



THE CITY OF
Fredericksburg, Texas

Comprehensive Communication Plan 2018

Created by the City of Fredericksburg Public Information Office
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City of Fredericksburg - Comprehensive Communication Plan - 2018

The City of Fredericksburg’s Communication Plan highlights goals, objectives, and specific actions that staff will take to assist the organization in connecting and engaging with citizens and employees. This plan is critical in accomplishing transparency, the growing demand for open, two-way communication needed to engage with the public, and gathering of feedback from citizens, visitors, and employees. This plan is a living document and will be reviewed and updated as needed as part of the City’s commitment to continuously improve its communications to the public.

The City of Fredericksburg

The City of Fredericksburg is a city of beauty and charm. Its founding includes a rich history of people making a good life in a new place with the help of friends and neighbors. Working together, they created a city where all could live up to their potential, participate in activities, and benefit from services to enhance the quality of their lives. The spirit of working together to create a beautiful, livable place is still alive today in Fredericksburg and that spirit is responsible for the ambiance of the city today.

The City of Fredericksburg is located approximately 72 miles northwest of San Antonio and approximately 80 miles west of Austin with a population of just over 11,000. The City of Fredericksburg employs 157 people full-time and 64 people part-time. The City Council includes a mayor and four council members.

Mission Statement

“We’re leading with integrity while providing the best customer services to our community.”

Core Values



Customer Service - We will provide the highest level of service to customers at all times.



Leadership - We are all leaders serving the needs of others and uniting in the pursuit of common goals.



Integrity - We will do what is right even when no one is looking.



Community - We encourage a diligent effort to discover and share the common values with the community.

Public Information Office

Effective communication with the public and with our employees is the goal of this office. Whether it is through a phone call, email, social media, the City website, messages via our Constant Contact account, or a face to face visit, it is important to us to make sure citizens and employees are receiving the information they need.

Communication is not just talking... it's listening as well. We want to hear from you! Communities and governments that are engaged communicate better.

The role of the Public Information Officer (PIO) is to plan, coordinate, and manage the operations and activities of the City of Fredericksburg's Public Information Office to assure the City's key messages reach the public by coordinating dissemination of news by way of all media outlets utilized by the City. The PIO provides advice and counsel to City staff and officials in the management of community relations issues and serves as the City's primary media liaison. The PIO also serves as the Public Information Officer in the event of the activation of the Incident Command System.

The Public Information Office is responsible for disseminating accurate, reliable and timely information to employees and the public. The City utilizes several methods to communicate with employees and the public. These methods include email, the City website, social media channels, Constant Contact distribution, the local newspaper, and the local radio station.

Email

The majority of City employees are assigned a City issued email address. These email addresses can be accessed from the City's website from the Staff Directory. The City Council can also be emailed from the website.

Employees diligently try to answer emails within 24 hours of receiving them and will post out of office messages if they will be away from the office for more than one day.

Website

The City of Fredericksburg's website, www.fbgtx.org, is the City's main hub of information. While the Public Information Officer serves as the webmaster and is responsible for the overall supervision of the site, each department within the organization is responsible for reviewing and updating content on their departmental pages. CivicPlus currently hosts the website and offers modules used within the site to promote notification and engagement by the public.

The website contains a plethora of information as well as tools for the public to use. Through this website, utility bills can be paid online, calendars of events for meetings of city committees and boards can be viewed, and public notices and bid announcements can be

found. The Request Tracker tool allows the public to submit and track service requests to City departments.

The website also contains an Intranet site that is utilized by employees only. This site contains forms, manuals, benefit information, and other communications for employees to access.

Social Media

Social media allows the City of Fredericksburg to disseminate information quickly to an ever-growing audience. Currently, the City of Fredericksburg utilizes the following social media channels:

- Facebook - Fredericksburg, TX (@CityofFredericksburgTX)
- Twitter - Fredericksburg, TX (@Fredericksburg2)
- YouTube - Fredericksburg, Texas USA

At the time of this publication, the City of Fredericksburg has 5,483 followers on Facebook and 959 followers on Twitter. These social media channels are used to post information about City services, street closures, utility outages, upcoming events, employment opportunities, and many other important communications.

Constant Contact

The City of Fredericksburg uses the distribution services of Constant Contact to send out monthly City Updates. The public can sign up to receive these updates on the City's website under the [Public Information Office's page](#) or by clicking this [link](#). Updates are sent out at least once per month and contain information about upcoming events, project status updates, introduces new employees to the public, and more.

At the time of this publication, the City of Fredericksburg has 1,589 active contacts in Constant Contact.

Local Newspaper & Radio Station

The City of Fredericksburg and the Fredericksburg Standard have a great working relationship and collaborate on articles to make sure the public is receiving up-to-date, accurate information. The City utilizes the services of the Fredericksburg Standard to publish press releases, notify the public of new City services, publicize upcoming City events, and publish employment opportunities and advertisements for bid.

The City of Fredericksburg notifies the local radio station, KNAF, when information needs to be broadcast over the radio.

Emergency Communications

In the event of an emergency, the City of Fredericksburg will utilize as many communication channels as necessary to disseminate information in a timely manner. However, the City of Fredericksburg currently participates in the i-Info Mass Communications System for emergency notification to the public. In the event of an emergency, the Fredericksburg Emergency Management staff will use this system to alert our citizens to the danger and to provide any instructions that they need to remain safe. These messages are generated and sent 24 hours a day - 7 days a week as needed.

Citizens must register to receive emergency notifications in order to have the messages delivered to them via email, text message, or by telephone call. The service does not charge registrants to receive messages, however, standard phone charges, mobile minutes, and text messaging rates may apply for calls and text messages you receive as provided in your telephone or wireless plan.

To register for i-Info emergency notifications, visit the [Emergency Notification System](#) webpage for more information, or click this [link](#).

Communication Goals

The City of Fredericksburg is working to create an organizational culture that values and utilizes open, two-way communication that includes listening to citizens and employees. How citizens and employees wish to be communicated with, what information they wish to receive, and how often they wish to receive it, must be understood to be able to accomplish the goal of communicating effectively.

The City of Fredericksburg has identified several goals to be adopted throughout the organization. These include:

- Continue efforts of transparency
- Keep citizens informed
- Better engagement of citizens
- Disseminate information that is clear, concise, and accurate
- Have more conversations and gather more feedback from citizens
- Increase public participation
- Identify new channels to distribute information
- Put a human face on local government

These goals will strengthen the City's ability to continuously improve the process by which citizens can connect with City Staff and City Council. They will also increase the City of Fredericksburg's capacity to communicate with citizens in meaningful ways, as well as help in the development in relationships that will allow for discussion and dialogue of topics.

In order to meet the goals set forth in this Plan, several actions must be taken. Taking responsibility must be a priority. Every staff member and council member has a responsibility to listen to citizens and incorporate feedback to improve the organization. Information should be made available to citizens and employees in a timely manner utilizing the methods they prefer. Active listening is at the forefront of communication efforts. Citizens want their voices heard. We should acknowledge and appreciate their input.

New Programs & Communication Efforts

In an effort to improve overall communication, the City of Fredericksburg Public Information Office will be introducing several new programs to the public in 2018, as well as enhancing things we already have in place.

Enhancements to Existing Communications

Our monthly Employee Newsletter and City Update will include more upcoming events rather than details of what has happened over the past month. We have begun posting agenda items to social media when agendas for public meetings have been posted. In an effort to make public meeting agendas more easily accessible, a link to meeting agendas has been added to the homepage of the City's website. We have also performed a similar action to access the Special Events calendar on the homepage.

Video Capabilities

We, in time, hope to incorporate more short video presentations to promote City facilities, introduce City departments, and put a human face on local government. In the future, we also plan to live stream public meetings for those who cannot attend.

First Responder Fridays

As a way to connect with the public and put a human face on local government, a program we plan to begin is being called 'First Responder Fridays'. This program will introduce a member of the Fredericksburg Fire EMS or Fredericksburg Police Department to the public in a short video publication each Friday. These will be posted on social media and on the City's website.

Coffee with the City Manager

Another program that will be an effort to reach out to the community for conversations will begin on May 9th. "Coffee with the City Manager" will take place on the second Wednesday of each month and be held at different locations around the City. This program will give the City Manager and the public an opportunity to have conversations in a relaxed atmosphere. The public will be able to ask questions and receive direct answers from the City Manager. We are hoping that a council member may be able to attend these gatherings as well.

Newspaper Articles

In an effort to expand information on key issues facing the City, the PIO and City Manager will prepare monthly articles for the Fredericksburg Standard. We will seek input from the City Council on topics to be included in these articles.

Establish Local Communications Group

As part of the Visioning process, creation of a community channel that is informative and entertaining has been identified. In their final report, the Business Visioning Subcommittee identified this channel to become available for broad participation by local entities to communicate to (or be viewed by) visitors and residents alike. In order to accomplish this task, the establishment of a local communications group, including both public and private entities, to explore the feasibility of establishing a local cable access channel should be formed.

Conclusion

The City of Fredericksburg's Comprehensive Communication Plan will facilitate a more transparent, engaging form of government that will help establish relationships with the public. This Plan is a guide to assist the City of Fredericksburg in its mission to accomplish its communication goals.

Comments and suggestions concerning this comprehensive communication plan can be emailed to Lea Feuge, Public Information Officer, LFeuge@fbgtx.org.