

TOWN of BARNSTABLE  
TOWN COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN  
FISCAL YEARS 2021-2022

**Sept. 2020 Town Council Guidance on Communications**

Desired Outcome: The professional credibility of the Town's government should be well regarded by its residents and stakeholders. The Town's citizenry should be active, involved, and feel heard; Town decisions should be made with community buy-in.

- *New Town Government Positions:* The Town should explore creating a volunteer coordinator position as well as a grants coordinator position.
- *Role of Town Council:* The Town should consider developing guidance for what it means to serve in the role as Town Councilor. The Council itself should have clarity on its role versus the role of Town management, especially as it pertains to community engagement and communications.
- *Audience for Town Communications:* The Town should examine any gaps in the audiences it is currently reaching, such as generational gaps, and target its communications to reach those missing constituencies. Focus groups could be a tool to design tailored messages for missing audiences, as could partnerships with civic associations, the formation of a Community Engagement Committee, and/or the formation of a task force with residents on communications. The Town should also be cognizant of economic gaps among its residents that may increase barriers to online access and virtual participation for some households.
- *Additional Modes of Communication:* Some options for additional modes of communication the Town could capitalize on include a mailer about Town Council updates distributed through the schools, increased utilization of the popular Town Manager video updates, and posting recorded meetings and applications to Town RFPs online for public access. The Town's web presence more generally should be made more accessible and user-friendly. Additionally, the Annual Report could be an opportunity to provide residents with an overview of the Town's structure, roles, and goals and achievements. The Town Council could also use feel-good communication opportunities, like Channel 18 programs on volunteer opportunities, to highlight the strength of the Barnstable community.
- *Town Council Accessibility and Participation:* Holding special, issue-focused Town Council workshops and holding Town Council meetings on Saturday at least once per year could increase accessibility and participation. Promoting and accepting remote participation in Council proceedings could also help increase citizen involvement, and the Town should explore any legal or procedural barriers to allowing remote participation.