



2018 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Cannabis

Prepared by: Communications and Marketing Services
Nikki Booth

TABLE of CONTENTS

Purpose

Background

SWOT analysis

Goals and objectives

Spokesperson

Audience

Key messages

Supporting strategies

- Social media
- Traditional media
- Mayor and council

Evaluation

Tactics

PURPOSE

The purpose of this communications strategy is to help inform Leduc citizens about the work that the City of Leduc is doing related to cannabis legalization, including the role that the federal and provincial governments play, the timeline for City bylaw changes, and information related to education on a variety of topics.

Background

The federal government introduced legislation to legalize cannabis by July 2018. Each province can decide how it will adapt to this legislation.

The Government of Alberta developed the Alberta Cannabis Framework following extensive public and stakeholder engagement to best achieve four policy priorities for cannabis legalization in our province:

1. keeping cannabis out of the hands of children and youth
2. protecting safety on roads, in workplaces and in public spaces
3. protecting public health
4. limiting the illegal market for cannabis

In November 2017, the Government of Alberta passed Bill 26: An Act to Control and Regulate Cannabis, to empower elements of the framework through legislation, which are largely in the form of amendments to the *Gaming and Liquor Act*.

The Alberta Cannabis Framework, which outlines what Albertans can expect when cannabis becomes legal in our province by summer 2018.

The framework was developed after months of engagement with Albertans, stakeholders and partners, extensive research of other jurisdictions, and consideration of our existing liquor and tobacco laws. It sets the stage for the responsible use of cannabis in our province.

Aspects of this framework will be implemented through various pieces of legislation introduced during fall 2017 and spring 2018, including substantive changes to the *Gaming and Liquor Act* that will address oversight, distribution and licensing for non-medical cannabis. To properly reflect this, the amendments will include renaming the act to the *Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Act*.

The City of Leduc began its public engagement in January 2018 using the Engage Leduc branding. The first piece of engagement was a survey related to changes to the Land-Use Bylaw. That survey saw 1,487 respondents, which is one of the best survey responses in the City's history. A second survey went live in February related to public use/consumption. That survey runs until March 2 and results from both surveys will be shared with Council on March 12. Social media has been used to promote the surveys, which also drives people to the cannabis webpage on the City's website. Links to both surveys have also been advertised in the Leduc Rep.

SWOT Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City is seen as a leader by other municipalities for engagement work • Already ahead in terms of engagement, planning on issue • We have a population that wants to be engaged on the issue • Regional collaboration • Strong community partners • Visibility in the community 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased demand/workload on CMS staff • Mixed emotions in community • Most people say they do not have a clear understanding or are very knowledgeable about legalization • Strong biases against cannabis in community
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City council's focus on safe and vibrant community • Partnerships within the community – ec dev, FCSS, RCMP/Enforcement, DBA, Chamber, LNEDA • Council are good at promoting information • Able to work with regional partners • To build off interest from surveys • Access to Leduc Rant & Rave • Staff that are residents can be unofficial spokespeople 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If County decides to proceed with different land-use and consumption • People feeling that City is supportive of Cannabis use in community • Fears about cannabis by residents and others • Compromised relationships with stakeholders – DBA if cannabis distribution points located there • People who don't want to be educated and begin fearmongering • Leduc Rant & Rave – people not being receptive to City comments • Lack of staff engagement or understanding of new policies

GOALS and OBJECTIVES

The following are proposed goals and specific objectives to support the purpose of this strategy:

- To create ongoing opportunities for all Leduc citizens to learn about what the City is doing related to cannabis legalisation:**

This can be achieved through:

 - Tailoring communications tools based on community feedback
 - Provide the proper tools to elected officials to help champion the efforts Council and Administration.
- To engage with a diverse cross section of this community to create conversations around the work being done around cannabis legalization.** This can be achieved through:

 - Create engagement opportunities to provide two-way communication between the City stakeholders and the various audiences. Methods could include social media, surveys (online and informal face-to-face), information session, host coffee-talks in the community, etc.

- b. Engagement must be strategic and timed accordingly, as not to flood the audience to where they no longer hear the message or believe their opinion is valued. Engagement shouldn't be done just for the sake of it. It's about looking at the bigger picture; not just for specific workshops or programs.
- 3. To obtain a better understanding of the concerns in the community related to cannabis legalization, and how to meet those needs to support residents in understand the work being done by the City of Leduc**
- This can be achieved through:
- a. Seek and/or continue collaborative and consultative work with community groups to help educate e.g. Leduc Drug Action Committee, FCSS, Economic Development, The Chamber, DBA, LNEDA
- b. Citizens don't recognize municipal boundaries when they are in crisis or time of need. Seek ways to partner with Leduc County to help educate regional citizens on cannabis legalization.

SPOKESPERSON

Media spokesperson:

Nikki Booth – Communications & Marketing Services

Internal contact:

- Sylvain Losier – Planning & Development
- Cameron Chisholm – Leduc Protective Services Branch
- Lauren Wozny – Communications & Marketing Services

KEY MESSAGES

- Hearing from our residents on this is vital before we can proceed with updating our bylaws that are impacted by the legalization of Cannabis by the federal government.
- The results from both surveys will be shared with Council on March 12. At that time, Council will review the input that we have received from our residents.
- In April, the City will host a public hearing so that residents can see what changes are being proposed to the land use bylaw. Council will review the proposed changes following the hearing in early May.

- It is important to note, that while we are doing this public engagement to determine what our residents would like to see regarding both land-use and public consumption, the Provincial Secretariat on Cannabis is working on finalizing aspects of The Alberta Cannabis Framework.
- The work of the Provincial Secretariat on Cannabis impacts the work that we are doing. We need to ensure that we have a clear understanding of their regulations in order to determine how to set our own path for the City of Leduc.
- We are taking our citizens feedback seriously when it comes to determining how the City of Leduc will address the legalization of cannabis in our municipality.

AUDIENCES

When addressing the various audiences, it's important to consider these two questions as it'll help shape how you share information and engage with your audiences:

1. Why should 'I' care?
2. How does it affect 'me'?

Internal		
Leduc City Council	Executive Team	Staff, including frontline
Family and Community Support Services	Emergency Services (Fire, Enforcement, RCMP)	Family and Community Support Services Advisory Board
Leduc Community Drug Action Committee	City departments, e.g. IACP, Legal, Recreation and Community and Social Development, Leduc Recreation Centre, etc.	
External stakeholders		
Residents – 18+ and up	Leduc Nighthawks	Black Gold Regional School Board No.18
Youth 17 and under	Leduc Regional Chamber of Commerce	St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Schools Separate Regional Division # 38
Business owners/operators – Aurora Cannabis	Leduc Public Library	
Entrepreneurs	Leduc-Beaumont Primary Care Network	
-	Alberta Health Services	
	Leduc County FCSS	
	Leduc Community Hospital	
	Outdoor space user groups	
	Leduc Downtown Business Association	
	Leduc-Nisku EDA	

METHODS of COMMUNICATIONS

The following are identified means in which to reach the various audiences identified:

INTERNAL	CHANNELS
Leduc City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email by following the proper protocol Council reports/updates Meetings – face-to-face Encourage their participation in public activities
Executive Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff newsletter – City Voice Regular updates through the chain of command Email City hosted lunch n’ learns Cross departmental meetings
Frontline staff	
City departments, e.g. IACP, Legal, Recreation and Community and Social Development, Leduc Recreation Centre, etc.	
Emergency Services (Fire, Enforcement, RCMP)	
Leduc Community Drug Action Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FCSS liaison Email

EXTERNAL Stakeholders	CHANNELS
Residents – 18+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interagency luncheons Print promotions and materials Website – update the content Media relations – print and broadcast Social media – paid and organic Events – tag onto other events or create new ones, e.g. coffee talks, open houses Regular meetings
Youth 17 and under	
Business owners/operators	
Entrepreneurs	
Alberta Health Services	
Leduc Regional Chamber of Commerce	
Leduc Downtown Business Association	
Leduc Public Library	
Leduc Nighthawks	
School boards	

Communications activities

Any activities should inspire some level of action – whether it’s action to pick up a phone, go online, write letters, participate in engagement opportunities.

ACTIVITIES	FREE	COST	TIMELINE
News release/ announcements	Produced in-house and shared to audiences		As required
Website update	Updating will be done in-house		1 st quarter 2018
Media relations	Utilize relationships	Ads	As required

Promotional materials and items	City owned/ managed mediums	Print materials; promotional items	As required
Engagement (internal and external)	Surveys	Events Contests	
Social media	Organic	Ads	Regularly

Resources

To meet the needs of this education, resources required from Communications and Marketing Services, and other city departments include:

	CMS	Other Departments
Media relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordination • Proactive measures • Key messaging, FAQs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spokesperson availability • Content from subject matter experts
Print/promotional material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic design • Product sourcing and co-ordination to ensure best price 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review/approval process
Engagement opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications assistance to promote opportunities • Graphic design for required materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordination and management • Work with CMS rep to identify opportunities and options
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordination • Messaging • Visuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review/approval process
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and web support to restructure and add new content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with CMS rep to provide updated content • Review/approval process

SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

Social media plan

This will outline creative, messaging, links and hashtags to be used on the city's social media streams that align with the campaign goals and any engagement opportunities. There will be more to come.

Traditional media

This will outline unique opportunities to engage with various media to help relay the message and help them feel a part of this campaign of 'caring.' There will be more to come.

Mayor and council

This will outline how we can support our elected officials to be campaign ambassadors in the community, as this is identified one of the top three areas of focus in 2018. Methods include:

- Key messaging for the mayor as a potential spokesperson

- Provide members of council with any promotional materials and items to encourage them to share with others
- Identify opportunities where the mayor and Council can engage with residents and staff

EVALUATION

This will be based on the expectations as outlined by the client to include:

- Website analytics – we can take a benchmark of the page as it currently sits and then monitor traffic to see if the numbers change once the page is refreshed.
- Surveys – formal/informal
- Social media engagement
- Media coverage

This can be measured quarterly, depending on the need/expectation. It will also provide the opportunity to bolster or alter the campaign in order to reach the identified goals. This should be reviewed on a regular basis to make the best decision to meet the client's needs.

TACTICS

The following GANTT table outlines tasks/tactics:

TACTIC/TASK	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Launch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revamped webpage Surveys launched 	X	X										
Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what this looks like and tailor to meet the goals (open house, coffee talks, etc.) 2 formal surveys already produced 	X	X					Tag onto established events					
Social media – alternate months to allow for adequate review of messaging based on engagement and to alter future messaging if needed	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Print/promotional material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pamphlet that can be distributed at key locations Posters promoting engagement opportunities 												
Media relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> News Releases: Public hearing, updated Land-Use Bylaw, rules around consumption Tracking/monitoring Spokesperson support 				X	X	X	X					

Social Media:

March 3: A social media post will go out on Twitter and on Facebook thanking our residents for taking part in the public use survey. We will also advise them of next steps – Council COW on March 12, Public Hearing April and advise them to keep an eye out on social media and website for updates.

Starting March 5 - 12 – we will post Did you know content about Cannabis work by the province and the City.

March 13 – We will provide an update from Council COW on social media accounts and remind people of next steps – public hearing

March 14 – April 14 - We will create two social media posts a week related to the feedback from the surveys and then direct people to City of Leduc website for more information.

April – We will also create posts related to the public hearing – outlining rules of engagement for those coming to attend. We will also provide live Twitter feed on the night of the public hearing – number of people, concerns, etc. We will post a summary on Facebook the following day and provide next steps.

May 1 – July 1 – We will need to create social media posts and update the website to reflect information coming from the Federal and Provincial governments, our new Land-Use Bylaw, information on economic development, educational information related to Cannabis in Leduc re: public consumption.