CITY OF CORINTH

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN 2.0

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. DISCOVERY REPORT

EVOLUTION OF CORINTH AS A COMMUNITY

Corinth is steadily growing, with plans to continue that growth and appeal to a more diverse population including younger families by adding more retail, restaurants and gathering places. The community is currently undergoing a plan to bring in more development in hopes of both bringing in and retaining new families and young people. With the expansion of the local college, there is an opportunity to strengthen the City/College relationship to keep talent in Corinth and build an enduring sense of community.

POPULATION
2018: 21,900
2021: 22,437
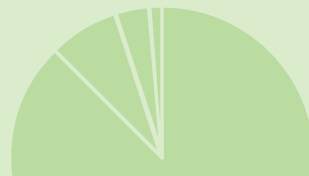
86.55% WHITE
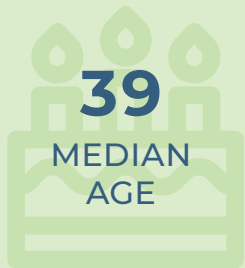7.4% BLACK
3.54% 2+ RACES
1.25% ASIAN
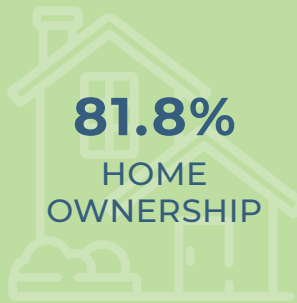
.76% GROWTH ANNUALLY

39 MEDIAN AGE

81.8% HOME OWNERSHIP

$103K MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
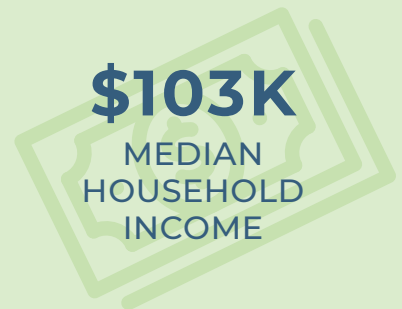
BUSINESS LICENSES
2021: 360

BUILDING PERMITS
2018: 852
2020: 978
2021: 866
(AS OF 9/30/21)

ABOUT CORINTH AS AN ORGANIZATION

As an organization, the City of Corinth is growing quickly. Word of mouth is no longer a viable tool to share organization news and updates. Demands on staff time continue to create capacity issues.

The City of Corinth employs 181 full-time workers.

In the next five years, the City's staff will only grow. Corinth intends to:
  ‣ Add 3 firefighters in 2025
  ‣ Add Parks Maintenance Workers in 2026
  ‣ Add a Tourism and Event Manager in late 2022 to manage the Commons at Agora

Employee retention and recruitment has been difficult. Key positions are not immune to turnover, either. 2021 saw the hiring of a new Economic Development Director, Planning Director, and Public Works Director. With the fire chief retiring in February 2022, this position will need to be filled as well.

EXISTING CITY PLANS

The existing City plans outline the direction that Corinth wants to go and how to get there. The communications plan will need to take these goals into consideration and ensure that both staff and residents are kept informed about each step and how they play into the long-term vision. It can be easy to get lost in the weeds and little details of projects in the day-to-day, but all communications should point back to the overarching vision as a reminder to all Corinthians why we do what we do.

2040 Comprehensive Plan: This plan outlines guiding principles and core values for policy direction in Corinth for the next 20 years. Corinth will adopt policies that facilitate a growing community while building parks, trails, and other amenities. The City will allow room for future development, connect safe neighborhoods, and ensure that this growth is smart and sustainable.

Strategic Plan: The strategic plan outlines steps that the City will take to build the community that residents envision by 2030. These steps include attracting quality residential and non-residential development, engaging citizens, and encouraging and investing in regional cooperation.

VISION STATEMENT

A growing community that is conveniently located, delivers outstanding services, engages its residents, and provides a good mix of high quality retail, restaurants, and entertainment.

Parks Master Plan

Technology Strategic Plan

Police Department Strategic Plan

Fire Strategic Plan

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

To better understand the communication preferences of Corinth residents, a short survey was put out to the community through the website and social media. A total of 106 responses were collected in 2018 and 35 in 2021.

HOW DO YOU CURRENTLY RECEIVE CITY INFORMATION?

Category	2018	2021
City eNewsletter	42%	14%
Facebook	64%	48%
Twitter	13%	4%
Nextdoor	n/a	14%
City Website	45%	19%
Utility Bill Inserts	12%	6%
Direct Mail	13%	4%
Local Newspapers	9%	2%
City Podcasts	n/a	1%
Other	10%	3%
Instagram	n/a	19%
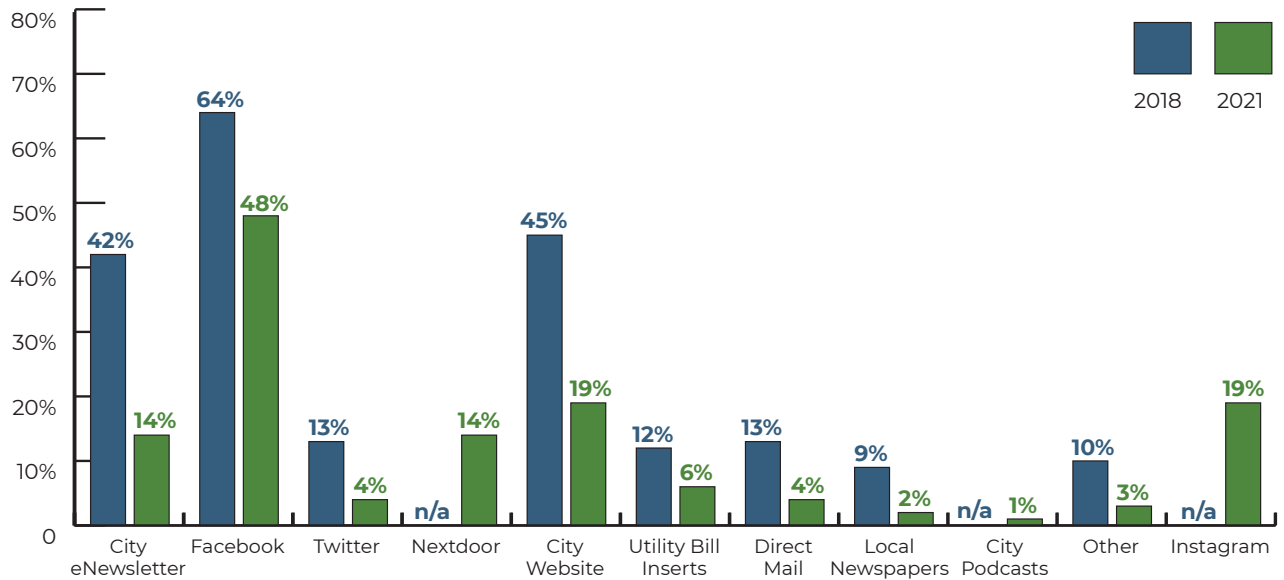
HOW WOULD YOU PREFER TO RECEIVE CITY INFORMATION?

Category	2018	2021
City eNewsletter	72%	24%
Facebook	63%	37%
Twitter	16%	6%
Nextdoor	n/a	6%
City Website	35%	15%
Utility Bill Inserts	24%	11%
Direct Mail	23%	15%
Local Newspapers	7%	0%
City Podcasts	n/a	1%
Other	8%	0%
Instagram	n/a	7%
Text Updates	n/a	27%
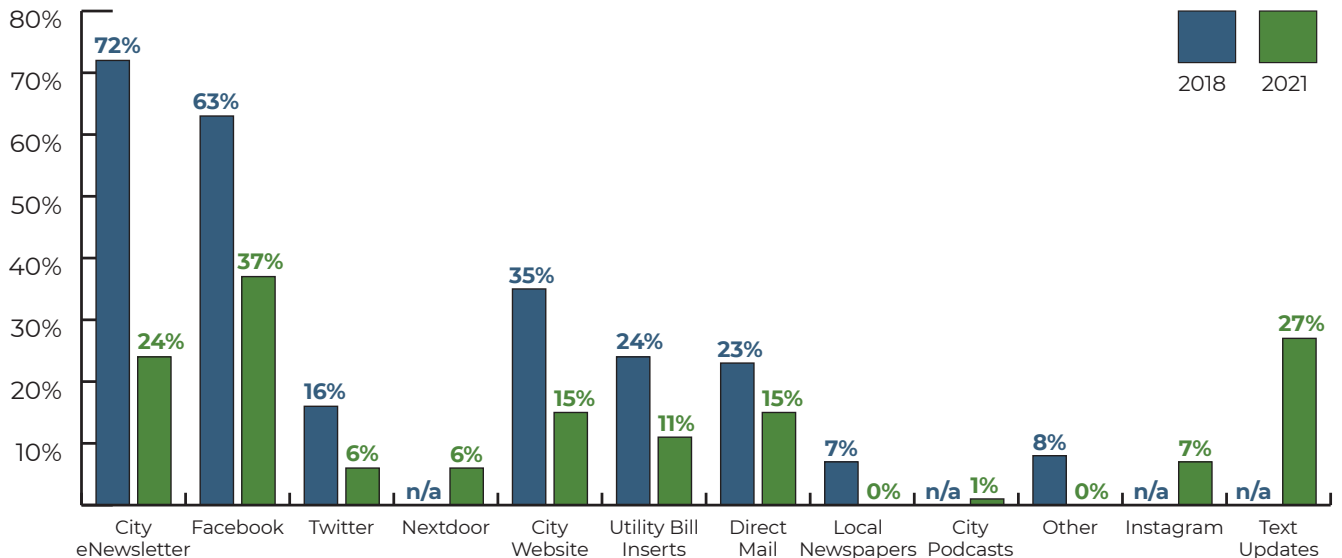
WHAT TYPES OF INFORMATION ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

Legend: 2018 (blue), 2021 (green)

Category	2018	2021
Community Events	91%	52%
Special Projects	73%	36%
Police Arrests	87%	39%
City Meetings & Agendas	48%	19%
City Council Actions & Decisions	57%	31%
Policy & Ordinance Reminders	53%	19%
Breaking News	95%	41%
Public Notices	50%	24%
City Programs & Services	65%	37%
Other	4%	0%
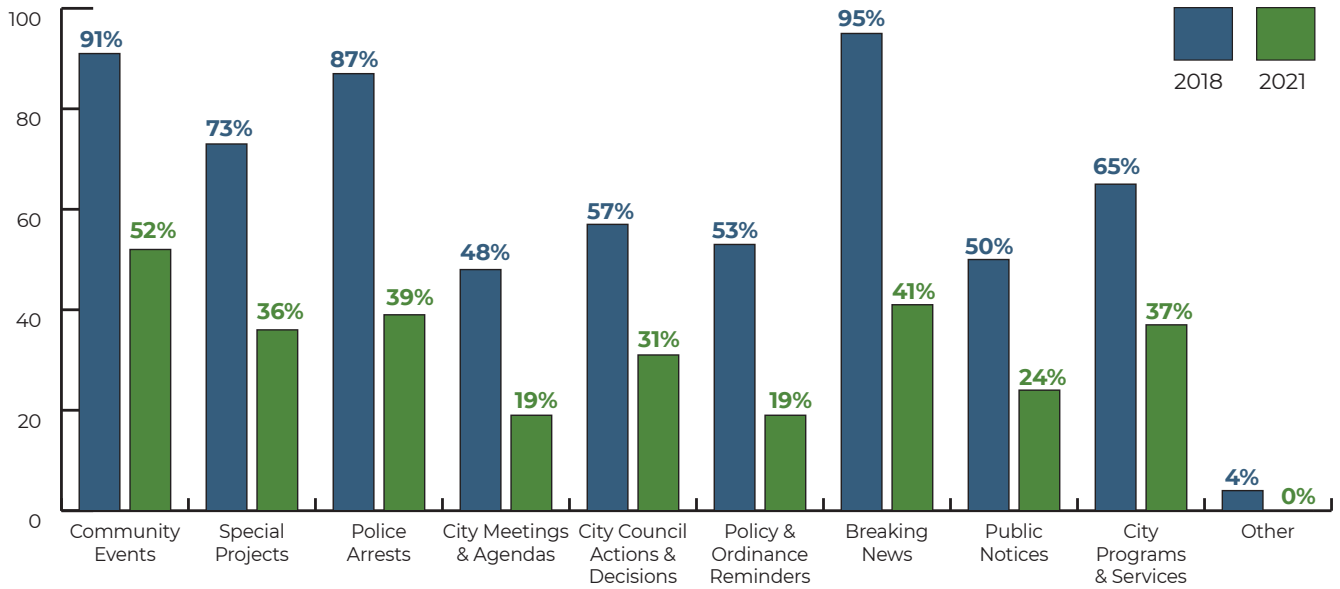
IF YOU WANTED TO BE MORE INVOLVED WITH THE CITY OF CORINTH, HOW WOULD YOU PARTICIPATE?

Legend: 2018 (blue), 2021 (green)

Category	2018	2021
Online Internet-based Communication	56%	34%
Other	2%	4%
Attending City Council Meetings	24%	5%
Join a City Board	21%	4%
Community Meetings	36%	17%
Volunteer at Special Events	35%	26%
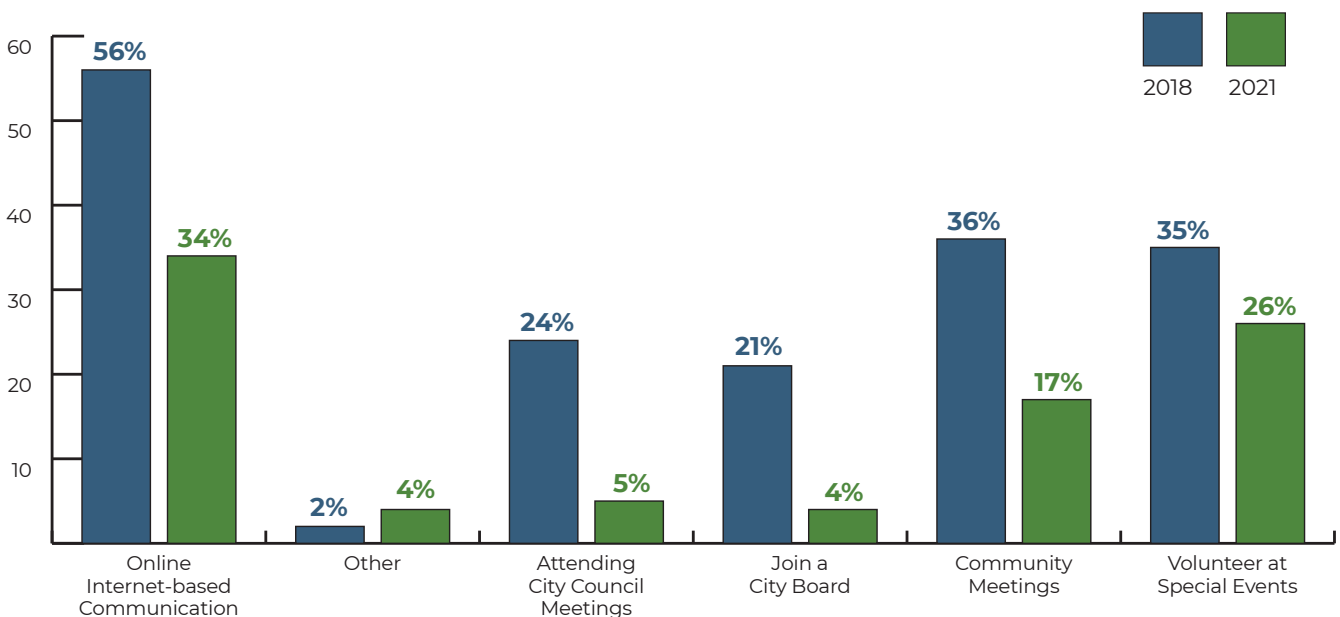
FREQUENCY OF COMMUNICATION FROM CITY TO RESIDENTS

2021

0%

42%

58%

- Not enough communication
- Just enough communication
- Too much communication

WHAT IS YOUR AGE?

2018

2%

10%

20%

33%

40%

2021

0%

5%

16%

31%

47%

- Under 20
- 20-34
- 35-49
- 50-64
- 65+
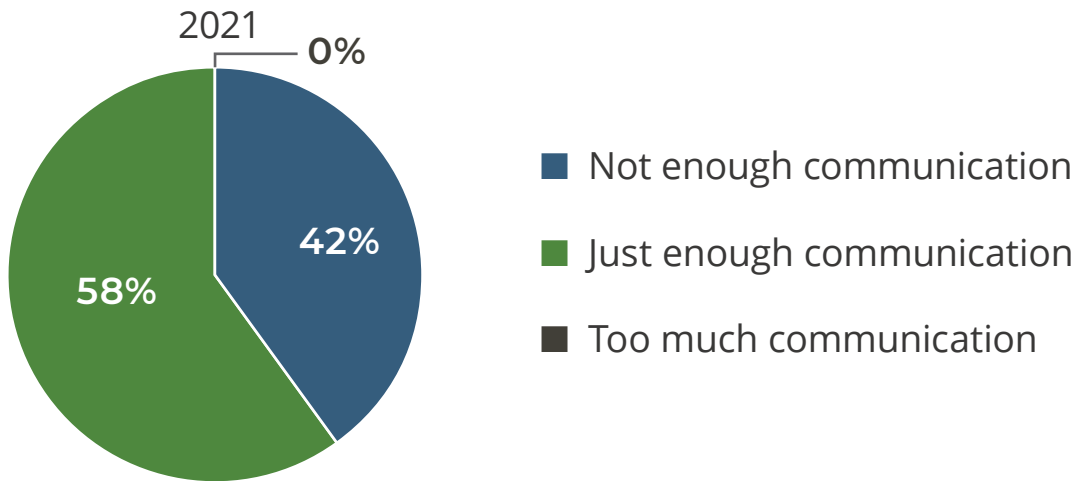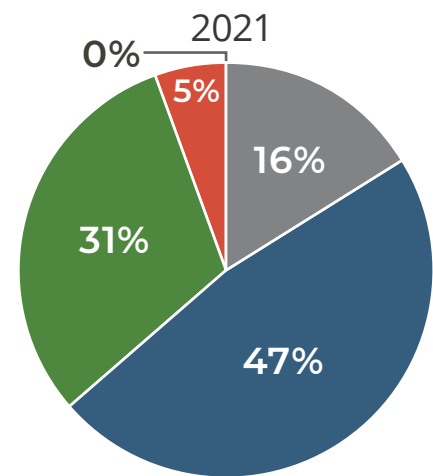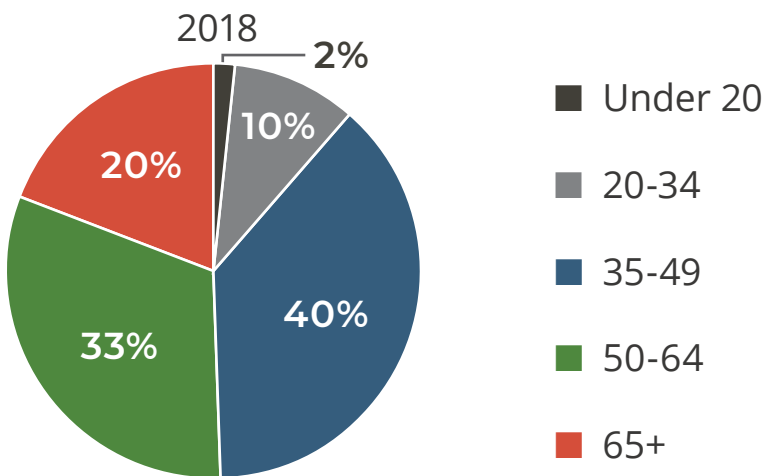
HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN CORINTH?

2018

12%

27%

40%

21%

2021

24%

44%

20%

13%

- Less than 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 11-20 years
- More than 20 years
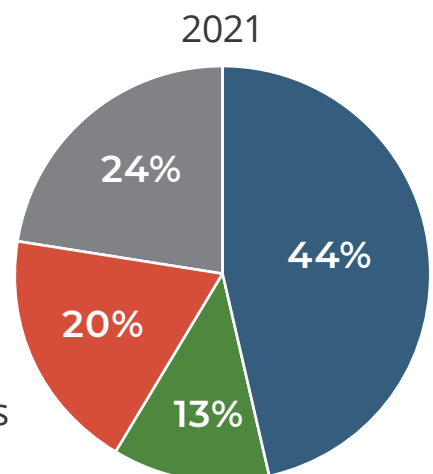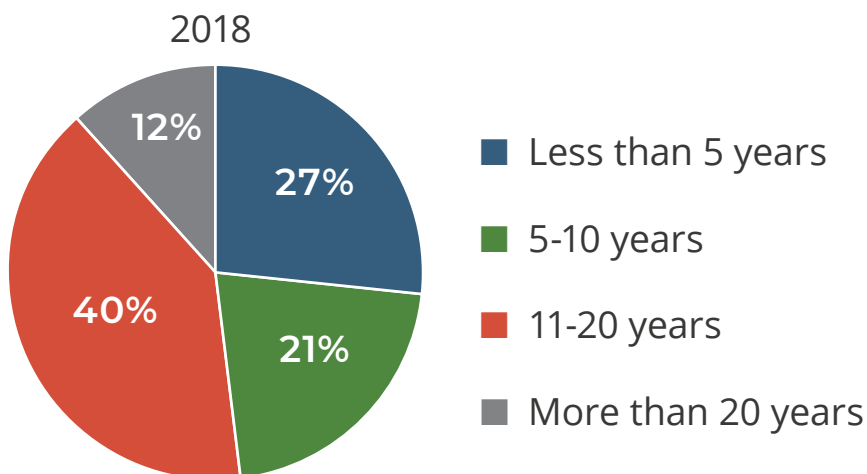
COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS

Since 2018, the City of Corinth has greatly expanded the number of tools used to reach residents. The City has added social media platforms and increased both the volume of posts as well as focused on more engaging posts that highlight happenings from various departments.

	2018	2021
Nixle Subscribers	1,756 (2019)	2,706

Since 2018, the City has added Instagram, Nextdoor, LinkedIn, YouTube, MyCorinth, and Nixle (emergency alerts).

CURRENT EXTERNAL TOOLS

City Website	Facebook	Twitter
Instagram	Nextdoor	LinkedIn
YouTube	MyCorinth (Bang the Table)	MyCorinth Mobile App
Citibot	Nixle	Constant Contact
	Mailchimp	

CURRENT INTERNAL TOOLS

Workvivo Intranet	Loomly Scheduler	ClickUp project management
Microsoft Teams	Adobe Creative Suite	Canva Pro

SOCIAL MEDIA STATS	2018	2021
Instagram Followers	n/a	791
Nixle Subscribers	1,756 (2019)	2,706
Facebook Followers	2,025	7,700
Facebook Impressions	659,072	1,426,726
Twitter Followers	n/a	931

WEBSITE STATS	2018	2021
Website Sessions	123,752	221,000

SUMMARY OF STAFF INTERVIEWS

After meeting with Economic Development, Public Works, Police & Fire, the Planning Department, and Human Resources, many common themes and struggles began to emerge.

THEMES

The local college campus is underutilized; how else can we connect with students, and how can we involve the youth?

We need to better utilize boards, other staff, and ambassadors as champions of what we are doing.

Some departments will be affected by inevitable growth more than others. Are those departments prepared to meet that demand financially and with adequate capacity? How do we communicate our readiness to combat concerns about decreases in service levels?

While there are adequate resources across departments, there may be an opportunity to reallocate or reposition them.

> *For example, fire stations can be in better locations, social media posts are high in quantity but can lack quality, lots of technology is available but may be underutilized, the website could be utilized better, Nixle could be segmented to better serve residents by neighborhood, and there is a need for increased communication from fire/police.*

There is a missed opportunity when hiring new staff to educate them about departments and connect them with other areas of the City.

Technology is playing an increasingly important role in operations and communication. There's an opportunity to leverage these investments to provide more real-time and relevant information.

COMMON CHALLENGES

Cross-departmental teamwork is crucial and more is needed – not only do departments need to communicate with the communications team, but the communications team needs to show other departments the results and engagement! That feedback and response is valuable.

Residents don't fully understand what each department does.

Emergency communications lack structure and point people.

There is a hesitation around sharing information because plans change and staff is weary that information will quickly become outdated.

MAJOR PROJECTS

Agora

Economic Development Marketing
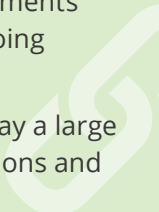
Backup Power

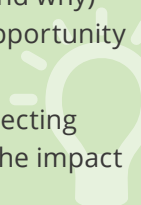Charter Amendment

Broadband

Recruitment

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS:

- Current communications team is high-functioning and effective.
- Many tools available to communicate with residents.
- Robust communications team that can dedicate time to specific campaigns and messages.
- Staff recognizes importance of communications and wants to improve.
- Potential to improve internal communications so departments know what each other is doing (and who each other is!)
- Technology continues to play a large and growing role in operations and communications.
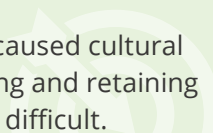
WEAKNESSES:

- No consistent onboarding process to new hires, expectations for connecting, and teamwork across departments is not communicated.
- Communications team doesn't always return feedback to departments – departments don't always fully understand the success of their communications efforts.
- Communications tools aren't all being used optimally – email open rates have dropped and Facebook impressions (while followers increased) have been dropping since 2019.
- Emergency communications plan lacks structure and point people.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- There is an opportunity to partner with NCTC and with schools to involve the younger generations and youth.
- Regional collaboration – partnership with other Lake Cities in Denton County can help create more effective service models and communication efforts (e.g., fire departments).
- Continue educating the public about just what each department does (and why) and when the public has the opportunity for commenting.
- Strengthen messaging by connecting City decisions and services to the impact on individuals.

THREATS:

- Nearby large cities can draw residents away, particularly the younger population.
- Corinth doesn't have a lot of physical area to expand, so growth needs to happen strategically and within City limits. Such visibility only heightens attention on growth and potential negative impacts.
- Vocal residents can oppose new growth and projects, although they do not represent the majority.
- The global pandemic has caused cultural shifts that have made hiring and retaining employees infinitely more difficult.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Internal Collaboration and Communications

Steps need to be taken to improve collaboration among departments, fostering a new culture of shared responsibility for quality communication which starts at orientation.

Community Pride and Loyalty

The youth and young adults in Corinth are currently disconnected and an under-engaged population. The City should work more with NCTC, Lake Dallas and Denton School Districts, and local high schools to create a community that they are proud to grow up in, live in, and want to return to to raise their own families. Long term residents need to understand how new development, projects, and people positively contribute to the community they love.

Strong Foundation with Great Potential

Corinth has the tools to be superstar communicators (internally and externally) but now we need to learn how to maximize all of these tools and make sure they are used to the best of their capabilities.

Growing Community and Changing Needs

The City and the City organization is about to go through a lot of rapid growth. As a community, we need to plan ahead and be prepared to answer residents' questions, explain how the growth coincides with our comprehensive plan and community desires, and be ready in case of emergencies. As an organization, growth and turnover mean that we need to reinvest in foundational communication tools and integrate connectivity into daily work days.

2. GOALS

A — Move from simply communicating to fully engaging.

B — Maximize the effectiveness of current tools.

C — Generate support and enthusiasm for change (both internally and externally).

D — Build community pride.

CITY STAFF (INTERNAL) CHARACTERISTICS

Demonstrate a willingness to collaborate with other departments but aren't always sure how to start

Would generally love more face time with directors

Younger staff seem to be more willing to participate in fun activities while older staff are here to work

Mostly obtaining information from staff meetings

CORINTH RESIDENTS (EXTERNAL)

| YOUTH | Generally not engaged with City issues, can't easily identify points of connection to local government |
| | Rely heavily on digital platforms – but not Facebook |

SENIORS	Not as engaged with digital platforms (online surveys, social media, emails)
	More resistant to change and new developments
	Prefer physical, informational pieces
	Have more time to dedicate towards learning about City happenings

GENERAL	Like when information is "handed" to them and they don't have to hunt for it
	Primarily obtain information via Facebook and prefer social media, text updates, and email newsletters (in that order)
	Looking for community events to attend with families
	Many have recently moved to Corinth within the last five years

| LOCAL BUSINESSES | Mostly small and locally-owned businesses |
| | Many enthusiastic about Agora and future economic potential |

4. KEY MESSAGES

The key messages of this communications plan are the core of everything. When in doubt, refer to our goals and key messages to determine the effectiveness of a campaign. Every piece of communication coming from the City to residents should support the "External Key Message" statements.

INTERNAL

1. All departments within the City organization are linked, and moving from simply communicating to engaging the community takes teamwork and a willingness to learn new things or help out in new ways.

2. The City organization is growing, and while this is exciting and a good thing, it will take cooperation amongst staff and departments to maintain our close-knit culture and best serve our community.

EXTERNAL

1. Corinth continues to grow and is doing so in a planned, strategic way, resulting in more opportunities and amenities for residents.

2. Corinth is a great place to live, and the City not only cares about community desires and hopes for the future but is actively working to make them happen at a pace that is sustainable and achievable.

5. STRATEGIES

STRATEGY #1

A C

Develop and maximize tools that allow for more comprehensive storytelling and explain the "why" of City decisions

TACTICS:

MAXIMIZE MYCORINTH

▸ Develop a year-long campaign to get feedback from residents to emphasize the two-way street of communications with the City.

- To take it a step further, identify 3-5 long-term engagement projects coming up that will be utilizing MyCorinth.

▸ Create a shared editorial calendar amongst dedicated staff members to plan topics correlating with projects throughout the year.

- Build dedicated time into staff schedules to add to the engagement editorial calendar.

▸ Identify circumstances in which MyCorinth is most appropriate – it is an engagement platform, not another "catch all" and not another website. Define when a project should be added to MyCorinth and when it should not.

▸ Market MyCorinth internally to staff as the best engagement tool. Make sure it is understood that for any project that requires community engagement, it will be on MyCorinth.

UTILIZE PODCASTS AND VIDEOS

Video Podcast Taping

Produce 140 second version that features 5 second intro and 5 second outro. 1-2 questions maximum.

(At this length, the audience will be able to watch the video within these platforms without having to click through to an external site.)

Share via Twitter, Facebook and any other social media platforms.

Produce to the full 15-20 minutes.

(Recommended length: No more than 10 minutes.)

Add to playlist on Corinth website.

(Make the page formatting structure similiar to YouTube for viewer's comfortability)

Add to playlist on Corinth YouTube channel.

Produce a 10 minute audio version of the podcast.

Add to Podbean or similar podcasting service that automatically loads the podcast.

Promote the podcast via social media.

Create cross-promotion partnerships with area organizations; add commercials for the partners in exchange for the same on their podcast.

MOST REACH   TO   LEAST REACH

MAXIMIZE CITY AMBASSADORS

▸ Create physical tools for ambassadors.

  • Create a branded binder to collect and store information.

  • Provide ambassadors with three-hole punched handouts at each meeting that go over the main points of the agenda for that day.

  • Provide worksheets with background information on topics, checklists and timelines, and key talking points for how they can go about sharing this information with friends and neighbors.

  • Include City Manager reports or updates.

▸ Create a media kit and sample posts for ambassadors to share after each meeting.

▸ Provide them with materials to share their status as an ambassador within the community, such as business cards or rack cards that they can hand out.

▸ Utilize Workvivo as a collaboration tool.

▸ Pilot Citibot as a texting tool to communicate with ambassadors.

STRENGTHEN INTERNAL CONNECTIONS WITH TRAINING ON WORKVIVO TO INCREASE UTILIZATION AND EFFECTIVENESS

▸ Incorporate a 15-minute training into the onboarding process with new staff members.

▸ Provide tangible examples of how to use Workvivo within the City organization.

  • Ex. Learn more about someone's role beyond their title and department.

IMPLEMENT DATA-DRIVEN STORYTELLING

▸ Generate one-page infographic annual reports on large projects or for departments.

▸ Use Envisio tracking and reporting to tell the story of Corinth's organizational progress in the strategic plan.

  • Announce when new data is published online

  • Create a campaign to drive people to dashboard on monthly basis

BIG IDEA: CORINTH MAGAZINE

An annual publication of 20-30 pages, sent to each resident's home, is a great way to tell the whole story about current and future projects. It is an opportunity to introduce residents to City staff, illustrate real data and results, and provide context to new developments and plans.

STRATEGY #2

A

Create independent strategic plans/campaigns to dive deep into education

Some projects are simply too big to be covered underneath the umbrella of one, all-encompassing strategic plan. Projects that will involve multiple departments, span several months or years, and require significant input from the community (such as those listed below) will need their own, independent plans and/or campaigns. A separate plan will create a space to identify small details and nuances to educate the public better.

- ▸ Agora
- ▸ Broadband
- ▸ Economic Development Marketing to developers, entrepreneurs, business owners, and residents
- ▸ Recruitment
- ▸ Backup power
- ▸ Charter Amendment

STRATEGY #3

`C` `D`

Build a culture of shared responsibility in the organization for communication to residents.

TACTICS:

DEFINE INTERNAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

▸ Identify point people within each department to feed communications staff information.

▸ Potentially evolve into an "agency model," further defined in the Big Idea.

CLARIFY RESPONSIBILITY AND INVOLVEMENT WITH COMMUNICATIONS DURING THE ONBOARDING PROCESS

▸ Show new staff members where they can find information about projects within the organization and within other departments.

▸ Assign new staff members a role in communication and explain the significance of the part they play.

▸ Introduce them to communications staff and their primary contact when sharing information.

DEVELOP A LONG-TERM COMMUNICATIONS STAFFING PLAN

▸ Eventually, the police and fire departments will need their own PIO. Identify the path to getting to this point and what this person's role will be and how that will change how the communications team interacts with these departments.

▸ Given the increased need for video production, the communications team will continue to work with IT to ensure that the videographer is readily available to capture and edit content. Check in annually to ensure the split between IT and Communications still fits the needs of the organization.

FORMALIZE THE PROCESS OF REQUESTING SUPPORT AND REPORTING BACK

▸ Report back to departments and City leadership on a quarterly basis to help the organization better understand the value of communications, community interests, etc.

Strategic Communication Planning Process

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Leverage Strategic Plan into Communication Strategy

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGER

Create a Communication & Implementation Plan

COMMUNICATIONS STAFF

Manage the Project

COMMUNICATIONS STAFF

Development

Quality Control

Deliverable
to Target Audience

To best support the City of Corinth's Core Priorities, the Communications Department utilizes this process to intake ideas, strategize key messages and create high-quality content in order to effectively communicate and engage Corinth's residents.

Office/Department Support Process

DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE

Request Support from Communications Department

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Vetting the Project

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

1-on-1 Meeting
to discuss the project &
connect the dots

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGER

Create a Communication & Implementation Plan

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Manage the Project

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Development

Quality Control

Deliverable
to Target Audience

The Department Support Process is slightly different. Ideas and initiatives come from department leaders and staff. The "intake" process allows the Communications Department to respond in a timely and strategic manner.

DEVELOP A CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN/CHECKLIST*

▸ Plan template included at the end of this strategic plan to be completed with applicable information. A centralized call center has proven vital to crisis communication and should be included in the final product.

ADD COMMUNICATIONS AS A STANDARD AGENDA ITEM AT THE DIRECTORS MEETING

▸ Provide updates and calls for action during this time.

CREATE A "STORYTELLERS' GROUP"

▸ Representatives from each department will gather once a month to share stories and updates from their teams and service areas.

- Communications staff will also attend the storytellers' group.

- Brainstorm unique ideas to get particularly interesting or exciting stories to the public.

- Storytellers can monitor Corinth social platforms and reshare as they are comfortable. In other words, they can take on roles similar to that of the Communications Ambassadors. By sharing information in their own networks, the City can expand their organic reach and potentially diversify their audience.

ARM FRONT-LINE STAFF WITH CONSISTENT MESSAGING AND TALKING POINTS

- Staff members that are out and about need to be on the same page about key projects or know where to send someone looking for more information. Create standard, informational one-pagers or tri-fold business cards for these staff members whenever they are working on projects that could draw questions from community members.

- Creating a template for these one-pagers will ensure the process is seamless when needed. Outline standard questions ahead of time, then plug and play the information when a new project begins.

BIG IDEA: THE AGENCY MODEL

The city organization is growing and may soon be large enough to consider adoption of an "agency model." In this model, the core communications team acts as an agency would. Each communications staff member is assigned a few departments, and they are then responsible for knowing those departments' updates, sharing in communications channels, and reporting back. This method can ease the workloads of staff currently trying to "do it all" as well as strengthen the individual relationships between departments and the communications department.

STRATEGY #4

Further segment and target residents.

TACTICS:

NIXLE SEGMENTATION AND TRAINING

▸ Nixle can notify residents of specific areas. Break the city into manageable sections and train the staff members most often using Nixle to inform more relevant areas.

TARGETED SOCIAL MESSAGING TO SEGMENTS

▸ Use Instagram to reach young families

- Nearly **two-thirds of Instagram users are aged between 18–29.** 18- to 34-year-olds are the most active age group. Consider this audience when creating content.

- Currently Instagram is prioritizing Reels over Stories. Maximize your reach and exposure by focusing on Reels.

- Videos should be less than 60 seconds.

- Post no more than 2-3 times per week.

- Instagram will be used to help Corinth engage and educate residents, specifically those under age 34.

▸ Use Facebook as the primary social media tool to reach residents. Target content to an older audience.

- Facebook is declining as the preferred tool among younger adults (18–34). The average Facebook user in the U.S. is **40.5 years old**. Consider this audience when creating content.

- Highest engagement days on Facebook are traditionally Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday.

- Videos are currently the highest performing content type on Facebook, Optimal length is 15 seconds to 2 minutes.

- Schedule posts for 2-5 times per week to allow more flexibility for the integration of specific campaigns.

- Facebook will be used as the primary tool to help Corinth inform, engage, and involve residents older than 34.

- LinkedIn will be used to help Corinth bolster its image as a great place to work and demonstrate the community's economic potential and momentum to investors, developers and businesses.
  - Share and recognize partners and initiatives.
  - Utilize for economic development and recruiting.
  - Encourage organizational members to share and like content.
  - Post once per week, more videos than photos, and never just text.
  - Reach out to other businesses and organizations to create an expanded network.
  - Identify measurements of success and review periodically.
- Reserve a portion of the marketing budget for social media boosts and ads that are not event-related, and instead promote strategic campaigns and information.

STRATEGY #5

Create more opportunities for connections among staff.

TACTICS:

LIVE Q&A WITH CITY MANAGER

▸ Stream and record a live Q&A session with Bob Hart. Employees can ask questions and interact with Bob in real-time or watch the recorded session online later. This is an opportunity for staff to hear directly from the City Manager about strategic initiatives and organizational priorities.

WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEES

▸ Create opportunities for staff to send personal notes or welcome messages to new hires.

▸ Put together Love My Corinth welcome baskets.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION CAMPAIGN

▸ Develop a peer-nominated recognition program, either monthly or quarterly, in which the selected individual's photo is shared along with a quote about why they love what they do.

▸ Share imagery on social, put posters up around the offices, create page on the website, spread positivity and the joy of working for the City of Corinth!

BIG IDEA:
EMPLOYEE-DRIVEN TRAINING PROGRAM

Let employees connect over their passions! Once a month, employees can take a lunch hour and train those interested on any topic – it can be work-related or a hobby they do in their free time.

STRATEGY #6

Frame new growth and development as a catalyst to realize residents' vision of Corinth's future.

TACTICS:

FORMALIZED PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

▸ Outline a process that includes development project timelines and checklists of standard communications items for each new project.

CREATE PROJECT HOT SHEETS

▸ A "hot sheet" can be just one page that gives a fast breakdown of background information, goals, key players, and where to find more information.

▸ To be distributed internally (staff, committees, boards) so that other staff are in the loop about other departmental projects and can communicate with residents when they are out and about.

PROVIDE BOD/EDC TOOLKITS

▸ This toolkit can include the project hot sheet as well as:

- sample social media posts and encourage resharing of City posts.

- talking points or tri-fold business cards.

- a timeline and the main goals of the project.

IF THE PROJECT WILL REQUIRE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, BUILD A ROBUST PAGE ON MYCORINTH

▸ All information from hot sheets

▸ Frequently asked questions

▸ Timeline and process

▸ End goals

▸ Explicitly state what the city can control and what it cannot

▸ Outline points at which the community can get involved (public hearings, attending board meetings, etc.)

▸ Work with point people of EDC and Planning and Development to ensure they do their part in keeping this information up to date

BIG IDEA:
HIRE A DEDICATED PERSON TO BE THE COMMUNICATIONS PERSON

In line with the Agency Model, assign one communications person to be in charge of new growth and development communications. Their job will be to monitor the MyCorinth page, collect survey results, share information on social channels, create content (photos and videos), schedule podcast interviews, and head up an individual communication plan.

⚠ 6. CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

PURPOSE

The City of Corinth's Crisis Communications Plan outlines the roles, responsibilities and protocols that will guide the City in promptly sharing information with the City's audiences during an emergency or crisis.

All emergencies are not created equal. Develop a tiered response plan that offers an appropriate response level based on the scope threat using the chart below as a framework. In the Scope column, explain what circumstances would trigger the associated level response. In the Stakeholders column, identify departments that will be stakeholders in the community's response.

LEVEL	SCOPE	STAKEHOLDERS
LEVEL 1	Level one is the highest level of crisis escalation and reflects the broadest risk of citizen and operational disruption. Examples may include a severe natural disaster, pandemic, or a cyber attack that cripples operations.	
LEVEL 2	Level two represents a moderate potential risk to citizens or an impact on government delivery. Examples may include a mild natural disaster, active shooter event, infrastructure damage (e.g., collapsed bridge), or a local business crisis (e.g., factory fire).	
LEVEL 3	Level three represents a situation that requires a coordinated municipal response, but that is unlikely to pose a health risk to citizens or severely disrupt operations. Examples may include a political controversy or a scandal that involves a highly visible public figure.	

PLAN OBJECTIVES

The guiding principle for this plan is to communicate facts as quickly as possible, update information regularly as circumstances change, to keep the Corinth community safe and to ensure the continuity of essential services.

To achieve these goals, updates should be simultaneously accurate and delivered as quickly as possible. In many crisis situations, this may mean that the official information that is shared is incomplete as events unfold. Reacting swiftly with accurate information about what is known for certain during an emergency or crisis is key to avoiding lasting damage and spreading misinformation.

The City of Corinth will use multiple platforms to reach all audiences with accurate, timely information with the goal of being accessible to all decision-makers, community members and interested parties. The City will do this while being mindful of legal and privacy concerns.

AUDIENCES

There are several important audiences for the City of Corinth to reach during emergency situations. These include staff, elected officials, community members, businesses and those in surrounding areas.

PROCEDURE

In the instance that a crisis occurs, conveying critical information is essential to ensuring community safety and allowing for appropriate decision-making in an emergency or crisis situation. A series of statements will be drafted and properly distributed across media and City of Corinth platforms in a timely manner.

THE FOLLOWING STEPS WILL BE USED TO CONVEY CRITICAL INFORMATION IN A CRISIS SITUATION

1 **Conference call with:**

City Manager – lead coordinator of crisis response, primary spokesperson, liaison to elected officials, liaison to other local governments

City Mayor – secondary spokesperson, secondary liaison to elected officials

City Attorney – ensure legality and limit liability of statements and communication

City Communications Staff – crafts and distributes messages, central point of coordination for media and resident inquiries

Police Department – to ensure appropriate coordination and updated information and public safety

Other staff as needed, depending on the event.

2 **Establish a spokesperson and key point of contact for all statements**

3 **Establish a point of origin and coordination with City Manager for all outgoing communications**

4 **Compose statements and speaking points**

5 **Coordinate with Mayor and elected officials**

6 **Distribute through existing channels prioritizing audiences as follows:**

City Council

City staff

City residents (direct channels)

Local media

Regional and national media

7 **Compose a message from City Manager to City staff**

8 **Compose social media posts and monitor posts for needed responses**

9	Craft press releases and respond to press/reporters
10	Update the website with appropriate updates
11	Craft and distribute email notifications
12	Hold press conference (if necessary)

AS IT IS IMPERATIVE TO USE ALL COMMUNICATION TOOLS AVAILABLE, BELOW IS A CHECKLIST OF CITY COMMUNICATION OUTLETS AND LOGINS:

TOOL	LOGIN	PASSWORD	CONTACT INFO
WEBSITE			Name: Email: Phone:
EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS			Name: Email: Phone:
EMERGENCY ALERT NOTIFICATIONS			Name: Email: Phone:
SOCIAL MEDIA			Name: Email: Phone:
LOCAL MEDIA CONTACTS	Name: Email: Phone:		

INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM

The Incident Response Team should include those individuals who need to be informed first when a crisis occurs. Such stakeholders may consist of your elected officials, human resources director, department of public works director, director of information technology, public safety officials, and director of communications. Outline the purpose of your incident response team and include a list of its members, including titles and contact information.

Name: Title: Department: Email: Phone Number:	Name: Title: Department: Email: Phone Number:
Name: Title: Department: Email: Phone Number:	Name: Title: Department: Email: Phone Number:
Name: Title: Department: Email: Phone Number:	Name: Title: Department: Email: Phone Number:

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Regardless of threat level, identify what each department's priorities should be during a crisis. Adjust the chart below to fit the needs of your municipal structure.

DEPARTMENT	STAKEHOLDER(S)	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
ELECTED OFFICIALS		
ADMINISTRATION		
PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS		
PUBLIC SAFETY		
HUMAN RESOURCES		
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY		
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS		
FINANCE		
UTILITIES		
CLERK OR RECORDER		
PARKS AND RECREATION		

RISK ASSESSMENT

Explain that the incidence response team will collaborate on establishing the threat level from the escalation framework and establish immediate priorities. The conversation should aim to answer the following questions:

- What happened?
- Where?
- Who was affected?
- When did we learn about the incident?
- What future risk is there to citizen safety?
- What government service delivery operations, if any, will be affected, and for how long?
- Develop an emergency response and if necessary a business continuity plan.

PLAN EXECUTION

Inform impacted stakeholders about the events, communicate the emergency response and business continuity plan, and execute the plans. Include who the next-level stakeholders are and what communication channels should (or should not) be used to communicate the events and response. Outline likely action items and responsible parties below based on the given examples.

ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Execute emergency communication plan	Communications Department
Deploy emergency response teams	Public Safety
Establish road barriers	Department of Public Works and Public Safety