



**Plano**

*City of Excellence*

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**Marketing and Communications Plan  
2015-2016**

# Plano is

**a vibrant, safe and sustainable city with attractive neighborhoods and urban centers, a vital economy, a high degree of mobility and an abundance of educational, recreational and cultural opportunities.**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | GOALS FOR 2015-2016

In 2013-14, Plano identified our vision, mission and brand as a “City of Excellence.” Now in 2015-16, it is time for Plano to bring alignment between our internal brand view and our external brand view. We have three marketing and community engagement goals for FY 2015-16:

## 1. Align brand expression.

We have tremendous brand awareness with our Plano logo mark (the P). However, we are presenting ourselves as disparate entities rather than as a unified organization with unique departments that relate to the overall City. We need to define and implement visual standards that create consistency City-wide in internal and external facing publications. This will require developing design guidelines that 1) provide enough freedom for uniqueness from department to department that also 2) provide consistent representation of the City. This is something we can develop, but will require more robust design guidelines, templates to make design easy for non-design staff members and possibly the assistance of an outside provider. We’re also going to work on our “voice,” so that we know what our writing style and tone should be.

*See the communications strategy on page 10 for the brand message that we need to maintain and the voice that we need to develop.*

## 2. Develop measurable methods for connecting with our core constituencies.

In order to know when we’re doing a good job of engaging with our constituencies, it is important to know what “good engagement” looks like. We believe good engagement can be defined as:

***Intentional, relevant, two-way communication between the City and our constituents.***

This definition guides our communication strategy as we seek ways to increase dialogue, providing the right information at the right time with the right stakeholders. We’ll know when we’re doing it right based on what we learn while measuring our efforts: We’ll measure which content is resonating with our constituents, how often and in what way people are engaging with content and if people are following through on specific calls to action that we offer. We also need to address how information is presented on the Plano website to make sure it is presented in the most useful and simple manner possible.

We’re going to apply these strategies not only to the City as a whole, but also on a departmental level. Believing that collaboration reflects our core values, we’re going to work in partnership with three departments: Parks and Recreation, Libraries and Neighborhood Services. Together, we will work to refine the goals of what we do and develop specific marketing plans that help us tell our story and invite our constituents to get involved.

*See the “constituent groups” on page 4 for relationships we need to sustain, develop and explore.*

*See the community engagement strategy on page 5 for methods to build engagement with our constituent groups.*

*See the communication content workflow by trigger on page 16 for a matrix of how, when and where we will share information.*

### **3. Develop and implement communications strategy.**

Many of our City activities follow a set “rhythm” – a predictable schedule of events and activities. However, our marketing and communication efforts are highly reactive. We can break this cycle by creating a communication strategy that will allow us to be intentional in developing, building, and executing outreach efforts.

*See the event calendar on page 7 for the annual City schedule of events and activities.*

*See the communications strategy on page 11 for our specific efforts on the website, mobile, direct mail, publications and social media.*

*See the joint communications plans on page 17 for our efforts with our Parks and Recreation, Libraries and Neighborhood Services departments.*

# CONSTITUENT GROUPS

		GROUP	DEFINITION
SUSTAIN		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plano Chamber</li> <li>• Resident Companies</li> </ul>	<i>We have a strong relationship with these constituent groups and should continue to support our efforts with them.</i>
DEVELOP		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizens</li> <li>• Employees</li> <li>• Neighborhood organizations (eg – HOAs)</li> <li>• MCOR</li> <li>• PISD</li> <li>• Collin College</li> <li>• SMU-in-Plano</li> <li>• Healthcare organizations</li> </ul>	<i>We have an existing relationship with these constituent groups and should increase efforts to engage with them.</i>
EXPLORE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faith-based groups</li> <li>• Community organizations</li> <li>• Non-profits</li> <li>• Disadvantaged groups (eg – Autistic community)</li> </ul>	<i>We have a little in-depth specific outreach efforts with these constituent groups and should spend this year researching and exploring engagement efforts for the future.</i>

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Engagement Strategy

If we believe that good engagement is “Intentional, relevant, two-way communication between the City and our constituents,” we need to focus on providing information (“content”) at the right time, to the right people, in the right way. We also need to make sure that people have an opportunity to connect back with us with comments and questions.

## Ideas for Engagement

We’ll address these – and other strategies - in our communications content plan on a quarter-by-quarter basis.

### **Bring people together**

- Ask people to participate in situations where they get a chance to know other people that share their interests.
- These include photo sessions, focus groups, usability studies, the city’s Academies and so on.

### **Ask and participate**

- Invite someone to write a blog post about his/her experiences.
- Include a call to action (request for some type of action) with each of our content posts.
- Comment or like a post when a constituent adds feedback, photos and video related to the City or your department

### **Acknowledge accomplishments**

- Send an email or write a social media post when you read good news or receive email or mail announcing moves, anniversaries, promotions, significant events or fun life events.
- Make it a practice to connect with people when you are at events, not just with people you know.

### **Keep them in the know**

- Develop an easy at-a-glance calendar that shows everything happening on a daily basis throughout the city.
- Share quick announcements of upcoming meetings with links to agenda items through our social channels.
- Remind people of changes in road patterns, scheduled maintenance and other time-based events.

### **Be where they are**

- Partner with other organizations to meet people who are traditionally not engaged with the city.
- Contribute content to language-specific publications
- Offer events/meet and greets/etc in non-city owned spaced like Starbucks or McDonalds.

# EVENT CALENDAR

This is not an all-encompassing list, but does cover most of the regular annual events that the marketing team is involved with, constituting the “rhythm” of the City’s year:

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
MLK Day Celebration Homeless Count Spring Citizens Fire Academy Recruit Neighborhood Leadership Council Winter Weather Preparedness and Safe Heating VIP Mentoring Month Successful Seeds Organic Gardening Master Composter Training	Clerk Training Warrant Round-up Nickel Neuter State of the City Daddy’s Little Sweetheart Dance Environmental Health Day in Plano American Heart Assn. Heart Smart Month How to Become a Firefighter Workplace CARES Clothing Drive VIP Police Volunteer Recognition Bookmark Contest	TX Pure Products Warrant Round-up Courtyard TX Music Series Easter Egg Hound Hunt Citizens Fire Academy starts Annual PRF Awards/Promotions Fire Prevention Posters judged VIP Animal Shelter Volunteer Recognition Compost Fair World Water Day Bookmark Contest CERT Classes Spring Weather Safety TedXPlano	National Public Telecommunicators Week DEA National Drug Take Back initiative Employee of the Year Plano Town Hall National Pet ID Month Neighborhood Leadership Council National 9-1-1 Public Education Month ASPCA’s Cruelty Prevention Month Animal Tag Day Courtyard TX Music Series Plano Youth Leaderships “Plano After Dark” event Library Volunteer Recognition, Supervisor of the Year Rain Barrel Sale Great American Cleanup Yard Trimming Collections/Storm Preparedness Love Where You Live

MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
Peace Officer Memorial Battle of the Badges Asia Fest Take 25 Event Be Kind to Animals Week Dog Bite Prevention Month Employee Picnic Courtyard TX Music Series Beatles Night Sr./Wellness Info Fair Healthy/Safe Swimming Week Building Safety Month Citizens Fire Academy graduation Water Safety Drowning Prevention Kickoff VIP Fire and SEED Volunteer Recognitions Elections (Odd Years) Food4Kids Summer Peanut Butter Drive Memorial Day	Vacation Safety School Discover Plano (formerly Suburban Dare) Juneteenth Celebration Adopt a Shelter Cat Month Courtyard TX Music Series World's Largest Swim Lesson TMC Swim Night & Luau Komen Race Summer Heat Safety Grilling Safety Workplace CARES - Race for the Cure City Team Board/Commission Appointment Applications Plano Mayor's Summer Intern Program	All-American Parade & Fireworks Discover Plano (formerly Suburban Dare) Recommended Budget Presentations Neighborhood Leadership Council Courtyard TX Music Series Battle of the Badges Fireworks Safety Board/Commission Appointment Applications Budget video Plano Mayor's Summer Intern Program	Boards & Commission Applications Courtyard TX Music Series National Water Quality Month Back to School Friends of the Plano Public Library Book Sale Plano Mayor's Summer Intern Program Discover Plano (formerly Suburban Dare)

SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
<p>Meet &amp; Greet Your City Council &amp; City Staff</p> <p>9/11 Remembrance</p> <p>Balloon Fest</p> <p>Food Safety Month</p> <p>Food Safety Awards</p> <p>Warrant Round-up</p> <p>Cell Phone Presentations at Schools</p> <p>Courtyard TX Music Series</p> <p>Love Where You Live</p> <p>Environmental Community Awards</p> <p>National Preparedness Month</p> <p>CERT classes</p> <p>Love Where You Live</p> <p>HR Whiteboard</p> <p>Citizens Academy wrap up</p> <p>Leadership Plano kick-off</p>	<p>National Night Out</p> <p>Kids Night Out</p> <p>Fire Prevention Month - Station Open House</p> <p>PISD/PFR Fire Prevention Week Poster Contest</p> <p>Clowns at PISD Elem Schools</p> <p>Neighborhood Leadership Council</p> <p>Red Ribbon Week</p> <p>DEA National Drug Take Back</p> <p>International Festival</p> <p>Adopt a Shelter Dog Month</p> <p>Haunt Jaunt</p> <p>Citizen's Academy</p> <p>Courtyard TX Music Series</p> <p>Arts/Crafts Fair</p> <p>Boo Bash</p> <p>Cub Scout Saturday</p> <p>Food Awards</p> <p>VIP Coat/Blanket Drive</p> <p>Water Wise Landscape Tour</p> <p>Landscape for Life Series</p> <p>Growing Up Wild Teacher Workshop</p> <p>Citizens Academy Start</p> <p>Leadership Plano Government Day</p> <p>Steinfest</p>	<p>Christmas Crafts Fair</p> <p>Pet Palooza</p> <p>Texas Recycles Day</p> <p>Arbor Day</p> <p>Plano Town Hall</p> <p>Adopt a Senior Pet Month</p> <p>Courtyard TX Music Series</p> <p>Turkey Fryer Safety</p> <p>Holiday Safety</p> <p>VIP Adopt an Angel &amp; Christmas Cops</p> <p>Volunteer Managers Day</p> <p>Veterans' Day</p>	<p>Dickens Historic Downtown Plano</p> <p>Lantern Light</p> <p>Christmas Parade</p> <p>Holiday Employee Luncheon</p> <p>Winter Heating Safety</p> <p>Fireworks Safety</p> <p>VIP Adopt an Angel</p> <p>Christmas Cops</p> <p>Winter Weather Safety</p>

# COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

## Brand Message

Plano is a vibrant, safe and sustainable city with attractive neighborhoods and urban centers, a vital economy, a high degree of mobility and an abundance of educational, recreational and cultural opportunities.

Our macro story is ***The City of Excellence***.

## Constituent Profile

Citizens, resident companies, “drive through” traffic, City of Plano employees, HOAs, PISD/schools, churches, community organizations/associations, State delegation, County judge and commissioners.

## Constituent Benefits

- A diverse, international and emerging urban city and metropolitan center
- A multifaceted city which meets the needs of its citizens to work, live and play here
- A city known for very high quality city services
- A city of vibrant and renewing neighborhoods
- A city of business and enterprise of national and international importance
- A city that partners with a variety of educational institutions to support and encourage exceptional quality of education at all levels

## Voice

Our brand voice is friendly, trustworthy and inclusive.

We create written and visual pieces from the point of view of providing clarity and accurate information. We look at our content from the POV of the person who will be reading or watching to make sure that what we're saying is understandable, relatable and approachable.

## Plano.gov

According to our analytics, typical behavior for users of our site is to land on the Plano.gov homepage then select one of these pages and drill down (listed in order of popularity):

1. Plano Library homepage
2. City of Plano employment page
3. Plano Parks and Recreation homepage

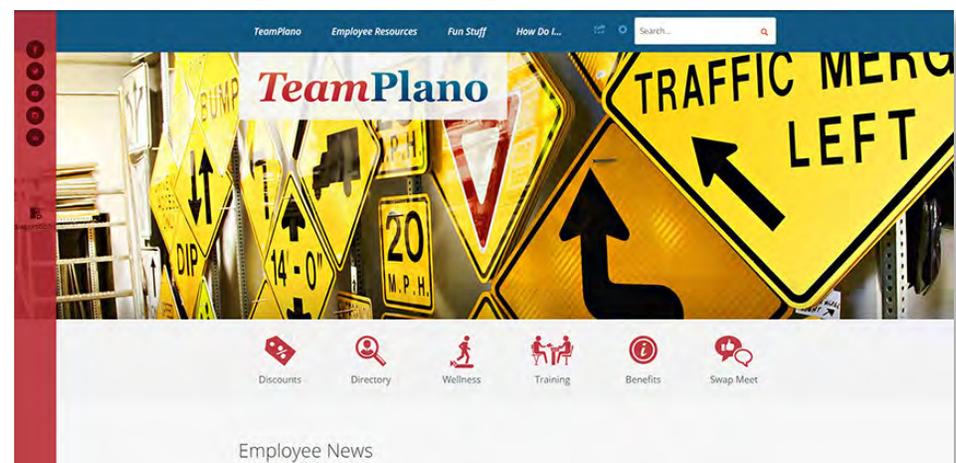
Based on feedback provided through the City's 2015 Citizen Survey, we know that 77% of citizens currently obtain information from our website. We obtained excluded responses (collected in an unscientific manner). We can assume that individuals that participated with the freely available survey link are more engaged citizens. Among this group, 89% obtain information from our website.

However, the official survey indicates that perceived usefulness of information on the site is down 5% from the 2014. As a result, we believe the most important update to the site in 2015-16 will be simplifying the way information is presented so that users have an increased chance of finding the information they are looking for in three clicks or less. We will conduct a usability study to identify where the pain points are on the website and use that to drive the update process.

We will also explore what our next website design should look like to be prepared for a website refresh in 2016-17.

We will activate the blog component of the Plano.gov website. This section will become the central location for stories, becoming the foundation of our content marketing efforts. Stories can be shared from the blog section to various newsletters and social channels, allowing for repetition of message and easy reference by external users. The blog component is scheduled to Go Live in first quarter 2016.

For our internal users, our most important project is completing the implementation of the Team Plano website. The Team Plano website is scheduled for Go Live on January 4, 2016.



## Mobile Strategy

We will continue to explore mobile strategies for connecting with constituents. Currently the City is completing a Technology assessment, allowing the marketing team to investigate a variety of apps, mobility plug-ins and other mobile-based strategies.

We also plan to place mobile devices in the priority position for our next website redesign project. Recent Pew Internet Research findings indicate that mobile is not only the primary method that all users access the internet, it is also the primary method that disengaged communities that do not have home internet access governmental websites.



## Direct Mail

We currently produce and distribute two newsletters:

- Plano City News (external audience) – 1,996 (as of 10/31/2015)
- Team Plano (internal audience) – 2,607 (as of 10/31/2015)

The 2015 Citizen Survey indicated that 38% of our citizens receive information via email. Among those who participated in the excluded responses, 57% receive information via email. The numbers are nearly identical regarding preference for email (39% in the Survey / 60% in the excluded responses).

While we want to grow the subscription rate for the general Plano City News, we intend to simplify the content allowing readers to quickly scan the news provided and click to read with more detail. The click to read takes users to the blog component of the website. This will allow us to track the usefulness of content.

We will also develop additional specific newsletters for other targeted audiences. These will include:

- Department specific newsletters (such as a Library Patron newsletter)
- Audience-specific newsletters (such as Families with Children, Healthy Living in Plano)

Each of these newsletters will include calls to action, which ask our readers to do something. We will be able to determine if we are providing value by tracking action taken.

Based on feedback from the 2015 Citizen Survey, we know that our citizens would like additional opportunities for online self-guided training. We will explore how best to accomplish this as part of our overall content marketing strategy via both newsletter and website adjustment.

We will also explore using Community Impact News Plano for mail-route specific distribution of targeted direct mail pieces. Not only will this allow us to be hyper-segmented in message distribution, it also reduces cost by using an existing mail distribution system.

**Publications**

We will continue to partner with Community Impact News Plano, using it to distribute a two-page news insert distributed quarterly. As analytics become available for this new-to-Plano publication (in third quarter 2016), we will examine whether frequency should be increased.

We will also begin to actively contribute content to other local publications, including Plano Magazine and Plano Profile. These publications distribute content via blog and e-newsletter, in addition to their printed versions.

**Social Media**

CITY CHANNEL	TARGET AUDIENCE	STRATEGY	METRIC
	All constituents	Active strategy: Our website is where we develop the content that is shared out to other platforms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page views</li> <li>• Click throughs</li> <li>• Bounce rates</li> <li>• Time on site</li> </ul>
	All constituents	Active strategy: 1. Tweet content that people want to share so that our content is retweeted. 2. Interact with people who retweet or mention us. (More informal relatable tone)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Followers</li> <li>• External audience retweets and mentions</li> </ul>
	Employees, external constituents	Mixed strategy: We will have automated posts and interact with those who engage with us. We will encourage additional growth of employee engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likes</li> <li>• Engagement</li> </ul>

CITY CHANNEL	TARGET AUDIENCE	STRATEGY	METRIC
	External constituents	Active strategy: Post quality images that communicate quality of life in Plano.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorites</li> <li>• Reposts</li> <li>• Engagement</li> </ul>
	Residents	Active strategy: 1. Post content that is important for our residents. 2. Interact with people who respond to our posts. (More informal relatable tone)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement</li> </ul>
	Employees, external constituents	Active strategy: Post quality videos to support education, information and announcement efforts. We will share out content to our other platforms more frequently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content posted</li> <li>• Views</li> </ul>
	Future City of Plano employees	Passive strategy: Make sure links to jobs are posted and updated videos and internal marketing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement of our current and prospective employees</li> <li>• Followers</li> </ul>

CITY CHANNEL	TARGET AUDIENCE	STRATEGY	METRIC
	Natural search	Passive strategy: Make sure our SEO (search engine optimization) strategy is up to date.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>

MAYOR & COUNCIL CHANNEL	TARGET AUDIENCE	STRATEGY	METRIC
	All constituents	Passive strategy: We will have automated posts and interact with those who engage with us.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Followers</li> <li>• External audience retweets and mentions</li> </ul>
	All constituents	Passive strategy: We will have automated posts and interact with those who engage with us.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likes</li> <li>• Engagement</li> </ul>

## Next Steps for Social Media

- We will adjust the tone of our writing to be more informal and relatable in our social channel postings.
- We will interact more with responses to build a sense of community and engagement.
- We will restructure our YouTube channel to be more robust and have clearer organization of content available.
- We will use some of our advertising funds on selected social channel promoted posts.
- We will monitor the performance both in metrics and quality on all City social media channels to ensure conformance to brand.

## Communication Content Workflow by Trigger

The following triggers produce content which can then be posted to a variety of channels:

Trigger		Result
Ground breakings, grand openings and dedications		Social media
Educational content		Social media YouTube (if appropriate) Newsletter
Upcoming meetings and work sessions		Social media (where appropriate) Newsletter
Special event		Social media Newsletter Media
Awards and recognition		Social media Newsletter Media

## Joint Strategic Marketing and Communication Plans

The following departments co-create content and need specific communication plans that are based in their specific marketing plans, developed by the department and the MCE team. The departments that we will work specifically with during 2015-16 are:

- Parks and Recreation
- Library
- Neighborhood Services

### **Parks and Recreation Department Strategic Marketing and Communications Goals 2015-2016**

Currently in development.

### **Library Department Strategic Marketing and Communications Goals 2015-2016**

**Strategic Marketing Goal #1:** By the end of FY 2015-2016, the library will implement an outreach program to reach non-library users, measured by an increase in the number of library card applications and attendance at events by self-reported first-time attenders.

**Strategic Marketing Goal #2:** Develop and implement a strategic communication plan designed to communicate a unified message regarding the library system's role in the Plano community by the end of FY 2015-2016. The communication plan will increase visibility of the library's role, measured by increased stories in key publications and increased speaking engagements.

**Strategic Marketing Goal #3:** By the end of FY 2015-2016, the library will implement an outreach program to better serve Plano's diverse community, measured by an increase in attendance at specific events by targeted groups.

### **Neighborhood Services Department Strategic Marketing and Communications Goals 2015-2016**

Currently in development.

## Content Calendar

To help us manage our workflow, we will focus on content at a macro level on a calendar year basis and on a micro level on a quarterly basis. In general, the calendar will look something like this:

	TOPIC/TITLE	CONTENT/DETAILS	KEYWORD(S)	CHANNEL	TARGET AUDIENCE(S)	CTA	AUTHOR	DUE DATE	PUBLISH DATE	STATUS
Week of Oct 5										
Monday, Oct 5										
Tuesday, Oct 6										
Wednesday, Oct 7										
Thursday, Oct 8										
Friday, Oct 9										
Week of Oct 12										
Monday, Oct 12										
Tuesday, Oct 13										
Wednesday, Oct 14										
Thursday, Oct 15										
Friday, Oct 16										
Week of Oct 19										
Monday, Oct 19										
Tuesday, Oct 20										
Wednesday, Oct 21										
Thursday, Oct 22										
Friday, Oct 23										
Week of Oct 26										
Monday, Oct 26										
Tuesday, Oct 28										
Wednesday, Oct 28										
Thursday, Oct 27										
Friday, Oct 28										

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

