



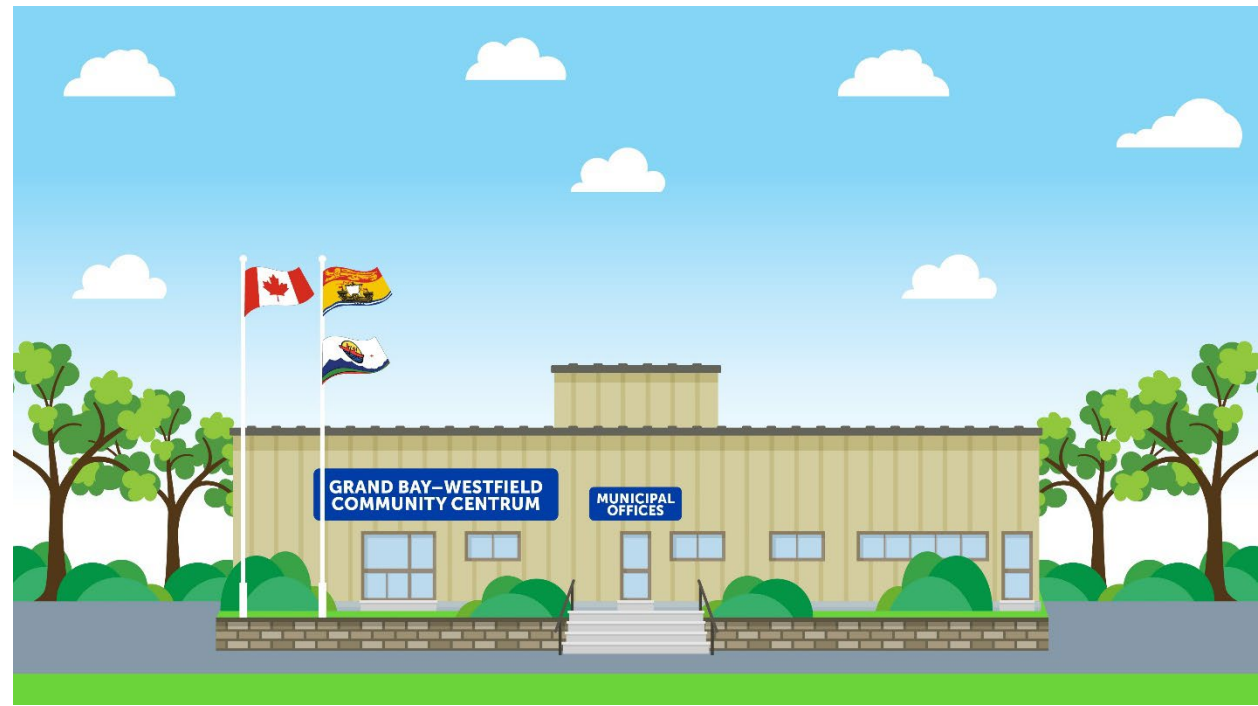
**Grand Bay-Westfield**  
NEIGHBOURS BY NATURE

# Communications Plan 2024-2026



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# INTRODUCTION



Recognizing the importance of transparency, the Town of Grand Bay-Westfield hired its first Communications Manager in February 2022.

This document represents the Town's first official Communications Plan. Its purpose is to establish a foundation of a more informed and engaged community, stakeholders, Council, and staff – with proactive and responsive communication that is transparent by being intentionally open and honest. This Plan aligns directly with the Town's Strategic Plan.

Effective, thoughtful communications play a crucial role in each of these priorities succeeding – whether by building a relationship with the community surrounding different initiatives, or by launching campaigns that specifically contribute to them.

Each of these priorities will be supported by transparent, open, and proactive communications.

## Transparency

The purpose of this Plan is to establish a foundation of a more informed and engaged community, stakeholders, Council, and staff – with proactive and responsive communication that is transparent by being intentionally open and honest.

VISION	
A welcoming place for all to live, grow and thrive	
10-YEAR OUTCOMES	
Growing the population: 1K Increasing new assessment: \$200M	
PRIORITIES	MANDATE
Smart Growth Organizational Capacity Infrastructure and Climate Adaptation Community Vitality	Facilitating a welcoming and thriving community by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encouraging new assessment growth;</li><li>• Enhancing organizational capacity;</li><li>• Establishing proactive infrastructure resiliency;</li><li>• Furthering climate change adaptation; and</li><li>• Increasing community vitality.</li></ul>
VALUES	
Understanding Teamwork Honesty Trust <b>RESILIENCY</b> Openness Courage Justice Inclusion Transparency	

# COMMUNICATIONS OVERVIEW

## PURPOSE

- Fostering an engaged and informed community, Council, staff, and stakeholders
- Strengthening community partnerships
- Supporting Strategic Plan deliverables
- Increasing a positive sense of community pride
- Building a relationship between residents and the municipality

## FUNCTIONS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• External communications</li><li>• Website and social media</li><li>• Internal communications</li><li>• Council support</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community engagement</li><li>• Media relations</li><li>• Issues management</li><li>• Branding and marketing</li></ul> |
|--|---|

## AUDIENCES

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Residents</li><li>• Council</li><li>• Staff</li><li>• Businesses</li><li>• Community groups</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diverse communities</li><li>• Developers and potential investors</li><li>• Media (web and radio)</li></ul> |
|---|--|



# GOALS

## TRANSPARENCY

- Increase formalized, strategic citizen engagement.
- Develop and execute a public-facing communications engagement process, to learn how to better communicate with residents.

## STRATEGY & SUSTAINABILITY

- Continue website enhancements, ensuring a user-friendly and efficient experience for the Town and residents alike.
- Continue review of branding, including signage, to ensure consistency.
- Implement this new Communications Plan, ensuring it is used as a framework by which Town communications strategies are developed moving forward.
- Provide or secure communications training of relevance for Council and Administration, including but not necessarily limited to media relations and crisis communications.
- Identify options to efficiently track customer service requests, creating a streamlined and consistent process to ensure that requests are addressed in a timely and effective manner.





















## CHALLENGES

- Capacity constraints: Department with only one staff member.
- Budget constraints impact the ability to achieve enhanced communications.
- Effectively reaching target audiences.
- Limited media coverage.

# COMMUNICATIONS METHODS



	COMMUNINCATIONS METHODS					
NEWS	 <a href="http://www.grandbaywestfield.ca">www.grandbaywestfield.ca</a>					
EVENTS	 <a href="http://www.grandbaywestfield.ca">www.grandbaywestfield.ca</a>					
EMERGENCY MESSAGING	 <a href="http://www.grandbaywestfield.ca">www.grandbaywestfield.ca</a>					
VIDEO BROADCASTING						

# CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

## ISSUES MANAGEMENT

The first layer of crisis communications typically comes in the form of issues management. This includes a situation that has arisen and from which there is the potential for escalation into a larger emergent situation. However, there is no need to execute widespread crisis communications at this time. There's a problem that requires a strategic but light-handed approach, with planning for communications in the event that escalation occurs. For example, a storm warning is in effect.

## RISK COMMUNICATIONS

Escalation of an event has occurred, rising the level of communications required from issues management to risk communications. This requires a higher level of communications output, though still not to the extent of a full crisis. This often requires preparatory communications, in case the situation continues to worsen. For example, the storm is significant, and there are elements present that could further escalate weather to the level of hurricane.

## CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

The elements that feed a crisis (the "risk" phase) have come together, and you are now in crisis. For example, a hurricane is anticipated or approaching, and a shelter-in-place or evacuation order is required. This flow of issue-risk-crisis is a typical path for a developing crisis, though not all crises progress in the same manner. There are times at which an unanticipated event results in the issues and/or risk phases being skipped, though this is not particularly common.

## WHAT IS A CRISIS?

A crisis may be anything from a cyber-attack, or a hazardous materials incident, to a natural disaster.

Not all emergent situations are deemed crises, but any incident that requires public communications requires an appropriate level of communications.



# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

## HOW WILL THE TOWN HANDLE A CRISIS?

The Town of Grand Bay-Westfield is in the process of developing a Crisis Communications Plan outlining steps and strategic messaging required for a crisis from beginning to end.

Once implemented, relevant staff members and Council will be trained in crisis communications, to ensure that the Plan can be effectively implemented should an emergent situation take place.

## WHO IS INVOLVED IN CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS?

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Communications Manager and Senior Leadership Members will be involved in crisis communications. Mayor, Council, and additional staff may be involved with varying degrees of responsibility, as determined by the CAO.

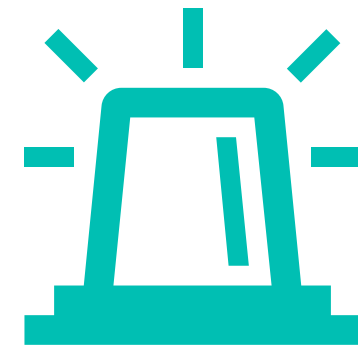
Depending on the nature of the emergent situation in question, it is possible that the Town work collaboratively with partner organizations, who may have their own spokespersons or representatives that will be involved in a communications capacity. This may include organizations such as the fire department, police, and municipal partners, amongst others.

## TOWN'S EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

If there is a local or regional disaster, know that you are not alone. Our Emergency Management Organization (EMO) is responsible for emergency planning in the Town of Grand Bay-Westfield. The EMO deals with preparedness, damage mitigation, response, and recovery in the case of a major disaster. The EMO also promotes emergency preparedness for all residents, organizations, and businesses.



# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



# HERE TO HELP

## THE TOWN IS ALWAYS HERE TO HELP

For any comments, questions or concerns related to Town matters, facilities, or services, we encourage the community to contact the Town Office directly. The Town also encourages residents to stay informed on Town news, information and events through our official platforms which are the Town's website at [www.grandbaywestfield.ca](http://www.grandbaywestfield.ca) and/or Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly known as Twitter).

Town Council and Planning Advisory Committee meetings can be viewed on the Town's YouTube channel.

Residents are also reminded to register to receive alerts in the event of emergencies, by visiting the homepage of the Town's website.



## Town of Grand Bay-Westfield Contact Information

 (506) 738-6400     (506) 738-6400

 [administration@towngbw.ca](mailto:administration@towngbw.ca)

 609 River Valley Drive

 Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (excluding holidays)

 [www.grandbaywestfield.ca](http://www.grandbaywestfield.ca)