



## Communications Strategy - Municipal Awareness Week

### ***Your Opportunity:***

Municipal Awareness Week provides a platform for expanding your community's understanding of the priorities, services, and programs provided by your municipality. It is a chance to tell your story and invite residents to recognize it as their story.

### ***Telling Your Story:***

#### **1. Identify your objective**

The activities and events that you develop for MAW should flow out of a communications objective (for example, "to increase public knowledge of our community's core infrastructure" or "to promote awareness of our efforts to become carbon neutral"). Integrate communications considerations in all facets of your MAW planning.

#### **2. Take a residents' point of view**

As you are considering your communications objective, consider the questions and concerns that are commonly raised by residents in your community. Are there any "top of mind" issues that need to be addressed before local residents will give you their attention?

#### **3. Identify your key messages**

Develop two or three key messages that support your objective and integrate them within your events and activities. These messages should be simple and memorable.

#### **4. Assess your communication assets**

Consider the assets that provide points of contact with your municipality (conventional media, social media, partnering opportunities, and existing community gathering places). What are the lessons learned from previous public engagement processes undertaken by your municipality?

#### **5. Make it easy for media**

Consider having someone on staff write an article about municipal government. Local media are often stretched and will likely use some or all of a well written and informative article that is delivered to them. Hiring a freelance writer from the community to bring an objective eye to the project can also help.

#### **6. Think small**

Boil things down to a human level. Telling the history behind a civic fountain can lead to the larger subject of public art, civic buildings or heritage issues. A story about a venerable tree on municipal property can lead to a wider story on a municipality's parks services, the environment, dedicated employees or contracted services.