



# Strategic Communications Plan

2010

DRAFT

Keith Sterling, Public Information Officer  
PIO Subcommittee



## CONTENTS

Overview and Mission.....	3
Strategic Communications Plan.....	5
Media/Community Relations.....	5
Burbank TV.....	6
Web/Social Media.....	9
External Communication.....	10
Internal Communication.....	11
Branding/Marketing.....	12
Media Training/Crisis Communication.....	14
Conclusion/Measures of Success.....	15

---

## **CITY OF BURBANK OVERVIEW AND MISSION**

---

Burbank, California is a dynamic, nationally recognized community in greater Los Angeles that offers a high-quality of life for its residents. Celebrated as the *Media Capital of the World*, the City is home to major entertainment studios including Warner Brothers, NBC-Universal and The Walt Disney Company. In addition, Burbank's Bob Hope Airport is a major gateway to the San Fernando Valley and Southern California.

With almost 110,000 residents and over 1,500 City employees, clear and consistent communication is essential to improve public understanding of the municipality.

With an ever-changing landscape of communication methods, delivering a successful message to targeted audiences is no longer a 'one size fits all' formula. Once a primarily broadcast focused division, the City's Public Information Office is now expanding as the central point for communications including media relations, enhanced citizen/employee communication, Web and television programming. As the office works to develop new communication tools, outlining a strategic plan is essential to the mission. The life of the plan is estimated at three to five years with annual reviews to ensure timeliness.

The plan is intended to:

- Establish a communications program that directly helps the City achieve its goal of more proactive, informative communication
- Provide focus and direction for messages and methods of communication
- Enable the City to present itself distinctly to diverse audiences

### **Primary Audiences**

#### **Internal Customers**

City Council  
City staff  
Employee association leadership  
Volunteers

# OVERVIEW AND MISSION

(Continued)

## External Customers

Residents  
Business owners  
New/prospective residents and business owners  
Journalists  
Visitors  
Former residents

## Goals

- To build awareness about the City of Burbank
- To better communicate with all audiences through a variety of techniques
- To improve access to local government

## Strategy

- Maintain/enhance presence in the community by leveraging the channels which can best reach the targeted audiences
- Reinforce key messages through these channels and maximize a limited budget to tell the Burbank story

## Strategic Communication Channels

- Media/Community Relations
- Burbank TV
- Web/Social Media
- External Communication
- Internal Communication
- Branding/Marketing
- Media Training/Crisis Communication

---

# CITY OF BURBANK

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

---

### MEDIA/COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The media act as an objective third-party to deliver news to consumers. When working with the media, timeliness and deadlines are an integral part of a successful campaign. To make certain the City receives maximum coverage, regular dialogue is vital.

Engaging the community with elected officials and City leaders is crucial for the success of any municipality.

#### Objectives

- Proactive rather than reactive media relations
- Expand professional relationships with members of the media
- Develop a reputation as a “media friendly” City of accessible experts
- Provide high-quality services to the media, regardless of the type of story being prepared
- Ensure information being disseminated is consistent and timely, spoken with ‘one voice’
- Increase opportunities for two-way communication with all members of the community
- Increase opportunities for community members to interact with the City Council

#### Strategies

- Routine press releases and photo opportunities
- Develop professional and credible press release template
- Furnish tailored pitches to media contacts
- Monthly meetings with local reporters
- Update/develop comprehensive media lists
- Develop media kit folders for public events (boiler plate, exec bios)
- Subscribe to national media database
- Editorial Calendar monitoring of monthly magazines for feature possibilities

## **MEDIA/COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

(Continued)

- Revise Administrative Procedure on Press Relations (Develop Media Relations Policy)
- Town Hall meetings as potential venue for information and interaction
- Continued civic and service organization participation
- Continue routine communication/coordination of information with Burbank Unified School District, Bob Hope Airport and major private sector employers

## **BURBANK TV**

**The mission of the City's government access channel is to serve citizens by providing current and accurate information about policies, activities and services in Burbank.**

### **Current Shows in Production**

#### Weekly

- The Adopt-A-Pet Show
- Burbank Council News (BCN)

#### Monthly

- Burbank Magazine
- Burbank Update
- The Mayor's Report
- Public Service Announcements
- Special Features/Events/Ceremonies

#### Bi-Monthly

- Burbank Close-Up
- Info Junction (BWP)
- Did You Know? (BWP - Quick tips/PSA's on sustainable practices, programs and information)

#### Annually

- Teens in Action (TIA)

## **BURBANK TV**

(Continued)

### **Bulletin Board**

- Rotating full screen announcements that run between programming

### **Televised Meetings**

- Burbank City Council
- Burbank Planning Board
- Park, Recreation and Community Services Board
- Burbank Unified School District
- Airport Authority Meeting (outsourced)

### **Objectives**

- Expand reach to a broader audience
- Create more progressive image
- Better engage community participation in programming
- Provide more timely and visual programming with information viewers can use

### **Strategies**

- Re-brand Burbank TV6 to **The Burbank Channel**
- Create new station ID/enhanced graphics/update show opens
- Create new On-Demand Video page on City Web site with all programs available for instant viewing
- Establish government YouTube account for segment uploading of shorter format shows
- Eliminate Burbank Update and combine with BCN in a new program titled **This Week in Burbank**
- TWIB to feature more timely news and video elements from other channel programs
- Replace annual Teens in Action program with new bi-monthly or quarterly program titled **Burbank Youth Update**
- BYU will focus on youth programs/include timely PSA's and condensed versions of past TIA shows
- Develop new Web site for teens (burbankteens.com)
- Develop historical-themed programming in conjunction with Burbank's 2011 Centennial

## **BURBANK TV**

(Continued)

- Update General Policy/Procedure Guide for The Burbank Channel to help determine procedures for selecting programming content
- Evaluate possible location for studio space to allow expanded capabilities for programming
- Improve communication with departments prior to televised events
- Evaluate opportunities for tri-cities 'program partnerships' (Glendale/Pasadena)
- Work with cable operators to introduce Burbank Channel programming into their video on-demand library.
- Utilize citizen survey and other informal surveys to gauge audience programming interests

### **New logo**

The logo for The Burbank Channel features the word "the" in a small, blue, lowercase sans-serif font positioned above the word "burbank". The word "burbank" is written in a large, bold, blue, lowercase sans-serif font. Below "burbank", the word "channel" is written in a smaller, blue, lowercase sans-serif font.

## **WEB/SOCIAL MEDIA**

**The purpose of Web based information is to have an additional way of communicating to those who have an interest in the City of Burbank and its services.**

**Social media is emerging as an important way to reach customers and engage civic participation.**

### **Objectives**

- Create a new dynamic/interactive presence on the web
- Disseminate timely information promptly through a variety of web-based communication channels
- Engage in online interaction with community members to improve outreach and efficiency
- Strengthen City's image as Media Capital of the World

### **Strategies**

- Promote/enhance 'e-notify me' feature (goal of 1200 subscribers)
- Utilize online survey tool
- Create 'submit story idea' page
- Create opportunity for online and mobile based Citizen Reporting (e-Burbank)
- Welcome video from Mayor on home page
- Consider creation of City Manager's blog/monthly column in BURBANKUSA
- Explore adding Web link to live traffic cam/ongoing major construction (I-5)/current construction projects
- Implement Mobile City of Burbank Web site for wireless devices
- Evaluate creating City of Burbank Twitter/Facebook Accounts (based on citizen survey feedback)
- Consider implementing City of Burbank "Apps" for iphone users
- Transition city email addresses from ci.burbank.ca.us to burbankusa.com
- Improve resident access to City Hall and city services with creation of Virtual City Hall and other improvements
- Continue work to centralize city-related sites through burbankusa.com

## EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Disseminating timely and relevant information about Burbank is a primary function and responsibility of City government.

### Objectives

- Professional, informative, routine communication with constituents
- Streamline citizen requests for service and assistance
- Present progressive, transparent and effective image
- Obtain important feedback from community
- Encourage civic and community pride/participation

### Strategies

- Consider implementing 311 customer service system to manage citizen requests
- Eliminate monthly utility bill inserts/replace with monthly citizen newsletter called **BURBANKUSA**
- BURBANKUSA** will contain newsworthy items from across city departments and a monthly calendar of items to encourage participation in city activities
- PIO staff will utilize status updates to council as sources of potential citizen interest stories
- Create Annual Report to be disseminated each year
- Eliminate printing of City calendar/map and shift to electronic versions
- Frequently update/promote Public Information Network Hotline (1-800-994-2872) during emergencies
- Utilize/promote BAM Radio/emergency notification protocol
- Conduct formal and informal surveys
- Work with City Clerk's office to create staffed information check-in area in lobbies
- Display live feed of The Burbank Channel on flat screens throughout CSB lobby/City Hall

## INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

**Strong employee relations increases ownership in the City, builds trust and fosters a positive work environment.**

### Objectives

- Expand distribution of information to employees
- Increase recognition of employees internally and externally for their accomplishments
- Enrich morale and enhance trust in City leadership

### Strategies

- Implement City INTRANET (Internal Web site with information for employees)
- Replace HOTLINE printed employee newsletter with bi-weekly electronic newsletter called **FYI**
- Streamline email-administrator notices through use of Intranet/**FYI**
- Fresh employee newsletter design consistent with new external citizen newsletter and The Burbank Channel
- Purchase IN DESIGN software (also used by City's graphic designer) for new publications
- Maintain strong, frequent communication with Council
- Better framing of issues for Council
- More frequent communication from City Manager to staff

## **BRANDING/MARKETING**

**A consistent and recognizable identity is vital to the success of any brand. This identity along with key graphic elements in marketing materials will serve to build and maintain an image in the minds of the audience.**

### **Objectives**

- Determine current perception of Burbank and vision for the future
- Building on its rich history, create a refreshed and progressive identity for the City to assist with strategic goals including economic development

### **Strategies**

- Initiate re-branding campaign
  - Retain city seal for select documents and utilize new brand for marketing purposes
  - Develop citywide rollout plan for brand (Web, business system, city signage/gateways, newsletters/publications, promotional items, uniforms, vehicles, council chamber, television programming and interior signage/marquees)
  - CM/PIO offices serve as project managers with input from community and internal committees to define brand
  - Utilize new brand prominently in economic development marketing
  - Centralize all City publications/marketing materials through City Graphic Designer to maintain integrity of brand
  - Consider enhanced Graphic Design presence within PIO
- \*Develop temporary brand in conjunction with Burbank's 2011 Centennial

# BRANDING SAMPLES



## **MEDIA TRAINING/CRISIS COMMUNICATION**

**Developing comfort when dealing with the press and preparing message content are keys to optimizing media interviews.**

### **MEDIA TRAINING**

#### **Objectives**

- Develop comfort level with the media for council/execs
- Increase opportunities for employees to receive communications training

#### **Strategies**

- Conduct media relations training with realistic simulations for council/designated staff
- Communication planning integrated into major decision processes
- Refine disaster communications protocol (Radio, web, print, TV, phone, private sector)

### **CRISIS COMMUNICATION**

Crisis communication can entail emergency management as well as image management during uniquely challenging events.

With regard to the continuing litigation facing the City's police department, it is imperative to reinforce the department's basic mission and commitment to overall public safety.

## **MEDIA TRAINING/CRISIS COMMUNICATION**

(Continued)

Through all crises, the PIO will structure strategic messages which acknowledge the ongoing issues, while continuing to highlight the strengths, accomplishments and attributes of the City as a whole. It is important for Burbank City Government to speak with one voice.

### **Objectives**

- Effectively prepare staff to manage crisis communications
- With direction from City Manager's Office, counsel City Council members on appropriate role in crisis or emergency
- Provide timely, accurate information to internal/external audiences during crisis

### **Strategies**

- Crisis management training
- Written materials for council/departments to use in emergencies
- Timely updates in emergencies
- Strategic use of Emergency Notification System (Reverse 911)
- Routine exercises within City's EOC
- Disaster communications template (radio, web, print, tv, telephone, private sector partners)

## **CONCLUSION/MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

This Strategic Communications Plan formalizes many of the communication tools currently employed to make direct connections with the community and demonstrate transparency in operations. Through this cohesive plan, each decision-making process will determine how best to reach the audience while exploring alternative and cutting-edge communication resources.

## CONCLUSION/MEASURES OF SUCCESS

(Continued)

In order to determine the success of the communication methods implemented, several tools are available to gauge effectiveness:

- Citizen survey
- Employee survey
- Web site hit reports
- Online surveys
- e-notify participation
- City event participation/attendance

To effectively meet the City's communication goals in this ever-changing environment of technology, it is important to remain progressive regarding dissemination of information. This plan is adaptable and will be reviewed on an annual basis to determine progress and alignment with City Council and management goals.

