

City of Burien Strategic Communications Plan

2019–2023



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The City of Burien Strategic Communications Plan 2019-2023 aims to capture in one place current communications and community engagement activities and set a path for future growth and improvement in the communications and engagement function at the City of Burien.

SECTION 1: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Background

Burien is a young city built from homesteads around Lake Burien and a summer waterfront community on the Puget Sound. With six miles of shoreline and expansive mountain views, residents take pride in their neighborhoods, actively preserve the environment, and support protection of public spaces.

Burien is a [diverse community](#). Individuals who identify as Latino/Hispanic make up Burien’s largest ethnic group at nearly a quarter of the total population. Another 10 percent identify as Asian, and according to the Highline School District, more than 50 different languages are spoken in the homes of Burien area students.

The Puget Sound Regional Council designated Burien as one of the 25 Regional Growth Centers that will experience focused urban growth in the decades ahead. Burien is responding by continuing to rebuild and reinvent itself.

Burien’s downtown serves a large segment of the South King County population. Burien is noted for boutique retail and a large number of restaurants. Olde Burien, the historic town center, is bustling with new boutiques, businesses and restaurants serving thousands of residents of the greater Highline area.

Burien has been the birthplace of several iconic Puget Sound businesses. More businesses are opening second or third locations in Burien, as hundreds of new residents move to the city each year.

Our community supports a thriving maker culture—from chocolates to “Aussie” pies. Products made in Burien are being enjoyed throughout the Seattle region, and the world.

Burien is also known for its thriving health care community. Burien has a large number of health care providers, including hospitals, health centers, clinics, private practice doctors, dentists, and various wellness and alternative care specialists. The city also enjoys several health clubs, yoga and martial arts studios, swimming pools, and other recreational facilities that help residents stay healthy and fit.

CHI Franciscan and Kaiser Permanente recently opened new facilities in Burien, and there are plans to enhance Highline Medical Center. Puget Sound Skills Center opened in 2017 a state-of-the-art health sciences building to support the education of the next generation of health care professionals.

Burien’s inviting downtown features one of the oldest and best-attended Independence Day parades in the region. Both residents and visitors enjoy a Farmers Market, monthly art walks, professional local theater, and seasonal festivals generating year-round activity and excitement.

The community is also embracing new approaches and technology in education, health care, development, and recreation. The City of Burien Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department remodeled its Community Center in 2009 for children, teenagers, and adults to enjoy, as well as growing its cultural arts programs. The Moshier Art Center draws artists from throughout the region, and offers affordable classes in ceramics. The Burien community supports several privately funded arts groups, including an orchestra, dance groups, art galleries, and the 800-seat Highline Performing Arts Center.

The Highline School District, based in Burien, enjoys strong public support and has rebuilt several new schools over the past decade. Educators are proud of the Microsoft certification class, a marine technology lab and

the Puget Sound Skills Center, which includes a new Health Sciences building. Nearby Highline Community College offers a wide variety of educational and technical programs.

The City of Burien has a Council-Manager form of government. The seven members of the City Council are elected to serve four-year terms. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are elected by the Council for a two-year term. The City provides a range of services to its residents with departments including the City Manager's office, City Clerk, City Attorney, Community Development, Finance, Administration Services, Public Works, and Economic Development. The City contracts with the King County Sheriff's Office for police services and fire services are provided by Fire District 2 and North Highline Fire District. Water, sewer, and power are provided by outside public and private entities. Communications from these separate agencies are handled by the respective organizations.

Telling the Burien Story

Burien has a great story to tell, and the word is getting out! From coverage in national outlets such as the New York Times as well as local papers, Burien's foodie paradise and small-town charm are recognized in the region, in part due to the efforts of the City's communications and economic development staff. Despite this, the City still is challenged to consistently and clearly communicate with residents and stakeholders.

There is growing pressure from the community for the City to more consistently and adequately inform residents about issues, programs, and initiatives that will have a direct impact on them or their neighborhoods and to regularly engage individuals in open and meaningful dialogue. This is particularly true when it comes to communities of color, low-income residents, and other historically marginalized populations. And while efforts have been made to create accessible communications and engagement opportunities for limited English speakers and people with disabilities, there is still more work to do.

In 2015, the City hired a full-time Communications Officer to improve external communications. While the addition of this position was an important start, the City still found that it was not effectively communicating with all target audiences.

In 2016, the City Council approved a new brand, which it adopted in 2017. The new brand provides an important foundation to build on, but it does not address some of the gaps in the City's current communications and engagement practices.

The current Communications Officer built on the branding effort to establish internal structures and protocols to better align internal communications efforts. This strategic communications plan pulls those efforts together into a cohesive vision for the City's communications efforts.

Current Resources

The City already maintains a large number of communications channels, including a recently re-designed website, established presences on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn, a print magazine mailed to all households, and access to professional graphic design and photographer resources. There is also a growing toolkit of resources available for public outreach and community engagement. See appendix 1 *Portfolio of Communications Channels* to see the current state of City communications.

STAFFING

The City manages a large volume of work with limited staff resources. Compared to neighboring cities of the same size the City's communications and community engagement is understaffed.

Staff Level Comparisons

City	Population Served	Communications and Community Engagement Staff	Total FTE
Burien	51,908	1 FTE Communications Officer .6 FTE Communications Intern (limited term) .4 FTE Recreation Coordinator (parks marketing and communications)	2
Shoreline	55,174	1 FTE Communications Manager 1 FTE Communications Specialist .15% of Intergovernmental Relations Program Manager (dedicated to Communication) .5 FTE Community Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator (community engagement) 1 FTE Neighborhoods Coordinator (community engagement)	3
Sammamish	51,229	1 FTE Communications Manager/Public Information Officer (asking for another full time staff person in this budget cycle)	1
Lakewood	59,610	1 FTE Communications Manager Other departments do community outreach – Parks handle events, for example.	1
Bothell	45,260	1 FTE Public Information Officer (currently not staffed)	1
Des Moines	31,140	1 FTE City Clerk/Communications Director	1
Edmonds	41,820	.5 contract communications, reports to Economic Development Director	.5
Puyallup	41,100	1 FTE Public Affairs Officer	1
Redmond	64,050	1 FTE Communications and Marketing Manager 1 FTE Communications and Marketing Specialist 1 FTE Communications Marketing Project Admin 1 FTE Graphics Designer 1 FTE Digital Designer	5
Olympia	49,218	1 FTE Strategic Communications Director 1 FTE Program Specialist – Web + Social Media	5

		2 FTE Program Specialists - handle different department needs – general communications 1 FTE – Neighborhood Coordinator – block parties, etc. Contact for neighborhood associations.	
Tukwila	19,920	1 FTE Community Engagement Manager 1 FTE Digital Communications Specialist 1 FTE Graphic Design & Publications 1 FTE Deputy City Administrator	4
SeaTac	28,126	1 FTE Communications & Government Relations Manager 1 FTE Graphic Designer .5 FTE Admin	2.5

A Look Ahead

This document is strategic communications plan to guide the City of Burien and the City’s Communications Division. This plan was developed by the Communications Division in coordination with the City’s internal Communications Committee, City Manager, Leadership Team, and City Council.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to City of Burien staff on the communications, outreach, and public engagement strategy for the next few years. It describes the City's approach and objectives for communications, the current situation, key messages, tools and tactics, and measures for assessing outcomes.

Successful implementation of this plan will depend, in large part, on whether the City dedicates adequate resources and support to external communications.

SECTION 2: GOALS

This plan supports the goals and priorities set in the Council’s strategic plan adopted in 2016. Communications and community engagement support many of the strategic plan goals. Specifically, they are called out in the following areas of the Strategic Plan:

Safe Community:

- 1c. Increase community engagement, including crime prevention strategies.

Dynamic Community:

- 3c. Attract new business investment through communications, outreach, and targeted use of incentives.
- 3c. Improve Burien’s community image with a refreshed brand and a marketing campaign.*
- 3e. Establish new ways to better engage diverse communities in civic conversations and activities.*

- 3h. Foster community development and community leaders, both locally and regionally in South County.

The top priority for our communications and community engagement efforts will be to enhance communications with the residents and businesses in the city and region by proactively identifying emerging issues; improving long-range communication strategies; and communicating more effectively the identified key issues, policy decisions made, and actions taken by the City Council. Our intent is to increase awareness of the policies and programs of the City and generating enhanced engagement of constituents in the governing process.

Communications, transparency, and community engagement are basic obligations of government, and an essential component of the democratic process. When the community feels informed and part of a shared vision, community pride and satisfaction increase and participation in policymaking increases. Investing in communications and community engagement is a good use of the City’s resources and a duty that we have to our constituents.

Broadly, this plan lays out strategies so we can:

- Improve the **quality** of our communications with key audiences.
- Enhance **transparency** by effectively and consistently inform the diverse communities of Burien about issues, programs and initiatives that affect them, their families, their neighborhoods, or their businesses.
- Build **trust** between the City and the community.
- Build a shared community vision and enhance community **pride** for our city.
- Build community ownership of City priorities and initiatives, and City ownership of community priorities.
- Advance economic and social equity within the City through **access**, community **engagement**, and leadership development.
- Reach audiences outside the region with messages that attract visitors, talent, investment, partnerships, and business.

SECTION 3: RESEARCH

Communications Portfolio

The Communications team documented the City’s current communications practices, processes, and key performance indicators (metrics) in the Portfolio of Communications Channels. See Appendix 1.

Research Findings

The City has engaged in a number of strategic planning and visioning exercises, as well as a regular community opinion survey. Instead of engaging in a new surveying effort, City staff analyzed existing surveys and plans to glean insight on what residents are looking for in terms of communications from the City.

We analyzed the following past surveys and outreach efforts to discover key findings related to the City’s communications efforts. Common themes include: better transparency around city and council decisions, more consistent and timely communications, better connections to diverse communities, especially those who speak limited English, and being more active on social media.

BURIEN BRANDING PROJECT

In 2015, the City initiated a branding project to establish a new brand platform of the City (see page 10). The foundation of this platform was based on research conducted by Jay Ray PR & Ads. The branding project was

intended to help the City differentiate Burien from competitor cities, communicate our vision and values, retain existing and recruit new businesses, drive sales and other tax revenue, guide strategic marketing efforts, and build awareness and community pride.

In 2016, they conducted focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and a survey. The branding research showed that there is rich potential in sharing stories of our community's assets, including: restaurants, arts and events, diversity, Olde Burien and downtown, access to waterfront, central location and ease of access, and affordability of Burien as a place to live and do business. The brand audit recommended streamlining of social media channels, overhauling the City website, providing clearer audience identification and calls to action in the Burien Magazine, and redesigning the Recreation Guide. Work is in progress for all four of these areas.

COMMUNITY SURVEYS

Every two years since 2008, the City of Burien has conducted a survey to assess residents' perceptions about the general quality of life in the City and their satisfaction with City government services. The survey is a longitudinal study that enables us to compare the results over time.

In the most recent survey, residents felt the City should:

- Increase presence on social media
- Improve transparency about City decisions and processes (e.g. budget)
- Provide more communications in different formats

59 percent of the survey respondents stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the City's communications efforts. The top sources of information for residents about Burien were: B-Town Blog, Burien Magazine, and local social media.

OUTREACH

Through various public engagement efforts, such as the selection of a new police chief, the City has been able to gather information from residents about how they would like to receive communications, better ways to engage their communities, and current barriers for engagement.

Language access is a common theme in terms of barriers that have been identified. Residents have expressed that information is not written in language they understand pointing to a need for more plain language work by the City. Other barriers to participation in public meetings include logistical barriers such as lack of childcare, ADA concerns, and time and location of meetings.

WEBSITE USABILITY TESTING

Six months after the launch of a newly redesigned website, the City hired a firm to test the usability of the website and to discover ways to improve the website. A website improvement plan was launched as a result of this report. The plan will be completed by the end of 2019.

SECTION 4: STRATEGIES & OBJECTIVES

Based on the analysis of research, the City recommends the following strategies be followed to achieve communications goals.

Strategies

STRUCTURE AND PROTOCOLS

- Establish a communications staffing structure that enables the City to strategically and effectively inform and engage a diverse population and tell its story to a broad audience inside and outside the region.
- Institutionalize protocols that facilitate proactive, consistent, coordinated, and engaging communications. See Staff Communications Guidelines (see Appendix 2).
- Institutionalize and maintain brand standards.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- Deliver clear, relevant, and timely information to diverse audiences including residents, neighborhoods, community groups, businesses, and partner organizations.
- Listen. Continue to engage diverse voices, including residents, neighborhoods, community groups, and the business community in meaningful and appropriate ways.
- Deepen relationships with Highline Schools District, King County Library System, Highline College, and other public agencies that serve Burien.
- Deepen relationships with organizations representing historically marginalized communities within Burien.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

- Establish and institutionalize protocols for delivering accessible and equity-driven community outreach.
- Establish and maintain relationships with community leaders and support the development of civic engagement among new community leaders.
- Leverage community partnerships to establish a civic engagement program.
- Leverage existing programs, such as the Neighborhood Grant program and the Arts & Culture grant, to establish neighborhood partnerships and creative community involvement.

MEDIA RELATIONS

- Institutionalize protocols outlined in the Staff Communications Guidelines to effectively communicate with media outlets in proactive and responsive situations.
- Identify a diverse group of City representatives who are knowledgeable and authorized to speak to the media about subjects of interest to the media.
- Establish or strengthen relationships between local media, including minority-owned and focused media outlets, and key City leaders.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Build and maintain a digital presence that reaches target audiences and engages residents, neighborhoods, community groups, businesses and partner organizations in a positive and responsive way.
- Build a digital presence that supports information (e.g. updates on policymaking), marketing (e.g. recreation programs), and service (e.g. online permits and license applications) goals.
- Expand and maintain a digital portfolio that allows the City to tell its own story directly to the public.
- Establish a structure to schedule digital communications in advance and guarantee consistency across channels.
- Streamline the operations of the City's digital and social media presence.

- Leverage digital and social media to engage historically marginalized communities.
- Implement guidelines and structure to website management to ensure uniformity across the website.

DATA TRANSPARENCY

- Provide easy access to public available data to increase trust between City and community and reduce frequency of public records requests.
- Present data in formats that are understandable, accessible, and engaging.

LANGUAGE ACCESS

- Establish and institutionalize internal guidelines and procedures for translation and interpretation.
- Implement a translation effort to translate key documents, forms, etc.
- Effectively market translation and interpretation services to residents who speak limited English.

Objectives

The following objectives are steps to support the strategies and advance the goals outlined above.

- Increase awareness and use of City programs, assets, and services that can enhance residents' quality of life.
- More effectively and consistently reach historically marginalized communities where they live.
- Increase positive and proactive interactions between communities of color and the City.
- Increase the frequency of positive or neutral earned media coverage and placement about City programs, community initiatives, and achievements.
- Increase frequency of City messaging in earned media coverage.
- Maintain brand guidelines, train department personnel in application, and mandate compliance.
- More fully and regularly engage non-English language communities in City communications.
- Make better use of data and measurement to help understand our audiences and more effectively communicate with the community.
- Leverage the power of social media to listen to our community, gain insight into their priorities, and be more responsive to their needs.
- Leverage positive coverage on digital platforms to advance community goals.
- Institutionalize communications planning process that uses best practice planning frameworks, such as the Public Relations Society of America's Research, Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation (RPIE) framework.
- Maintain a forward-looking master calendar that organizes daily messages across departments, offices, and related business entities.
- Identify digital and social media best practices and ensure implementation of these practices.
- Increase the number of likes on Facebook by end of 2020 through organic posts and paid advertising.
- Increase the number of followers on all channels by 20 percent by end of 2020.
- Follow best practices by generating 1 - 2 social media posts per day for each account; post more frequently to keep followers apprised of important time-sensitive developments and tailor messages for specific social media channel..

SECTION 5: TARGET AUDIENCES

This strategic communications plan guides communications with the City's external and internal audiences. The following groups of people or organizations are who our communications should strive to reach. When possible, the City should try to connect to established networks to reach a broad group of people.

Local

- Burien residents
- Burien neighborhood associations, community groups, neighborhood business associations, advocacy groups, social service agencies, and other nonprofits
- Key economic development and urban planning partners, including area chambers of commerce and business groups
- Investors and property managers in neighborhoods and downtown
- Municipal and County partners in neighboring communities
- Higher educational institutions - public and private
- Area primary and secondary educational institutions
- Faith-based organizations
- Arts and cultural institutions and initiatives
- Key Burien philanthropic partners
- Key Burien area health care organizations
- Area media
- Social media influencers, i.e., local groups with large followings on Facebook who regularly lead and engage in discussions about socially relevant topics and community activities and initiatives

Regional / National

- State and federal elected officials representing Burien
- Federal administrative departments with regulatory oversight over Burien initiatives
- Governor's office and other State of Washington administrative departments
- Statewide and regional business organizations
- Statewide advocacy groups, social service agencies and other nonprofits, including those serving targeted populations
- Statewide and national philanthropic partners
- Relevant regional, statewide, and national media outlets

SECTION 6: BRAND PLATFORM

In 2017, Council approved a new Burien logo designed by the communications agency Jay Ray Ads & PR. They also developed a brand platform, which included the refreshed City logo, a new visual identity, and key messages to guide external communications.

A brand isn't our name, nor is it our logo. Our brand is what we stand for in the minds of Burien residents, businesses, visitors, employees, and the greater community. It is what we do and say. Our brand is unique to us. It's our face, our tone, and our human qualities. It's what makes us distinct. Think of our brand as what the community can expect from us every time.

The brand helps guide communications about Burien as a community and as a place for economic growth. However, what is missing is branding the City government, and the services provided to residents. It's recommended that these messages be developed and added to the brand platform.

Vision

A vibrant and creative community where residents embrace diversity, celebrate arts and culture, promote vitality and treasure the environment.

Position, Promise, Personality

There are three major components of the brand: position, promise, and personality. Our 3Ps are at the heart of the Burien brand, how the community sees Burien now, and how those of us in Burien aspire to distinguish ourselves as a community into the future. These 3Ps guide how we talk, write, and represent Burien visually in an authentic and aspirational way. These are foundational, not necessarily for use in external communications.

POSITION: How We're Distinct

Burien is a close by city, with room for life

PROMISE: What We Make True Every Day

Burien will always inspire you to create

PERSONALITY: Our Face, Tone, and Human Qualities

Neighborly: welcoming and friendly, loyal and supportive, small-town feel, close connection to Seattle and Puget Sound

Spirited: energetic community, lots of character, a variety of lively events and festivals

Unpretentious: genuine and original, dogged and unshowy, humble yet proud

Wholehearted: authentic, "can do" spirit, sincerely devoted, going after dreams wholeheartedly, making it happen

Enterprising: relentlessly creative and imaginative, ambitious, aspiring to grow, a self-starting, hardworking mentality

SECTION 7: KEY MESSAGES

This section of the plan outlines key messages for use when talking about Burien as a community as well how we talk about ourselves as an organization. Due to the breadth and diversity of services the City provides, this section does not suggest program-specific key and secondary messaging. Should program-specific-messaging be required, the Communications Division will lead that effort in consultation with the appropriate department representatives.

ABOUT BURIEN

How do you describe Burien to a neighbor, colleague, or friend?

The three key messages and proof points below are the answer. Think of them as a helpful framework, easily adapted to a conversation over coffee, a newsletter article, or community presentation. Incorporate these key messages in both formal and informal communications. Elaborate on these messages with supporting points, such as those in the bullets below each message.

Desirable Location: From Burien, everywhere you need to go is close by.

Supporting points:

- 6 miles of shoreline and water access
- 20 minutes to downtown Seattle
- 4 miles from Sea-Tac Airport
- Proximity to jobs, colleges, and schools

Quality Of Life: **Experience our spirited community in friendly Burien.**

Supporting points:

- Diverse and fascinating food scene
- Year-round festivals and events
- Centers for music, dance, art and theater
- Scenic Seahurst Park
- Olde Burien main-street charm (Downtown Burien and 152nd Street)

Opportunity & Potential: **Feel inspired by our creative culture to start something in Burien.**

Supporting points:

- Thriving local businesses
- Engaged, supportive community
- One of 25 regional growth centers
- Revitalized Burien Town Square
- Proud to call Burien home

ABOUT CITY SERVICES, PROJECTS, OR INITIATIVES

When communicating with residents or media, it is important to share information in a way that a person who is not an expert in your field would understand. Imagine describing your project to a friend or neighbor who is not an expert in your field. In writing, try to write at a 6th grade level or below (see Appendix 4 *Plain Language Guidelines*).

An overarching key message to use when discuss the City government as an organization: “Big enough to help, small enough to care.”

Building on the work of the brand platform, we have added key messages for the City to use when talking about the services the City provides. These messages emphasize our internal values (see [Innovative Stewards of Public Trust](#)): collaboration, trust, service, communication, integrity, and excellence. These internal values were developed with input from City staff. This internal vision statement is posted on the wall of the City Manager’s office lobby.

Key message: Equity, inclusion, and access. The City of Burien is committed to equity, inclusion, and equal access to services, policymaking, and due process.

Supporting points:

- In 2017, Council adopted BMC 2.26 stating City staff shall not collect information about a person’s immigration status or religion.
- Recruiting for language proficiency.
- Starting in 2017, the Burien Magazine is published in three languages.
- In 2018, the City piloted the Community Connectors program.
- In 2019, the City’s Language Access Strategy was launched.
- City Council has adopted a number of resolutions and proclamations supporting diversity and equity

Key message: Customer service. The City of Burien is big enough to help, but still small enough to care.

Supporting points:

- Friendly staff.

- One of the fastest permitting processes in the region.

Key message: Transparency. The City of Burien is committed to transparency in all government operations.

Supporting points:

- Recent creation of a public records officer position to facilitate faster and better access to public records.
- Implementation of Laserfiche software to make it easier to find key public documents online.
- Public meetings designed to reduce barriers to access (childcare, interpretation, etc.).
- Frequent and consistent communications about important decisions affecting residents including: Council Roundups, project pages on the City’s website, etc.
- Public meetings on topical issues, providing individuals a chance to communicate directly with the City

Calls to Action

These messages drive audiences to take action and often relate to specific programs and initiatives, i.e. participate in a community listening session, complete a survey, or attend an event. For purposes of this plan, we have included some broadly applied calls to action here.

- Visit burienwa.gov for more information.
- Call phone number for answers about City services.
- Make your voice heard! Join a citizen board or commission.
- Be informed! Attend a Council meeting, commission meeting, or watch it live on Comcast’s Channel 21, at burienwa.gov/burientv.
- Want to stay in the know? Follow us on social media or subscribe to our email newsletter.

SECTION 8: MESSENGERS

Well-Prepared Spokespersons

A key aspect of the City’s communications strategy is its responsibility to disseminate vital information to the public through trained and prepared messengers. These messengers serve as spokespersons for the City. They must be fully informed about the relevant issues and comfortable speaking to the media or in large groups. It is also important that the roster of spokespersons reflect the diversity within the City staff and our community.

We anticipate that the following individuals, among others, would be called upon to serve as spokespersons for the City due to their expertise and/or their position. Spokespersons would be determined based on issue and opportunity:

Primary Spokespersons:

- Mayor
- City Councilmembers
- City Manager
- Communications Officer
- Burien Police Chief
- Burien/Normandy Park Fire Chief

Secondary/Topical Spokespersons

- Burien Police Captain
- City Attorney
- Community Development Director
- Economic Development Manager
- Human Services Manager
- Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director
- Public Works Director

Partnerships

The City works with other public agencies as well as private groups. Not only can they be effective messengers of the Burien brand, but they also are an important audience for our own communications. They should be considered when working on a communications plan and public engagement for a specific project or event.

Some key partners:

- Business associations such as Discover Burien and Seattle Southside Chamber
- Schools both public and private
- Public and private agencies and organizations
- Faith-based communities such as the Ecumenical Leadership Circle
- Local businesses
- Local health providers

The City has established partnership guidelines to guide marketing of events that are co-sponsored. These guidelines will be updated fall 2019.

SECTION 9: TACTICS & TOOLS

The following communications tactics and tools are recommended to support the strategies, goals and objectives outlined earlier in this plan.

General

1. **Maintain an interdepartmental Communications Committee.**

Description: In 2017, the Communications Officer established an interdepartmental Communications Committee. The Committee shares information about priority departmental initiatives with each other, provides input into the Master Content Calendar (see below), and relays communications issues back to their respective departments and divisions.

Process: The Communications Officer chairs the committee. Heads of departments and divisions that frequently engage in external communications appoint staff members to represent their respective teams. The appointed individuals should be familiar with the external communications priorities and practices within their departments. The committee meets every other month in order to keep interdepartmental lines of communication open and ensure well-coordinated and comprehensive communication.

2. **Use communications planning best practices to plan for communications campaigns.**

Description: Planning for communications using the Research, Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation (RPIE) method is a proven way make sure key messages have the greatest opportunities to reach target audiences. It is also the foundation to determine what is working, what is not, and how to tell the difference.

Process: All coordinated communications campaigns should follow an RPIE process. See communications plan template (appendix 3).

3. Develop a Master Content Calendar.

Description: This calendar should outline the schedule for distributing proactive communications and media materials. It should highlight the planned release of all information for the upcoming month. It should be updated weekly, or as needed, based on new developments. This would also include editorial themes that could be used to present integrated campaigns across channels, or be channel specific.

Process: The Communications Officer would oversee and update the calendar and would communicate regularly with relevant department managers through the Communications Committee and individually, as needed, to identify and prioritize content.

4. Develop department-level annual reports.

Description: One way to improve understanding of the service the City provides to the community is to regularly report metrics in a format that is easy to understand. Brief annual reports, presented in an infographic format, will help all audiences have a better understanding of how government works.

Process: The Communications Officer work with each department and graphic designer to develop the annual reports. The annual reports would be shared with Council and placed on the City's website.

5. Coordinate with regional communications staff.

Description: Particularly in times of crisis, it is important to for Burien communications staff to be able to reach out to peers in other jurisdictions for both aid and coordinated response. There are also many issues our city faces that require collaboration with other jurisdictions.

Process: Attend regional meetings and networking opportunities in order to learn and build connections.

Community Relations

The Council set as a goal in the City's strategic plan to "establish new ways to better engage diverse communities in civic conversations and activities." While steps have been made to improve engagement, we are still not meeting this goal.

There are several opportunities and tactics this plan recommends to improve communications with the community, and in turn, improve overall community relations.

1. Develop a "civic academy" for residents.

Description: A civic academy could help build engage existing community leaders and support the development of new community leaders. The goal of this program would be to support more diverse community engagement.

Process: The City would seek out community partners to help establish credibility and logistical support for this program.

2. Consistently implement community engagement tactics and processes.

Description: Across departments, community engagement is implemented differently. It depends on the skill and staff available in that department. The result is that events hosted by different departments, or public processes managed by different departments, are implemented in vastly different ways, creating confusion and an inconsistent experience with our residents.

Process: The Communications Division will establish a toolkit that departments should use for public engagement. This toolkit will establish best practices and resources for staff. The Communications Division will also lead an internal work group to receive training on best practices on meeting facilitation and community engagement.

3. Set protocols to regularly inform community organizations.

Description: Communications practices designed to reach community organizations with information of interest to their constituents. Protocols will ensure a consistent, relevant flow of information to these groups.

Process: The Communications Division would work to develop these protocols. Final protocols would be shared with the Leadership Team and with departments via the Communications Committee.

Sample Protocol:

- Develop monthly email or newsletter for community organizations to recap and look ahead to key community issues and development topics. Any organization or individual could subscribe.
- Determine which City announcements require immediate distribution.
- Work with the Communications Committee to identify and prioritize potential issues and programs of interest to community groups.
- Determine which community organizations would benefit from receiving City information in both English and Spanish (or third language).
- Conduct annual online or email survey regarding the distribution of information and the content included in those communications.

4. Community relations issues management protocols

Description: Communication practices designed to respond to escalating community events or issues of interest or concern to community organizations or their constituents. Established protocols will ensure a timely, consistent, and relevant flow of information to community groups and foster a stronger level of engagement between the City and its community organizations.

Process: Communications will work with relevant department staff to develop protocols. Final protocols would be shared with leadership team and with departments via the Communications Committee.

Sample Protocol:

Develop criteria that define when an event or issue becomes a subject of widespread concern to parts or all of the community. When it has been determined that an event or issue meets specified criteria:

- Engage Communications in rapid response assessment, planning, implementation, including media relations, community relations, digital communications, and other relevant channels.
- Conduct ongoing discussions with leadership team and relevant department managers to ensure a full understanding of the situation.
- Identify and equip media spokespersons.
- Keep direct lines of communication open with relevant community groups as the situation develops.
- Monitor, update, and respond on social media outlets with heightened urgency.
- Develop criteria that define when an issue escalates to a crisis level, at which time, the crisis communications plan would be implemented.

5. Establish a regular schedule of community visits (community conversations, town halls, coffee chats, etc).

Description: Establish a regular schedule of proactive community engagement opportunities for City leadership and staff (i.e., Leadership staff, department/office representatives and, possibly, City Councilmembers) to facilitate opportunities for two-way dialogue between residents, City staff, and councilmembers. These would be regularly scheduled visits to various community locations, local businesses, or other community gathering locations throughout the city where City representatives would make themselves available to discuss City programs and services, hear from residents, and share concerns and ideas.

Process: The Communications Division would identify and work with community locations in each neighborhood to establish a schedule of meetings every other month. For example, meetings could be held in local businesses, community rooms, Boulevard Park library, etc.

- Downtown Burien – Community Center
- Boulevard Park – Hilltop or Southern Heights Elementary Schools
- Seahurst neighborhood –community club
- Shorewood on the Sound – community club
- North Burien – Hazel Valley Elementary School
- Ambaum – Navos, Ravelle Hall

The topics and City representatives would change each meeting. The Communications Division would work with the leadership team to identify which topics should be covered each month and who is assigned to represent the City. The topics would be added to the Master Content Calendar. City Councilmembers would have the option to join City staff based on availability.

6. Regularly update list of community organizations that receive City communications.

Description: Our community is constantly growing and evolving. While the City currently has a strong base list of community organizations, it is important that information reach all community audiences. Therefore, the City must take proactive steps to ensure new or underserved groups are part of the information distribution process.

Process: Community relations team would conduct annual review of community organization distribution list and update it as needed.

7. Have a regular tabling presence at community events.

Description: Burien is known for its engaging community events. Having a regular presence at community events give residents an opportunity to engage with the City in a fun and low-stress environment.

Process: Communications Division would manage a tabling sign up process for City departments. They would help with setup of the booth and provide recommendations on engaging tabling activities to help draw people in.

8. Scheduling ceremonies, such as ribbon cuttings and dedications

Description: Communications will work with other departments to schedule ceremonial events. For businesses openings, the Seattle Southside Chamber of Commerce works with Discover Burien to schedule councilmember participation.

Process: Communications would manage a tabling sign up process for City departments. They would

help with setup of the booth and provide recommendations on engaging tabling activities to help draw people in.

9. Establish a community partner network.

Description: Community-based organizations are often seen as trusted leaders or voices in the community. They have their own networks and constituents, and can serve as important partners in delivering information to residents as well as helping the City engage residents during policymaking and other important decisions.

Process: Communications would establish a list of community partner organizations that have agreed to be contacted on City-related topics. Communications would work with other departments to develop and maintain this list. The community partner network would receive the City's email newsletter as well as a periodic emails specific to topics that may interest them. These partners may assist in promotion of City communications campaigns, help recruit people to attend public meetings, host occasional public meetings in their space, and more. When extensive labor is involved on the part of the community partner organization, the City may reimburse certain expenses, such as the provision of childcare or food.

10. Leveraging recognitions, proclamations, and presentations at Council meetings.

Description: Communications would develop integrated (cross-channel) campaigns related to specific proclamations, resolutions, presentations, and other activities that occur at Council meetings. This tactic focuses on activities that celebrate community members or causes that are recognized through some sort of Council action.

Process: Communications would establish a standard communications plan for different types of processes. For example, Communications would develop a series of social media posts and web announcement for proclamations.

11. Apply for awards that demonstrate the quality and success of City of Burien programs.

Description: Awards help demonstrate the quality of services the City provides to its residents. They also can help secure funding through future grant applications.

Process: Communications would work with department to identify relevant award programs and assist with the award applications.

12. Establish a speakers bureau to make it easier for community groups to request presentations from City staff or councilmembers.

Description: City staff and councilmembers often get asked to speak at community events or give presentations to community groups. Establishing a speakers bureau will help the City better manage the request process, and provide more logistical and presentation support for the speakers.

Process: Communications would work as a designated department assistant to manage the speakers bureau. Scheduling and logistics would be handled by the department assistant and communications support (talking points, PowerPoint help, etc.) would be provided by Communications.

Executive Communications

Both the City Manager and Mayor can be powerful messengers of the Burien story. The Communications Division should support their efforts.

- 1. Develop speeches, talking points, and other collateral for executive leadership.**

Description: Executive leaders (mayor, city manager, councilmembers, and directors) are the City's spokespeople. In order to reinforce the City's key messages and brand as well as ensure communications are clear and accurate, Communications should support leaders with talking points and related collateral.

Process: When a leader is invited to speak at an event or for media, Communications works with that individual to develop talking points and supportive collateral such as backgrounders or fact sheets.

Media Relations

Developing an effective media relations strategy is a fundamental component of the City's overall communications plan. In our democracy, the media views itself as the Fourth Estate, a watchdog for the public, entrusted to monitor the actions of government agencies. The media has a strong interest in covering the policies, programs, and actions of city operations. When residents or sectors of the community do not favor those policies, programs, or actions meet with disfavor from the community, the local media will likely commit a higher level of reporting resources to the subject. Media will also be drawn to stories that echo larger regional or national concerns.

The City must have a multifaceted media relations strategy that outlines communications tactics that are both proactive and responsive. By doing this, the City will be better positioned to clearly communicate its actions and the decisions behind them.

There are several communications tools and tactics the City should develop and implement to effectively and strategically handle media relations.

- 1. Maintain a Media Relations Program within the Communications Division.**

Description: This program manages all media relations matters. This includes developing and maintaining media contact lists, writing and/or editing media releases, scheduling and distributing media releases, responding to media inquiries, working with the City Council, Leadership Team, and departmental spokespeople to schedule media interviews, develop messaging when appropriate, and maintain professional relationships with local media outlets.

Process: The Communications Officer manages the Media Relations Program.

- 2. Maintain protocols to handle media inquiries.**

Description: The protocols outlined in the Staff Communications Guidelines provide clarity and uniform practices for handling media inquiries.

Process: The Communications Officer manages the media inquiry process.

- 3. Maintain protocols for media release and advisory distribution.**

Description: These protocols outlined in the Staff Communications Guidelines will provide clarity and uniform practices for the distribution of all media materials.

Process: The Communications Officer manages the media inquiry process.

- 4. Establish protocols for issue and crisis communications.**

Description: These protocols will provide uniform practices for handling issue and crisis communications situations and would be in place until a comprehensive crisis communications plan can be developed.

Process: The Communications Division would work with the City Manager and Administrative Services Director to develop these protocols. Final protocols would be shared with the leadership team and with departments via the Communications Committee.

Sample Protocol:

- All issue or crisis related subjects require engagement by the Communications Division and other relevant staff.
- Communications Officer consults with leadership team.
- Communications Officer works with leadership team and the relevant spokesperson to develop key messages on the specific subject.
- Communications Officer coordinates the City's response with appropriate leadership and then arranges media access to the relevant spokesperson.
- Communications Officer accompanies City spokesperson during media interviews.
- Communications Officer implements Rapid Response program (see Recommendation #9 under Digital Media).

5. Track emerging trends

Description: A proactive media relations strategy requires tracking of brand mentions as well as emerging trends.

Process: The Communications Division staff would track media mentions and share as a report on a regular basis with the City Manager and key leadership staff. The City Manager will share this report as needed with Council. A separate report showcasing media stories on topics of interest to the City will also be developed by Communications Division staff.

6. Engage and strengthen relationships with minority media outlets.

Description: This tactic is intended to help the City strengthen relationships with the Seattle area minority/ethnic media outlets and improve the flow of information to communities these outlets reach.

Process: The Communications Division would meet with editors and community reporters from each Burien and Seattle area minority/ethnic publication a minimum of two times per year. Outlets will also be added to the standard release list. A minimum of four press releases per year will be translated into other languages.

7. Conduct regular, proactive media meetings.

Description: This tactic is intended to provide background information to members of the media and strengthen relationships with key media personnel in the Burien/South King County/Seattle market.

Process: The Communications Officer should arrange meetings with news managers and key reporters from one outlet each quarter. One member of the City's leadership team should accompany the Communications Officer for these meetings. The choice of which City leadership team should be partly based on upcoming communications initiatives.

8. Maintain Communications oversight of messaging from City spokespeople on topics covered in the media.

Description: In order to maintain consistent and accurate messaging from the City of Burien, the Communications Division should retain oversight of messaging from City spokespeople.

Process: Follow process laid out in Staff Communications Guidelines.

9. Create media backgrounders on hot topics.

Description: In order to maintain consistent and accurate messaging from the City of Burien, the Communications Division will develop written talking points in the form of backgrounders on hot topics.

Process: The backgrounders will be created as part of either the communications planning process for campaigns or as needed, and distributed to Council and key City spokespeople.

10. Establish a robust online newsroom that includes resources for media.

Description: In order to make it easier for media to tell accurate stories about Burien, it's important to have good information about the city and community on the City's website. This includes basic demographic info, news releases, photos and/or b-roll, contact information for key communication staff, etc.

Process: The Communications Division will maintain content in the City's newsroom.

11. Develop a Twitter list of all reporters covering the City, follow their activity and engage with them when appropriate.

Description: Reporters are very active on Twitter. Build a list of their Twitter accounts to monitor their activity and look for opportunities to engage with them. This has the added benefit of enabling the City to get ahead of a bad news story that first breaks on Twitter. Actively following this list will ensure the City can stay ahead of the curve and be as responsive as possible to reporters and residents.

Process: Communications would identify all relevant reporters and their handles and put them in a Twitter list that can be followed by members of the City's Twitter account. The Communications Officer would lead engagement with reporters on Twitter, messaging and retweeting reporter content when appropriate.

Burien Magazine and Recreation Guide

1. Publish quarterly magazine, supported by local advertising.

Description: In the latest community survey, 50 percent of residents stated they received their news about the City of Burien from the *Burien Magazine*, more than from the City's social media and website. In an age of digital noise, print can cut through the clutter. It also reaches people who have limited access to the internet, do not follow the City on social media, or who don't follow local online media. Support from local advertising not only helps subsidize the cost of producing the magazine, but also helps us reach economic development goals of supporting local businesses by providing an affordable way for local businesses to reach local customers.

Process: Communications works with departments and community members to develop the content for each magazine issue. Philips Publishing Group, with the help of subcontractors, provides design, layout, mailing, and printing services.

2. Combine Recreation Guide and Burien Magazine.

Description: The Recreation Guide is the primary channel for marketing PaRCS programs and services. In 2019, the *Burien Recreation Guide* was combined with the *Burien Magazine*. More Spanish

translation was incorporated in 2019 as well.

Process: Communications works with the PaRCS Department to develop a combined publication. A digital version of the Recreation Guide will be posted on the City's website.

3. Translate 5-6 stories per issue into top two non-English languages.

Description: Because the magazine reaches all Burien households and businesses, it is useful to translate high priority stories into the top two non-English languages spoken in Burien. According to census data, those top two languages are Spanish and Vietnamese.

Process: Using professional translation services, translate 5-6 stories per issue into top two non-English languages.

Digital Communications

Developing an effective digital media strategy is a fundamental component of the City's overall communications plan. It both supports and promotes the City's traditional communications activities while serving as a conduit for residents to directly engage with the City. The successful implementation of a comprehensive digital media strategy will ensure that residents view the City as responsive, engaged, and informative.

Using a Master Content Calendar to ensure all facets of the City's communications, including digital media, are aligned coupled with the consistent implementation of digital and social media best practices will help the City effectively and professionally reach target audiences.

To that end, there are several communications tools and tactics the City should develop and implement to effectively and strategically handle digital media.

1. Develop and implement a program of weekly social media posts (as part of the Master Calendar) that support the City's content strategy.

Description: This program of weekly social media posts would assist the City in generating content to achieve the objective of 1 - 2 posts per day for each social media account. Of course, this effort would be in addition to the timely, "as it happens" type of social media content.

Process: Communications would work with the PaRCS social media manager to develop the weekly program.

Sample Protocol:

- Develop program of posts.
- Work with departments to source and generate content biweekly or monthly for the proceeding two-week or monthly period. Some potential ideas are:
 - Vibrant business sector: New businesses opening; highlighting existing ones
 - Dynamic business sector: New investments, job numbers, where to find a job, interesting business-led initiatives
 - Diverse neighborhoods: Upcoming events, neighborhood news
 - Transportation and infrastructure project updates
 - Local and national recognition or awards
 - Content posted by other public agencies, like the police and fire departments
 - Community resources from local organizations
 - Special fun days like #nationaldonutday

- Communications updates Master Content Calendar with forward-looking posts for approval and assists in implementation (posting) where/if necessary.

2. Gather ideas from the social and digital tactics of peer and major cities.

Description: This effort will ensure the City is implementing a social media strategy – and the attendant tactics – that draw from the successful strategies and tactics of peer and major cities. Since social media is continually evolving, this should be an on-going (but not cumbersome) effort.

Process: Communications would research peer and major city best practices and incorporate them into the City’s efforts, including the Master Content Calendar.

3. Develop and engage a list of social media influencers, including elected officials, business leaders and community organizers who can help push and promote the City’s message. This is especially relevant for engaging traditionally marginalized communities.

Description: Engaging a list of influencers will help City of Burien spread and promote its message. The social media influencers should be in Burien and active on social media. For example, elected officials should include those in Burien, King County, State House and Senate members who represent parts or all of Burien, and statewide elected officials. This list of influencers should also include active community organizers and potentially business leaders.

Process: Consistently engaging this list via tagging, Liking, sharing and retweeting, etc., will create a positive feedback loop where they will be more likely to share the City’s content in the future.

4. Develop design templates for use on social media across departments with an easy-to-use digital design tool.

Description: Design templates help make social media content look more professional and engaging. It has the added benefit of making the creation of new content faster. Using a tool like Canva will enable non-designers to produce professional looking content.

Process: Communications manage the tools and would work with the on-call contract graphic designer to create design templates.

5. Develop and maintain an email newsletter to inform residents and other stakeholders of City news.

Description: An email newsletter would allow Burien to highlight news and programs more frequently than the Burien Magazine and to people who may choose to not use social media. Adding a newsletter to the City’s portfolio of communications channels will enhance transparency. Building a robust email list will support outreach and communications efforts.

The newsletter could contain stories, news, events, crisis communications, volunteer opportunities, job openings, board and commission’s announcements, re-purposed *Burien Magazine* stories, and more.

Process: An email management software such as Constant Contact will be used to and create and deliver a monthly issue. To build the email list, several tactics will be employed: subscribe button on website, sign-up sheets at public meetings, social media posts encouraging people to subscribe. The contact list could also be used to send topic-specific e-blasts. Communications would work with City Clerk in order to manage contacts.

6. **Maintain a PaRCS email newsletter and e-blasts to inform residents and other stakeholders of PaRCS news, such as classes and programs.**

Description: Maintaining the existing email newsletter would allow Burien to highlight news and programs from the PaRCS department. The newsletter should be re-designed to match the look and feel of the new City newsletter.

Process: An email management software such as Constant Contact will be used to and create and deliver a monthly issue. It will be managed by the PaRCS marketing lead.

7. **Develop and maintain a City blog.**

Description: A blog will provide a place on the website for stories that go beyond news and announcements. This new channel will help highlight stories that don't fall under the traditional definition of city news. These include: profiles on community members, local success stories, frequently asked questions, former magazine stories, explainer documents, and more. Stories in the blog can provide more context and information around decisions made by the City.

Process: A new section of the website will be created to house the blog. The blog's content strategy will incorporate content from news & announcements section of the website, *Burien Magazine*, and more. The email newsletter will feature links to the blog.

8. **Use a social media management tool, such as Hootsuite, to manage, generate and approve content across all of the City's social media accounts.**

Description: Hootsuite is one of many apps that can be used to manage several social media accounts simultaneously. Hootsuite enables organizations to divvy up responsibility to teams and individuals with moderation as well as schedule and measure social media posting.

Process: Communications would manage the Hootsuite team.

9. **Support, promote, and leverage all traditional media efforts undertaken by the communications department.**

Description: Ensure that all traditional media efforts are promoted through the City's social media accounts where appropriate. For example, if an interview is given to Q13 and aired, the Communications Officer should capture that and share it on the City's social media (or share the news organization's social media post itself).

Process: This process would largely be done as part of the Master Content Calendar maintenance. Traditional media efforts that exist in the Master Calendar should have digital media efforts backing them in each case. It is the Communications Officer's job to ensure this happens.

10. **Produce video to support social media and website campaigns.**

See The Burien Channel Tactic #1.

The Burien Channel (Channel 21)

The City uses its public access channel to broadcast Council and Planning Commission meetings, as well as PSA and other public interest content. Online streaming of the meetings provide important access for people who can't make in-person meetings. In order to better leverage

Specific tactics include:

1. **Program original content for Channel 21.**

Description: Video is an effective method for conveying complex information in an engaging way. It can also be used to supplement other communications tactics. Content ideas include: videos about

events, interviews with Councilmembers and City leadership, educational videos that support City goals, etc.

Process: Communications Division would write scripts and work with videography consultant to develop original content for the channel. Content could be used across multiple platforms.

2. Air Council and Planning Commission meetings live on Channel 21.

Description: Both Council and Planning Commission meetings are aired live on Channel 21. Archived versions of the video are made available on the City's website within 24 hours.

Process: The IS division works with a videography contractor to film and produce the video feed. The IS division manages the upload of the final video file.

3. Post PSAs and content created by other agencies on Channel 21.

Description: Video created by other agencies can be used to share important information with Burien residents.

Process: Communications Division would actively seek out video content from other agencies to air. The IS division manages the upload of the final video file.

Graphic Design and Visual Communication

An important part of communicating Burien's brand includes maintaining a consistent visual identity across all external communications. Studies show that people remember only 30 percent of what they read, but 80 percent of what they see. Communications must be able to tell stories visually across all channels and media. High-quality graphic design creates an impression of quality and professionalism in our services and programs.

1. Enforce design standards on all new external communications.

Description: Design standards were created when the City adopted a new brand. These new design standards apply to documents, online systems, signage, and more.

Process: The Communications Division maintains the branding guidelines and design file library. New documents should reflect the new design standards.

2. Update all documents still in use (forms, informational handouts, etc.) with new document templates developed during branding process.

Description: There are hundreds of documents, signs, and other places where City branding occurs.

Process: The Communications Division is to lead the overhaul of all City documents, signs, and other places where the City's branding occurs.

3. Continue to fund on-call professional photography services.

Description: A key component of high-quality visual communication is high-quality photos.

Process: Contract with a professional photographer to take high-quality photos of City events, places, programs, and services.

4. Continue to fund on-call professional graphic design services.

Description: A key component of high-quality visual communication is high-quality graphic design.

Process: Contract with a professional graphic designer to design high visibility documents and publications.

5. Maintain a robust and frequently updated photo library.

Description: An organized and frequently updated photo bank will help the City produce high-quality communications both in print and online. Print quality photos are particularly important for the *Burien Magazine*.

Process: The Communications Division will manage a shared photo resource library.

6. Subscribe to stock photo service.

Description: Stock photos can fill in gaps in the City's photo library when it comes to producing well-designed communications products.

Process: The Communications Division will maintain a stock photo subscription.

7. Continue to fund professional design tools such as InDesign, Photoshop, and Canva.

Description: Social media visuals and other smaller profile communications can be designed in-house with the aid of professional design tools such as InDesign, Photoshop, and Canva.

Process: The Communications Division will maintain licenses to these three pieces of software as well as maintain how-to documents and templates.

Marketing & Advertising

Marketing is the promoting and selling of products or services. Marketing tactics should be used to market programs and services the City offers, including recreation programs and resources such as the Community Resource Center. Advertising in media outlets and via digital channels, such as Facebook, can be a tactic used to raise broader awareness of City programs and services.

1. Implement ad campaigns on social media.

Description: Social media platforms continually change their algorithms to favor content that is paid for by advertisers. In order to ensure that content the City shares on social media is seen, the City must invest in occasional ad campaigns.

Process: The Communications Division will select a handful of communications campaigns per year to support with social media advertising. Priority will be given to campaigns supporting events where participation is low and important public service announcements.

2. Advertise programs and other services in appropriate media outlets.

Description: Despite the rise of social media, many people still read traditional media, both in print and online. Some of these outlets offer free advertising opportunities, such as community calendars, and others require payment. This type of advertising is particularly important for our events and fee-based programs.

Process: The Communications Officer, or their designee, will approve in advance all paid advertising (print, broadcast, Internet, billboard, radio, etc.). This does not include paid advertising used for hiring purposes or advertising that meets a state statute, such as notifications of Councilmember attendance at an event. The City will only pay for advertising for City programs, services, or events of which the City serves as a partner or a sponsor. The PaRCS department marketing lead will handle advertising for PaRCS events.

3. Post flyers in community locations (grocery store bulletin boards, etc.)

Description: Placing flyers in locations frequented by the community can be an effective way of advertising City events, programs, or services.

Process: The Communications Division will create a list of community locations where flyers are allowed to be posted. Distribution of flyers will be handled by department staff or volunteers.

4. Use Peachjar to advertise to Highline School District families.

Description: The Highline School District uses a software system called Peachjar to share flyers with families. The digital flyers appear in emails sent to families as well as on the Highline School District's website and mobile app. Peachjar is free to use for non-fee based events or programs.

Process: The Communications Division will maintain a city account and will manage distribution of flyers through Peachjar.

5. Advertise programs and services in partner communications (e.g. Southside Chamber newsletter).

Description: The City can broaden its reach by placing content in partner communications.

Process: As part of communications planning process, identify partners who can help promote a City event, service, or program. The Communications Division will help departments provide suggested content and associated graphics as part of a media kit.

Internal Communications

The goals of internal communications include: employees feel informed of policies that affect them and the communities they serve, employees can serve effectively as brand ambassadors for the City, employees feel welcome and valued, and communication and collaboration between departments is improved.

1. Deploy internal survey to gather baseline information about employee information needs.

Description: It is important to measure the information needs of our employees before launching into new communications tactics. A survey will help establish a baseline to measure improvement, and help guide choice of appropriate tactics.

Process: Communications and Human Resources will work together to develop and deploy a survey for employees.

2. Update B-Hive design and content strategy.

Description: The B-Hive is the City's intranet site where internal information is shared. Nobody currently "owns" the content strategy for the B-Hive, and there are missed opportunities to communicate important employee information. Some ideas for new content include the celebration of employee achievements and milestones, employee spotlights, and other fun employee engagement opportunities.

Process: Human Resources will eventually "own" the management of content on the B-Hive, with the assistance of Communications. Information Systems, Communications, and Human Resources will work together to establish a new design and content strategy.

3. Develop internal newsletter.

Description: An internal newsletter will help drive traffic to the B-Hive and deliver important employee information right to their inboxes.

Process: A newsletter would be established once a new B-Hive is in place. Human Resources with support from Communications would be responsible for the newsletter.

4. Establish protocols internal communications protocols.

Description: More consistent communication to employees about important policies that affect them and the communities they serve, about staff who have just been hired and those who are leaving will help boost morale. When new job opportunities open up, employees may either be interested in applying for the position or they may help recruit a good candidate. Regular protocols for announcements of new job opportunities will help the City find the best candidate for the position.

Process: Human Resources with support from Communications will develop internal communication protocols for a variety of scenarios including: staff leavings and welcomes, new job opportunities, and other important issues.

5. Establish staff protocols for crisis and emergency communications.

Description: City staff are not only important to the implementation of a crisis and emergency communications plan, but they also are on the receiving end of crisis and emergency information. A well-developed crisis plan will include protocols for assigning staff tasks during a crisis as well as keeping them informed.

Process: Communications will work with Human Resources to establish protocols for staff communications during a crisis.

6. Maintain cross-department communications committee.

Description: In 2017, the Communications Officer established an interdepartmental Communications Committee. The Committee shares information about priority departmental initiatives with each other, provides input into the Master Content Calendar, and relays communications issues back to their respective departments and divisions.

Process: The Communications Officer chairs the committee. Heads of departments and divisions that frequently engage in external communications appoint staff members to represent their respective teams. The appointed individuals should be familiar with the external communications priorities and practices within their departments. The committee meets every other month in order to keep interdepartmental lines of communication open and ensure well-coordinated and comprehensive communication.

7. Leverage existing All Staff meetings, Communications, Wellness, and Safety Committees to improve internal communication.

Description: Improving internal communication flow is often as simple as getting people in the same room together. The City currently has quarterly all staff meetings and three internal staff committees: Communications, Wellness, and Safety. All three could be better utilized for internal information sharing. The Human Resources division is looking to re-vamp the strategy for the Wellness and Safety Committee in 2020.

Process: Human Resources and Communications will work together to evaluate how information sharing can be improved in existing committees and all staff meetings.

Crisis and Emergency Communications

1. **Develop a comprehensive City of Burien Crisis Communications Plan.**

Description: Whether it's a natural disaster, act of terrorism, violent crime or internal criminal behavior, the City must be prepared to communicate about a wide range of potential crises quickly, effectively, through multiple channels, and to a variety of local and potentially national audiences. This demands both preparation and the agility to shape the response to the specific situation. A strategic crisis communications plan would be designed to:

- Prepare City leadership to quickly and effectively take control of communications related to a crisis and manage the clear dissemination of information to all relevant audiences as necessary and appropriate, including but not limited to residents, community organizations, area business leaders, the media, elected officials, and community partners.
- Ensure that City spokespersons are accessible, responsive, forthcoming, thorough, organized, and focused on solutions throughout the crisis response.
- Maintain the high integrity of the City's brand.

Process: The Communications Officer would lead development of this plan in close coordination with executive leadership and key department heads.

2. **Conduct preparedness outreach, partnering with King County Emergency Management and local organizations.**

Description: Building relationships with the community in advance of a disaster will help the City better respond in times of crisis. A community that is able to be more self-sufficient will be able to recover more quickly. King County Emergency Management has a public outreach program and Trusted Partner Network that helps connect local communities to the right information both before, during, and after an emergency.

Process: The Communications Division will work with KCEM staff to host preparedness events in Burien. The City will assist KCEM in helping connect local organizations and community leaders into the Trusted Partner Network.

3. **Update emergency communications plan in the City's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.**

Description: The State of Washington requires all jurisdictions have a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). The CEMP is for use by elected officials and City of Burien staff and managers to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. The CEMP includes communications and external affairs requirements.

Process: The Communications Officer will work with City staff and King County Emergency Management staff to update the City's CEMP communications and external affairs plans.

4. **Develop multi-level bench of PIOs.**

Description: If the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) needs to be activated, there may be a need for the Communications Officer/Public Information Officer to have backup if the emergency lasts more than 12 hours. While King County Emergency Management will assist, it will be helpful to have other City staff trained on PIO procedures.

Process: Identify staff from other departments who sit on the Communications Committee to go through FEMA Basic PIO training.

5. **Ensure all communications staff with PIO responsibilities have received basic FEMA PIO certifications.**

Description: The Emergency Management Institute (EMI) Public Information Officer (PIO) training program is designed to provide PIOs with the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities to support proper decision-making by delivering the right message, to the right people, at the right time. Public information is a vital function in disaster operations that contributes greatly to saving lives and protecting property.

Process: The Communications Officer/Public Information Officer should complete the following trainings. Backup PIOs should complete only the G289/IS-29.

- a. *G289/IS-29 – Public Information Officer Awareness*
- b. *G290 – Basic Public Information Officer*
- c. *G291/E-L0387 – Joint Information System/Joint Information Center Planning for Tribal, State and Local PIOs*
- d. *EMI managed courses:*
 - i. *E/L0388 – Advanced Public Information Officer*
 - ii. *Master Public Information Officer Program*
 1. *E0389 – Master Public Information Officer Part 1*
 2. *E0393 – Master Public Information Officer Part 2*
 3. *E0394 – master Public information Officer Part 3*

SECTION 10: MONITORING & EVALUATION

Reach & Penetration

A basic measure of the success of our communications programs is the number of people who see the various media produced by the City. We will use a number of metrics to determine if we are reaching the audiences we are trying to reach. We will collect the following data to determine reach (how broad) and penetration (how deep):

- Social media followers/likes
- Channel 21 viewers
- Website visits (City website)
 - Traffic source
 - Raw author contribution to blog (posts per month, characters per post, videos, photos)
 - Document downloads
 - Unique website visitors
 - Duration
 - Incoming links
 - Website transaction volume
- In-kind value of ad and PSA placements

Level of Engagement

One way to measure engagement is to measure the reach of particular messages through individual communication channels and the actual participation, and then compare the various communications methods to determine which yield the highest levels of participation. It is not advisable to experiment with live issues or events, so the opportunity for a rigorous approach is limited. Instead, the Communications Division adjust the various communications mixes aimed at optimizing participation to see if fluctuations can

be detected that are not merely related to content. To that end, we will collect the following data from communications and community engagement efforts:

- Attendance at events, forums, and meetings
- Participation on boards and commissions
- Conversion or “click through” rates
- Participation in online polls and voluntary surveys
- “Citations” or “shared” web resources

Experience & Opinion

One of the more challenging aspects of the changes in media is that while there is now more subjective feedback available directly from constituents on issues, this flood of information is difficult to compile and analyze in a way that provides actionable data. One way is to collect comments and feedback from various sources and conduct an affinity analysis to see what the general tone or direction those comments are taking. We will monitor the following to do that analysis:

- Satisfaction with City communications (community survey)
- User ratings on both City-produced and user-content generated
- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram mentions
- Number of fans/subscribers/followers
- Comment tone on other sites

Media Tracking

Data collected under this rubric include:

- Number of stories, both in general and on specific topics
- Number of stories generated by City staff efforts
- Tone of stories

Performance Measures Reporting

The Communications Division will produce a quarterly report that includes these metrics. Analysis of the report will inform the Communications Division on ways to improve our communications and outreach. The quarterly report will be presented to the Communications Committee.

APPENDIX 1: PORTFOLIO OF COMMUNICATIONS, MARKETING, AND ENGAGEMENT CHANNELS

Overview

Welcome to the City of Burien. This portfolio will provide you a snapshot of our *current* communications channels, our goals and vision for each, the audiences are trying to reach, a summary of the frequency of publication, and the type of content we produce and the people involved in producing and distributing them.

A new City of Burien communications, marketing, outreach and engagement strategy is currently being developed, and will be presented to City Council the second quarter, 2018. This document lays out the current state of our efforts.

- **Owned media:** City of Burien website; Burien Magazine; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn channels (City of Burien, PaRCS, and Community Development all have their own social media channels), Channel 21, PaRCS Recreation Guide, PaRCS program newsletters, PaRCS email newsletter. We also produce a large volume of posters, flyers, presentations, and other collateral.
- **Earned media:** The City of Burien has relationships with both local media (B-Town Blog and Highline Times/Westside Seattle) and regional broadcasters (KING 5, KIRO, Q13). We are working to develop stronger relationships with Puget Sound Business Journal, KUOW, and Seattle Times. We also want to develop stronger relationships with lifestyle magazines like Sunset Magazine and Seattle Magazine.
- **Paid media:** We sometimes advertise for special events and campaigns. Economic Development is managing a paid marketing campaign with the Seattle Southside Regional Tourism Authority thanks to funding from the Port of Seattle.
- **Outreach and engagement:** Outreach and engagement occurs through three main methods: public comment at City Council meetings, engagement through social media, and engagement through programs and events. In 2018, we are piloting a community liaison program called Community Connectors.

Brand

In early 2017, the City Council adopted a new logo and new brand for the City of Burien. JayRay PR & Ads conducted extensive community and stakeholder research to develop a brand platform for Burien. The brand platform includes positioning statements that inform a set of key messages that can be woven into the stories the City and other stakeholders tell about Burien. Creative Fuel Studios has been hired to develop document templates, marketing collateral, and web graphics that reflect the new brand.

The Communications Office is in the process of rolling out the new brand across all channels. There are three major stages to the branding roll out. Updating our visual identity on existing channels and products, developing new design treatments and templates, and developing a more robust story bank that can be used to support the brand platform.

Website

The City of Burien website is a public information and marketing tool. It was last redesigned more than 8 years ago. We are currently overhauling content, design, functionality, and backend platform for the website.

CivicLive is working on the design and development, and Parallel Public Works is helping guide the content overhaul. The website also connects to several third party services, including agenda software, payment processing, and permitting software. The City Clerk will be project managing the migration of our agenda software to iCompass in 2017.

URL:

<http://burienwa.gov/>

Publication frequency:

- As needed

Audience:

Primary

- All residents of Burien (both citizens and non-citizens)
- Existing business owners
- Potential business owners
- Potential residents
- City Council members
- Media

Secondary

- Visitors and tourists
- Nonprofits – social services, etc.
- Other governments (Port of Seattle, King County, State of Washington)
- Other legislators and their staff
- Contractors, vendors who work with the City
- Real estate developers and site selectors
- City employees
- Job seekers
- Special purpose district employees - Fire District, Water, Sewer, Library

Reach:

- As of July 2017, we receive between 20,000 and 30,000 visits to the website per month.

Staff and consultants:

Current website production:

- Communications: content strategy, production, project management, review, and budget oversight
- City Web Authors group: staff who have the ability to post to different areas of the website.
- City Web Admins group: staff who have higher level privileges on the website.

Social Media

Our social media presence will grow as our communications portfolio grows. We have a presence on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube. We post news from the City of Burien, links to events, updates on public works and other projects, public information, as well more fun and engaging posts highlighting fun things to do in our community. As of July, 2017 have more than 11,000 followers across all of our social media channels.

Platform	Channel	Number of followers
Facebook	<u>CityofBurien</u>	1,926
	<u>burienparks</u>	2,154
	<u>MoshierArtCenter</u>	360
Twitter	<u>Burien</u>	3,531
	<u>BurienParks</u>	1,270
Instagram	<u>CityofBurien</u>	1,004
	<u>Burienparks</u>	828
	<u>burienteenprograms</u>	400
LinkedIn	<u>City of Burien</u>	385
YouTube	<u>burienparks</u>	69

Email newsletters

PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAM NEWS

Publication frequency:

- The Recreation E-news is sent quarterly.
- PaRCS sends out flyers about classes and specific programs as well to this list.

Audience:

- The lists are segmented by the type of activity such as youth programs, arts organizations, etc.

Reach:

- As of June 2017, we have a 9,316 per month.

Staff and consultants:

- PaRCS staff. Recreation Specialist Amanda Morales is lead.

The City used to produce two email newsletters. The email list segments still exist in Constant Contact. The newsletters have now been replaced by *Burien Magazine*. However, we are suggesting reactivating these newsletters as part of this plan.

- *Boletín en Español*
- *City Reporter - News and Activities of Burien City Government*

Print

The following print publications are produced by City staff. *Burien Magazine* and the *Recreation Guide* are the only publications that are regularly mailed to residents.

BURIEN MAGAZINE

The City's flagship publication serves as an important communications tool for not only sharing information about City services and programs, but also highlighting positive stories about Burien. The magazine is mailed to all residents of Burien, approximately 30,000 households. The magazine is financially supported by advertising sold to local businesses. The advertising is a good deal for our local businesses, and costs less for them than a similar mailer would cost.

We also make an effort to translate at least five of the stories into Spanish and Vietnamese.

As of December, 2017, it costs the City approximately \$5,000 per issue to produce and mail the magazine. The majority of the production costs are covered by advertising.

Publication frequency:

- Quarterly.

Audience:

- Residents and local business owners.
- Visitors are a secondary audience.

Reach:

- Mailed to all households in Burien, including apartments.
- Distributed to various key information points.

Staff and consultants:

- Communications Officer: Executive Editor
- Communications Assistant: Assists with proofreading, story conceptualization, mailing, invoicing, and administrative duties.
- Staff: Content producers and reviewers
- Phillips Publishing: Design, printing, advertising, mailing.
- Dynamic Language: translation

RECREATION GUIDE

The *Recreation Guide* is an important tool for advertising classes, programs, and City-sponsored events. It is included inside the Burien Magazine, increasing its reach. Standalone versions of the guide are also still available.

Publication frequency:

- Quarterly.

Audience:

- Residents
- Past program attendees

Reach:

- Mailed to all households in Burien, including apartments.
- Distributed to various key information points.

Staff and consultants:

- Recreation Specialist Amanda Morales is lead.
- PaRCS staff contribute content
- Creative Fuel Studios (Sheila Cowley) designs and coordinates printing and mailing.

MOSHIER NEWSLETTER

The *Moshier Newsletter* is a class catalog for arts classes at the Moshier Center.

Publication frequency:

- Quarterly.

Audience:

- Anyone interested in taking a class.
- Regional.

Reach:

- Mailed to Clay Arts Center, Seattle Pottery, and other arts schools.
- Distributed to various key information points.

Staff and consultants:

- Arts Coordinator Alisa Savage produces the newsletter.
- Creative Fuel Studio designs and coordinates printing.

Media Relations

Our local media play a vital role in informing our community on important issues, as well as informing the community on the activities of their local government. We have relationships with both local media (B-Town Blog and Highline Times/Westside Seattle) and regional broadcasters (KING 5, KIRO, Q13, KOMO). We are working to develop stronger relationships with Puget Sound Business Journal, KUOW, and Seattle Times. We also want to develop stronger relationships with lifestyle magazines like Sunset Magazine and Seattle Magazine. We occasionally get covered in trade publications.

The Communications Assistant assists the Communications Officer with tracking media interactions and stories as well as producing information for media.

We field approximately two to three calls per week from media, unless it's a bigger story. Regional broadcast outlets often send cameras to Burien in order to get the South King County and regional perspective.

Channel 21 and Radio

We produce and post content for our government channel. Council meetings and Planning Commission meetings are broadcast on the channel live. We also post legislative updates from the Washington State Legislature and PSAs. We use Castus software to stream content online. We are working to develop more content, and find more third party content, to show on the channel. The new website will have a page dedicated to the online video streaming content titled Burien TV.

Publication frequency:

- As needed.

Audience:

- Burien residents.

Reach:

- Burien residents who have access to cable. Online streaming is available to anyone with an internet connection. Actual viewers not available at this time.

Staff and consultants:

- IT Manager, technical support and manages videographers
- Communications Officer, approves non-Council and advisory board content.

Advertising and other paid media

We sometimes advertise for special events and campaigns. Economic Development is managing a paid marketing campaign with the Seattle Southside Regional Tourism Authority thanks to funding from the Port of Seattle. We have begun to explore paid social media advertising.

Outreach and engagement

Outreach and engagement currently occurs through three main methods: public comment at City Council meetings, engagement through social media, and engagement through programs and events. The PaRCS

Department, the Stormwater Outreach program, and Communications Office are the departments mostly engaged in outreach.

Starting in 2018, we are working with Forterra and Global to Local to develop a more robust outreach and engagement strategy, which could include partnerships with local organizations and community leaders.

Crisis and emergency communications

We are in the process of updating our crisis and emergency communications plans. Current emergency communications procedures are in the EOC handbook.

Templates and resources

We have branded templates for PowerPoint and letterhead. We are working to develop branded templates for other types of documents, like flyers, memos, etc.

We are also developing a style guide for style and usage issues specific to the City of Burien. Otherwise we follow Associated Press style guidelines.

APPENDIX 2: CITY OF BURIEN STAFF COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

Overview

Publishing well-written, easy to understand, and accurate communications is a critical component of maintaining public trust in government services. It is also important to align key messages, tone, voice, and style across all our communications.

To facilitate this alignment, the City of Burien has instituted new staff communications guidelines. These guidelines were developed with input from the Communications Committee and Leadership Team in order to ensure it reflects the needs of all departments. This policy also addresses requirements in the Public Records Act.

If you have questions that this guide does not cover, please contact the Communications Officer.

Official Spokesperson

The City Manager will designate an official spokesperson for each department or for the City. The Mayor, or their designee, is the official spokesperson for the City Council.

Brand

The Burien Brand Guide (see Appendix A) is meant to help employees use and communicate the messages and the visuals that express our brand consistently. It includes the fonts, colors, and photo style, as well as the messages and tone that best represent the City of Burien in official communications.

Used faithfully, the brand guide will help keep our City's identity intact, ensuring every way we communicate about Burien, from letters and business cards to brochures, fliers and our website, looks like it came from Burien. Why is this important? This helps us build trust, awareness and interest with our residents, businesses and visitors, and pride among employees.

IDENTITY

All departments will identify themselves as the City of Burien. Exceptions will be made for specific purposes, such as to meet grant funding requirements. This includes advertisements, fliers, press releases, newsletters, etc. If your department has a specific need for using the department's name for branding, please consult with the Communications Officer.

"This meeting is sponsored by the Community Development Department..." should be "The meeting is sponsored by the City of Burien..."

Exceptions may be made with approval from City Manager and Communications Officer.

DOCUMENTS

The City creates and distributes a variety of communication documents including, but not limited to, press releases, media advisories, brochures, PowerPoint presentations, annual reports, staff reports, newsletters, advertisements, posters, postcards, flyers, etc.

All presentations, publications and items purchased with City funds should bear the City of Burien logo and if appropriate, use one of the approved document templates.

USE OF CITY LOGO

The City of Burien logo shall be used on all City publications, external communications, fliers, invitations, programs, posters, paraphernalia and any item requiring a symbol of identity. When designing a publication or an item with the logo, please consult with the Communications Officer.

Internal requests for the logo should be made through the Communications Officer. Scanned or modified copies of the logo or the symbol are prohibited. External organizations requesting the City logo should be referred to the Communications Officer. The Communications Officer may approve use of logo for types of communications, such as surveyor notice boards or co-sponsored events when a director or designee has approved its use.

Use of the City logo from non-partner organizations and copying images from the City's website for personal or commercial use is prohibited. If you see the City's logo displayed in such a manner, please notify the Communications Officer.

Emergency Notifications

Fire and Police responses to emergencies in the community are the responsibility of those two agencies. Any releases should be sent to the City Manager and Communications Officer. Other emergency notifications, including notifications to media, on social media, and on the website, will be sent out by the Communications Officer or designee. For emergency notifications that affect City of Burien employees, under the direction of the City Manager, internal communications will be managed by the Administrative Services Director in cooperation with the Communications Officer.

Website guidelines

Guiding principles:

1. **Review and vetting** helps ensure content is accurate and that we maintain style, brand, and accessibility standards.
2. **Department accountability** keeps content fresh and up-to-date.
3. **Advance planning** helps ensure content strategy, policies, and standards are well executed.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone has a role in ensuring our website and digital communications are accurate, written in language that is easy to understand, and maintains legally mandated accessibility guidelines. In order to ensure accountability, we have laid out roles and responsibilities for the new website in the Website Roles and Responsibilities spreadsheet.

ABOUT THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES SPREADSHEET

Department = department that is responsible for editing/updating content, and is accountable for ensuring accuracy. It may be different than the review (for example, Communications Officer is responsible and accountable for ensuring accuracy of police and fire info on the website, but BPD and Burien Fire will act as reviewers).

Content editor = the person/s who will do the actual updating and editing on the website. This person will also be responsible for writing the content and ensuring it goes through the right review process (see below). Admins will have admin access to all pages of the site so that they can pitch in for website updates when the assigned content editor is on leave or otherwise unavailable.

Content editors will have the *full control* permissions for creating, editing, and archiving pages and directory and calendar entries. However, creating new pages (except for project pages and department

announcements) and permanently deleting pages needs to be approved by Communications Officer. This way we can maintain the integrity of the site's overall information architecture.

Reviewer/s = the person who is responsible for reviewing the content before it goes on the website and afterwards (possible QA group will split off the post-production QA to a different person).

REVIEW PROCESS

It is best practice to have at least two people (content editor, reviewer) look at every piece of content on the website. For that reason, this is the proposed review process.

1. **Draft content:** Content editor drafts content and sends it to reviewer.
2. **Review:** Reviewer edits content in word and provides final approval.
3. **Production:** Content editor updates website.
4. **Post-production QA:** Reviewer looks at content on website to ensure no errors were introduced in posting.

ROLES

Web admins

All web admins are *required to*:

- Go through admin training.
- Be on the web authors mailing list.
- Read and use the City of Burien style manual.
- Receive and act on website issue reports that note pages that need to be updated or corrected.
- Receive website lite training outlining:
 - Goals and vision of the website
 - Burien branding and style guidelines
 - Plain language and accessibility guidelines
 - Review process

Admin permissions:

Will be able to do everything a content editor can do, plus:

- Delete pages
- Update settings on the content editor module
- Have access to every page of the website

Web authors

All web authors are *required*:

- Go through author training. If they can't make the CivicLive author training, they will be provided training at a later date.
- Be on the web authors mailing list. The mailing list will have (at least quarterly) information that will be important for web authors to read.
- Read and use the City of Burien style manual.
- Receive and act on website issue reports that note pages that need to be updated or corrected.
- Receive website lite training outlining:
 - Goals and vision of the website
 - Burien branding and style guidelines

- Plain language and accessibility guidelines
- Review process

Web author permissions:

- Create and edit pages
- Archive or unpublish pages (but not delete)
- Create photo galleries, announcements, calendar entries, and other functionality

Reviewers

Go through a website lite training that outlines:

- Goals and vision of the website
- Burien branding and style guidelines
- Plain language and accessibility guidelines
- Review process

RETENTION AND ARCHIVING WEBSITE CONTENT POLICY

To ensure that we comply with state regulations governing public records, while at the same time ensuring we are honoring values of transparency and accessibility, we ask content editors to follow our internal policy. At least every year, content should be reviewed for accuracy and relevancy.

Content should be removed and archived after two years on the website, unless it falls into one of the following categories:

- Council and Commission materials
- Project information
- It still has informational value as determined by the department and/or Communications Office

COUNCIL AND COMMISSION MATERIALS ON THE WEBSITE

Agendas, agenda packets, meeting minutes, supplemental materials, and videos of meetings will be on the website for **six years**.

Materials and videos are removed from the website, and files go to the Washington State Archives at **seven years**.

EXTERNAL LINKS

The purpose of this policy section is to provide guidance for the posting of external links to the City of Burien website. Please use this policy as a reference when responding to requests from external organizations.

Burienwa.gov is a resource for the public and provides information about City programs, events, and governance. Editorial policy for the website is set and maintained by the Communications Officer.

1. The City website may contain links to websites that are not administered by the City of Burien. These external websites are provided to further the mission of the City through partnerships. The City is not responsible for the content of these websites or for any internal links the websites may contain. The placement of these links on the City's website does not mean that the City endorses, warrants, or accepts responsibility for the content or uses of the external website.
2. The City's Communications Office conducts regular reviews of the external links on its site to confirm that the link still meets the original goal of furthering the City's mission through partnerships.
3. City staff, with the support of the City Communications Office, may refuse a request for including a link or delete a posted link at any time and without notice in accordance with this policy.

4. All external links featured on the City’s website must be consistent with the City’s website purpose, as stated herein. The external links must be authorized by the Communications Officer. If a requestor does not agree with the determination of the Communications Officer, they may appeal the determination to the City Manager, or the City Manager’s designee. The decision of the City Manager will be final.
 - a. Links to commercial vendors/businesses, media, public interest groups, private organizations, nonprofit organizations, and private individual sites are prohibited with the exception of those stated in section b.
 - b. Links to the following types of websites may be authorized if the web sites are consistent with the purpose of the City of Burien:
 - i. Government sites, including Federal, state and local governments
 - ii. Quasi-government organization sites that serve the City of Burien
 - iii. Official sites of City-sponsored or City-partnered events or functions. Sponsor means the City has approved funding or support with either authorization from the Department Director or City Manager.
 - iv. Sites that are required for a vendor to provide services in performing its contractual obligations to the City of Burien.
 - v. Sites that provide software plug-ins necessary for the user to access files on the connection (e.g. Adobe’s Acrobat).
 - vi. Links to research or data that supports a City of Burien program or activity.

REQUEST PROCEDURES

1. A written request for a link must be submitted to the Communications Officer for consideration.
2. The request must include a specific description of the web site link requested and provide justification for the external link.
3. The Communications Officer will review the request and provide a response to the requestor.
4. The Communications Office will review links on a periodic basis and will remove any links that no longer comply with this policy within 10 business days of the review.

Advertising

The Communications Officer, or their designee, will approve in advance all paid advertising (print, broadcast, Internet, billboard, radio, etc.). This does not include paid advertising used for hiring purposes or advertising that meets a state statute, such as notifications of Councilmember attendance at an event. The City will only pay for advertising for City programs, services, or events of which the City serves as a partner or a sponsor.

Staff Communications with Council

As Councilmembers have full schedules and commitments in addition to their roles as elected officials it is important that City staff coordinate our communications with Council to ensure that we are efficient and consistent. Staff shall not email Councilmembers directly unless otherwise directed by Department Directors or City Manager. If a Councilmember calls or emails City staff directly, please inform your director and the City Manager. It is important for all Councilmembers to have equal access to information. It is also important that City staff and Council follow [RCW 35A.13.120](#) which states, “Except for the purpose of inquiry, the council and its members shall deal with the administrative service solely through the manager and neither the council nor any committee or member thereof shall give orders to any subordinate of the city manager, either publicly or privately.”

Invitations to Councilmembers for public events should be directed and coordinated through the City Manager's Executive Assistant so that the request can be tracked and properly noticed.

Photo guidelines

The photos guidelines document provides guidelines for taking, storing, sharing, and using photographs. The server location of Burien stock photos and a list of approved tags are included.

See Photo Guidelines – Appendix B.

Media guidelines

Effective communications with the media are critical to the City of Burien's ability to provide accurate and consistent messaging. Effective media relations best serve the City by:

- promoting news, services, activities and events of significance
- expanding the general visibility of the City
- ensuring that accurate information is conveyed to the public regarding incidents and issues of a controversial and/or sensitive nature

GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR INTERACTING WITH THE MEDIA

The City Manager, Communications Officer, or designee, will be the official spokesperson for the City. The Mayor, or their designee, is the official spokesperson for the City Council. The Communications Officer's role is to coordinate the best response and outreach to media.

- All inquiries from the media should be referred to the Communications Officer.
- Depending on the topic, the City Manager or the Communications Officer may designate a department director or staff to serve as spokesperson on a particular issue.
- In cases of critical significance to the City, the Communications Officer will work with City officials to develop a fact sheet to detail the situation and summarize the City's position.
- In the event of a crisis or emergency situation, the Communications Officer or designated PIO will handle all contacts with the media and will coordinate the information flow from the City to the public. In such situations, all departments should refer calls from the media to the Communications Officer.
- City Councilmembers respond to media inquiries at their own discretion. Councilmembers are asked to notify the City Manager when they have had contact with the media and are encouraged to work with the Communications Officer when they receive advance notification of a media inquiry.

Since positive media coverage is an integral element of the City's communications program, any ideas for articles or pieces that would positively portray the City should also be directed to the Communications Officer. In a similar manner, the City Manager should be notified about negative occurrences that are likely to rise to the level of a news story.

Guidelines for communicating with the media when the issue is non-controversial and limited to the director's area of expertise:

- Obtain the name of the person calling, the media organization and, if available, the anticipated time of release of information in print or broadcast. This information should be included in the notification to the Communications Officer. The Communications Officer will work with the appropriate directors and managers to determine which staff person is best suited to respond directly.

- Do not offer speculation or gossip. Do not answer a reporter's question with "no comment" instead, refer them to the Communications Officer. Personal opinions should not be communicated. Please know that nothing is ever "off the record" and declaring that statement is not supported by any law.
- Issues that should not be discussed with reporters are 1) legal issues, 2) personnel issues, 3) a crisis or emergency. Refer all such inquiries to the Communications Officer.

PRESS RELEASES AND PRESS STATEMENTS

A press release (or news release) is a news-type article that is presented to a newspaper or other media outlet. It is meant to be used either verbatim or as background information. It often includes a quote from the city manager and the mayor (or deputy mayor if the mayor is unavailable). It can also include a quote from a department director or partner organization when relevant.

Press releases are used to announce City programs, services, events, or to inform the public of a certain topic. The Communications Officer will prepare, for review and distribution, all press releases to local, regional and national media. All press releases must be reviewed by the City Manager, or designee, prior to distribution or release.

The City of Burien will issue press statements to add clarity to a particular issue, topic, or media story. Press statements will be issued by the Communications Officer under the guidance of the City Manager, City Council, and/or the City Attorney.

When requesting a press release, please email the Communications Officer, submit the information to be released in detail. Please allow for an adequate amount of time prior to the need for the release; at least one week prior to the distribution date. Emergency releases will be addressed under Emergency Notifications.

- Press releases shall be prepared by the Communications Officer and reviewed by the City Manager or designee and relevant department director prior to release.
- Staff may prepare news releases publicizing specific City events (date, time, place, etc.) after being reviewed by their respective departments. The releases will be forwarded to the Communications Officer for distribution.
- All press releases containing controversial or sensitive materials and/or matters relating to general public safety will be prepared by the Communications Officer and distributed to the City Council, City Manager, City Attorney, and the respective department director prior to release to the media.

[Press Release Distribution Process](#)

A department may request that the Communications Officer issue a press release on its behalf, after providing them with all relevant information. The release will be sent to the requesting department for review and approval before distribution. Once approved, the Communications Officer will be responsible for distribution to the news media, as well as notifying Council, Leadership Team, and relevant staff. The initiating department is responsible for sending copies to their staff.

[Media Distribution List](#)

News releases shall be sent via email with a PDF attachment to a list maintained by the Communications Officer comprised of all interested, press-credentialed media.

MEDIA ADVISORIES/ALERTS

A media advisory is a type of indirect news material providing media outlets with information about upcoming news opportunities. A media advisory can be used to invite media to an event, such as a groundbreaking ceremony or a community event.

- Media advisories shall be prepared by the Communications Officer and reviewed by the City Manager or designee and relevant department director prior to release.
- Or, staff may prepare media advisories publicizing specific City events (date, time, place, etc.) after being reviewed by their respective departments. The advisories will be forwarded to the Communications Officer for distribution.

MEDIA BACKGROUNDERS/FACT SHEETS

A media backgrounder or fact sheet provides information on a particular issue. It is not written in the same style as a press release. It can also include photos, graphics, and other supplemental materials.

MEDIA CALENDARS

Departments shall prepare and send information about events directly to media outlets, cc'ing the Communications Officer on the email.

MEDIA INQUIRIES AND INTERVIEWS

All media requests for information and interviews for departments and staff will be handled through the Communications Officer. Department directors are encouraged to give interviews regarding their departments or areas of expertise in a timely and courteous manner. If your department is contacted by a member of the press on a routine topic for your department, please contact the Communications Officer for a protocol to respond and afterwards, follow up with the Communications Officer.

On non-routine topics, please refer the reporter to the Communications Officer and we will work with your department on a response. Departments should consult with the Communications Officer if they have questions regarding the release of sensitive or controversial information. In instances regarding the legality of releasing information, the department and the Communications Officer will consult with the City Attorney.

When possible, the City Council will receive notification of press release distribution at least one hour prior to the distribution. The exception will be emergency notifications when time is of the essence regarding the release of vital information to the community. After emergency notification is made, the City Council shall be informed as soon as possible, but within one hour of the emergency notification, either by the department, Communications Officer or the City Manager.

The Communications Officer will ensure that the media has current contact information.

EDITORIAL BOARD MEETINGS AND OP-ED COLUMNS

At any time, City of Burien officials may meet with an editorial board of a publication to provide additional insight into a topic directly involving the City. The Communications Officer will assist with the logistics of setting up such a meeting. City staff that are approached or who desire to write an editorial or opinion piece as a representative of the City shall receive approval from the City Manager and work with the Communications Officer. This ensures that the message stays consistent with the City's views and mission.

Public Safety

Fire and Police responses to emergencies in the community will be reported by the relevant agency and to the City Manager and Communications Officer.

Social Media Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide guidance and establish standards for using social media sites to conduct City business.

RESPONSIBILITY

- It is the responsibility of the Communications Officer, delegated department staff, and the IT Manager, to maintain the City's official Internet presence via social media and networking sites.
- It is the responsibility of any City department who wishes to engage in social media to coordinate their request with the Communications Officer.

DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE

These guidelines cover social media tools including, but not limited to the following:

- Social media sites: social media sites focus on creating and fostering online social communities. These sites offer various ways to interact including posting, groups, instant messaging, blogging and commenting, status updates, sharing of pictures and video, etc. Example: Facebook or Nextdoor.
- Blog: a web site where a blog author posts information on specific topics. Readers can respond to the article by posting comments online. Example: Wordpress.
- Discussion Forums: an online bulletin board that may also be referred to as a discussion group or board, a message board or an online forum. On a forum, a registered user can post a message and receive responses to the message on the site. City of Burien employees are prohibited from participating in such forums as representatives or spokespersons for the City of Burien.
- Photo and Video Sharing Websites: sites that gives users a method and location to store their digital images and videos and share them with others. Example: YouTube, Flickr (SmugMug).

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All official City of Burien social media platforms will be administered by the Communications Officer, departmental delegates, or a designee. These platforms shall be used primarily for informing the public about business of the City including news, programs, services, and events.

Individual departments may not have or maintain independent pages/sites without submitting a request to the Communications Office. The Communications Office will review the request to determine if a separate site should be created, if the determination is that it should not, the request will be forwarded to the City Manager for review.

Any department with a social media account will give admin access to all sites to both the IT Manager and Communications Officer. Department social media authors will also contribute to a City editorial calendar and participate in the Communications Committee.

Individual departments wishing to add content to official City social media sites may submit a request to the Communications Office. The Communications Office will determine if the post meets the policy guidelines.

The City of Burien website will remain the official location for content regarding the City. Whenever possible, links within social media outlets should direct users back to the City's website.

Direct messages and mentions requiring follow up communication will be treated as general correspondence and kept in accordance to retention schedules as determined by the Washington State Public Records Act.

Each social media platform used by the City of Burien shall include the posting guidelines and a short introductory statement that clearly specifies the purpose of the site and directs the user back to the City's website. Branding should include, but not be limited to the City's official social media style and colors (see Brand Guide). The name and contact information posted should not contain a specific employee's name but should be general to the City of Burien.

City employees shall not represent the City or its departments on any online community forum.

POSTING/COMMENTING GUIDELINES

All postings made by the City of Burien on social media platforms will contain information and content that has already been published or broadcast in an official manner. The City will not comment on other social media member's sites unless it pertains to City business or goals. All official social media postings by the City will be done solely on the City's social media sites or in response to postings made on the City's social media sites. Exceptions to this policy will be made on a case-by-case basis under review from the Communications Office.

Postings made on the City of Burien social media platforms will use a plural voice as you are representing the organization and not yourself.

Confidential City business shall not be disclosed on either the City's social media sites or the personal social media site of a City employee. In addition, all use of social media sites by elected and appointed officials shall be in compliance with Washington state open meeting laws.

The City will not post photos for which it does not have the copyright or owner's permission to use.

Approved content will be posted to the City's social media sites by the Communications Office or a department designee for a departmental Facebook page.

All social media sites will include a link to the City's Commenting Policy, available on the City website: burienwa.gov/footer/terms_of_use.

CITY OF BURIEN SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTING POLICY

The City of Burien uses social media to interact with residents, businesses and visitors about public issues. The City welcomes dialogue with the public. Please be aware your comments are subject to public disclosure laws and we will screen for the following:

- Potentially libelous comments.
- Obscene or explicit comments.
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetrates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation.
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language.
- Plagiarized material, or material that violates intellectual property rights.
- Private, personal information published without consent.
- Commercial promotions or spam.
- Comments that are off-topic or that link to material that is off-topic.
- Comments that embed images from external sources.
- Comments that violate any law.

Please note that the opinions and comments expressed on this social media site do not reflect the opinions and positions of the City of Burien government, its officers or employees. If you have any questions about our commenting policy, please don't hesitate to ask.

Comments will be screened periodically during standard business days.

REQUEST FOR NEW SOCIAL MEDIA SITE USAGE

All requests for new social media sites and services to promote City business, services, or events must be submitted to the Communications Officer for review. Requests should be accompanied by an explanation of:

- the purpose of the social media site or service
- primary audience served
- the reason internal or existing resources will not meet these needs
- a date range for the project (i.e. when will it launch, how long will it be in effect).
- person responsible for posting content and moderating comments

All content posted on City of Burien social media sites must comply with the City's Social Media Policy, unless otherwise agreed upon between the requesting departments and the Communications Officer. Employee or City confidentiality will be maintained in accordance with all applicable laws and City policies. If a question arises regarding the use or posting of confidential information on a social media site, the matter shall be referred to the City Attorney for review. The information in question shall not be posted, or if already posted, shall be removed until an opinion is rendered by the City Attorney.

Notwithstanding the opinion of the City Attorney, the City Manager's Office reserves the right to restrict or remove City information from an official City social media site if the City Manager believes that the information does not serve the best interests of the City.

All social media-based services to be developed, designed, managed by, or purchased from any third-party source for use requires appropriate budget authority and approval from the Communications Officer and the City Manager in conjunction with the Information Technology Manager. The requesting department will be responsible for all costs related to the purchase, maintenance and support of third-party products.

Map Guidelines

Any map that is to be published in an external-facing channel (e.g. website, social media, etc.) should be reviewed first by a City GIS staff.

Radio and TV guidelines

Video content must first be approved by the Communications Officer before posting to Castus or YouTube.

Audio content must first be approved by the Communications Officer before posting to Radio 540 AM.

Public Inquiries

Departments should respond to public inquiries in a courteous and timely manner. This includes inquiries received by email, telephone, web, or U.S. mail. Please notify the City Manager and your department director of inquiries of a sensitive nature.

Public Records Requests

All requests for public records should be forwarded to the Public Records Officer for an official response.

City Manager's Office Procedures

If a department does not agree with the determination of the Communications Officer, they may make an appeal to the City Manager, or their designee. The decision of the City Manager, or their designee will be

final. In addition to the administrators provided by this policy, the City Manager's Office may also determine/approve additional employee access to social media sites from City computing equipment.

Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of employees and appointed and elected officials to understand the procedures as outlined in this policy.
- Designated administrators for City social media sites will be trained regarding the terms of this policy, including their responsibilities to review content submitted for posting to ensure compliance with the policy.
- The Communications Officer will chair the cross-departmental Communications Committee. The committee will meet at least every month to discuss communications issues and make recommendations to policy and procedure.

Authority

These guidelines have been approved by:

City Manager Brian Wilson on August 20, 2018.

APPENDIX 3: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN TEMPLATE

Overview

Short overview of project.

Objectives

Objectives of communications component of project or campaign. Objectives could be:

- Inform and solicit feedback from community on the proposed policies and programs.
- Raise awareness.
- Inspire behavior change.

Key Audiences and Stakeholders

Note both internal and external audiences and stakeholders. Be as specific as possible. Broad categories of audiences and stakeholders are listed below.

- Residents: Specify if you are trying to reach a particular neighborhood or group.
- Council and commissions
- Legislators
- Community groups and agencies

Key Messages

Write messages to answer the “What’s in it for me?” (WIFM) question from your audiences. Messages should address information gaps or concerns from your audiences. Include proof points below each message.

Potential barriers: Note potential barriers or questions you may receive.

Messengers: Identify messengers or spokespeople.

Content/Activities

List communications tactics/activities in this section. Possible activities are listed.

- Public meetings
- Media outreach
- Social media
- Email
- Report
- Collateral
- Cost

Metrics

What does success look like?

Include specific metrics, such as website visitors, number of people attending a meeting, post-activity awareness, etc.

Timeline

The schedule below details the outreach/communication strategy and responsibilities.

Week of	Communication Type	Action Needed	Responsible for Action
January 28	-	1.	1.
February 5	-	1.	1. 2.
February 12	-	1.	1.
February 20	-	1.	1.
February 26	-	1.	1.
March 1	- Report	1.	1.

APPENDIX 4: PLAIN LANGUAGE PRINCIPLES

Federal and state agencies are required by law to use clear government communication that the public can understand and use. While no law exists for the City of Burien, it is a good practice to follow plain language, or “plain talk”, principles in external communications.

The information in this section is courtesy of plainlanguage.gov.

What is Plain Language?

“Plain language,” also known sometimes as “plain English,” is writing in a way that helps readers understand the content in a document the first time they read it. Writing in plain language is not unprofessional. It’s not “dumbing down” the message or “talking down” to the audience. When you write clearly and get to the point without using unnecessary words or technical jargon, you get your message across more quickly and increase the chance the information will be understood and used.

The federal government maintains a robust set of guidelines (plainlanguage.gov/guidelines) to help ensure government communications are easily understood. The guidelines cover the following topics:

- Write for your audience
- Organize the information
- Choose your words carefully
- Be concise
- Keep it conversational
- Design for reading
- Follow web standards
- Test your assumptions

Checklist for Plain Language

Use this checklist to see if your document meets plain language standards. (If you are writing for the web, here is the web checklist.)

- Written for the average reader.
- Organized to serve the reader’s needs.
- Has useful headings.
- Uses “you” and other pronouns to speak to the reader.
- Uses active voice.
- Uses short sections and short sentences.
- Uses the simplest tense possible—simple present is best.
- Uses base verbs, not hidden verbs.
- Omits excess words.
- Uses concrete, familiar words.
- Uses “must” to express requirements; avoids the ambiguous word “shall”.
- Places words carefully (avoids large gaps between the subject, the verb and the object; puts exceptions last; places modifiers correctly).
- Uses lists and tables to simplify complex material.
- Uses no more than two or three subordinate levels.

Checklist for Plain Language on the Web

On the web, people are in a hurry. They skim and scan, looking for quick answers to their questions. Help your readers quickly find what they need with these web writing tips:

- Less is more! Be concise.
- Break documents into separate topics.
- Use even shorter paragraphs than on paper.
- Use short lists and bullets to organize information.
- Use even more lists than on paper.
- Use even more headings with less under each heading.
- Questions often make great headings.
- Present each topic or point separately, and use descriptive section headings.
- Keep the information on each page to no more than two levels.
- Make liberal use of white space so pages are easy to scan.
- Write (especially page titles) using the same words your readers would use when doing a web search for the info.
- Don't assume your readers have knowledge of the subject or have read related pages on your site. Clearly explain things so each page can stand on its own.
- Never use "click here" as a link. Link language should describe what your reader will get if they click the link.
- Eliminate unnecessary words.

APPENDIX 5: LANGUAGE ACCESS TOOLKIT

In Burien, we envision a vibrant and creative community where the residents embrace diversity. Achieving this vision will require City departments to strengthen our efforts to serve some of our city's most marginalized populations because they have not yet gained English fluency, including the 23.7 percent of foreign-born individuals who say that they "do not speak English very well." Meeting the city's language access needs not only reflects who we want to be as a city, but it is also smart governing. Neighborhoods are stronger and safer, and residents feel more connected when they feel that they belong and can access the information and services that they need.

Addressing historical feelings of distrust in government cannot be resolved through the translation of a document. Building relationships, designing public meetings so all voices are welcome, lowering barriers to participation, providing education and support to communities traditionally marginalized, and developing community leaders—all of this requires hard work, collaboration, partnership, listening, and open and consistent communication. The purpose of this toolkit is to outline the small component of this work related to providing better access to City services for limited English speakers (LES).

In 2000, the President signed the Limited English Population (LEP) Executive Order, which requires federal agencies and all recipients of federal financial assistance to provide meaningful access to LEP individuals, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. LEP services commonly include interpreter services and translation of printed materials. In 2018, the Washington State legislature passed RCW 38.52.070, which requires emergency notifications be issued in the languages spoken by either 1,000 or 5 percent of the community, whichever number is less. This toolkit aims to address these legal requirements as well.

The Language Access Toolkit, developed by the Communications Division in consultation with City departments and language access experts, provides a step-by-step guide to help City of Burien departments successfully integrate language access into their program and budget planning. If your question is not covered by this toolkit, communications staff are available to provide technical assistance.

For language access inquiries, including reaching ethnic media, please contact:

Emily Inlow-Hood
Communications Officer
emilyi@burienwa.gov
206-439-3167

Planning a Project

Language access should be integrated at the beginning of a program and budget planning process, not at the end. Language access also is about more than translating documents. It is about operationalizing our values as a city that is serving an increasingly diverse population. This Project Planner section covers the key questions you should be asking in order to integrate language access into your work.

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

- Who is your audience?
- Is this a citywide project or for a specific neighborhood or area? What languages are spoken by your audience? What language access needs does your audience have?
- Is your campaign or project focused on an immigrant or refugee community? How does this community prefer to receive communication—written or spoken?

BUDGET

- What is the project budget? Do you need to use the centralized translation resource?

- What is the amount allocated for translation, interpretation, and community outreach?
- Who will monitor and track the record-keeping process? Records usually include, but are not limited to, numerous draft versions of text to be translated and invoices.

TIMELINES, PROCESS, AND ROLES

- What is the timeline for the project?
- How will information be distributed?
- Who will be the project liaison with the Communications Division?
- What capability or capacity exists to answer in-language to calls, emails, and other constituent communication? For example, if a phone number is provided on a document or flyer, do you have staff able to answer the phone calls in-language?

HAVE YOU CONSULTED?

- Communications Division regarding language access and communications needs?
- Community-based organizations if they have translation or interpretation capability (always offer to compensate them for their services)?

Priorities for Translation and Interpretation

In order to be able to manage a limited budget, we must prioritize which materials and activities will be offered in multiple languages. Below are guidelines for materials that should be translated into other languages and interpretation services. Unless otherwise stated, assume translation and interpretation in Spanish and Vietnamese, however staff should evaluate the audience they are trying to reach and see if other languages are necessary.

VITAL DOCUMENTS

Vital Documents provide essential information for accessing basic City services and benefits. Translating these documents is important to ensure that LEP residents understand the information and services available to them.

As set forth in federal law, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and federal Executive Order 13166, vital documents must be translated when a significant number or percentage of the population eligible to be served is likely to be directly affected by a program or activity and needs services or information in a language other than English to communicate effectively.¹ For many larger documents, translation of vital information contained within the document will suffice and the documents need not be translated in their entirety.²

EXAMPLES OF VITAL DOCUMENTS INCLUDE:

- Application forms
- Summary explanations of department's direct services
- Important documents that are key for the department's scope of work and services
- Consent and complaint forms
- Letters or notices that require a response from an LEP customer
- Summary explanations of department's direct services

¹ More info: <https://www.lep.gov/faqs/faqs.html>

² It is good practice to conspicuously list in the original script of that language all the translated versions you have available. For example, if you have a flyer translated in Traditional Chinese, the original English version of the flyer should have printed on it: 該信息的中文版本可用。 (*The Chinese-language version of this flier is available.*)

- Notices of availability of free language assistance
- Notices of eligibility criteria, rights, denial, loss, or decreases in benefits or services

OTHER DOCUMENTS TO TRANSLATE

- Emergency notifications (see LEP Emergency Communications Plan Annex and [RCW 38.52.070](#))
- Five articles per Burien Magazine and five ads for Recreation Guide
- Outreach materials
- Meeting handouts
- Educational information
- Event flyer
- List of contact information and resources
- Council Roundups
- For major events and education campaigns: posters, flyers, postcards, and digital communications (social media, website, survey).
- Key signs in public facilities.
- Key evergreen fact sheets and informational brochures.
- New and existing IT systems that have an external face should have a Google Translate function. If that is not available, then some sort of alternative access should be given.

WHEN TO OFFER INTERPRETATION

- Council Meetings and advisory board/commission meetings by request.
- For projects that require community engagement, offer interpretation services at public meetings.
- Sensitive personnel communications (HR)
- Spoken emergency notifications (see LEP Emergency Communications Plan Annex)

Quick Planning Guides for Other LEP-Accessible Venues

FRONT DESK/RECEPTION

- If someone approaches your desk and speaks to you in a language other than English, and you have determined that they are limited English proficient (LEP), try to identify the speaker's language. When communicating with them, speak slowly and clearly.
- Have the Language Line chart easily accessible or conspicuously visible in your work area.
- Point to the chart and ask the limited English proficient individual: "What language do you speak?"
- Say or point to the helpful phrase on Language Line chart that says: "Please wait while I try and locate someone who speaks your language."
- Check if there is a staff person nearby who speaks the specified language and ask for assistance.
- Or connect to Language Line. See instructions on how to use Language Line on page xx.

IN THE FIELD

- If someone approaches you and speaks to you in a language other than English, and you have determined that they are limited English proficient (LEP), try to identify the speaker's language. When communicating with them, speak slowly and clearly.
- Have the Language Line chart (wallet size) easily accessible.
- Point to the chart and ask the limited English proficient individual: "What language do you speak?"

- Say or point to the helpful phrase on Language Line chart that says: “Please wait while I try and locate someone who speaks your language.”
- Check if there is a staff person nearby who speaks the specified language and ask for assistance.
- Or connect to Language Line. See instructions on how to use Language Line on page xx.

TELEPHONE HELPLINE

If someone calls you and speaks to you in a language other than English, and you have determined that they are limited English proficient (LEP), try to identify the speaker’s language. When communicating with them, speak slowly and clearly.

- Start reading the list of top tier languages in English and see if the caller identifies one of them.
- Someone who speaks English might be in the vicinity of the caller. Try to determine if they can give the phone to someone who is English proficient to help with the conversation.
- If you can at least guess from which region of the world the speaker is from, a staff person nearby who speaks a similar language may be able to help. Ask them for assistance.
- Tell the caller to, “Please wait a moment.” And then connect to Language Line. A trained Language Line professional may be able to help. See instructions on how to use Language Line on page xx. Try to get their name and phone number to follow up with them later.
- In extremely rare cases, you may be able to guess their home language based on their name. Try to record their name and phone number so that you can call them back later with an interpreter.
- If you are able to determine the caller’s language, tell them: “Please wait a moment.”
- Check if there is a staff person nearby who speaks the specified language and ask for assistance.
- Or if you are able to determine the caller’s preferred language, please connect to Language Line. See instructions on how to use Language Line on page xx.

How to Request Translation or Interpretation

Any resident can request either interpretation or translation service by sending an email to language@burienwa.gov. We ask for 48 hours’ notice for interpretation and at least business day notice for a document needing translation. We only provide this service for City-related activities or documents.

INTERNAL REQUESTS

City staff who would like to request interpretation services should email this a completed request form to interpreting@dynamiclanguage.com, cc’ing emilyi@burienwa.gov. Confirm with Dynamic Language using their secure email service. See Tips for Working with an Interpreter for best results.

City staff who would like to request a document be translated should send the document to [email], cc’ing emilyi@burienwa.gov. See Tips for Preparing Content for Translation for best results.

Tips for Preparing Content for Translation

As of 2018, the City of Burien has a master contract with Dynamic Language to provide both translation and interpretation services. Departments are encouraged to plan ahead and build in time to ensure that translation is done accurately and at a reasonable cost. Translators will charge more for a rush order. The rates below are meant to be a guide only. The translation company and community translators determine the final costs. (move this to rates section)

For the City of Burien, the translation process has three basic steps. We recommend budgeting a week for a simple translation and a week and a half for a complex translation. Please see the chapter, Translating

Documents: a Step-by-Step Guide for our comprehensive guide on translating official City of Burien documents and outreach materials.

1. Plan for your translation and interpretation needs throughout the program or service process.
2. Find an employee (see employee language bank) who speaks the language and ask them to review OR find a native-language translator from the community and pay them to review the translated document, (one hour of work is the standard for a simple translation and two-hours of work is the standard for a complex translation), OR
3. If the community reviewer recommends changes to the translated text, the translator and you will need to come to a final decision on the translation. Then you can disseminate the translated documents. The agreed-upon term may need to be added to the City of Burien Term Base.

STEP 1: UNDERSTAND THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Whenever possible, learn about the best way to reach a limited English speaking (LES) community by asking someone from the target audience (such as staff from an organization in that community) or looking up information about the community (see resources).

Written communication is not the only (nor always the best) mode of communication. For example, some languages have rich oral traditions, including East African languages such as Oromo. A word-of-mouth or video approach may work better in those language communities.

STEP 2: PREPARING MATERIALS FOR TRANSLATION

Time and cost estimates (non-rush)

Generally, simple translations (600 words or less, common vocabulary) take about a week and complex translations (more than 600 words, technical language) take a week and a half or more. Budget around 0.25 cents per word or \$50/hour by a certified translator.

Improve quality and accuracy: prepare the document for translation

Consider readability and use plain English.

- A complicated or poorly written English document is more likely to result in an awkward or confusing translation. Keep the information simple and concise.
- Use short sentences and avoid complicated sentence structure.
- Avoid jargon and acronyms.
- It's acceptable for the English version you send to the translator to differ from the original English document.
- Try to write for an audience at a fourth-grade reading level. This will make it easier for people to understand the translated text. Online tools like readable.io can help.

Check for cultural relevance.

- Imagine how it reads in another language. Would the content make sense to someone from another country?
- Avoid metaphors, idioms, colloquialisms, euphemisms, and other forms of language that require situational or U.S. cultural experience, for example, "open house" might be translated as "vacant house." A "hot line" might be translated literally as a line that is hot.
- Look for language, instructions or images that may not be culturally appropriate. For example, "swine flu vaccination" may be unintentionally distasteful to groups that consider pork taboo. When using images, try to use ones that reflect the target community.
- When possible, ask a member of the target audience to review the document for cultural relevance.

Prepare the document for the translator.

- Send text as Word files.
- Highlight certain words to flag to the translator and provide explanations of those terms, such as:
 - Names of organizations, programs and other proper nouns (specify if you want them translated or left in English)
 - Technical terms
- If are making a poster, flyer, or other material that will have design elements, check to see if the translation vendor can put the translated text into the layout. Dynamic Language charges extra for this service. If not, use a format like the one shown below. You can insert the sentences or phrases put into one column in English and the translation agency can put the translations into the other column. This will help you copy and paste the translated text into the correct spot in your designs.

Translation Template Document		
Language:		Project:
Instructions: Please translate each row below and put your translated sentences on the right side. Yellow highlighted words are to be kept in English or are to be included in parentheses. Green highlighted words are technical terms that may need further thought regarding the translation.		
Cell	English	Translation
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		

Step 3: Working with a translation vendor.

- Email a translation vendor to request an estimate and attach the document.
- Clearly state:
 - What languages are needed. Ask for the translation in the dialect of the language that is used locally. Some language use is distinctly different in the U.S. than in the country of origin (such as Vietnamese) or there may be a dialect that is spoken more by the community in your area (such as Mexican Spanish vs. South American dialects).
 - Whether it is a rush job and the completion date and time needed
 - How the translation will be used (e.g., a news release, flyer, phone recording, etc.). This helps the translators determine the tone and style.
- Accept the estimate to begin the translation.

- Encourage the translator to contact you if they have questions about the meaning of any of the content.
- Ask for a quality assurance (QA) review. This will be an additional cost, but will be a check on the accuracy and quality. A quality assurance review will have a second translator check the work of the first. Dynamic Language provides this as part of their service. When using them, you don't need to ask for the QA review.

Step 4: Community or peer review

Even the best translation agencies may have differing levels of quality depending on which individual translator is doing the work. They may be stronger in some languages than others. As a result, it's possible to have a problematic translation on occasion from even the best vendors.

The best practice is to have a native speaker review the translation to make sure it is accurate and reads well. When possible, identify possible reviewers in advance. If the translation is long, consider providing some type of compensation for the time and expertise it takes to carefully review a document.

If the reviewer disagrees with the translation, provide the feedback to the translation agency. This may involve some back-and-forth with the translation agency as their team may not agree with the reviewer. In general, the professional translators are more experienced, so if you are uncertain about which version to use, go with the advice of the professional translators.

Emergency Communications

These instructions have been written for general translation. When translating messages in an emergency, it may not be possible to do every step (such as Step 1: Understand the target audience). During emergencies, ask for rush translations from translation vendors. You may also need to have a list of translation vendors from outside your region or state who are not impacted by the disaster. You may also need to use alternate, faster translation options, such as bilingual staff. Keep in mind the following to increase accuracy and clarity of translated emergency information:

- Translation is a technical skill, and just as not every speaker of English is a good writer, not every speaker of a language is a good translator.
- Try to only have short messages translated by non-certified translators.
- Community or peer review is very important when using translations done by non-certified translators! A second set of eyes (whether a community member or another bilingual staff member) can catch problematic translations.
- You can speed up the translation process and still have quality translation work if you have already built relationships with members of language communities who can quickly advise on and review your communications.

See Appendix A for LEP Communications component of Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).

Tips for Working with an Interpreter

Summary of Basic Process

1. **1-2 months before the event.** Plan for your translation and interpretation needs throughout the program or service process. **NOTE: If your event/meeting is longer than one hour, you will need to hire two interpreters per language to accommodate the length of time.** The Communications Division has interpretation equipment that can be used by interpreters in various meeting settings to reach

participants that need those services. If you are already working with a community partner on outreach, they may be able to provide interpretation and simple translation. Inquire with the community partner.

2. **2-3 weeks before the event.** Communicate with the interpreters prior to the meeting. Let them know in advance what type of interpretation will be used, (see Language Access Terms on page 7). Share any pertinent handouts and the event agenda, summarizing the important points.
3. **1 week before the event.** Meet with the interpreters before the event to review the agenda and handouts. If sensitive topics or issues will be discussed, ask for input on the best ways to present these issues.
4. **2 days before the event.** Test and practice using any equipment.
5. **1 hour to 30 minutes before the event.** Remind interpreters to interpret the original message directly without editorializing. And explain all technical terms to the interpreters.
6. **5 minutes before the event.** Acknowledge the interpreters, and allow them to inform the audience in-language that interpretation is available. Remind the audience and speakers that interpretation is happening and to speak clearly and at a moderate speed. Announce any other guidelines the interpreter(s) would like to have announced.
7. **During the event.** Try to observe any mention of any confusing terms or abbreviations and pause to explain them for the interpreters.
8. **Immediately after the event.** Thank the interpreter and ask for feedback about the event logistics.
9. **1 week after the event.** Pay the interpreter invoice.

Working with an Interpreter and LEPs: Best Practices

- Remember to be friendly in your demeanor, smiling often.
- Speak directly to the limited English proficient (LEP) individual as if the interpreter is not there. Use first-person language. Do not speak to the LEP individual through the interpreter.
- Speak naturally and at a normal pace. Do not speak more loudly or more slowly.
- Speak in one to two short sentences at a time. Avoid breaking up a thought. Use plain English. Express the whole thought at one time, if possible. This will help the interpreter understand the context.
- Be responsive to the interpreter. They may ask you to slow down or repeat if necessary.
- Feel free to also ask the interpreter whether you are speaking at a good pace. Ask the LEP individual if they have understood the conversation and have any questions.
- Check for understanding and comprehension. Do not assume. Do not use industry jargon, slang, abbreviations, acronyms, or technical terms. If needed, explain any words unique to the situation, and give examples to explain them. If you need to use technical terms, explain them to the interpreter, so they are able to convey the meaning.
- Use simple language to improve understanding and comprehension. Some cultures may say “yes” to be polite, but not understand what has been communicated. Also, a lack of English proficiency does not mean a lack of education.

Top Tier Languages

Primary languages are languages other than English spoken by 5 percent or more of Burien residents, based on data from the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), American Community Survey, and the Highline School District. These languages are organized into two tiers. The first tier includes the top languages spoken in Burien, and the second tier includes languages spoken by at least 2,250 or 5 percent of Burien residents.

Emerging languages are defined as languages spoken by between 2.5 percent and 5 percent or between 1,250 and 2,550 Burien residents. According to the 2017 American Community Survey, 2.17% or 995 people speak African languages (specific language not detailed).

28.7% of Burien residents are speakers of a non-English language.

TIER 1

1. Spanish, 8,531 speakers (18.6%)
2. Vietnamese, 1,793 speakers (3.9%)

TIER 2

1. African Languages (unknown), 995 speakers (2.17%)

Countries and Languages of Origin List

This list reflects the majority of foreign languages spoken by residents of the City of Burien and King County, as well as the predominant countries of origins for these native and heritage language speakers. This is not meant to be a comprehensive list. Rather, we intend this to be a guide to show that even if a group of people share the same language, their places of origin, cultures, and communities may differ.

A “heritage language speaker” refers to someone who learned a minority language at home as a child, but never fully developed fluency because they grew up with a culture’s dominant language, in which they become more competent.

A “native language speaker” refers to someone who learned and used their society’s dominant language from early childhood. It does not necessarily mean that it is the speaker’s only language, but it means it is and has been the primary means of concept formation and communication.

LANGUAGE	COUNTRIES ASSOCIATED
Acholi	South Sudan, Uganda
Afrikaans	Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe
Akan	Côte d’Ivoire/Ivory Coast, Ghana
Albanian	Albania
Amharic	Ethiopia
Arabic	Algeria, Bahrain, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen
Armenian	Armenia
Bemba	Botswana, Congo, Tanzania, Zambia
Bengali/Bangla	Bangladesh, India
Bilen	Eritrea, Sudan
Bosnian	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia

Bulgarian	Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Turkey Serbia, Ukraine
Burmese	Burma, Malaysia, Thailand
Cambodian/Khmer	Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam
Cantonese	China, Hong Kong, Macau
Cebuano	Philippines
Cham	Cambodia, China, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam
Chamorro	Guam, Northern Mariana Islands
Chuukese	Micronesia
Croatian	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia
Czech	Czech Republic
Dari	Afghanistan
Dinka	South Sudan
Eritai	Indonesia , New Guinea
Estonian	Estonia
Farsi/Persian	Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, Russia
Fijian	Fiji
Filipino/Tagalog	Philippines
Finnish	Finland
French	Algeria, Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire/Ivory Coast, Djibouti, France, Gabon, Guinea, Haiti, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mali, Monaco, Morocco, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Vanuatu, Vietnam
Fukienese/Fujianese	China, Taiwan
Fulfulde/Fulani/Fula	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Togo
Fuma/Kele	Democratic Republic of Congo
Georgian	Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine
German	Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Switzerland
Greek	Cyprus, Greece
Gujarati	India, Pakistan

Hebrew Modern	Israel
Hindi	India, Pakistan
Hmong	China, French Guinea, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam
Hungarian	Austria, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine
Icelandic	Iceland
Igbo	Nigeria
Ilokano	Philippines
Indonesian	Indonesia
Japanese	Japan
Javanese (Basa Jawa)	Indonesia
Kannada	India
Kaqchikel	Guatemala
Karen	Burma, Thailand
Khmu	China, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam
Kikuya	Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda
Kinyarwanda	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda
Kirundi/Rundi	Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, Uganda
Korean	North Korea, South Korea
Krio	Sierra Leone
Kurdish	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey
Lao	Laos
Latvian	Latvia
Lithuanian	Lithuania
Malay	Brunei, Christmas Island, Cocos, East Timor, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand
Malayalam	India
Mam	Mexico
Mandarin	China
Mandingo/Mandika	Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Senegal
Maori	New Zealand
Marshallese/Ebon	Marshall Islands, Nauru
Maya-Quiche	Guatemala

Mien	China, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam
Minnan	China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam
Mongolian	China, Mongolia
Nepali	India, Nepal
Nigerian	Nigeria
Nuer	Ethiopia, South Sudan
Nyanja/Chewa	Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Oromo	Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Somalia, Tanzania
Pampangan	Philippines
Pashto	Afghanistan, Pakistan
Pohnpeian	Pohnpei
Portuguese	Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, East Timor, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Macau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe
Punjabi	India, Pakistan
Pushtu	Afghanistan, Pakistan
Quechua	Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru
Romanian	Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine
Russian	Russia
Samoan	Samoan Islands
Serbo-Croatian	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia
Sinhalese	Sri Lanka
Slovak	Czech Republic, Hungary, Serbia, Slovakia
Somali	Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Somaliland
Soninke	Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire/Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal
Spanish	Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay, Venezuela
Swahili	Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mayotte, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia
Taiwanese	Taiwan

Tamil	India, Sri Lanka
Telugu	India
Thai	Thailand
Tibetan	Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan
Tigrinya	Eritrea, Ethiopia
Toishanese	China, Hong Kong
Tongan	Tonga
Trukese (Chuukese)	Micronesia
Turkish	Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Kosovo, Iran, Iraq, Macedonia, Northern Cyprus, Romania, Turkey
Twi	Ghana
Ukrainian	Ukraine
Urdu	India, Pakistan
Vietnamese	China, Vietnam
Visayan	Philippines
Wolof	Gambia, Mauritania, Senegal

How to Use Telephonic Language Interpretation

City staff are in the process of searching for a firm and establishing a contract to provide this service.

1. Dial phone number.
2. Provide contract number.
3. Once connected, ask for the language needed.
4. You will hear a click. STAY ON THE LINE.
5. When an interpreter is on the line, briefly describe what the situation is before reconnecting with limited English-proficient (LEP) individual.

WHEN LEP RESIDENT IS ON-SITE

1. Have the LEP individual point to what language they need from the language picker chart.
2. Call Language Line. When an interpreter is on the line, explain the context of the call before connecting again with the LEP individual.

WHEN LEP RESIDENT CALLS YOU

1. Ask them which language they speak and put them on hold.*
2. Call Language Line. When an interpreter is on the line, explain the context of the call before connecting again with the LEP individual.

WHEN YOU CALL AN LEP RESIDENT

1. First, call Language Line.
2. Once you are connected with the interpreter, explain the situation.
3. Give interpreter the name and telephone number of the LEP individual.
4. The interpreter will place the call for you.

Quick Planning Guide for LEP-Accessible Community Meetings

PREPARING FOR THE MEETING

- Identify your audience. Will there be a mix of limited English proficient (LEP) and English-speaking individuals attending the meeting?
- Determine languages you need interpreted. Schedule interpreters as early as possible.
- Outreach flyers should be translated. The translated flyers should explicitly state that interpretation is available and which languages. Provide contact information if you want to be able to respond to requests for interpretation in specific languages.
- Determine if you need to use headsets. For a mixed group, simultaneous interpretation through use of headset equipment is preferable. Test headsets in advance.
- Translate handouts. If you plan to use charts, make them easy to understand and visually simple.
- Plan your room setup. Ensure that LEP participants can clearly see and hear the interpreter. If there is more than one language present, make sure to provide ample space between each group to reduce noise interference.

INTERPRETATION

- Schedule interpreters well in advance to ensure availability.
- Check in with interpreters prior to the meeting. If you are using interpretation equipment, let the interpreters know.

- Share an overview of the agenda and summarize the important points. Send them handouts before the meeting. If sensitive topics or issues are to be discussed, ask for input on the best ways to present these issues.
- Remind interpreters to interpret the original message directly without editorializing. Explain all technical terms.
- Discuss room set up, seating, or positioning.

TRANSLATION

- Schedule translation of documents as early as you can.
- Have native speakers community review translated materials to ensure accuracy and context.

AT THE MEETING

- Ensure room set-up is ready for interpretation. Test the interpretation equipment before the meeting.
- Brief all speakers that interpreters are in the room. Speakers need to speak slowly and clearly, and pause to give interpreters a chance to interpret what is said in a timely manner.
- If using interpretation headsets, lay them out before the meeting and collect them after.
- At the beginning of the meeting, introduce the interpreters to the room. And allow the interpreters to inform the audience in-language that interpretation is available.
- If the meeting has an audience participation portion, remind the audience that interpretation is happening and they should speak clearly and with a moderate pace to give the interpreter(s) the best chance to interpret what was said.
- Thank the interpreter for their time. Follow up with a timely payment.

Quick Planning Guide for LEP-Accessible One-on-One Meetings

SETTING UP THE MEETING

- Let the limited English proficient (LEP) individual know in advance that an interpreter will be provided free of charge. You can communicate this through an interpreter or in-language notice.
- When scheduling the meeting, include the time and place and clear directions on how to get there.
- Schedule with the interpreter far enough in advance to ensure availability on the meeting date.
- In cases where you have short notice and an interpreter is not available in person, use Language Line.
- Determine if documents that are being used at the meeting need to be translated.

INTERPRETATION

- Schedule the interpreter well in advance to ensure availability.
- Connect with the interpreter prior to the meeting. If you are using headsets, please inform the interpreters.
- Share overview of agenda and summarize the important points. Send them handouts before the meeting.
- NOTE: When sensitive topics or issues are to be discussed, ask for input on the best ways to present these issues.
- Remind the interpreter to interpret the original message directly without editorializing. Explain all technical terms.

TRANSLATION

- Schedule translation of documents as early as you can.
- Have native speakers review translated materials to ensure accuracy and context.

DURING THE MEETING

- Address the LEP individual directly.
- Make sure you pause to give the interpreter sufficient time to interpret.
- Maintain eye contact with the LEP individual.
- Thank the interpreter for their time and follow up with a timely payment.

Rates

The City of Burien has a contract with Dynamic Language. Below are the rates they charge. The rates in this contract match the State of Washington's negotiated master contract rates. City staff will renegotiate this contract in the fall 2019 so rates may change.

SPOKEN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING RATES (IN-PERSON)

- Regular Business Hours: \$45.00 per hour Spanish, \$47.50 for all other languages
- After Hours: \$52.00 per hour
- Mileage: \$0.58 per mile

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING RATES (IN-PERSON)

- Regular Business Hours: \$75.00 per hour
- After Hours: \$82.00 per hour
- Mileage: \$0.58 per mile

TRANSLATION

- Spanish: \$0.20 per word
- Other languages: \$0.24 per word
- 250 word minimum or \$65.50 fixed charge.
- Rush orders cost more
- Minimum of 3-4 day turnaround. Depends on project.
- All-inclusive pricing includes quality control and proofreading.

DESIGN CONSULTATION

- Desktop Publishing, Press-Proof: Provides advice on design and word choice for cultural appropriateness.
- Per project quote. Based on \$40.00 per ½ hour maximum price (actual project cost may be less).

TELEPHONIC INTERPRETATION

- *Currently, we don't have an active contract with a service provider.
- Washington State contract rates vary between \$.54 to \$.69 per minute

Employee Language Bank

An internal resource that lists City of Burien employees who have volunteered their language skills for City departments needing community review or short-term or emergency interpretation/translation. This is still under discussion as it involves employee job descriptions and labor.

Language Access Terms

Dynamic Language A full service translation and interpretation company based in Tukwila, Washington. The City has a contract with them.

Employee Language Bank An internal resource that lists City of Burien employees who have volunteered their language skills for City departments needing community review or short-term or emergency interpretation/translation.

In-person Translation The precise oral interpretation of written communication from one language to another.

Interpretation The oral delivery of a **spoken** message from one language to another without changing the original message. There are many modes of interpretation:

Simultaneous While the speaker is talking, an interpreter is simultaneously listening and comprehending the next sentence to a target audience. Headsets are often used in group settings and when multiple languages are being interpreted in a room.

Consecutive The speaker stops every 1-5 minutes (usually at the end of every paragraph or complete thought) to allow interpretation of what was said.

Summary The interpreter provides a summary of the statements in the original language. It differs from simultaneous interpretation in that statements are not interpreted verbatim.

Whispered The interpreter sits or stands next to the intended (usually small) audience and interprets simultaneously in a whisper. This mode is often used in situations where the majority of the group speaks one language, and a limited number of people do not speak that language.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) A person with limited English proficiency (LEP) cannot speak, read, write, or understand the English language at a level that permits them to interact effectively with English speakers. An individual may be LEP in one situation and not another, for example, a medical setting versus a restaurant setting.

Term Base The official list of translations for often used City of Burien terms and names. This usually includes unique city names, like “Ambaum Avenue,” or names of departments, like “Public Works,” or names of programs, like “Green Burien Program.” Translators will use the term base to ensure consistency with your department’s ongoing translation needs. **The City of Burien Term Base has official translations in Spanish and Vietnamese.** If you are utilizing Dynamic Language, they will already refer to the most current Term Base. If you are utilizing a community translator, you will need to forward them the Term Base from: [link](#) and instruct the translator to refer to the document during the translation process. *This service currently is not part of the City’s contract with Dynamic Language, but it is something that will be included as part of the contract negotiation.*

Translation The conversion of communication from one language to another in a **written** form. An accurate translation is one that conveys the intent and essential meaning of the original text. Accurate sometimes does not mean literal. For example, “let your voice be heard” in English is often used and understood as a

metaphor for voting or civic engagement. In some languages, the phrase might literally mean “yelling,” and not at all the act of voting or participating in one’s community.

Vital Documents Documents that provide essential information for accessing basic City services and benefits.

APPENDIX 6: LEGAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the aspirations we have for the quality of our communications, there are a number of other considerations that also guide our tactics and strategies. We are very careful to ensure that we are aware of and implement all legal requirements. We also are careful to execute our communications within the established policies of the City of Burien. We strive to meet the highest ethical standards of both government agencies and the public relations and communications profession.

Accessibility—We will make every reasonable effort to ensure that the information about City programs and policies is available to all of our audiences, despite the many barriers to communication. These barriers include access to media, language, cultural differences, and physical disabilities.

Informing vs. Persuading—One of the many challenges of communicating emerging issues is in providing complete and unbiased information to residents on issues that are coming to the City Council before the Council has had the opportunity to deliberate and establish the City’s official position, or vote on a specific decision. While we firmly believe that we best serve the public interest by acting as responsible advocates for the Council’s policy decisions—providing the City’s perspective in the marketplace of ideas, facts, and viewpoints to aid informed public debate—we also recognize the potential for criticism that the City has been selective about information provided to the public with the goal of attempting to persuade residents to come to preferred conclusions. Any appearance of “spin” in our communications will work against the ideals of transparency and inclusiveness and reduce our credibility with the public. Ultimately, we aim to provide the data and reasoning behind the policy decisions so that residents can understand how those decisions were made.

In addition, as professional practitioners, we have adopted the ethical standards of the Public Relations Society of America.