

Town of Chapel Hill

Communications Strategy Statement



Excellent communication is a basic obligation of democratic government. It does not stand apart from the Town's other activities but is an embedded component of success in every Town effort. Our goal is to build our community through the highest standards of openness and participation.

The Town of Chapel Hill will reach out to people where they are to tell the story of what we are doing and how our actions affect them. Our communications will be clear, complete and timely, using any resource appropriate for the message. Our primary audiences are residents, volunteer leadership in local government, employees and news media. The Town Council adopted the Communications Strategy on January 24, 2011.

Goal Statements and Objectives

1. Increase public awareness of and participation in Town decisions

- a. Increase subscribers to Chapel Hill eNews and other media for distribution of Town news
- b. Seek feedback on use of tools from the public and demonstrate changes based on feedback
- c. Experiment with new tools for civic engagement and information
- d. Express appreciation for public participation and demonstrate their contribution to policy-making
- e. Increase efforts with other units of government, business and civic groups and non-profits to develop information on joint projects and shared interests
- f. Increase efforts to recruit and train residents for service on advisory boards

2. Increase awareness of Town programs and services

- a. Increase informed participation levels in Town programs
- b. Centralize and increase easily accessible information on status of Town projects
- c. Seek widespread acknowledgement of the quality of Town's services and programs
- d. Seek feedback on programs and services for improvement and demonstrate change as a result of feedback
- e. Create a system of training and tracking that enhances employee ability to handle and report citizen inquiries and close the loop (from citizen request to resolution)

3. Maintain accurate and accessible public records

- a. Respond in a timely manner to requests for public information
- b. Improve system of document management
- c. Improve archives for easier access
- d. Develop new systems for Mayor and Council members to manage information they receive from Town and residents

4. Improve employee information of what is going on around them

- a. Develop effective and consistent tools for keeping Town employees knowledgeable about decisions that affect them
- b. Increase knowledge of overall Town government, mission, values and how individual jobs fit in
- c. Develop employee skills in presenting and communicating information
- d. Develop Teamwork motivation messages and emphasize the interdependent system in which we work

5. Develop new ways to provide community timely; and accurate information before, during and after an emergency situation