

Strategic Marketing & Communications

Led by: Director of Customer Service & Communications

Description

Strategic Marketing & Communications (SMC) provides marketing and communications consulting, strategy and tactics that align with The City's brand. It strengthens The City's reputation and supports business objectives by providing communications, marketing, media planning, social media, corporate communications, creative services and media relations. This service informs, influences and motivates Calgarians, customers and employees. It is focused on building public trust and confidence, achieving business outcomes, and demonstrating the value of City services in making life better every day in Calgary.

Value and benefits

Our service ensures Calgarians, customers, and employees are informed about The City's strategic direction, its services, and the value received from The City. We provide transparent, trustworthy, targeted and timely information to create awareness of City programs and services, increase revenue, and build advocacy. We also manage communications and marketing policies that protect The City's brand and reputation.

Service directors receive marketing and communications expertise including: strategy and content development, issue and crisis communications, media relations, social media, internal communications, digital marketing, advertising, web content, and creative services. Council and Administration receive support for all priorities and Council Directives through our service.

Customers

Calgarians, businesses, visitors to Calgary, other orders of government, Council, Executive Leadership Team, City employees, and City service directors.

What we deliver

We deliver strategic marketing and communications consulting, plans, and tactics. We administer City channels including web, social media, media relations and digital communications to deliver messages about City services, initiatives and programs. We manage The City's One Voice visual identity and brand, and provide measurement and analysis of plans, tactics and channels.

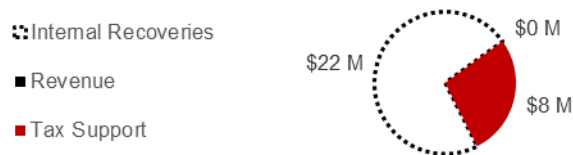
Partners

Internal partners: Council, City Manager's Office, Executive Leadership Team, service directors

External partners: Government of Alberta, Government of Canada, regional municipalities, vendors, media, City partners (Calgary Economic Development, Calgary Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, etc.)

1,239	Media inquiries received in 2021
934,275	Visits to The City Newsroom in 2021
545,185	Total followers on social media in 2021
10,076	Web & Digital service requests in 2021

Strategic Marketing and Communications
2022 Budgeted Gross Operating Expenditures Funding Breakdown (\$ Millions)*



* Gross operating budget may include internal recoveries that are also included in other services' gross operating cost.

Note: Internal recoveries is how The City accounts for the costs of goods or services between services

Key assets

SMC's key assets include a social media monitoring tool, email marketing tools, news release distribution and hosting software and media monitoring services.

What we have heard & what we are watching

What we have heard

According to the 2021 Citizen Satisfaction Survey, 74 per cent of Calgarians feel The City communicates well about services, programs and policies. Satisfaction with communications remains consistently high across all demographics. Within the organization, satisfaction with marketing and communications is also high, with most components of the service achieving scores between 85 and 95 per cent.

Despite high satisfaction levels, research indicates a need for more inclusive and accessible communications. Participants from equity-deserving communities have identified opportunities for increased representation and access to information in their channels and language of choice.

Providing high quality information, timely service, flexibility, and acting as trusted partners to City departmental clients remain key factors in providing value to Calgarians and the Corporation.

What Council has directed

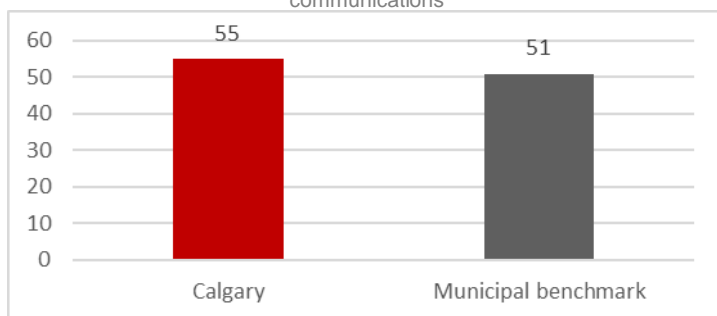
By providing communications and marketing for all City services, we advance all Council principles and focus areas. Most directly, we help to 'Strengthen relationships with Calgarians' through compelling storytelling and informing them about the value of City services and how The City is responding to their priorities. We also support this principle by building awareness, trust and confidence in The City. Through our Multicultural Communications Strategy and Standards for Equitable Communications (Social Well-Being Policy), we also contribute to the 'Social equity' focus area. Additionally, our work on the local economy, City brand, and marketing Calgary as a great place to make a living and a life, directly supports Council's focus on 'Global positioning & reputation.' Our service also supports these Council policies: Transparency & Accountability, Public Notice & Legal Advertising, Plain Language and compliance with Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation.

What we are watching

Risks facing SMC include declining trust and confidence in government, misinformation, increased polarization, complexity, and growing demand. Staff managing corporate channels and providing corporate-level communications could face capacity issues should this demand continue to grow.

We are watching trends in the digital landscape and demographics to ensure we use the right channels and meet the needs of all Calgarians including equity-deserving groups. Interest in communications experienced through the pandemic could continue as the pandemic evolves, further impacting planned activities and service demand. We are also monitoring Calgary's economic recovery and will need to provide marketing and communications support for revenue generating City services, the Downtown Strategy and other initiatives to support local business and attract investment.

Residents' satisfaction with the quality of municipal information and communications



National Omnibus survey conducted by Leger

Comparing our service

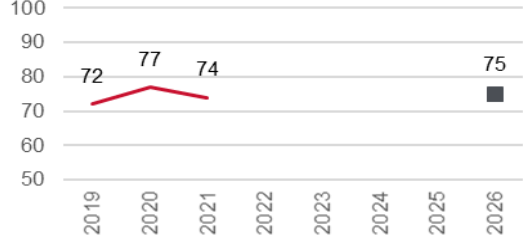
Benchmarking data indicates that 55 per cent of survey respondents are satisfied with the overall quality of information and communications from The City of Calgary. This is higher than the municipal average of 51 per cent seen in a summer 2022 national omnibus survey of five major Canadian cities (Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver). SMC aims to provide timely, inclusive and accessible communications.

Measuring performance & where we want to go

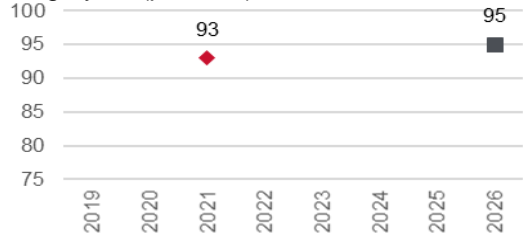
For Council Approval

— Actuals ■ Expected Future Performance

PM1: Calgarians who say The City has communicated well about its services, programs, policies, and plans (per cent)



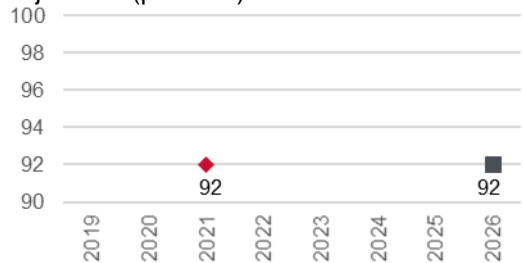
PM2: Calgarians who say they trust the information that The City provides on Calgary.ca (per cent)



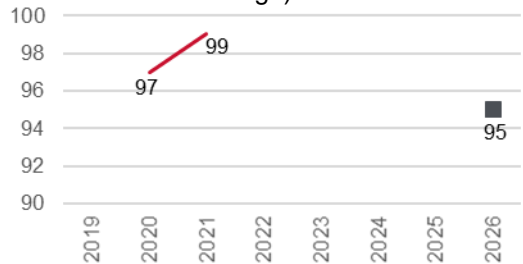
PM3: Paid investment from overall spend allocated to multicultural communications and marketing advertising (per cent)



PM4: Customers that are satisfied with their overall experience working with external communications to achieve business objectives (per cent)



PM5: Media tonality (per cent of positive and neutral media coverage)



Story behind the curve

A number of external factors have impacted perceptions of City communications, and the expectations of Calgarians are increasing. Improvements to the methods and best practices in The City have allowed the service to continue to meet the needs of Calgarians despite challenging circumstances; Strategic Marketing & Communications will continue to evolve within this changing landscape, holding a steady measure of 75 per cent in the coming years.

The City has been very successful in establishing Calgary.ca as a reliable and relevant source of information for City services and programs. This is achieved through continuous maintenance and review of existing content to ensure information is accessible to all Calgarians. Ongoing funding will be leveraged to continuously improve the site and demonstrate value to Calgarians and the organization.

Paid investment in multicultural advertising strengthens The City's relationship with Calgarians by reducing language inequity and barriers to participation in civic life, and ensuring marketing and communications are delivered in a culturally appropriate and inclusive way. Multicultural communications are supported through creative, translation and purchased advertisements. The expected future performance can be achieved through inclusion in all media recommendations.

By measuring client satisfaction with external communications over the cycle, Strategic Marketing & Communications aims to gauge how well the service is meeting client expectations around service delivery and communications with the public, businesses, industry, and other orders of government. With a baseline of 92 per cent satisfaction established in 2021, Strategic Marketing & Communications anticipates being able to maintain this level of satisfaction by continuing to refine internal processes and prioritizing client relationship management.

The City receives third-party media monitoring reports classifying news coverage as positive, neutral, or negative in sentiment. Tracking sentiment allows The City to better respond to issues and adjust messaging to enhance understanding. Despite increased polarization in public opinion and growth of misinformation, City coverage has been mostly positive or neutral, with less than five per cent of news classified as negative. Based on the measure's historical stability and the level of investment in media relations, the service expects performance to remain stable over the cycle.

What we plan to do

Result for 2023-2026

We are focused on contributing to Calgary's economic, social and climate resilience through timely and effective storytelling and messaging that strengthens Calgary's reputation, builds trust and confidence in local government and allows all Calgarians to see themselves as part of the city's future.

How we are going to get there

Maintain The City's relationship and reputation with the public and media by focusing on the effectiveness and responsiveness of The City's social media and media relations efforts. This requires the service to manage of increased demand for timely, two-way communication within the existing budget, while also ensuring The City is able to adapt to the changing media and social media preferences of Calgarians.

Support economic recovery and resilience priorities such as the Downtown Strategy, investment in Calgary and revenue generation for City services through the development and implementation of marketing and communication strategies. This includes leveraging data and analytics to better target audiences and partnering with Citizen & Information Services to implement e-commerce solutions to make doing business with The City faster and easier.

Advance social equity through communications and marketing support to City services. This includes continuing to champion inclusive and accessible City communications through the Multicultural Communications & Engagement Strategy and Equitable Standards for Communications.

Improve the effectiveness and level of trust in City communications by addressing the growth of misinformation about The City. This includes providing staff with tools and training to identify, monitor, and correct misinformation when responding to Calgarian and media inquiries, and address increased demand within existing budget.

Protect and enhance The City's visual identity and brand by educating staff on the related policy and conducting regular reviews of City communication and marketing materials for brand compliance.

Ensure staff are connected, informed, equipped and engaged as ambassadors of The City by providing coordinated messaging to employees in support of The City's goals to modernize government and improve organizational culture. This includes maintaining core employee communications activities and channels, while also providing communication strategy and tactics for large corporate initiatives such as the Rethink to Thrive Strategy within the existing budget.

Uphold public trust and confidence in The City by delivering ongoing communications and campaigns to raise Calgarians' awareness and understanding of The City's services, financial position, and the value Calgarians receive for their taxes and fees.

Improve the accessibility of Calgary.ca by making the content and services provided online easier to find and understand. This will help streamline the process of communicating with The City and help to manage high demand for in-person and telephone support.

Operating budget needed to achieve results

For Council Approval

Breakdown of net operating budget (\$000s)

	2023		2024		2025		2026	
	Base	One-time	Base	One-time	Base	One-time	Base	One-time
Previous Year's Net Budget	8,321	-	8,321	-	8,321	-	8,321	-
Previously approved One-time budget		-		-		-		-
2022 One-time carry forward		-		-		-		-
Revenue Changes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Internal Recoveries Changes	(493)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Inflation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Operating Impact of Previously Approved Capital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Operating Impact of New Capital (Incremental)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Service Reductions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Service Increases	493	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total net budget	8,321	-	8,321	-	8,321	-	8,321	-

Total Operating Budget (\$000s) for Approval

	2022 Budget	2023			2024			2025			2026		
	At April 30	Base	One-Time	Total	Base	One-Time	Total	Base	One-Time	Total	Base	One-Time	Total
Expenditures	30,330	30,823	-	30,823	30,823	-	30,823	30,823	-	30,823	30,823	-	30,823
Recoveries	(22,009)	(22,502)	-	(22,502)	(22,502)	-	(22,502)	(22,502)	-	(22,502)	(22,502)	-	(22,502)
Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net	8,321	8,321	-	8,321	8,321	-	8,321	8,321	-	8,321	8,321	-	8,321

Note: Figures may not add up due to rounding