, etc.

<b>Task C</b>	<b>Identify and revise/recreate all existing forms, brochures to reflect brand.</b>
Audience	Residents, businesses
Budget	\$50-75 per document
Responsible persons	PR, IT, Clerk's office, Record's Manager
Evaluation measures	Creation of forms, brochures, etc., document for tracking file information

<b>Task D</b>	<b>Apply brand and styles to website.</b>
Audience	Residents, businesses, community leaders, partner organizations
Budget	\$3,500
Responsible persons	PR, IT
Evaluation measures	Updated website style

## Objective C: Improve Internal Communications

Strategy 1: Emphasize the role of employees as “Borough Ambassadors”.

<b>Task A</b>	<b>Collect and distribute stories that focus on successes.</b>
Audience	Borough employees
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, departments/service areas
Evaluation measures	Number of stories shared, rate/count of email opens

<b>Task B</b>	<b>Use existing tools to highlight current Borough efforts, services and projects.</b>
Audience	Borough employees
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, Office of the Mayor, Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Rate of email opens

<b>Task C</b>	<b>Create and distribute talking points and summaries of work for service areas, initiatives, and projects.</b>
Audience	Borough employees
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, departments/service areas
Evaluation measures	Number of document opens

Strategy 2: Provide communications/customer service training and tools to public-facing employees.

<b>Task A</b>	<b>Develop customer service training for all public-facing employees.</b>
Audience	Public-facing Borough employees
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR
Evaluation measures	Number of individuals trained

<b>Task B</b>	<b>Develop tools to help public-facing employees quickly find information (FAQs, infographics, how-to guides).</b>
Audience	Public-facing Borough employees
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR



Evaluation measures	Development of tools, number of opens for tools
Example	Public-facing employees must often answer questions from the public about complex topics. Infographics with easy-to-comprehend explanations can be shared with the public to answer questions and explain what is going on in the borough.

<b>Task C</b>	<b>Establish department/service area spokespeople and provide training and tools for effective communication.</b>
Audience	N/A
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	Departments/service areas
Evaluation measures	List of spokespeople

<b>Task D</b>	<b>Provide public-facing employees with contact information for department/service area spokespeople, PR Officer and PIOs.</b>
Audience	Public-facing Borough employees
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR
Evaluation measures	Directory of spokespeople

### Strategy 3: Evaluate use and efficacy of internal communications tools.

<b>Task A</b>	<b>Conduct internal communications survey.</b>
Audience	Borough employees
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR
Evaluation measures	Number of surveys completed

<b>Task B</b>	<b>Create and review analytics related to use of internal communications tools.</b>
Audience	N/A
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, IT
Evaluation measures	Completed review of analytics

<b>Task C</b>	<b>On-going research into new communication technologies and tools that address issues and gaps in internal communications.</b>
Audience	N/A
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, IT
Evaluation measures	Reports and recommendations on new tools

## Objective D: Increase Engagement

Strategy I: Continue to develop public engagement/outreach strategies.

<b>Task A</b>	<b>Continue to provide and expand opportunities for public input that don't require attendance at a meeting (e.g. comments in Facebook live read into public record, print submitted comments, etc.).</b>
Audience	Residents, businesses
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	Clerk, PR, IT
Evaluation measures	Number of events with remote public comment capacity, number of remote public comments

<b>Task B</b>	<b>Identify and document existing partnerships and continue to develop collaborative partnerships with other agencies (cities, tribal governments, etc.).</b>
Audience	Partners organizations
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, PIO, responsible Borough parties
Evaluation measures	Number of collaborative efforts, rate of promotion of Borough communications
Example	All Lands, All Hands interagency group that manages fuel mitigation projects, expand the communications of the group to support Ready, Set, Go or Firewise projects

<b>Task C</b>	<b>Provide access to Borough meetings/events remotely and at public spaces.</b>
Audience	Partners organizations
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, PIO, Clerk's office, responsible Borough parties
Evaluation measures	Number of collaborative efforts, rate of promotion of Borough communications

<b>Task D</b>	<b>Hold town halls or forums throughout borough, not just in Soldotna/Kenai.</b>
Audience	Residents, businesses, community leaders, partner organizations
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, responsible Borough parties
Timeframe	Starting Spring 2021
Evaluation measures	Number of town halls/forums in each region

<b>Task E</b>	<b>Hold focus groups on "hot topics".</b>
Audience	Residents, community leaders, businesses, partner organizations
Budget	N/A

Responsible persons	PR, responsible Borough parties
Evaluation measures	Number of focus groups

<b>Task F</b>	<b>Provide visual signs of welcome, acknowledgment and appreciation for internal audiences.</b>
Audience	Borough employees
Budget	\$1,000
Responsible persons	PR, Service areas
Evaluation measures	Creation and posting of signs
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employee recognition: signage highlighting employee of the month or highlighting a successful project team, department, or service area</li> <li>Acknowledgement for years of service (coins commemorating 1, 3, 10, 20-year work anniversaries), retiree gifts (cutting board), new hire orientation and introductions</li> </ul>

<b>Task G</b>	<b>Provide visual signs of welcome, acknowledgment and appreciation for external audiences.</b>
Audience	Residents, businesses, external audiences
Budget	\$1,000
Responsible persons	PR, Service areas
Evaluation measures	Creation and posting of signs
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome signage at building entrances highlighting successes and partnerships in the borough</li> <li>Land acknowledgements at building entrances</li> <li>Post signs to delineate zones and infrastructure in the borough, for example, “You are now entering the Bear Creek Fire Service Area”</li> <li>Post placards acknowledging historical contributions, for example, the Donald E. Gilman River Center</li> </ul>

## Strategy 2: Establish a key communicator network.

<b>Task A</b>	<b>Identify influential key communicators (community and business leaders, including Alaska Native and minority leaders).</b>
Audience	Influential leaders
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Creation of list, increase in number of individuals on the key communicators list

<b>Task B</b>	<b>Invite identified key communicators to meet with Borough representatives several times each year.</b>
Audience	Identified key communicators
Budget	\$1,000
Responsible persons	Strategic Communications Advisory Workgroup
Evaluation measures	Number of individuals attending

<b>Task C</b>	<b>Develop “Friends of the Borough” e-newsletter to keep key communicators informed between meetings.</b>
Audience	Identified key communicators
Budget	\$1,000
Responsible persons	PR
Evaluation measures	Number of individuals on mailing list, number of opens for newsletters

<b>Task D</b>	<b>Establish a hotline or direct contact for key communicators to clarify information.</b>
Audience	Identified key communicators
Budget	\$1,000
Responsible persons	PR, PIO
Evaluation measures	Log of contacts from key communicators

**Strategy 3: Continue to develop a “shared leadership” style across the Borough and service areas.**

<b>Task A</b>	<b>Close the communication loop on new initiatives by explaining rationale for actions and result of efforts.</b>
Audience	Staff, residents, businesses, partner organizations, community leaders, key communicators
Budget	\$1,000
Responsible persons	PR, PIO, responsible Borough parties
Evaluation measures	Rate of completion of rational and of results communications
Example	The sales tax collection department is a place residents are often obligated to visit to make tax payments. Their tax dollars go directly to supporting schools in the borough, but there is no visible evidence of that fact in the sales tax department. Signage with pictures of schools, school activities and kids learning could be placed in the department so taxpayers can see the tangible evidence of their money at work in the community.

<b>Task B</b>	<b>Solicit input and conduct research before making important decisions. Surveys and focus groups can be used.</b>
Audience	Borough employees, residents, businesses, community leaders, partner organizations
Budget	N/A
Responsible persons	PR, PIO, responsible Borough parties
Evaluation measures	Number of efforts to gather input (surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.)

## APPENDICES

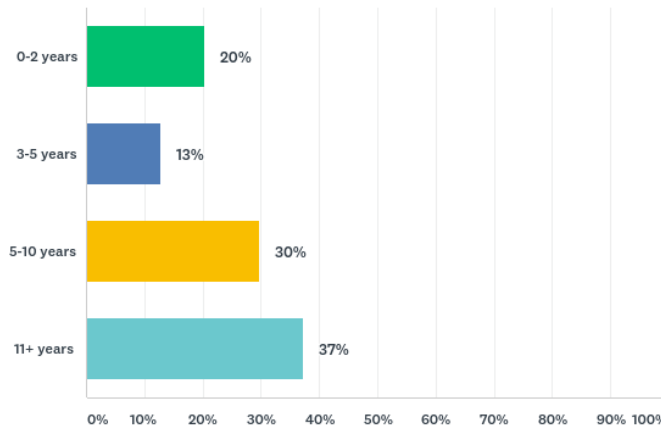
- Internal Survey Results
- External Survey Results
- Summary of Interview Themes
- Public Relations Policy
- Communications Tools and Templates
  - Communications Checklist
  - Communication Scheduling Matrix
  - Communication Tools Matrix

# INTERNAL SURVEY RESULTS

A five-minute internal survey was conducted to look at Brand Experience and Perception, Internal Communications and Communications Preferences. There were 97 respondents.

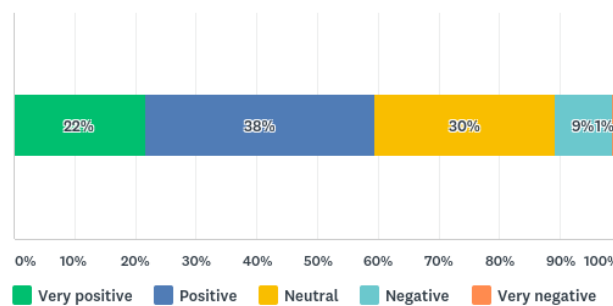
## Demographic

**Q1. How long have you worked at the Borough?**



## Brand Experience/Perception:

**Q2. How do you feel about the Borough?**



Most respondents felt positive or very positive about the Borough (60%) with only 10% feeling negative or very negative.

**Q3. What do you perceive to be the core values of the Borough?**

Most respondents felt that there was not clarity on the Borough's values or mission.

The most commonly identified values were:

- Service (30%),
- Efficiency/Cost Savings (16%),
- Honesty/Transparency (13%),
- Safety (9%),
- Community (6%).

- Diligence/Work Ethic (6%)

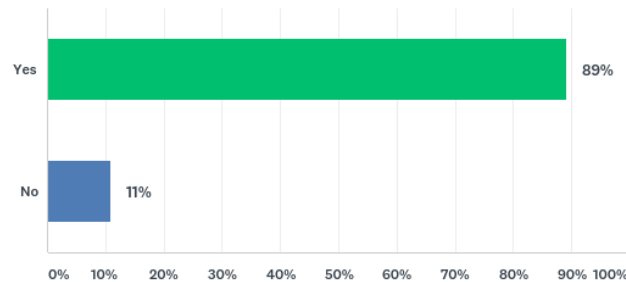
#### Q4. What do you perceive to be the mission of the Borough?

Most respondents felt that there was not clarity on the Borough's values or mission. Many individuals still provided their understanding of the mission even though it was not clear.

The most common topics addressed in the respondent's summary of the mission of the Borough were:

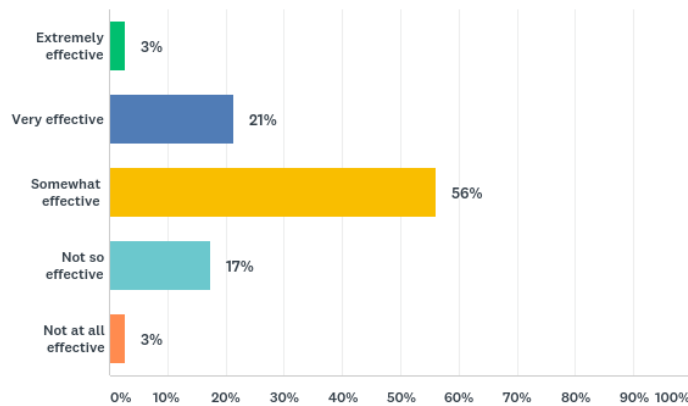
- Providing services (58%)
- Unclear (18%)
- Being fiscally responsible/Cost savings (15%)
- Taxing and establishing funding for services (13%)

#### Q5. Are you proud to be a member of the team?



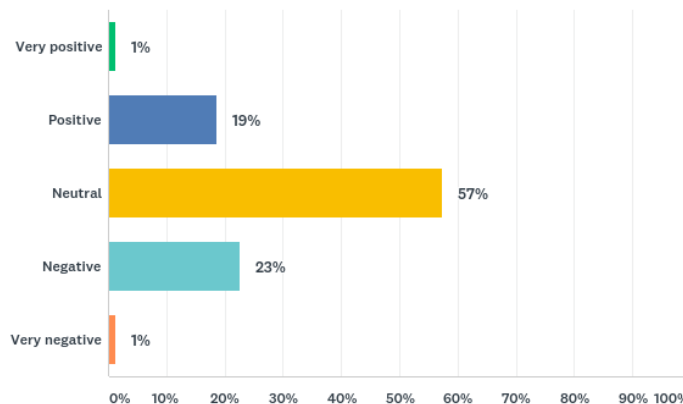
89% of respondents were proud to be a member of the Borough team.

#### Q6. How effective is the Borough's logo?



Regarding the effectiveness of the logo, there was a pretty standard bell curve with most people (56%) choosing Somewhat Effective. Only 24% of respondents felt positively about the efficacy of the logo (Extremely Effective or Very Effective) and only 20% felt negatively about the efficacy of the logo (Not So Effective or Not Effective At All).

### Q7. How do you think the public feels about their experiences with the Borough?



The respondents' impression was that the public felt "Neutral" about their experiences with the Borough (57%). Both Very Positive and Very Negative received only 1% of responses.

There is a slight bias towards the negative end of the spectrum, but it is very slight with 18 responses of Negative or Very Negative compared to 15 responses of Positive or Very Positive.

It is interesting to note that Borough employees' perception of public opinion was lower than the opinion our survey respondents. Bringing awareness that Borough residents generally view the Borough in a positive way could help improve employee morale and create a more positive work environment.

### Q8. How do you think we can improve public perception and feelings towards the Borough?

The most common topics addressed in the respondent's ideas for improving the public perception and feelings towards the Borough were:

- Education: This was both about what the Borough is and does, and about issues (32%).
- Public Engagement (24%): This was about increasing and utilizing new methods to allow better public involvement.
- Self-Promotion/Branding (24%): These comments were focused on letting the public know all of the positive things that the Borough has been doing as well as the things the Borough is working towards.
- Transparency (21%): These comments focused on creating clear processes on how and why decisions were being made, and providing that information to the public.
- Positive Experiences/Customer Service (18%): These were comments focused on positive interactions with Borough Employees as well as positive experiences when utilizing a Borough service.
- Positive Work Environment/Internal Communications (14%): There were a number of suggestions focused on the idea that creating a positive work environment with stronger internal communication would make employees better brand ambassadors.

## Communications Opinions:



- 50% of respondents were Very Satisfied or Satisfied with internal communications within the Borough. Only 18% were Very Dissatisfied or Dissatisfied.
- Regarding the effectiveness of communications across service areas, most respondents felt that communications were somewhat effective (48%). There was a slight bias towards Not Effective, with 30% either Not So Effective or Not At All Effective compared to 23% Very Effective or Extremely Effective.
- Regarding the effectiveness of communications with partners and residents, most respondents felt that communications were somewhat effective (59%). There was a slight bias towards Not Effective, with 25% either Not So Effective or Not At All Effective compared to 15% Very Effective or Extremely Effective.

## Communications Preferences:

- The top 5 sources of information were: Borough Website (48%), Borough/Service Area Facebook (38%), Friends/Word of Mouth (37%), Email (24%). Note: Email was not the employee newsletter.
- Respondents were most interested in receiving information about: Assembly Meetings (69%), News from the Mayor's Office (66%), and Service Area News (60%).

## Communications Strengths/Weaknesses:

- When asked what the Borough is doing effectively to communicate internally, by far the most common answer was emails.
- When asked about challenges with internal communication, two common responses were: finding the right balance between brevity and depth, too many emails causing people to feel overwhelmed.
- When asked about how to make employees feel more connected, respondents had a large diversity of ideas but there were a couple of themes around: more Borough-wide face-to-face type activities/events, departments sharing highlights and current projects, make team members feel valued.
- Tools/procedures suggested by respondents included: supervisor training, newsletter/email, communications/PR person or department, office-wide wellness goals.
- Respondents identified that they could aid in internal communications in many ways, but some common responses were: actually reading current communications, repeating/passing along information, having timely and thorough enough responses to questions.

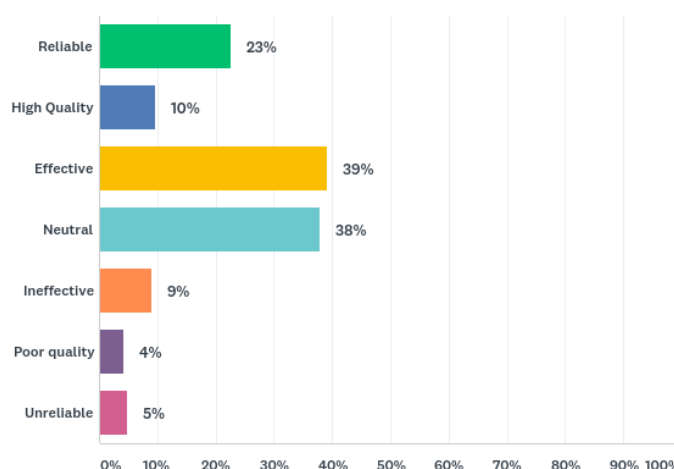
## EXTERNAL SURVEY RESULTS

A three-minute survey was used to establish a baseline and verify assumptions related to Brand Experience, Communication Efficacy and Communication Preferences for borough residents. The survey was launched over social media on Borough channels, a targeted social media campaign was developed to encourage responses from smaller communities, email was used to announce and promote the survey to partner organizations and governments, and the survey was conducted in person at the Native Youth Olympics, Peninsula Arctic Winter Games, and the Seward Chamber of Commerce.

*Note: Additional in-person surveying and public engagement was planned but had to be cancelled due to a social distancing mandate issued by the State in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

### Brand Experience

**Q1. Which of the following words best describe the Borough? Select all that apply.**



Respondents generally selected positive words when asked to describe the Borough. The three least selected responses were the three negative responses which were selected only 18% of the time (Ineffective 9%, Poor Quality 4%, Unreliable 5%).

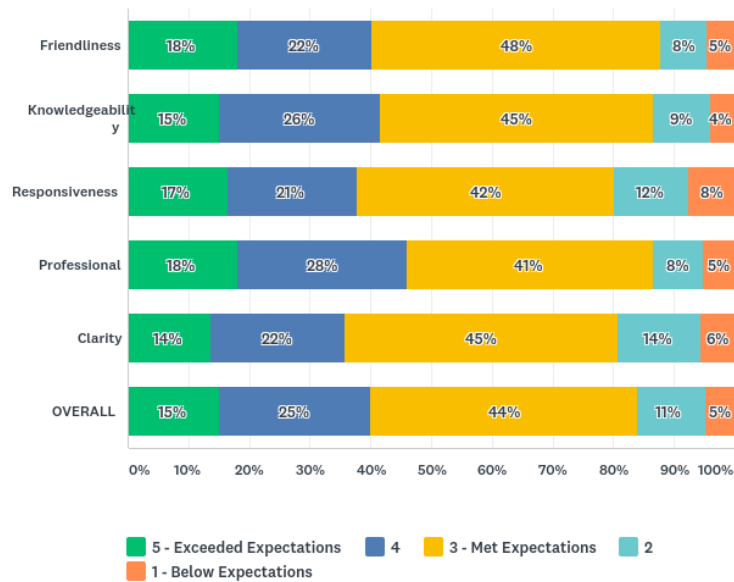
The comments related to this question indicated some confusion related to the structure of the Borough and a lack of a unified brand. Many comments that indicated confusion when asked to describe their opinions about the Borough as a whole and/or a desire to break their comments into the administration, the assembly and the various service areas.

Examples: *“courteous candid informative helpful but the org. structure is bulky and confusing” “complex” “what about the Borough is [this question] referring to? Crime, education, recreation?”*

The comments also indicated a feeling of bias towards the central peninsula. This is a theme we also heard in our interviews.

Example: *“Biased in favor of central peninsula”*

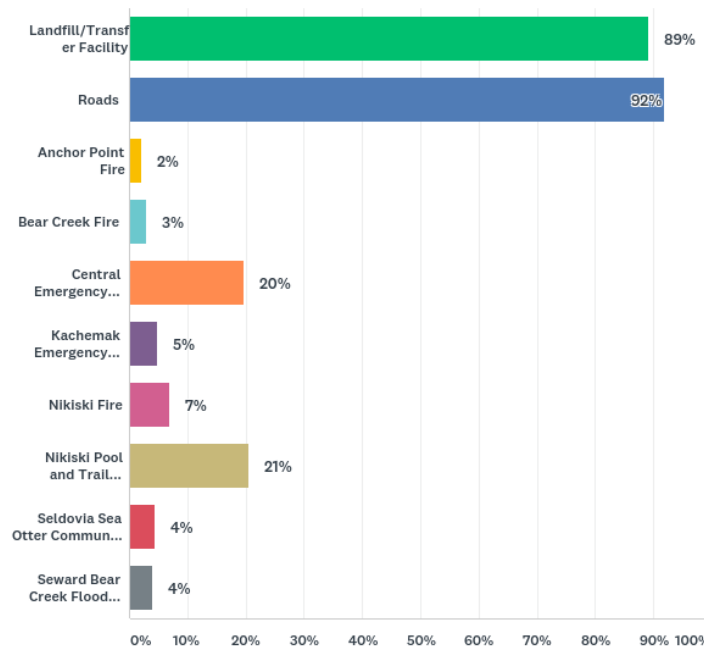
**Q2. Please rate your last experience with the Borough with regard to: friendliness, knowledgeability, professionalism, clarity and overall.**



The vast majority of individuals selected “Met Expectations” for all of the areas above (ranging from 40% to 47%).

- Friendliness: 88% met or exceeded expectations (indicated 3-5 on the scale which corresponds to met or exceeded expectations)
- Knowledgeability: 86% met or exceeded expectations
- Responsiveness: 80% met or exceeded expectations
- Professionalism: 86% met or exceeded expectations
- Clarity: 81% met or exceeded expectations
- Overall: 84% met or exceeded expectations

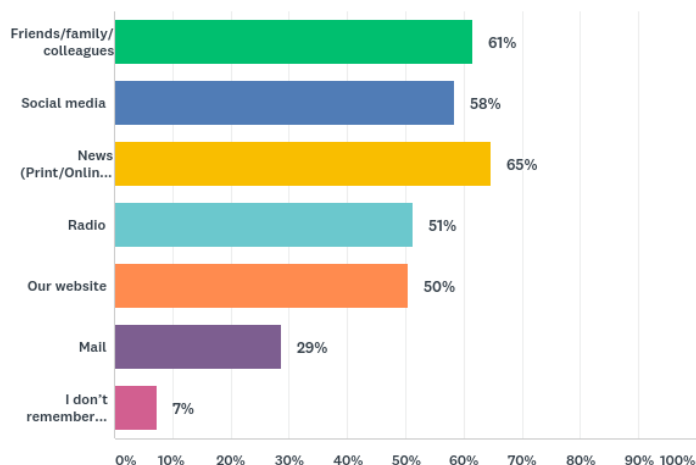
**Q3. Which of the following services have you used in the past year: landfill/transfer facilities, roads, Anchor Point fire, Bear Creek fire, CES, Kachemak emergency services, Nikiski fire, Nikiski pool & trails, Seldovia Sea Otter Community Center, Seward Bear Creek flood area.**



This question was included because it may allow us to see trends within respondents who use specific services and also served to as a way to initiate conversations about the Borough services while conducting the surveys in person at the Native Youth Olympics, Peninsula Arctic Winter Games and a Seward Chamber of Commerce meeting. During these conversations we talked with some individuals who were unaware of the scope of services that the Borough provided, however this was not a majority of survey respondents.

## Communication Efficacy

**Q4. Where have you seen or heard about the Borough? Friends/family/colleagues, Social media, News (print/online/tv), Radio, Borough website, Mail, Don't remember hearing about the Borough.**

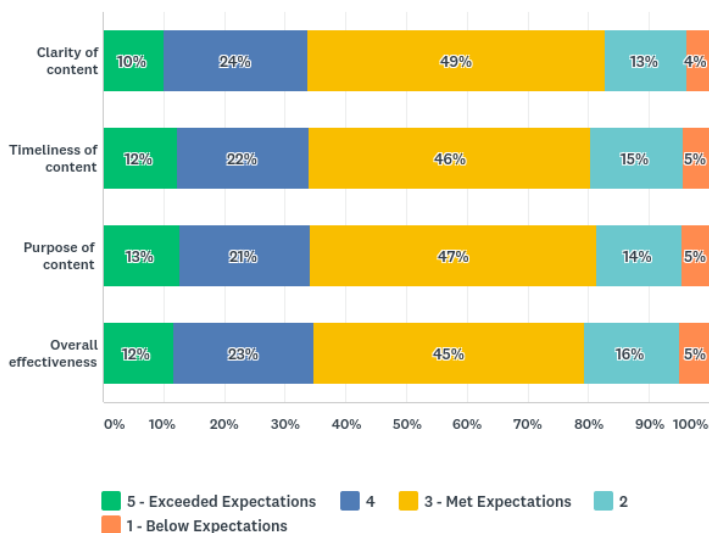


The top three places where respondents had heard about the Borough were: News (69%), Friends/Family Colleagues (61%) and Social Media (58%).

More than half of respondents identified Radio (51%) and the Borough Website (50%) as a place they had heard about the Borough.

In the comments a number of people specifically identified: Borough employees/interactions (19%), Meetings (13%) and Schools (10%). It is likely more respondents would have selected these if they had been options on the survey.

**Q5. Please rate the communications you have received from the Borough with regard to: clarity, timeliness, purpose, and overall effectiveness.**



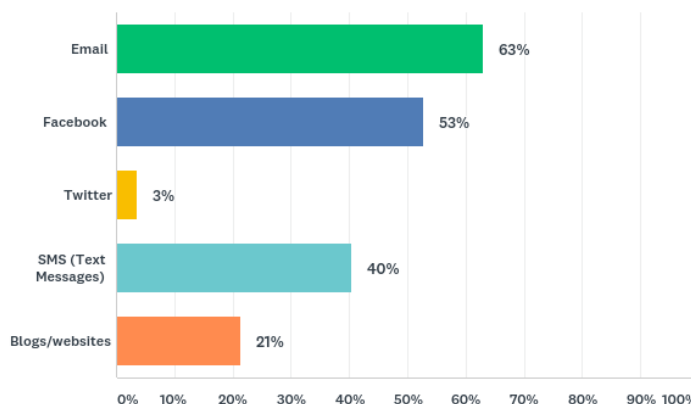
Much like question 2 the vast majority of respondents (between 45 and 49%) said that communications “Met Expectations” for all of the areas above.

It is also important to note that communications met or exceeded expectations for the vast majority of respondents in all of the areas we asked about.

- Clarity: 83% met or exceeded expectations
- Timeliness: 78% met or exceeded expectations
- Purpose: 81% met or exceeded expectations
- Overall effectiveness: 80% met or exceeded expectations

## Communications Preferences

### Q6. What is your preferred way to receive and share news?



Email (63%), Facebook (53%) and Text (40%) were the top three preferred sources of information. It is important to note that radio (19 times, 4%), mail (19 times, 4%) and news (18 times, 4%) came up frequently in the comments as preferred sources of information. The percentage of total respondents identifying these comments was only 4%, but it is likely that percentage would have been higher had they been an option in the survey question.

We also saw several comments that SMS is effective but that respondents would only want texts for emergencies and road closures.

## Demographics

### Q7. Age (number of respondents below)

- 18-24: 3, >1%
- 25-34: 37, 9%
- 35-44: 76, 18%
- 45-54: 77, 18%
- 55-64: 108, 26%
- 65+: 104, 25%
- No response/Prefer not to answer: 8, 2%

The age demographics of the respondents heavily skews towards the older age groups compared to the census data for the borough. In specific, 45-64 represented 44% of our respondents as opposed to 26% of the population (census) and 65+ represented 25% of survey respondents as opposed to 7% of the population. This bias is important to note as it likely had an impact particularly on Q4 and Q6 which deal with communications tools and preferences.

### Q8. Community

There were several census areas that did not have respondents. It is likely that residents in these areas identified the larger city they live near rather than their small census areas.

<b>Anchor Point</b>	3.12%	13
<b>Bear Creek</b>	1.20%	5
<b>Beluga</b>	0.00%	0
<b>Clam Gulch</b>	0.00%	0
<b>Cohoe</b>	0.48%	2
<b>Cooper Landing</b>	3.12%	13
<b>Crown Point</b>	0.00%	0
<b>Diamond Ridge</b>	1.68%	7
<b>Fox River</b>	0.48%	2
<b>Fritz Creek</b>	5.28%	22
<b>Funny River</b>	1.20%	5
<b>Halibut Cove</b>	0.00%	0
<b>Happy Valley</b>	0.00%	0
<b>Homer City</b>	10.31%	43
<b>Hope</b>	0.48%	2
<b>Kachemak City</b>	1.44%	6
<b>Kalifornsky</b>	6.71%	28
<b>Kasilof</b>	5.52%	23
<b>Kenai City</b>	13.91%	58
<b>Lowell Point</b>	0.48%	2
<b>Miller Landing</b>	0.00%	0
<b>Moose Pass</b>	0.24%	1
<b>Nanwalek</b>	0.00%	0
<b>Nikiski</b>	7.43%	31
<b>Nikolaevsk</b>	0.48%	2
<b>Ninilchik</b>	1.92%	8
<b>North Kenai</b>	0.48%	2
<b>Port Graham</b>	0.72%	3
<b>Primrose</b>	0.00%	0
<b>Ridgeway</b>	0.48%	2
<b>Salamatof</b>	0.00%	0
<b>Seldovia</b>	1.92%	8
<b>Seward City</b>	2.88%	12
<b>Soldotna City</b>	14.63%	61
<b>Sterling</b>	9.11%	38
<b>Sunrise</b>	0.00%	0
<b>Tyonek</b>	1.44%	6
<b>Rural Outlying</b>	2.88%	12
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>417</b>

# SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

We conducted 15 interviews with Borough Assembly members and the heads of service areas.

The interviews covered three areas:

1. How residents perceived the Borough
2. Internal communication
3. External communication (focus)

## Branding

### **Promotion:**

“The Borough needs to do a better job of ‘bragging’. Not always just posting about meetings, talk about all the good things we are doing.”

“Army Corp. partnership was possible because of Borough. The challenge is that people don’t see this connection, they just see it as an Army Corp. effort instead of seeing the Borough’s huge role.”

### **Clear source of information:**

“Information should come from one source and run the gamut of topics.”

“Do we have a PR person that is designated for this task? School district has that role (Peggy).”

“I hear more about the City of Homer than I do about the Borough. The City has a regular update that goes out to the community via the radio.”

## Internal Communication

### **Lack of clarity can cause confusion:**

“We need guidance on the long-term strategy, clear and defined, sometimes it’s hard to know what the Borough wants to do. Does the Borough have an agenda for a specific issue? A 10-year plan. Sometimes the Borough’s plan doesn’t fit with what is really going on over here. We need guidance on the long-term strategy, clear and defined.”

### **Borough staff are appreciated:**

“When people engage with the Borough employees, they have positive feedback.”

## External Communication

### **Improving public perception:**

“Communication through the entire thread of what the Borough does. Must tell a story – voters supported a bond package that did this or that specific thing. There is a disconnect for people about these kinds of stories.”

“A lighthearted way to understand everything that public employees do could help spread trust.”



**When residents demonstrate frustration with the Borough, it is usually because of a lack of understanding:**

“People don’t know we are a Borough entity. A few years ago there was an effort to make consistent use of Borough branding at the administrative level. The Borough brand (logo) was used on emails, faxes, etc. I don’t know if they dropped this, but it never made it to the service areas.”

**Public involvement:**

“I would be very interested in a public forum to allow people to gather and share ideas.”

“We could have a place for people to pre-record testimony at public libraries. People don’t always understand the meeting process. Finding ways to help people participate.”

“It is difficult for people to participate in Borough activities because of our geography. A drive to Soldotna can be as long as a drive to Anchorage for some people.”

**Soldotna-Focus:**

“The farther you are out of Soldotna, the less the Borough cares.”

“Mind-set is that ‘the Borough’ is Soldotna, Kenai, Sterling. We are kind of an afterthought.”

“Would like to see Seward town halls with the mayor. Seward residents don’t get the same face time as Soldotna residents. We only have assembly members here once a year.”

**Key partnerships with the Borough help build a good rapport:**

“The City Manager has built a solid working relationship with Borough employees.”

# MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

## Kenai Peninsula Borough Policy: Media Relations

**Purpose:** This policy establishes guidelines for all employees to provide consistent, accurate and timely information in a coordinated manner while keeping Borough officials informed of developing topics. For the purpose of this policy, “media resources” is defined as any form of media, i.e. newspaper, radio, television or internet applications that may be used to convey accurate information to the general public. The Borough is committed to its residents and visitors, ensuring that the exchange of mutual communication is a priority practice in daily interactions and through the use of media resources.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all employees who are responsible for conducting day-to-day, public information functions. For cohesiveness, the term “department” includes department or service area. The term “director” includes department or service area.

**Official Spokespersons:** The Borough’s official spokespersons are the Mayor, Chief of Staff, Lead Public Information Officer (PIO), Directors, Fire Chiefs or assigned designees. Official spokespersons will represent the Borough in news releases, news conferences, public meetings, special events and media interviews as appropriate. In all cases, an official spokesperson shall approve all information that is distributed to media resources.

**Department Spokesperson:** Directors may designate an employee(s) to serve as a “spokesperson” to handle day-to-day inquiries or news releases as necessary. The designated spokesperson(s) are encouraged to respond directly to media inquiries in a timely manner. The following should be practiced to ensure effective communication while keeping Borough officials informed:

- Each director shall make his/her staff aware of the identity and role of the department spokesperson;
- All responses should be limited to the department’s responsibilities and expertise. Staff may not speculate or speak on behalf of another department or other agency regarding subject matter that is not directly relevant. Staff should direct media inquiries to the spokesperson;
- The spokesperson should promptly notify his/her director, describing the media resource and subject discussed. All responses should be documented as determined by the director;
- The director is responsible for informing the mayor if media inquiries are significant, controversial or have potential to generate ongoing, public interest.

Some examples of day-to-day media relations may include but are not limited to distributing information to any media resource, conducting special events or public displays, scheduling trainings that may be visible to the general public, and providing education or prevention information.

**Personal Opinions:** Employees may not use the Borough’s official logos, stationery, websites or social media accounts to express personal opinions or speculation. Such actions may conflict with Borough policies, Code of Ordinances, state or federal laws. NOTE: all documents, including any form of electronic record or distribution, used to publish public information are public records and may be subject to disclosure.

**Records Requests:** Employees must direct all public records requests to the Clerk’s office to ensure compliance with the Borough Code of Ordinances Chapter 2.54 “Access to Public Records,” which cites reasonable and prompt public access to non-exempted or non-confidential public records except those records specifically exempted under Section 2.54.040.

**Annual Training Options:** Spokesperson or PIO training will be provided regularly. The Borough's Lead PIO will coordinate with instructors and distribute the training schedule.

\* \* \*

**Emergency Response:** During an areawide response, the Emergency Management Director may activate the Incident Management Team (IMT-III). At such times, all media inquiries or release of public information from any department or service area will be done through the IMT-III Lead Public Information Officer in a coordinated manner under the incident command structure.

The Lead PIO and PIO staff will adhere to the PIO responsibilities and duties as defined in the KPB Emergency Operations Plan, Section 5: "Incident Management Team" and Section 7: "Incident Communication" as well as in the KPB Emergency Operations Center Guide, Section 3: "Command Section - Information Officer." These documents may be found at <http://www.kpb.us/emergency-mgmt>.

Any employee that wishes to serve on the IMT-III PIO team must have the minimum qualification as listed on page 5, "Media Relations: Public Information Officer - Qualified Training Courses."

For Fire/EMS service areas, the fire chief may activate a department PIO during a service area response. The appointed PIO will adhere to the incident command system and the "Media Relations: Fire & EMS Public Information Officer Protocol" (pg 3-4).

## Media Relations: KPB Fire & EMS Public Information Officer Protocol

**Purpose:** To keep the public informed in a coordinated manner while keeping Borough officials informed of an escalating response. This policy defines the manner in which a Fire/EMS PIO will interact with media resources during emergency response. For the purpose of this policy, “media resources” is defined as any form of media, i.e. newspaper, radio, television or internet applications that may be used to convey accurate information to the general public.

**Protocol:** The Public Information Office (PIO) will be requested under the incident command system. To prevent the release of incomplete, conflicting or restricted information, the PIO will function as cited in the KPB Emergency Operations Plan, Section 7: "Incident Communication" as well as in the KPB Emergency Operations Center Guide, Section 3: "Command Section - Information Officer." Any employee acting in the PIO role during emergency response shall have the *minimum* training qualifications (pg 5).

The Fire Chief or on-scene Incident Commander (IC) shall serve as the PIO only when such duties will not interfere with the safe operations of the incident. It will be the responsibility of the Fire Chief to contact the Mayor, Chief of Staff or Emergency Management Director of any escalating incident that requires notification.

For major or non-routine incidents that may bring close media scrutiny, the IC will determine the need for an assigned PIO and designate a qualified staff member. The PIO will handle the dissemination of information in coordination with the Fire Chief or IC to ensure that on-scene media and after-action responses are effectively addressed. NOTE: The IC should identify an appropriate spokesperson without sacrificing the staff from his/her duties. Examples of major or non-routine incidents include two-alarm or greater fires, technical rescues, hazardous material response, fatalities or serious injuries.

All personnel should be notified that incident-related information will be released through the PIO.

Occasionally, personnel may be approached by the media. Personnel should limit responses to his/her expertise and direct media inquiries to the PIO for additional interaction. Personnel should notify the PIO if they have been interviewed or approached by a news reporter. NOTE: No member of the Fire/EMS SA shall jeopardize tactical operations in order to accommodate a news reporter!

*(It is recommended that media relations training be provided to all personnel as directed by the Fire Chief. Contact the Borough's Lead PIO for the "Basic PIO" training calendar.)*

**Multi-Agency Operations:** When an incident involves multiple-agency response, the agency having primary jurisdiction will be responsible for the coordination and release of all public information. This includes:

- All inquiries shall be referred to the lead agency, i.e. Alaska State Troopers, Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Alaska Division of Forestry, non-government agencies, etc.;
- For all area-wide incidents involving the IMT-III team, the Lead PIO will coordinate with other agencies' PIOs on the release of information;
- The service area will only release information specifically related to its operations.

**Media on the Scene:** The IC or the designated PIO will be responsible for coordinating activities of the news reporters at incidents.

- News reporters will be free to work outside the perimeter of an incident provided there is no personal risk.

- When practical, the IC shall establish a media Staging Area, and PIO will direct news reporters to this location to ensure their safety.
- Reporters shall only enter an incident area when accompanied by the PIO or assigned designee and possesses acceptable personal protective equipment (PPE) for the incident, ie: hard hat, wildland PPE, etc.
- News reporters may conduct interviews with victims provided that the questioning does not interfere with the victim's need for medical attention, investigative personnel have completed their interviews and that the victim consents to the interview.
- Tours within an incident area may be conducted after the following conditions have been met:
  - a. The IC has authorized the tour;
  - b. Fire line tape, police officer or other security measures have been deployed to secure the established perimeter;
  - c. Ensure that no one is in an area that will interfere with operations or the investigation;
  - d. News reporters are supervised while in the area;
  - e. Regarding private property, the property owner agrees to a tour only after SA operations have been completed.

**Post-Response:** The designated PIO will resume regular duties when the Fire Chief or IC releases the staff from incident.

**Non-Emergency Public Information:** Reference KPB Media Relations Policy (pg 1-2).

## Media Relations: Public Information Officer - Qualified Training Courses

1. Minimum course qualifications for Media Liaison tasks and basic media interaction:

FEMA G290 Basic Public Information Officer Training

*or*

NWCG S203 National Wildfire Coordinating Group: Introduction to Incident Information

2. Minimum course qualifications for Service Area PIOs responding under the incident command system.

The courses as listed above, including the following:

FEMA IS-100a Introduction to the Incident Command System

FEMA IS-100a ICS for Single Resources and Initial Actions Incidents

FEMA IS-700a National Incident Management System (NIMS)

FEMA IS-800b National Response Framework

and

FEMA E388 Advanced Public Information Officer

*or*

National Wildfire Coordinating Group Position Specific Task Book Satisfactory performance as PIOF

3. Minimum course qualifications for PIO Section Lead, which supports the Borough Mayor or Emergency Management Director directives. The courses as listed above, including the following:

FEMA IS-300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents

FEMA IS-400 Advanced Incident Command System

and

FEMA L952 NIMS ICS All-Hazards Public Information Officer

*or*

NWCG S403 National Wildfire Coordinating Group: Information Officer

*or*

National Wildfire Coordinating Group Position Specific Task Book Satisfactory performance as PIO2

**NOTE:** A Borough employee with an accredited AA or BA degree in Communications, Marketing, Media Relations or Public Affairs equivalent is certainly an asset to the Borough; however, the Public Information Officers assigned to emergency response requires the above-listed qualifications to effectively adhere to protocols that meet the qualifications of a PIO as required in NIMS or NWCG.

## COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS AND TEMPLATES

<b>Communications Checklist</b>	
	<b>PURPOSE</b> Is the goal of your message clear? Be clear about the intent of your communication
	<b>FEEL</b> Are you clearly communicating the necessity and reasons?
	<b>ACTION</b> What do you want people to do as a result of your communications?
	<b>WHO</b> Define the target group. Who is, and who is not a part of that group?
	<b>MOTIVATION</b> Per target group: What are the barriers or motivators (pre-disposition) towards the desired action? Messaging should address these barriers or motivators.
	<b>SENDER</b> Per target group: Which spokespeople are the best messengers?
	<b>CHANNEL</b> Per target group: Which communication channel will be most effective?
	<b>FREQUENCY</b> Per target group: How urgent is issue? Do not over or under communicate.
	<b>FEEDBACK</b> Is a response desirable? If so, make sure you have prepared for this.
	<b>MEASURE SUCCESS</b> What went right? What went wrong?

## Communication Scheduling Matrix

Stakeholders	Frequency				Communication Type				Complete
	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Once	Email	In-Person	Facebook	Print	
Example Group	X	X	X		X	X		X	date



## Communication Tools Matrix

Tool	Description	Dev Time	Cost	Effort	Impact	KPB Entity
Website Update		3-5 days	Low	Low	Low	IT/PR
Stakeholder Email		3-5 days	Low	Moderate	Moderate	IT/PR
Press Release		3-5 days	Low	Moderate	Varies	PR
KPB Alerts		7-10 days	Moderate	Moderate	High	PIO
Facebook Posts		1-2 days	Low	Low	Moderate	PR/PIO
Direct mail letter		7-10 days	High	Moderate	High	PR
Direct mail postcard		7-10 days	Moderate	Moderate	High	PR
Posters		7-10 days	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	PR
Focus Groups		10-15 days	Low	Moderate	Moderate	PR
Interviews		5-7 days	Low	Moderate	Moderate	n/a
Open House		15-20 days	Moderate	High	High	PR
Town hall		7-10 days	Moderate	High	High	PR
Virtual Town Hall		7-10 days	Low	High	High	IT/PR