



Communications

Some municipal governments may choose to communicate their cost-sharing agreement to the public.

This tool provides the following:

- [Elements of a Communications Strategy](#)
a “template” that can be used to build a strategy to communicate your cost-sharing initiative.
- [Components of a Media Release](#)
a “template” that could be used to build a Media Release about the initiation of the cost-sharing agreement. The Media Release could be one of the communications materials that make up the Communications Strategy. **Sample Media Release** – an example of a Media Release about an inter-municipal cost-sharing agreement for a recreation complex.

Elements of a Communications Strategy

Issue

This section describes what is at stake in the community, or what is driving the cost-sharing agreement and reasons for communicating it to the public.

Communications Challenges

This section describes why the issue could be difficult to communicate to the public, but those difficulties should also re-enforce the reasons for communicating the initiative to the public.

Communications Opportunities

This section describes important opportunities or linkages that the initiative exhibits. Is the initiative unique and historic? Have community organizations/residents been calling for this type of initiative? Do other orders of government look to the initiating communities as leaders in cost-sharing efforts?

Communications Objectives

This section lays out what the municipal governments hope to achieve by communicating the initiative to the public.

Target Audiences

This section identifies who you hope will see the communications efforts, and want to learn more about them. In the case of cost-sharing agreements, the most likely audiences would be:

- **Residents** - to promote the project, and increase understanding as to the value of the project
- **Other municipal governments and municipal associations** - to demonstrate leadership provincially (and perhaps nationally or internationally depending on the nature of the agreement and efforts attached to the agreement)
- **Government of Alberta and Government of Canada** - to demonstrate leadership and the credibility, accountability and innovative/flexible nature of municipal governments.

Communications Tactics

Strategic considerations

This section describes both internal and external factors (e.g.: timelines of similar projects, how to align with the success or failure of other projects) that could impede or push forward communications about your initiative.

Strategy

The column headings in Table 1 could be used for preparing the communications strategy. Below the headings you will find examples of activities/events that form the communications strategy and communications materials associated with the sample activities/events.

Table 1: Components of a Communications Strategy

Time Period	Activity/ Event	Task/ Deliverable	Person Responsible	Anticipated Outcome
April/May	Media report following Joint Council meeting of Town B and the County of R	Press Release on Cost-Sharing Initiative	County of R's Manager and Town of B's Manager (or Communications Officers if someone fills that position)	Public interest in the initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Increased public understanding of the reasons (cost-savings) for entering the agreement · Increased public awareness of the leadership role taken on by the municipal governments in initiating the agreement
June/July	Community Festival	Speech by the County Reeve and the Town Mayor, including the innovative elements of the agreement	Administration to prepare the speeches, Chief Elected Officers to review, refine and deliver the speeches	As above

Media Release Components and Sample

Components of a Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Title – something that will catch the attention of the media editor

Dateline (Place, Date) – Introduction to the topic – provide the 5 “W”s in the introduction.

Second Paragraph – a few more details, but it is recommended that the paragraph contains no more than 3 sentences.

Final Paragraph – again, 2-3 sentences, including a quotation from leaders of the initiative.

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(News and Media Releases always ends with - 30 -)

Contact Information

As per the Municipality’s communications protocols. The contact person could be administration, or the chief elected official. The most important part of this section is the contact telephone number.

Sample Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

County and Town to Share Costs and Increase Benefits for All

TOWN OF M, June 12, 200? – The County of R was host to an historic meeting last night with the Town of B. The meeting put the wheels in motion for a cost-sharing agreement on a state-of-the art recreation complex that will benefit residents of the region, and will provide a venue for provincial and national sports competitions. Several different sites were considered by both Councils, and residents gave their input on the site location last winter.

The region is proud to have produced the talents of Olympic marathon runner: U----- R-----, and will build on the recognition she has brought to the community. The recreation complex is key to achieving the 10-year regional vision that looks to branding the region as an Olympics training ground and attracting athletic talent to the area.

“This cost-sharing agreement is unique in the Province for its scope and linkages to our regional strategic plan,” says Reeve K. Mayor T adds: “we have been planning the recreation complex for over a year, and we are now ready to put our plans into action for a healthier region”.

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For more information, contact:

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Reeve K
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