



Meeting Date: January 25, 2023

Submitted by: Heather Kepran, Communications Specialist

Report No: CPS-08-2023

Subject: Website and Social Media Overview 2022

Recommendation:

THAT Report CPS-08-2023 entitled “Middlesex Centre Website and Social Media Overview, 2022” be received.

Purpose:

To provide Council with an overview of the use of the municipal website and engagement through municipal social media channels in 2022.

Background:

Virtual / online communications through the municipal website, social media channels, and e-newsletter are key elements of our communications with residents, businesses, and various stakeholders.

The attached infographic presents a quick overview of the municipality’s online presence in 2022.

- In 2022, the municipal website saw 125,333 visitors, who viewed over 797,000 pages on the site.
- The top viewed pages on the website, aside from the homepage, were:
 - Komoka Wellness Centre (28,818 total views, 11,500 unique views)
 - Municipal Election Results (23,195 total views, 10,453 unique views)
 - Book a Facility (22,872 total views, 7,083 unique views)
 - Building Permits (22,184 total views, 7,447 unique views)
 - Waste & Recycling (20,455 total views, 8,621 unique views)
- Engagement through social media – Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube – continued to expand, with the number of followers on each platform increasing over the year. Regular posts by the municipality and sharing of relevant content from other agencies, levels of government, etc. supported this engagement.

- The municipality’s YouTube channel continued to see growth both in posted content (new videos) and in terms of subscribers. Much of this growth was driven by the move to live-stream council meetings. Depending on the topics being discussed, it is not unusual for council meetings to have 60 to 100 views or more, and for meetings with issues of particular interest seeing hundreds of views.
- Subscribers to the monthly e-newsletter grew throughout 2022, with 1,882 subscribers at the end of the year, a 24.6% increase over the previous year. Staff actively encourage new subscribers by offering them the opportunity to sign-up for the e-newsletter when changing billing, moving, attending an online meeting, etc., as well as advertising the e-newsletter on social media each month.

It should be noted that while a key component of our communications with the community, our online presence exists alongside with more traditional outreach, including media releases, a monthly “Middlesex Centre Municipal Minute” page in the Middlesex Banner newspaper, a monthly Middlesex Centre page in both the Ilderton Villager and the Komoka-Kilworth-Delaware Villager, inserts into tax and utility bills, and signage, to name a few.

Analysis:

The municipal website, social media channels, and e-newsletter continue to be effective tools for sharing information about municipal news, services, and facilities.

The website:

- provides a 24/7 “central hub” of information on municipal news, notices, services and facilities;
- allows residents and businesses to access services including billing changes, dog tags, fire inspection, and by-law enforcement; to report concerns about roads, parks and facilities; and to provide general feedback by-way of online forms that link directly to staff;
- serves as a launching pad for residents, businesses and various stakeholders looking to access third party sites such as Cloudpermit (building permits) and Escribe (council meeting management); and
- acts as a repository for forms, reports, and documents of interest to residents and businesses.

Social Media:

- provides a means for the municipality to instantly share news and updates with residents, businesses, and various stakeholders; and

- supports increased access to open and transparent government decision-making, such as live streaming of council meetings and online public engagement sessions; and
- provides insights into the sentiment of the community on topical issues.

E-Newsletter:

- provides a monthly digest-style updates to those that do not necessarily engage on social media.

Financial Implications:

None. Costs associated with the website and social media outreach are included in the annual budget process.

Strategic Plan:

This matter aligns with following strategic priorities:

- Responsive Municipal Government

Use of the website and social media respond directly to Objective 5.1 – Enhance Customer Service by expanding our digital services. Further, use of the website and social media respond to Objective 5.3 – Foster a culture of innovation, continuous improvement, and cost-effective services by sharing information and gathering input.

Attachments:

Infographic, Middlesex Centre Online 2022