

Communication Strategy
Infrastructure Funding Projects
Town of Markham



Date	August 31, 2009	
Project Name	Infrastructure Funding Grants – Capital Programs	
Client / Department	Brenda Librecz, Community and Fire Services	
Tel. # / extension		
Project Lead	Dennis Flaherty	
Project End Date	March 31, 2011	Priority: High
Budget	TBD	
Internal Stakeholders Required	Senior Executive and senior staff from all commissions associated with the infrastructure program	

Scope of Work

Develop an overarching communications strategy to guide communications for the seven infrastructure projects and communications plans for each individual project.

Timing or Critical Dates for specific projects		Info
Project #1 -	Artificial Ice Surface	
Project #2 -	Emergency Operations Centre	
Project #3 -	Facility Accessibility Retrofits	
Project #4 -	Facility Energy Retrofits	
Project #5 -	Indoor Soccer Field	
Project #6 -	Indoor Tennis Centre	
Project #7 -	Thornhill Community Centre & Library	

Project Description

Background:

The Town of Markham has received funding from the provincial and federal governments to undertake and complete seven infrastructure projects by March 31, 2011. The total budget is \$21.83 Million. An Executive Coordinating Infrastructure Team has been created to oversee coordination of the projects and to support the project teams.

Communications and Community Relations (CCR) participates on the team to provide communications counsel, advice and communications support to the Executive Coordinating Infrastructure Team. The CCR Department will develop also provide specific integrated communications plans for each of the seven infrastructure projects.

Communications Objectives:

External

1. Ensure external stakeholders and media are informed of infrastructure project benefits and progress before significant activities occur in the public domain.
2. Provide opportunities for external stakeholders to be engaged in individual projects communications and to serve as community ambassadors on the benefits to the community.
3. Develop communications tactics across multiple mediums to ensure all residents and stakeholders have the opportunity to learn about the infrastructure projects and the benefits to the community
4. Utilize Ward and Regional Councillors as information ambassadors and spokespersons for Ward/project communications..

Internal

1. Maintain communications updates to staff during key milestones of the projects.
2. Ensure operations staff connected to each project are informed of public communications and construction activity milestones prior to execution in the public domain.
3. Utilize facilities operations staff as ambassadors to speak to project progress and benefits to the community.

Interim Business Messages:

1. Markham is moving forward aggressively with all of its infrastructure projects and we are already creating jobs through these projects
2. We have formed special purpose staff teams and these teams are operating to meet the deadlines we committed to in our applications.
3. Special consultants and architects and now engaged to assist with our projects.
4. The new and upgraded facilities from this program will provide significantly enhance Markham's services and recreational opportunities for residents.

Strategic Considerations:

Environmental:

- As these are Town of Markham facilities LEED standards will apply and these standards should be mentioned as part of individual project communications.
- Many of the infrastructure activities will involve energy efficiency retrofits. As such the environmental benefits of these should be articulated in understandable terms and developed in conjunction with Markham's Sustainability office.

Political:

- As these programs are funded through federal provincial and municipal funding some communications tactics (particularly groundbreaking and ribbon cutting ceremonies) may require participation from all three levels of government. This will add a degree of complexity to

scheduling communications activities.

Economic

- The current economy, while in recovery, remains focussed on job creation and improvements in the quality of life. The projects will generate local employment and increase the quality of life.

Issues/Opportunities/Current Environment:

- The provincial and federal fund portions of these projects have strict standards associated with the nature and timing of signage, and the construction start and finish dates. Funding may be at risk if these requirements are not met.
- Some communications program support in 2010 may require funds outside of the current available budget in Communications and Community Relations.

Opening Ceremony and Ribbon Cutting Strategy

Tactics : External	Details	Timing
Grand Kick off Ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed as a public/ media event for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ residents of all ages and backgrounds to understand the scope and impact of infrastructure projects unfolding in 2010-2011 ◦ key community stakeholders/ influencers and provincial/federal representatives to join in the announcement and celebration ◦ project team members and architect to be present for the initial launch ceremony • Preferred location Markville Mall - <i>if available</i> • Secondary locations – A Community Centre or the Civic Centre • Design of event to include professional visuals and descriptions of each of the seven infrastructure projects – set up in tradeshow exhibitry style - <i>An interesting "Information Fair" atmosphere is desired result</i> • Initial launch ceremony will be a public/media event but exhibits will remain for a day or two in this location. • Special interest in attracting youth and seniors involvement in this event. • Mayor's Youth Task Force will be engaged to get youth involved . • Key business reps. involved e.g. local Boards of Trade • Invitation from Mayor sent via email, team personal contacts and template notices provided to organizations (<i>e.g. ratepayer</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early November 2009 • A Sunday afternoon approximately at 2:00 pm for launch ceremony • Exhibit displays of the seven projects to remain behind for a day or two.

	<p><i>associations</i>) that can be publish to their membership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor and Council Invitation sent via email via corp. com database and Mayor's contact list. • Utilize Councillor and Reg. Councillor contact lists to promote • Grand Ceremony promoted on Town EIB's, marquis, Town page and website, posters in Community centres and libraries. • Advertisements in ethnic media • Appearance on Roger 905 "Local Notes" for a 2 minutes PSA message on the ceremony 	
Ribbon Cuttings – First Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ribbon cutting events customized to each project location. • Up to three possibly four projects launched during November in order of priority as listed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thornhill Community Centre & Library ○ Tennis courts and bubble ○ Emergency Ops Center ○ Energy Retrofits • Specific stakeholders, politicians and project team members invited based on riding and project impacts. • General invitation to community at large • Mayor and Council Invitation sent via email via corp. com database and Mayor's contact list. • Identify local community stakeholders and centres of influence to invite and involve who can serve as community champions and ambassadors. • Ribbon cutting ceremony promotions in Town page, EIB's, website, local community publications, local ethnic publications • PSA's developed for media for each ribbon cutting and distributed to all local media. • Individuals invited to attend and participate in ribbon cutting that have a specific interest or occupation related to the infrastructure facility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Month of November following grand ceremony launch
Community Centre Exhibit Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure panels developed for Grand Ceremony launch to be rotated around each community centre during November and December 	

Ribbon Cuttings: Second Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details to come but balance of infrastructure ribbon cutting to take place in first quarter of 2010 	
Background on Tactics for Promotion and Information		
Press Conferences & Media Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media events for groundbreaking ceremonies and other key project milestones. Key stakeholders and political representatives invited as appropriate Photo ops. involving government officials and stakeholders 	
E- newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E- News template developed specifically for updates on the infrastructure projects for distribution to community stakeholders Circulated via Email blast based established BMFT email database – approximately 2000 	
Project Videos/photos	Photo record of each project will be done for key activities and milestones for each project. To be used for promotional stories and news updates.	
Town page	To be used to provide notices of upcoming meetings notices as required	
Project Signage	Custom signage to be developed for each project location in addition required signs for Provincial/Federal recognition	October- November 2009
Public meetings/Open Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required during key project milestones. Recommend that each infrastructure project should hold a public meeting/open house once architectural drawings or construction details are available to share with residents. 	
Markham website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to locate Latest News on infrastructure projects on home page. Will archive E-news updates 	1 st week of October
Electronic Information Boards & Marquis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located at Markham's main facilities. To be used for messaging on progress of the infrastructure projects Marquis to be used for posting of special event messages 	
Community Projects Bulletin Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community projects board located in Civic Centre at Information Markham in Great Hall, Treasury counter location and Contact Centre Each location to provide visual/ text description of Markham's community projects. 	
Markham Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Markham's new magazine will be used to provide news brief updates each quarter. 	Next issue - November 5 th 2009

Resources
Budget Details: To be confirmed
Staff Support Required: Client advisors, graphic support, production coordination, web, event management and external suppliers as required

