

The Corporation of the Township of North Huron

By-law No. 45-2026

Being a By-law to adopt an Internal Communications Strategy for the Township of North Huron.

This accessible version of this by-law is printed under the authority of the Council of the Township of North Huron.

Printing Date: June 16, 2026

Disclaimer:

The following version is an electronic reproduction made available for information only. It is not an official version of the by-law. The format may be different, and plans, pictures, other graphics or text may be missing or altered. The Township of North Huron does not warrant the accuracy of this electronic version. This consolidation cannot be distributed or used for commercial purposes. It may be used for other purposes only if you repeat this disclaimer and the notice of copyright. Official versions of all by-laws can be obtained from the Clerk's Department by calling 519-357-3550.



Communications for A Better Planet

Phase 2: Internal Communications Strategy for the Township of North Huron

Prepared for:
Nelson Santos
Chief Administrative Officer

Prepared by:
Barbara Robinson
RiverRoad Creative

Date:
10 June 2026

Township of North Huron Internal Communications Plan

Table of Contents

Introduction & Context	3
Summary of Communications Situational Analysis	3
About the Township of North Huron	4
Internal Audiences/Stakeholders	7
Internal Communications Priorities	9
Branding	11
Content Production and Posting System	13
Communications Products, Tools and Training Resources	14
Artificial Intelligence	14
Actions	15

Figures

1. Township of North Huron Strategic Goals 2024-2027	4
2. Township of North Huron Demographics	4
3. Township of North Huron Team	6
4. Internal Communications Vision	8
5. Strategic Communications Priorities	9
6. Internal Communications Flow	11
7. Township of North Huron Communications Channels	12
8. Content Production and Posting System	13
9. Posting Steps	13
10. Communications Folder Contents	14

Appendices

- Appendix A. About the Township of North Huron
- Appendix B. Top 10 Internal Communications Recommendations
- Appendix C. Township of North Huron Visual Branding Guidelines
- Appendix D: Editorial Branding Guidelines
- Appendix D: Staff Directory

Introduction & Context

The Township of North Huron is committed to responsive, transparent, effective and engaging communication with its residents, stakeholders and the broader community. To meet this goal, the Township has invested in its internal communications with the goal to improve employee retention, drive employee engagement and encourage a thriving employee culture.

The Internal Communications Plan presents a framework or "system" to guide staff in their internal communications efforts in advance of undertaking external communications. Communications. It lays the foundation for a well-informed, empowered and engaged team in their critical role to deliver accurate, relevant and timely communications services both internally and externally in support of the Township's six strategic priorities.

The Plan is the first to be developed for the Township of North Huron and reflects the commitment of Council and the CAO invest in their employees. It is a working document designed to be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis and at a minimum every year.

Summary of Communications Situational Analysis

The Township of North Huron's current communication practices are generally working well; however, there are significant opportunities for improvement, specifically in the areas of coordination, consistency, continuity and transparency. In addition, all staff, whether new or long-term employees need to be working from the same playbook with an importance on the important role they play in Township and community success. Having Township communications plans (internal and external), such as this internal plan, along with supporting communications policies, systems and tools, will establish a framework for an agreed-upon approach to provide effective communications services.

For example, social media and website posting protocols have been streamlined and fine-tuned to simplify and standardize content creation and review in a way that minimizes the risk of oversight, inconsistencies and duplication. It is imperative that all departments, particularly content producers and supervisors, are knowledgeable with regard to the amended systems and that there be opportunity for input and ongoing feedback and adaptation as needed.

Also, based on the results of the communications audit and associated interviews, access to training and the development of communications tools and products to position staff with the information needed to best perform their jobs must be at the forefront of internal communications. Finally, recognizing all staff for their value and contributions to the Township should be a high priority for internal communications.

The purpose of the following Internal Communications Plan is to present an agreed-upon system and road map that empowers staff with a strong communications foundation that positions the team for external marketing.

Coordination Consistency Continuity Transparency

About the Township of North Huron

Figure 1. Township of North Huron Strategic Goals 2024-2027



Figure 2. Township of North Huron Demographics

Population:	5,273 [2021]
Area:	179.01 km ²
Population Density:	28.2/km ² [2021]
Annual Population Change:	0.9% [2021 → 2051]

Vision

The Township of North Huron strives to be a prosperous and engaged community that welcomes visitors, families, residents and businesses through strong agriculture, development, culture and tourism.

Mission

The Township of North Huron endeavors to offer an affordable and sustainable high-quality of life by delivering excellent and efficient services to our residents, businesses and visitors.

Values

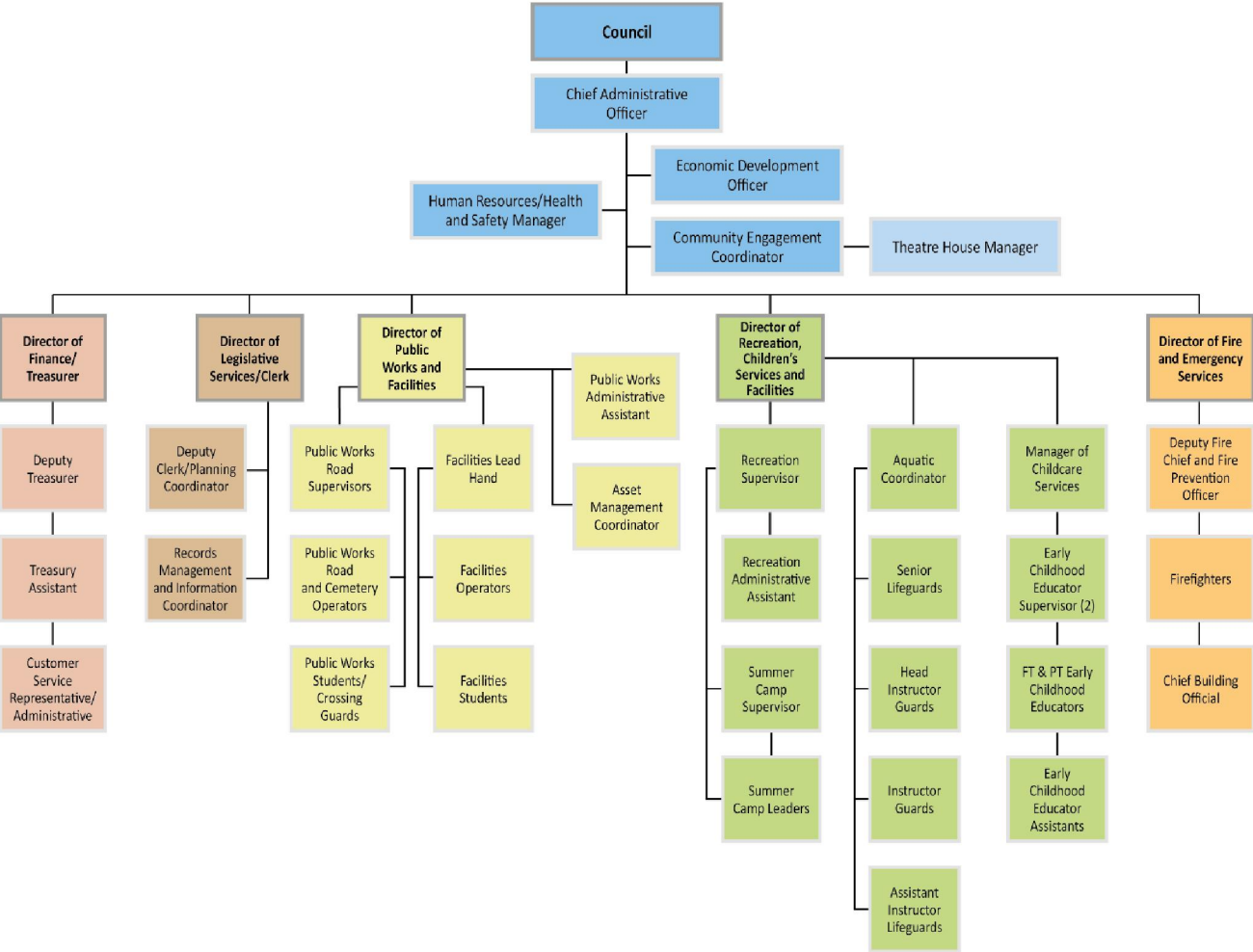
- Service Excellence
- Teamwork
- Respect
- Accountability and Transparency
- Integrity
- Engagement

Principles

Through integrity and responsible leadership, North Huron implements and maintains policies, practices and regulations that are:

- Focused on exceptional and efficient service
- Designed to be inclusive and accessible
- Informed through meaningful and transparent community engagement
- Focused on growth, development and modernization while being fiscally responsible
- Aligned with our neighbors, fostering fair and balanced partnerships

Figure 3. Township of North Huron Team



<p>Internal Communications Goal</p>	<p>To streamline and optimize internal communications so that staff are empowered to perform their job well while taking great pride in providing exceptional services to the residents and businesses of North Huron Township, surrounding Townships and visitors to the area.</p>
--	---

Internal Audiences/Stakeholders

- Council – keep Council well informed of events, activities, particularly issues of high importance, such as emergencies
- Staff – empower staff with the training, tools and human resources support to conduct their jobs well
- Internal Volunteers – focus on training, recruitment and retention; develop volunteer appreciation and recognition program (Note: Several external local volunteer groups actively contribute to the betterment of the Township through various community initiatives and projects)
- Contractors/Consultants – ensure access to Township resources and tools in order to complete their work

Council Members
Title
Reeve Deputy Reeve Councillors (5)

Staff – Senior Management
Title
Chief Administrative Officer Director of Legislative Services/Clerk Director of Finance Director of Recreation, Children’s Services and Facilities Director of Public Works and Facilities Director of Fire and Emergency Services

Staff
Title
(*Content Producer)
*Economic Development Officer *Community Engagement Coordinator *Deputy Clerk/Planning Coordinator *Records Management and Information Coordinator *Human Resources/Health & Safety Manager Drainage Superintendent Planner *Deputy Treasurer Customer Service Rep/Admin Assistant Manager of Child Care Services Early Childhood Educator

Internal Communications Priorities

Figure 5. Strategic Communications Priorities



The following strategic priorities form the basis of this Communications Plan and will guide communications activities:

1. Building a strong culture of internal communications: *Together we are stronger*

Building a strong culture of internal communications sets the stage for external communications.

Leadership will foster an internal communications culture where staff are well-informed and valued as an integral part of the Township team. This includes:

- following an agreed upon communications system
- providing training, resources and learning opportunities
- centralizing communications documents for easy access by content producers and other key staff
- ensuring staff are kept up to date and informed (in the loop) on all Township news – this is highly important, especially if there is a change in Township staff or position on an issue
- creating a sense of belonging among staff through listening
- adapting to new ideas, approaches and technologies for communicating Township activities
- encouraging a highly informed team with exceptional peer-to-peer communications and trust
- demonstrating collective impact through recognition and appreciation of individuals

2. Providing training, resources and learning opportunities: *An informed team is a competent team*

The Township will empower its team with the tools to succeed and their jobs and in their personal and professional development. By providing access to training and resources, the Township is preparing employees for advancement while creating a competent, adaptable and satisfied work force. Resources include:

- policies and plans to ensure staff are working under the same terms and guidelines as agreed upon and directed by senior management
- tools for performing their work and that include, Township 101, Posting 101 and access to the Employee Wellness and Engagement Committee
- access to employee Onboarding Kit and Communications Kit

3. Ensuring well-branded, accurate, relevant and timely communications: *Township-branded and detail-oriented*

Passive communications includes messaging and posting for anticipated events, key dates or initiatives that happen on a regular basis – weekly, monthly, annually, such as leaf collection, snow clearing, holidays, etc. Reactive communications is responding to an event, incident or situation that has already happened, often unexpectedly, and for which the Township is looked to for comment, direction, instructions, etc. For example, flooding, road closures, etc. The Township is the “go to” source for both passive and reactive communications. Preparing for passive and reactive communications includes:

- using a shared calendar to identify important events and opportunities
- providing access to a communications directory that includes key messaging, etc.
- referring to the Township Communications Policy or other relevant policies for guidance
- fact-checking all information, including dates, names, etc.
- following the appropriate visual and branding guidelines
- ensuring that proper approval processes are followed
- routing all posts through the community engagement coordinator (exceptions include Clerk postings and Daycare Facebook postings)
- positioning staff for success and ensure that the entire team is rowing in the same direction
- preparing for worst-case scenarios through training

4. Engaging in proactive communications: *Let's tell our story*

Proactive communications means addressing issues or problems before they happen. It is also a way to feature information that adds value but is not essential to know. For example, I need to know the leaf pick up dates but I don't need to know about a Township staff member who has been cooking for the daycare for 30 years, though it is very interesting and valuable for promoting the human-interest aspects of the community.

- create a database/inventory of stories and photos that can be used on the website or socials to fill a gap
- remind users about resources – i.e., recreation centre public swimming

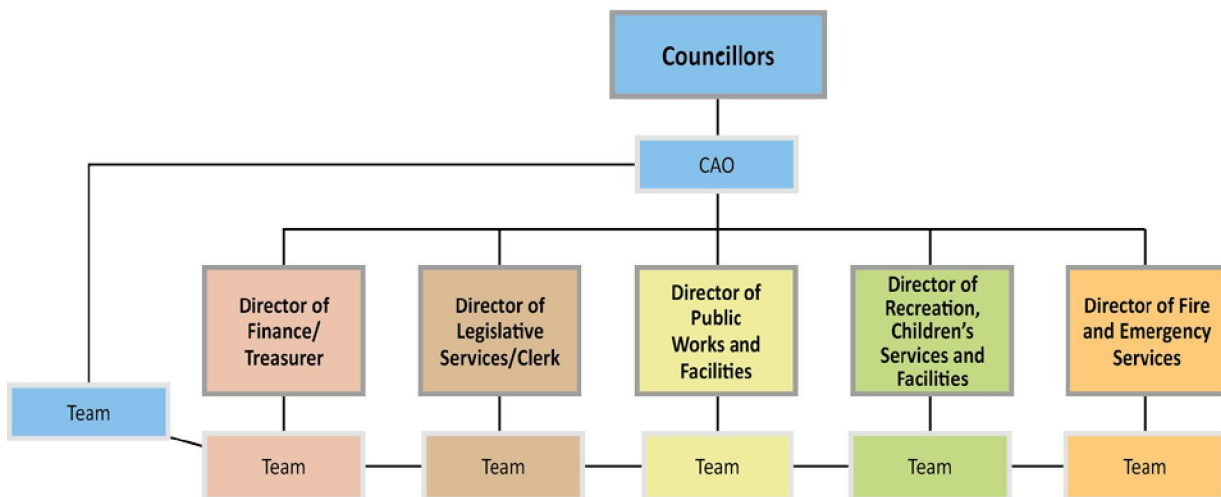
- include updates in mailouts to offset the downsides of asking for money – e.g., a water bill could include a list of the fun things to do in the Township of North Huron or an infographic showing how the payment of your water bill goes directly to a particular service.
- preparing for worst-case scenarios through training

5. Implementing a communications system: *Working from the same playbook*

This Internal Communications Plan sets forth a path for communications, including information sharing, website and social media posting and overall peer to peer engagement that is mostly bottom up, but that is guided by top down “big picture” directives. The system includes:

- a fine-tuned process for website and social media posting
- visual branding guidelines
- editorial branding guidelines
- contextual background with Township facts and figures

Figure 6. Internal Communications Flow



Branding

The Township of North Huron has developed visual (logo and color schemes) and editorial (writing and signature lines) branding guidelines to help maintain a consistent and distinctive identity that is recognizable to internal and external audiences. The branding assets (visual and written) should be adhered to for the development of all communications and marketing products in order to distinguish the Township from other organizations.

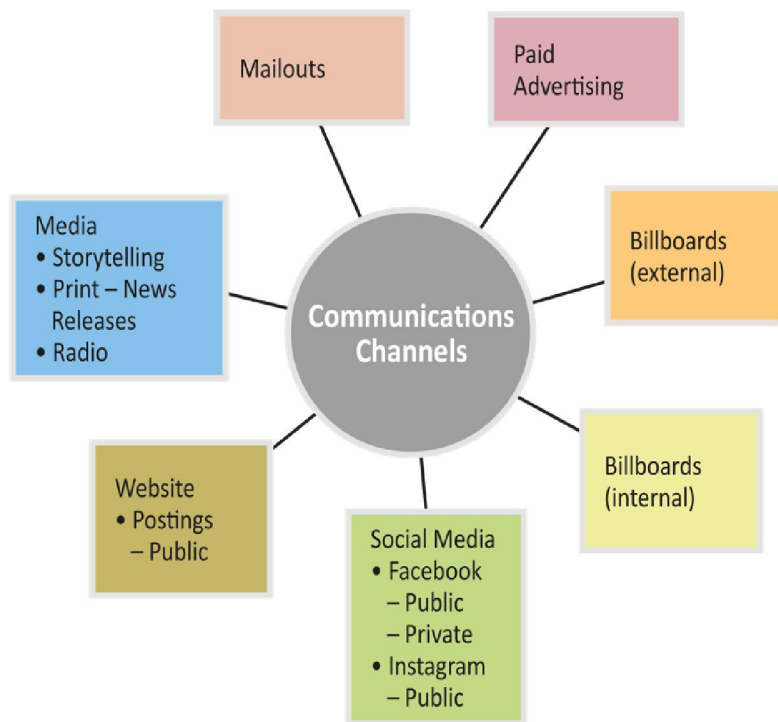
At a minimum and as a starting point:

1. Staff are requested to use a standardized signature line that includes pertinent title, contact details, etc. as well as the tagline: The middle of Everywhere. Could be designed and distributed by technical expert and included as part of the Onboarding and Communications Kits.

See Appendix A: Township of North Huron Visual Branding Guidelines

See Appendix B: Township of North Huron Editorial Guidelines

Figure 7. Township of North Huron Communications Channels



Content Production and Posting System

Currently, the Township does not have a formal, centralized communications and posting system for website and social media content. Each department manages its social media channels and creates content for the different projects, events, services and announcements.

It is recommended that the Township of North Huron will have one Website, one Instagram account, one Facebook account (with the exception of Daycare which will be a separate, independent account for connecting with families) and one LinkedIn account. It is recommended that all posting, other than posting by the Clerk in emergency situations, be branded, fact-checked, then pre-reviewed and approved by senior managers of the respective department before being sent to the Community Engagement Coordinator for posting.

Figure 8. Content Production and Posting System

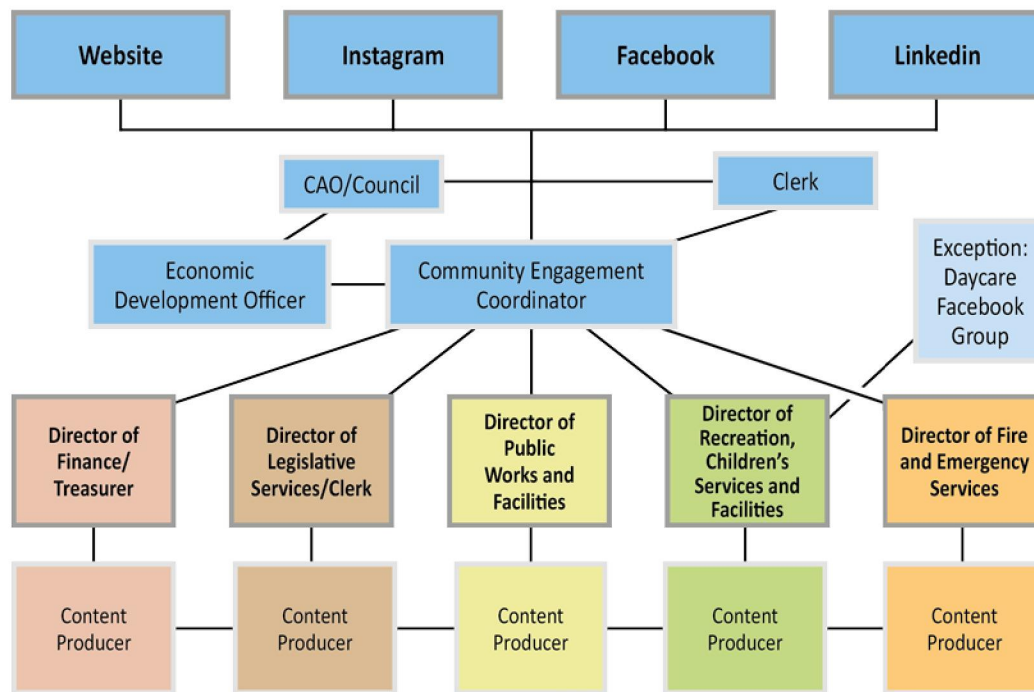
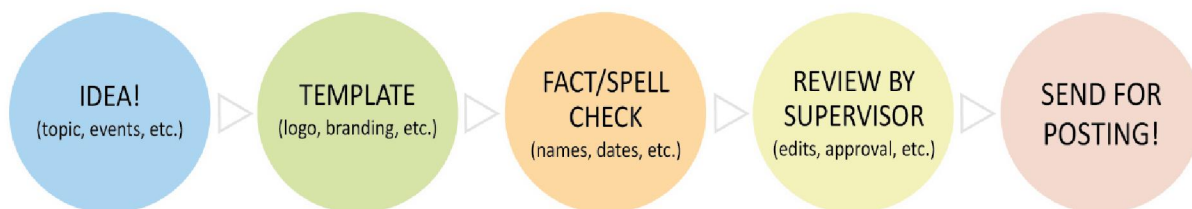
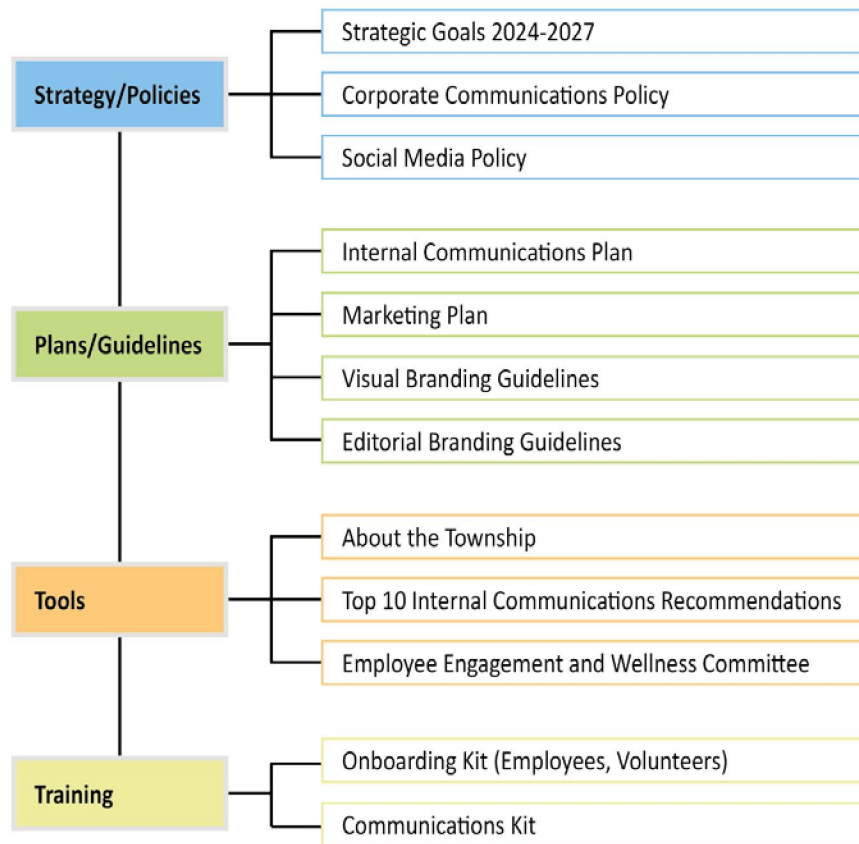


Figure 9. Posting Steps



Communications Products, Tools and Training Resources

Figure 10. Communications Folder Contents



Additional Communications Tools

- Canva (Templates) and other visual collateral for graphic design
- Laserfiche
- Rate Guide
- Recreation Guide

Artificial Intelligence

The following guidelines are procedures serve as a starting point for the Township of North Huron to conduct business in a manner that is ethical, responsible and secure. A more formal and comprehensive AI policy will be developed in the future. The Policy will include:

- A list of acceptable and approved AI tools
- Employee training on the responsible use of AI, including data privacy and the risk of incorrect information
- A monitoring and evaluation system that ensures regular reviews to adapt to the rapidly changing technological and legal landscape of AI

In the meantime, AI may be used as a research tool for Township of North Huron work but all content must be written, verified and reviewed by a human. Employees are required to disclose the use of AI on all projects relating to Township of North Huron business in order to maintain accuracy, integrity and build and maintain trust with members of the community.

In Canada, the federal government has developed [Responsible use of artificial intelligence in government](#) as a framework for employees. This is an excellent reference tool for developing a strategy.

Actions

11 Steps to Success

	Objective	Action	Lead	Timeline
1	Finalize internal communications products	Communications Policy – DONE Social Media Policy – DONE Communications Audit – DONE Internal Communications Plan – DONE Visual Branding Guidelines – DONE Editorial Guidelines – DONE About the Township – DONE Ten Internal Communications Actions – DONE	Barbara/ Nelson/ Denise/ Ritu	June, 2026
2	Finalize external Marketing Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing Plan – In progress 	Barbara/ Nelson/ Denise/ Ritu	July 2026
3	Improve information flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide overview of Internal Communications Plan including branding and training opportunities with content producers Provide overview of External Marketing Plan 	Barbara/ Denise/ Ritu	Sept. 2026
4	Coordinate communications activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select Laserfiche for sharing information; with some internal training required Start an internal communications content calendar Implement communications content calendar and provide staff training Identify standard federal, provincial, municipal dates, community and social dates, Township initiatives, Council meetings, etc. 	Denise/ Ritu	Oct. 2026
5	Update Council on communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide overview of Communications Consultant work Submit Communications Policy to Council for review 	Barbara/ Denise/ Ritu	Done

7	Updates from Clerk's Department after each Council meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-level point-form summary and action items from Council meetings for sharing with internal audiences and for external marketing (motion tracker) 	Clerk's Dept.	Jan. 2027 launch; ongoing
8	Profile departments, stockpile internal communications stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage content producers to come up with a list of staff profiles and stories, i.e., the 30-year career with the daycare chef 250 words, 1 photo 	Denise/Ritu	Nov, /Dec. 2026
9	Build photography/video and story database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Never miss an opportunity to tell stories visually Challenge content producers to encourage departmental photograph submissions Start a central database with photographs, captions, credits for use by Staff when developing content 	Denise/Ritu	Sept. 2026 launch; ongoing
10	Internal Volunteer Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine process for internal volunteer recruitment, retention, training and recognition 	Denise/Lindsay/Nelson	Nov. 2026
11	Evaluate how internal communications is working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage staff input and feedback on this new communications system Nelson roadshow with staff Feedback forms First quarterly meeting with Denise and content producers Review evaluations; adapt and adjust as needed 	Nelson/Denise	Oct. 2026; ongoing

Actions/Next Steps

- Signature line branding – See Appendix B: Township of North Huron Editorial Branding Guidelines
- "Out of office" reply guidelines, including recommending alternate contact person
- Review and update/revise plan on an ongoing basis and at least once annually
- Create an awards/recognition program to recognize and celebrate employee accomplishments
- Include Communications Kit with Onboarding Kit for all staff
- Package a communications folder/directory (all communications products, training opportunities and tools)