AGENDA
SPECIAL MEETING
WORKSHOP
CITY OF BANNING
BANNING, CALIFORNIA

October 25, 2016   Banning Civic Center
3:00 p.m.   Council Chambers
                                                    99 E. Ramsey St.

I.   **CALL TO ORDER**

        Roll Call - Councilmembers Franklin, Miller, Moyer, Peterson, Mayor Welch

II.   **WORKSHOP ITEM**

        A. Communications Assessment - Report by Erin Gilhuly, CV Strategies

III.   **ADJOURNMENT**

Pursuant to amended Government Code Section 54957.5(b) staff reports and other public records related to open session agenda items are available at City Hall, 99 E. Ramsey St., at the office of the City Clerk during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The City of Banning promotes and supports a high quality of life that ensures a safe and friendly environment, fosters new opportunities and provides responsive, fair treatment to all and is the pride of its citizens

Communications Audit Summary and Next Step

The City of Banning is facing a series of choices that will dictate its future for decades to come, impacting if and how the City grows, the community's ability to thrive, the provision of essential services, and the quality of life of residents and visitors.

As part of its comprehensive effort to make the most of this unprecedented opportunity, the City of Banning conducted an organization-wide communications assessment over the course of 4 months in 2016. The audit was designed to assess the City's communications capacity, culture and capability, identifying challenges and opportunities as well as making recommendations for change.

The audit was conducted by CV Strategies, an independent communications and public relations firm specializing in comprehensive messaging. During the assessment period, CV Strategies spent more than 100 hours reviewing materials, visiting sites, facilitating group discussions, distributing questionnaires, and interviewing elected officials, managers, staff, citizens and other stakeholders.

THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CITY OF BANNING'S COMMUNICATIONS PERFORMANCE PROVIDES:

1. *A holistic and comprehensive evaluation based on observations, meetings and research conducted throughout the organization;*
2. *An examination of the City of Banning's resources and internal strategies related to communications within the organization, its staff , and elected leaders;*
3. *An evaluation of the effectiveness of the City of Banning's external messaging and related strategies;*
4. *A specific review of the City of Banning's communications and media efforts;*
5. *An evaluation of Banning's communications tools, such as website, printed collateral, press releases;*
6. *An assessment of Banning's branding efforts to-date;*
7. *Immediate communications recommendations; and*
8. *Long-term communications recommendations*

PROCESS AND REVIEW ELEMENTS

- Interviews with Elected Officials and Staff
- Questionnaires
- Group Discussions
- Site Visits and Ridealongs
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Media Landscape Assessment
- Brand and Image Evaluation
- Communication Tools Appraisal
- Web, Social Media, and Digital Tools Evaluation
- Internal Communication Protocol Review
- Site Geography Assessment

For more information or to review the full report, contact Rochelle Clayton, the Deputy City Manager, at (951) 922-3148.

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Summary of Findings

- Banning has a number of key strengths, including: a unique identity, heritage, and sense of community; a hard-working, self-sufficient staff that prioritizes service; an active, engaged City Council and a well-respected Chief of Police; and leaders that are interested in proactive, innovative communication.

- Communications challenges arise from a number of sources: the rapid turnover in leaders at the executive management level; the prioritization of individual department performance over collaboration; discord in public meetings; and a silo environment in which each department functions with its own rules, standards, and protocols.

- Creating a cohesive leadership structure and minimizing public meeting conflict will help focus on positives in the community and improve employee productivity and morale.

- Increased outreach to community members through frequent, regular and dynamic information sharing will eliminate the information vacuum and build awareness of Banning's brand and services.

- A central coordinator of all outreach activities would unify the City's voice, ensure accuracy and clarity, and reach out to parts of the community that are currently not engaged with City programs and services.

- New digital tools and practices must be embraced to improve the convenience, speed, and effectiveness of the transactions citizens have with the City.

- The City's wide range of services and their value must be actively messaged to community members through the numerous methods already available in Banning.

- Internal client service should be prioritized to enhance collaboration, shared vision, unified spirit, and morale.

- The City should strive to continue its focus on transparent governance, which increases awareness of public policies, facilitates feedback and improves the organization's performance and accountability.

Immediate Next Step

Strategic Communications Plan

The plan will serve as the key communications resource in the City's daily execution of effort to:

- Improve and coordinate all internal and external communications;
- Fulfill its mission through practical and proactive communication strategies;
- Build relationships and buy-in across departments with different goals and leadership;
- Increase public awareness of Banning's many services;
- Increase overall communications effectiveness.

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Communications Assessment Report

CITY OF
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California

Communications
ASSESSMENT

Table of Contents

The City of Banning is a City in transition. In the months and years ahead, Banning is facing a series of choices that will dictate its future for decades to come, impacting if and how the City grows, the community's ability to thrive, the provision of essential services, and the quality of life of residents and visitors.

This transitional period presents a once in a lifetime opportunity for substantive change and improvement, with decisions made today creating a lasting shift in culture and community. Communication, both internally within City government and externally with community members, will play a key role in the successful realization of this opportunity.

Recognizing the importance of internal and external communications excellence on the city's ability to serve its citizens effectively, the City of Banning initiated a comprehensive audit of its internal and external communications in the Spring of 2016.

This audit and associated initiatives are a testament to the City leadership's substantial investment, proactive approach, and commitment to change and improvement. The intent of this audit is to determine the organization's level of effectiveness and make recommendations on best practices and areas of improvement.

Over a period of several months, an audit team of independent, third-party assessors evaluated the City's internal and external communications processes, protocols, and performance. Relationships between departments, across facilities, and among different communities and constituencies served in Banning were evaluated via survey, interview, or other assessment tools. The City's web, social media, and digital presence, its collateral outreach materials, its public image in the media and among citizens, and the perceptions generated by staff, services, internal leadership, and elected officials were compiled into the concise and comprehensive audit document that follows.

The resulting communications assessment provides clear identification of the City of Banning's challenges, opportunities, strengths, and weaknesses as they relate to communications. This report includes a series of appendices, which offer in-depth accounts of communications policies and examples of successes and failure that helped determine the findings. With this in mind, the report provides initial actionable recommendations to guide the city's enhancement of all communications planning and activities.

A. GOALS

1. *To provide the City of Banning with a high-level assessment of its internal communications efforts;*

2. *To provide the City of Banning with a high-level assessment of its external communications efforts;*

3. *To provide the City of Banning with an objective analysis of current capacity and effectiveness of its communications staff;*

4. *To provide the City of Banning with an evaluation of its communications initiatives and messaging tactics;*

5. *To provide the City of Banning with a review of all messaging, and the extent to which it is perceived, understood, and achieved; and*

6. *To provide the City of Banning recommendations for improvements in key areas including budget, operations, efficiency, training, etc.*

B. PROCESS

1. *Methodology*

The City of Banning Communications Assessment is the product of thorough review and analysis of a number of key data points. These include evaluation of: communications protocols, outreach materials, digital and social media presence, media image and brand identity, City Council communication materials, workflow, geographic and experiential considerations, and more.

One-on-one interviews with Council members, executive staff, employees at all levels and in all departments, in addition to attendance at council meetings, ride-alongs with front-line staff, and discussions with citizens, provided valuable information about internal and external communications. Evaluation of stakeholder relationships contributed to the understanding of interaction with peer public agencies.

The audit was conducted by four key team members, with assistance from additional support staff. More than 100 hours was dedicated to the research and compilation of this comprehensive report.

The resulting assessment includes key findings and recommendations. The assessment process is intended to identify opportunities and challenges, as well as to provide immediate and long-term recommendations to enhance communication success.

A. PROCESS

2. *Review elements*

- Staff interviews

- Councilmember interviews

- Citizen communication

- Media landscape evaluation

- Web, digital, and social media presence audit

- Brand and image perception examination

- Stakeholder analysis

- Site visits

- Ride-alongs and observation of front-line staff interaction

3. *Audit team*

CV Strategies is a communications and public relations firm specializing in comprehensive messaging. The team of highly skilled professionals has a proven track record of helping clients navigate complex challenges across a broad spectrum of messages, audiences, and media. Regardless of scope, the firm's strategic communications and public relations initiatives stress an in-depth understanding of client needs and goals, and a focus on targeted, precise implementation of strategies.

The CV Strategies team consists of former news journalists with substantial experience both determining what makes news in both large and small markets and shaping stories in ways that resonate with a wide variety of audiences. Since transitioning our work to the public engagement and outreach side, our experience includes significant public sector work throughout California.

Our services include public outreach strategy and support, internal communication assessment and strategic planning, training and orientation development, media relations and crisis communications, branding and collateral development, as well as web, photo, and video production.

Audit Conducted by CV Strategies:

Erin Gilhuly, *President*
Alex Altman, *Senior Vice President*
Janet Zimmerman, *Account Manager*
Amanda Kasten, *Associate*
Rachel Brady, *Associate*

Draft Report presented in: May 2016
Final Report delivered in: August 2016

c. PRODUCT

The communications assessment process provides:

1. *A holistic and comprehensive evaluation based on observations, meetings and research conducted throughout the organization;*

2. *An examination of the City of Banning's resources and internal management strategies as it relates to communications within the organization, its staff, and elected leaders;*

3. *An evaluation of the effectiveness of the City of Banning's external messaging and related strategies;*

4. *A specific review of the City of Banning's communications and media efforts;*

5. *An evaluation of Banning's communications tools, such as website, printed collateral, press releases;*

6. *An assessment of Banning's branding efforts to-date;*

7. *Immediate communications recommendations; and*

8. *Long-term communications recommendations*

The assessment process revealed a number of key strengths at the City of Banning. These strengths are critical foundational elements upon which the city can enhance communications. Strengths exist in the dedication of new leadership and its commitment to open communication, the motivation and self-sufficiency of staff, the involvement of elected leadership, and the unique traits and characteristics that contribute to Banning's heritage and identity.

Specific strengths include:

- *Banning employees are generally interested in making investments of their time and energy to improve the organization*

- *Dedicated staff across departments identifies service as a key goal*

- *New leadership is taking proactive, innovative steps to improve communication*

- *A spirit of hard work and self-sufficiency frequently exists among staff members at all levels and in many different departments*

- *Individual departments take pride in their performance and the services they provide*

- *Many city employees identified Banning's status as a full-service city as a point of pride, and are motivated to provide a wide range of services to citizens*

- *Banning's special character has resulted in a tight-knit community with an appetite for involvement and participation in the city's success*

- *Banning's unique heritage and identity provides substantial opportunities for branding, community outreach, and regional awareness*

- *Opportunities: climate, location, and geography*

- *Citizens are engaged in and actively participate in community programs and services*

- *Council members are engaged, seeking answers and solutions to perceived problems*

- *Police chief is well-known and respected throughout the community, and is an effective communicator*

- *Many leaders are well-liked in their respective departments*

CITY OF
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KEY
FINDINGS

1. LEADERSHIP

The assessment process identified a number of key findings in the area of leadership. Leadership communications challenges arise from a number of sources: the rapid turnover in leaders at the executive management level; the prioritization of department leadership over collaboration; the lack of commitment to core values and discord in public meetings; and a silo environment in which each department functions with its own rules, standards, and communication protocols.

Key findings in leadership include:

1.1 *Leaders are not afraid to closely examine communication, culture, and morale*

1.2 *Executive staff members are willing to make substantive changes to resolve challenges*

1.3 *Top-down leadership is key to eliminating pervasive silos*

1.4 *Strong department heads can be counterproductive to communication effectiveness and success by prioritizing department performance over collaboration and communication*

1.5 *Public discord among City Council members at public, televised meetings does not set a positive example that contributes to collaboration and decorum*

1.6 *Council's public vocalization of frustration with other elected officials and staff members contributes to an atmosphere of fear and low morale among City employees*

1.7 *A lack of commitment to core values and strategic planning goals limits the Council's ability to provide high-level direction*

1.8 *Turnover in executive leadership creates an atmosphere of instability, which limits communications effectiveness by failing to allow relationships to develop*

1.9 *Struggle for ownership over information and control of areas and responsibilities is a roadblock hampering swift and effective communication*

1.10 *The different rules, standards, protocols, and responsibilities established by different department leaders fuel jealousy and entrench silos*

2. CULTURE

In order to improve communications across the organization, it is important that the City of Banning analyze the culture and environment in which it operates.

Generally, City staff is independent and resourceful, but also heavily focused on individual responsibilities or department tasks. Work is conducted in a series of vertical silos, with a limited sense of shared mission or understanding of value to the City and its citizens. Public discord among City Council members, in addition to Council's public statements of dissatisfaction and questions of managers and staff, are disruptive to a spirit of unity, causing suspicion and impacting the morale of staff. Creating a cohesive leadership structure with less conflict will help focus on positives in the community and will go a long way toward improving employee productivity.

The assessment process identified a number of key findings regarding the workplace culture at the City of Banning.

2.1 *Trust is reduced by the public interaction between councilmembers and staff, and by communication taking place outside the traditional Council – City Manager – Staff structure, resulting in an atmosphere of suspicion*

2.2 *Continuing to foster an atmosphere of respect includes collegial expression of disagreement among councilmembers, and public collaboration between council and staff*

2.3 *Fear of disciplinary repercussions and public censure reduces innovation, stunts positive change, and forces adherence to the status quo*

2.4 *Decorum in the handling of disagreement will improve public perception and serve as a springboard to progress*

2.5 *Tackling challenges in council meetings with solutions-oriented thinking and a forward-looking approach minimizes excuses and blame*

2.6 *Morale will steadily improve as trust grows through investment in communication and a clear and positive mechanism for feedback*

3. Perception

The assessment process identified a number of key findings regarding how the City is perceived by various audiences and stakeholders, as well as the key influencers of this perception. Because the City has not actively and frequently told its story to its citizens, an information vacuum has developed. This vacuum is currently filled by rumor and misinformation, as well as media and public focus on behavior at public meetings. Key to transforming perception is a redoubled commitment to messaging the wealth of services and positive stories already taking place at the City every day, and creating new communication tools that are easy and rewarding for citizens to use.

An organization's brand can serve as an important communications guide for internal staff, residents and businesses. Streamlining each department's concepts, images and messages into a cohesive brand will make it easier to change the culture in the City and serve as a tool when conveying the spectrum of services it provides and the value to citizens.

The City is missing a vital opportunity by not cultivating its presence in the press. Earned media, i.e. news stories, are the most trustworthy source of information among the public. With this in mind, the main City spokesperson should be trying to get "positive" stories in the news to convey the benefits of living in Banning. This will also go a long way toward engaging residents.

One of the single most important factors steering public perception of the City is the behavior and attitude of its Council. Without reconciliation and realization of common goals, Banning will continue to suffer detrimental press and lose opportunities to distance itself from neighboring communities that are experiencing negative press and perception because of scandal.

3.1 Brand and image

3.1.1 *Banning's media image is a non-image*

3.1.2 *Little effort currently devoted to leveraging the City's unique identity*

3.1.3 *Awareness of public dysfunction of City Council impacts public perception of city function and performance*

3.1.4 *There is a distinct lack of narrative about the City aside from controversial City Council actions and lawsuits*

3.1.5 *A web search produces virtually no stories that examine life in the City or promote signature events such as Stagecoach Days*

3.1.6 This deficit could be remedied with a dedicated press spokesperson who has a relationship with local reporters and can call on them with ideas for these "slice of life" stories that portray the City in a more positive light by showcasing service and value

3.1.7 This strategy will continue to achieve still greater success as news agencies cut back on their resources and reporters no longer have the luxury of mining stories by spending time in the community

3.1.8 A subtle nudge from a press contact can satisfy the City's need to get positive stories in the press and the reporter's desire to find good stories, which are best done outside of meetings

3.1.9 City is poised to involve citizens in a rebranding process that highlights Banning's strengths and heritage

3.2 Media coverage

3.2.1 City does not have an issue management forecast or plan to communicate in crisis situations

3.2.2 Media interaction is handled separately at the City and the Police Department, with little collaboration and connectivity

3.2.3 The primary local news media, including the Banning Record-Gazette, the Press-Enterprise, and Banning-Beaumont Patch, do not currently focus on stories that demonstrate the City's value to citizens

3.2.4 There is no reference in any news stories by the above sources to a City spokesperson, and little evidence that anyone with the City is actively nurturing relationships with the local media

3.2.5 The news section on the City's website is not given priority, and there is no area for media where press releases and statements would be posted

3.2.6 Stories that do appear in the Record-Gazette and Press-Enterprise are largely based on City Council actions, scheduled events and lawsuits

3.2.7 These stories appear to be somewhat balanced, although improved frequency and depth of interaction with media members would improve objectivity

3.2.8 The Patch has many more stories about Beaumont than Banning (even before the recent financial scandal)

3.2.9 The Banning Informer covers politics and controversial subjects in the city; this is a website with a biased and negative view which includes information from Council members

3.2.10 The majority of stories in all sources are negative coverage of the previous city manager's termination and lawsuits by the former city manager, former public works director and former police chief

3.2.11 Other stories reference the lawsuit between the City and its Chamber of Commerce

3.2.12 There seems to be a void of positive stories, meaning tremendous potential opportunity and appetite for the City to begin providing news about its services and value to the community

3.3 Citizens

3.3.1 Citizens are primarily aware of the City through utility bills

3.3.2 There is some awareness of discord on Council

3.3.3 That discord is frustrating to residents and limits engagement

3.3.4 Some citizens who were interviewed after attending a Council meeting said that they would never be returning

3.3.5 Citizens have an "us and them" mentality with Sun Lakes

3.3.6 There is some concern about the idea that Sun Lakes may be disproportionately represented on the Council

3.3.7 Residents are not aware of the advantages of a full-service City

3.3.8 Programs run by Community Services and Police Department are embraced by the community and provide tremendous opportunity for relationship building and messaging

3.4 City Council

3.4.1 Some Council members do not have full faith in staff and its performance

3.4.2 An atmosphere of conflict pervades Council interaction

3.4.3 Factionalism is demonstrated in behavior at public meetings

3.4.4 Some Council members rely on staff members other than the City Manager for information, placing employees in an awkward position

3.4.5 Council members can be interventionist with tendencies to micromanage

3.4.6 Council members publicly criticizing staff imparts fear and weakens morale

3. Perception

3.5 Peers

> *3.5.1 Current communication challenges in nearby cities can impact perception of Banning*
>
> *3.5.2 Banning must distance and distinguish itself from scandals occurring elsewhere*
>
> *3.5.3 The City must highlight transparency to avoid being connected with negative public and media image*

3.6 Internal

> *3.6.1 See Culture section*

The City is lacking a strategy that aligns audiences, messages, and media – and works to efficiently engage all communicators within the organization. It seems as if communications decisions are made in a series of vacuums, one not necessarily connected to the next. This leads to wasted time and lost opportunities to connect with the community.

In order to move forward, achieve results and benefit from its communications efforts, Banning must become strategic in its approach and look holistically at all organizational messaging and outreach. Further, it must implement tactics with clear deliverables, training and proof of performance measures to ensure messages permeate and penetrate targeted audiences.

The assessment process identified a number of key findings regarding the City's current community outreach and engagement efforts. Findings in this area are the result of a lack of advance planning and coordination of efforts. Outreach materials are created by individual departments on an ad hoc basis with no central coordination. There is no authority serving as the hub of communication and as the guardian of the Banning brand. This leads to a lack of consistency both in tone, look, and schedule of outreach, and a less than ideal image in the community, with opportunities to improve connection with citizens through consistency, collaboration, use of new tools and technology, and a commitment to the City's narrative.

4.1 There is no master planning document or holistic approach to communication

4.2 Limited evaluation of outreach efforts limits knowledge of what is and isn't working

4.3 There is not a consistent effort to take pulse on community priorities or receive feedback

4.4 Limited outreach coordination among departments results in a lack of consistency in look, content, and timing of outreach

4.5 Uneven production from different departments contributes to lack of balance in what the community hears from different departments

4.6 Increased coordination would help citizens grasp the nature of Banning's full service approach

4.7 Many residents only interact with city through their utility bills

4.8 Misperception exists that these services are overpriced because they are all charged on one document

4.9 There is limited effort to correlate value of service with cost, or to demonstrate what citizens' rates are buying for them

4.10 Banning residents have limited understanding of all the services and benefits the City provides

4.11 Police Department youth outreach is enthusiastically received

4.12 Community Services programs provide tremendous opportunities for outreach

4.13 The need exists for a style guide or guideline document to promote consistency

4.14 The need exists for staff member to be designated as the hub of communications

4.15 The need exists for communications protocols linking departments to coordinate joint outreach and create an outreach calendar that incorporates all departments

4.16 More attention needs to be paid to young families and teens -- this population is the future of the city and must be encouraged to stay

4.17 Banning communicators need to be trained to constantly mine for stories, resources, and key information that should be shared with citizens

4.18 Additional focus could be devoted to the eastern portion of the City, where residents have a less strong connection with local government

The assessment process identified a number of key findings regarding internal communications at the City. Limited communications planning and protocol development results in inconsistent application of communications principles across the organization. Top level managers, often the most talented communicators, rely on mid-level management to distribute information, resulting in decreased effectiveness. Silos that exist in departments prevent the best practices from each department from being shared across the organization, and limit knowledge of the common goals and vision toward which all Banning staff and electeds are working every day. Internal client service needs to be prioritized across all departments, promoting shared service and unity.

5.1 *Banning employees are hungry for communications improvements internally and are willing to participate in information-sharing ideas*

5.2 *Conflicts arise as a result of the culture generated by Council meetings and their public relationship with staff*

5.3 *There are bottlenecks in the flow of information*

5.4 *The organization's mission and vision are not well understood internally*

5.5 *Employees generally desire a more open-door policy and approach to internal communications*

5.6 *The recent focus on communications has been narrow, targeting particular projects one at a time, rather than approaching the messaging holistically*

5.7 *The rapid and aggressive pace of change in the organization calls for equally sophisticated communications tools and systems that are not yet in place*

5.8 *Current message distribution is not timely, which causes conflict and confusion for employees*

5.9 *Employees cite "word of mouth" as a primary communications tool*

5.10 *Gossip across the organization results in spread of misinformation and limits relationship building and collaboration across the organization*

5.11 *Staff is aware of large-scale changes taking place at the city, but there is limited clarity on how it affects them, how they are expected to message it or how to participate in its success*

- *5.12 Communication between staff and executive management is not shared as frequently or successfully as between managers and employees*

- *5.13 Mid-level managers and principals are relied upon to conduct the bulk of the communications within the organization, dramatically diminishing the ability to capitalize on Banning's most skilled communicators*

- *5.14 Silos and barriers exist across Banning's departments*

- *5.15 Communication patterns, tools, and resources vary widely in different city locations*

- *5.16 Council members do not always follow the traditional communication structure in which staff is communicated with through the City Manager.*

6. COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS

The City has at its disposal numerous messaging tools that need to be maximized for effective communications.

This includes signage promoting the Banning brand, community events and positive attributes of the City.

A web presence is also critical to communications in the 21st century. Web sites should be easy to navigate, with the information people are looking for easily accessible and understandable. The current Banning website is in transition, since it is now crowded and difficult to navigate. The easy search of forms, guidelines and other documents must be prioritized and made more intuitive. Information must be more clearly organized and navigation must be streamlined. And the opportunity to use the internal web traffic to communicate throughout the organization must be harnessed.

Expanding its social media presence, expand community TV programming and revive the City's newsletter, 92220.

Printed material is also an important method for improving knowledge and understanding of the organization by the community. There are stories to tell and messages to share, yet no real direction or consistency in messaging for any of them. Various departments are creating their own outreach materials without a gatekeeper of consistency in branding and messaging.

The assessment process identified a number of key findings regarding the City's various tools for communication. This area represents a tremendous opportunity to make immediate, stead, and incremental changes that dramatically impact the City's image and relationship with its citizens. By creating a signage program, digital media plan, and regular collateral calendar, and periodically revisiting these areas as the City's needs evolve, Banning can make immediate and major steps toward enhancing communications. And because there is not a great deal of communication taking place, these changes will be noticed and appreciated by citizens, particularly if they are focused on delivering value, relevant information, and contributing to sense of place.

6. Communications Tools

6.1 City signage

6.1.1 *City's main thoroughfare provides tremendous opportunity for signage and branding*

6.1.2 *Signage does little to promote the City's unique sense of place*

6.1.3 *Key messages, events, services, etc. could be prominently featured*

6.1.4 *Community signs such as "hometown heroes" honoring veterans or historical figures or celebrating key events can build awareness and promote positive city image*

6.1.5 *Signs recognizing unique neighborhoods encourage local pride, promote community spirit, and contribute to positive changes at a granular level*

6.1.6 *Transit advertisements are underutilized and provide opportunity for public service announcements (such as text 911) or other city information*

6.1.7 *A city sign program creating consistent branded looks for all signs and materials on walls of City facilities will improve perception*

6.1.8 *Signage should "advertise" services and message value in a compelling way that competes with private sector advertising*

6.2 Web presence

6.2.1 *City website is in transition*

6.2.2 *Website must cope with the extraordinary number of services provided*

6.2.3 *This breadth of information can cause confusion and make navigation difficult*

6.2.4 *There is no top-level "advertising" presented to visitors of the city*

6.2.5 *Citizens are not presented with key messages in a prioritized and strategic way*

6.2.6 *Services and information about value city provides are not clearly highlighted*

6.2.7 *Visits to public agency websites are increasingly transactional*

6.2.8 *Transactions need to be available, simple, quick and convenient for all city services, with digital options for all tasks present and easily found*

6.2.9 *While making these transactions easy and efficient, the opportunity to engage a captive audience must be leveraged*

6.2.10 *Local resources should be promoted and showcased as a community support tool*

6.3 Social media

6.3.1 Multiple social media presences of different City services (City, Community Services, PD, etc.) contribute to a fractured online persona, divided audience and confusion

6.3.2 There is a need for close coordination and planning between diverse city elements

6.3.3 Social media policy and protocol needs to be clearly documented, and social media participants should undergo training

6.3.4 City maintains an active Twitter account and a Facebook page with regular posts about job openings, community events, water issues, meetings, school awards

6.3.5 No Instagram

6.3.6 The Facebook page has 1,300 likes (By contrast, Beaumont has 4,309 likes on its Facebook page, Redlands has 2,900 likes, Menifee has 6,700)

6.3.7 The greatest number of comments on Banning's Facebook page were generated by a posting about chromium-6 in the City's water

6.3.8 Most other comments were responded to or resolved by staff

6.3.9 It is admirable that staff responds to the more reasonable complaints and questions on Facebook, which lets readers know that someone is listening

6.3.10 The City should strive to increase the number of "likes" on its Facebook page by through promotion, events, and provision of relevant information

6.3.11 Centralization of multiple accounts and presences online will make efforts aimed at increasing Facebook "likes" more effective

6.4 Community Access TV

6.4.1 Banning Government Access Channel broadcasts City Council and other meetings, but offers little other programming

6.4.2 Council meeting broadcasts reinforce negative image of city governance

6.4.3 Channel is a tremendous opportunity for messaging and education

6.4.4 Effort needs to be invested to offset Council meeting broadcasts

6.4.5 City YouTube channel could benefit from integration throughout

6.4.6 Contests and user-participation efforts will increase engagement with these valuable tools

6.4.7 This resource also presents a tremendous opportunity to interact with students and families

6.5 NEWSLETTER

6.5.1 *92220, the City newsletter for residents, is expected to be revived*

6.5.2 *Digital newsletter may be an option, and could increase engagement and interactivity while reducing production costs*

6.5.3 *Incorporating videos, polling, contests, and other two way dialog would increase reader engagement*

6.5.4 *Relevance and timeliness of material is key*

6.5.5 *Collaboration with local businesses increases engagement and creates meaningful community bonds*

6.5.6 *Internal audiences should not be ignored, and would benefit from their own internal news sources, even if these sources are digital*

6.5.7 *Special material should be devoted to internal teams, and staff should be actively encouraged to contribute ideas and content to the newsletter initiative*

6.5.8 *A central source should be compiling newsletter resources constantly, so that there is always content ready to be included*

6.6 COLLATERAL MATERIAL

6.6.1 *Numerous sources of collateral are an impediment to consistency*

6.6.2 *A style guide is needed to create a more uniform look, including application of brand, and tone/style of writing*

6.6.3 *More centralized review and coordination of outreach materials will create more effective products and markedly improve branding*

6.6.4 *Materials need to be created to focus citizen engagement on services, programs and value offered by the City*

6.6.5 *Communication must occur frequently beyond the utility bill*

6.6.6 *Citizens need to be trained where to easily find relevant and useful information about issues that impact their lives*

6.6.7 *This training results in a rapid growth in readership and engagement*

7. Resources

The City of Banning, like other areas of Southern California, is beginning to recover from the economic downturn. In the last year, the City added four major retail stores to its tax rolls, which, along with low debt service, has helped boost the economic outlook for the coming year. The improved financial picture sets the stage for increased customer service and resident outreach through additional hiring and funding for staff training and orientation.

The budget for 2016-2017 is not only balanced, it includes an increase for capital improvement projects and hiring of additional staff. Hiring an economic development manager, community service officer and management analyst will bring more business to the City, improve customer service and begin restoring some of the 40 full-time positions that were cut over the last few years.

In order to maximize communications effectiveness, the City of Banning must prioritize communications by dedicating the resources, personnel, and time to this essential task. Key to this commitment is the creation of a central point of contact responsible for the coordination of all messages and the management of the City's internal and external outreach efforts. This oversight will address the lack of coordinated effort, the lack of a unified message, and the multiple sources of information that are distributed with central review. A public information officer would be the ideal mechanism for tackling these challenges. The assessment process evaluated City resources and identified the following key findings.

7.1 *Lack of coordinated effort results in duplicate work and conflicting sources of information*

7.2 *Lack of unified message creates confusion*

7.3 *Web resources need unification*

7.4 *There is no single point of contact for the media*

7.5 *Single point of contact and oversight is essential to unify and manage City image and outreach efforts, both internal and external*

7.6 *Public information officer (PIO) would be responsible to present a unified and professional face of the City*

7.7 *In addition to dealing with the above issues, a PIO could hammer key messages*

7.8 *PIO could focus on engaging additional demographics in the City that have not yet been reached*

7.9 *Organizational development, internal communications, and emergency operations would also be improved through this position*

The City of Banning is located to the north and south of Interstate 10, between the Inland Empire and the Coachella Valley, in the San Gorgonio Pass. The City initially served as a stagecoach and railroad stop between the Arizona territories and Los Angeles. This history has contributed to the spirit of pioneer resourcefulness and "can do" attitude that is prevalent in the community today.

Banning was incorporated in 1913 as a general law city with a Council-Manager form of government. The City has five elected Council members, one of which is appointed Mayor by the Council every year. The City Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer and is appointed by the City Council. Banning Council members are elected city-wide and represent all citizens.

Banning is a full-service city, delivering all of the local essential services, including police, fire, library, parks and recreation, and planning. Many residents are unaware of the advantages of living in a full-service city, such as convenience, local control, excellent customer service and a coordinated response between departments.

The City operates well-respected programs through Community Services and the Police Department, which can be leveraged for messaging. Opportunities exist to improve outreach, which is now accomplished primarily through residents' utility bill. Many citizens perceive an "us and them" mentality with Sun Lakes and the rest of the community, and there is concern that this neighborhood is disproportionately represented on the Council. This perception may contribute to a lopsided approach to governance and marginalization of other neighborhoods.

The assessment process identified a number of key findings regarding the City's structural and geographic issues on both the internal and external sides.

8.1 Internal

8.1.1 City Hall is divided into two halves, which impacts workflow and communication

8.1.2 Police Department is in an entirely separate facility, which is not clearly established through internal and external signage, leading to confusion

8.1.3 Electric and Water Utilities are separated, leading to reduced communication and increased competition and jealousy

8.1.4 Community Services is in its own location, with limited signage in and around City Hall

8.1.5 Staff at Community Services feels isolated, and experiences some workflow impacts

8.1.6 Senior Center and other community facilities could benefit from increased signage messaging Banning's role in the lives of its citizens, advertising Banning services, and creating consistent meaningful connections by leveraging communications opportunities

8.2 External

8.2.1 Sun Lakes residents are very involved in governance

8.2.2 East Banning does not participate as much, and would benefit from targeted outreach

8.2.3 Neighborhoods are disconnected; efforts should be initiated to encourage neighborhood spirit through City programs, such as landscape contests, neighborhood information, features and resources, etc.

8.2.4 Downtown Banning has the opportunity to provide a heart to Banning's sense of place and to build on the City's heritage

8.2.5 Downtown events, branding, and marketing should be developed to draw citizens to this area

8.2.6 Regular calendar of downtown special events such as a New Year's Eve ball drop should be developed and messaged to the citizens

Recommendations

Based on findings gleaned from hours of interviews, surveys and community observations, we are providing the following recommendations for improving communications in the City of Banning. These suggestions are intended to pave the way for focused direction and thoughtful resource allocation and, ultimately, as the basis for future planning and decision-making.

1. Invest in long-term communications planning

A well-devised communications plan built on the foundation of the City's goals and key messages will ensure consistency across all channels. This approach will help raise Banning's profile by refining its image in the community, reinforcing credibility, and establishing trust among residents.

1.1 *Recruit, hire and train a Public Information Officer to maximize internal and external communications with consistent, high-quality messages*

1.2 *Develop a strategic marketing program to drive city interest, engagement and support*

1.3 *Leverage the City's unique identity through use of message tagline and positioning statement*

1.4 *Revamp the City's mission and vision statements*

1.5 *Create a messaging and collateral toolkit*

1.6 *Develop a coordinated outreach program*

2. Build & achieve excellence in City communications

Effective communications will penetrate every part of the organization, from letters to brochures and interaction with the media. To drive perception, messages must be consistent and capitalize on the City's strengths.

2.1 *Enhance brand awareness through visual identification and frequent reminders of the city's promise to its community*

2.2 *Ensure all communication delivery strategies are synchronized*

2.3 *Institute ad one clear voice communication strategy across the city*

2.4 *Develop consistent collateral and messaging*

3. Enhance City performance through the establishment of a renewed culture of trust, transparency and shared vision

Sharing information allows for more transparent governance, which increases awareness of public policies, facilitates feedback and improves the organization's performance and accountability.

3.1 *Engage employees in the production and implementation of the plan*

3.2 *Increase employee engagement through a diverse use of tools and resources*

3.4 *Create city brand ambassadors*

3.5 *Establish regular cross-training opportunities including job specific presentations*

3.6 *Build communications training and in-service programs around key messages, audiences and issues for all staff*

3.7 *Strict adherence to a traditional communications structure in the organization will improve relationships and productivity among council members, City leadership and staff*

The following chart identifies a recommended structure:
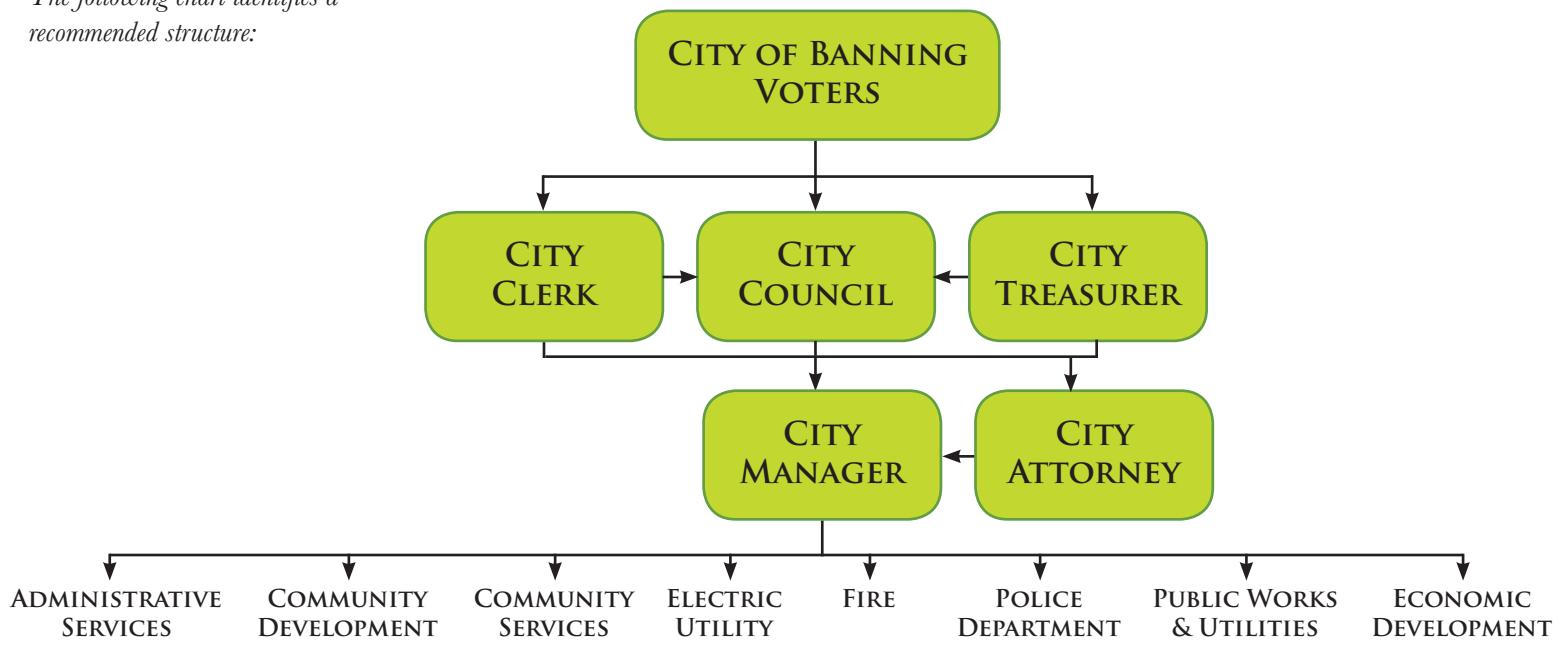
4. Leverage technology to maximize available messaging vehicles

Multiple technologies can be used to enhance the delivery of City services and communicate information to residents. The result is improved awareness, understanding and participation.

4.1 Enhance quality and quantity of programming on the Banning Government Access Channel

4.2 Technology improvements to City website to provide one-stop access to information and self-service portals

4.3 Maintain streamlined, updated and consistent technology policies

4.4 Utilize technology to communicate across the city's vast scope of services

5. Develop comprehensive communications campaigns

City communications should support, reinforce and reflect the goals of the City as established by the City Council and managers. This underscores the idea of an organization with one common purpose: its residents. To do this, the City must consider its resources, plan for emergencies and strategize how to spread the message.

5.1 Build key messaging components based on stakeholder buy-in

5.2 Foster community commitment to communications through sponsorships and community information network

5.3 Devote financial resources to paid media and public service campaigns

5.4 Develop marketing plans for transit system, airport and utilities

5.5 Develop proof of performance mechanisms in all efforts

CITY OF
BANNING
California

APPENDIX

Discussion Guide

1. Do you have any thoughts on internal messaging among the City's may moving parts?
2. How does your team receive news and information from other departments?
3. How does your team learn about community affairs and public outreach efforts?
4. Could this process be improved? In an ideal world what would happen?
5. What is currently the best way for your department to find out about how Banning is reaching out?
6. Does staff in your department know the best/same responses to questions when citizens and other stakeholders call or stop employees in the community? (Talking Points)
7. How do you think members of your staff could help spread Banning's message that is different than anything Banning is currently doing or could logistically do?
8. Do new staff members receive adequate orientation that incorporates information, key messages, and organizational ideals? What would you include to enhance this process?
9. Characterize the communication culture of CVS.
10. What types of initiatives would enhance and improve this culture?
11. How do we align all these different moving parts?

INTERNAL

1. Tell me about your department's interaction with the public.
2. What are the key ways in which your department can be supported in terms of communications?
3. What resources are required? What resources are currently available?
4. Do you have any overall comments or suggestions regarding priorities?
5. What should every customer know about Banning and your department?
6. Have any outreach efforts been particularly successful? Particularly unsuccessful? Why?
7. Who do you think/know the audiences are that Banning is trying to reach/need to reach?
8. Is there a particular target audience that needs more attention? Why? What method would be best?
9. What are the most common questions that you think need to be answered?
10. How often do you see an article in the local newspaper or other media source about Banning? What do you think of the coverage and how it affects community perception of the city?
11. Who are the stakeholders that you consider top priorities?
12. What are the best strategies for engagement?
13. What do these stakeholders need?
14. What does the Banning brand represent?

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Vela, Art	Acting Public Works Director	avela@ci.banning.ca.us	(951) 922-3130

Questionnaire

Internal Communications Assessment Questionnaire

1. What is the name of your department?

2. Briefly describe your department's primary function.

3. How does your department intersect with the public (counter, field, community, etc.)?

4. Is there a stated mission that defines your department?

5. In terms of communications, what would you say your department does well?

6. What are the internal communications challenges facing your department?

7. How do you believe your department is generally perceived by your colleagues across the organization?

8. How do you believe your department is perceived by outside residents and/or customers?

9. Describe how your communications efforts intersect with those of the City (staff, council, etc.).

10. In terms of communications, what would you do differently if you could?

11. If you could define a new brand for your department, how would you describe it?

12. What promise are you making to each of your internal customers every day?

13. What promise are you making to each of your external customers every day?

14. What does communications excellence look like for you?

15. Please identify key interview contacts in your department that will provide insight at all levels of department operation.

Questionnaire Results

Internal Communications Assessment Questionnaire

1. What is the name of your department? *The Banning Police Department*

2. Briefly describe your department's primary function. *The Banning Police Department is full service law enforcement agency, providing police services 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.*

3. How does your department intersect with the public (counter, field, community, etc.)? *Our station lobby is open Monday through Friday (8-5), our officers are on patrol 24-7. Further, we have a well-established presence on social media, we offer a Neighborhood Watch program, a Fraud Safety program, and a police activities league program.*

4. Is there a stated mission that defines your department? *"The Banning Police Department is committed to serve with honor and protect all citizens of our culturally diverse community through a partnership focused on public trust and providing a safe environment for all."*

5. In terms of communications, what would you say your department does well? *We do a great job building long-term partnerships with businesses, civic leaders and residents.*

6. What are the internal communications challenges facing your department? *Because of staffing shortages in Administration, the information is not filtered to the lower ranks in a timely manner.*

7. How do you believe your department is generally perceived by your colleagues across the organization? *We are perceived as a young, solid department with new leadership.*

8. How do you believe your department is perceived by outside residents and/or customers? *I believe we are perceived as a fair police department who despite staff shortages, has gone above and beyond to accommodate the safety needs of our residents.*

9. Describe how your communications efforts intersect with those of the City (staff, council, etc.). *Previous to the hiring of our new city manager, efforts where somewhat nonexistent; communication was limited to a few council members, a few directors and almost no communication with mid-level managers and below. Communication efforts have greatly increased with the implementation of the monthly Management Meetings.*

10. In terms of communications, what would you do differently if you could? *A newsletter is needed to communicate our "message" to the employees, quarterly meetings would also benefit those employees because it would allow them an opportunity to provide input dealing directly to the "message" we are trying to convey.*

11. If you could define a new brand for your department, how would you describe it? *A modern police department, innovative and willing to embrace technology to provide a safe environment to our citizens, our businesses, and our visitors.*

12. What promise are you making to each of your internal customers every day? *I am promising a streamlined dissemination of information process, flow of information (dialog) between all employee levels (civilian-sworn) and the opportunity for each employee to have a say in the future of our police department.*

13. What promise are you making to each of your external customers every day? *I am promising a dedicated police force willing to embrace modern, proactive policing methods to provide our resident the tools necessary to lead a safe and happy life.*

14. What does communications excellence look like for you? *Communication excellence to me looks like this: streamlined dissemination of information process, flow of information (dialog) between all employee levels (civilian-sworn) and the opportunity for each employee to have a say in the future of our police department.*

15. Please identify key interview contacts in your department that will provide insight at all levels of department operation. *Lieutenant Phil Holder PHolder@ci.banning.ca.us, Sergeant Robert Fisher RFisher@ci.banning.ca.us, Officer Brandon Smith BSmith@ci.banning.ca.us, IT Specialist Liza Kester LKester@ci.banning.ca.us, Public Safety Dispatcher Pam Stone PStone@ci.banning.ca.us, Police Assistant (Records) Mandy Stephens MStephens@ci.banning.ca.us, Code Enforcement Officer Debbie Shubin DShubin@ci.banning.ca.us*

Questionnaire Results

Internal Communications Assessment Questionnaire

1. What is the name of your department? *Community Development*

2. Briefly describe your department's primary function. *Processing planning and land use entitlements, Building and Safety functions (plan checking, permitting and inspections).*

3. How does your department intersect with the public (counter, field, community, etc.)? *Processing permit applications we interact with professionals via the typical ways. We interact with the public at the counter, in the field, on our web page, and over the telephone.*

4. Is there a stated mission that defines your department? *Not that I am aware of.*

5. In terms of communications, what would you say your department does well? *We follow through. We explain complex development regulations to persons with different levels of experience.*

6. What are the internal communications challenges facing your department? *Inter-departmental communications are challenging when it comes to processing complex projects.*

7. How do you believe your department is generally perceived by your colleagues across the organization? *As having too many rules.*

8. How do you believe your department is perceived by outside residents and/or customers? *As having too many rules. We are responsible for directing compliancWe circulate project proposals to the many departments for their review and comment. We prepare entitlement and policy reports to the Planning Commission and City Council. Code enforcement often sends customers to us to work with them on getting their issues into compliance with City codes. These issues are often report to City Council and Planning Commission members.*

9. Describe how your communications efforts intersect with those of the City (staff, council, etc.). *Previous to the hiring of our new city manager, efforts where somewhat nonexistent; communication was limited to a few council members, a few directors and almost no communication with mid-level managers and below. Communication efforts have greatly increased with the implementation of the monthly Management Meetings.*

10. In terms of communications, what would you do differently if you could? *Present a more positive image of the City by helping individuals appreciate the benefits of the many regulations that we enforce.*

11. If you could define a new brand for your department, how would you describe it? *Community enhancement.*

12. What promise are you making to each of your internal customers every day? *To be fair and consistent.*

13. What promise are you making to each of your external customers every day? *To be fair and consistent.*

14. What does communications excellence look like for you? *Clear and concise direction.*

15. Please identify key interview contacts in your department that will provide insight at all levels of department operation. *Sandra Calderon, Project Development Coordinator   SCalderon@ci.banning.ca.us (951) 922-3190*

Internal Communications Assessment Questionnaire

1. What is the name of your department? *Administrative Services Department*

2. Briefly describe your department's primary function. *Finance (payroll, purchasing, utility billing, payment acceptance, budget preparation, audit, and financial reporting), Human Resources, and Risk Management*

3. How does your department intersect with the public (counter, field, community, etc.)? *Utility Billing – Field Service Reps read meters and interact with customers at their homes when reading meters; Customer Service Reps interact with customers at the counter to sign customers up for service, accept payments, and discuss billing disputes; Utility Billing Reps interact with customers over the phone to discuss complaints/issues with bills.*

4. Is there a stated mission that defines your department? *My hope is to develop it to be EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE TO INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS.*

5. In terms of communications, what would you say your department does well? *Reacts (to complaints and requests).*

6. What are the internal communications challenges facing your department? *There is little to NO inter-departmental communication, so if anything affects the calls that customer service will receive, we are not notified. Limited information is shared by Finance staff to other departments, which makes it difficult for department directors to make informed decisions based on budget and financial status of the department.*

7. How do you believe your department is generally perceived by your colleagues across the organization? *Perceived often as being unhelpful and unsupportive, while we are a support department to all other departments.*

8. How do you believe your department is perceived by outside residents and/or customers? *A few (that voice their opinions) perceive Utility Billing as dishonest and cheating (on bills); we have received requests at Council Meetings for a Forensic Audit of Utilities (multiple requests by the same person). We did not communicate to customers that two months of bills were estimates, which has caused several complaints in the community.*

9.   Describe how your communications efforts intersect with those of the City (staff, council, etc.). *I, personally, have regular meetings with staff to keep them informed of things that will affect them, that are going on in other departments, and that have happened at the Council level. However, this has only recently been started.*

10. In terms of communications, what would you do differently if you could? *Meet regularly (at least quarterly) with all staff, or at least key, lead, and supervisory staff from all departments to interact and share information. Additionally, I would require customer service training, as many staff are condescending and demeaning when they talk to others (internally and externally).*

11. If you could define a new brand for your department, how would you describe it? *Exceptional Customer Service!*

12. What promise are you making to each of your internal customers every day? *That I will be responsive and timely with accurate information.*

13. What promise are you making to each of your external customers every day? *That I am taking measures to improve customer service, avenues of making payments, and data sharing.*

14. What does communications excellence look like for you? *It looks easy to obtain, and clearly communicated!*

15. Please identify key interview contacts in your department that will provide insight at all levels of department operation. *Stacy Bavol-Bouslog – Utility Financial Analyst (Directly supervises Utility Billing, Customer Service, and Field Service Reps/Meter Readers) SBavol@ci.banning.ca.us 951-922-310, Michelle Green – Deputy Finance Director MGreen@ci.banning.ca.us 951-922-3118, Rita Chapparosa – Deputy Human Resources Director RChapparosa@ci.banning.ca.us 951-922-3147, Todd Parker – Field Service Lead JeffParker@ci.banning.ca.us (goes by Todd) 951-922-3185 or contact his supervisor – Stacy Bavol-Bouslog*

Questionnaire Results

Internal Communications Assessment Questionnaire

1. What is the name of your department? *City Clerk's Department*

2. Briefly describe your department's primary function. *The City Clerk is an elected position whose primary responsibility is the management of all official city records, provides services to the City Council, City departments and citizens of Banning. The City Clerk also administers the bi-annual function of elections and special elections that may occur at any time the City Council directs and the elections are coordinated with the County of Riverside Registrar of Voters.*

3. How does your department intersect with the public (counter, field, community, etc.)? *The City Clerk's department interacts with the public at the information desk at city hall, by phone, email, fax.*

4. Is there a stated mission that defines your department? *No*

5. In terms of communications, what would you say your department does well? *Works well with the public in answering their emails for information and through phone calls.*

6. What are the internal communications challenges facing your department? *Not knowing who is in the office when we need to transfer calls to other departments or get information.*

7. How do you believe your department is generally perceived by your colleagues across the organization? *Not sure.*

8. How do you believe your department is perceived by outside residents and/or customers? *For the most part I think that we are perceived as being responsive to the public's requests for information.*

9. Describe how your communications efforts intersect with those of the City (staff, council, etc.). *Communications are usually through emails, phone calls or one on one with the Council, department heads and other city personnel. (Maybe this doesn't answer your question)*

10. In terms of communications, what would you do differently if you could? *I am not sure at this time.*

11. If you could define a new brand for your department, how would you describe it? *Not sure of this question.*

12. What promise are you making to each of your internal customers every day? *Be responsive in a timely manner.*

13. What promise are you making to each of your external customers every day? *Be responsive in a timely manner.*

14. What does communications excellence look like for you? *Being able to connect with someone to get the correct information internally and externally being able to respond quickly with the information that is needed to our customers in a courteous manner and to those we work with so that we know what we are doing (we are all on the same page).*

15. Please identify key interview contacts in your department that will provide insight at all levels of department operation. *Sonja De La Fuente and Leila Lopez.*

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is the name of your department? *Public Works Department*

2. Briefly describe your department's primary function. *The divisions of the Public Works Department include: Airport, Solid Waste, Engineering, Street and Park Maintenance, Fleet Maintenance, Building Maintenance, and Water and Wastewater utilities. Within these divisions our functions include administration of services to the public and other departments and the implementation of capital improvement programs.*

3. How does your department intersect with the public (counter, field, community, etc.)? *We field varies of inquiries at our counter and phone calls. We also deal with the public out in the field. The director and some managers participate in public workshops and meetings.*

4. Is there a stated mission that defines your department? *I am not aware of a mission statement for our department that has been approved and is listed in any literature; I am very interested in creating one.*

5. In terms of communications, what would you say your department does well? *I feel that our customer service level at our counter and in the field is very good. I also feel that our management team does a very good job of communicating with one another.*

6. What are the internal communications challenges facing your department? *I have heard on more than one occasion that our field staff feels "out of the loop" on certain actions that the City takes. An employee specific newsletter would be a great tool to help address the deficiency in our internal communication.*

7. How do you believe your department is generally perceived by your colleagues across the organization? *I think it really depends on who you talk to. I would imagine that some departments would say that we are slow to respond to certain requests, and others understand that our workload is pretty high with a small staff. For example, we have one person that is responsible for the maintenance of all of our City buildings (HVAC, plumbing, repairs, etc.), so sometimes it can take a little longer than anticipated to respond to the non-emergency type requests.*

8. How do you believe your department is perceived by outside residents and/or customers? *I could probably echo a little from #7. I also feel that we could do a better job with keeping the public informed with what we do, what we are (and will) work on and what we have accomplished.*

9. Describe how your communications efforts intersect with those of the City (staff, council, etc.). *We provide updates during executive staff meetings and department staff meetings. We also provide city council with a bi-weekly update on departmental activities.*

10. In terms of communications, what would you do differently if you could? *Being consistent with a communications plan would be a huge step in the right direction.*

11. If you could define a new brand for your department, how would you describe it? *I feel that our department provides essential services to our City's everyday quality of life. "Maintaining Quality of Life Excellence"*

12. What promise are you making to each of your internal customers every day? *We promise that we will keep our roads maintained and open; that you will turn your faucet on and that water will come out; that you can flush your toilets with no worries; that our public facilities (buildings and parks) will be safe to visit and that we will work with developers on smart and responsible development.*

13. What promise are you making to each of your external customers every day? *Same as #12.*

14. What does communications excellence look like for you? *It includes a well-informed staff and public with a seamless method for communicating with one another. It also includes efficiency in communication both internally and externally to avoid delays in responding to inquiries. An understanding of City's goals and objectives from all levels of staff is a big part in order to make sure that we are all representing the same mission.*

15. Please identify key interview contacts in your department that will provide insight at all levels of department operation. *Carl Szoyka (Public Works Superintendent): cszoyka@ci.banning.ca.us, Perry Gerdes (Water/Wastewater Superintendent): pgerdes@ci.banning.ca.us, Holly Stuart (Management Analyst): hstuart@ci.banning.ca.us, Laurie Sampson (Office Specialist and counter representative): lsampson@ci.banning.ca.us*

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is the name of your department? *Community Services*

2. Briefly describe your department's primary function. *Providing recreational programs, sports leagues, leisure classes for all ages of the community; Senior Services to include programs, activities, social services and daily food services for congregant attendants and homebound. Summer Aquatics programs; offering recreational swimming, lessons, water exercise programs, and private rentals of the aquatics center. Operate the municipal bus system, consisting of four fixed routes providing daily service throughout Banning and Cabazon and paratransit transit service Monday-Friday.*

3. How does your department intersect with the public (counter, field, community, etc.)? *Counter, field, telephone, email and community events.*

4. Is there a stated mission that defines your department? *No*

5. In terms of communications, what would you say your department does well? *Moderately*

6. What are the internal communications challenges facing your department? *Much of what we do is putting people and programs in our public spaces, primarily city parks. There is, and has been for many years, a lack of communication and coordination when it comes to projects and/or work done in areas that we utilize and program. Currently the Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance and improvements of our parks, and the Community Services Department is responsible for allocating fields, renting park facilities and offering programs in the parks. With transit there is a struggle to get pertinent financial information in a timeframe that fits the annual funding timeline that is set by Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC).*

7. How do you believe your department is generally perceived by your colleagues across the organization? *I do not believe that other departments know what we do. A very common misconception, even among street/ parks maintenance workers is that we are responsible for areas such as the tennis courts and skate park, when in fact those areas fall under public works. Due to the misconception, I sometimes get the impression that people think my staff doesn't maintain areas they should.*

8. How do you believe your department is perceived by outside residents and/or customers? *I believe that customers and residents appreciate the courteousness and responsiveness of our staff, and that the programs and services we provide are well received. One very real problem we have is simply getting the information out about the programs and services that we offer.*

9. Describe how your communications efforts intersect with those of the City (staff, council, etc.). *Being located offsite (away from city hall) our communications are more of a direct nature. The interaction with council is typically a result of community groups and organizations that a particular councilmember may be affiliated with.*

10. In terms of communications, what would you do differently if you could? *I'm not really sure.*

11. If you could define a new brand for your department, how would you describe it? *At this point I don't have a brand description in mind.*

12. What promise are you making to each of your internal customers every day? *To be readily responsive and work cooperatively on projects, both internal and external.*

13. What promise are you making to each of your external customers every day? *To offer quality programs and services, and to ALWAYS provide prompt and courteous customer service.*

14. What does communications excellence look like for you? *Internally, there needs to be an open environment where people are comfortable sharing with the team and realize a value in doing so (that there observations or concerns have value) Externally, being able to provide clear and concise information to consumers, utilizing a variety of media.*

15. Please identify key interview contacts in your department that will provide insight at all levels of department operation. *Kennith Ware, Field Supervisor (Transit) KWare@ci.banning.ca.us (951) 922-3244 Ivano Torres – Bus Driver, Ana Sandoval – Program Coordinator ASandoval@ci.banning.ca.us (951) 922-3243, Martha Cosentino – Executive Secretary MCosentino@ci.banning.ca.us (951) 922-3252*