CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE MEMORANDUM
#28-2026

DATE: Aug. 24, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members

THROUGH: Jason Loveland, Acting City Manager

FROM: Amanda J. Peterson, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture

SUBJECT: Communications and Marketing Assessment Update #3

PURPOSE
To provide City Council with the Communications and Marketing Assessment from Joy Riot. Jessica McCarthy, Rick Ammirato, and John Armstrong will present to City Council.

BACKGROUND
The Communications and Marketing Assessment is complete and Joy Riot will present the final report.

BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS
City Council approved the contract with Joy Riot on March 9, 2026, for an amount not to exceed $73,112. The project time frame is March 9 through Oct. 10, 2026.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
This item is for informational purposes and Council feedback only.

STAFF REFERENCE
If Council members have any questions, please contact Amanda Peterson, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture, at apeterson@northglenn.org or 303.450.8950.

ATTACHMENTS
1. Final Presentation
2. Detailed Findings
3. Written Report


NORTHGLENN, COLORADO
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT
FINAL REPORT PRESENTATION
AUGUST 13, 2026
JOY RIOT
1

AGENDA

Overview

Tactical Findings & Strategic Recommendations

Organizational Findings & Strategic Recommendations

Brand Recommendations

Discussion

OVERVIEW

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PURPOSE

The assessment was initiated to better align citywide communications efforts with community expectations, industry best practices, and the City Council's strategic priorities. The goal was to provide a comprehensive review of Northglenn's communications and marketing operations and develop strategic recommendations to guide future efforts. Specifically:

- **Evaluate** the City's communications and marketing strategies, channels, staffing structure, and available resources.
- **Identify** organizational strengths, communication gaps, and opportunities for improvement.
- **Assess** the effectiveness, consistency, accessibility, and reach of existing communications efforts.
- **Benchmark** Northglenn's practices against peer municipalities and industry standards.
- **Develop** recommendations for a sustainable, measurable, and forward-looking communications and marketing strategy.

The assessment was guided by the City's broader goals of building trust and transparency, strengthening community identity and pride, increasing engagement and participation, supporting economic vitality, improving organizational efficiency, adapting to evolving resident expectations, and establishing meaningful performance measures that focus on outcomes rather than activities.

METHODOLOGY

Joy Riot conducted a multi-phase assessment designed to evaluate Northglenn's current communications environment and identify opportunities for strategic improvement. The methodology included:

DISCOVERY AND CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

- Interviews & focus groups with City Council members, city leadership, department staff, and key stakeholders.
- Review of existing communications policies, plans, procedures, branding materials, and organizational practices.
- Audit of external communications channels, including the City's website, social media, newsletters, print materials, videos, signage, events, and public engagement efforts.
- Evaluation of internal communications practices, employee engagement efforts, staffing structure, and communications resources.

BENCHMARKING AND BEST PRACTICES REVIEW

- Comparison of Northglenn's communications and marketing activities against peer municipalities and recognized industry standards.
- Evaluation of emerging trends, best practices, technology solutions, digital engagement strategies, and storytelling approaches.

GAP ANALYSIS

- Assessment of message consistency, audience reach, accessibility, equity, and inclusion across communication channels.
- Evaluation of alignment between communications efforts, community priorities, and City Council goals.
- Review of media relations, crisis communications capabilities, reputation management practices, and digital performance metrics.
- Identification of opportunities to enhance, consolidate, or discontinue communications tools and tactics.
- Evaluation of staffing, training, technology, and resource needs.

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PEER SELECTION CRITERIA

Northglenn was evaluated against a comparison set of local peers and comparable suburban communities across the country.

NEARBY COLORADO PEERS

These communities provide direct Denver metro/Front Range comparisons for regional identity, resident engagement, events, and business communication.

TOWN OF ERIE 1874

WESTMINSTER COLORADO

CITY OF THORNTON

COMPARABLE SUBURBAN COMMUNITIES

These communities offer broader suburban benchmarks based on similar population, proximity to urban centers, income, demographics, and communication needs.

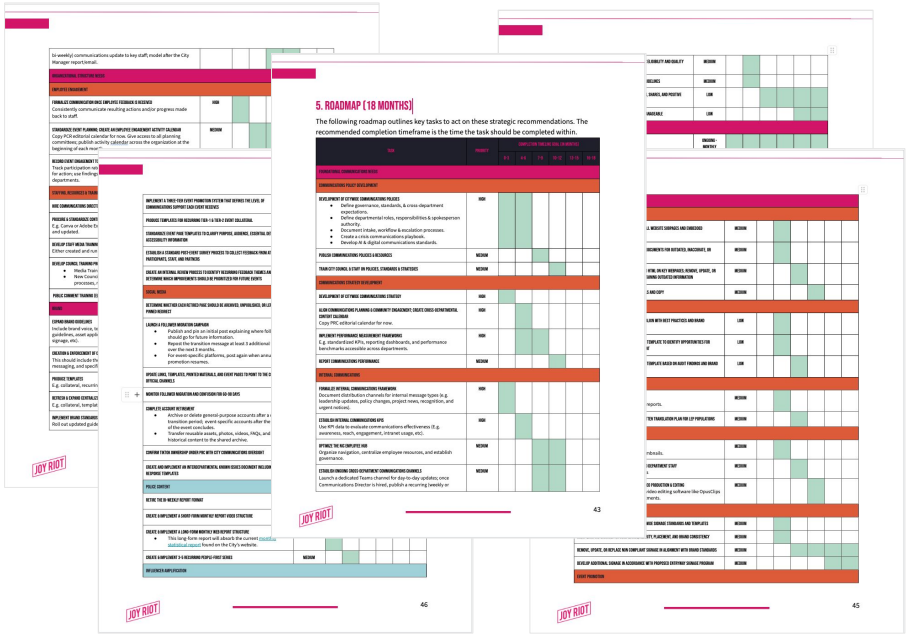
Reston ASSOCIATION

Des Moines WATERLAND CITY

FARMERS BRANCH

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ROADMAP: SEE SECTION 5 OF WRITTEN REPORT



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TACTICAL FINDINGS & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

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CITY COUNCIL & STAFF SHARED PERSPECTIVES

INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL PERCEPTION GAP

Internal: Welcoming, affordable, family-friendly, “hidden gem,” strong community, close to Denver.
External: Confused with surrounding cities, “doesn’t exist,” seen as a pass-through, limited awareness of offerings.

DEFINITION OF WHAT COMMUNICATIONS SHOULD DO

City Council and staff reflected the same core ideas: inform and educate audiences, build trust through transparency, strengthen relationships between the City and the community, and communicate Northglenn’s unique value and identity.

SAME PROBLEM: TIMELINESS (SYMPTOM & CAUSE)

City Council named the *symptom*: Content is sometimes shared outside windows of relevance.
Staff named the *cause*: High volume of initiatives coupled with capacity limitations, due in part to several vacant communications positions, makes proactive planning challenging at this time.

SHARED DESIRE FOR IMPROVED SYSTEMS & TOOLS

City Council wants to see stronger use of metrics and performance data. Staff wants to implement more shared systems, standardize measures of success, and develop a more complete, centralized asset library.

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CHALLENGES UNCOVERED

NO UNIFIED MESSAGING FRAMEWORK OR COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Northglenn lacks a clear, consistent story and a strategy for how, when, and to whom it's told. Messaging varies by department and channel, with no shared framework defining what makes Northglenn distinct or how that story should adapt for different audiences. *In Progress: The City plans to hire a Director of Communications. Once hired, this role will lead the development and execution of the City's communications strategy.*

SILOED DEPARTMENTS & INCONSISTENT PROCESSES

Communications happens in parallel across departments rather than as one connected system. Each department has developed its own approach, resulting in uneven process maturity and duplicated efforts instead of reinforcing shared goals.
In Progress: The City has recently established an Internal Marketing Committee, comprised of representatives from several departments, that regularly meet to coordinate efforts and foster cross-department collaboration.

SERVING MULTIPLE, DIVERSE AUDIENCES

Residents, businesses, visitors, and community groups engage with information differently, yet Northglenn lacks insight into how effectively its communications reach and resonate with them. Additional community engagement will help determine whether current channels, languages, and communication methods align with audience preferences and inform future refinements.

UNDEFINED PRIORITIES, EXPECTATIONS & SUCCESS METRICS

There's no shared definition of what “effective” communications looks like, what should take priority, what is urgent, or how success is measured. This lack of clear guidelines leads to case-by-case communications decisions rather than a consistent standard.

COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCING HASN'T SCALED WITH DEMAND

The volume and pace of communications work have outgrown the infrastructure supporting it. Communications responsibilities have been layered onto existing roles without corresponding increases in dedicated staff, tools, or budget to meet growing demands.

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FOUR KEY RULES OF PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

TIMELINESS

Share information early enough for people to understand their options and take action. Timely communication helps the community respond with confidence.

ACCURACY

Provide clear, verified information from a dependable source. Accuracy builds credibility and strengthens public trust in the municipality.

FREQUENCY

Communicate often enough to remain visible without overwhelming the audience. A thoughtful cadence helps keep residents informed and engaged.

CONSISTENCY

Use consistent messaging, visual standards and practices across departments and channels. Consistency makes municipal information easier to recognize and understand.

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INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS, POLICIES & STRATEGIES

COMMUNICATION POLICIES: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

The strongest communications policies provide the foundation for consistent decision-making by **establishing governance, defining roles and responsibilities, and setting clear expectations** for how information is shared.

DOING WELL

- Citywide values are identified.
- Communications is recognized across the organization as an essential function.
- Commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility, and a non-discriminatory tone.
- Efforts to increase cross-department coordination have been made (i.e. creation of the Internal Marketing Committee with regular meetings).

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Lacking a formal communications policy that establishes citywide standards, expectations, and governance.
- Roles, responsibilities, and workflows are not consistently documented or standardized across departments.
- Guidance for cross-department collaboration remains largely undefined.
- Policies for communications channels, crisis communications, and spokesperson authority are not standardized across departments.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) usage policies are not yet formalized.*
- Routine policy reviews/audits are not apart of standard operating procedures.**

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*An AI usage policy is currently being implemented across the organization.
**The City has established a recurring schedule for departmental page updates; however, this process does not currently include comprehensive or formal website audits.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

A best-practice municipal communications strategy is **proactive, measurable, and aligned with the City's greater strategic plan.**

DOING WELL

- Promotion of civic participation though events, programs, public meetings, amenities, and services.
- Communications supports ongoing community awareness.
- Partial processes for communications planning are in place; serves as positive foundation for further development.
- A variety of channels are used to deliver information.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Lack of a current, and formalized communications strategy that defines shared goals, priorities, audiences, or success measures.
- Communications are not tied to broader organizational goals outlined in the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan.
- The ability to more formally pre-plan known communications, would better equip teams to manage unexpected communication needs.
- Feedback collection from audiences is inconsistent.
- Communications success is measured inconsistently, with limited use of organization-wide performance indicators beyond channel-specific metrics.
- Communications strategies are not formally reviewed or updated on a recurring basis.

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EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS EVALUATION

Against best practices, benchmarks, and peer cities.

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THE 50-POINT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK

Northglenn and peer communities were each evaluated using the same criteria to assess the effectiveness of communications across media.

THE FRAMEWORK

10 EVALUATION CRITERIA
Each medium is evaluated against 10 criteria specific to that medium.

5 STRATEGIC CATEGORIES
2 criteria per category — up to 10 points each.

TOTAL SCORE / 50
Used to compare each channel against peers.

THE SCORING SCALE

1	**Poor / Absent:** The criterion is missing or fails to meet even basic expectations.
2	**Inconsistent or Limited:** Present in some areas but unreliable, incomplete, or hard to access.
3	**Functional but Average:** Meets minimum standards—adequate, but no standout qualities.
4	**Strong and Mostly Effective:** Performs well in most respects with only minor gaps.
5	**Excellent / Best Practice:** Exemplary performance—a model for other channels to follow.

FIVE STRATEGIC CATEGORIES

CLARITY
Is information easy to understand, current, and genuinely useful?

ACCESSIBILITY
Is the experience inclusive, mobile-friendly, and easy to use?

USER EXPERIENCE
Can audiences find information, complete tasks, and navigate efficiently?

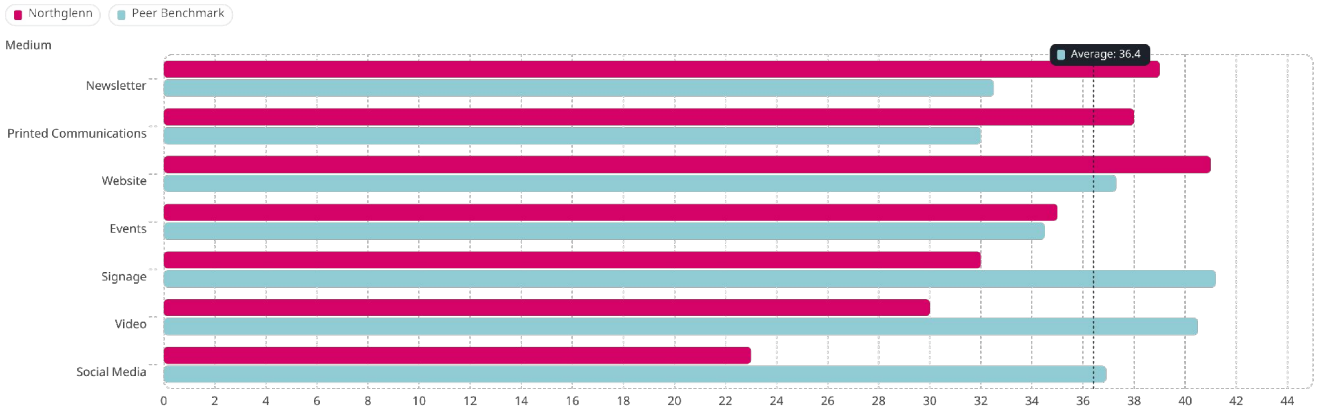
BRAND
Does the channel feel consistent, professional, and reflective of the City's identity?

ACTION & ENGAGEMENT
Does the channel guide users toward clear next steps or interaction?

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MEDIUM PERFORMANCE VS. PEER BENCHMARKS

Northglenn performs just below the peer benchmark overall, with strong results in website, signage, print, newsletters, and events, but clear opportunities to improve social media and video performance.



34

NORTHGLENN AVERAGE

Out of 50 across all media

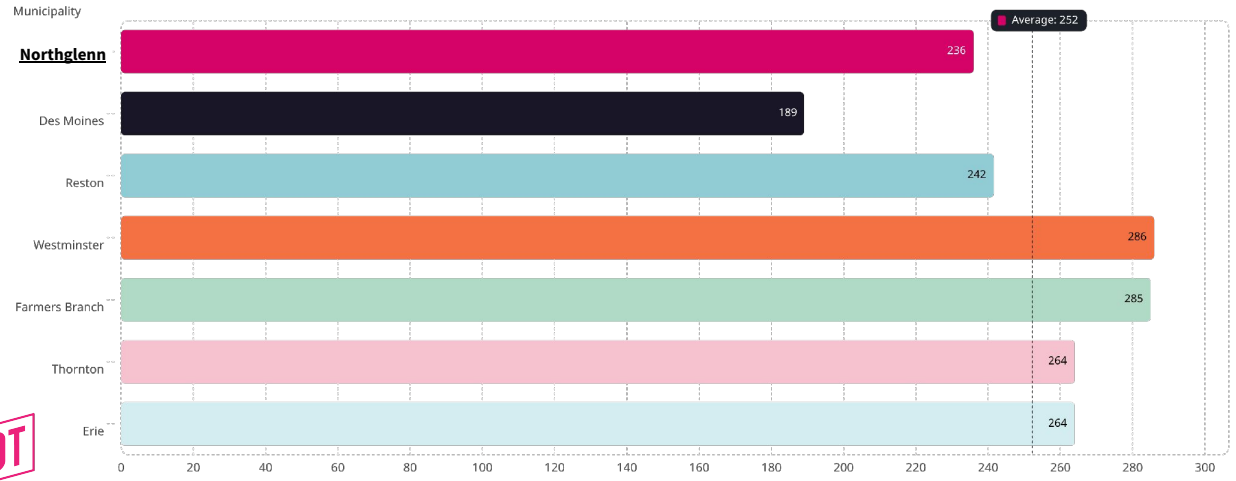
-2.4

VS. PEER BENCHMARK

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NORTHGLENN: TOTAL SCORE VS PEERS

Each municipality's scores across the seven communications mediums are combined into a single overall score out of 350. The bar graph compares these cumulative totals, providing a high-level view of how each city's communications system performs relative to its peers. Higher scores indicate stronger and more consistent performance across the full range of evaluated channels.



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NEWSLETTER: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

TOTAL SCORE: 39/50

DOING WELL

- Strong Calls to Action (CTAs), useful links, and clear pathways back to city resources.
- Newsletters are timely, useful, and action-oriented.
- Distinct but connected newsletter identities for resident and business audiences.
- Strong civic and business engagement value.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Content can be dense and hard to scan quickly.
- Mobile readability and accessibility could be improved.
- Important information should rely less on embedded graphics and long-form layouts.

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Note: The Newsletter audit included the eConnection, Catalyst, Business Connection, Northglenn Arts, and Recreation e-newsletters. The Northglenn Connection print newsletter was also evaluated under the “Newsletters” category and is therefore excluded from the Print score.

PRINT: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

TOTAL SCORE: 38/50

DOING WELL

- Clear purpose, strong hierarchy, and generally polished execution.
- Major documents feel professional, credible, and aligned with city communications.
- Print materials generally use helpful visuals, photography, and organized content.
- Strong relative performance compared with peers.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- CTAs and next steps are not always strong or consistent.
- Contact information is inconsistently included, placed, and formatted across print materials.
- Cross-department print standards could be tighter.
- Some pieces inform well but do not clearly drive action.

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Note: The Print audit included, but was not limited to, activity guides, water quality reports, strategic plans, departmental and interdepartmental flyers, municipal court monthly reports, annual budgets, and printed schedules.

WEBSITE: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

TOTAL SCORE: 41/50

DOING WELL

- Strong resident usability: clear navigation, quick links, service pathways, contact information, and Access Northglenn.
- Clear, plain-language content that surfaces timely updates and common resident needs.
- Strong accessibility posture, including ReciteMe, accessibility feedback, and stated WCAG/Colorado standards.
- Common tasks are easy to find and complete.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Brand storytelling is underdeveloped; the site feels more functional than distinctive.
- Homepage and priority pages could better reflect Northglenn's people, neighborhoods, parks, civic life, and quality of life.
- Some technical accessibility issues remain, including landmarks, heading structure, and potential mobile friction.
- Search could better support plain-language resident questions.

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Note: The city has completed an initial ADA compliance scan. A full-scope compliance scan needs to be completed.

EVENT COMMUNICATIONS: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

TOTAL SCORE: 35/50

DOING WELL

- Complete, regularly updated digital event calendar.
- Thorough seasonal activity guides available to the public.
- General event details are generally prioritized and clear in digital materials.
- Clear, streamlined registration process for City activities.
- Prominent contact information for relevant event coordinators and administrators.
- Supplemental resources included on event webpages.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Event clarity is inconsistent; purpose, audience value, and participation details are not always obvious.
- Event information can be fragmented across city pages, external sites, registration tools, and supporting materials.
- Accessibility details are not centralized and standardized on event webpages.
- Post-event recaps, feedback loops, and "what we heard / what changed" follow-ups are limited.
- Outcomes of participation are not always visible afterward.

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Note: The Event Communications assessment included, but was not limited to, city webpages, online calendar listings, registration pages, departmental and City flyers, printed and digital schedules, social media promotions, newsletter content, event maps, and logistical materials, if and when present.

SIGNAGE: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

TOTAL SCORE: 32/50

DOING WELL

- Signage is generally functional, clear, and well-placed.
- Strong wayfinding support, especially around facilities and recreation spaces.
- Most signage feels maintained, professional, and trustworthy.
- Signs help users navigate, identify spaces, and make decisions.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Citywide signage does not consistently reinforce a clear sense of place or arrival.
- Limited city-identifying signage may contribute to confusion between Northglenn and neighboring communities.
- Citywide signage standards are not fully systematized.
- Brand consistency varies by location and department.
- Some signs need larger type, simpler hierarchy, and stronger contrast for distance viewing.

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VIDEO: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

TOTAL SCORE: 30/50

DOING WELL

- Topics are generally clear and appropriate for local government.
- Captions/accessibility supports are a relative strength.
- Mayor's Minute and City-Platform Video lengths are generally platform-appropriate.
- Tone is often service-oriented and community-appropriate.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Law enforcement content can dominate or work against broader city positioning.
- Law enforcement video lengths frequently exceed best-practices.
- Brand expression is generally inconsistent between departments.
- Many videos lack clear takeaways, CTAs, or next steps.
- Openings do not always hook viewers or explain why the topic matters.
- Production quality, audio, pacing, editing, and visual hierarchy are inconsistent.

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SOCIAL MEDIA: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

DOING WELL

- Broad platform presence and large overall audience.
- Many posts share useful service updates, reminders, events, and alerts.
- Some accounts maintain regular posting and timely information.
- Captions and platform-appropriate copy are often present.
- PRC short-form content drives sustained growth on Facebook.

TOTAL SCORE: 23/50

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Channel roles and audiences are unclear across the ecosystem.
- Brand identity is fragmented across departments, platforms, templates, and tones.
- Residents may need to follow multiple accounts to get a complete picture.
- Engagement feels one-way because visible response and escalation are limited.
- Police/crime-heavy content can dominate perception and disconnect from broader city positioning.

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CURRENT SOCIAL MEDIA ORGANIZATION

Northglenn currently maintains a wide spread of pages—with dramatically uneven audiences. Fragmentation creates confusion for residents and unnecessary burden for staff.

CITY GOVERNMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



POLICE DEPARTMENT



P.R.C.



NORTHGLENN ARTS



NORTHGLENN YOUTH THEATRE & ACADEMY



FUSION SWIM CLUB



FOOD TRUCK CARNIVAL



PIRATE FEST



MUDAPALOOZA



NORTHGLENN WATER



DON ANEMA MEM. SKATEPARK



WIFFLEBALL TOURNAMENT



NORTHGLENN SENIORS



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RECOMMENDED REORGANIZATION

To optimize Northglenn social mix, it is recommended that the City discontinue one-off, hyper-focused, and event-specific pages, adopting TikTok to round out the Parks, Recreation, & Culture mix.

Organize content by audience need, not by department org chart. Each remaining platform should have a clear purpose, with City Communications setting the standards for tone, timing, visuals, and accessibility.

CITY GOVERNMENT*	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	POLICE DEPARTMENT	PARKS & RECREATION**	NORTHGLENN ARTS***
				

* Consolidated: Northglenn Water
** Consolidated: Pirate Fest, Mudapalooza, Fusion Swim Club, Food Truck Carnival, Northglenn Seniors, Don Anema Memorial Skatepark, Wiffleball Tournament
*** Consolidated: Northglenn Youth Theatre and Academy

RECOMMENDED CONTENT ROUTING: EXAMPLES

CONTENT TYPE	PRIMARY OWNER	SECONDARY OWNER(S) / CROSS-PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES (WHEN RELEVANT)
City announcements	City Government *(All Platforms)*	Police Department *(All Platforms),* Parks, Recreation, & Culture *(All Platforms)*
Emergency updates	Police Department *(All Platforms)*	City Government *(Facebook, X, Nextdoor)*
Council and public meetings	City Government *(YouTube)*	–
Resident service reminders	City Government*(Facebook, Nextdoor)*	–
Aquatics, sports, workshops, & camps	Parks, Recreation, & Culture *(All Platforms)*	City Government *(Facebook, X, Nextdoor)*
Business resources	Economic Development *(LinkedIn)*	–
Development wins	Economic Development *(LinkedIn)*	City Government *(Facebook, X, Nextdoor)*
Police alerts	Police Department *(All Platforms)*	–
Water and utility updates	City Government *(All Platforms)*	–

DEEP DIVE:
POLICE SOCIAL MEDIA

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SAFETY, SERVICE, AND TRUST: POLICE CONTENT PILLARS

Across all platforms, police communications should reinforce the department's role in keeping the community safe, providing service, and building trust. **The opportunity is to apply these strengths more consistently across every public touchpoint.**

A BALANCED CONTENT MIX

Across platforms, continue pairing enforcement and incident updates with prevention, education everyday service to reflect the full scope of police work.

USE A CONSISTENT, STEADY VOICE

Carry a clear, professional, and useful tone across routine posts, public safety updates, video, and other department communications.

SHOW THE HUMAN SIDE OF SERVICE

Build communications around the officers, residents, relationships, and everyday interactions that demonstrate what public service looks like in Northglenn.

KEEP ENFORCEMENT IN PROPORTION

Communicate significant incidents transparently, while ensuring imagery and frequency do not unintentionally define the department's overall presence.

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RECOMMENDATION: EXPANSION OF A PEOPLE-FIRST CONTENT SYSTEM

This people-first approach is already visible in parts of Northglenn PD's communications; the opportunity is to carry it consistently across every touchpoint. By centering real people, relationships, and everyday service, communications give the department a human face and help residents see the full scope of its role in the community.

GIVE THE DEPARTMENT A FACE

Regularly introduce the people behind the badge so residents recognize officers as members of the community, not an anonymous institution.

SHOW SERVICE IN CONTEXT

Capture the everyday interactions, problem-solving, preparedness, education, and assistance that make up much of police work.

CREATE PERSPECTIVE ACROSS CONTENT

When people and service form the foundation of the content mix, incident and enforcement updates are understood as one part of a much broader public-safety role.

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RECOMMENDATION: IMPLEMENTATION OF SHORT-FORM CONTENT

Use versatile, recurring short-form content to carry a people-first presence across every platform—keeping officers, service, and community connections visible regardless of format or cadence.

MEET NPD

Officer, dispatcher, civilian staff, and volunteer spotlights.

TRAINING TUESDAY

Short educational content showing preparation, professionalism, and public safety work.

SAFETY IN 60 SECONDS

Timely tips tied to seasonal issues, traffic patterns, scams, weather, and school safety.

IN THE COMMUNITY

Officers at schools, events, neighborhood meetings, youth programs, and senior outreach.

BEHIND THE BADGE

Human-interest stories that show why officers serve Northglenn.

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THE MONTHLY REPORT: RECOMMENDED FORMATS

Social media should remain accessible to a broad audience and balance information with approachability. Repeated use of graphic drug or firearm imagery can overwhelm that balance, while bodycam-heavy storytelling can also make officers feel anonymous and reduce opportunities to show the people and service behind the department.

We recommend a monthly cadence between two complementary formats:

SHORT-FORM SOCIAL REPORT

Facebook, YouTube Shorts, X, Instagram

A 1-2 min. recap highlighting key activity, statistics, prevention tools, and public-safety takeaways.

EXPANDED WEBSITE REPORT

Northglenn City Website

A detailed written report with incident context, statistics, embedded video, and other material for residents who want deeper transparency.

This approach allows social media to present a well-rounded view of the department while preserving a clear path to more detailed and explicit information.

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ORGANIZATIONAL FINDINGS & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORKS

THE CENTRALIZED GATEKEEPER

The Town Hall Bottleneck

The City Manager or Communications Director sits at the center of a strict hierarchy. No department is allowed to post on social media, talk to the local newspaper, or issue a statement without explicit sign-off from the central office.

THE DECENTRALIZED WILD WEST

Every Department for Itself

There is no central coordination. Each department generally operates their own independent social media accounts, managed by whoever has a spare ten minutes.

THE HYBRID NETWORK

Coordinated City

This model establishes clear departmental responsibilities. The central communications team or City Manager sets the overall communication policy, provides pre-approved templates, and handles high-level crises, like town budget deficits or major natural disasters. However, individual departments are trained and empowered to communicate their daily operational realities.

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HOW COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORKS FUNCTION

MODEL	PRIMARY CONTROLLER	BEST USE CASES	CORE RISK PROFILE
CENTRALIZED	City Manager / Communications Team	Budget announcements, active litigation, severe crises.	Severe information blockages and delayed safety updates.
DECENTRALIZED	Individual Department Staff	Daily community engagement, departmental events, police outreach.	Conflicting narratives and severe loss of brand identity.
HYBRID	Shared (Hub & Spokes)	Modern civic operations require both agility and safety.	Requires ongoing training, alignment, and coordination.

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COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORK RECOMMENDATION

Northglenn utilizes a loosely structured "Hub-and-Spoke" (hybrid) framework, routing central brand authority through the City Manager's Office while maintaining highly specialized communication nodes for its key service departments. We are recommending that Northglenn formalize its hybrid framework with specific areas of responsibilities spelled out for both the Communications Team and Staff within individual departments.

1. THE CENTRAL HUB: COMMUNICATIONS TEAM FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The central Communications Team serves as the city's strategic anchor, brand protector, and organizational enabler. Rather than micro-managing daily operational tasks, the Hub focuses on governance, high-level strategy, executive support, and maintaining quality control across all municipal channels.

2. THE OPERATIONAL SPOKES: DEPARTMENTAL FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Department staff are responsible for real-time program and service content creation—drafting their own posts, building localized flyers using the central team's pre-approved templates, and capturing the day-to-day realities of their field work.

THE CENTRAL HUB: COMMUNICATIONS TEAM FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE & BRAND INTEGRITY

The Communications Team owns the Strategic Governance & Brand Integrity of the City. They establish the foundational rules of engagement by creating citywide branding guidelines, messaging frameworks, and standardized style manuals. To streamline compliance for departments, the Hub designs pre-approved templates for digital and print media and curates a central, searchable database of approved logos, photography, and creative assets.

QUALITY CONTROL & CONTENT CREATION

To ensure the city doesn't overwhelm residents or contradict itself, the Communications Team builds and maintains the citywide editorial calendar. They oversee all major citywide content creation and quality control across core public channels, including the city newsletter, master website, and main Facebook page. Under this formalized model, the central team acts as the final traffic stop—systematically approving and monitoring departmental social media posts to ensure they align with the master calendar's timing and standards.

EXECUTIVE, MEDIA, AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

When the stakes are high, the Hub takes complete control of the microphone. They provide dedicated Executive & Elected Official Communication Support, crafting speeches, talking points, and non-partisan messaging for the Mayor, City Council, and city boards. They manage all Media and Government Relations, acting as the sole point of contact for journalists. Most critically, the Hub orchestrates the response to high-level crises, ensuring unified, legally compliant, and accurate messaging during public safety emergencies or organizational disruptions.

DEPARTMENTAL ENABLEMENT

The Hub's secondary identity is that of a supportive partner. They drive cross-departmental coordination so that separate wings of city government are aware of each other's initiatives. They also provide ongoing departmental training and support, equipping non-communications staff with the basic skills, media literacy, and tool training required to execute ground-level messaging safely.

THE OPERATIONAL SPOKES: DEPARTMENTAL FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

LOCALIZED PLANNING & EXECUTION

Every department manages its own departmental content calendar, which feeds directly upward into the master citywide calendar. This ensures that a department's planned announcements do not conflict with major city news. Department staff are responsible for real-time Program and Service Content Creation—drafting their own posts, building localized flyers using the central team's pre-approved templates, and capturing the day-to-day realities of their field work.

FRONTLINE QUALITY CONTROL & STORYTELLING

Before any draft leaves a department to be reviewed by the central Hub, it must pass through the department's own internal quality control check. Directors or designated leads review content for operational accuracy, technical jargon, and basic alignment with city policies. Finally, departments act as the city's primary scouts for positive messaging; they are uniquely positioned to look for and share success stories and best practices from the field, passing those narratives up to the central Hub to be amplified on a citywide scale.

STAFFING STRUCTURE

STAFFING RECOMMENDATION

With budget pressures requiring Northglenn to do more with less, this roadmap does not recommend adding communications staff centrally or within departments. Instead, it focuses on equipping existing teams with the capabilities, systems, and support needed to manage a modern public-facing communications program.

STRENGTHEN SKILLS

Build staff capabilities in strategy, content development, accessibility, digital engagement, and performance measurement.

IMPROVE SYSTEMS

Create clearer roles, workflows, standards, templates, and tools that reduce duplication and streamline execution.

EXPAND CAPACITY

Enable existing staff to communicate more efficiently, consistently, and strategically across the City.

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COMPARATIVE BUDGET & PERSONNEL

Estimated FY 2026 Financial Landscapes.

MUNICIPALITY	FTE COUNT	FY 2026 GENERAL FUND	ESTIMATED COMMUNICATIONS PERSONNEL COST
Northglenn, CO	6.00 FTE	$40.4 Million	$750,000
Thornton, CO	11.00 FTE	$195.0 Million	$1,450,000
Westminster, CO	17.90 FTE	$165.0 Million	$1,100,000
Farmers Branch, TX	14.00 FTE	$85.9 Million	$580,000
Erie, CO	8.00 FTE	$42.0 Million	$480,000
Des Moines, WA	4.50 FTE	$26.1 Million	$520,000
Reston, VA (RA Core)	1.00+ Core FTE	N/A (Private HOA)	$650,000

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Note: Figures represent fully loaded calculations (salary + benefits) specifically isolated for marketing and communications positions, completely excluding general IT, administrative support, utility operations, and dispatch staff.

KEY TAKEAWAYS & LESSONS

STRATEGIC STAFFING INSIGHTS

- **Functional Specialization**
  - Larger ecosystems segment their communication resources into specialized roles like graphic designers, multimedia content creators, and marketing analysts.
- **Activation Priorities**
  - Farmers Branch dedicates close to half of their communication/marketing workforce directly to parks, theater, and cultural events.
- **Integrated Frameworks**
  - Mid-size systems like Erie leverage combined administrative and marketing CMO structures to eliminate departmental barriers.



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STAFFING, TRAINING, & RESOURCES

STAFFING CONTEXT

Considering its size and budget constraints, Northglenn has adequate staffing. (Although key positions need to be filled.)

The pressing question is:
Do staff have the skill, training, and resources to implement and manage a modern communications landscape?

NEEDED SKILLS

- Content Creation
- Photography
- Video Production
- Digital Assets
- Video Editing
- Social Media Management

NEEDED RESOURCES

- Annual Citywide Content Calendar *(Open to all Departments, Managed by Communications Team)*
- A more robust Monarch photo and asset database
- Clear Social Media Response Guidelines

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TRAINING & POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

MEDIA TRAINING

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SAMPLE TRAINING PROGRAMS

Below are sample training programs for Elected Officials, Key City Administrators, and the Police PIO. These are the types of trainings that help Cities get ahead of issues and define roles and responsibilities under stress.



TRACK A: ELECTED LEADERS



TRACK B: CITY ADMINISTRATORS



TRACK C: POLICE PIO

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TRACK A: ELECTED LEADERS

DEFENDING THE POLICY VISION

Elected officials learn to manage the "political lane" under live-fire pressure:

THE SCENARIO

A heated council vote on zoning or density ordinances results in a sudden, adversarial doorstep interview.

THE STRATEGY

Pivoting away from personal council rivalries or operational details to focus on long-term safety, economic resilience, and structural stability.

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TRACK B: CITY ADMINISTRATORS

TRANSLATING TECHNICAL JARGON

Department directors are trained to lead operations, not television broadcasts. Training shows how to translate complex systems into humanized, plain language metrics during local infrastructure disruptions.

SAMPLE INFRASTRUCTURE SCENARIO

Instead of saying: *"The PSI spike triggered an automated mechanical shutoff of the localized distribution lines..."*

Practice saying: *"A safety mechanism worked exactly as intended to cut off water supply and protect neighborhood homes..."*

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TRACK C: POLICE PIO

STRICT LEGAL BOUNDARIES

Public Safety officials practice the highest-stakes communications, managing legal liabilities under rapid news updates:

THE ACTIVE INCIDENT

Balancing immediate public demands for bodycam footage with evidentiary integrity.

ACTIVE SCENE CONTROL

Setting physical boundaries for news vans and establishing a steady briefing rhythm to prevent rumor spread.

PRACTICAL BOOT CAMP FOR KEY OFFICIALS AND LEADERSHIP

ON-CAMERA HOT-SEAT DRILLS
The final phase tests and reinforces concepts under realistic, simulated pressure.

BROADCAST ENVIRONMENT
Utilizing real lights, lapel microphones, and cameras to trigger the physical response of a real newsroom.

MICRO-BEHAVIOR EVALUATION
Using frame-by-frame playback to analyze pacing, eye contact, nervous tics, and professional physical positioning.

ACTIONABLE FEEDBACK
Individualized coaching cards showing growth metrics and areas for communication refinement.

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CORA LEGAL BOUNDARIES TRAINING

CORA DEMYSTIFIED

Reminding leadership that private texts, personal emails discussing city business, and draft memos are public records.

THE PIO SHIELD

Teaching officials to route active media requests through the central PIO to protect data integrity and coordination.

"OFF THE RECORD"

An absolute rule of the training: nothing is off the record. If you don't want it reported, do not say it.

JOY RIOT

THE FIRST AMENDMENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINING

We recommend the City Officials and Staff receive annual training regarding the First Amendment and social media.

- **Public Forum**
- **Viewpoint Discrimination**
- **Profanity**
- **Libel**
- **Actual Malice**
- **Moderation**

NATIONAL TRAINING FRAMEWORKS

FEMA & PUBLIC SAFETY PIO

FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI): Offers free structured training, specifically IS-29 (PIO Awareness) and IS-702 (NIMS Public Information Systems).

NIOA (National Information Officers Association): The benchmark standard dedicated specifically to training and networking for public safety and law enforcement PIOs.

GOVERNANCE & STRATEGY TOOLKITS

ICMA (International City/County Management Association): Publishes operational checklists, "Crisis Communication Checklists," and civic-trust building guides for City Managers.

NAGC (National Association of Government Communicators): Focuses on professional standardizations, federal/state/local communicator training, and networks.

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BRAND RECOMMENDATIONS

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BRAND GUIDELINES: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

Effective brand guidelines make it easy for staff and partners to communicate consistently through **clear, accessible standards** for the City's **visual identity, messaging, and overall brand experience.**

DOING WELL

- Established visual identity; clear rules for logo usage, color palette application, fonts, and graphic elements across all materials.
- Current guidelines provide a strong foundation for continued brand development.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Brand guidelines do not provide direction on messaging, voice, and tone.
- Brand assets are not fully centralized or easily accessible; templates for recurring assets are limited or nonexistent.
- Monarch & NIC should be updated with new images, video b-roll, templates, and other assets regularly and organized in a way that allows for a more effective centralized image, video, & asset library.
- Guidance for environmental graphics and wayfinding signage can be expanded to include shared arterial, Tier-1, Tier-2, and departmental (Recreation Center, Police) standards.
- Photography guidelines focus on technical requirements rather than visual composition. Equipping staff with assets and training for consistent brand implementation.
- Brand guidelines are not formally reviewed or updated on a recurring basis.

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OVERARCHING COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

DEFINE A CLEAR NORTHGLENN STORY

Establish a shared brand narrative that consistently communicates what Northglenn offers and what makes it distinctive.

CREATE A SURROUND-SOUND APPROACH

Coordinate messages across departments and touchpoints so audiences encounter consistent communications multiple times, in multiple ways.

STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS WITH TARGET AUDIENCES

Tailor messaging for residents, businesses, and visitors while ensuring all audiences experience the same core brand.

ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Develop timely, relevant, and action-oriented communications that encourage audiences to engage with City programs, events, meetings, services, and initiatives.

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Every communication should **reinforce the Northglenn story** through these four principles.



BE CONSISTENT

Present one clear voice, visual identity, and message across departments and communication channels.



PUT AUDIENCES FIRST

Develop communications around the needs, questions, and experiences of the intended audience.



REMAIN AUTHENTIC

Use real stories, people, and experiences to reflect the character of Northglenn, rather than simply describing it.



STAY ACTION-ORIENTED

Ensure every communication has a clear purpose and helps audiences understand what to do next.

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THE NORTHGLENN BRAND

VALUE PROPOSITION

A value proposition defines the **benefit** Northglenn offers its audiences—the reason residents, businesses, and visitors should see value in choosing to live, work, or visit here.

From a communications perspective, it provides a clear foundation for all messaging, keeping communications focused on what matters most to the audience. To serve that purpose, it should be:

- **Distinctive**, reflecting what makes Northglenn meaningful or different.
- **Benefit-focused**, centered on what people gain from Northglenn.
- **Audience-centered**, reflecting the needs and priorities of residents, businesses, and visitors.
- **Foundational**, giving communications a consistent value to build from.

VALUE PROPOSITION

THROUGH WORK, RECREATION, AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT, OUR COMMUNITY GROWS TOGETHER.

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VALUE PROPOSITION

THROUGH WORK, RECREATION, AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT, OUR COMMUNITY GROWS TOGETHER.

Our City has been on the upswing since its inception. As we continue to ascend, we offer opportunities for residents, visitors, and businesses to join us in pursuits they'll find meaningful and rewarding.

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LOOK, FEEL, VOICE

Look

- Bright, vibrant tone that draws from our brand color palette
- Maintain clear hierarchy and intentional whitespace
- Show imagery of people interacting in Northglenn's spaces

Feel

- Familiar; opt for friendly over formal
- Welcoming; make yourself comfortable
- Hands-on; get involved

Voice

- Down-to-earth; limit civic jargon
- Action-oriented
- Positive

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KEY MESSAGE

The key message is an **internal touchstone**—what you're trying to get across in all you do. To serve that purpose, it should be:

- **Easily remembered**.
- **Repeatable** by anyone speaking on behalf of Northglenn.
- **Relevant** to all three key audiences: residents, businesses & visitors.
- **Usable** across every City department.

Grounded in the brand positioning and the welcoming spirit inherent to Northglenn, the key message focuses on bringing people into the fold to embrace the possibilities the City has to offer, and build the future that matters most to them.

KEY MESSAGE

NORTHGLENN WELCOMES YOU TO THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY.

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KEY MESSAGE

NORTHGLENN WELCOMES YOU TO THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY.

- Reflects the City's neighborly culture and commitment to making participation approachable, accessible, and welcoming.

- Whether it's buying a house, growing your family, opening a business, attending an event, enjoying a park, or engaging with your neighbors, "the next opportunity" can look different for everyone. Northglenn provides a customizable foundation for that opportunity.
- Northglenn has a forward momentum and is constantly evolving and improving; the community shapes what comes "next."

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DEPARTMENT KEY MESSAGE ADOPTION EXAMPLES

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY TO PROTECT AND SERVE.

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE:

THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT PARSONS THEATRE.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS.

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AUDIENCES & MESSAGING SEGMENTATION

RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

MAINTAIN AN ALWAYS-ON SOCIAL PRESENCE

Treat social media as a real-time communications channel for questions, timely issues, events, safety updates, and resident needs.

CLOSE THE LOOP AFTER ENGAGEMENT

After meetings, surveys, events, public input, or major decisions, explain what was heard, what changed, and what happens next.

MAKE PARTICIPATION EASIER

Promote meetings, surveys, programs, events, and volunteer opportunities with clear CTAs, plain-language summaries, and reminders across channels.

TURN RESIDENTS INTO STORYTELLERS

Feature resident voices, volunteers, families, City staff, traditions, and community moments to build pride and make communications feel more personal.

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BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

CREATE CLEARER AUDIENCE PATHWAYS

Continue organizing content around common business needs, including starting, growing, relocating, developing, hiring, promoting and accessing funding.

ESTABLISH PROACTIVE OUTREACH

Continue using newsletters, direct outreach, relationship-building and quarterly networking or roundtable events to keep businesses informed and engaged.

HIGHLIGHT BUSINESS MOMENTUM

Continue sharing grants and available resources while expanding coverage of openings, expansions, and redevelopment successes.

MAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MORE VISIBLE

Increase the presence of economic development content across citywide social media, newsletters, website updates, events and partner channels.

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VISITOR ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

PACKAGE EXPERIENCES AROUND PLANNING MOMENTS

Organize content around questions like "What's happening this weekend?", "What should I know before I go?", and "What else can I do nearby?"

CURATE REASONS TO VISIT YEAR-ROUND

Create seasonal guides, event roundups, family activity lists, recreation spotlights, arts and culture highlights, and itineraries.

MAKE SOCIAL MORE EXPERIENCE-DRIVEN

Use short-form video, event photography, staff picks, seasonal guides, and attendee-generated content.

BUILD PARTNER-BASED PROMOTION

Work with local businesses, regional tourism organizations, influencers, vendors, performers, and community organizations to extend reach beyond City-owned channels.

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THANK YOU

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NORTHGLENN, COLORADO
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT
DETAILED FINDINGS
AUGUST 13, 2026
JOY RIOT

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BACKGROUND

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PURPOSE

The assessment was initiated to better align citywide communications efforts with community expectations, industry best practices, and the City Council's strategic priorities. The goal was to provide a comprehensive review of Northglenn's communications and marketing operations and develop strategic recommendations to guide future efforts. Specifically:

- **Evaluate** the City's communications and marketing strategies, channels, staffing structure, and available resources.
- **Identify** organizational strengths, communication gaps, and opportunities for improvement.
- **Assess** the effectiveness, consistency, accessibility, and reach of existing communications efforts.
- **Benchmark** Northglenn's practices against peer municipalities and industry standards.
- **Develop** recommendations for a sustainable, measurable, and forward-looking communications and marketing strategy.

The assessment was guided by the City's broader goals of building trust and transparency, strengthening community identity and pride, increasing engagement and participation, supporting economic vitality, improving organizational efficiency, adapting to evolving resident expectations, and establishing meaningful performance measures that focus on outcomes rather than activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Northglenn does not have a communications *effort* problem—the City has a communications *system* problem. Across the organization, departments are producing valuable information, supporting major initiatives, and maintaining active public touchpoints. However, these efforts operate independently, without a shared strategy, a consistent message, or a unified sense of what Northglenn should be known for. The result is a city that is more compelling than its communications currently reveal.

This assessment recommends a shift from a reactive, department-by-department approach to one that is intentional, coordinated, and measurable. This includes:

- **Defining** the Northglenn story.
- **Clarifying** channel roles and ownership.
- **Strengthening** brand consistency.
- **Setting clear** communications priorities.
- **Equipping staff** with the systems and tools to plan ahead and execute more effectively.

With these pieces in place, Northglenn can move beyond simply informing the public, and begin using communications to build trust, reinforce identity, and make the City's value visible to everyone it serves.

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METHODOLOGY

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METHODOLOGY

Joy Riot conducted a multi-phase assessment designed to evaluate Northglenn's current communications environment and identify opportunities for strategic improvement. The methodology included:

DISCOVERY AND CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

- Interviews & focus groups with City Council members, city leadership, department staff, and key stakeholders.
- Review of existing communications policies, plans, procedures, branding materials, and organizational practices.
- Audit of external communications channels, including the City's website, social media, newsletters, print materials, videos, signage, events, and public engagement efforts.
- Evaluation of internal communications practices, employee engagement efforts, staffing structure, and communications resources.

BENCHMARKING AND BEST PRACTICES REVIEW

- Comparison of Northglenn's communications and marketing activities against peer municipalities and recognized industry standards.
- Evaluation of emerging trends, best practices, technology solutions, digital engagement strategies, and storytelling approaches.

GAP ANALYSIS

- Assessment of message consistency, audience reach, accessibility, equity, and inclusion across communication channels.
- Evaluation of alignment between communications efforts, community priorities, and City Council goals.
- Review of media relations, crisis communications capabilities, reputation management practices, and digital performance metrics.
- Identification of opportunities to enhance, consolidate, or discontinue communications tools and tactics.
- Evaluation of staffing, training, technology, and resource needs.

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PEER SELECTION CRITERIA

Northglenn was evaluated against a comparison set of local peers and comparable suburban communities across the country.

NEARBY COLORADO PEERS

These communities provide direct Denver metro/Front Range comparisons for regional identity, resident engagement, events, and business communication.

COMPARABLE SUBURBAN COMMUNITIES

These communities offer broader suburban benchmarks based on similar population, proximity to urban centers, income, demographics, and communication needs.

TOWN OF ERIE 1874

WESTMINSTER COLORADO

CITY OF THORNTON

Reston ASSOCIATION

Des Moines WATERLAND CITY

FARMERS BRANCH

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THE 50-POINT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK

Northglenn and peer communities were each evaluated using the same criteria to assess the effectiveness of communications across media.

THE FRAMEWORK



10 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each medium is evaluated against 10 criteria specific to that medium.

5 STRATEGIC CATEGORIES

2 criteria per category — up to 10 points each.

TOTAL SCORE / 50

Used to compare each channel against peers.

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THE 50-POINT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK (CONT.)

THE SCORING SCALE

1	**Poor / Absent:** The criterion is missing or fails to meet even basic expectations.
2	**Inconsistent or Limited:** Present in some areas but unreliable, incomplete, or hard to access.
3	**Functional but Average:** Meets minimum standards—adequate, but no standout qualities.
4	**Strong and Mostly Effective:** Performs well in most respects with only minor gaps.
5	**Excellent / Best Practice:** Exemplary performance—a model for other channels to follow.

FIVE STRATEGIC CATEGORIES

CLARITY
Is information easy to understand, current, and genuinely useful?

ACCESSIBILITY
Is the experience inclusive, mobile-friendly, and easy to use?

USER EXPERIENCE
Can audiences find information, complete tasks, and navigate efficiently?

BRAND
Does the channel feel consistent, professional, and reflective of the City's identity?

ACTION & ENGAGEMENT
Does the channel guide users toward clear next steps or interaction?

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SECTION A: DISCOVERY & CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

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QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

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CITY COUNCIL & STAFF SHARED PERSPECTIVES

INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL PERCEPTION GAP

Internal: Welcoming, affordable, family-friendly, “hidden gem,” strong community, close to Denver.
External: Confused with surrounding cities, “doesn’t exist,” seen as a pass-through, limited awareness of offerings.

DEFINITION OF WHAT COMMUNICATIONS SHOULD DO

City Council and staff reflected the same core ideas: inform and educate audiences, build trust through transparency, strengthen relationships between the City and the community, and communicate Northglenn’s unique value and identity.

SAME PROBLEM: TIMELINESS (SYMPTOM & CAUSE)

City Council named the *symptom*: Content is sometimes shared outside windows of relevance.
Staff named the *cause*: High volume of initiatives coupled with capacity limitations, due in part to several vacant communications positions, makes proactive planning challenging at this time.

SHARED DESIRE FOR IMPROVED SYSTEMS & TOOLS

City Council wants to see stronger use of metrics and performance data. Staff wants to implement more shared systems, standardize measures of success, and develop a more complete, centralized asset library.

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CHALLENGES UNCOVERED

NO UNIFIED MESSAGING FRAMEWORK OR COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Northglenn lacks a clear, consistent story and a strategy for how, when, and to whom it's told. Messaging varies by department and channel, with no shared framework defining what makes Northglenn distinct or how that story should adapt for different audiences. *In Progress: The City plans to hire a Director of Communications. Once hired, this role will lead the development and execution of the City's communications strategy.*

SILOED DEPARTMENTS & INCONSISTENT PROCESSES

Communications happens in parallel across departments rather than as one connected system. Each department has developed its own approach, resulting in uneven process maturity and duplicated efforts instead of reinforcing shared goals. *In Progress: The City has recently established an Internal Marketing Committee, comprised of representatives from several departments, that regularly meet to coordinate efforts and foster cross-department collaboration.*

SERVING MULTIPLE, DIVERSE AUDIENCES

Residents, businesses, visitors, and community groups engage with information differently, yet Northglenn lacks insight into how effectively its communications reach and resonate with them. Additional community engagement will help determine whether current channels, languages, and communication methods align with audience preferences and inform future refinements.

UNDEFINED PRIORITIES, EXPECTATIONS & SUCCESS METRICS

There's no shared definition of what “effective” communications looks like, what should take priority, what is urgent, or how success is measured. This lack of clear guidelines leads to case-by-case communications decisions rather than a consistent standard.

COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCING HASN’T SCALED WITH DEMAND

The volume and pace of communications work have outgrown the infrastructure supporting it. Communications responsibilities have been layered onto existing roles without corresponding increases in dedicated staff, tools, or budget to meet growing demands.

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EVALUATION OF NORTHGLENN COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES

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FOUR KEY RULES OF PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

TIMELINESS

Share information early enough for people to understand their options and take action. Timely communication helps the community respond with confidence.

ACCURACY

Provide clear, verified information from a dependable source. Accuracy builds credibility and strengthens public trust in the municipality.

FREQUENCY

Communicate often enough to remain visible without overwhelming the audience. A thoughtful cadence helps keep residents informed and engaged.

CONSISTENCY

Use consistent messaging, visual standards and practices across departments and channels. Consistency makes municipal information easier to recognize and understand.

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COMMUNICATION POLICIES: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

The strongest communications policies provide the foundation for consistent decision-making by **establishing governance, defining roles and responsibilities, and setting clear expectations** for how information is shared.

DOING WELL

- Citywide values are identified.
- Communications is recognized across the organization as an essential function.
- Commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility, and a non-discriminatory tone.
- Efforts to increase cross-department coordination have been made (i.e. creation of the Internal Marketing Committee with regular meetings).

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Lacking a formal communications policy that establishes citywide standards, expectations, and governance.
- Roles, responsibilities, and workflows are not consistently documented or standardized across departments.
- Guidance for cross-department collaboration remains largely undefined.
- Policies for communications channels, crisis communications, and spokesperson authority are not standardized across departments.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) usage policies are not yet formalized.*
- Routine policy reviews/audits are not apart of standard operating procedures.**

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*An AI usage policy is currently being implemented across the organization.

**The City has established a recurring schedule for departmental page updates; however, this process does not currently include comprehensive or formal website audits.

COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START

- Developing and annually reviewing a citywide communications policy defining governance, standards, and cross-department expectations.
- Standardizing workflows, intake, turnaround times, approvals, departmental responsibilities, and spokesperson authority.
- Training City Council and staff on communications processes, expectations, and brand standards.
- Documenting crisis communications protocols, backup contacts, escalation pathways, and activation triggers.
- Establishing governance for digital communications, including AI and social media.

STOP

- Relying on informal, department-specific practices for creating content and messaging.
- Determining spokesperson authority on a situational basis.
- Managing communications standards in separate, disconnected documents or unwritten norms.

CONTINUE

- Reinforcing organizational values.
- Recognizing communications as a strategic function that supports trust and service delivery.
- Commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility, and non-discriminatory language throughout communications.
- Efforts to increase cross-department coordination (i.e. Internal Marketing Committee meetings with representatives from key departments).

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IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
DEVELOPMENT OF CITYWIDE COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES • Define governance, standards, & cross-department expectations. • Define departmental roles, responsibilities & spokesperson authority. • Document intake, workflow & escalation processes. • Create a crisis communications playbook. • Develop AI & digital communications standards.	HIGH						
PUBLISH COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES & RESOURCES	MEDIUM						
TRAIN CITY COUNCIL & STAFF ON POLICIES, STANDARDS & STRATEGIES	MEDIUM						
CONDUCT ANNUAL POLICY REVIEWS & UPDATES	ONGOING - ANNUAL						

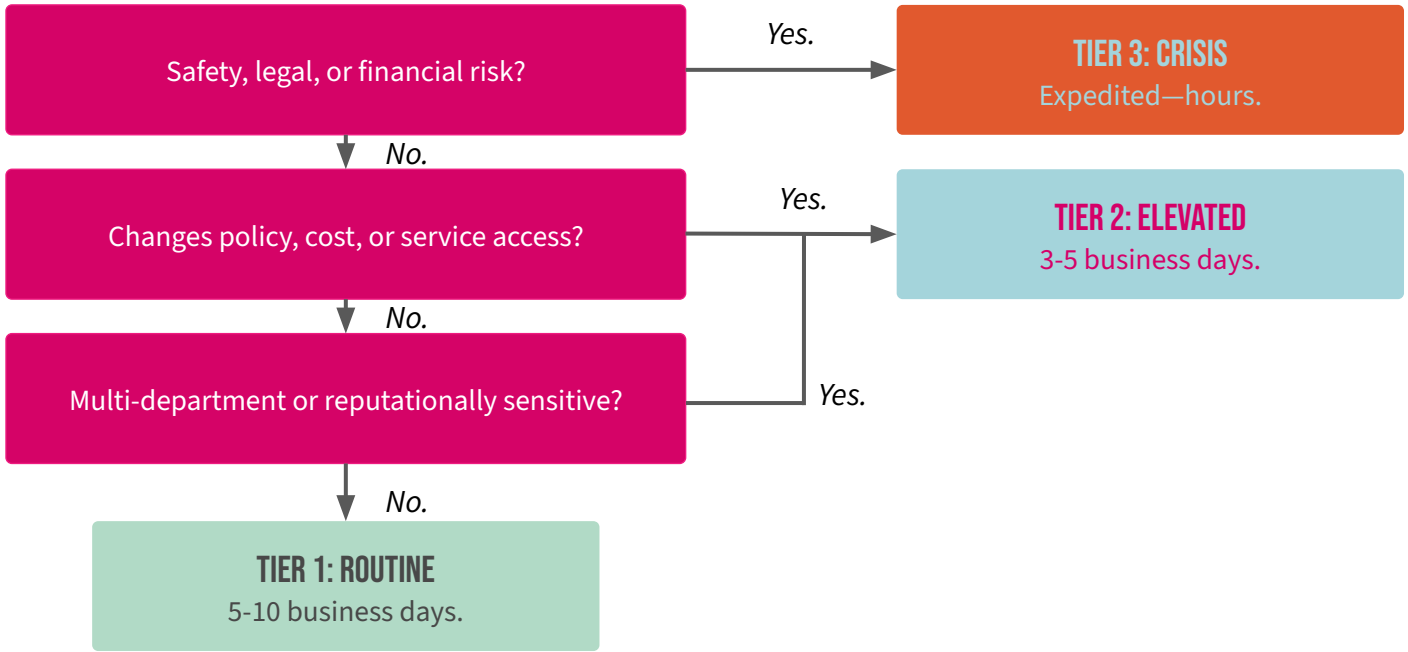
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DEEP DIVE:
FRAMEWORK FOR ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES

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CLASSIFY BY RISK, NOT BY TYPE

Four questions determine the tier for any communication, no matter the subject. The tier then does the work by setting the timeline, reviewers, and approver automatically.



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WHAT EACH TIER DETERMINES

Once a tier is determined, everything below happens automatically—no separate judgment call for timeline, reviewers, or approver.*

	TIER 1: ROUTINE	TIER 2: ELEVATED	TIER 3: CRISIS
Timeline	5-10 business days	3–5 business days	Expedited — hours
Drafts	Owning department	Owning department	Designated crisis lead (pre-assigned)
Reviews	Department Reviewer (+ City Communications for channels owned by City Communications)	Dept reviewer + City Communications + Legal	Legal + City Manager's Office (parallel)
Final Approver	Owning department's reviewer	Director of Communications	City Manager + Chief (joint)
Spokesperson	Dept staff, as needed	Director of Communications + City Manager	Pre-designated spokesperson + backup
Cross-department trigger?	Only if routing table lists a secondary owner	Yes, by default	Yes, activates crisis plan

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*Which department specifically runs the process is defined by the “Recommended Content Routing” tables found in Deep Dive: Social Media Organization

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

This table determines exactly who can act at each step.*

ROLE	CAN DRAFT	APPROVE ROUTINE	APPROVE LEGAL/RISK	CAN PUBLISH
Content Creator	Yes	No	No	No
Department Reviewer	No	Yes (Tier 1)	No	No
City Communications Reviewer	No	Yes (Tier 1–2, City Platforms)	No	Yes (City Platforms only)
Dept Reviewer ***(Police/Parks Rec & Culture/Econ Dev)***	No	Yes (Tier 1, own channels)	No	Yes (own channels only)
Legal / Compliance	No	No	Yes (Tier 2–3)	No
Final Approver ***(Communications Director/City Manager)***	No	No	Yes (Tier 2–3)	No

***Cross-department trigger:** when the routing table lists a secondary owner for this content type, the primary owner notifies that department during drafting, invites input, and confirms channel and timing before anything is published.

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SERVICE EXPLANATIONS

Whenever a communication revolves around a city service, these six questions should be answered as part of the communication.

1. **WHAT IS THE SERVICE?**
2. **WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**
3. **HOW DO AUDIENCES ACCESS IT?**
   Steps, locations, forms, etc.
4. **WHAT DOES IT COST?**
   If anything.
5. **WHAT CHANGES?**
   If this is an update.
6. **WHOM TO CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS?**

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PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Example: An emergency road closure. Two determinations (tier, then owner) run at once and produce one concrete result, not a set of abstract rules.

STEP 1: FIND THE TIER

Immediate public safety risk? Yes.

TIER 3: CRISIS

Expedited workflow—hours, not days. Legal and City Manager's Office review in parallel.

STEP 2: FIND THE OWNER

Routing table lookup: "emergency updates."

PRIMARY OWNER:
POLICE DEPARTMENT

Secondary: City Platforms cross-posts if the threat is active.

JOY RIOT

EVALUATION OF NORTHGLENN COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES

JOY RIOT

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

A best-practice municipal communications strategy is **proactive, measurable, and aligned with the City's greater strategic plan.**

DOING WELL

- Promotion of civic participation though events, programs, public meetings, amenities, and services.
- Communications supports ongoing community awareness.
- Partial processes for communications planning are in place; serves as positive foundation for further development.
- A variety of channels are used to deliver information.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Lack of a current, and formalized communications strategy that defines shared goals, priorities, audiences, or success measures.
- Communications are not tied to broader organizational goals outlined in the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan.
- The ability to more formally pre-plan known communications, would better equip teams to manage unexpected communication needs.
- Feedback collection from audiences is inconsistent.
- Communications success is measured inconsistently, with limited use of organization-wide performance indicators beyond channel-specific metrics.
- Communications strategies are not formally reviewed or updated on a recurring basis.

JOY RIOT

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START

- Developing a citywide communications strategy with defined goals, audiences, priorities, and success measures.
  - Led by the Director of Communications.
- Organizing communications around strategic priorities and target audiences rather than departments.
- Seeking community feedback to inform communications strategies and priorities.
- Implementing standardized KPIs to measure effectiveness.
- Reviewing communications strategies annually using KPI data, audits, and community feedback.
  - Led by the Director of Communications.
- Reporting annual communications performance and progress to City Council.

STOP

- Inconsistently tracking/measuring success across departments and channels.
- Relying on ad hoc content creation and planning measures.
- Anchoring channel-investment and messaging decisions to data more than two years old
  - *The 2021 Resident Survey and early-2023 social media benchmarks are the most recent figures cited in the reviewed materials.*

CONTINUE

- Using communications to promote city services, community events, emergency updates, and civic participation.
- Utilizing communications as a tool for public engagement and awareness.
- Implementing a master editorial calendar to track all communication efforts and assist in long-term planning.
  - *The Director of Communications must regularly monitor the calendar, enforce adoption, track progress, and lead long-term planning.*
- Providing information through multiple communication channels.

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
DEVELOPMENT OF CITYWIDE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY	HIGH						
ALIGN COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT; CREATE CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL CONTENT CALENDAR Utilize PCR editorial calendar as a template.	HIGH						
IMPLEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORKS E.g. standardized KPIs, reporting dashboards, and performance benchmarks accessible across departments.	HIGH						
REPORT COMMUNICATIONS PERFORMANCE	MEDIUM						
EVALUATE & UPDATE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY	ONGOING - ANNUAL						

JOY RIOT

EVALUATION OF NORTHGLENN BRAND GUIDELINES

JOY RIOT

BRAND GUIDELINES: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

Effective brand guidelines make it easy for staff and partners to communicate consistently through **clear, accessible standards** for the City's **visual identity, messaging, and overall brand experience.**

DOING WELL

- Established visual identity; clear rules for logo usage, color palette application, fonts, and graphic elements across all materials.
- Current guidelines provide a strong foundation for continued brand development.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Brand guidelines do not provide direction on messaging, voice, and tone.
- Brand assets are not fully centralized or easily accessible; templates for recurring assets are limited or nonexistent.
- Monarch & NIC should be updated with new images, video b-roll, templates, and other assets regularly and organized in a way that allows for a more effective centralized image, video & asset library.
- Guidance for environmental graphics and wayfinding signage can be expanded to include shared arterial, Tier-1, Tier-2, and departmental (Recreation Center, Police) standards.
- Photography guidelines focus on technical requirements rather than visual composition. Equipping staff with assets and training for consistent brand implementation.
- Brand guidelines are not formally reviewed or updated on a recurring basis.

JOY RIOT

BRAND GUIDELINES: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START

- Adding direction for brand voice, tone, messaging, video and photography into the brand guidelines.
- Expanding application standards for branded assets (e.g., facilities, signage)
- Creating standardized templates for recurring communications and marketing materials.
- Expanding and organizing Monarch & NIC into a centralized asset library for templates, photos, videos, and brand resources.
    - *Managed by City Communications.*
- Reviewing brand guidelines on a regular cycle (e.g. annually).
    - *City Communications will facilitate review process and distribution of updated guidelines.*

STOP

- Maintaining inconsistent asset storage of informal file sharing of official brand materials.
- Leaving departments to create recurring materials from scratch and/or on use-basis.
- Leaving departments to tell different versions of the Northglenn story.
- Using brand assets that do not comply with brand standards.

CONTINUE

- Using the existing brand guidelines (i.e. logo system, typography, color palettes, etc.).
- Ongoing reinforcement of consistent branding across all communications touchpoints.
- Using brand assets that comply with brand standards.

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
EXPAND BRAND GUIDELINES Include brand voice, tone, messaging, photography/videography guidelines, asset application guidelines (facilities, vehicles, apparel, signage, wayfinding, etc).	HIGH						
PRODUCE TEMPLATES E.g. collateral, recurring social posts, signage.	HIGH						
REFRESH & EXPAND CENTRALIZED ASSET LIBRARY (MONARCH & NIC) E.g. collateral, templates, photo & video assets.	HIGH						
IMPLEMENT BRAND STANDARDS ACROSS ORGANIZATION Roll out updated guidelines, templates, and digital assets.	MEDIUM						
REVIEW & UPDATE BRAND GUIDELINES	ONGOING - ANNUAL						

JOY RIOT

EVALUATION OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

JOY RIOT

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

Successful internal communications **create systems** that keep employees **informed, connected, and engaged** while supporting organizational priorities.

DOING WELL

- City communications actively supports City Council and departmental needs.
- Employees express strong commitment to the City's mission.
- Bi-weekly City Manager report delivered to all staff.
- Multiple communication channels are used to keep employees informed and connected.
- The NiC employee intranet provides staff with access to templates, resources, and materials.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Cross-department collaboration needs more formalized structure and day-to-day facilitation (e.g. increased opportunities to share and discuss updates, new projects, successes, challenges, coordinate decision-making).
    - *This has started to improve with the monthly Internal Marketing Committee meetings; filling the Communications Director position will help to further these efforts and provide ongoing facilitation.*
- Opportunity to shift the NiC from a static resource repository to a more dynamic hub with improved navigation.
- Effectiveness of internal communications is not consistently measured, making it difficult to evaluate employee awareness, engagement, and communication performance over time.

JOY RIOT

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START

- Documenting distribution channels for internal message types (e.g. leadership updates, policy changes, project news, urgent notices).
- Measuring effectiveness of internal communications (e.g. awareness, reach, engagement, intranet usage).
- Leveraging the NiC as a more dynamic, centralized hub; ensure navigation is organized and resources are kept current.
- Evaluating internal communications on a regular (e.g. annual) cycle using KPI data and employee feedback.
- Establishing an ongoing cross-department channel (e.g. dedicated Teams channel) for day-to-day updates, questions, and coordination between Internal Marketing Committee meetings.
- Having the Communications Director (one hired) issue a recurring communications update; send to key staff, mirror the City Manager report.

STOP

- Leaving the employee intranet as a passive resource repository.
- Making communications decisions without subsequent evaluation measures in place to determine effectiveness.

CONTINUE

- Holding quarterly (or more frequent) “all staff” meetings led by the City Manager.
- Holding Internal Marketing Committee meetings with representatives from key departments.
- Publishing bi-weekly City Manager reports to all staff members.
- Publishing weekly City Manager emails to City Council and key staff members.
- Including “Team Northglenn”/”Northglenn Proud” messaging in emails to staff.
- Aligning internal communications with an annual staff-selected team theme (e.g., "Horsepower" – Strong, Steady, and Ready).
- Fostering pride in public service and the City’s mission.
- Commitments to strengthening cross-department collaboration.
- Recognizing the importance and value of communications as a strategic asset.

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
FORMALIZE INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK Document distribution channels for internal message types (e.g. leadership updates, policy changes, project news, recognition, and urgent notices).	HIGH						
ESTABLISH INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS KPIS Use KPI data to evaluate communications effectiveness (E.g. awareness, reach, engagement, intranet usage, etc).	HIGH						
OPTIMIZE THE NIC EMPLOYEE HUB Organize navigation, centralize employee resources, and establish governance.	MEDIUM						
ESTABLISH ONGOING CROSS-DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS Launch a dedicated Teams channel for day-to-day updates; once Communications Director is hired, publish a recurring (weekly or bi-weekly) communications update to key staff; model after the City Manager report/email.	MEDIUM						
EVALUATE & REFINE INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS	ONGOING - ANNUAL						

JOY RIOT

SECTION B: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

JOY RIOT

EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES

JOY RIOT

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

Best-practice employee engagement is where **communication, recognition, and participation** intersect.

DOING WELL

- Intentional reinforcement of staff vision, mission, values.
- Established employee recognition program and celebration of achievements.
- Year-round employee engagement opportunities and staff events.
- Cross-department committees that foster collaboration and employee involvement.
- Professional development and learning opportunities.
- Established employee feedback channels.
- Initiatives to improve employee benefits.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- More consistent communication around employee feedback received and resulting actions and/or organizational improvements.
- Opportunity to grow awareness, frequency, and participation in employee engagement efforts—such as listening sessions, Joy Committee events, and Employee Appreciation Week—while developing new opportunities across departments.

JOY RIOT

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START

- Publishing how employee feedback informs organizational improvements on a consistent basis.
- Standardizing planning across engagement activities (e.g. shared calendar).
- Tracking participation across employee engagement opportunities to identify trends, patterns, concerns, and opportunities for action.
- Proactively promoting engagement opportunities to departments and teams with historically lower participation.
- Evaluating employee engagement practices on a regular cycle (e.g. annually).

STOP

- Collecting employee feedback without consistently communicating resulting actions and progress back to staff.

CONTINUE

- Reinforcing organizational culture through staff vision, mission, and values.
- Recognizing employee contributions through the “Give A Wow” program and bi-weekly City Manager Report.
- Offering year-round engagement opportunities (e.g. staff events, listening sessions, department celebrations, annual events, Employee Appreciation Week, etc).
- Fostering cross-department collaboration through committees (e.g. Wellness, Joy, Northglenn Next).
- Collecting employee feedback through engagement surveys and the Idea Box.
- Investing in employee benefits (i.e. City’s increased contribution to staff retirement, review of human capital reinvestment/benefits).

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
FORMALIZE COMMUNICATION ONCE EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK IS RECEIVED Consistently communicate resulting actions and/or progress made back to staff.	HIGH						
STANDARDIZE EVENT PLANNING; CREATE AN EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY CALENDAR Utilize PCR editorial calendar as a template. Give access to all planning committees; publish activity calendar across the organization at the beginning of each month.	MEDIUM						
RECORD EVENT ENGAGEMENT TO INFORM FUTURE EFFORTS Track participation rates to identify trends, impact, and opportunities for action; use findings to tailor outreach to under-participating departments.	MEDIUM						
EVALUATE & ENHANCE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT	ONGOING - ANNUAL						

JOY RIOT

EVALUATION OF STAFFING, BUDGET & ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR COMMUNICATIONS

JOY RIOT

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Northglenn has 4 main departments with significant communications, marketing, or public engagement functions:

- CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
- PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE
- POLICE DEPARTMENT
- CITY COUNCIL

THE CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

City Manager's Office is responsible for the **overall performance** of each City Department and plays an outsized role in **developing and coordinating the City's messaging, marketing, and communications**.

The City Manager's Office houses four (4) distinct areas that heavily engage in public communications.

- PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS
- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- SPECIAL EVENTS
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

JOY RIOT

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Department **manages the City's day-to-day communications strategy**, serving as the **central hub** for city news and providing timely, accurate information on city programs, major construction projects, and emergency updates.

It also orchestrates:

- Large-scale city events
- Supports cross-promotion across channels and departments
- Manages unforeseen events
- Assists Council Members and their committees with content creation, dissemination, and events

The Communications Department has three (3) dedicated communications positions:

- Communications Director (1) *Vacant to be Filled*
- Sr. Public Communications Specialist (1)
- Public Communications Specialist (1) *Vacant & Frozen*

JOY RIOT

SPECIAL EVENTS

Housed within the Public Communications their main role is to **coordinate all planning, logistics, and execution of City events**. The two (2) special Events Specialist and one (1) part-time special Events Specialist Assistant play a vital role in the success of Northglenn's many community events, but sit outside the main communications functions of the Public Communications Department.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Although not directly tied to communication strategy and planning, Community Engagement **manages connections** and **provides involvement, interaction and problem resolution** through volunteer services, community outreach, neighborhood programs, events, and proactive relations with residents. The Community Engagement Coordinator duties include:

- Administering programs needing volunteers such as Snow Stormers, Flowerbed Partners, Trail Partners, Bike Giveaway Program, Farmers' Highline Canal Cleanup.
- Coordinating annual volunteer recognition event.
- City representative for select council directed programs such as Adams County Mayors & Commissioners Youth Awards, Neighborhood Beautification Program.
- Administrator for City directed Court Ordered Community Service Hours
- Administrator for Memorial programs (Bench, Tree, Sign)
- Coordinator for select City run Food & Toy drives
- Point of contact for multiple faith communities.
- Support Event Specialists by managing Event Sponsorship program.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

The Economic Development Department **actively markets** Northglenn to **attract** new employers, retailers, and developers that align with community values and **strengthen the local tax base**. Although the department does not have staff dedicated to marketing and communications as their primary responsibility, its current staff do fulfill communications and marketing functions in addition to their main roles.

MARKET DATA & PROFESSIONAL PIPELINES

Free access for companies making market decisions.

ANNUAL BUSINESS APPRECIATION EVENT

Community recognition event.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Free listings for local businesses.

BUSINESS E-NEWSLETTER

Monthly business e-newsletter keeps owners informed of regional updates and opportunities.

JOY RIOT

PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE (PRC)

Because the Parks, Recreation, and Culture (PRC) department **manages highly visible physical spaces**—such as the recreation center, senior programs, public parks, and theater programs—its communication needs are **uniquely hands-on and experiential**. PRC's goal is to **turn public amenities into highly accessible and engaging experiences**. PRC's marketing and communications functions fall within two (2) distinct divisions of the department; Recreation and Culture.

RECREATION

Physical wellness, community engagement, leisure activities, and programming for residents of all ages is the focus of the Recreation division of PRC. Its marketing and communications staff include:

- Recreation Assistant Marketing (1) (Vacant)

CULTURE*

The Culture division manages cultural initiatives through **Northglenn Arts**, offering visual and performing arts classes, public art installations, and educational programs. Its marketing and communications staff include:

- Theatre Coordinator Marketing (1) (Filled)

Although PRC has only two (2) dedicated marketing FTEs spread across Recreation and Culture, many staff fulfill communications and marketing functions in addition to their main roles.

**Please note that Northglenn Arts works in partnership with the Northglenn Arts and Humanities Foundation (NAHF). Regarding marketing, Northglenn Arts relies on the NAHF for approximately $30,000.00 annually to fund marketing efforts, including media buys and printed marketing materials.*

PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE (PRC)

PRC manages a **wide range of specialized marketing channels** that support recreation, arts, culture, sponsorship, and on-site engagement. Its communications work goes **beyond basic promotion**, using publications, social media, ticketing platforms, direct mail, press outreach, sponsorship materials, signage, and facility displays to make city amenities more visible, accessible, and engaging.

SEASONAL ACTIVITY GUIDE

A major recurring publication used to market recreation and cultural programming.

TARGETED SOCIAL MEDIA & BRAND CHANNELS

Tailored platforms used to reach specific audiences across PRC and Northglenn Arts.

ARTS PROMOTION & TICKETING

Digital ticketing, show promotions, PR, direct mail, and gallery/season marketing for Northglenn Arts.

SPONSORSHIP & B2B MATERIALS

Sponsorship guides and marketing menus that help local businesses buy into city assets.

ON-SITE FACILITY MESSAGING

Digital displays, banners, and flyers used inside the Northglenn Recreation Center.

OUTDOOR SIGNAGE & PLANNING COMMUNICATIONS

Trail signage, wayfinding, and park-user communications for initiatives like the Northglenn Playbook.

JOY RIOT

POLICE DEPARTMENT

While citywide communications are centralized within the City Manager's Office, the Police Department maintains a specialized Public Information Officer (PIO) to **manage high-stakes public safety communications, media relations, and operational transparency.**

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS

Delivers timely alerts and updates related to critical incidents, emergency operations, traffic disruptions, and immediate threats to public safety.

MEDIA RELATIONS

Serves as the department's primary media contact, coordinating statements, responding to inquiries, and sharing accurate information during evolving situations.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Works alongside the Professional Standards Division to support community engagement, special events, policing updates, and other department-level outreach efforts.

DATA AND OPERATIONAL TRANSPARENCY

Uses policing metrics and program data to explain department initiatives, enforcement activity, technology rollouts, and public safety outcomes.

LEGAL AND PRIVACY COMPLIANCE

Balances the public's right to information with victim privacy, statutory restrictions, and the need to protect active criminal investigations.

JOY RIOT

NORTHGLENN: PARKS, REC, & CULTURE AND POLICE

PARKS, REC, & CULTURE (2.0 FTE)

PRC possesses an active marketing team comparable in size to the Public Communications Department, transforming local amenities into highly engaging events:

- **Theatre & Arts (1.0 FTE):** One (1) Theatre Coordinator Marketing (1) Filled
- **Recreation (1.0 FTE)**: Recreation Assistant Marketing (1) Vacant

POLICE DEPARTMENT PIO (1.00 FTE)

While general municipal outreach is centralized under the CMO, public safety maintains a dedicated presence:

- **Dedicated PIO (1.0 FTE):** Manages public safety bulletins, media relationships, and community-informed policing updates.
- **Operational Alignment:** Works closely with the Professional Standards Division to coordinate community relations, department events, and grant compliance.

JOY RIOT

CITY COUNCIL

The Public Communications Department **manages communication, marketing, and event support** for City Council, boards, and commissions, ensuring **messaging remains coordinated** with broader City communications.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

Develops and coordinates messaging related to Councilmembers' official roles and responsibilities as elected representatives.

CONSTITUENT EVENTS

Supports ward meetings, community conversations, and other Councilmember-led events through promotion, messaging, and event communications.

NEWSLETTER AND STORYTELLING SUPPORT

Produces informational stories and updates for the City newsletter that highlight Council priorities, initiatives, and community issues.

CITYWIDE CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

Provides approved content for Councilmembers to share through their individual channels in support of City events, programs, and initiatives.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS SUPPORT

Manages communication needs for City boards and commissions, including public information, outreach, and promotional support.

JOY RIOT

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

JOY RIOT

COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORKS

THE CENTRALIZED GATEKEEPER

The Town Hall Bottleneck

The City Manager or Communications Director sits at the center of a strict hierarchy. No department is allowed to post on social media, talk to the local newspaper, or issue a statement without explicit sign-off from the central office.

THE DECENTRALIZED WILD WEST

Every Department for Itself

There is no central coordination. Each department generally operates their own independent social media accounts, managed by whoever has a spare ten minutes.

THE HYBRID NETWORK

Coordinated City

This model establishes clear departmental responsibilities. The central communications team or City Manager sets the overall communication policy, provides pre-approved templates, and handles high-level crises, like town budget deficits or major natural disasters. However, individual departments are trained and empowered to communicate their daily operational realities.

JOY RIOT

HOW COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORKS FUNCTION

MODEL	PRIMARY CONTROLLER	BEST USE CASES	CORE RISK PROFILE
CENTRALIZED	City Manager / Communications Team	Budget announcements, active litigation, severe crises.	Severe information blockages and delayed safety updates.
DECENTRALIZED	Individual Department Staff	Daily community engagement, departmental events, police outreach.	Conflicting narratives and severe loss of brand identity.
HYBRID	Shared (Hub & Spokes)	Modern civic operations require both agility and safety.	Requires ongoing training, alignment, and coordination.

COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORK RECOMMENDATION

Northglenn utilizes a loosely structured "Hub-and-Spoke" (hybrid) framework, routing central brand authority through the City Manager's Office while maintaining highly specialized communication nodes for its key service departments. We are recommending that Northglenn formalize its hybrid framework with specific areas of responsibilities spelled out for both the Communications Team and staff within individual departments.

1. THE CENTRAL HUB: COMMUNICATIONS TEAM FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The central Communications Team serves as the city's strategic anchor, brand protector, and organizational enabler. Rather than micro-managing daily operational tasks, the Hub focuses on governance, high-level strategy, executive support, and maintaining quality control across all municipal channels.

2. THE OPERATIONAL SPOKES: DEPARTMENTAL FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Department staff are responsible for real-time Program and Service Content Creation—drafting their own posts, building localized flyers using the central team's pre-approved templates, and capturing the day-to-day realities of their field work.

JOY RIOT

THE CENTRAL HUB: COMMUNICATIONS TEAM FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE & BRAND INTEGRITY

The Communications Team owns the Strategic Governance & Brand Integrity of the City. They establish the foundational rules of engagement by creating citywide branding guidelines, messaging frameworks, and standardized style manuals. To streamline compliance for departments, the Hub designs pre-approved templates for digital and print media and curates a central, searchable database of approved logos, photography, and creative assets.

QUALITY CONTROL & CONTENT CREATION

To ensure the city doesn't overwhelm residents or contradict itself, the Communications Team builds and maintains the citywide editorial calendar. They oversee all major citywide content creation and quality control across core public channels, including the city newsletter, master website, and main Facebook page. Under this formalized model, the central team acts as the final traffic stop—systematically approving and monitoring departmental social media posts to ensure they align with the master calendar's timing and standards.

EXECUTIVE, MEDIA, AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

When the stakes are high, the Hub takes complete control of the microphone. They provide dedicated Executive & Elected Official Communication Support, crafting speeches, talking points, and non-partisan messaging for the Mayor, City Council, and city boards. They manage all Media and Government Relations, acting as the sole point of contact for journalists. Most critically, the Hub orchestrates the response to high-level crises, ensuring unified, legally compliant, and accurate messaging during public safety emergencies or organizational disruptions.

DEPARTMENTAL ENABLEMENT

The Hub's secondary identity is that of a supportive partner. They drive cross-departmental coordination so that separate wings of city government are aware of each other's initiatives. They also provide ongoing departmental training and support, equipping non-communications staff with the basic skills, media literacy, and tool training required to execute ground-level messaging safely.

THE OPERATIONAL SPOKES: DEPARTMENTAL FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

LOCALIZED PLANNING & EXECUTION

Every department manages its own departmental content calendar, which feeds directly upward into the master citywide calendar. This ensures that a department's planned announcements do not conflict with major city news. Department staff are responsible for real-time Program and Service Content Creation—drafting their own posts, building localized flyers using the central team's pre-approved templates, and capturing the day-to-day realities of their field work.

FRONTLINE QUALITY CONTROL & STORYTELLING

Before any draft leaves a department to be reviewed by the central Hub, it must pass through the department's own internal quality control check. Directors or designated leads review content for operational accuracy, technical jargon, and basic alignment with city policies. Finally, departments act as the city's primary scouts for positive messaging; they are uniquely positioned to look for and share success stories and best practices from the field, passing those narratives up to the central Hub to be amplified on a citywide scale.

JOY RIOT

STAFFING STRUCTURES

JOY RIOT

STAFFING RECOMMENDATION

With budget pressures requiring Northglenn to do more with less, this roadmap does not recommend adding communications staff centrally or within departments. Instead, it focuses on equipping existing teams with the capabilities, systems, and support needed to manage a modern public-facing communications program.

STRENGTHEN SKILLS

Build staff capabilities in strategy, content development, accessibility, digital engagement, and performance measurement.

IMPROVE SYSTEMS

Create clearer roles, workflows, standards, templates, and tools that reduce duplication and streamline execution.

EXPAND CAPACITY

Enable existing staff to communicate more efficiently, consistently, and strategically across the City.

JOY RIOT

EXECUTIVE STAFFING SCALE



LARGE METRO TIER

Westminster maintains extensive specialized platforms, registering over 17+ target FTE (full-time-equivalent) positions across core safety, CMO, Rec and Parks, and administrative networks.



STRATEGIC SUBURBS

Thornton, Northglenn & Farmers Branch run highly structured centralized communications suites supported by solid recreation and seasonal events divisions (6.0 to 19.0 FTE).



LEAN & SPECIALIZED

Des Moines, Erie & Reston leverage optimized operations, spanning Erie's 8.0 generalist multi-media CMO setup, Des Moines’s 4.5 across PS, EconDev,and Community outreach, to Reston's hyper-isolated 1.0 FTE HOA core coordination framework.

JOY RIOT

NORTHGLENN, CO

Total Dedicated Headcount: Six (6) FTE

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS (3.00 FTE)

The City Manager's Office plays an outsized role in overall messaging coordination and features three vital areas:

- **Communications Director (1.0 FTE):** Coordinates high-level branding, public updates, and city-wide messaging.
- **Specialists (2.0 FTE):** One (1) Senior Public Communications Specialist (Filled), One (1) Public Communications Specialist (Vacant, Frozen)

POLICE [1.00 FTE]

- **Public Information Officer:** **One (1) PIO**

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE [2.00 FTE]

- **Theatre & Arts (1.0 FTE):** One (1) Theatre Coordinator Marketing (Filled)
- **Recreation (1.0 FTE)**: One (1) Recreation Assistant Marketing (Vacant)

JOY RIOT

DES MOINES, WA

Total Dedicated Headcount: ~4.50 FTE

ENRICHMENT & SAFETY (3.50 FTE)

Operating under tight levy caps, communications are integrated directly into multi-hatted community service roles.

Community Events & Services Mgr.	**1.00 FTE**
Program Coordinator (Events)	**2.00 FTE**
Sgt. Recruiting/Standards (PIO)	**0.50 FTE**

ADMINISTRATION & BUSINESS (1.00 FTE)

Centralized outreach is shared natively among administrators. Business development planning functions do not feature dedicated media roles.

Director of Communications/Admin (Blended)	**0.50 FTE**
Administrative Coord. (Blended)	**0.50 FTE**

JOY RIOT

THORNTON: DEDICATED DEPT FOCUS

UNIFIED CENTRAL MANAGEMENT

Thornton aggregates media operations under a dedicated Communications Department while distributing tactical coordinators across public bureaus.

- **Centralized Department (7.0 FTE):** Features one (1) Director, one (1) Deputy Director, two (2) Digital/Media Specialists, two (2) Video Production Specialists, and one (1) Digital Engagement Manager.
- **Safety & Community PIOs (3.0 FTE):** Supported by two (2) Police PIOs (1 Sworn, 1 Civilian) and one (1) Fire Community Safety Officer.
- **Recreation & Commerce (7.0 FTE):** Three (3) Rec Specialists (Sponsorship, Graphic Design, Engagement), and two (2) Econ Dev marketers.



JOY RIOT

WESTMINSTER: BALANCED CMO NETWORK

CMO & PUBLIC SAFETY (12.00 FTE)

- **Communications Unit (10.00 FTE):** Housed in the City Manager's Office with one (1) Manager, two (2) Supervisors, five (5) Coordinators, one (1) Engagement Lead, and one (1) Graphic Designer.
- **Emergency Channels (2.00 FTE):** Supported by one (1) dedicated Fire Public Information Coordinator and one (1) Police Public Affairs Coordinator.

RECREATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (9.90 FTE)

- **Recreation & Parks (6.90 FTE):** Features one (1) Cultural Affairs Coordinator, 0.90 Digital Media, two (2) Event Planners, one (1) Graphic Designer, one (1) Analyst, and one (1) Administrator.
- **Economic Development (3.00 FTE):** Consists of two (2) Business Navigators and one (1) Community Vibrancy Administrator.

FARMERS BRANCH: EVENT POWERHOUSE

ADMINISTRATIVE CORE (4.00 FTE)

Farmers Branch operates a highly integrated management team to control public messaging and civic outreach.

- **City Manager Core:** Supported by one (1) Deputy Director of Administration and Communications, one (1) Public Information Officer, one (1) Marketing Manager, and one (1) Communications Specialist.
- **Strategic Focus:** Centralized branding, corporate communications, and localized media relations.

RECREATION & VENUES (9.00 FTE)

The city places an unusually high staffing priority on localized tourist operations and parks events.

- **Special Events (4.00 FTE):** One (1) Community Events Manager, one (1) Coordinator, and two (2) Special Events Assistants.
- **Dedicated Facilities (5.00 FTE):** One (1) Historical Park Cultural Specialist, one (1) Event Center Manager, and three (3) Event Center Assistants.

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ERIE & RESTON: AGILE FORMATS

ERIE, CO: UNIFIED CMO (8.00 FTE)

- **City Manager's Core (5.00 FTE):** One (1) Director of Communications, one (1) Marketing Manager, one (1) Multi-Media Specialist, one (1) Communications Specialist, and one (1) Social/Digital Specialist.
- **Economic Development (2.00 FTE):** One (1) Local Business Administrator and one (1) Business Development Specialist.
- **Police Bureau (1.00 FTE):** One (1) Police PIO.

RESTON ASSOCIATION (1.00 FTE CORE)

- **HOA Management (1.00 FTE):** One (1) Director of Communications & Member Engagement coordinates local newsletters and activity guides.
- **Regional Operations:** All public safety, commercial zoning, and regional affairs are completely absorbed by Fairfax County's overarching budget.

COMPARATIVE BUDGET & PERSONNEL

Estimated FY 2026 Financial Landscapes.

MUNICIPALITY	FTE COUNT	FY 2026 GENERAL FUND	ESTIMATED COMMUNICATIONS PERSONNEL COST
Northglenn, CO	6.00 FTE	$40.4 Million	$750,000
Thornton, CO	11.00 FTE	$195.0 Million	$1,450,000
Westminster, CO	17.90 FTE	$165.0 Million	$1,100,000
Farmers Branch, TX	14.00 FTE	$85.9 Million	$580,000
Erie, CO	8.00 FTE	$42.0 Million	$480,000
Des Moines, WA	4.50 FTE	$26.1 Million	$520,000
Reston, VA (RA Core)	1.00+ Core FTE	N/A (Private HOA)	$650,000

JOY RIOT

Note: Figures represent fully loaded calculations (salary + benefits) specifically isolated for marketing and communications positions, completely excluding general IT, administrative support, utility operations, and dispatch staff.

KEY TAKEAWAYS & LESSONS

STRATEGIC STAFFING INSIGHTS

- **Functional Specialization**
  - Larger ecosystems segment their communication resources into specialized roles like graphic designers, multimedia content creators, and marketing analysts.
- **Activation Priorities**
  - Farmers Branch dedicates close to half of their communication/marketing workforce directly to parks, theater, and cultural events.
- **Integrated Frameworks**
  - Mid-size systems like Erie leverage combined administrative and marketing CMO structures to eliminate departmental barriers.



JOY RIOT

STAFFING, TRAINING, & RESOURCES

STAFFING CONTEXT

Considering its size and budget constraints, Northglenn has adequate staffing. (Although key positions need to be filled.)

The pressing question is:
Do staff have the skill, training, and resources to implement and manage a modern communications landscape?

NEEDED SKILLS

- Content Creation
- Photography
- Video Production
- Digital Assets
- Video Editing
- Social Media Management

NEEDED RESOURCES

- Annual Citywide Content Calendar *(Open to all Departments, Managed by Communications Team)*
- A more robust Monarch photo and asset database
- Clear Social Media Response Guidelines

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
HIRE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR	**IMMEDIATE**						
PROCURE & STANDARDIZE CONTENT CREATION TOOLS ACROSS ALL DEPARTMENTS E.g. Canva or Adobe Express where templates can be created, stored, and updated.	**MEDIUM**						
DEVELOP STAFF MEDIA TRAINING PROGRAM Either created and run by Communications team or Outsource.	**MEDIUM**						
DEVELOP COUNCIL TRAINING PROGRAM • Media Training. • New Council Member training on Communications processes, roles & responsibilities.	**MEDIUM**						
PUBLIC COMMENT TRAINING (ELECTED OFFICIALS & STAFF)	**MEDIUM**						
CONTINUE MONTHLY ALL-DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATIONS MEETINGS • Share successes. • Share updates for upcoming three months, with next month being priority. • Brainstorm cross-promotion opportunities.	**ONGOING - MONTHLY**						

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MUNICIPAL MEDIA TRAINING

Sample Curriculum, Tactical Scenarios, & On-Camera Simulation Playbook for Colorado Cities

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SAMPLE TRAINING PROGRAMS

Below are sample training programs for Elected Officials, Key City Administrators, and the Police PIO. These are the types of trainings that help Cities get ahead of issues and define roles and responsibilities under stress.



TRACK A: ELECTED LEADERS



TRACK B: CITY ADMINISTRATORS



TRACK C: POLICE PIO

JOY RIOT

TRACK A: ELECTED LEADERS

DEFENDING THE POLICY VISION

Elected officials learn to manage the "political lane" under live-fire pressure:

THE SCENARIO

A heated council vote on zoning or density ordinances results in a sudden, adversarial doorstep interview.

THE STRATEGY

Pivoting away from personal council rivalries or operational details to focus on long-term safety, economic resilience, and structural stability.

JOY RIOT

TRACK B: CITY ADMINISTRATORS

TRANSLATING TECHNICAL JARGON

Department directors are trained to lead operations, not television broadcasts. Training shows how to translate complex systems into humanized, plain language metrics during local infrastructure disruptions.

SAMPLE INFRASTRUCTURE SCENARIO

Instead of saying: *"The PSI spike triggered an automated mechanical shutoff of the localized distribution lines..."*

Practice saying: *"A safety mechanism worked exactly as intended to cut off water supply and protect neighborhood homes..."*

JOY RIOT

TRACK C: POLICE PIO

STRICT LEGAL BOUNDARIES

Public Safety officials practice the highest-stakes communications, managing legal liabilities under rapid news updates:

THE ACTIVE INCIDENT

Balancing immediate public demands for bodycam footage with evidentiary integrity.

ACTIVE SCENE CONTROL

Setting physical boundaries for news vans and establishing a steady briefing rhythm to prevent rumor spread.

JOY RIOT

CORA LEGAL BOUNDARIES TRAINING

CORA DEMYSTIFIED

Reminding leadership that private texts, personal emails discussing city business, and draft memos are public records.

THE PIO SHIELD

Teaching officials to route active media requests through the central PIO to protect data integrity and coordination.

"OFF THE RECORD"

An absolute rule of the training: nothing is off the record. If you don't want it reported, do not say it.

JOY RIOT

THE FIRST AMENDMENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINING

We recommend the City Officials and Staff receive annual training regarding the First Amendment and social media.

- **Public Forum**
- **Viewpoint Discrimination**
- **Profanity**
- **Libel**
- **Actual Malice**
- **Moderation**

JOY RIOT

THE BRIDGING FORMULA

BRIDGING FROM TRAP TO TRUTH

Media training centers on "Bridging"—the physiological and verbal mechanism of taking control of an interview:

Step 1: Acknowledge the question briefly without validating the hostile premise or repeating their negative words.

Step 2: Transition using a robust bridge phrase (e.g., "What is critical to remember is..." or "That speaks to a broader issue...").

CONCRETE BRIDGING EXAMPLE

Hostile Question: "Why was council's water treatment upgrade delayed? Is this a failure of management?"

Bridged Response: "Our team worked diligently, but what is critical to remember is that our upgrades are designed to ensure 100% safety standards before active deployment."

JOY RIOT

CRISIS CHECKLIST

TRIGGER THE JOINT INFORMATION CENTER (JIC)

Establish the designated physical space or virtual channel where all communication is coordinated before release.

DRAFT IMMEDIATE HOLDING STATEMENTS

Distribute basic factual templates ideally within the first hour of an incident (e.g., cyber threats, weather disasters). Circumstances permitting.

MONITOR LOCAL FORUMS & SOCIAL CHANNELS

Active tracking of neighborhood platforms (Nextdoor, Facebook) to identify and squash false rumors before they hit mainstream press.

JOY RIOT

IMPACT OF TRAINING

PROTECTING MUNICIPAL TRUST

Rapid, professional response models significantly alter the trajectory of local crises:

Proactive Mitigation: Municipalities with pre-trained leaders see up to a 90% reduction in wild, viral rumors on community forums.

Operational Focus: By speaking clearly and with absolute operational control, staff avoid public panics, minimizing service downtime and protecting vital infrastructure projects.

90%

RUMOR REDUCTION

JOY RIOT

EXAMPLE 1-DAY AGENDA

08:30 - CORA

Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) compliance, trust building, and modern media dynamics.

1

2

10:30 - TRACKS

Role-specific breakouts focusing on governance vs. administration boundaries.

13:00 - CRISIS

Simulating JIC setup and drafting holding statements for worst-case local emergencies.

3

4

14:30 - DRILLS

Live, on-camera hot-seat interviews with professional reporter playback review.

JOY RIOT

PRACTICAL BOOT CAMP

ON-CAMERA HOT-SEAT DRILLS

The final phase tests and reinforces concepts under realistic, simulated pressure.

BROADCAST ENVIRONMENT

Utilizing real lights, lapel microphones, and cameras to trigger the physical response of a real newsroom.

MICRO-BEHAVIOR EVALUATION

Using frame-by-frame playback to analyze pacing, eye contact, nervous tics, and professional physical positioning.

ACTIONABLE FEEDBACK

Individualized coaching cards showing growth metrics and areas for communication refinement.

JOY RIOT

COLORADO LOCAL RESOURCES

COLORADO MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

CML provides "Mastering Media Interviews" training during its annual Effective Governance Workshops and regional training programs across the state.

CIRSA RISK SHARE

Incentivizes risk-reduction through the Risk Control Credit Account Program. Scoring 80%+ on safety/liability audits deposits credits that can pay for this training.

PRE-INCIDENT SERIES

Jointly hosted webinars by CML, CIRSA, and CMCA designed to build pre-incident awareness and resilient leadership skills for elected officials.

JOY RIOT

NATIONAL TRAINING FRAMEWORKS

FEMA & PUBLIC SAFETY PIO

FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI): Offers free structured training, specifically IS-29 (PIO Awareness) and IS-702 (NIMS Public Information Systems).

NIOA (National Information Officers Association): The benchmark standard dedicated specifically to training and networking for public safety and law enforcement PIOs.

GOVERNANCE & STRATEGY TOOLKITS

ICMA (International City/County Management Association): Publishes operational checklists, "Crisis Communication Checklists," and civic-trust building guides for City Managers.

NAGC (National Association of Government Communicators): Focuses on professional standardizations, federal/state/local communicator training, and networks.

JOY RIOT

FIRST AMENDMENT & PUBLIC COMMENTS

A constitutional roadmap for municipal governments operating social media platforms in the modern digital public square.

JOY RIOT

*This is not and should not be considered legal advice. All legal advice must come from the City Attorney. This is for informational use only.

LANDMARK SUPREME COURT RULINGS

In 2024, the U.S. Supreme Court resolved a major legal gray area regarding public officials, censorship, and digital media in two companion cases:

LINDKE V. FREED (2024)

Establishes the definitive two-pronged test determining when digital moderation constitutes state action bound by the First Amendment.

O'CONNOR-RATCLIFF V. GARNIER (2024)

A companion ruling reinforcing the boundaries of public officials' individual free expression versus governmental censorship.

JOY RIOT

THE TWO-PRONGED STATE ACTION TEST

Moderating comments or blocking users on social media constitutes government censorship only if the public official meets both prongs of the Court's test:

01

POSSESSED ACTUAL AUTHORITY

The official must have had actual, legally backed authority to speak on the municipality's behalf on that particular matter of public business.

02

PURPORTED TO EXERCISE AUTHORITY

The official must have actively purported to use that authority when making the post or executing the moderation action in question.

> *The Takeaway: If a town official posts updates on their personal page but has not been legally designated by the town to do so, it is private speech, not state action.*

JOY RIOT

OFFICIAL VS. PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

The legal framework governing comments shifts dramatically based on account ownership and purpose:

OFFICIAL MUNICIPAL PAGES

Assumed to represent state action automatically. The interactive feed functions as a digital public square governed entirely by the Public Forum Doctrine.

PERSONAL / MIXED-USE PROFILES

Analyzed on a post-by-post basis. If an official uses a personal page for mixed announcements, blocking a citizen risks a lawsuit because blocking prevents interaction globally.

RULES FOR POLICING COMMENTS

To moderate legally on state-action channels, follow strict constitutional boundaries:

- **No Viewpoint Discrimination:** You cannot delete, hide, or ban opinions simply because they criticize, mock, or oppose city leaders.
- **Written Policy Required:** Municipalities may only moderate if they have a public-facing, strictly neutral, written policy in place first.
- **Modern Public Square:** As defined in Packingham v. North Carolina (2017), social media is the modern equivalent of public parks.

LEGALLY DELETABLE CONTENT

Only clear-cut content-neutral violations defined in your policy can be deleted:

- Spam & Ads
- True Threats
- Malware / Viruses
- Citizens' Personal Identifiable Information (PII)

JOY RIOT

THE PUBLIC FORUM DOCTRINE

A constitutional framework used to define where, when, and to what degree the government can regulate public speech on its property.

*This is not and should not be considered legal advice. All legal advice must come from the City Attorney. This for informational use only.

JOY RIOT

FOUR TYPES OF PUBLIC FORUMS

FORUM TYPE	LEGAL DEFINITION & EXAMPLES	GOVERNMENT CONTROL
1. Traditional Forum	Historically dedicated to assembly & debate. *(Parks, streets, sidewalks)*	Extremely Low
2. Designated Forum	Intentionally opened up by the government. *(City Facebook comment section)*	Low / Restricted
3. Limited Forum	Opened up only for specific topics or groups. *(School board budget meetings)*	Medium /Subject-neutral
4. Non-Public Forum	Not open to public communication by default. *(Jails, military bases)*	High Regulation

JOY RIOT

TWO GOLDEN RULES OF FREE SPEECH

The two golden rules of free speech for government and municipal social media moderation are straightforward: keep rules content-neutral, and never censor based on viewpoint.

FORBIDDEN

VIEWPOINT DISCRIMINATION

The ultimate constitutional violation. Even in limited or non-public forums, the government cannot silence speech simply because it disagrees with the speaker's opinion or viewpoint.

PERMISSIBLE

TIME, PLACE & MANNER RULES

The government may enforce logical, content-neutral parameters—e.g., banning loud speakers at night or regulating protest paths equally.

JOY RIOT

PROFANITY, LIBEL & ACTUAL MALICE

Many local officials erroneously cite profanity or defamation to delete critical comments:

- **Profanity is Protected:** The Supreme Court in Cohen v. California ruled that vulgarity is protected, particularly when used to criticize local government.
- **Actual Malice Standard:** Established in NYT v. Sullivan, public officials cannot claim defamation unless they prove a commenter knew the fact was false or acted in reckless disregard of the truth.

LEGAL RISK FOR MODERATORS

A city employee cannot act as judge and jury. Deleting a post as "libelous" before a court of law has officially made that determination constitutes unconstitutional viewpoint discrimination.

JOY RIOT

REAL-WORLD MUNICIPAL DEFEATS

WYOMING, MI

HOMRICH V. CITY

The city deleted critical posts and banned a vocal resident. The federal court held the City unconstitutionally violated the citizen's free speech rights.

MORROW, GA

BOOTERBAUGH V. CITY

A resident was blocked for six months. The court declared Morrow's vague rules banning "abusive language" and "personal attacks" completely unconstitutional.

WOONSOCKET, RI

ACLU SETTLEMENT

The mayor blocked citizens for asking critical park questions. Facing federal defeat, the City settled, unblocked all users, and paid $7,000 in legal fees.

JOY RIOT

NATIONAL GUIDANCE & BEST PRACTICES

Prominent entities like the National League of Cities (NLC) and the Knight First Amendment Institute advocate for these practices:

- **Official-First Posting:** Post official news on the official page first. Personal pages should only hyperlink directly to the original municipal source.
- **Prominent Disclaimers:** Personal profiles of public officials must contain an explicit disclaimer clarifying they are posting as private citizens.
- **Avoid Blunt Instruments:** Do not block users entirely on pages sharing city business. Blocked citizens are unconstitutionally shut out from all future speech.



JOY RIOT

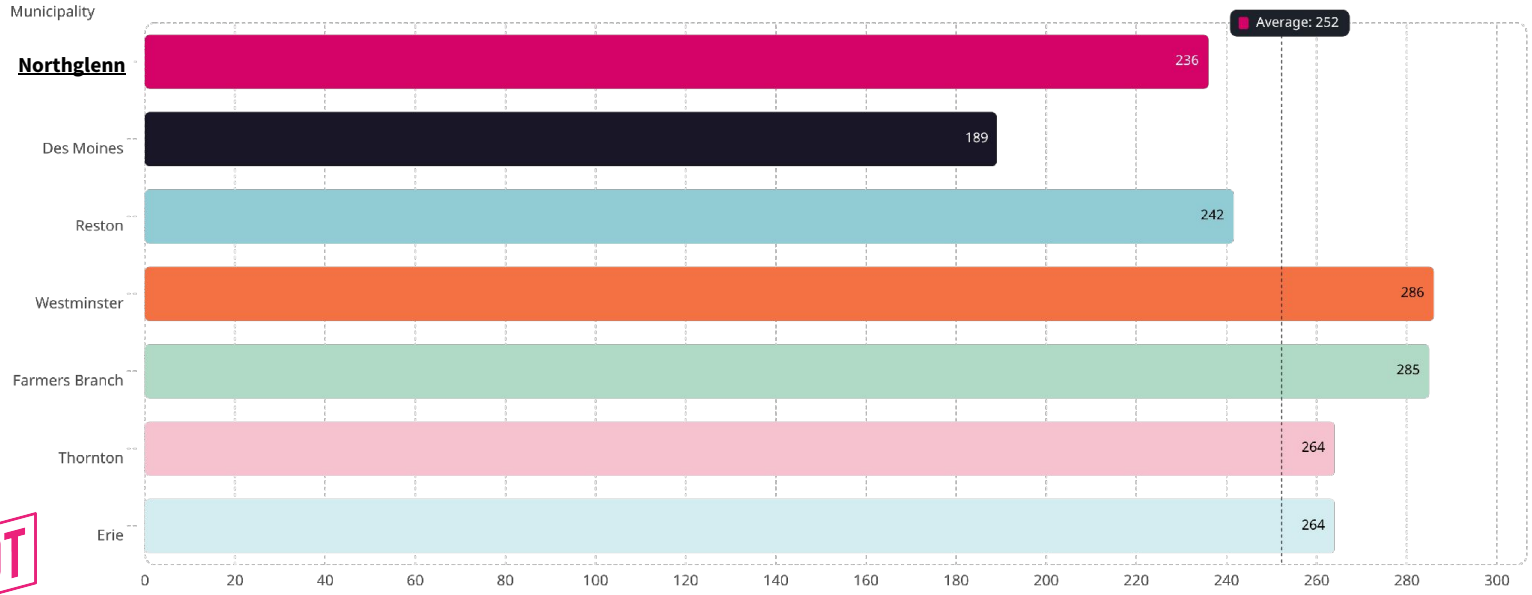
SECTION C: DISCOVERY, ASSESSMENT & RECOMMENDATION OF CORE TACTICS

JOY RIOT

PEER BENCHMARKS

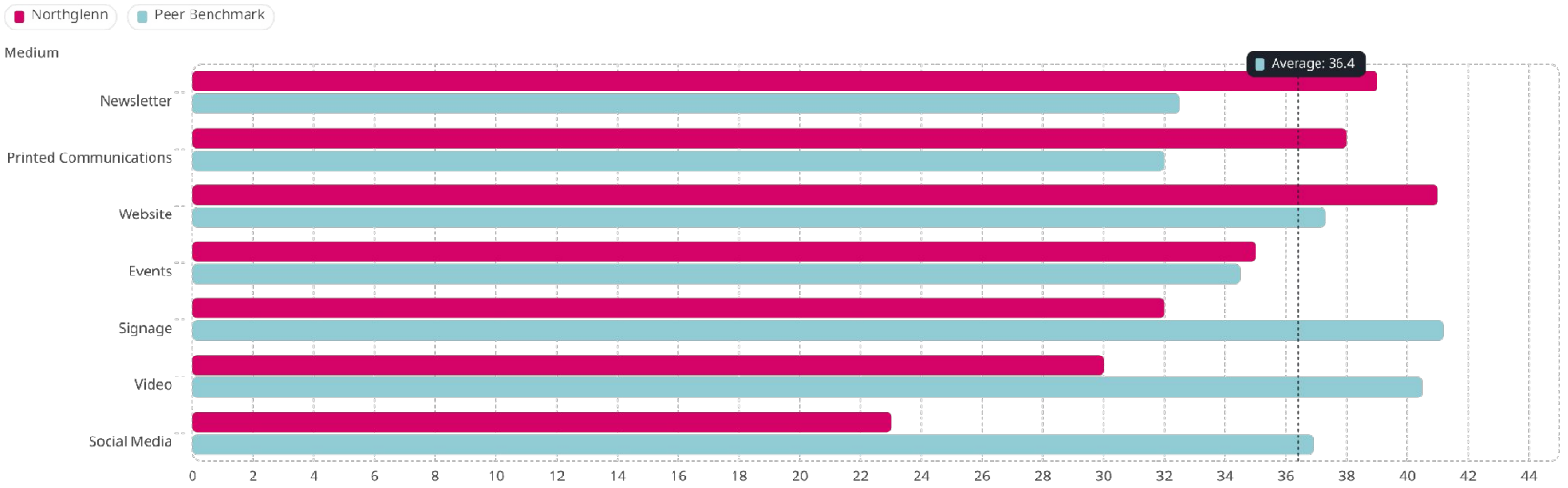
NORTHGLENN: TOTAL SCORE VS PEERS

Each municipality's scores across the seven communications mediums are combined into a single overall score out of 350. The bar graph compares these cumulative totals, providing a high-level view of how each city's communications system performs relative to its peers. Higher scores indicate stronger and more consistent performance across the full range of evaluated channels.



MEDIUM PERFORMANCE VS. PEER BENCHMARKS

Northglenn performs just below the peer benchmark overall, with strong results in website, signage, print, newsletters, and events, but clear opportunities to improve social media and video performance.



34

NORTHGLENN AVERAGE

Out of 50 across all media

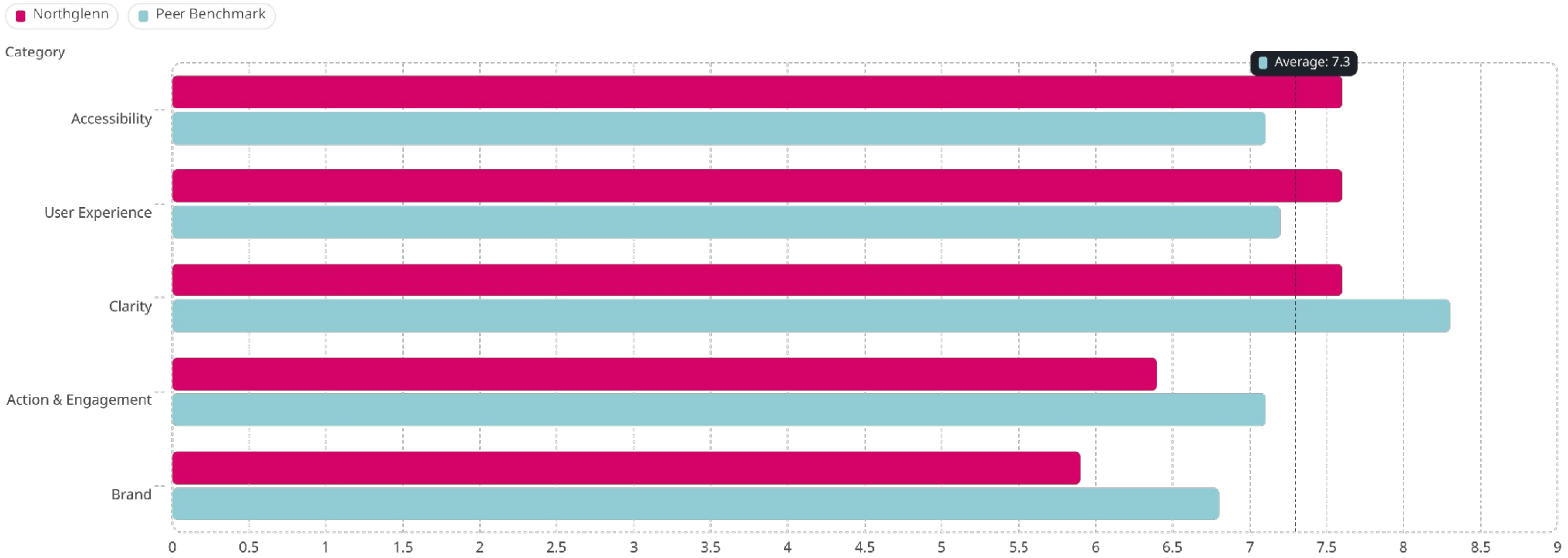
-2.4

VS. PEER BENCHMARK

JOY RIOT

CATEGORY PERFORMANCE VS. PEER BENCHMARKS

Northglenn is broadly competitive across core communication categories, with especially strong performance in accessibility and user experience. Opportunities remain in brand consistency and engagement.



7.0

NORTHGLENN AVERAGE
Out of 10 across all categories

-0.3

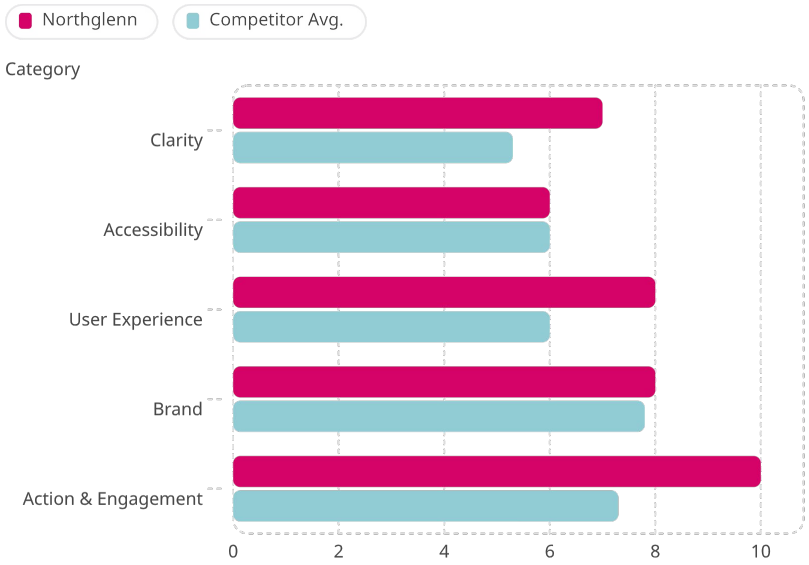
VS. PEER BENCHMARK

JOY RIOT

NEWSLETTER AUDIT

Note: The Newsletter audit included the eConnection, Catalyst, Business Connection, Northglenn Arts, and Recreation e-newsletters. The Northglenn Connection print newsletter was also evaluated under the “Newsletters” category and is therefore excluded from the Print score.

NEWSLETTER: PERFORMANCE VS. PEER AVERAGES



TOTAL SCORE: 39/50

KEY TAKEAWAY

Northglenn's newsletters are standout performers from a best-practices perspective. Northglenn leads peers in four of five categories, with **Action & Engagement** scoring a perfect 10 based on the presence of strong engagement-oriented elements, such as clear Calls to Action (CTAs), scannable content, and actionable next steps.

JOY RIOT

NEWSLETTER: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

DOING WELL

- Strong CTAs, useful links, and clear pathways back to city resources.
- Newsletters are timely, useful, and action-oriented.
- Distinct but connected newsletter identities for resident and business audiences.
- Strong civic and business engagement value.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Content can be dense and hard to scan quickly.
- Mobile readability and accessibility could be improved.
- Important information should rely less on embedded graphics and long-form layouts.

JOY RIOT

NEWSLETTER: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START

- Print (Northglenn Connection)
  - Building shorter, more scannable content blocks.
  - Adopting a more consistent column-count between pages.
  - Highlighting priority information for easier scanning.
- Digital (eConnection, Catalyst, Business Connection, Northglenn Arts, Recreation E-Newsletter, & Culture eNews)
  - Making top stories, deadlines, and action items easier to scan quickly.
  - Ensuring important details are included as readable text for accessibility.
  - Varying content structure while keeping the overall system consistent.
  - Adding clearer summaries, hierarchy, and "what matters most" cues.

STOP

- Print (Northglenn Connection)
  - Burying important information within dense body text.
- Digital (eConnection, Catalyst, Business Connection, Northglenn Arts, Recreation E-Newsletter, & Culture eNews)
  - Overloading newsletter sections with dense copy.
  - Embedding key information only in images or graphics.

CONTINUE

- Using clear calls to action and practical resource links.
- Connecting readers back to city services, departments, and resources.
- Maintaining distinct newsletter identities for resident and business audiences.
- Using newsletters to support civic participation, business engagement, and public awareness.
- Sharing timely, useful, and action-oriented updates.
- Keeping recurring sections that help readers know what to expect (i.e. Legislative Recap).

JOY RIOT

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR BENCHMARKS

KPI	TARGET	WHAT IT MEASURES
Open Rate	~30-35%	Whether residents recognize the sender and are interested enough to open the newsletter
Bounce Rate	<2%	Whether the email list is clean, current, and reaching valid inboxes
Unsubscribe Rate	<0.5%	Whether content frequency and relevance are aligned with audience expectations
Click Rate	2-3%	Whether recipients are taking action from the newsletter
Click-to-Open Rate	10-17%	Whether people who open the newsletter find the content useful and clickable
Subscriber Growth	1-3%	Whether the newsletter is gradually expanding its reach

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

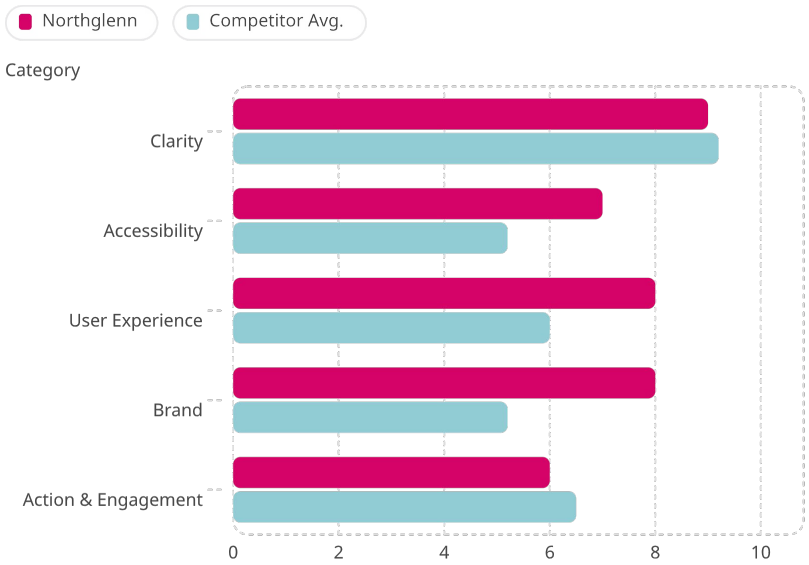
TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
REFRESH DIGITAL NEWSLETTER TEMPLATES TO ALIGN WITH BEST PRACTICES AND BRAND GUIDELINES	LOW						
AUDIT THE EXISTING NORTHGLENN CONNECTION TEMPLATE TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVED CLARITY, USABILITY, AND ENGAGEMENT	LOW						
REFRESH THE NORTHGLENN CONNECTION PRINT TEMPLATE BASED ON AUDIT FINDINGS AND BRAND GUIDANCE	LOW						

JOY RIOT

PRINT AUDIT

*The Print audit included, but was not limited to, activity guides, water quality reports, strategic plans, departmental and interdepartmental flyers, municipal court monthly reports, annual budgets, and printed schedules.

PRINT: PERFORMANCE VS. PEER AVERAGES



TOTAL SCORE: 38/50

KEY TAKEAWAY

Print is one of Northglenn's strongest relative performers. The City leads in **Accessibility, User Experience, and Brand**—outpacing peers by 2.8 points in brand alignment. The primary gap is **Action & Engagement**, where materials often lack clear next steps for residents.

JOY RIOT

PRINT: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

DOING WELL

- Clear purpose, strong hierarchy, and generally polished execution.
- Major documents feel professional, credible, and aligned with city communications.
- Print materials generally use helpful visuals, photography, and organized content.
- Strong relative performance compared with peers.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- CTAs and next steps are not always strong or consistent.
- Contact information is inconsistently included, placed, and formatted across print materials.
- Cross-department print standards could be tighter.
- Some pieces inform well but do not clearly drive action.

JOY RIOT

PRINT: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START

- Standardizing CTAs, QR codes, URLs, contacts, and deadlines.
- Creating shared print style standards across departments.
- Designing print pieces to guide audiences from awareness to action.
- Building templates for common print needs.
- Adding accessibility checks for contrast, type size, spacing, and readability.

STOP

- Developing print materials with disregard for shared brand style guidelines.
- Allowing department materials to drift visually.
- Using busy or low-contrast layouts without reviewing for ADA compliance.

CONTINUE

- Producing polished, professional major documents.
- Using clear hierarchy, headings, and organized layouts.
- Supporting key messages with photography, icons, and graphics.
- Keeping information easy to understand quickly.
- Using print to support resident information and city initiatives.

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

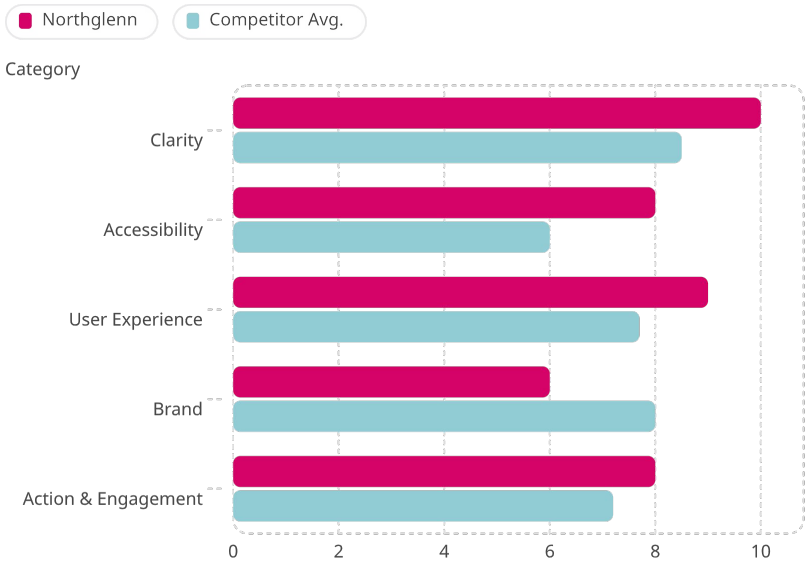
TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
PRODUCE TEMPLATES E.g. flyers, brochures, pamphlets, reports.	**MEDIUM**						

JOY RIOT

WEBSITE AUDIT

JOY RIOT

WEBSITE: PERFORMANCE VS. PEER AVERAGES



TOTAL SCORE: 41/50

KEY TAKEAWAY

The Northglenn website outperforms peer municipalities in four of five categories. The one exception, **Brand**, trails peers by 2.0 points, signaling a clear opportunity to strengthen city identity and storytelling across the site.

Note: The city has completed an initial ADA compliance scan. A full-scope compliance scan needs to be completed.

WEBSITE: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

DOING WELL

- Strong resident usability: clear navigation, quick links, service pathways, contact information, and Access Northglenn.
- Clear, plain-language content that surfaces timely updates and common resident needs.
- Strong accessibility posture, including ReciteMe, accessibility feedback, and stated WCAG/Colorado standards.
- Common tasks are easy to find and complete.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Brand storytelling is underdeveloped; the site feels more functional than distinctive.
- Homepage and priority pages could better reflect Northglenn's people, neighborhoods, parks, civic life, and quality of life.
- Some technical accessibility issues remain, including landmarks, heading structure, and potential mobile friction.*
- Search could better support plain-language resident questions.

JOY RIOT

*The city has completed an initial ADA compliance scan. A full-scope compliance scan needs to be completed.

WEBSITE: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START

- Refreshing visuals to better show people, neighborhoods, parks, civic life, events, and quality of life.
- Strengthening priority pages with clearer positioning and community identity.
- Auditing pages for landmarks, heading structure, mobile usability, and screen reader flow.*
- Conducting an annual content audit for outdated information and/or incorrect information.**

STOP

- Treating the website primarily as a service directory.
- Leading with generic or infrastructure- heavy imagery that does not reflect community life.
- Letting low-resolution icons or visuals weaken otherwise useful sections.
- Allowing technical accessibility gaps to remain unresolved.
- Publishing event pages without logistics, registration, parking, or accessibility details.

CONTINUE

- Prioritizing clear, resident-friendly language.
- Keeping common resident tasks visible and easy to complete.
- Maintaining strong quick links and service pathways.
- Making contact information easy to locate.
- Supporting accessibility through ReciteMe, feedback channels, and accessibility commitments.
- Using Access Northglenn as a clear resident service and feedback pathway.

*The city has completed an initial ADA compliance scan. A full-scope compliance scan needs to be completed.
**The City has established a recurring schedule for departmental page updates; however, this process does not currently include comprehensive or formal website audits.

JOY RIOT

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR BENCHMARKS

KPI	TARGET	WHAT IT MEASURES
ADA Compliance Score	>85/100	Content is accessible and legally safer
Task Completion Rate	65-75%	Residents can complete common actions without needing extra help
Traffic Growth Rate	10-15% YoY	Whether the website is expanding its reach
Decrease in Repeated Questions Across Channels	10-15% YoY	Whether clearer website content, stronger calls to action, and more accessible navigation reduce routine questions in phone logs, emails, social comments, and front-desk conversations

DEEP DIVE:
GENERATIVE ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (GEO)

JOY RIOT

WEBSITE BEST PRACTICES: GENERATIVE ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools may not know which version of Northglenn's content is current—especially when old PDFs, outdated pages, and inconsistent department language all remain online. A GEO audit reduces ambiguity before inaccurate information reaches residents.

BUILD AI-FRIENDLY FAQS

Answer common resident questions in clear, structured HTML —not buried in documents.

MOVE CONTENT OUT OF PDFS

Place service, event, policy, and department info directly on webpages where AI can read it.

ADD STRUCTURED DATA

Use JSON-LD schema on department, service, event, and FAQ pages so AI tools can interpret content accurately.

RETIRE OUTDATED DOCUMENTS

Remove or revise legacy PDFs that contradict current website content before they mislead residents.

JOY RIOT

Note: An AI usage policy is currently being implemented across the organization. The City has established a recurring schedule for departmental page updates; however, this process does not currently include comprehensive or formal website audits.

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

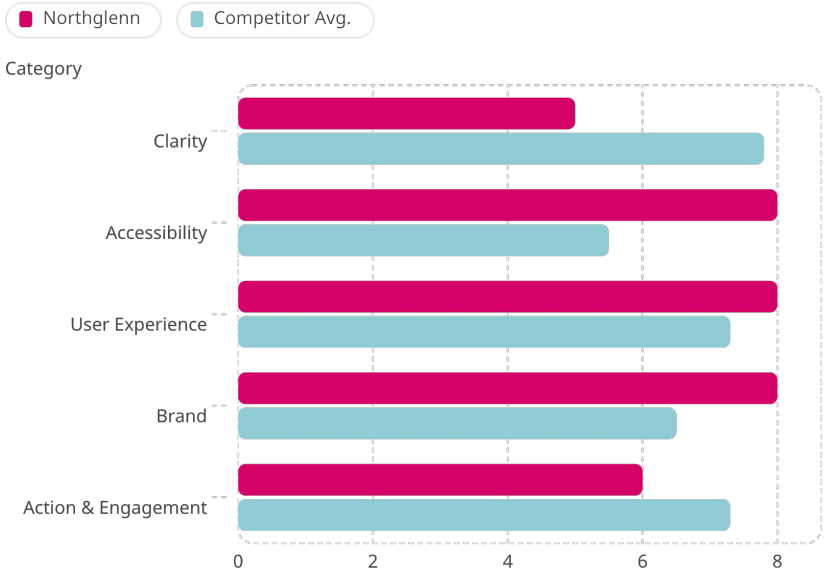
TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
CONDUCT AN ADA COMPLIANCE AUDIT ACROSS ALL WEBSITE SUBPAGES AND EMBEDDED DOCUMENTS	MEDIUM						
AUDIT ALL WEBSITE SUBPAGES AND EMBEDDED DOCUMENTS FOR OUTDATED, INACCURATE, OR INCONSISTENT INFORMATION	MEDIUM						
IMPLEMENT JSON-LD SCHEMA AND STRUCTURED HTML ON KEY WEBPAGES; REMOVE, UPDATE, OR REPLACE EMBEDDED PDFS AND WEBPAGES CONTAINING OUTDATED INFORMATION	MEDIUM						
IMPLEMENT A REFRESH OF KEY WEBSITE VISUALS AND COPY	MEDIUM						

JOY RIOT

EVENT COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

Note: The Event Communications assessment included, but was not limited to, city webpages, online calendar listings, registration pages, departmental and interdepartmental flyers, printed and digital schedules, social media promotions, newsletter content, event maps, and logistical materials, if and when present.

EVENT COMMUNICATIONS: PERFORMANCE VS. PEER AVERAGES



TOTAL SCORE: 35/50

KEY TAKEAWAY

Events demonstrate strong community quality — outperforming peers in Accessibility, User Experience, and Brand. But **clarity lags significantly**, trailing peers by 2.8 points. Incomplete event information undermines what is otherwise a compelling community programming strength.

JOY RIOT

EVENT COMMUNICATIONS: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

DOING WELL

- Complete, regularly updated digital event calendar.
- Thorough seasonal activity guides available to the public.
- General event details are generally prioritized and clear in digital materials.
- Clear, streamlined registration process for City activities.
- Prominent contact information for relevant event coordinators and administrators.
- Supplemental resources included on event webpages.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Event clarity is inconsistent; purpose, audience value, and participation details are not always obvious.
- Event information can be fragmented across city pages, external sites, registration tools, and supporting materials.
- Accessibility details are not centralized and standardized on event pages.
- Post-event recaps, feedback loops, and "what we heard / what changed" follow-ups are limited.
- Outcomes of participation are not always visible afterward.

JOY RIOT

EVENT COMMUNICATIONS: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START

- Centralizing event information in one place.
- Immediately clarifying each event's purpose, audience, and value.
- Adding consistent accessibility details to major event pages.
- Creating public recaps, summaries, and updates after events.
- Turning survey feedback into visible improvements.
- Including disclaimers on event pages when key details are not yet confirmed.
- Communicating the full patron experience, including venue accommodations, accessible seating, sensory supports and accommodation-request procedures.

STOP

- Creating new social accounts for individual events.
- Assuming audiences understand why an event matters.
- Excluding essential accessibility information on event webpages.
- Letting participation end when the event ends.
- Keeping feedback and evaluation mostly internal.
- Distributing participation pathways across disconnected pages and third-party platforms without context (Northglenn Arts).

CONTINUE

- Providing clear logistics for major events.
- Using events for direct resident engagement.
- Producing useful seasonal event and activity guides.
- Including essential event details, relevant contacts, and additional resources on event webpages.

JOY RIOT

DEEP DIVE:
EVENT PROMOTION

JOY RIOT

EVENT PROMOTION TIERS

- Northglenn's communications plan already calls for integrated planning, shared calendars, request systems, standard operating procedures, audience targeting, channel coordination, and feedback loops. ***The opportunity is to make that system easier to apply by assigning each event a clear level of support.***

- **Event tiers help the Communications Team determine:**
  - Which events need a full communications plan?
  - Which channels are required, optional, or unnecessary?
  - What departments need to provide before promotion begins?
  - Which requests should use templates or standard workflows?
  - Which events require follow-up, measurement, or reporting?

JOY RIOT

TIER 3 - STANDARD PROGRAMS

(Ex. Shred Event, Coffee with the Chief, 1st Saturday Birding, recurring classes with dependable enrollment, routine drop-in youth or senior activities)

Valuable programs, classes, and opportunities that need consistent visibility—without custom campaign planning every cycle. ***Use templates and recurring systems.***



CALENDAR LISTING

Date, time, location, registration link, accessibility, and contact information.



DEDICATED CITY WEBPAGE

Detailed attendee information housed where residents already expect to find it.



TEMPLATE-BASED SOCIAL

One or more posts using standard graphics, captions, and established formats.



NEWSLETTER INCLUSION

Placed in recurring event roundups, department updates, or issue-based newsletter sections.

JOY RIOT

TIER 2 - PRIORITY COMMUNITY EVENTS

(Ex. National Night Out, Safe Street Halloween, Summer Concert and Movie Series, Northglenn Youth Theatre productions)

These events support safety, trust, civic participation, and resident engagement. They need coordinated promotion—but not the full Tier 1 campaign machine. ***Use a scaled campaign plan.***

SHORT PROMOTIONAL BRIEF

Audience, message, deadline, owner, desired action, and a basic channel plan.

CORE CHANNEL SUPPORT

Newsletter, organic social, calendar listing, department webpage update, and reminder posts.

BRANDED TEMPLATES

Social graphics, flyer templates, and short copy blocks departments and partners can reuse.

LIGHT FOLLOW-UP

Post-event photos, short recap, attendance notes, or next-step content when useful.

JOY RIOT

TIER 1 — SIGNATURE & CITYWIDE EVENTS

(Ex. July 4 Festival, Food Truck Carnival, Pirate Fest)

Northglenn's highest-visibility events shape public perception, build community pride, and reinforce the City's identity. ***Use the full communications process***

FULL CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

City event planning strategy with lead times, milestones, and owner assignments.

DEDICATED LANDING PAGE

Parking, maps, accessibility, schedule, FAQs, registration links, weather plans, and clear calls to action.

DAY-OF COVERAGE

Photo, video, live updates, and content capture to fuel future promotion and community storytelling.

PARTNER AMPLIFICATION

Toolkits for influencers, sponsors, partners, departments, council, and internal ambassadors to extend reach.

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

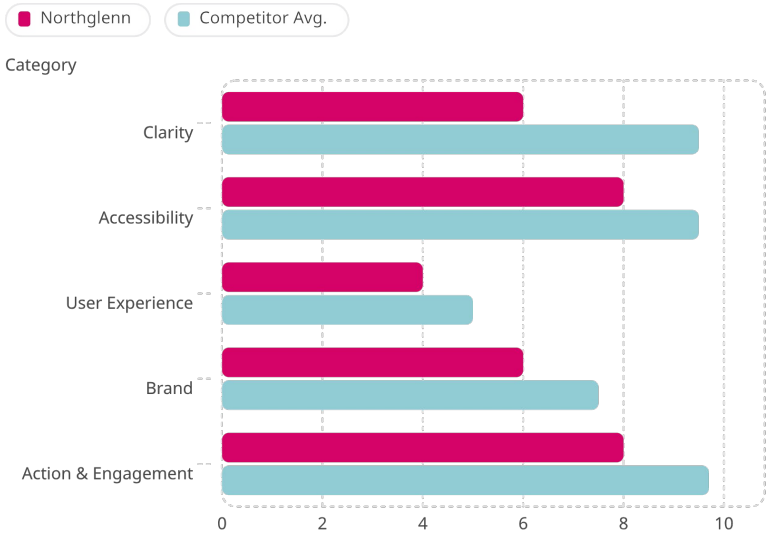
TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
IMPLEMENT A THREE-TIER EVENT PROMOTION SYSTEM THAT DEFINES THE LEVEL OF COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT EACH EVENT RECEIVES	HIGH						
PRODUCE TEMPLATES FOR RECURRING TIER-1 & TIER-2 EVENT COLLATERAL	HIGH						
STANDARDIZE EVENT PAGE TEMPLATES TO CLARIFY PURPOSE, AUDIENCE, ESSENTIAL DETAILS, & ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION	MEDIUM						
ESTABLISH A STANDARD POST-EVENT SURVEY PROCESS TO COLLECT FEEDBACK FROM ATTENDEES, PARTICIPANTS, STAFF, AND PARTNERS	MEDIUM						
CREATE AN INTERNAL REVIEW PROCESS TO IDENTIFY RECURRING FEEDBACK THEMES AND DETERMINE WHICH IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED FOR FUTURE EVENTS	MEDIUM						

JOY RIOT

SIGNAGE AUDIT

JOY RIOT

SIGNAGE: PERFORMANCE VS. PEER AVERAGES



TOTAL SCORE: 32/50

KEY TAKEAWAY

Signage is a clear weak point, with **inconsistent brand application** throughout the City's signage system. Parks, Recreation, & Culture (PRC) signage is generally the strongest and most consistent area. Tier-3* entryway pole signs are underwhelming and easy to miss, while Tier-2* arterial signage strays from brand standards. Departmental signage is mostly consistent, but police signage feels disconnected from the broader municipal identity.

JOY RIOT

*Entryway signage tiers refer to those delineated by the Entryway Signage Program, November 7, 2022 Memorandum.

SIGNAGE: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

DOING WELL

- Signage is generally functional, clear, and well-placed.
- Strong wayfinding support, especially around facilities and recreation spaces.
- Most signage feels maintained, professional, and trustworthy.
- Signs help users navigate, identify spaces, and make decisions.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Citywide signage does not consistently reinforce a clear sense of place or arrival.
- Limited city-identifying signage may contribute to confusion between Northglenn and neighboring communities.
- Citywide signage standards are not fully systematized.
- Brand consistency varies by location and department.
- Some signs need larger type, simpler hierarchy, and stronger contrast for distance viewing.

JOY RIOT

SIGNAGE: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START*

- Creating citywide standards for type, size, hierarchy, contrast, materials, and placement.
- Auditing signs in real-world contexts: driving, walking, parks, events, and facilities.
- Using larger type and simpler hierarchy for distance-based signage.
- Strengthening Tier 2 and Tier 3** signs to signal arrival and civic pride.
- Improving Tier 2 & Tier 3** entryway signage to signal arrival and reinforce civic pride.

STOP

- Allowing one-off signage styles to dilute the system.
- Designing signs that work up close but fail at viewing distance.
- Letting department or facility signage drift from the City identity.
- Relying on inconsistent contrast, scale, or layouts.

CONTINUE

- Maintaining clear, functional wayfinding.
- Placing signs where users naturally need information.
- Supporting navigation, identification, and decision-making.
- Keeping signage professional, maintained, and trustworthy.
- Continuing strong facility and recreation center wayfinding.
- Making key information visible first.

JOY RIOT

* Any proposed update, modification, replacement or expansion of the City's signage system should be undertaken in consultation with, and subject to coordinated review by, the Parks, Public Works, and Planning departments.
**Entryway signage tiers refer to those delineated by the Entryway Signage Program, November 7, 2022 Memorandum.

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

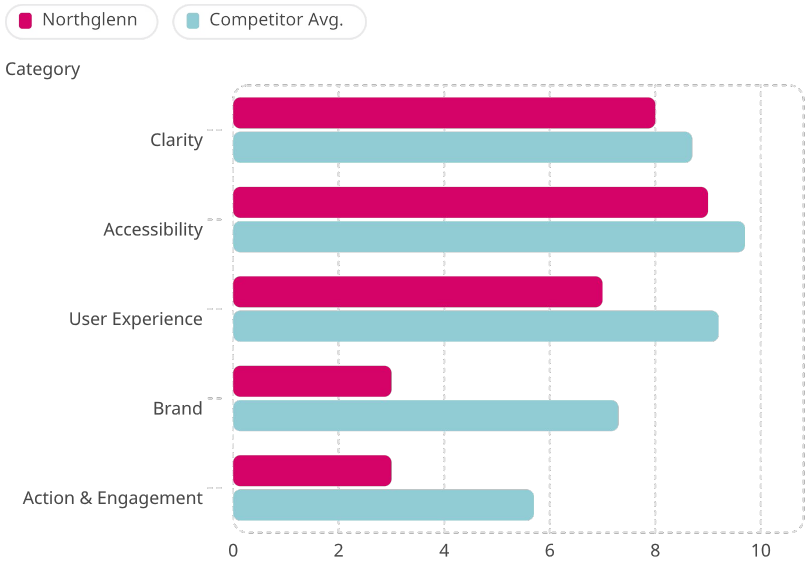
TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERDEPARTMENTAL, CITYWIDE SIGNAGE STANDARDS AND TEMPLATES	MEDIUM						
AUDIT EXISTING SIGNAGE FOR COMPLIANCE, CLARITY, PLACEMENT, AND BRAND CONSISTENCY	MEDIUM						
REMOVE, UPDATE, OR REPLACE NON COMPLIANT SIGNAGE IN ALIGNMENT WITH BRAND STANDARDS	MEDIUM						
DEVELOP ADDITIONAL SIGNAGE IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROPOSED ENTRYWAY SIGNAGE PROGRAM	MEDIUM						

JOY RIOT

VIDEO AUDIT

JOY RIOT

VIDEO: PERFORMANCE VS. PEER AVERAGES



TOTAL SCORE: 30/50

KEY TAKEAWAY

Video represents Northglenn's **largest competitive gap** across all channels. Police video content often departs from the broader city government brand. Additionally, most videos across platforms end without a clear next step, leaving the purpose, takeaway, or desired viewer action unclear.

JOY RIOT

VIDEO: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

DOING WELL

- Topics are generally clear and appropriate for local government.
- Captions/accessibility supports are a relative strength.
- Mayor's Minute and City-Platform Video lengths are generally platform-appropriate.
- Tone is often service-oriented and community-appropriate.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Law enforcement content can dominate or work against broader city positioning.
- Law enforcement video lengths frequently exceed best-practices.
- Brand expression is generally inconsistent between departments.
- Many videos lack clear takeaways, CTAs, or next steps.
- Openings do not always hook viewers or explain why the topic matters.
- Production quality, audio, pacing, editing, and visual hierarchy are inconsistent.

VIDEO: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START

- Opening and closing each video with a stronger hook, purpose, and call to action.
- Improving audio quality with professional-quality stock music and equipment.
- Building a balanced police content strategy across service, prevention, trust, community, and civic pride.
- Creating shared brand standards for city video content.
- Producing monthly, rather than bi-weekly, police recap videos with platform-appropriate runtimes.
- Using eye-catching, brand-consistent thumbnails.

STOP

- Publishing videos without a clear audience or purpose.
- Recapping events without a clear takeaway.
- Ending videos without a clear call to action or next step.
- Using generic visuals or effects that weaken professionalism, including stock-image thumbnails, stock footage, and low-resolution static imagery.

CONTINUE

- Keeping videos concise and platform-appropriate.
- Using video for timely updates and public information.
- Maintaining an appropriate local government tone.
- Humanizing city services and staff when relevant.
- Introducing topics clearly early in the video.
- Spotlighting local businesses, awards, amenities, and attractions.
- Diversifying city video content with human- and local-interest features.

JOY RIOT

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR BENCHMARKS

KPI	TARGET	WHAT IT MEASURES
Engagement Rate	2-5%	Whether viewers are liking, commenting, sharing, or otherwise interacting with the content
Completion Rate	40-50%	Whether viewers are watching the full video, especially for shorter long-form pieces
Retention at 30 Seconds	60-70%	Whether the opening is clear, relevant, and engaging enough to keep viewers watching
Subscriber Conversion Rate	0.5-0.6% / Month	Whether videos are helping build a repeat audience

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

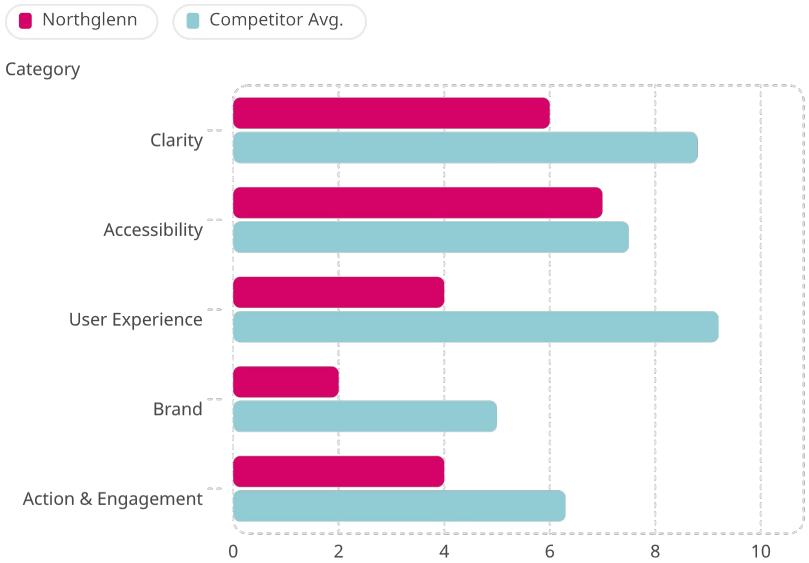
TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
PRODUCE TEMPLATES E.g. transitions, intros, outros, thumbnails.	MEDIUM						
ORGANIZE DIGITAL ASSETS & MAKE AVAILABLE TO DEPARTMENT STAFF E.g. collateral, photo & video assets.	MEDIUM						
TRAIN CITY STAFF OR HIRE CONTRACTOR FOR VIDEO PRODUCTION & EDITING Consider investing in inexpensive video editing software like OpusClips and sharing licenses across departments.	MEDIUM						

JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIT

JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA: PERFORMANCE VS. PEER AVERAGES



TOTAL SCORE: 23/50

KEY TAKEAWAY

Social media is Northglenn's **weakest-performing channel** relative to peers — trailing in every single category. The UX gap is 5.2 points and Brand scores just 2.0, reflecting the impact of fragmented, ungoverned departmental accounts with no unified strategy.

JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA: WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

DOING WELL

- Broad platform presence and large overall audience.
- Many posts share useful service updates, reminders, events, and alerts.
- Some accounts maintain regular posting and timely information.
- Captions and platform-appropriate copy are often present.
- PRC short-form content drives sustained growth on Facebook.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Channel roles and audiences are unclear across the ecosystem.
- Brand identity is fragmented across departments, platforms, templates, and tones.
- Residents may need to follow multiple accounts to get a complete picture.
- Engagement feels one-way because visible response and escalation are limited.
- Police/crime-heavy content can dominate perception and disconnect from broader city positioning.

JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA: START, STOP, CONTINUE

START

- Defining a clear role, audience, and content lane for each channel, organized around resident needs.
- Consolidating one-off and hyper-focused pages into primary channels.
- Developing a unified visual system for events, alerts, reminders, meetings, closures, police updates, and PRC programming.
- Using a shared content calendar to coordinate timing and reduce duplication.
- Establishing clear response and escalation expectations for resident concerns.
- Elevating people-first content, including staff spotlights, event recaps, community participation, business wins, and public service stories.

STOP

- Operating disconnected departmental accounts as separate brands.
- Letting visual style, tone, and templates vary widely across accounts.
- Making residents follow multiple accounts to piece together basic city information.
- Allowing police or crime-heavy content to dominate the City's public perception.
- Leaving resident questions or concerns visibly unanswered.
- Posting without a coordinated cross-department plan.
- Treating social media as one-way broadcasting.

CONTINUE

- Sharing timely service updates, reminders, alerts, and event information.
- Maintaining presence across major platforms.
- Using captions and platform-appropriate copy.
- Using social media as a practical distribution channel for resident information.
- Posting regularly where cadence is already sustainable.
- Continuing to use social for urgent communications when needed.
- Keeping useful, timely information flowing to the public.

JOY RIOT

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR BENCHMARKS

KPI	TARGET	WHAT IT MEASURES
Follower Growth	1-5%*	Whether the account is steadily growing its owned public audience over time
Engagement Rate Growth	+10-15% YoY	Whether content is becoming more relevant, useful, and interaction-worthy over time
Reach Growth	+10-20% YoY	Whether content is reaching more unique people over time
Impression Growth	+5-15% YoY	Whether content is being shown more frequently across feeds
Comment Sentiment	Majority neutral-to-positive	Whether public reaction is generally constructive or supportive rather than negative or confused

JOY RIOT

*Hootsuite's 2025 government social media benchmarks report lists average government engagement rates of 3.5% on Instagram, 2.7% on LinkedIn, 2.5% on Facebook, 1.7% on X, and 1.6% on TikTok. That supports using a general 1–5% engagement-rate target, with performance judged by platform rather than averaged across all accounts.

DEEP DIVE:
SOCIAL MEDIA ORGANIZATION

JOY RIOT

CURRENT SOCIAL MEDIA ORGANIZATION

Northglenn currently maintains a wide spread of pages—with dramatically uneven audiences. Fragmentation creates confusion for residents and unnecessary burden for staff.

CITY GOVERNMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



POLICE DEPARTMENT



P.R.C.



NORTHGLENN ARTS



NORTHGLENN YOUTH THEATRE & ACADEMY



FUSION SWIM CLUB



FOOD TRUCK CARNIVAL



PIRATE FEST



MUDAPALOOZA



NORTHGLENN WATER



DON ANEMA MEM. SKATEPARK



WIFFLEBALL TOURNAMENT



NORTHGLENN SENIORS



JOY RIOT

BEST PRACTICES: EVENTS & CROSS-POSTING

THE CURRENT MODEL

Fragmented Event Accounts

- Separate accounts for large, signature events
- Active only a few weeks each year
- Audiences divided across multiple pages
- Long inactive periods limit visibility

THE RECOMMENDED MODEL

Coordinated Cross-Posting

- Promote events through larger, routinely active accounts (City Gov't., PRC, Northglenn Arts)
- Assign **one** account as primary publisher
- Cross-promote via Instagram Collab Posts, Facebook reposts
- Use embedded Facebook Events for larger recurring events to maintain existing audiences.

THE AUDIENCE BENEFIT

Expanded Audience

- Cross-posting exposes each account's followers to programs they may not otherwise encounter
- Broadens event reach while encouraging residents and visitors to discover and follow other City accounts

JOY RIOT

RECOMMENDED REORGANIZATION

To optimize Northglenn social mix, it is recommended that the City discontinue one-off, hyper-focused, and event-specific pages, adopting TikTok to round out the Parks, Recreation, & Culture mix.

Organize content by audience need, not by department org chart. Each remaining platform should have a clear purpose, with City Communications setting the standards for tone, timing, visuals, and accessibility.

CITY GOVERNMENT*



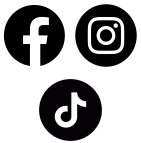
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



POLICE DEPARTMENT



PARKS & RECREATION**



NORTHGLENN ARTS***



* Consolidated: Northglenn Water
** Consolidated: Pirate Fest, Mudapalooza, Fusion Swim Club, Food Truck Carnival, Northglenn Seniors, Don Anema Memorial Skatepark, Wiffleball Tournament
*** Consolidated: Northglenn Youth Theatre and Academy

JOY RIOT

TIKTOK: VALUE ASSESSMENT

Northglenn's younger-than-region age profile makes TikTok a worthwhile secondary channel for young families, parents, and working-age residents.

33.5

MEDIAN AGE IN NORTHGLENN

vs. 35.6 regional median

50%

OF RESIDENTS ARE UNDER 40

Residents 10–39 make up roughly half of the community

63%

OF ADULTS UNDER 30 USE TIKTOK

A strong match for young adult reach

44%

OF ADULTS 30-49 USE TIKTOK

Relevant for parents, young families, and working-age residents

JOY RIOT

TIKTOK: STRATEGIC ROLE

Unlike service updates or policy information, PRC content is built around experiences residents can see—making it one of the strongest fits for Northglenn's younger age profile. TikTok gives PRC a way to:

EXTEND EVENT PROMOTION

by turning upcoming programs, festivals, classes, and activities into short, visual previews.

BUILD EVERYDAY VISIBILITY FOR PRC ASSETS

by spotlighting parks, trails, facilities, playgrounds, public art, and seasonal amenities.

CAPTURE PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY ENERGY

through quick recaps that show residents using and enjoying Northglenn spaces.

SUPPORT—NOT REPLACE—OFFICIAL CHANNELS

by using TikTok to spark awareness, then directing residents to registration pages for details.

JOY RIOT

TIKTOK: GENERAL BEST PRACTICES

RECOMMENDED CADENCE

Post bi-weekly, prioritizing 30–60 second videos that are timely, useful, and easy to understand.

SECURITY

To protect one’s data and privacy from the security risks associated with the platform's Chinese parent company, ByteDance, experts recommend a few essential best practices:

- Use on a dedicated device: Avoid installing TikTok on a primary or work phone. Keep it on an isolated device that contains no sensitive personal, governmental, or financial information.
- Protect your account from unauthorized access by setting up two-factor authorization in the app's login security settings.
- Disable access to contacts, location services, and camera. Check your device's settings to restrict TikTok's background tracking and data harvesting capabilities.

RECOMMENDED CONTENT ROUTING: EXAMPLES

CONTENT TYPE	PRIMARY OWNER	SECONDARY OWNER(S) / CROSS-PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES (WHEN RELEVANT)
City announcements	City Government *(All Platforms)*	Police Department *(All Platforms),* Parks, Recreation, & Culture *(All Platforms)*
Emergency updates	Police Department *(All Platforms)*	City Government *(Facebook, X, Nextdoor)*
Council and public meetings	City Government *(YouTube)*	–
Resident service reminders	City Government*(Facebook, Nextdoor)*	–
Aquatics, sports, workshops, & camps	Parks, Recreation, & Culture *(All Platforms)*	City Government *(Facebook, X, Nextdoor)*
Business resources	Economic Development *(LinkedIn)*	–
Development wins	Economic Development *(LinkedIn)*	City Government *(Facebook, X, Nextdoor)*

JOY RIOT

RECOMMENDED CONTENT ROUTING: EXAMPLES (CONT.)

CONTENT TYPE	PRIMARY OWNER	SECONDARY OWNER(S) / CROSS-PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES (WHEN RELEVANT)
Hiring and workforce	City Government *(LinkedIn, Facebook)*	Police Department *(All Platforms)*, Parks, Recreation, & Culture *(All Platforms)*, Economic Development *(LinkedIn)*
Police alerts	Police Department *(All Platforms)*	–
Police transparency content	Police Department *(All Platforms)*	–
Water and utility updates	City Government *(All Platforms)*	–

RECOMMENDED CONTENT ROUTING EXAMPLES: PRC & NORTHGLENN ARTS

Because Parks, Recreation & Culture and Northglenn Arts serve overlapping audiences and promote many related programs, content ownership should be clearly defined between the two social channels.

NORTHGLENN ARTS	SHARED	RECREATION
• Plays, musicals, and live performances • Parsons Theatre programming • Youth Theatre & Academy • Arts education programming • Public art & gallery exhibitions • Arts volunteering & fundraising	• Arts classes, camps, and workshops • Summer Concert & Movie Series • Parsons Theatre operational updates • *High-priority* Parsons Theatre programming	• Recreation Center operations • Aquatics, sports, fitness & wellness • Preschool, youth, and senior programming • Parks, trails & open space • Facility & field rentals • Community-wide festivals & seasonal events (Mudapalooza, Food Truck Carnival)

For programs that serve both audiences, Parks, Recreation & Culture and Northglenn Arts should coordinate cross-promotion on Facebook and Instagram. One account should remain the clear content owner and publish the original post, while the other supports it through Instagram collaboration posts, Facebook sharing, and complementary reminders.

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
DETERMINE WHETHER EACH RETIRED PAGE SHOULD BE ARCHIVED, UNPUBLISHED, OR LEFT UP WITH A PINNED REDIRECT	HIGH						
LAUNCH A FOLLOWER MIGRATION CAMPAIGN • Publish and pin an initial post explaining where followers should go for future information. • Repost the transition message at least 3 additional times over the next 3 months. • For event-specific platforms, post again when annual promotion resumes.	HIGH						
UPDATE LINKS, TEMPLATES, PRINTED MATERIALS, AND EVENT PAGES TO POINT TO THE CORRECT OFFICIAL CHANNELS	HIGH						
MONITOR FOLLOWER MIGRATION AND CONFUSION FOR 60-90 DAYS	MEDIUM						
COMPLETE ACCOUNT RETIREMENT • Archive or delete general-purpose accounts after a one-year transition period; event-specific accounts after the next run of the event concludes. • Transfer reusable assets, photos, videos, FAQs, and historical content to the shared archive.	MEDIUM						
CONFIRM TIKTOK OWNERSHIP UNDER PRC WITH CITY COMMUNICATIONS OVERSIGHT	MEDIUM						

JOY RIOT

DEEP DIVE:
POLICE SOCIAL MEDIA

JOY RIOT

SAFETY, SERVICE, AND TRUST: POLICE CONTENT PILLARS

Across all platforms, police communications should reinforce the department's role in keeping the community safe, providing service, and building trust. **The opportunity is to apply these strengths more consistently across every public touchpoint.**

A BALANCED CONTENT MIX

Across platforms, continue pairing enforcement and incident updates with prevention, education everyday service to reflect the full scope of police work.

USE A CONSISTENT, STEADY VOICE

Carry a clear, professional, and useful tone across routine posts, public safety updates, video, and other department communications.

SHOW THE HUMAN SIDE OF SERVICE

Build communications around the officers, residents, relationships, and everyday interactions that demonstrate what public service looks like in Northglenn.

KEEP ENFORCEMENT IN PROPORTION

Communicate significant incidents transparently, while ensuring imagery and frequency do not unintentionally define the department's overall presence.

JOY RIOT

RECOMMENDATION: EXPANSION OF A PEOPLE-FIRST CONTENT SYSTEM

This people-first approach is already visible in parts of Northglenn PD's communications; the opportunity is to carry it consistently across every touchpoint. By centering real people, relationships, and everyday service, communications give the department a human face and help residents see the full scope of its role in the community.

GIVE THE DEPARTMENT A FACE

Regularly introduce the people behind the badge so residents recognize officers as members of the community, not an anonymous institution.

SHOW SERVICE IN CONTEXT

Capture the everyday interactions, problem-solving, preparedness, education, and assistance that make up much of police work.

CREATE PERSPECTIVE ACROSS CONTENT

When people and service form the foundation of the content mix, incident and enforcement updates are understood as one part of a much broader public-safety role.

JOY RIOT

RECOMMENDATION: IMPLEMENTATION OF SHORT-FORM CONTENT

Use versatile, recurring short-form content to carry a people-first presence across every platform—keeping officers, service, and community connections visible regardless of format or cadence.

MEET NPD

Officer, dispatcher, civilian staff, and volunteer spotlights.

TRAINING TUESDAY

Short educational content showing preparation, professionalism, and public safety work.

SAFETY IN 60 SECONDS

Timely tips tied to seasonal issues, traffic patterns, scams, weather, and school safety.

IN THE COMMUNITY

Officers at schools, events, neighborhood meetings, youth programs, and senior outreach.

BEHIND THE BADGE

Human-interest stories that show why officers serve Northglenn.

JOY RIOT

BEST PRACTICES: TONE

Police content should feel human, accessible, and connected to the community without sacrificing professionalism or credibility. Officers can show personality, warmth, or humor when appropriate, but **the department should avoid chasing TikTok trends, viral challenges, memes, or content that makes public safety feel like entertainment.**

The tone should be:

- **Friendly, not goofy** — conversational and personable without becoming unserious.
- **Confident, not casual** — communicate clearly and directly while maintaining the weight of the department's role.
- **Human, not performative** — highlight officers, community interactions, and everyday moments naturally rather than manufacturing social-media moments.
- **Diligent and service-oriented** — reinforce that officers are present, prepared, responsive, and committed to the community.
- **Consistent with public trust** — every post should strengthen perceptions of professionalism, competence, transparency, and approachability.

RECOMMENDED CADENCE

Consistency builds trust. When residents know when to expect updates, they come back. A steady rhythm keeps NPD top of mind without overwhelming the feed.

REGULAR CONTENT MIX

Facebook, X, Instagram

2–3 times per week; includes events, PSAs, awards / honors, and holidays

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Facebook, YouTube Shorts, X, Instagram

Once a month, ~1-2 minutes—providing the context and accountability residents deserve

EMERGENCY & PUBLIC SAFETY COVERAGE

Facebook, X, Instagram

No set cadence—post as situations arise and when timely information is useful to the community.

SHORT-FORM POSTS

Facebook, YouTube Shorts, X, Instagram

2–3 times per week, under 1 minute—keeping NPD visible consistently

JOY RIOT

THE BI-WEEKLY REPORT

Recurring police reports should reinforce that Northglenn residents are safe, supported, and protected by a department they can see, understand, and trust.

The current bi-weekly format delivers valuable transparency, but it is carrying too many communication goals at once. It must serve residents seeking detailed incident information, casual social audiences, internal stakeholders, and the broader public—while also functioning as both an accountability tool and an engaging piece of social content.

That creates a fundamental format mismatch:

- **Too detailed** for casual social consumption
- **Too explicit** for broad, general audiences
- **Too enforcement-heavy** to represent the full scope of police service

The issue is not the information itself; it is asking one format and one channel to do multiple jobs at once.

JOY RIOT

THE MONTHLY REPORT: RECOMMENDED FORMATS

Social media should remain accessible to a broad audience and balance information with approachability. Repeated use of graphic drug or firearm imagery can overwhelm that balance, while bodycam-heavy storytelling can also make officers feel anonymous and reduce opportunities to show the people and service behind the department.

We recommend a monthly cadence between two complementary formats:

SHORT-FORM SOCIAL REPORT

Facebook, YouTube Shorts, X, Instagram

A 1-2 min. recap highlighting key activity, statistics, prevention tools, and public-safety takeaways.

EXPANDED WEBSITE REPORT

Northglenn City Website

A detailed written report with incident context, statistics, embedded video, and other material for residents who want deeper transparency.

This approach allows social media to present a well-rounded view of the department while preserving a clear path to more detailed and explicit information.

JOY RIOT

THE MONTHLY REPORT: PEER EXAMPLES

Short, monthly reporting is a common and proven format for municipal communications. These updates give cities and departments a manageable way to supplement day-to-day content with consistent, high-value reporting that is quick to produce, easy to consume, and adaptable across platforms.

ALBEMARLE, NC

Instagram Reels

Since Fall 2025, Albemarle has successfully used short-form monthly reports to recap department activity and respond to timely community issues. Featuring Chief Ryan Manley, the format maintains a professional, serious tone while remaining concise and accessible.

MOUNT VERNON, WA

YouTube

Since Spring 2025, Mount Vernon has produced concise, three-to-four-minute monthly reports, combining body-camera footage, service and community-policing updates, and voiceover narration

JOY RIOT

RECOMMENDED POLICE CONTENT ROUTING

SOCIAL MEDIA	MONTHLY REPORT (SHORT-FORM VIDEO)	MONTHLY REPORT (WEBSITE)
• Event promotions and public participation opportunities • Officer and staff spotlights • Recurring short-form educational or community segments • Awards, honors, promotions, and department recognitions • Hiring, recruitment, and retirement announcements • Urgent emergency notifications, public safety updates, and crime reports • Road closures, traffic advisories, and other time-sensitive alerts • Community engagement, outreach, and partnership activities • Crime prevention guidance and public service announcements	• Detailed crime, arrest, call-for-service, and enforcement statistics • Trends or changes in reported activity that are relevant to public awareness • Safety and crime prevention information • Summaries of notable department activity • Selected examples of community service, outreach, and problem-solving • Updates on recurring public safety priorities • Context for statistics, including clarification where isolated incidents may not reflect broader trends • Body-worn camera footage, where release is authorized and appropriate • Clear direction to the full online report for incident-level detail, documentation, or additional context	• Detailed incident summaries and case information, where legally releasable • Body-worn camera footage, where release is authorized and appropriate • Sensitive evidentiary imagery, including firearms, narcotics, and seized materials • Detailed crime, arrest, call-for-service, and enforcement statistics • Monthly and annual trend data • Links to relevant releases, records, reports, and policies • Case-status and charge information needed for appropriate context • Supplemental video, photography, maps, charts, and documentation • Explanations of department response, procedure, or operational context

JOY RIOT

Note: Content examples are illustrative and are not intended to prescribe the contents of every report. Final content selection should reflect the circumstances, audience, and applicable legal requirements. Any legal guidance or disclosure recommendations should be reviewed and approved by the City Attorney prior to implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
RETIRE THE BI-WEEKLY REPORT FORMAT	HIGH						
CREATE & IMPLEMENT A 1-2 MINUTE MONTHLY REPORT VIDEO STRUCTURE	HIGH						
CREATE & IMPLEMENT A LONG-FORM MONTHLY WEB REPORT STRUCTURE • This long-form report will absorb the current monthly statistical report found on the city's website.	HIGH						
CREATE & IMPLEMENT 3-5 RECURRING PEOPLE-FIRST SERIES	MEDIUM						

JOY RIOT

DEEP DIVE:
INFLUENCER AMPLIFICATION

JOY RIOT

A LOCAL CREATOR NETWORK

Use local voices to show Northglenn as ***lived, active, and explorable***—through real people, real places, and everyday moments that city channels alone can't consistently capture.

SHOWCASE THE CITY

Parks, trails, events, restaurants, public art, and local amenities seen through community eyes.

REAL PEOPLE, REAL MOMENTS

Capture residents, visitors, business owners, and event-goers.

AMPLIFY & COLLABORATE

Support city channels through reposts, collaboration posts, and tagged community features.

LIFESTYLE CONTENT

Add "day-in-the-life" storytelling that builds pride and makes Northglenn feel familiar and full of life.

JOY RIOT

BEST PRACTICES

The goal is not to hand the City's voice to outside creators, but to **use trusted community perspectives that echo the values of the City** to make Northglenn feel visible, lived-in, and loved.

Northglenn should build a simple creator content pipeline: identify trusted local voices, give them clear prompts tied to events, parks, amenities, and seasonal themes, and repost or collaborate on content that aligns with city standards.

01

REPOST TAGGED CONTENT

Share community posts that align with brand standards.

02

USE COLLAB POSTS

Instagram collaboration posts for high-quality, city-relevant content.

03

PROVIDE SIMPLE GUIDANCE

Give creators prompts, hashtags, and tagging instructions.

04

ROUTE THROUGH MAIN PAGES

Parks, events, and cultural content flows through City and/or PRC channels for broader reach.

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
IDENTIFY 5-10 TRUSTED LOCAL VOICES FOR AN INITIAL PILOT W/BASIC ELIGIBILITY AND QUALITY CRITERIA	MEDIUM						
DEVELOP SIMPLE CREATOR GUIDANCE IN ACCORDANCE W/ CONTENT GUIDELINES	MEDIUM						
TRACK WHICH CREATOR CONTENT DRIVES REACH, ENGAGEMENT, SAVES, SHARES, AND POSITIVE SENTIMENT	LOW						
EXPAND THE PROGRAM ONLY AFTER THE PILOT PROVES USEFUL AND MANAGEABLE	LOW						

JOY RIOT

BEST PRACTICES:
SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSE ETIQUETTE

JOY RIOT

QUESTIONS AND INFORMATION REQUESTS

These are the **highest-value comments** to respond to residents who are actively looking to the City for help.

"What time does this start?" "Is trash pickup delayed?" "Who do I call about this?"

> "Thanks for asking. Trash collection will be delayed by one day this week because of the holiday. View the full schedule here: [link]."

ANSWER DIRECTLY

Respond with the information they need. Don't make them dig for it.

INCLUDE A LINK

Point to the official page, schedule, or form when relevant.

USE PLAIN LANGUAGE

Avoid jargon and department acronyms. Write like a helpful neighbor, not a bureaucrat.

JOY RIOT

SERVICE COMPLAINTS AND RESIDENT FRUSTRATION

Not every negative comment is a communications problem. Many are **service requests in emotional packaging.**

"This road has been a mess for months." "No one ever answers the phone." "Why hasn't this been fixed?"

> "We understand the frustration. Submit the location through [service request link] or call [number]. That ensures it reaches the right team and can be tracked."

ACKNOWLEDGE

Recognize the concern without admitting fault prematurely.

REDIRECT

Provide the correct reporting path and invite details through a formal channel.

LIMIT BACK-AND-FORTH

Avoid long exchanges in comments. Close the loop publicly when possible.

JOY RIOT

ANGRY, PROFANE, OR HOSTILE COMMENTS

Residents may express frustration with the City, even strongly. The **line is crossed** when a comment **violates the City's written policy.**

"You people are useless." "This city is a joke." "I'm sick of being ignored."

> "We hear your concern. If you'd like staff to look into this, please send the location and details through [link] so it can be routed to the right department."

DON'T MATCH THE TONE

Always respond calmly. One reply only; then redirect to phone, email, or a service request channel.

REDIRECT TO THE RIGHT CHANNEL

Give the resident one clear next step, such as a service request link or contact. Keep the reply short and move detailed back-and-forth offline.

DON'T ARGUE PUBLICLY

If the issue is escalating, move it offline. Public arguments damage the City's credibility.

JOY RIOT

THREATS, EMERGENCIES, AND PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES

Some comments must **never** be treated as routine engagement. Report to emergency services immediately if a comment includes any of the following:



THREATS OF VIOLENCE

Any specific threat toward staff, officials, residents, schools, or facilities.



ACTIVE EMERGENCY

Reports of a crime in progress or safety-critical infrastructure issues.



SELF-HARM CONCERN

Any comment or message suggesting someone may hurt themselves, is suicidal, or requires crisis support.

JOY RIOT

WHEN NOT TO RESPOND

Silence is sometimes the right answer. Not every comment needs a reply.

"This city is garbage." "First!" “This is a waste of taxpayer dollars!”

PURE OPINION, NO QUESTION

If the comment is expressing a view without asking anything, a reply adds little value.

ALREADY ANSWERED IN THREAD

If the same question was addressed earlier in the same thread, don't repeat the answer.

A RESPONSE WOULD ESCALATE

If replying would invite argument or give a troll more traction, disengage.

LEGAL OR HR REVIEW NEEDED

Wait for guidance before responding to anything that could affect an official process.

JOY RIOT

BUILD A SHARED "KNOWN ISSUES" DOCUMENT

WHAT IT IS

A living internal reference document that captures recurring resident questions, active controversies, approved talking points, and moderation decisions across all city social platforms.

WHO USES IT

Communications staff, department liaisons, and anyone authorized to respond on behalf of the City.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Active issues and approved responses
- Links to official project or service pages
- Contact info for each department liaison
- Moderation decisions and reasoning
- Frequently asked questions and sample answers

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
CREATE AND IMPLEMENT AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL KNOWN ISSUES DOCUMENT INCLUDING SAMPLE RESPONSE TEMPLATES	MEDIUM						

JOY RIOT

DEEP DIVE:
LANGUAGE ACCESS

JOY RIOT

A TITLE VI COMPLIANCE FRAMEWORK

Federal Title VI obligations and Safe Harbor guidance require agencies receiving federal funds to take meaningful steps toward language access. Under DOJ guidance, translating vital documents is considered strong evidence of compliance when an limited english proficiency (LEP) language group makes up 5% or 1,000 people, whichever is less, of the eligible or affected population.

54,940

LEP RESIDENTS

Adams County residents age 5+ with limited English proficiency

11.3%

COUNTY POPULATION

Share of Adams County residents who are LEP

ADAMS COUNTY LEP METRICS

For Northglenn, Adams County's LEP data makes Federal Title VI obligations and Safe Harbor guidance a compliance priority, particularly among Spanish-speaking communities.

43,768

SPANISH-SPEAKING LEP

9.0%

OF COUNTY AGE 5+

5,761

ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLAND LANGUAGES LEP

1.19%

OF COUNTY AGE 5+

5,761

OTHER INDO EUROPEAN LANGUAGES LEP

0.73%

OF COUNTY AGE 5+

JOY RIOT

WHAT SAFE HARBOR REQUIRES

Federal Safe Harbor guidance provides a clear, practical compliance trigger: cities can demonstrate strong Title VI compliance by creating a written translation plan for LEP populations. Critically, this does not mean translating every document. DRCOG guidance directs municipalities to prioritize strategically.

FULL TRANSLATION

Apply to vital communications, including emergency and safety alerts, legal notices, hearings, applications, complaint procedures, and benefit materials that directly affect residents' rights or access to services.

TRANSLATED SUMMARIES + CTAS

Apply to major engagement materials, including plans, surveys, project pages, registration programs, and campaigns. Provide a translated summary and clear call to action rather than translating the full document.

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE NOTICES

Apply to routine administrative content, including reports, agendas, background documents, and general web pages. Include a prominent translated notice explaining how to request interpretation or translated materials.

JOY RIOT

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A WRITTEN TRANSLATION PLAN FOR LEP POPULATIONS	MEDIUM						

JOY RIOT

SECTION D: SWOT ANALYSIS

JOY RIOT

STRENGTHS

NORTHGLENN HAS A STRONG SERVICE-ORIENTED COMMUNICATIONS FOUNDATION.

Northglenn already provides residents with trusted, practical ways to access information, complete common tasks, and stay connected to City services.

CLEAR SERVICE PATHWAYS

The website makes common resident needs easier to address through clear navigation, quick links, contact information, Access Northglenn, and plain-language content.

BUILT-IN ACCESSIBILITY

ReciteMe, accessibility feedback options, stated WCAG/Colorado standards, and department-specific contacts show that inclusive communication is already a priority.

TRUSTED RESIDENT TOUCHPOINTS

Events, newsletters, emergency communications, and service-oriented resources give residents multiple reliable ways to stay informed and connected.

COMMUNITY PRIDE & IDENTITY

Northglenn has strong story material to build from, including its welcoming character, family-friendly spirit, signature events, parks, open spaces and deep community pride.

JOY RIOT

WEAKNESSES

STRONG INDIVIDUAL PIECES DO NOT YET ADD UP TO ONE UNIFIED SYSTEM.

Northglenn's communications are useful, but the City's identity, voice, visuals, and calls to action are not yet consistent across channels or departments.

INCONSISTENT CIVIC IDENTITY

Northglenn's positive attributes do not consistently come through across web, social, video, signage, and departmental materials.

DEPARTMENT-LED STRUCTURE

Communications often reflect internal department organization more than how residents actually search for information.

UNEVEN STANDARDS

Visual style, tone, CTAs, responsiveness, content planning, and brand expression vary by platform, department, and use case.

UNDEFINED BRAND MESSAGE

Northglenn is actively developing a clearer brand message, but current communications do not yet ladder up to one shared story.

LIMITED ACTION ORIENTATION

Many materials inform residents, but do not always guide them toward a clear next step, such as registering, applying, or reporting.

UNDERUSED SENSE OF PLACE

Signage, website visuals, and content do not fully reinforce Northglenn's neighborhoods, parks, events, civic pride, or lived experience.

OPPORTUNITIES

NORTHGLENN CAN USE COMMUNICATIONS TO EXPAND ITS REACH AND SHAPE PERCEPTION.

The biggest opportunity is to strengthen the way people understand and experience Northglenn.

CLAIM A CLEARER REGIONAL POSITION

Use communications to define Northglenn's role in the metro area, shifting perception to a connected, active, and welcoming community with its own reasons to visit, engage, and invest.

BUILD VISITOR-FACING COMMUNICATIONS

Translate Northglenn's community assets into visitor-facing stories that encourage people to attend an event, explore a park, try a local business, or spend more time in the City.

EXPAND SHORT-FORM STORYTELLING

Short-form content can help Northglenn communicate in a more timely, accessible, and engaging way, turning services, amenities, and community moments into quick, shareable stories.

TURN LOCAL VOICES INTO AMPLIFIERS

Influencers, community partners, and everyday residents can help extend Northglenn's reach by sharing authentic stories about what makes the city worth visiting, joining, and investing in.

JOY RIOT

THREATS

NORTHGLENN RISKS LOSING VISIBILITY IN A CROWDED COMMUNICATIONS LANDSCAPE.

As audience habits shift and regional competition grows, Northglenn must communicate more proactively to stay visible, relevant, and accurately understood.

OUTSIDE PERCEPTION FILLING THE GAP

Without a stronger proactive story, Northglenn may be defined by outdated assumptions, fragmented impressions, or isolated narratives.

REGIONAL COMPETITION FOR ATTENTION

Nearby cities, districts, and community groups are all competing for the same attention. Without a clearer external story, Northglenn may be overlooked.

BLURRED METRO IDENTITY

Weak place cues and regional proximity can make Northglenn feel less distinct from surrounding communities.

CHANGING EXPECTATIONS

Changing media habits require Northglenn to keep pace with short-form, mobile-first, and real-time communication.

SEARCH AND AI RISK

As audiences rely more on search and AI-generated answers, inconsistent or outdated information may become easier to find and harder for the City to correct.

JOY RIOT

SECTION E: STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

JOY RIOT

OVERARCHING COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

DEFINE A CLEAR NORTHGLENN STORY

Establish a shared brand narrative that consistently communicates what Northglenn offers and what makes it distinctive.

CREATE A SURROUND-SOUND APPROACH

Coordinate messages across departments and touchpoints so audiences encounter consistent communications multiple times, in multiple ways.

STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS WITH TARGET AUDIENCES

Tailor messaging for residents, businesses, and visitors while ensuring all audiences experience the same core brand.

ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Develop timely, relevant, and action-oriented communications that encourage audiences to engage with City programs, events, meetings, services, and initiatives.

JOY RIOT

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Every communication should **reinforce the Northglenn story** through these four principles.



BE CONSISTENT

Present one clear voice, visual identity, and message across departments and communication channels.



PUT AUDIENCES FIRST

Develop communications around the needs, questions, and experiences of the intended audience.



REMAIN AUTHENTIC

Use real stories, people, and experiences to reflect the character of Northglenn, rather than simply describing it.



STAY ACTION-ORIENTED

Ensure every communication has a clear purpose and helps audiences understand what to do next.

JOY RIOT

VALUE PROPOSITION

A value proposition defines the **benefit** Northglenn offers its audiences—the reason residents, businesses, and visitors should see value in choosing to live, work, or visit here.

From a communications perspective, it provides a clear foundation for all messaging, keeping communications focused on what matters most to the audience. To serve that purpose, it should be:

- **Distinctive**, reflecting what makes Northglenn meaningful or different.
- **Benefit-focused**, centered on what people gain from Northglenn.
- **Audience-centered**, reflecting the needs and priorities of residents, businesses, and visitors.
- **Foundational**, giving communications a consistent value to build from.

VALUE PROPOSITION

THROUGH WORK, RECREATION, AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT, OUR COMMUNITY GROWS TOGETHER.

JOY RIOT

VALUE PROPOSITION

THROUGH WORK, RECREATION, AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT, OUR COMMUNITY GROWS TOGETHER.

Our City has been on the upswing since its inception. As we continue to ascend, we offer opportunities for residents, visitors, and businesses to join us in pursuits they'll find meaningful and rewarding.

LOOK, FEEL, VOICE

Look

- Bright, vibrant tone that draws from our brand color palette
- Maintain clear hierarchy and intentional whitespace
- Show imagery of people interacting in Northglenn's spaces

Feel

- Familiar; opt for friendly over formal
- Welcoming; make yourself comfortable
- Hands-on; get involved

Voice

- Down-to-earth; limit civic jargon
- Action-oriented
- Positive

CITY OF Northglenn

JOY RIOT

KEY MESSAGE

The key message is an **internal touchstone**—what you're trying to get across in all you do. To serve that purpose, it should be:

- **Easily remembered**.
- **Repeatable** by anyone speaking on behalf of Northglenn.
- **Relevant** to all three key audiences: residents, businesses & visitors.
- **Usable** across every City department.

Grounded in the brand positioning and the welcoming spirit inherent to Northglenn, the key message focuses on bringing people into the fold to embrace the possibilities the City has to offer, and build the future that matters most to them.

KEY MESSAGE

NORTHGLENN WELCOMES YOU TO THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY.

JOY RIOT

KEY MESSAGE

NORTHGLENN WELCOMES YOU TO THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY.

- Reflects the City's neighborly culture and commitment to making participation approachable, accessible, and welcoming.

- Whether it's buying a house, growing your family, opening a business, attending an event, enjoying a park, or engaging with your neighbors, "the next opportunity" can look different for everyone. Northglenn provides a customizable foundation for that opportunity.
- Northglenn has a forward momentum and is constantly evolving and improving; the community shapes what comes "next."

JOY RIOT

DEPARTMENT KEY MESSAGE ADOPTION EXAMPLES

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY TO PROTECT AND SERVE.

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE:

THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT PARSONS THEATRE.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS.

DEPARTMENT BREAKDOWN

POLICE DEPARTMENT

How they invite you

By building trust through visible, approachable, and service-oriented policing that encourages positive relationships with the community.

What 'the next opportunity' means

The opportunity to build relationships with officers, stay informed with safety resources, and work together to strengthen the community.

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE

How they invite you

By creating welcoming parks, programs, events, and shared experiences that make it easy for people to participate.

What 'the next opportunity' means

The opportunity to experience something new, meet others, build traditions, and become more connected to community life.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

How they invite you

By welcoming entrepreneurs, employers, and local businesses into a supportive community that encourages investment and growth.

What ‘the next opportunity' means

The opportunity to start, expand, connect, and contribute within a community invested in local success.

JOY RIOT

AUDIENCES & MESSAGING SEGMENTATION

JOY RIOT

AUDIENCE BREAKDOWN

RESIDENTS

How they're invited

By making it easy to participate in community life through accessible services, programs, events, and transparent communication.

What 'the next opportunity' means

A new way to get involved, connect with neighbors, access support, or help shape the community around them.

BUSINESSES

How they're invited

By fostering a supportive environment where businesses are welcomed as valued partners in the community's success.

What 'the next opportunity' means

A chance to start or grow, build relationships, and contribute to a community invested in their success.

VISITORS

How they're invited

By showcasing welcoming experiences, vibrant destinations, and opportunities to explore everything Northglenn has to offer.

What 'the next opportunity' means

A new experience to discover, a reason to stay longer, or an invitation to return and explore more.

NORTHGLENN RESIDENTS

WHAT THEY NEED

Residents need clear, timely communications that make daily life easier, explain City decisions, and reinforce trust that the City is listening and responding.

CURRENT GAP

Northglenn provides functional information, but resident communications are not always consistent, proactive, connected across touchpoints, or reflective of the City's warmth and small-town character.

OPPORTUNITY

Shift resident communications from mostly informational to more proactive, explanatory, and community-building.

MEDIA



WEB



PRINT



NEWSLETTER



ORGANIC SOCIAL



ADVERTISING

KEY MESSAGE SUPPORT POINTS

- Neighborhood-scale living makes it easy to recognize familiar faces, build relationships, and become part of the community.
- Accessible parks, trails, and community spaces create natural gathering places where connections form through everyday activities.
- Year-round events and local traditions provide recurring opportunities to engage with other residents and strengthens community pride.
- An approachable and visible City government makes residents feel connected to local leadership and invested in shaping their community.

JOY RIOT

RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

MAINTAIN AN ALWAYS-ON SOCIAL PRESENCE

Treat social media as a real-time communications channel for questions, timely issues, events, safety updates, and resident needs.

CLOSE THE LOOP AFTER ENGAGEMENT

After meetings, surveys, events, public input, or major decisions, explain what was heard, what changed, and what happens next.

MAKE PARTICIPATION EASIER

Promote meetings, surveys, programs, events, and volunteer opportunities with clear CTAs, plain-language summaries, and reminders across channels.

TURN RESIDENTS INTO STORYTELLERS

Feature resident voices, volunteers, families, City staff, traditions, and community moments to build pride and make communications feel more personal.

JOY RIOT

PROSPECTIVE BUSINESSES

WHAT THEY NEED

Businesses need communications that make Northglenn feel supportive, opportunity-rich, responsive, and easy to navigate for existing businesses, prospects, developers, entrepreneurs, and partners.

CURRENT GAP

Northglenn's Economic Development platform is resource-rich, but it often functions more like a directory than a persuasive business case.

OPPORTUNITY

Evolve Economic Development communications into a stronger recruitment, retention, and confidence-building tool.

MEDIA



WEB



PRINT



NEWSLETTER



ORGANIC SOCIAL



PAID SOCIAL

KEY MESSAGE SUPPORT POINTS

- A collaborative relationship with Economic Development provides businesses with direct access to resources, guidance, and City support.
- A loyal local customer base encourages businesses to become recognized community partners rather than simply places to shop.
- Community events and partnerships create opportunities for businesses to build visibility and relationships beyond traditional marketing.
- An engaged business environment encourages collaboration among local organizations, employers, and community partners.

JOY RIOT

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

CREATE CLEARER AUDIENCE PATHWAYS

Continue organizing content around common business needs, including starting, growing, relocating, developing, hiring, promoting and accessing funding.

ESTABLISH PROACTIVE OUTREACH

Continue using newsletters, direct outreach, relationship-building and quarterly networking or roundtable events to keep businesses informed and engaged.

HIGHLIGHT BUSINESS MOMENTUM

Continue sharing grants and available resources while expanding coverage of openings, expansions, and redevelopment successes.

MAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MORE VISIBLE

Increase the presence of economic development content across citywide social media, newsletters, website updates, events and partner channels.

JOY RIOT

VISITORS

WHAT THEY NEED

Visitors need communications that make Northglenn easy to discover, navigate, and choose for events, recreation, arts, culture, and family-friendly experiences.

CURRENT GAP

Northglenn's parks, events, and local experiences give outsiders a reason to visit, but current communications do not always make that value visible or compelling.

OPPORTUNITY

Position Parks, Recreation & Culture as one of Northglenn's strongest destination-building tools.

MEDIA



WEB



ORGANIC SOCIAL



PAID SOCIAL



ADVERTISING

KEY MESSAGE SUPPORT POINTS

- A diverse mix of public and specialty events provides authentic experiences that reflect the character of the community.
- Community events and programming invite visitors to participate alongside residents, creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.
- Convenient access from across the Denver metro makes Northglenn easy to explore as both a destination and a repeat visit.
- Local businesses and gathering places offer opportunities to experience the community through its people, not just its amenities.
- An approachable environment encourages visitors to return and discover something new with each visit.

JOY RIOT

VISITOR ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

PACKAGE EXPERIENCES AROUND PLANNING MOMENTS

Organize content around questions like "What's happening this weekend?", "What should I know before I go?", and "What else can I do nearby?"

CURATE REASONS TO VISIT YEAR-ROUND

Create seasonal guides, event roundups, family activity lists, recreation spotlights, arts and culture highlights, and itineraries.

MAKE SOCIAL MORE EXPERIENCE-DRIVEN

Use short-form video, event photography, staff picks, seasonal guides, and attendee-generated content.

BUILD PARTNER-BASED PROMOTION

Work with local businesses, regional tourism organizations, influencers, vendors, performers, and community organizations to extend reach beyond City-owned channels.

THANK YOU



APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: CITY COUNCIL INTERVIEW FINDINGS

JOY RIOT

CITY COUNCIL QUESTIONS

1. Why did you choose Northglenn?
2. What is the external perception of Northglenn? How is that the same/different from what it is or what you want it to be?
3. What's in the way of attracting and engaging future audiences?
4. If Northglenn were a person, who would they be? What's their personality like? (you can use celebrity, character, movie, or book references)
5. What do you think the role of communications is in City Government?
6. Do you think the City's communication priorities are in line with Council expectations? How so or not?
7. What do you think is being communicated well?
8. What do you think needs to be improved from a communications standpoint (e.g. start, stop, continue)?
9. What process/operational issues are you or others noticing?

CITY COUNCIL QUESTIONS (CONT.)

10. What has made establishing a clear communications strategy and execution of that strategy for Northglenn a challenge to date?
11. What do you think the message of the City is for your different audiences (businesses, residents, visitors, others)?
12. What do you think the message of the City should be?
13. Who do you think are Northglenn's competitors?
    a. Are there other places or other brands out there that you would like to emulate or you think are messaging themselves and communicating really well?
14. What questions do you want us to be asking City Staff/Stakeholders and the greater community when we conduct that research?
15. What hurdles might we have to overcome in this process?
16. What else should we know related to Northglenn Marketing & Communications?

JOY RIOT

METHODOLOGY

- To inform our Marketing & Communications Assessment, we conducted a series of in-depth interviews with Northglenn's 9 City Council members

- These findings include Council perspectives only and are meant to help inform broader research with staff, key stakeholders & the Northglenn community, not to serve as final conclusions

City Council Members

- Meredith Leighty (Mayor)
- Megan Burns
- Madison Leighty
- Adam Nowicki
- Joshua Sievers
- Katherine Goff
- Richard Kondo
- Shannon Lukeman-Hiromasa
- Jody Roper

JOY RIOT

PERCEPTIONS OF NORTHGLENN

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE NORTHGLENN?

Northglenn was commonly chosen for practical reasons but people choose to stay due to the strong sense of community.

Key Findings:

- Many respondents cited home prices and affordability as the initial draw
- The “small-town” feel was a consistent emotional hook
- Life-stage alignment
  - Raising families, long-term residency, or relocation settling
- Initial perceptions were often neutral but evolved into a strong affinity

JOY RIOT

PERCEPTIONS OF NORTHGLENN

EXTERNAL

- “Doesn’t really exist”
- Often confused with surrounding areas
- “Less affluent” stigma
- Limited opportunity
- Not a destination, purely residential

INTERNAL

- Welcoming
- Affordable & family-friendly
- Lots of amenities and offerings
- “Hidden gem” with a strong sense of community
- Close to Denver

JOY RIOT

BARRIERS TO AUDIENCE ATTRACTION & ENGAGEMENT

Key Findings:

- Structural limitations
  - Landlocked = limited growth available
  - Housing stock is aging
- Few unique attractions or anchoring destinations = lack of reasons to visit
- “Less affluent” image deters potential businesses
  - Trouble attracting medium to large scale companies (industrial & big-box stores)
  - Acts as launching pad; once businesses start to scale they move out of Northglenn
- Neighboring cities offer more space, amenities, and visibility
- Identity challenge
- Marketing & Communications gaps
- Physical visibility issues → poor signage, lack of consistent branding

JOY RIOT

IF NORTHGLENN WERE A PERSON...

Described as:

- “Underrated” / secondary player (i.e. wallflower)
- Friendly, acts as a “neighbor to all”
- Calm but capable
- Eager but not assertive
- Isn’t flashy or attention-grabbing

JOY RIOT



Brad Pitt (F1)
He's an "everyman" type of guy. His personality isn't "bold" but he's not lacking in confidence.



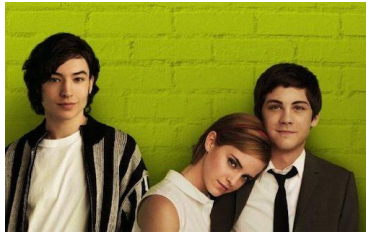
Rip Wheeler (Yellowstone)
No matter what comes his way, he stays calm. He's very laid back.



Katherine Walter (My Life with the Walter Boys)
The show is based in Northeast Colorado. She's a small town vet, always hustles, takes care of family, and puts people first.



Russell (Up)
Always eager and confident to go conquer the world.



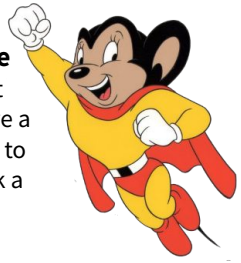
Perks of Being a Wallflower
We're here but unassuming, timid, and quiet. We show up to watch things happen but rarely jump in.



Aquaman
He's a part of the Justice League, but isn't the main character. His superpowers are cool in theory but aren't in reality (i.e. talking to fish).



Jessica Chastain (The Martian)
She's very calm and confident.

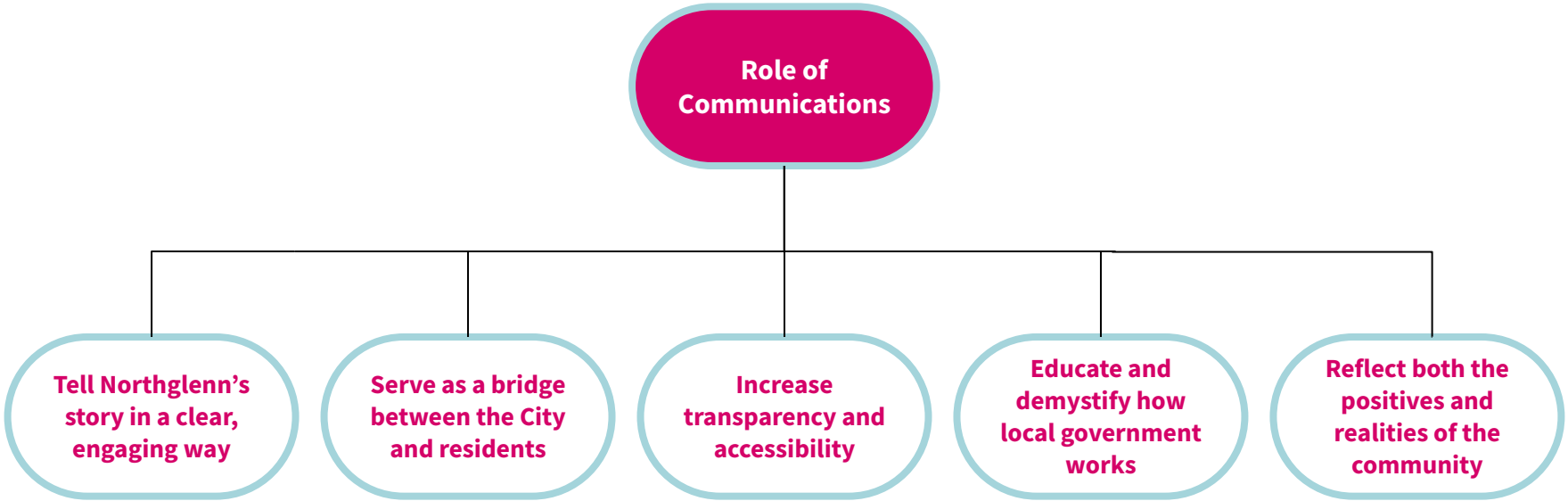


Mighty Mouse
We're small but mighty. We have a voice and work to use it; "we pack a punch."

JOY RIOT

PERCEPTIONS OF NORTHGLENN COMMUNICATIONS

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIONS IS IN CITY GOVERNMENT?



JOY RIOT

WHAT'S WORKING WELL

Key Findings:

- Event promotion
- Traditional channels (newsletter, print) are effective for key audiences
- Emergency communications
- City information is generally accurate and informative
- Council meeting recaps (valued yet inconsistent)

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Key Findings:

- Timeliness & Real-time Engagement
  - Content is sometimes shared outside peak windows of relevance
  - Opportunity to support before, during, and after event coverage
- Content & Storytelling
  - Opportunity to expand beyond informational updates into:
    - More community-driven, positive storytelling
    - Broader representation of Northglenn's diversity
  - Greater focus on public safety content highlighting community policing that balances transparency and tone
- Channels & Formats
  - Social media and video content are underutilized opportunities
  - Current mix leans heavily on static formats
  - Opportunity to build more engaging, digital-first content streams
- Audience Reach & Targeting
  - Opportunity to better connect with:
    - Hispanic community
    - Younger audiences
    - Seniors (non-digital users)

JOY RIOT

PROCESS & OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Key Findings:

- Changing Council demographics highlight generational differences in how people consume content and information creating evolving expectations and priorities
- Communications responsibilities are distributed across departments, which can make coordination more complex
- Opportunities to:
  - Clarify roles and ownership (who to contact and for what/when)
  - Streamline workflows and approval processes
- Current structure can make real-time content creation more challenging
- Number of channels/platforms creates fragmentation
- Additional leadership or central coordination can help align efforts and increase efficiency

JOY RIOT

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ESTABLISHING & EXECUTING A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Key Findings:

- Opportunity to further align on a clear, unified direction for communications
- Organizational complexity
  - Multiple stakeholders and perspectives can make alignment and decision-making more nuanced
- Adapting to changing expectations
  - Communications needs are shifting toward more real-time, digital-first approaches
  - Opportunity to continue evolving processes and tools to support this
- Opportunity to track/strengthen use of metrics and performance data
- Transitioning to new approaches requires time, coordination, and comfort with new ways of working

JOY RIOT

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE MESSAGE OF THE CITY SHOULD BE?



JOY RIOT

CITY MESSAGING BY AUDIENCE

Existing messaging is inconsistent and lacks differentiation.

What should it be?

- Residents & Families:
  - Welcoming, well-connected, affordable housing
  - Strong community and various event offerings
  - Family-friendly amenities
- Businesses:
  - Easy to operate
  - Supportive environment
  - Break through “less affluent” perception

JOY RIOT

WHO DO YOU THINK ARE NORTHGLENN'S COMPETITORS?

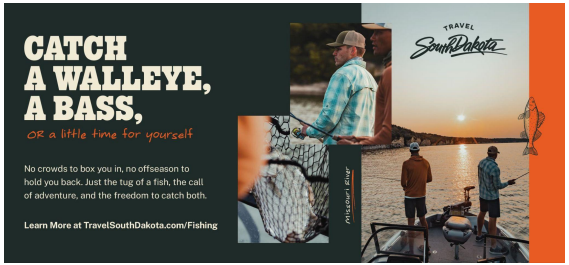
Key Challenge: lacking a clear geographic outline & brand differentiation.

- **Thornton, CO**
- **Westminster, CO**
- **Denver, CO**
- Boulder, CO
- Adams County, CO
- Aurora, CO
- Parker, CO
- Wheat Ridge, CO
- Fort Collins, CO
- Longmont, CO
- Timnath, CO
- Firestone, CO
- Erie, CO
- Frederick, CO

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OTHER PLACES/BRANDS TO EMULATE

- Carlsbad, CA
- San Diego, CA
- Tempe, AZ
- Phoenix, AZ
- Westminster, CO (Police Department)



South Dakota & Utah Tourism Ads
Both utilize storytelling in fun and "whimsical" ways. Visually engaging and attention-grabbing.





Zohran Mamdani's Mayoral Campaign
Unique and fun. Broke through political noise.



Alyia Gaskins (Mayor of Alexandria City, VA)
Good example of strong municipal communications.

Dunkin' & Nike
Immediate brand recognition.

DUNKIN'

JOY RIOT

WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD WE ASK CITY STAFF AND STAKEHOLDERS?

Key Findings:

- Staff-focused:
  - Capacity: Does staff feel empowered to post and manage content?
  - Barriers: What's stopping staff from real-time engagement and posting?
  - Alignment: Does staff understand Council's expectations and communications vision? If not, what is their current understanding?
- Community-focused:
  - Awareness: How do residents find information? (channels, formats, etc.)
  - Needs: What do residents want highlighted or communicated?
  - Engagement: What would make them participate more in events or initiatives?
  - Perception: How do residents perceive Northglenn? What would make them advocate for Northglenn?

WHAT HURDLES MIGHT WE HAVE TO OVERCOME IN THIS PROCESS?

Key Findings:

- Internal challenges:
  - Different communication expectations
  - Siloed departments
  - Resistance to change
  - Lack of City Communications Director
- External challenges:
  - Perception gap: “less affluent” & “bedroom community” vs. desired identity
  - Diverse audience preferences (social media vs. print / senior residents vs. younger residents)
  - Skepticism or pushback from residents, especially older or historically disengaged groups
  - Dealing with troublesome comments while keeping First Amendment in mind

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APPENDIX B: STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

JOY RIOT

STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONS

1. If you had to describe Northglenn in 3 words, what words would you use?
2. What is the external perception of Northglenn? How is that the same/different from what it is or what you want it to be?
3. What do you think the role of communications is in:
    a. City Government?
    b. Your Department?
    c. Your Specific Role?
4. Do you believe that the expectations of the Council are in line with your perception of the role communications play in City Government and in your Department?
5. What marketing or communications efforts are you most proud of?
6. What processes do you have in place for marketing/communications? (e.g. Who's in charge of what? What are approval processes? How are content calendars created?)

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STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONS (CONT.)

7. On a scale from 1-5, with 1 not effective at all and 5 being perfect, how would you rate those processes?
    a. Why? What goes well? What doesn't?
8. What other process/operational issues are you or others noticing?
    a. What is the ideal solution?
9. Do you feel empowered to create and publish communications content?
    a. If not, what barriers are in the way of that?
10. What types of training or resources would your Department benefit from to improve your communications and marketing efforts?
11. What has made establishing a clear communications strategy and execution of that strategy for Northglenn a challenge to date?
12. What questions should we be asking the greater community when we survey them?
13. What else should we know related to Northglenn Marketing & Communications?

JOY RIOT

METHODOLOGY

- To inform our Marketing & Communications Assessment, we held four (4) focus groups with key Stakeholders

- These findings include key Stakeholder perspectives only and are meant to help inform broader research with staff and the Northglenn community, not to serve as final conclusions

JOY RIOT

STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

GROUP 1: POLICE DEPARTMENT	GROUP 2: PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE	GROUP 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	GROUP 4: CITY COMMUNICATIONS
• Jamie Burlison • Chief Jim May • Deputy Chief Peter Rice	• Amanda Peterson • Patrick Berger • Michael Stricker • Deb Lawson • Terra Mueller • Elle Marzec	• Allison Moeding • Marisa Phillips • Christie Chambers	• Heather Geyer • Kim Newcomer • John Eisel • Rachael Henney • Michael Ringling • Jenna Gragg • Terri MacKenzie

JOY RIOT

PERCEPTIONS OF NORTHGLENN

NORTHGLENN IN 3 WORDS

- Strong alignment and pride on *what* Northglenn is amongst Stakeholders



JOY RIOT

PERCEPTIONS OF NORTHGLENN: CITY COUNCIL & STAKEHOLDERS

EXTERNAL

- Often confused with surrounding areas
  - “Doesn’t really exist”
- Overlooked & not seen as a destination
  - Instead purely as “pass-through”
- Limited awareness of offerings
- Limited opportunity

INTERNAL

- Welcoming
- Lots of amenities & offerings; large appreciation
- “Hidden gem” sentiment
- Strong sense of community
- Affordable & family-friendly
- Close to Denver

JOY RIOT

PERCEPTIONS OF NORTHGLENN COMMUNICATIONS

JOY RIOT

ROLE OF COMMUNICATIONS IN:

City Government, Your Department, Your Role?

- Across Departments:
  - Inform & educate; government transparency
  - Market & promote: events, programs, businesses
  - Build trust (especially public safety)
  - Drive engagement and participation
- City Communications:
  - Manage channels and distribution
  - Ensure brand consistency
  - Support cross-department alignment

JOY RIOT

WHAT EFFORTS ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?



JOY RIOT

BARRIERS TO A CLEAR STRATEGY?

- Capacity limitations
- Complexity of serving multiple, diverse audiences with different needs
- Balancing centralized coordination with department flexibility
- Lack of shared systems and tools
- Undefined expectations and success metrics
- City Council & Stakeholder alignment

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

- Primary challenge = **Capacity**
  - Staff adapts to meet communications needs alongside primary responsibilities
- High volume of initiatives
  - Limits ability to fully execute or leave time for proactive planning
- Lack of assistive resources & programs
- Lack of defined communications guidelines (City-wide & Department-specific)

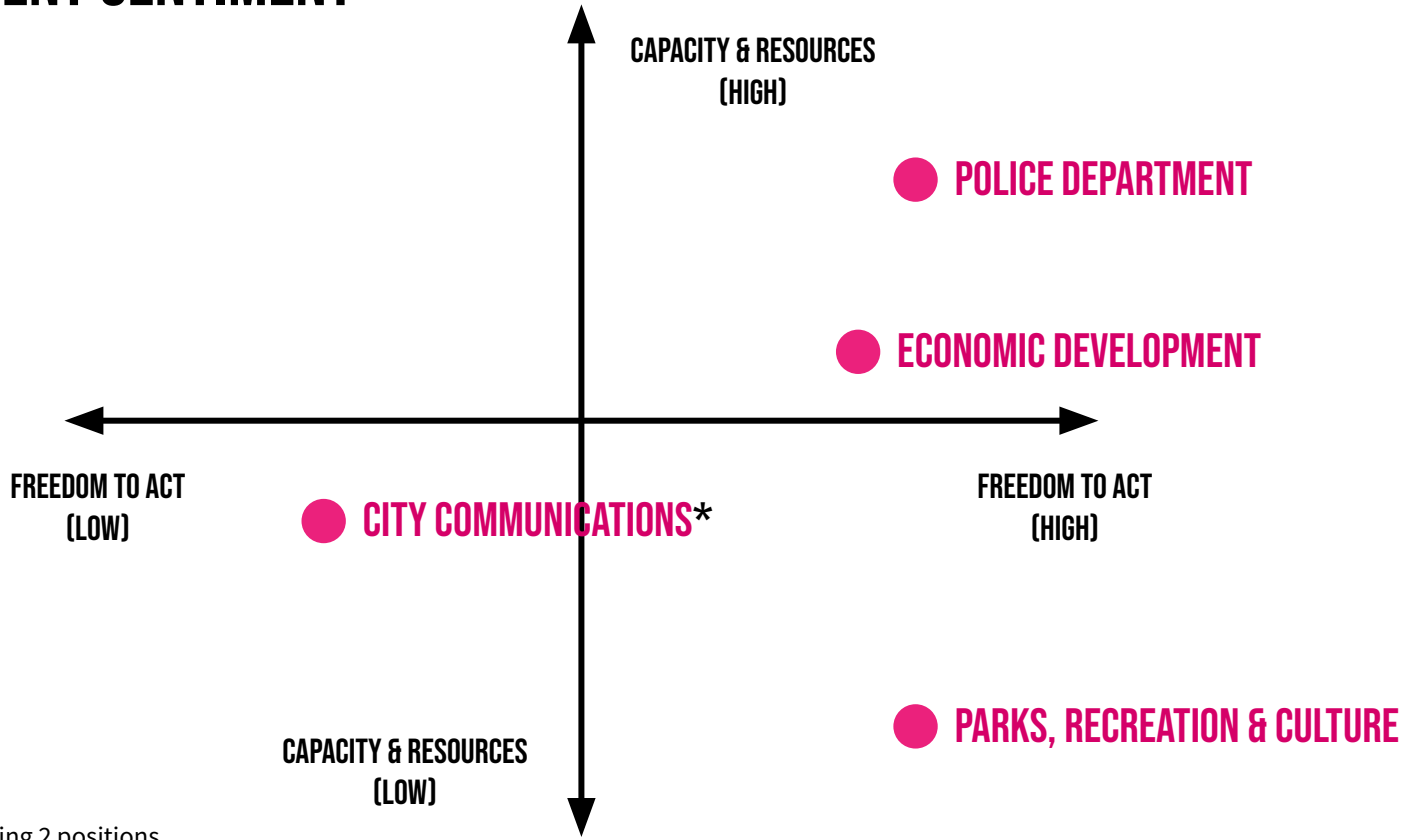
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PRIORITIES GAP

- No clear definition of:
  - Urgent vs. planned communications
  - “Drop everything” priorities vs. long-term efforts
  - Guidelines, expectations, evaluation practices
    - Department adoption
- Departments are often competing for limited resources
- City Council expectations do not always align with Stakeholder capacity
  - Evolving and/or disjointed expectations from City Council as members change

JOY RIOT

EMPOWERMENT SENTIMENT



JOY RIOT

*Missing 2 positions

DESIRED TRAINING & RESOURCES

- Additional Capacity
  - More staff or external support
- Tools & Systems
  - Centralized image/asset library (current systems difficult to navigate)
  - Better organization of content and materials
  - Consistent use of editorial calendars and shared tools for metrics tracking
    - Parks, Recreation & Culture currently has a successful editorial system in place
- Planning Support
  - Ability to maintain and update plans over time
- Budget
  - Increased funding for marketing efforts (e.g. media buys)
- Guidance & Expectations
  - Clear communications guidelines
  - Defined roles and responsibilities

JOY RIOT

WHERE ALIGNMENT EXISTS

- Communications is critical to establishing:
  - Transparency & trust
  - Engagement & event participation
  - Promoting programs and services
- All departments:
  - Highly value communications
  - Have examples of success
  - Want to do more and expand their efforts

MISALIGNMENT STEMS FROM DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTAL PROCESSES

PROCESS MISALIGNMENT				
	POLICE DEPARTMENT	PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	CITY COMMUNICATIONS
DEFINED PROCESSES	✓	✓	*Partial*	✓
ESTABLISHED PRIORITIES & GUIDELINES	*Partial*	✓	✓	*Partial*
EDITORIAL CALENDAR/CONTENT SYSTEM	X	✓	X	*Partial*
APPROVAL CONTROL	✓	✓	✓	✓
DEFINED ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	✓	*Partial*	*Partial*	✓
SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF EXPECTATIONS	*Partial*	*Partial*	*Partial*	*Partial*
ABILITY TO QUICKLY RESPOND TO NEEDS	✓	X	X	*Partial*
CROSS-DEPARTMENT COORDINATION	X	X	X	✓
STAFF CAPACITY TO SUPPORT DEMANDS	X	X	X	X
DEFINED SUCCESS & EVALUATION MEASURES	X	✓	*Partial*	*Partial*
ACCESS TO NORTHGLENN COMMS-RELATED TOOLS/RESOURCES	*Partial*	*Partial*	*Partial*	✓

JOY RIOT

OTHER KEY POINTS MENTIONED

- Audiences are diverse and require tailored approaches
- Marketing plays a direct role in participation and outcomes (e.g. event attendance)
- Significant planning already occurs well in advance in *some* departments
- Even small increases in resources can have measurable impact

WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU WANT US TO ASK THE COMMUNITY/CITY RESIDENTS?

- How do residents receive their information?
- Differences in engagement across age groups (teens vs. adults vs. elderly)
- Clarity around specific communication channels (avoiding confusion between sources)

APPENDIX C: NORTHGLENN COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT

JOY RIOT

WEBSITE

JOY RIOT

WEBSITE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 41/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Language is clear, plain, and accessible to public audiences	5
Important information is current, accurate, and easy to scan	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
The site is mobile-friendly and accessible	3
Contact information is easy to locate	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Information is easy to find within 1–2 clicks	4
Key services and actions are easy to complete	5
BRAND	
The design reflects the City's brand, priorities, and professionalism	2
Content is organized around user needs rather than internal departments	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Navigation labels intuitive and resident-focused	5
The search function returns useful and relevant results	3
TOTAL	**41/50**

CLARITY: 10/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Northglenn's site uses clear, resident-friendly language and keeps important updates visible from the homepage.
- **Notes:**
  - Homepage quick actions use plain labels like "Pay Online," "Jobs With The City," "Meeting Agendas," and "Report An Issue."
  - The "Services You Want" section highlights common resident needs like "Recreation & Events," "Water & Utilities," and "Trash & Recycling."
  - The homepage includes timely updates such as "June 2026 Connection," "Northglenn Pride - June 6," "Stage 2 Drought Declared," and "2026 Water Quality Report."

ACCESSIBILITY: 8/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Northglenn provides strong accessibility support and makes contact information easy to locate, though some pages may still create mobile or accessibility friction.
- **Notes:**
  - The Digital Accessibility page states the City is working toward WCAG 2.1 Level AA and Colorado accessibility standards.
  - The site provides ReciteMe accessibility support and invites accessibility feedback.
  - The City says it is committed to responding to accessibility feedback within five business days.
  - Footer contact information includes the City Hall address, hours, phone number, and communications@northglenn.org.
  - The Contact the City page includes department-specific phone numbers and emails for police, building, city clerk, parks and recreation, planning, water, trash, senior center, and more.

FLAGGED ACCESSIBILITY CONCERNS

- **Non-Semantic Icon Markup**
  - *Font Awesome* icons are placed inside <i> elements, which are intended to represent italicized text. This can create unclear or inconsistent interpretation by assistive technologies and is better handled with semantic controls and accessible labels.
  - Found in:
    - Main navigation dropdown arrow
    - Menu or overlay close button
    - Right-arrow icons used across linked cards and calls to action
    - Likely repeated across pages using the same shared components

- **Unlabeled Social-Sharing Links**
  - Social-sharing buttons contain no readable text or accessible name, leaving screen-reader users unable to determine each link's purpose.
  - Found on the homepage:
    - LinkedIn share button
    - Facebook share button
    - X/Twitter share button
    - Reddit share button

JOY RIOT

FLAGGED ACCESSIBILITY CONCERNS

- **Hidden Share Controls Lack Accessible Labels**
  - Social-sharing buttons rely on visual styling and icons without meaningful text labels, making their purpose unclear to screen-reader users. The issue becomes visible when CSS is disabled but remains present in the underlying page structure.
    - Found in: The “Share this page” modal on the homepage.

- **Additional Concerns (sitewide)**
  - Visible page content is not within defined landmark regions
    - Certain visible elements, such as the header address, phone number, and social media links, are not coded within clear structural regions like Header, Navigation, Main Content, or Footer.
  - At least one page is missing a level-one heading (H1)
    - At least one page does not include a clearly coded main heading that identifies the primary topic of the page.

JOY RIOT

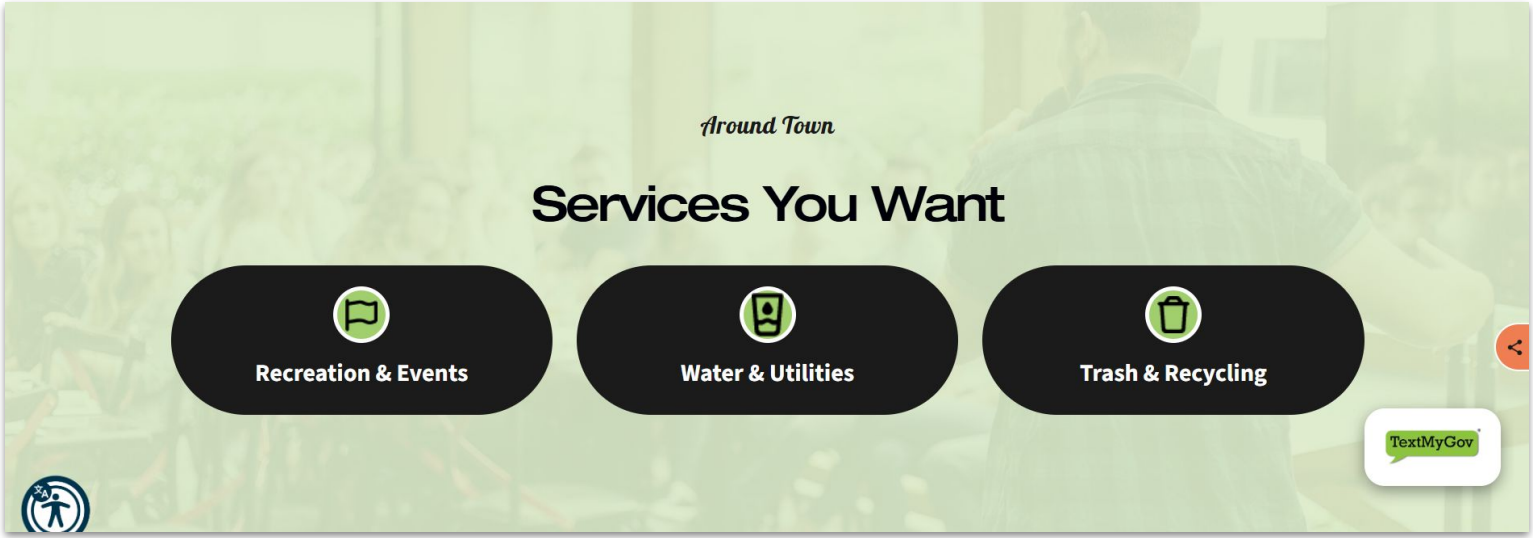
USER EXPERIENCE: 9/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Northglenn does a strong job surfacing common resident tasks and providing clear pathways to complete key actions.
- **Notes:**
  - Homepage shortcuts include “Contact Us,” “Pay Online,” “Meetings & Records,” “Employment Opportunities,” and “Recreational Activities.”
  - Footer quick links include “Pay Online,” “Report A Concern,” “Meeting Agendas,” “Facilities,” “Water,” “Licenses and Permits,” “Police,” “Events,” and “City Council.”
  - Access Northglenn lets residents report issues, ask questions, give feedback, and track service requests.
  - Recreation pages link directly to Activity Guide, Aquatics, Events, Facility Rentals, Register Online, Recreation Center, Seniors, Sports & Athletics, and Youth & Teen Programs.

JOY RIOT

BRAND: 6/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Northglenn's website effectively communicates services, updates, meetings, and city resources, but it does not always use its most visible spaces to tell a stronger story about Northglenn's identity, community, or quality of life.
- **Notes:**
  - The "Services You Want" icons found on the city's homepage appear blurry/low-resolution, which weakens the polish of an otherwise useful section.
  - The main hero image features a highway, which does not strongly convey the people, parks, neighborhoods, civic life, or community character that would make Northglenn feel more distinct.
  - Pages like "Why Northglenn" and "About Northglenn" could do more to express what makes the City unique, or why residents and businesses choose Northglenn.



SERVICES YOU WANT: ICON IMAGE QUALITY

When viewed on desktop, service icons appear pixelated and lack visual clarity, reducing their effectiveness as navigational cues.

JOY RIOT

ACTION & ENGAGEMENT : 8/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Navigation labels are mostly clear and resident-focused, while search is available but could better support plain-language resident questions.
- **Notes:**
  - Main navigation includes broad, understandable labels like “Community,” “Services,” “Recreation & Events,” “Government,” “Public Safety,” and “Business.”
  - Footer quick links use action-oriented labels such as “Pay Online,” “Jobs With The City,” “Report A Concern,” “Meeting Agendas,” “Water,” “Licenses and Permits,” “Police,” “Events,” and “City Council.”
  - The Government section includes civic participation links like “Attend a Public Meeting,” “Elections and Voting,” “Financial Transparency,” “Municipal Code,” “Taxes,” and “Volunteer.”
  - Site search is visible and organized into tabs for “Services,” “Forms,” and “All of Northglenn, CO.”

JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA

JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA ASSESSMENT SCORE: 23/50

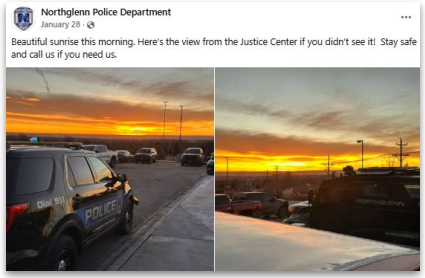
Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Posts are clear, concise, and useful to residents	3
Each social account has a clear purpose and audience	3
ACCESSIBILITY	
Graphics, videos, and captions are accessible and platform-appropriate	4
Posting cadence is regular and is a sustainable frequency	3
USER EXPERIENCE	
It is clear which city and/or city department owns each social channel (and information pertains to owner)	2
Social content balances service updates, engagement, storytelling, and urgent information	2
BRAND	
Branding and visual identity is applied consistently across all social channels/profiles	1
Overall social presence feels unified while allowing departments to speak with expertise	1
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Social content is coordinated across departments, platforms, and service areas	2
Resident questions, concerns, and service needs are answered and/or escalated in a timely and appropriate manner	2
TOTAL	**23/50**

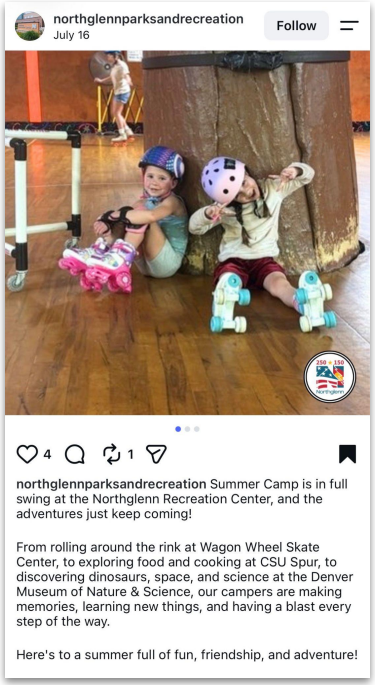
CLARITY: 6/10

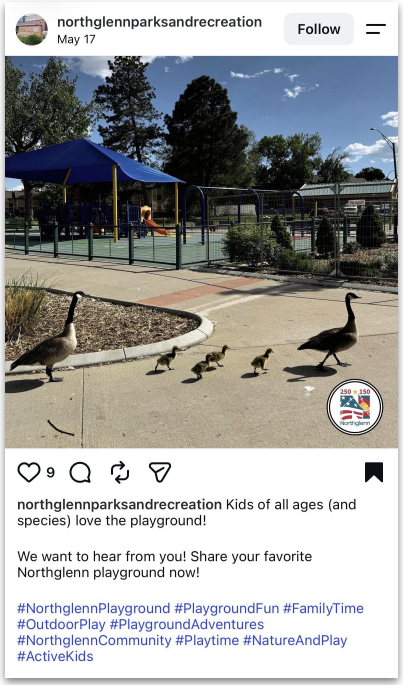
- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Posts are generally understandable, but account purpose and audience are not consistently clear across the full social media ecosystem.
- **Notes:**
  - Many posts communicate basic information clearly, especially service updates, reminders, and event promotions.
  - Content is not always concise or resident-centered; some posts feel more like internal announcements than audience-focused updates.
  - Each account does not always have a clearly defined role, which can make it harder for residents to know where to look for specific information.
  - Stronger channel definitions would help clarify what belongs on the main city account versus Police, Parks & Rec, Economic Development, or other department feeds.

JOY RIOT









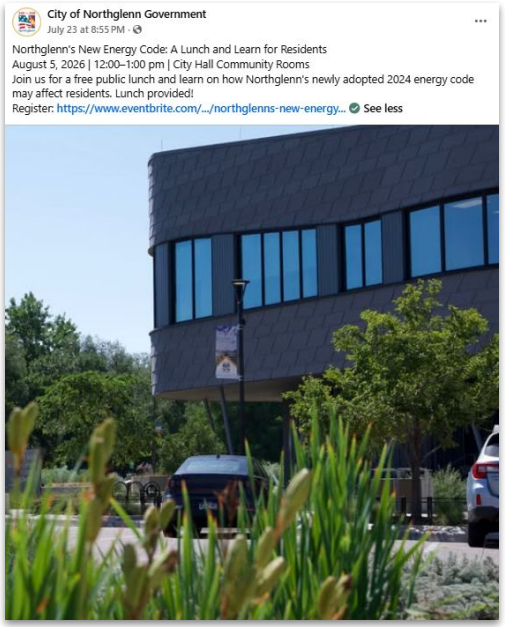
POOR CLARITY

Some posts lack a clear resident benefit or communications purpose, making content feel disconnected or incidental.

JOY RIOT







GREAT CLARITY

Example posts demonstrate a clear audience purpose and, where applicable, provide a clear next step.

JOY RIOT

ACCESSIBILITY: 7/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Accessibility is one of the stronger areas, but consistency varies across graphics, captions, videos, and platforms.
- **Notes:**
  - Many posts appear to include useful captions and platform-appropriate copy.
  - Graphics are often readable enough for social, but not always consistently designed for accessibility.
  - Video and graphic accessibility depends heavily on the department posting.
  - Posting cadence is regular in some places, but inconsistent across departments, which makes the overall system feel uneven and less reliable.

JOY RIOT

USER EXPERIENCE: 4/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - The user experience is weakened by unclear channel ownership, uneven content balance, and limited public responsiveness.
- **Notes:**
  - It is not always clear which account owns which type of information or whether a post represents the City broadly or a specific department.
  - Content does not consistently balance service updates, engagement, storytelling, and urgent information.
  - Police content can dominate the perception of the City with crime-heavy messaging, while more positive civic storytelling is less unified.
  - Residents may need to follow multiple accounts to piece together a complete picture of city information.

JOY RIOT

USER EXPERIENCE: 4/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - The user experience is weakened by unclear channel ownership, uneven content balance, and limited public responsiveness.
- **Notes:**
  - It is not always clear which account owns which type of information or whether a post represents the City broadly or a specific department.
  - Content does not consistently balance service updates, engagement, storytelling, and urgent information.
  - Police content can dominate the perception of the City with crime-heavy messaging, while more positive civic storytelling is less unified.
  - Residents may need to follow multiple accounts to piece together a complete picture of city information.

JOY RIOT





FEBRUARY 5 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

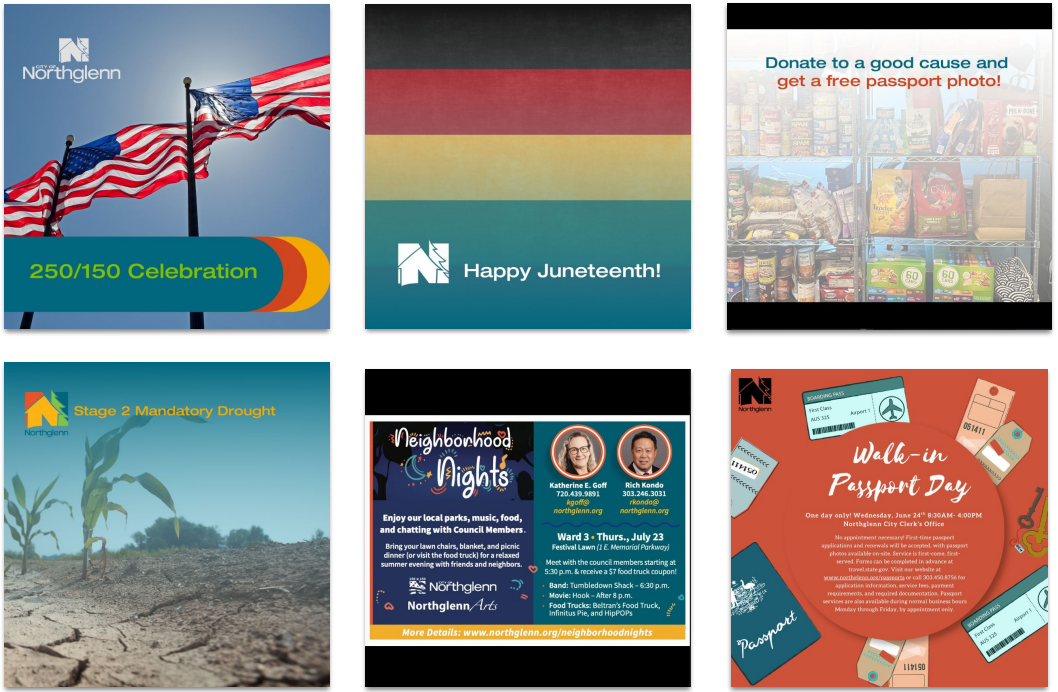
On February 5, a potentially hazardous utilities emergency was reported through the Parks & Recreation channel, with subsequent reposts by the City's Police Department and primary municipal pages. As the situation evolved, follow-up communications were issued inconsistently across platforms.

JOY RIOT

BRAND: 2/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Brand consistency is the weakest area. The city's social presence does not feel unified across channels, departments, or visual styles.
- **Notes:**
  - Graphics are visually inconsistent and feel "all over the place" from account to account.
  - Departmental channels do not appear to share a strong enough visual system, template structure, or content standard.
  - The Police Department's content and tone feel especially disconnected from broader city positioning.
  - The overall presence does not yet feel like one coordinated Northglenn brand with departments speaking from within the same system.

JOY RIOT



INCONSISTENT STYLE PARAMETERS - DEPARTMENTAL

Even within individual departments' social media channels (Above: City Government), posts lack a cohesive visual style, frequently mixing colors, illustration styles, solid backgrounds, gradients, and other treatments without a consistent system.

JOY RIOT









INCONSISTENT STYLE PARAMETERS - INTERDEPARTMENTAL

Visual treatment varies significantly between departments, even for comparable content such as job postings. In some cases, departments use entirely different colors, typography, and graphic styles, with certain materials straying from the City's established brand guidelines altogether.

JOY RIOT

ACTION & ENGAGEMENT: 4/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Social content shares information, but coordination and resident engagement are limited.
- **Notes:**
  - Posts are not consistently coordinated across departments, platforms, or service areas.
  - Resident questions, concerns, and service needs are often not answered or escalated publicly.
  - Lack of visible response can make channels feel one-way rather than community-oriented.
  - Stronger comment management, escalation protocols, and cross-department planning would help turn social media into a more useful resident service channel.



CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Resident questions posted to the City's social media channels frequently receive limited or no direct response. This lack of consistent engagement may create the appearance of unanswered public concerns and reduce confidence in the City's ability to provide timely, accessible information.

JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA: TOTAL ENGAGEMENT

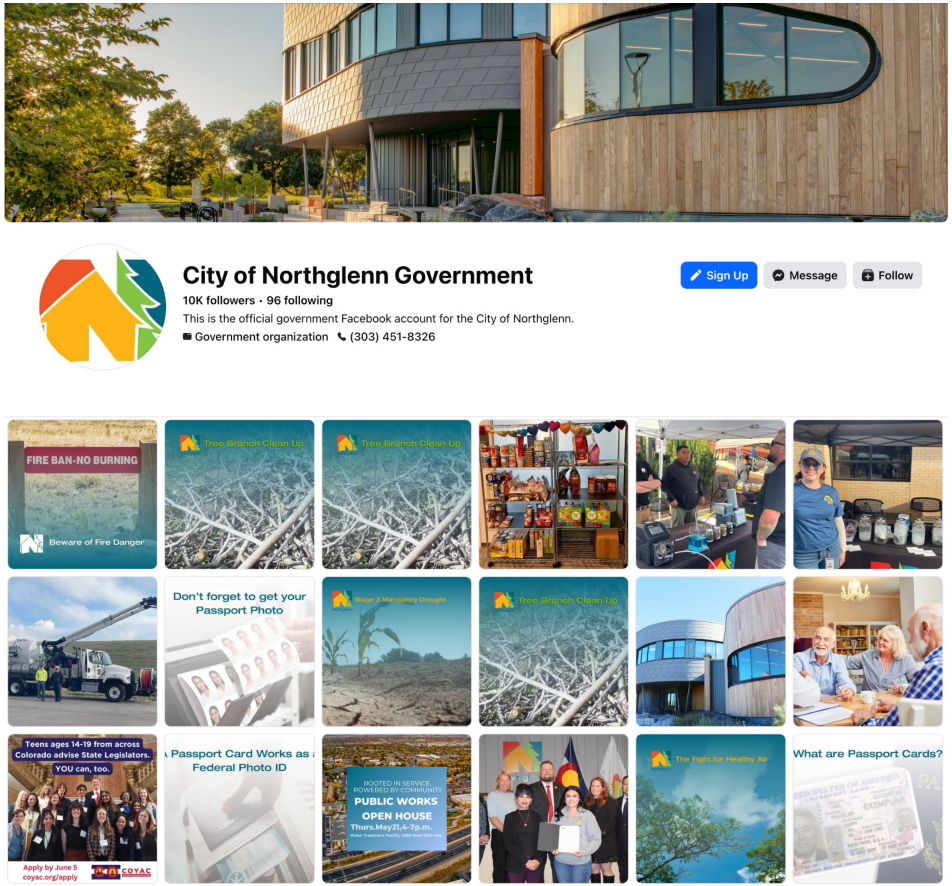
- 21 social media profiles
  - Across 6 social platforms
    - Facebook
    - Instagram
    - X
    - NextDoor
    - LinkedIn
    - YouTube
- Total Followers: ~65,207 across all platforms
- Total Following: 1,466 across all platforms

JOY RIOT

CITY PAGE: FACEBOOK

City of Northglenn Government

- 10K Followers
- 96 Following



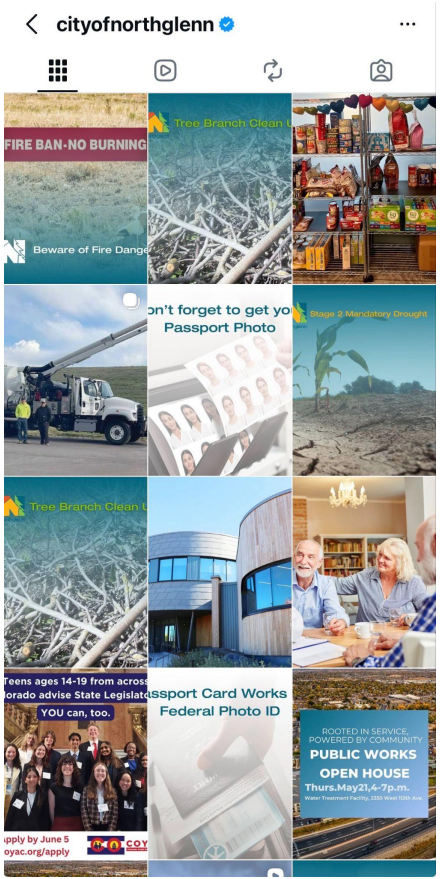
Link to Page: [Here]

CITY PAGE: INSTAGRAM

City of Northglenn

- 2,745 Followers
- 221 Following
- 2,834 Posts





JOY RIOT

Link to Page: Here

CITY PAGE: X

City of Northglenn

- 4,754 Followers
- 262 Following
- 10.8K Posts

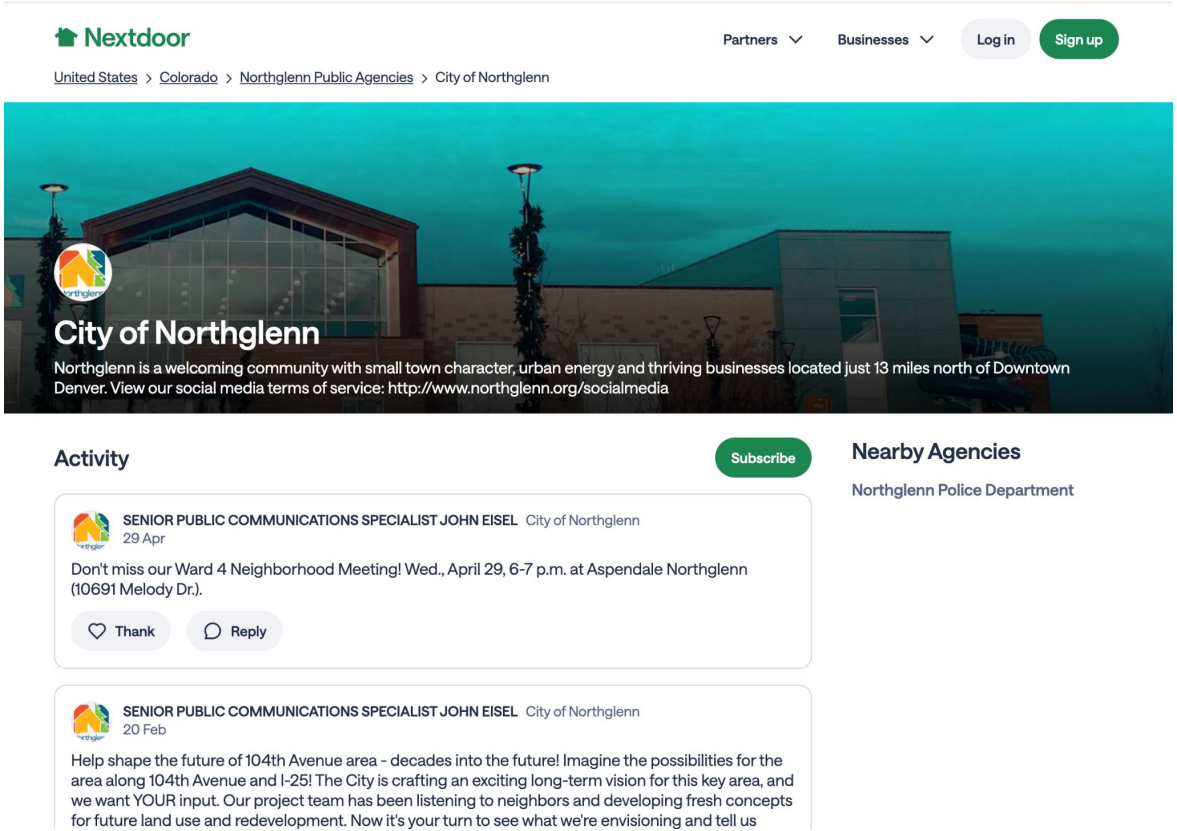


JOY RIOT

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CITY PAGE: NEXTDOOR

City of Northglenn



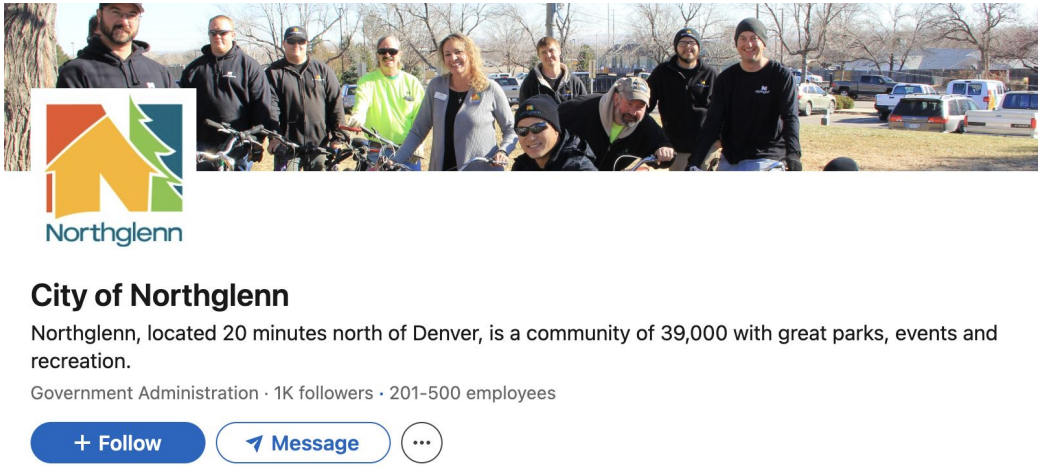
JOY RIOT

Link to Page: Here

CITY PAGE: LINKEDIN

City of Northglenn

- 1,306 Followers

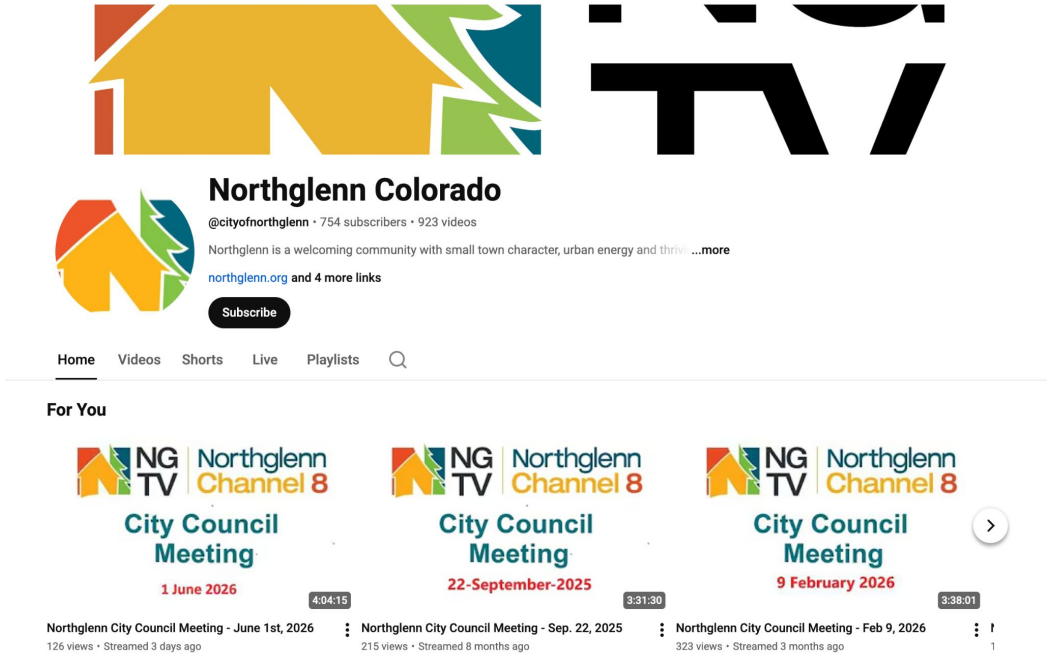


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CITY PAGE: YOUTUBE

Northglenn Colorado

- 754 Subscribers
- 923 Videos



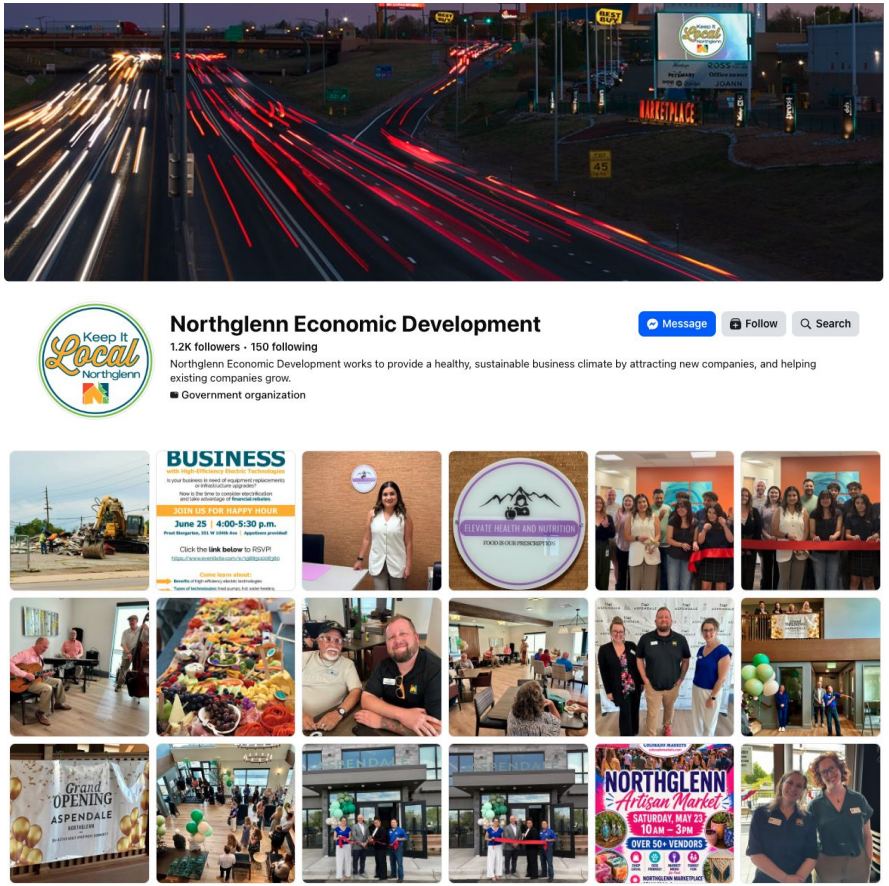
JOY RIOT

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: FACEBOOK

Northglenn Economic Development

- 1.2K Followers
- 150 Following



Link to Page: [Here]

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: LINKEDIN

Northglenn Economic Development

- 62 Followers



Link to Page: Here

PIRATE FEST: FACEBOOK

Northglenn Pirate Fest

- 6.8K Followers
- 48 Following

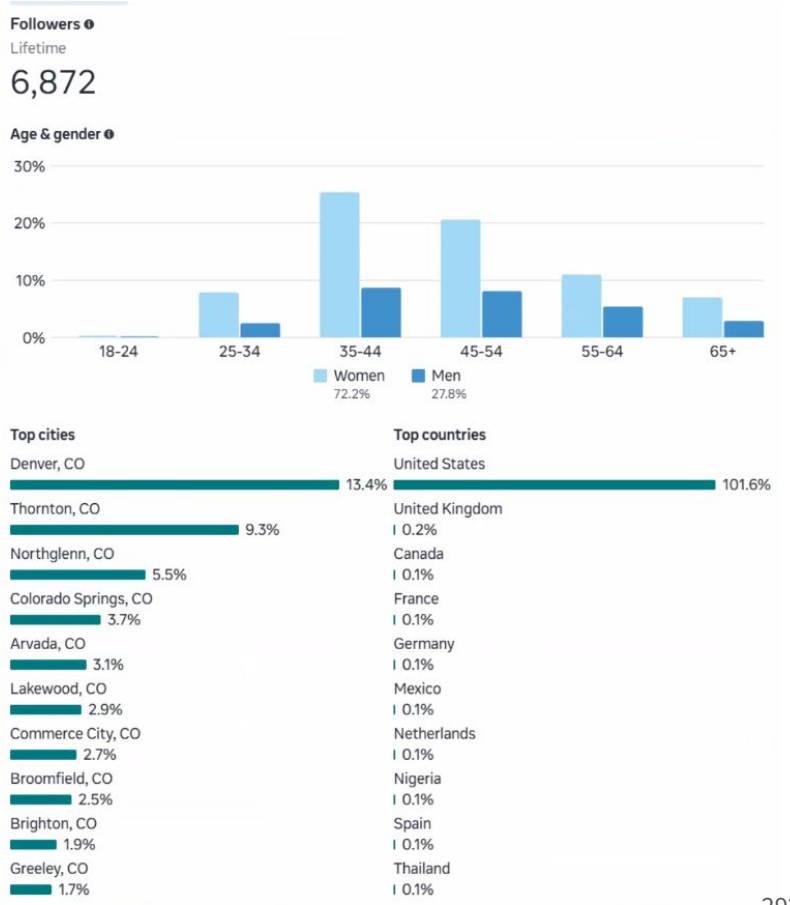


Link to Page: [Here]

PIRATE FEST: FACEBOOK

- Total Views: 55,157
- Total Page Visits: 10.8K
- Total Content Interactions: 899
- Total Link Clicks: 607

Data: 06/01/25 - 09/30/25



JOY RIOT

Link to Page: Here

FOOD TRUCK CARNIVAL: FACEBOOK

Food Truck Carnival

- 8.7K Followers
- 211 Following



Link to Page: Here

FOOD TRUCK CARNIVAL: FACEBOOK

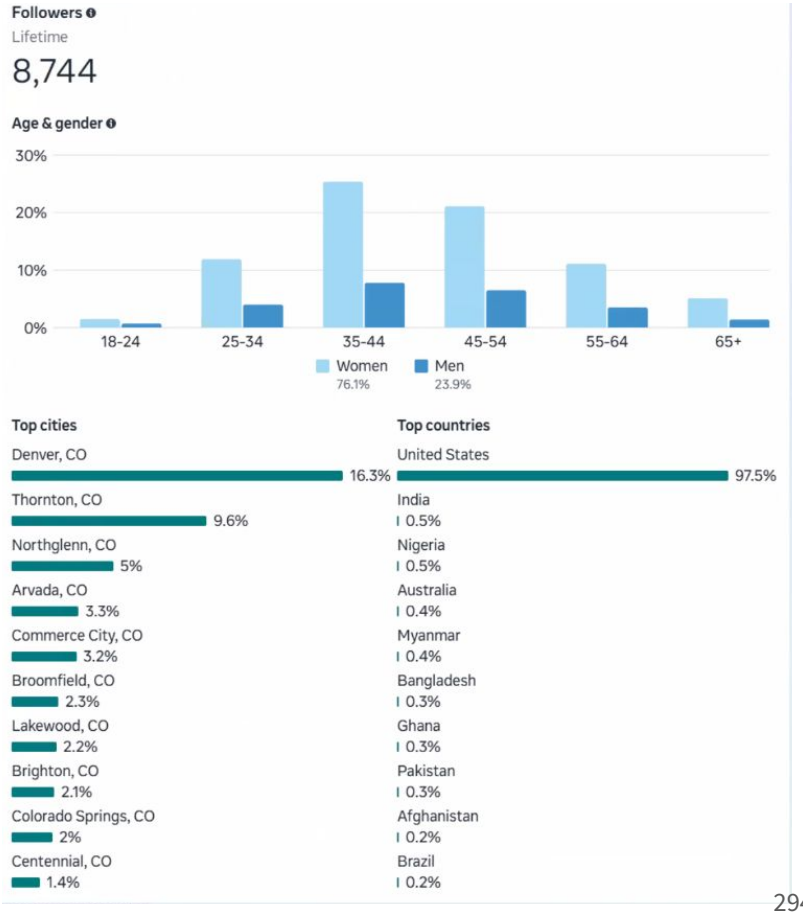
- Total Views: 1.3M
- Total Page Visits: 25.7K
- Total Content Interactions: 1.3K
- Total Link Clicks: 1.9K

Data: 03/01/25 - 06/02/25

- Total Views: 102.9K
- Total Page Visits: 9.8K
- Total Content Interactions: 458K
- Total Link Clicks: 764

Data: 03/01/26 - 06/02/26

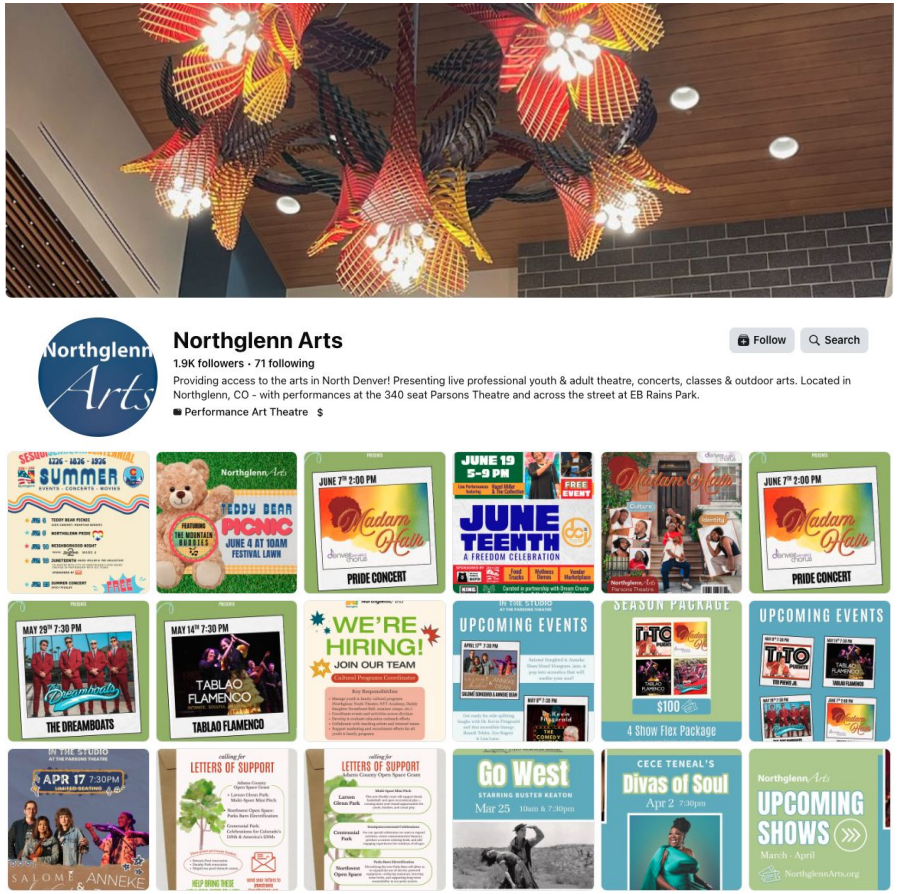
Link to Page: Here



NORTHGLENN ARTS: FACEBOOK

Northglenn Arts

- 1.9K Followers
- 71 Following



Link to Page: [Here]

WIFFLEBALL TOURNAMENT: FACEBOOK

Wiffleball Tournament

- 250 Followers
- 0 Following



JOY RIOT

Link to Page: [Here]

NORTHGLENN ARTS: INSTAGRAM

Northglenn Arts/Parson's Theatre

- 1,104 Followers
- 153 Following
- 574 Posts





JOY RIOT

Link to Page: Here

NORTHGLENN YOUTH THEATRE & ACADEMY: FACEBOOK

Northglenn Youth Theatre and Academy

- 1.3K Followers
- 17 Following



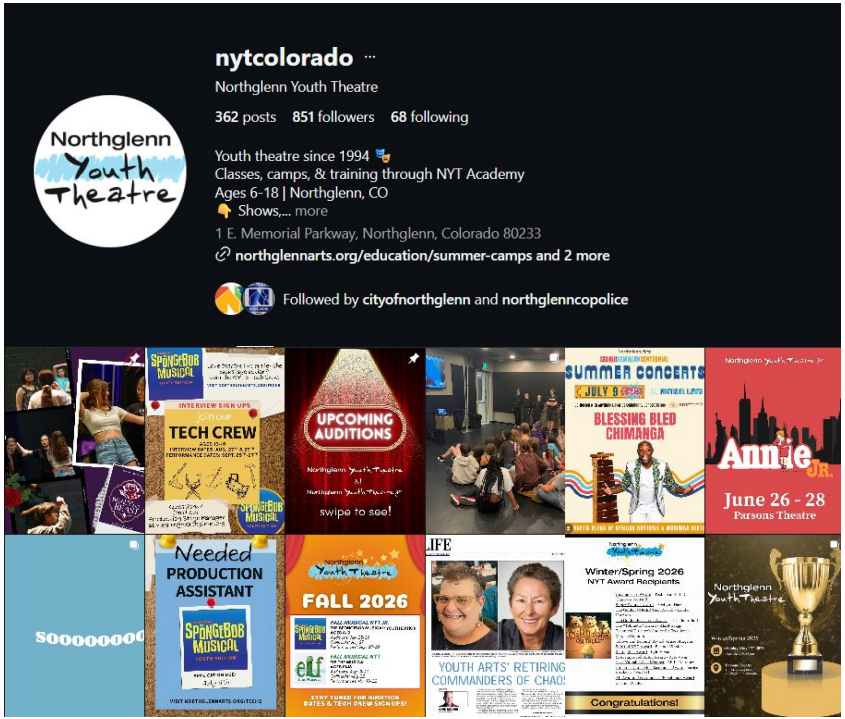
JOY RIOT

Link to Page: [Here]

NORTHGLENN YOUTH THEATRE & ACADEMY: INSTAGRAM

Northglenn Youth Theatre and Academy

- 851 followers
- 68 following
- 362 posts



Link to Page: [Here]

NORTHGLENN FUSION SWIM CLUB: FACEBOOK

Northglenn Fusion Swim Club

- 20 Followers
- 0 Following



JOY RIOT

Link to Page: Here

POLICE: FACEBOOK

Northglenn Police Department

- 17K Followers
- 25 Following



JOY RIOT

Link to Page: [Here]

POLICE: X

Northglenn PD PIO

- 4,218 Followers
- 110 Following
- 785 Posts



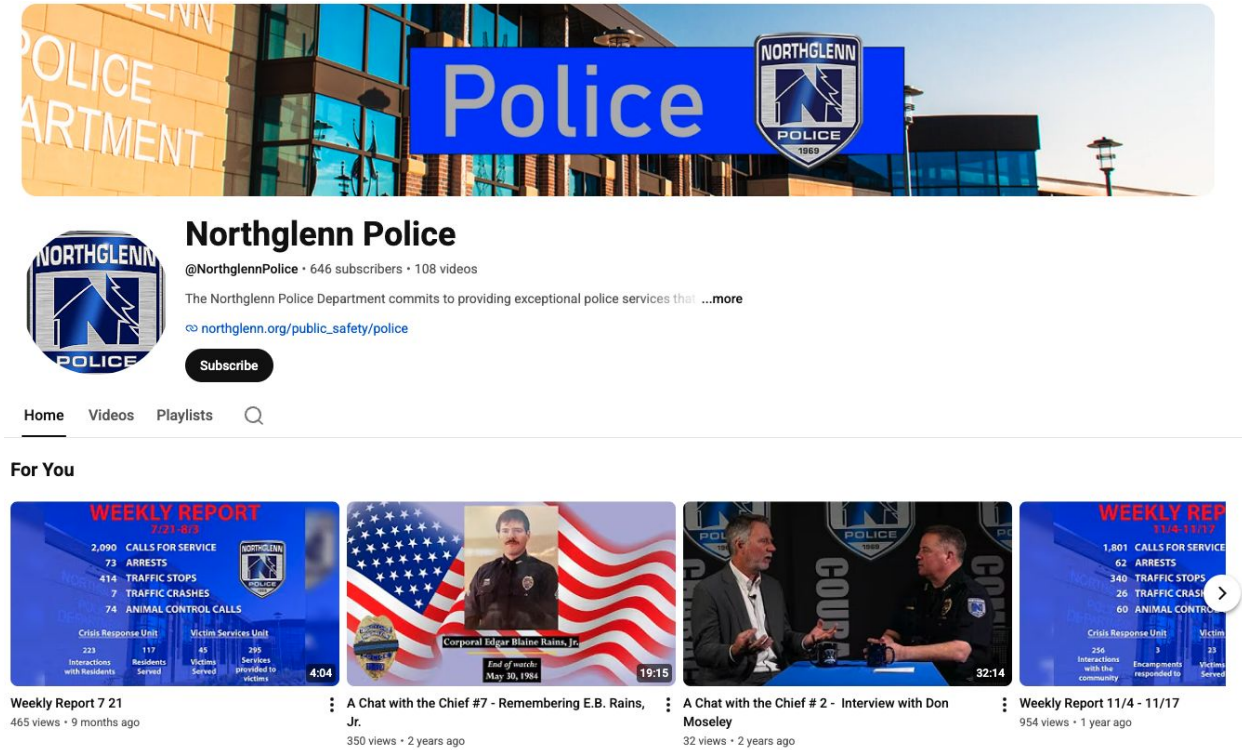
JOY RIOT

Link to Page: Here

POLICE: YOUTUBE

Northglenn Police

- 646 Subscribers
- 108 Videos



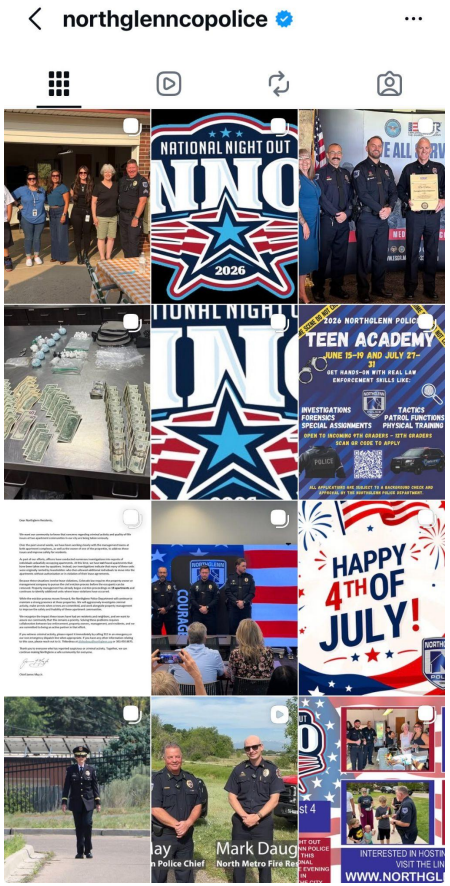
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POLICE: INSTAGRAM

Northglenn Police

- 1,971 Followers
- 31 Following
- 284 Posts





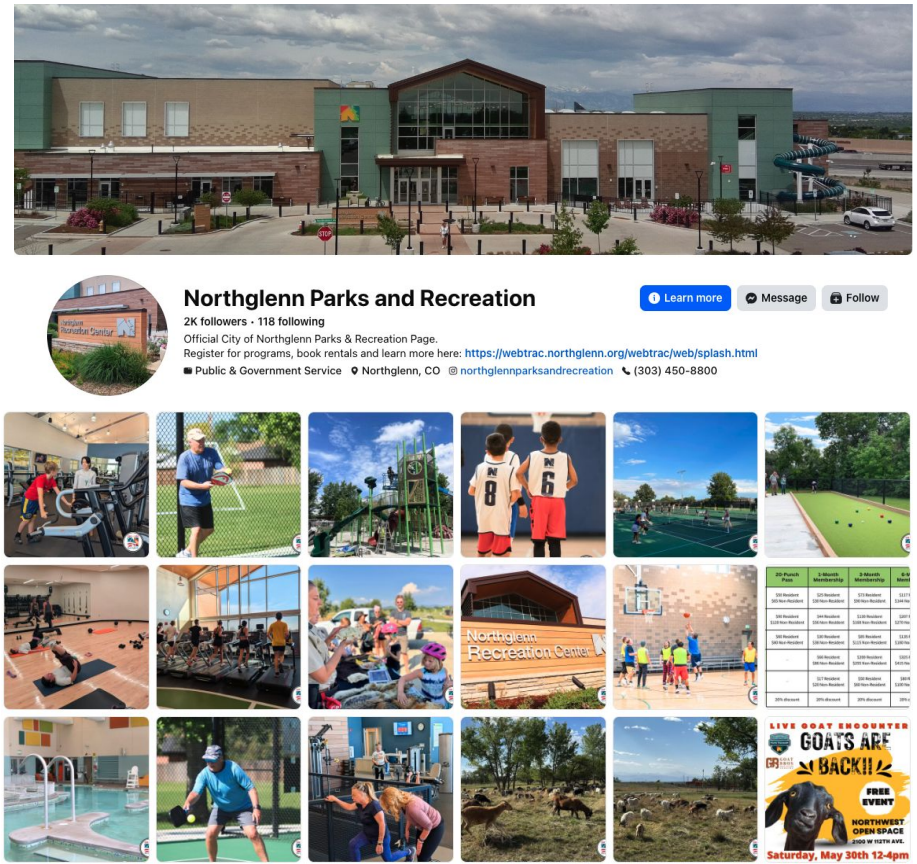
JOY RIOT

Link to Page: Here

PARKS & RECREATION: FACEBOOK

Northglenn Parks and Recreation

- 2K Followers
- 118 Following



JOY RIOT

Link to Page: Here

PARKS & RECREATION: INSTAGRAM

Northglenn Parks and Recreation

- 856 Followers
- 89 Following
- 1,679 Posts





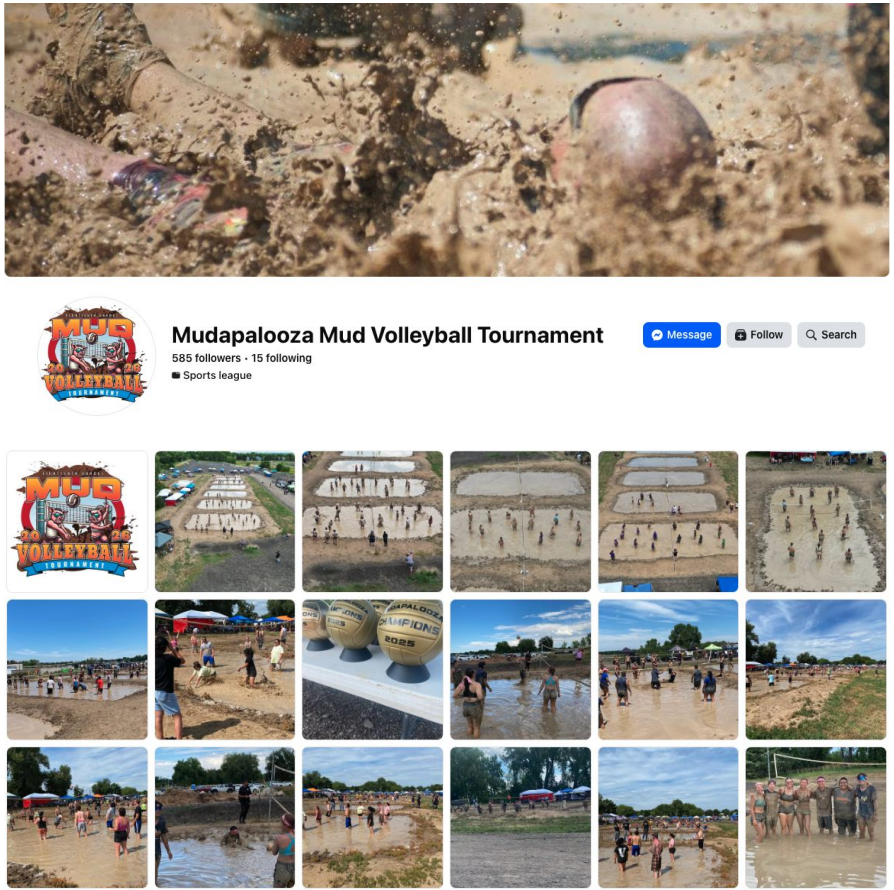
JOY RIOT

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MUDAPALOOZA: FACEBOOK

Mudapalooza Mud Volleyball Tournament

- 585 Followers
- 15 Following



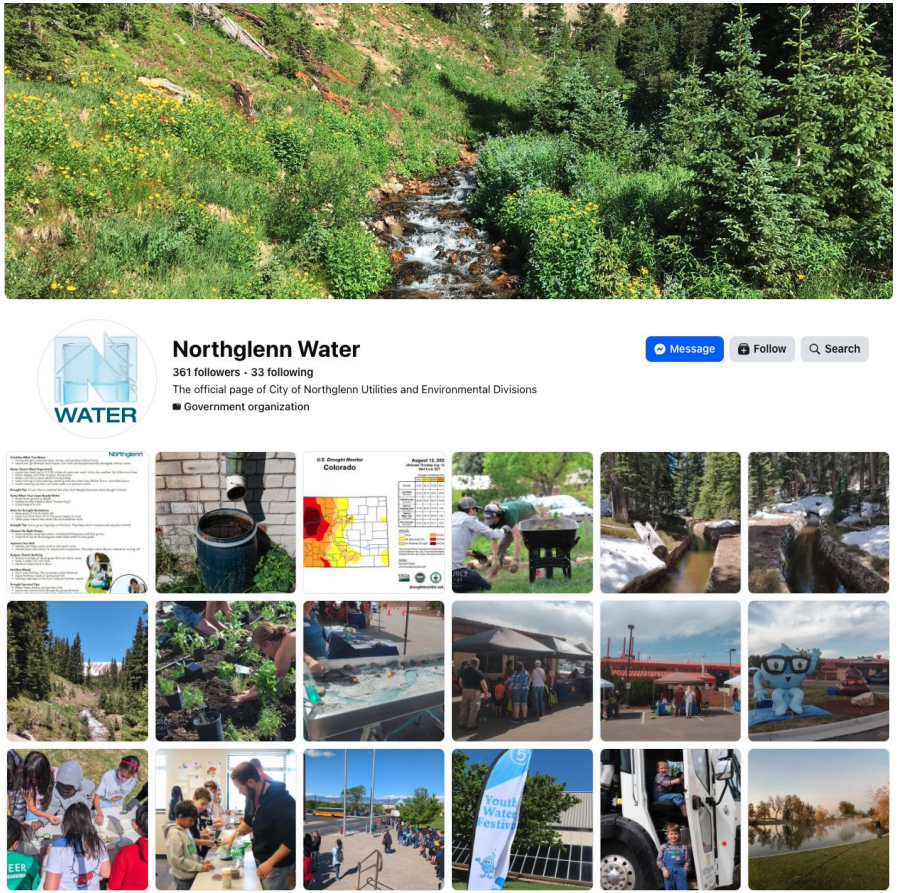
JOY RIOT

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NORTHGLENN WATER: FACEBOOK

Northglenn Water

- 361 Followers
- 33 Following



Link to Page: Here

NORTHGLENN SENIORS: FACEBOOK

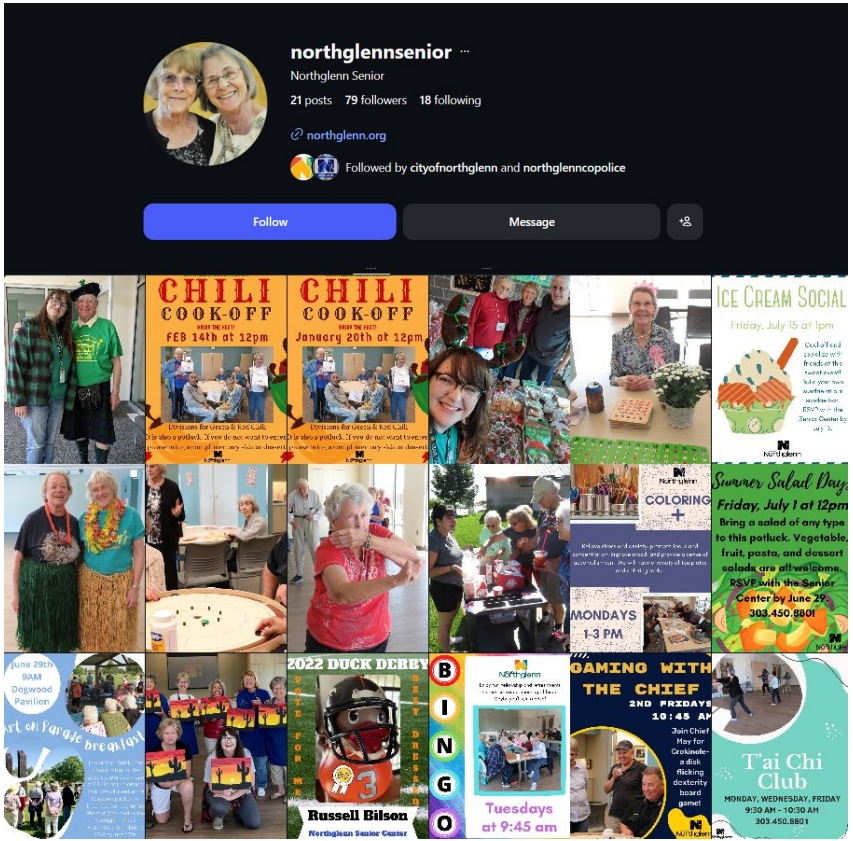
- 173 Followers
- 25 Following



Link to Page: [Here]

NORTHGLENN SENIORS: INSTAGRAM

- 79 Followers
- 18 Following
- 21 Posts

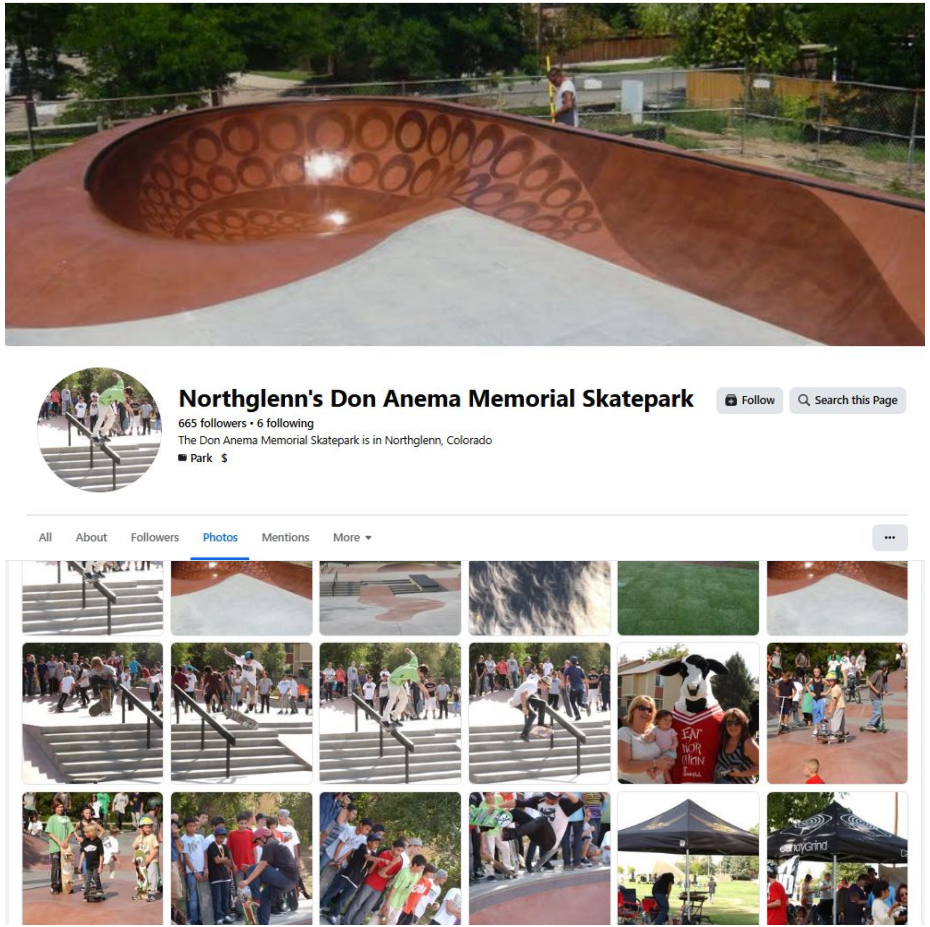


JOY RIOT

Link to Page: [Here]

DON ANEMA MEM. SKATEPARK: FACEBOOK

- 665 Followers
- 6 Following



Link to Page: [Here]

NEWSLETTERS

NEWSLETTER ASSESSMENT SCORE: 39/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Subject lines and headlines are clear, specific, and scannable	4
Content is organized for quick reading	3
ACCESSIBILITY	
Layouts are mobile-friendly and easy to read	2
Key information is placed prominently	4
USER EXPERIENCE	
Links and calls to action (CTAs) are clear and easy to access	4
Newsletters direct readers to useful city resources	4
BRAND	
Design is consistent with the City's brand	4
Newsletters balances news, services, events, and community updates	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Content is timely, useful, and relevant to the audience(s)	5
Content encourages continued engagement or readership	5
TOTAL	**39/50**

NEWSLETTER OVERVIEW

- **The Northglenn Connection**
  - A comprehensive, resident-facing city print newsletter.
- **The E-Connection**
  - A comprehensive, resident-facing city digital e-newsletter.
- **The Business Connection**
  - A targeted economic development e-newsletter for Northglenn's business community.
- **Recreation E-Newsletter**
  - A targeted e-newsletter featuring recreation programs, classes, activities, and events.
- **The Northglenn Catalyst**
  - A targeted economic development e-newsletter for developers, brokers, and property owners
- **Northglenn Arts**
  - A targeted arts and culture e-newsletter featuring programs, performances, events, and updates.

JOY RIOT

CLARITY: 7/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Headlines and section topics are generally clear, specific, and easy to understand, but all six newsletters could improve scannability by reducing dense copy and strengthening hierarchy.
- **Notes:**
  - Headlines clearly identify key topics relevant to each individual publication, such as drought restrictions, business grants, new businesses, and SBA resources.
  - The Northglenn Connection includes helpful section labels and an “In This Edition” overview to orient readers.
  - All newsletters at times include long text blocks that make it harder for readers to quickly pull out the most important information.

ACCESSIBILITY: 7/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Accessibility is mixed. Constant Contact enables readable and linear email formats, while the Northglenn Connection's print-style layout may be harder to read on mobile or for users with accessibility needs.
- **Notes:**
  - E-newsletters use a simpler, generally single-column structure that supports easier reading.
  - Some content is still dense, and embedded graphics limit accessibility if important information is not available as readable text.
  - The Northglenn Connection is visually organized, but relies heavily on small text, sidebars, charts, and multi-column layouts.

USER EXPERIENCE: 9/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Newsletters do a strong job helping readers find useful city resources, take next steps, and connect with relevant departments or services.
- **Notes:**
  - E-newsletters generally use clear CTAs such as “Visit our Website,” “Vote Today,” “More Info,” “Book an Appointment,” and “Learn More.”
  - Distinction between general and departmental E-newsletters allow residents to access relevant news while allowing room for departmental expertise to shine.
  - The Northglenn Connection functions well as a resident reference tool, with city contacts, meeting information, safety guidance, surveys, event details, and service links.
  - The Northglenn Connection newsletter is especially strong at connecting readers to multiple city departments and resources in one place.

JOY RIOT

BRAND: 8/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Newsletters feel consistent with Northglenn's civic identity, though the June newsletter presents a more developed and recognizable publication style.
- **Notes:**
  - Newsletters use consistent city branding, colors, logos, and public-service language while covering resident and departmental interests.
  - The Business Connection feels functional and on-brand, but its repeated boxed content blocks can feel visually repetitive.
  - The Northglenn Connection has a stronger-than-average publication identity, with recurring sections, category labels, photography, and civic storytelling.

JOY RIOT

ACTION & ENGAGEMENT: 9/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - This is the strongest category across all newsletters. Content is timely, useful, and consistently encourages readers to take action or stay connected.
- **Notes:**
  - The Business Connection and Catalyst newsletters encourage business engagement through grant opportunities, business recognition, voting, new business spotlights, and resource links.
  - The Northglenn Connection encourages broader civic engagement through events, council participation, surveys, public safety updates, recreation, and community resources.
  - Arts and Recreation e-Newsletters create convey clear opportunities for participation

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS

Note: The Print assessment included, but was not limited to, PRC activity guides, water quality reports, strategic plans, departmental and interdepartmental flyers, municipal court monthly reports, annual budgets, and printed schedules.

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 38/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of the piece is immediately clear	4
Key message is understood within seconds	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Typography, spacing, and contrast are both legible and accessible	4
Contact information is easy to find	3
USER EXPERIENCE	
Copy is concise, useful, and easy to scan	4
Visual hierarchy guides the reader effectively	4
BRAND	
Design reflects the City's brand system	4
Graphics and/or visuals support the message	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Content reflects audience(s) needs	4
Materials include a clear next step, QR code, URL, and/or call to action (CTA)	2
TOTAL	**38/50**

OVERALL PRINT MEDIA ASSESSMENT: 38/50

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Northglenn's print materials are generally clear, useful, and visually organized, with many pieces communicating their purpose quickly.
  - The strongest materials feel polished and aligned with the City's brand, especially longer guides and strategic planning documents.
  - The biggest opportunities are CTA consistency, department-to-department brand consistency, and accessibility, especially where contrast or contact information is weak.
- **Notes:**
  - Longer documents tend to include more complete information and contacts.
  - Some department-specific materials feel less connected to the broader city identity.
  - Accessibility issues appear when color contrast is pushed too far, such as white text on bright/neon green backgrounds.

JOY RIOT

CLARITY: 9/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Print materials generally communicate their purpose and key message quickly, especially in major public-facing documents.
- **Notes:**
  - The Water Quality Report immediately communicates its purpose through a large title, annual label, and public water system information.
  - The Parks, Recreation & Culture Guide clearly signals its role as a seasonal activity and program guide.
  - The Strategic Plan materials quickly establish their purpose through strong titling and supporting language like “Imagine the Possibilities” and “Empowering Change, Delivering Results.”
  - Some smaller or more promotional pieces could benefit from clearer framing around who the piece is for and what action the reader should take.

JOY RIOT

ACCESSIBILITY: 7/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Typography, spacing, and contrast are generally functional, but accessibility is inconsistent across materials.
- **Notes:**
  - Longer documents like the Water Quality Report use structured sections, clear headings, and contact blocks that make information easier to follow.
  - Contact information is included in more comprehensive documents, but is missing or less prominent on some shorter materials.
  - The Parks, Recreation & Culture Guide uses large, bold type and clear section callouts, but some color combinations create contrast concerns.
  - White text on bright/neon green backgrounds, such as on the Culture Guide buttons, may create legibility and accessibility issues.

USER EXPERIENCE: 8/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Most materials are easy to scan and use strong hierarchy to guide the reader, though some pieces could simplify the path to action.
- **Notes:**
  - Covers and major documents use strong visual hierarchy, with large headlines, supporting labels, and clear content sections.
  - The Strategic Plan Overview uses icons, numbered focus areas, and a circular graphic to make complex information more digestible.
  - Some pieces include a lot of visual activity, which can make the most important next step less obvious.

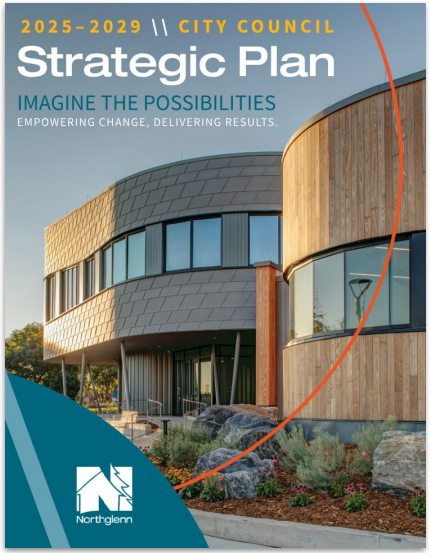
JOY RIOT

BRAND: 8/10

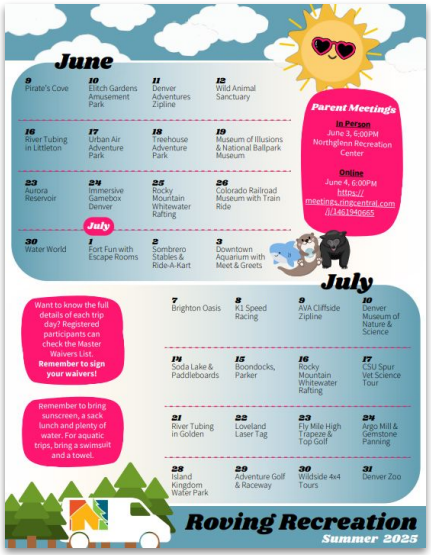
- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Many print pieces reflect a shared Northglenn identity, but consistency varies between departments and document types.
- **Notes:**
  - The Strategic Plan and Water Quality Report feel polished, official, and aligned with the City's broader brand system.
  - The Parks, Recreation & Culture Guides use a distinct recreation-focused style but lack visual consistency with the city's broader communications materials.
  - Brand consistency appears strongest within individual departments, but weaker across departments.
  - Graphics and photography generally support the message, but the overall system would benefit from tighter cross-department design standards.

JOY RIOT









INCONSISTENT STYLE PARAMETERS

The City's print materials appear to lack a consistently applied brand system, with noticeable variation in typography, color use, layout structure, and graphic style across publications. Please note that the attached examples are illustrative and do not represent the full range of materials, channels, or individual instances reviewed as part of the audit.

JOY RIOT

ACTION & ENGAGEMENT: 6/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Northglenn's print materials are generally informative and audience-relevant, but they often stop short of driving clear action. Many pieces explain what something is, but do not make the next step obvious enough for the reader.
- **Notes:**
  - Several materials lack a strong CTA, QR code, URL, or clearly visible "what to do next" pathway.
  - Longer documents, like the Water Quality Report, include helpful contact information, but shorter or more promotional pieces are less consistent.
  - Overall, the materials are useful once someone is already interested, but they do not consistently convert attention into action.

JOY RIOT

VIDEO

JOY RIOT

VIDEO ASSESSMENT SCORE: 30/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose is clear within the first few seconds	5
Key messages are communicated clearly and effectively	3
ACCESSIBILITY	
Captions and/or accessibility supports are included	4
Tone is authentic, inclusive, and appropriate for local government	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Visuals support audience(s) understanding of the message	3
Video length is appropriate for the platform and audience(s)	4
BRAND	
Content aligns with city's communication goals	1
Audio, visuals, and editing are professional and clear	2
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Openings capture audience(s) attention quickly	2
Desired takeaway and/or next steps are clear	1
TOTAL	**30/50**

VIDEO

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - The City channel is generally appropriate but often lacks strong audience purpose, polished production, and clear next steps.
  - The Police Department channel is a major brand concern: its heavy focus on crime, arrests, and alarming statistics can make Northglenn feel unsafe and enforcement-driven, which works against broader city messaging.
- **Notes:**
  - Videos often explain what is happening, but not always why it matters to the audience.
  - Many videos lack a strong opening hook or clear closing CTA.
  - Audio and editing quality are inconsistent, which weakens professionalism.
  - Stock effects and static overlays make some content feel generic or dated.
  - Public safety content needs stronger balance between transparency, prevention, service, trust-building, and community partnership.

JOY RIOT

CLARITY: 8/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Video topics are usually clear early, but the key message is not always framed around audience value.
- **Notes:**
  - Most videos make the general subject clear within the first few seconds.
  - Key messages are communicated adequately, but often feel more information-based than strategic.
  - Videos like “Get to Know the Jr. Nuggets Program 2026” lack a clear audience purpose or reason to keep watching.
  - Stronger intros should quickly answer: who is this for, why does it matter, and what should the viewer take away?

JOY RIOT

ACCESSIBILITY: 9/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Tone is generally appropriate for local government, and captions/accessibility supports appear to be included, but audio issues can still limit accessibility.
- **Notes:**
  - Captions and/or accessibility supports help make the content more usable.
  - The tone is generally authentic, inclusive, and appropriate for city communications.
  - City videos tend to feel community-oriented and service-focused.
  - Poor sound quality can make some videos difficult to follow, even when captions are available.

USER EXPERIENCE: 7/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Video length is generally appropriate, but visuals do not always help viewers understand or stay engaged with the message.
- **Notes:**
  - Most videos hover around 3–4 minutes, which is reasonable for YouTube and local government content.
  - Static overlays and stock effects make some videos feel generic or dated.
  - Visuals do not always clarify the message or add meaningful context.
  - Stronger pacing, transitions, and visual hierarchy would make videos easier to follow.

BRAND: 3/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Content does not consistently support Northglenn's broader communication goals, especially on the Police Department channel.
- **Notes:**
  - City videos are generally on-topic but do not always reinforce a broader story about Northglenn.
  - Audio, visuals, and editing quality are inconsistent, which weakens professionalism.
  - Police videos often emphasize crime, arrests, and negative statistics in a way that can make the City feel unsafe.
  - This approach may be transparent, but it does not help position Northglenn as welcoming, livable, service-oriented, or community-centered.



YOUTUBE THUMBNAILS

YouTube thumbnails use inconsistent fonts, colors, and visual treatments, preventing videos from feeling like part of a cohesive series and making it more difficult for users to immediately identify them as official City communications while scrolling.

JOY RIOT







POLICE DEPARTMENT BI-WEEKLY REPORTS

The Police Department's YouTube presence places significant emphasis on arrest footage, alarming crime statistics, and thumbnails featuring narcotics, firearms, and other enforcement imagery. While intended to demonstrate public safety activity, this presentation may unintentionally portray the City as more dangerous or disorderly, weakening broader efforts to communicate Northglenn as a safe, welcoming, and community-oriented place.

https://youtu.be/hEDzgLSLR8w
https://youtu.be/YnimKMQIKxg
https://youtu.be/Bkj7aMJxsMs

JOY RIOT

SIGNAGE

JOY RIOT

SIGNAGE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 41/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of signage is immediately clear	2
Messages are concise and easy to understand	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Text size, contrast, and layout are both accessible and legible	3
Icons and/or symbols are clear and universally understood	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Signage helps users navigate, decide, or take action	1
Signage is placed where users need/look for the information	3
BRAND	
Design aligns with the City's visual identity	1
Signage feels maintained, professional, and trustworthy	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
The most important information is visible first	5
Hierarchy of information is clear from the intended viewing distance	3
TOTAL	32

CLARITY: 6/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Northglenn's signage is generally clear and easy to understand, with most signs communicating their purpose quickly. Some instances, however, fail to effectively establish a sense of place.
- **Notes:**
  - Most signage has an immediately clear function, whether it is directional, facility-based, park-related, or informational.
  - Tier 3 signage falls short in wayfinding and placemaking, when present at all.
  - Messages are typically concise and easy to understand.
  - The main clarity issue appears on hanging street lamp banners, where text can be too small to read from a distance, particularly while driving.

ACCESSIBILITY: 8/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Signage is generally legible and accessible, but some text sizing creates challenges depending on viewing distance and context.
- **Notes:**
  - Icons and symbols appear clear and easy to understand, supporting quick recognition.
  - Most signage uses accessible layouts and visual cues that make information easy to process.
  - Some hanging streetlamp banners have text that is too small for the intended viewing distance (right).
  - Larger type and simpler message hierarchy would improve readability from afar, especially along roadways.



JOY RIOT

USER EXPERIENCE: 4/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Signage does not effectively support navigation or create a strong sense of place that distinguishes Northglenn from surrounding municipalities.
- **Notes:**
  - Recreation Center signage is clear, useful, and easy to follow, but that level of support is not carried consistently across the City.
  - Signs are generally located where residents and visitors would expect to find information.
  - Brand standards are applied inconsistently across departments, facilities, and locations.
  - Tier 2 signage is too small and underutilized, limiting its ability to clearly signal when someone has entered or left Northglenn.

JOY RIOT

BRAND: 6/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Northglenn's signage is generally professional and well-maintained, but inconsistencies weaken the combined brand experience.
- **Notes:**
  - Jaycee Park uses a different signage format and shares sign space with private businesses, making it feel disconnected from the broader city signage system.
  - Key facilities, including the Justice Center, parks, and Recreation Center, use different signage styles rather than a unified visual approach.
  - Tier 2 arterial signage does not consistently follow brand standards and varies noticeably between locations.



NORTHGLENN RECREATION CENTER SIGNAGE



NORTHGLENN POLICE DEPT. & JUSTICE CENTER SIGNAGE



PARK & OPEN SPACE SIGNAGE

Department-level signage is generally consistent within each individual department, but the City does not appear to apply a unified signage system across departments. This creates visual fragmentation, making City facilities and services feel disconnected rather than part of a cohesive municipal brand.

JOY RIOT



JAYCEE PARK SIGNAGE

Jaycee Park's parking lot/entryway signage appears to deviate from the broader Parks & Recreation signage system, with signage that shares visual space and style cues with adjacent retail uses.



POLE SIGNAGE

Lamppost signage across the city uses inconsistent typography and visual styles, reducing cohesion within the broader municipal signage system.

ACTION & ENGAGEMENT: 8/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - The most important information is usually visible first, but hierarchy can break down when signage is viewed from a distance.
- **Notes:**
  - Signage generally prioritizes the most important information well.
  - Directional and facility signage tends to make the key takeaway clear quickly.
  - Some hanging banners do not maintain strong hierarchy from their intended viewing distance.
  - Larger type, fewer words, and stronger contrast would help ensure key messages are readable at a glance.

EVENT COMMUNICATIONS

JOY RIOT

EVENTS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 35/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Event purposes are clearly communicated	3
Essential details are easy to find; including date, time, location, and registration	2
ACCESSIBILITY	
Presentations and materials are accessible and easy to understand	4
Attendees can easily navigate the event experience	4
USER EXPERIENCE	
Events feel organized, welcoming, and professional	4
Events create meaningful opportunities for participation or feedback	4
BRAND	
Branding, signage, and materials are consistent and clear	4
Promotion reaches the intended audience(s) effectively	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Timely follow-ups post-event share outcomes and/or next steps	2
Community voices are encouraged and heard	4
TOTAL	**35/50**

CLARITY : 5/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Event topics are generally understandable, but the purpose, audience value, and essential details are not always communicated as clearly or consistently as they could be.
- **Notes:**
  - Northglenn's main events page lists major seasonal events, including Food Truck Carnival, Northglenn Pride, Neighborhood Nights, July 4 Festival, Pirate Fest, and Noel Northglenn.
  - Some individual event pages provide strong basics, such as July 4 date, time, location, schedule, parking, rain plan, and FAQs.
  - Other pages are less complete. For example, Neighborhood Nights explains the general purpose, but several 2026 details are still listed as TBD.
  - Registration or participation details are not always immediately clear, especially when users are moving between city pages, external event sites, arts pages, or recreation registration.

JOY RIOT

ACCESSIBILITY: 8/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Northglenn shows meaningful accessibility effort, especially through sensory supports and practical arrival information, but accessibility details are not consistently centralized across event pages.
- **Notes:**
  - DISE planning includes sensory backpack stations for major events like Food Truck Carnival, Pride, Juneteenth, and Noel Northglenn, with a stated goal of improving promotion through enhanced signage.
  - Pirate Fest provides stronger navigation support, including road closure information, bike stations, bus access, walking directions, rideshare, and disabled parking locations.
  - Accessibility would be stronger if every major event page included a standard section for ADA access, mobility routes, sensory supports, restrooms, language access, and accessibility contacts.
  - Northglenn Arts' accessibility information is largely focused on digital compliance, with limited guidance on in-person accommodations for performances, classes, and venue experiences.

JOY RIOT

USER EXPERIENCE: 8/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Northglenn's events appear organized, welcoming, and well-attended, with strong opportunities for community connection and participation.
- **Notes:**
  - Major events show strong attendance, including Food Truck Carnival, July 4 Fest, Pirate Fest, and Noel Northglenn.
  - Survey data shows most attendees reported no significant barriers getting to Pirate Fest or Noel Northglenn, with parking being the most common issue among those who did report challenges.
  - Northglenn Arts landing pages often require additional navigation before users reach actionable details such as dates, pricing, availability or registration.
  - ***The city collects attendee feedback and uses event evaluation internally, but public-facing post-event recaps, review opportunities, and "what we heard / what changed" follow-ups appear limited.***

JOY RIOT

BRAND: 8/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Northglenn's events generally support a strong civic brand: active, family-friendly, inclusive, local, and community-oriented.
- **Notes:**
  - The event mix supports several city brand goals, including recreation, belonging, local pride, business/vendor visibility, and civic participation.
  - Promotion appears to reach audiences through multiple channels. A Pirate Fest survey found attendees first heard about the event through word of mouth, signage around town, and social media.
  - Northglenn Arts webpages contain minor copy and formatting errors across key pages, which can reduce clarity and weaken confidence in the information presented.
  - The main opportunity is consistency: event pages, external microsites, registration paths, and supporting materials should feel more unified under one Northglenn event system.

JOY RIOT

ACTION & ENGAGEMENT: 6/10

- **Overall Assessment:**
  - Events create meaningful opportunities for participation, but post-event follow-up could be more visible and outcome-oriented.
- **Notes:**
  - Northglenn Arts' action pathways are fragmented across multiple platforms and websites.
  - Community voices are encouraged through events like Neighborhood Nights, which explicitly invites residents to engage with City Council and staff.
  - The city has used event surveys, including a Pirate Fest survey with 127 participants, to understand awareness, attendance patterns, barriers, and desired future activities.
  - Broader community feedback opportunities also appear around city initiatives, such as DISE Board and Centennial Park surveys.
  - The gap is public-facing follow-up. There is evidence that staff reviews feedback, but fewer clear examples of post-event summaries that say what was heard, what changed, or what residents should do next.

APPENDIX D: COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

JOY RIOT



JOY RIOT

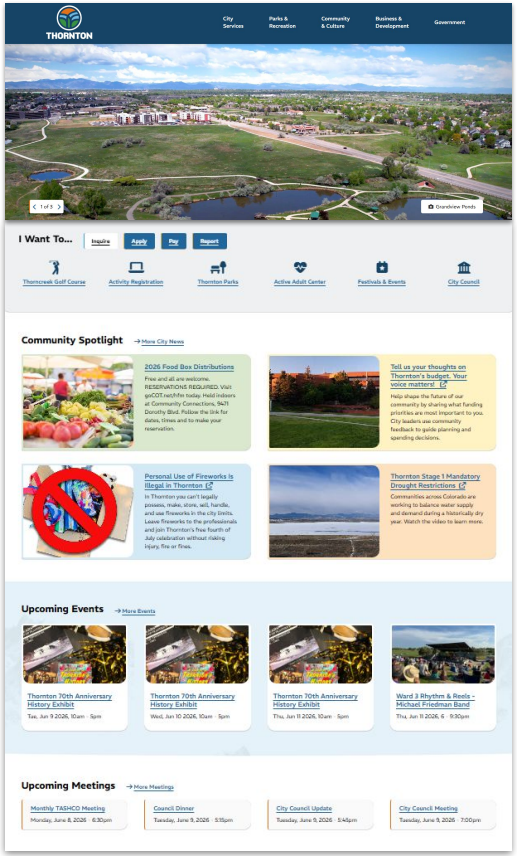
WEBSITE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 41/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Language is clear, plain, and accessible to public audiences	4
Important information is current, accurate, and easy to scan	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
The site is mobile-friendly and accessible	2
Contact information is easy to locate	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Information is easy to find within 1–2 clicks	4
Key services and actions are easy to complete	5
BRAND	
The design reflects the City's brand, priorities, and professionalism	4
Content is organized around user needs rather than internal departments	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Navigation labels intuitive and resident-focused	5
The search function returns useful and relevant results	3
TOTAL	**41/50**

WEBSITE

- Strengths
  - Clear, resident-friendly language
  - The site groups high-demand services into practical categories
  - Contact information is easy to locate
    - Thornton provides a centralized Department Contacts page with phone numbers and emails for major services
  - Professional, service-oriented brand experience
    - The site feels polished and municipal without being overly formal, balancing city priorities with practical resident tools.
- Weaknesses
  - 7.7 AIM Score (Average)
  - 5 Violations
  - 13 Potential Violations



JOY RIOT

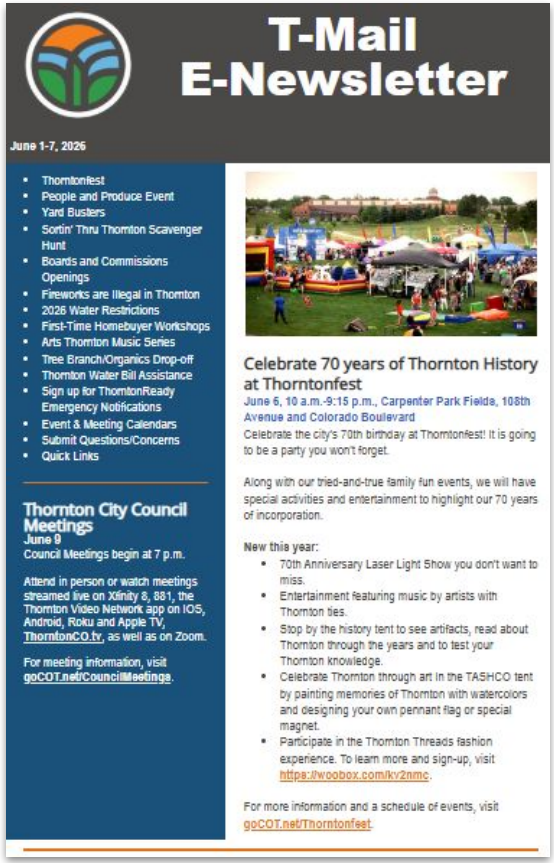
NEWSLETTER ASSESSMENT SCORE: 43/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Subject lines and headlines are clear, specific, and scannable	4
Content is organized for quick reading	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Layouts are mobile-friendly and easy to read	4
Key information is placed prominently	4
USER EXPERIENCE	
Links and calls to action (CTAs) are clear and easy to access	5
Newsletters direct readers to useful city resources	5
BRAND	
Design is consistent with the City's brand	3
Newsletters balances news, services, events, and community updates	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Content is timely, useful, and relevant to the audience(s)	4
Content encourages continued engagement or readership	5
TOTAL	**43/50**

NEWSLETTER

- Strengths
  - Clear, scannable headlines
  - Key information is placed prominently
    - High-priority dates, times, locations, deadlines, and eligibility details are included directly in each section
  - Consistent city resource hub
    - Quick Links at the bottom connect readers to City Contacts, reinforcing the newsletter as a practical gateway back to city services.
- Weaknesses
  - CTAs could be visually stronger
    - CTAs appear as basic text links rather than clear buttons or action-oriented prompts.
  - Too many competing links can dilute priority
  - Inconsistent color choices weaken brand recognition



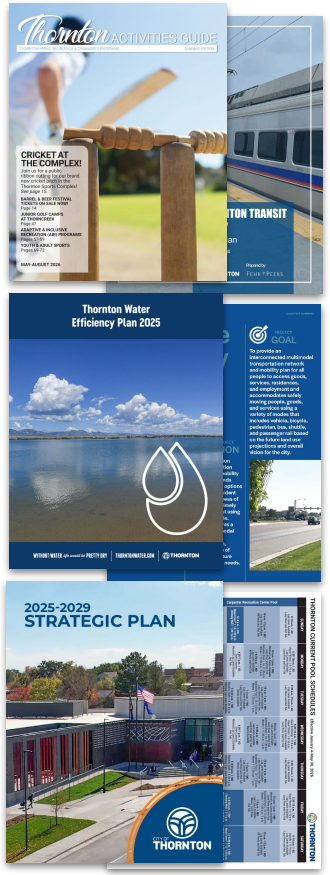
PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 30/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of the piece is immediately clear	5
Key message(s) are understandable within seconds	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Are typography, spacing, and contrast legible and accessible?	1
Is contact information easy to find?	3
USER EXPERIENCE	
Is the copy concise, useful, and easy to scan?	2
Does the visual hierarchy guide the reader effectively?	4
BRAND	
Does the design reflect the City's brand system?	2
Do graphics or visuals support the message?	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Does the content reflect audience needs?	3
Does the piece include a clear next step, QR code, URL, or call to action?	2
TOTAL	**30/50**

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS

- Weaknesses
  - Accessibility issues appear across print materials
    - Some documents have color contrast concerns, and materials are not always fully tagged for ADA compliance.
  - Brand standards are applied inconsistently
    - Thornton's logo, colors, type treatments, and layout styles vary across documents, making the print system feel less unified.
  - No clear overall print style
    - Materials appear to be designed individually rather than as part of a shared communication system.
  - Typography varies across pieces
    - Different fonts and text treatments are used from document to document, creating a less polished and less recognizable brand experience.



JOY RIOT

VIDEO ASSESSMENT SCORE: 41/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose is clear within the first few seconds	4
Key messages are communicated clearly and effectively	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Captions and/or accessibility supports are included	5
Tone is authentic, inclusive, and appropriate for local government	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Visuals support audience(s) understanding of the message	3
Video length is appropriate for the platform and audience(s)	5
BRAND	
Content aligns with city's communication goals	4
Audio, visuals, and editing are professional and clear	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Openings capture audience(s) attention quickly	4
Desired takeaway and/or next steps are clear	3
TOTAL	**41/50**

VIDEO

- Strengths
  - Videos are generally effective and professionally produced
    - Thornton's video content is clear, polished, and appropriate for a local government audience.
  - Messages are easy to understand early
    - Most videos establish their purpose quickly and communicate key information in a straightforward, accessible way.
- Weaknesses
  - Visuals do not always strengthen the message
    - While production quality is solid, some visuals feel more general or informational rather than actively reinforcing the main takeaway.
  - Next steps are not always clear
    - Videos often explain the topic well, but they do not always include a strong CTA or clearly direct viewers to what they should do next.







JOY RIOT

https://youtu.be/DK4jn_IbFLE | https://youtu.be/yuorkJK-n6o | https://youtu.be/Cz-Ztl0VwM4

SIGNAGE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 47/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of signage is immediately clear	5
Messages are concise and easy to understand	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Text size, contrast, and layout are both accessible and legible	5
Icons and/or symbols are clear and universally understood	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Signage helps users navigate, decide, or take action	4
Signage is placed where users need/look for the information	4
BRAND	
Design aligns with the City's visual identity	4
Signage feels maintained, professional, and trustworthy	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
The most important information is visible first	5
Hierarchy of information is clear from the intended viewing distance	5
TOTAL	**47/50**

SIGNAGE

- Strengths
  - Signage is visible in key locations
    - Thornton places signage where residents and visitors are likely to need guidance, including public facilities, parks, event areas, and service locations.
  - The style feels unified and consistent
    - Signage generally follows a cohesive visual approach, with limited variation across materials and locations.
  - Wayfinding supports the user experience
    - Directional signage helps people navigate spaces more easily and reduces confusion during events, facility visits, or service interactions.



JOY RIOT

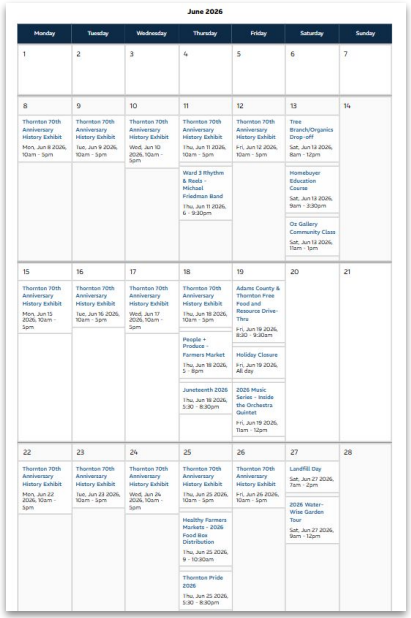
EVENTS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 35/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Event purposes are clearly communicated	5
Essential details are easy to find; including date, time, location, and registration	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Presentations and materials are accessible and easy to understand	2
Attendees can easily navigate the event experience	3
USER EXPERIENCE	
Events feel organized, welcoming, and professional	3
Events create meaningful opportunities for participation or feedback	4
BRAND	
Branding, signage, and materials are consistent and clear	3
Promotion reaches the intended audience(s) effectively	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Timely follow-ups post-event share outcomes and/or next steps	2
Community voices are encouraged and heard	3
TOTAL	**35/50**

EVENTS

- Strengths
  - Event information is easy to find and understand
  - The event calendar supports strong discoverability
- Weaknesses
  - Accessibility information is present, but not always event-specific
    - City Council meetings include Spanish interpretation and ADA accommodation information, but similar accessibility details are less consistently visible across general event pages.
  - On-site experience appears functional, but could be clearer
    - Event pages provide basic location and schedule information, but they do not always include maps, parking details, accessibility notes, or wayfinding information that would help attendees navigate the full experience.
  - Community participation is encouraged, but uneven
    - Public meetings, boards, commissions, surveys, and feedback tools create opportunities for resident input, but standard event pages do not always show how attendee feedback is collected or used.





JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA ASSESSMENT SCORE: 27/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Posts are clear, concise, and useful to residents	4
Each social account has a clear purpose and audience	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Graphics, videos, and captions are accessible and platform-appropriate	4
Posting cadence is regular and is a sustainable frequency	2
USER EXPERIENCE	
It is clear which city and/or city department owns each social channel (and information pertains to owner)	2
Social content balances service updates, engagement, storytelling, and urgent information	3
BRAND	
Branding and visual identity is applied consistently across all social channels/profiles	1
Overall social presence feels unified while allowing departments to speak with expertise	2
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Social content is coordinated across departments, platforms, and service areas	2
Resident questions, concerns, and service needs are answered and/or escalated in a timely and appropriate manner	3
TOTAL	**27/50**

PLATFORMS BY DEPARTMENT

CITY GOVERNMENT



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



POLICE DEPARTMENT



HUMAN RESOURCES



FIRE DEPARTMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



PARKS & RECREATION



ACTIVE ADULT CENTER



JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Weaknesses
  - Ownership across channels is not always clear
    - Thornton's city, Parks & Recreation, and Active Adult Center channels sometimes promote overlapping events or related information, which can make it harder for residents to know which account is the primary source.
  - Department channels feel more separate than unified
    - Social content often reflects the needs of individual departments, but the overall presence does not always feel coordinated as one citywide communications system.
  - Branding is applied inconsistently
    - Profile visuals, graphic styles, templates, colors, and post formats vary significantly across accounts, weakening recognition of Thornton as the parent brand.
  - Posting cadence is uneven
    - Some channels appear more active and timely than others, which can create an inconsistent resident experience depending on which account someone follows.



WESTMINSTER

COLORADO

JOY RIOT

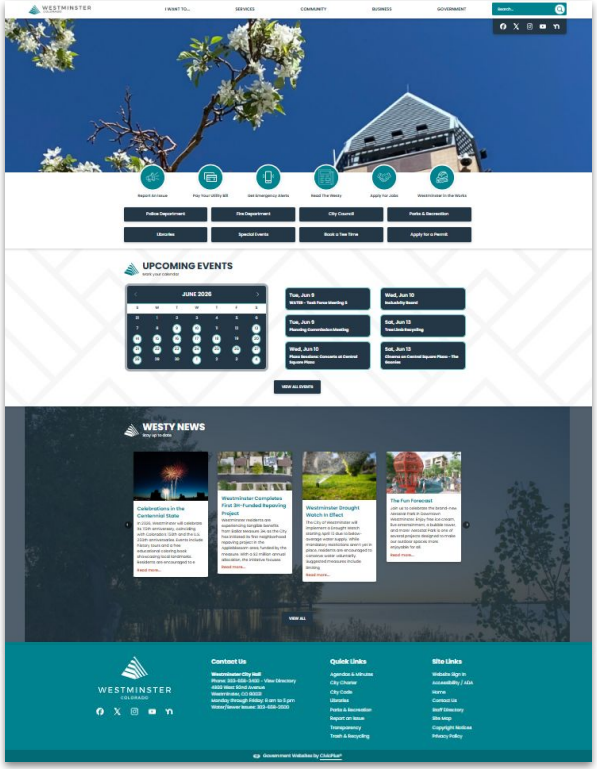
WEBSITE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 44/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Language is clear, plain, and accessible to public audiences	4
Important information is current, accurate, and easy to scan	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
The site is mobile-friendly and accessible	1
Contact information is easy to locate	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Information is easy to find within 1–2 clicks	5
Key services and actions are easy to complete	5
BRAND	
The design reflects the City's brand, priorities, and professionalism	5
Content is organized around user needs rather than internal departments	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Navigation labels intuitive and resident-focused	5
The search function returns useful and relevant results	3
TOTAL	**44/50**

WEBSITE

- Strengths
  - Strong expression of place and identity
    - Westminster's website does a good job reflecting the City's character, especially through messaging around trails, open space, parks, community services, and quality of life.
- Weaknesses
  - **4.6** AIM Score
  - **16** Violations
  - **65** Potential Violations
    - Contrast, heading structure, alt text, and ARIA problems can make the site harder to navigate for screen reader users, low-vision users, and residents relying on assistive tools.



JOY RIOT

NEWSLETTER ASSESSMENT SCORE: 44/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Subject lines and headlines are clear, specific, and scannable	5
Content is organized for quick reading	3
ACCESSIBILITY	
Layouts are mobile-friendly and easy to read	5
Key information is placed prominently	3
USER EXPERIENCE	
Links and calls to action (CTAs) are clear and easy to access	3
Newsletters direct readers to useful city resources	5
BRAND	
Design is consistent with the City's brand	5
Newsletters balances news, services, events, and community updates	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Content is timely, useful, and relevant to the audience(s)	5
Content encourages continued engagement or readership	5
TOTAL	**44/50**

NEWSLETTER

- Strengths
  - Newsletter content is polished and useful
    - Westminster's newsletter provides strong resident-facing information, with timely updates, practical resources, and a clear connection back to city services.
  - The design works well within the brand system
    - Layout, colors, typography, and visual treatments feel more cohesive than many other city communications, helping the newsletter feel professional and recognizable.
- Weaknesses
  - Content can sometimes run long
    - Some sections include more detail than readers may need upfront
  - CTAs are not always easy to find:
    - Important next steps are sometimes embedded within body copy rather than pulled out as clear buttons or standalone links.



JOY RIOT

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 32/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of the piece is immediately clear	5
Key message(s) are understandable within seconds	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Are typography, spacing, and contrast legible and accessible?	3
Is contact information easy to find?	1
USER EXPERIENCE	
Is the copy concise, useful, and easy to scan?	3
Does the visual hierarchy guide the reader effectively?	2
BRAND	
Does the design reflect the City's brand system?	2
Do graphics or visuals support the message?	3
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Does the content reflect audience needs?	4
Does the piece include a clear next step, QR code, URL, or call to action?	4
TOTAL	**32/50**

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS

- Strengths
  - Westminster's magazine and more editorial materials feel professional, visually engaging, and aligned with the City's brand.
- Weaknesses
  - Color contrast is a recurring accessibility concern
    - Some materials use combinations like white on yellow or orange on green, which can make text harder to read and may create ADA accessibility issues.
  - Consistency varies across print pieces
    - While some materials feel highly designed and brand-aligned, others use different layouts, color treatments, or typography, creating a less unified print system overall.



VIDEO ASSESSMENT SCORE: 46/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose is clear within the first few seconds	5
Key messages are communicated clearly and effectively	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Captions and/or accessibility supports are included	5
Tone is authentic, inclusive, and appropriate for local government	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Visuals support audience(s) understanding of the message	5
Video length is appropriate for the platform and audience(s)	5
BRAND	
Content aligns with city's communication goals	5
Audio, visuals, and editing are professional and clear	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Openings capture audience(s) attention quickly	3
Desired takeaway and/or next steps are clear	3
TOTAL	**46/50**

VIDEO

- Strengths
  - Video content is highly polished
    - Westminster's videos feel professional, well-edited, and visually strong, with clear audio, smooth pacing, and high production value.
  - The editorial style supports storytelling
    - Videos often feel more like feature pieces than basic announcements, helping the City communicate community identity, pride, and quality of life.
  - Visuals and editing are a clear strength
    - The content is engaging and polished enough to reflect well on the City's brand and professionalism.
- Weaknesses
  - Videos can lean too editorial for action-based communication
    - While the storytelling is strong, some videos spend more time creating atmosphere than clearly directing residents.







JOY RIOT

https://youtu.be/MzMFXw3Gzbc?si=CQtFGMF1FJttbd4P | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rct96-t6Cvk | https://youtu.be/xjq6aboir7k

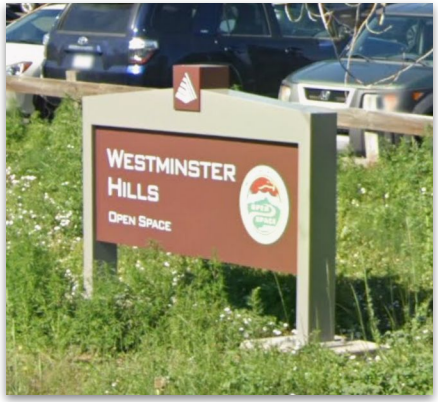
SIGNAGE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 40/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of signage is immediately clear	5
Messages are concise and easy to understand	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Text size, contrast, and layout are both accessible and legible	3
Icons and/or symbols are clear and universally understood	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Signage helps users navigate, decide, or take action	2
Signage is placed where users need/look for the information	2
BRAND	
Design aligns with the City's visual identity	3
Signage feels maintained, professional, and trustworthy	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
The most important information is visible first	5
Hierarchy of information is clear from the intended viewing distance	5
TOTAL	**40/50**

SIGNAGE

- Strengths
  - Parks and Recreation signage is consistent
    - Park, trail, and recreation signage generally follows a more unified visual style.
- Weaknesses
  - Consistency breaks down outside Parks and Recreation
    - Other signage types appear less unified and sometimes break away from the stronger Parks and Recreation visual system.
  - Wayfinding is not always complete
    - Directional signage is present in some areas, but it does not always provide enough guidance to support a full visitor journey from arrival to destination.









JOY RIOT

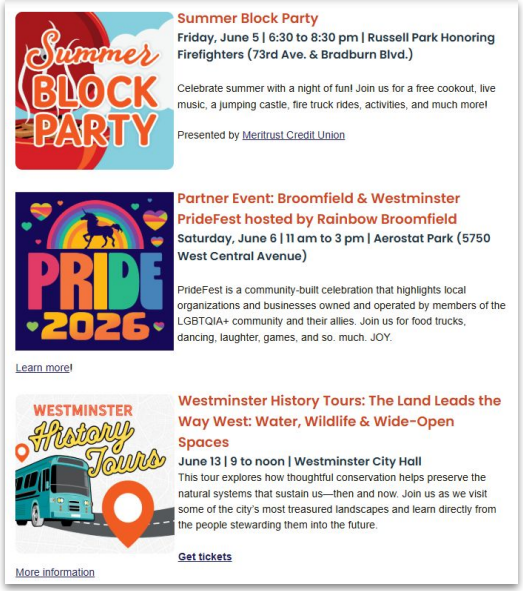
EVENTS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 42/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Event purposes are clearly communicated	5
Essential details are easy to find; including date, time, location, and registration	3
ACCESSIBILITY	
Presentations and materials are accessible and easy to understand	3
Attendees can easily navigate the event experience	3
USER EXPERIENCE	
Events feel organized, welcoming, and professional	4
Events create meaningful opportunities for participation or feedback	5
BRAND	
Branding, signage, and materials are consistent and clear	4
Promotion reaches the intended audience(s) effectively	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Timely follow-ups post-event share outcomes and/or next steps	5
Community voices are encouraged and heard	5
TOTAL	42/50

EVENTS

- Strengths
  - Events feel organized, welcoming, and professional
    - Special event pages use polished, inviting descriptions, such as Movies in the Park noting live music, pre-show activities, food concessions, and the movie starting at dusk.
  - Promotion appears strong and audience-aware
    - Westminster offers multiple event pathways, including a main city calendar, special events page, Parks and Recreation listings, Fire Department events, and a separate library calendar with filters by age group, program type, branch, and registration type.
- Weaknesses
  - Event navigation could be stronger
    - Some calendar entries provide basic location and timing, but limited arrival information, maps, parking guidance, site layout, or accessibility details.



SOCIAL MEDIA ASSESSMENT SCORE: 39/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Posts are clear, concise, and useful to residents	4
Each social account has a clear purpose and audience	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Graphics, videos, and captions are accessible and platform-appropriate	3
Posting cadence is regular and is a sustainable frequency	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
It is clear which city and/or city department owns each social channel (and information pertains to owner)	5
Social content balances service updates, engagement, storytelling, and urgent information	5
BRAND	
Branding and visual identity is applied consistently across all social channels/profiles	1
Overall social presence feels unified while allowing departments to speak with expertise	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Social content is coordinated across departments, platforms, and service areas	4
Resident questions, concerns, and service needs are answered and/or escalated in a timely and appropriate manner	3
TOTAL	**39/50**

PLATFORMS BY DEPARTMENT

CITY GOVERNMENT



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



POLICE DEPARTMENT



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



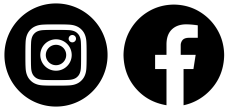
FIRE DEPARTMENT



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



PARKS & RECREATION

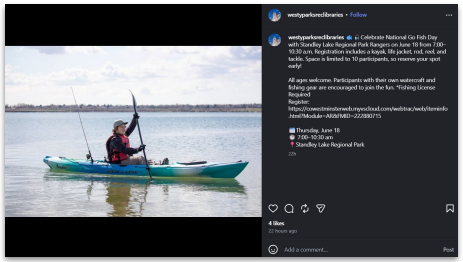


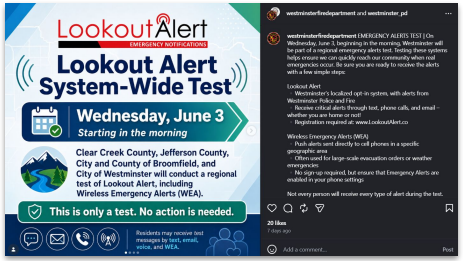
JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Strengths
  - Social channels have clear roles and audiences
    - Westminster appears to use different accounts for different community needs, allowing departments to speak to more specific audiences rather than forcing everything through one citywide channel.
  - Posting cadence is strong
    - The city maintains an active and sustainable social presence, helping residents receive timely updates across multiple platforms and departments.
- Weaknesses
  - Visual identity varies heavily across channels
    - Westminster uses many social channels, but design cues, templates, colors, typography, and graphic styles differ significantly between them.







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JOY RIOT

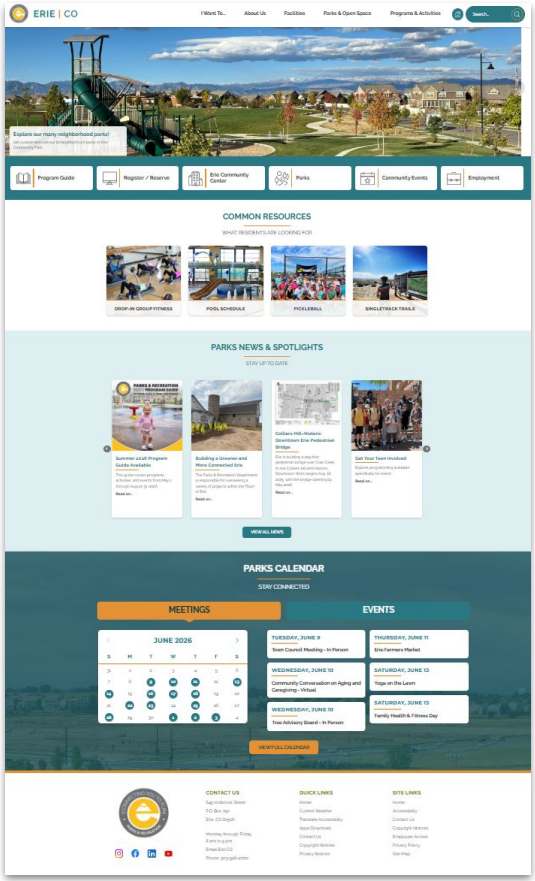
WEBSITE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 38/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Language is clear, plain, and accessible to public audiences	5
Important information is current, accurate, and easy to scan	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
The site is mobile-friendly and accessible	1
Contact information is easy to locate	4
USER EXPERIENCE	
Information is easy to find within 1–2 clicks	2
Key services and actions are easy to complete	4
BRAND	
The design reflects the City's brand, priorities, and professionalism	5
Content is organized around user needs rather than internal departments	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Navigation labels intuitive and resident-focused	3
The search function returns useful and relevant results	5
TOTAL	**38/50**

WEBSITE

- Strengths
  - Strong use of icons, color, and photography
    - Erie's website feels more visual and approachable than many municipal sites, using icons, color blocks, and community imagery to make the experience feel welcoming.
- Weaknesses
  - **5.4** AIM Score
  - **16** Violations
  - **68** Potential Violations
    - Broken ARIA references, broken ARIA menus, missing form labels, and empty headings can make the site harder to navigate for screen reader users and people relying on keyboard navigation.
  - Some content pathways still feel municipal-system driven
    - While the homepage is approachable, deeper pages can rely on standard government website structures, which may feel less polished than the top-level brand experience.



JOY RIOT

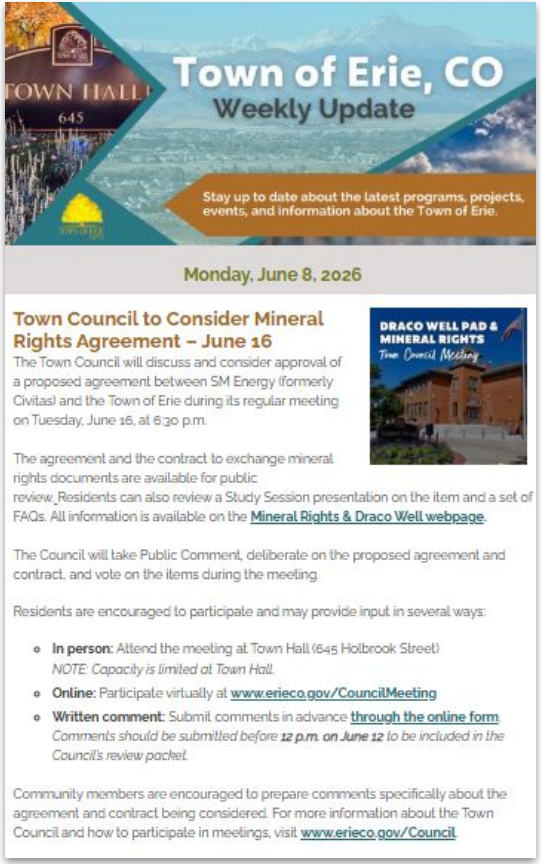
NEWSLETTER ASSESSMENT SCORE: 33/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Subject lines and headlines are clear, specific, and scannable	2
Content is organized for quick reading	3
ACCESSIBILITY	
Layouts are mobile-friendly and easy to read	4
Key information is placed prominently	2
USER EXPERIENCE	
Links and calls to action (CTAs) are clear and easy to access	2
Newsletters direct readers to useful city resources	3
BRAND	
Design is consistent with the City's brand	4
Newsletters balances news, services, events, and community updates	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Content is timely, useful, and relevant to the audience(s)	5
Content encourages continued engagement or readership	3
TOTAL	**33/50**

NEWSLETTER

- Weaknesses
  - CTAs are often embedded in body copy
    - Important next steps are sometimes placed within paragraphs instead of being pulled out as clear buttons or standalone links, making them easier to miss.
  - High-priority updates are not always placed prominently
    - Important traffic or service updates can appear farther down in the newsletter, even when they may have immediate impact on residents' daily routines.
  - Headlines can be vague
    - Some section titles do not clearly communicate the specific benefit, action, or urgency of the content.



JOY RIOT

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 33/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of the piece is immediately clear	5
Key message(s) are understandable within seconds	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Are typography, spacing, and contrast legible and accessible?	4
Is contact information easy to find?	2
USER EXPERIENCE	
Is the copy concise, useful, and easy to scan?	3
Does the visual hierarchy guide the reader effectively?	3
BRAND	
Does the design reflect the City's brand system?	2
Do graphics or visuals support the message?	3
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Does the content reflect audience needs?	4
Does the piece include a clear next step, QR code, URL, or call to action?	3
TOTAL	**33/50**

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS

- Strengths
  - Some recurring brand elements are visible
    - Erie's printed materials often use recognizable colors, logo placement, photography, and graphic treatments that help connect pieces back to the town.
  - More formal pieces feel more aligned
  - Core information is usually practical and resident-focused
- Weaknesses
  - One-off flyers often fall outside the design system
    - Event flyers, quick announcements, and department-specific pieces sometimes use different fonts, colors, layouts, or graphic styles.
  - Consistency varies by communication type
    - Some pieces feel clearly branded, while others look more individually designed, making the overall print system feel uneven.



JOY RIOT

VIDEO ASSESSMENT SCORE: 44/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose is clear within the first few seconds	5
Key messages are communicated clearly and effectively	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Captions and/or accessibility supports are included	5
Tone is authentic, inclusive, and appropriate for local government	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Visuals support audience(s) understanding of the message	5
Video length is appropriate for the platform and audience(s)	5
BRAND	
Content aligns with city's communication goals	5
Audio, visuals, and editing are professional and clear	2
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Openings capture audience(s) attention quickly	2
Desired takeaway and/or next steps are clear	5
TOTAL	**44/50**

VIDEO

- Strengths
  - Videos have a clear editorial structure
    - Erie's video content generally follows a recognizable story format, which helps make topics feel more polished and easier to follow.
  - Visual storytelling supports community identity
    - The videos often use community imagery, interviews, and narrative framing to make the town feel active, approachable, and resident-focused.
- Weaknesses
  - Viewer value could be stronger upfront
    - The content would be more effective if each video quickly answered, "What does this mean for me?" or "Why should I keep watching?"
  - Audio and production effects can feel uneven
    - Some videos are weakened by poor audio quality or stock-style effects.







JOY RIOT

https://youtu.be/xlqubfNq-i8 | https://youtu.be/Z5c_2RgYJBU | https://youtu.be/xKCTAekTmeA

SIGNAGE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 36/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of signage is immediately clear	4
Messages are concise and easy to understand	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Text size, contrast, and layout are both accessible and legible	5
Icons and/or symbols are clear and universally understood	4
USER EXPERIENCE	
Signage helps users navigate, decide, or take action	1
Signage is placed where users need/look for the information	2
BRAND	
Design aligns with the City's visual identity	2
Signage feels maintained, professional, and trustworthy	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
The most important information is visible first	4
Hierarchy of information is clear from the intended viewing distance	5
TOTAL	**36/50**

SIGNAGE

- Weaknesses
  - Detailed signage is missing around important government buildings
    - Key civic locations do not always provide enough exterior or entry-point signage to clearly orient residents and visitors.
  - Directional signage is limited
    - Signage does not consistently guide people from arrival points to entrances, departments, parking, public meeting areas, or service counters.
  - The signage system lacks a consistent style
    - Different signs use varying layouts, colors, materials, and design treatments, making the overall system feel fragmented.
  - Wayfinding does not fully support the visitor journey
    - Residents may be able to identify a building or destination, but they are not always given clear next-step guidance once they arrive.



JOY RIOT

EVENTS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 42/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Event purposes are clearly communicated	5
Essential details are easy to find; including date, time, location, and registration	3
ACCESSIBILITY	
Presentations and materials are accessible and easy to understand	3
Attendees can easily navigate the event experience	2
USER EXPERIENCE	
Events feel organized, welcoming, and professional	4
Events create meaningful opportunities for participation or feedback	5
BRAND	
Branding, signage, and materials are consistent and clear	4
Promotion reaches the intended audience(s) effectively	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Timely follow-ups post-event share outcomes and/or next steps	5
Community voices are encouraged and heard	5
TOTAL	**41/50**

EVENTS

- Strengths
  - Community participation is a major strength
    - Erie provides strong engagement opportunities through Town Council public comment, advisory board meetings, business roundtables, community surveys, public input events, and project-specific feedback through Engage Erie.
  - Follow-up and outcomes are stronger than many peer communities
    - The town posts meeting videos, agendas, updates, and recap-style follow-ups that show residents what happened after an event or where questions can go next.
- Weaknesses
  - Event navigation could be more complete
    - Some listings include limited information on parking, arrival instructions, maps, site layout, accessibility, or what attendees should expect once they arrive.
  - Accessibility information is uneven across event types
    - General community, recreation, and special event pages do not always surface accessibility accommodations or materials clearly.

JOY RIOT

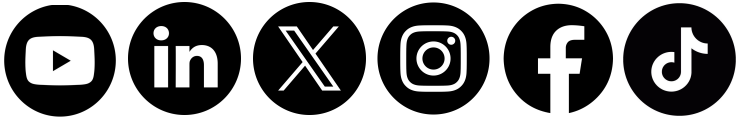
SOCIAL MEDIA ASSESSMENT SCORE: 39/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Posts are clear, concise, and useful to residents	4
Each social account has a clear purpose and audience	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Graphics, videos, and captions are accessible and platform-appropriate	3
Posting cadence is regular and is a sustainable frequency	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
It is clear which city and/or city department owns each social channel (and information pertains to owner)	5
Social content balances service updates, engagement, storytelling, and urgent information	5
BRAND	
Branding and visual identity is applied consistently across all social channels/profiles	1
Overall social presence feels unified while allowing departments to speak with expertise	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Social content is coordinated across departments, platforms, and service areas	4
Resident questions, concerns, and service needs are answered and/or escalated in a timely and appropriate manner	3
TOTAL	**39/50**

PLATFORMS BY DEPARTMENT

CITY GOVERNMENT



DOWNTOWN ERIE



POLICE DEPARTMENT



PARKS & RECREATION



FIRE DEPARTMENT



COMMUNITY LIBRARY



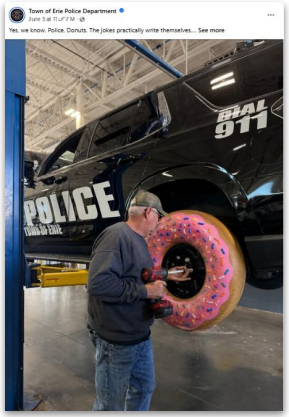
JOY RIOT

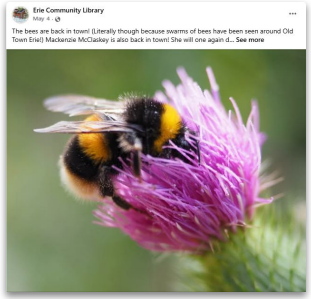
SOCIAL MEDIA

- Strengths
  - City Gov’t. maintains a consistent posting rhythm
  - Some individual channels feel internally cohesive
- Weaknesses
  - Channels do not always feel part of a shared brand system
    - Some accounts may be cohesive individually, but they do not consistently look or feel like they belong to the same organization.
  - Departmental posting cadence can feel uneven
    - While the main town presence appears active, some departmental accounts post at irregular intervals
  - Departmental content can feel unfocused



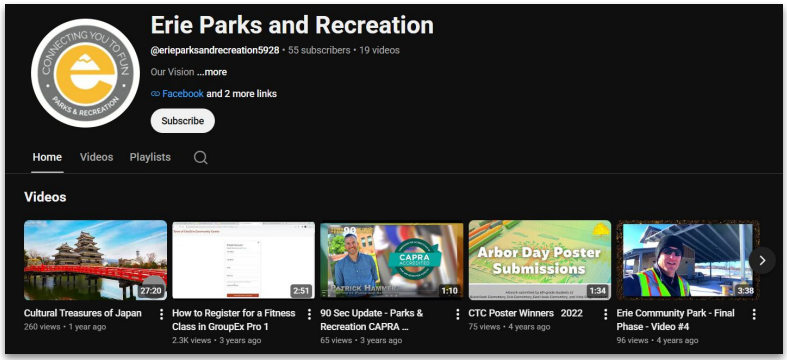




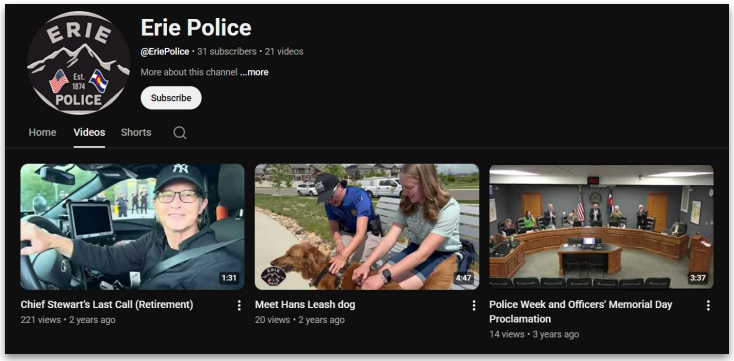


JOY RIOT

INACTIVE ACCOUNTS



EP&R: INACTIVE 1+ YEARS



EPD: INACTIVE 2+ YEARS



JOY RIOT

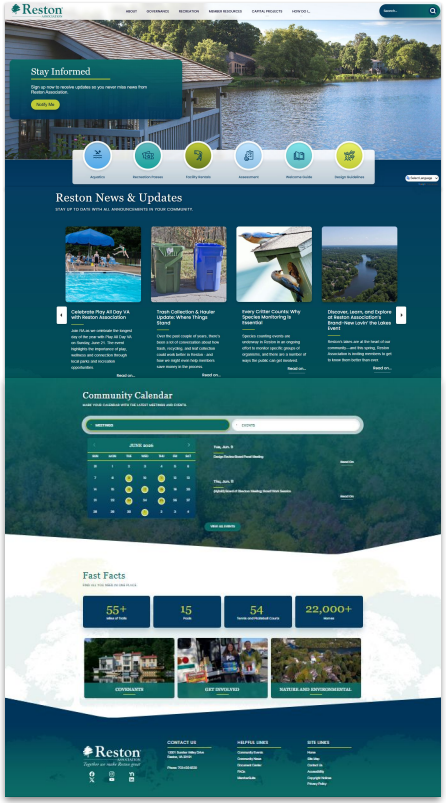
WEBSITE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 36/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Language is clear, plain, and accessible to public audiences	4
Important information is current, accurate, and easy to scan	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
The site is mobile-friendly and accessible	3
Contact information is easy to locate	4
USER EXPERIENCE	
Information is easy to find within 1–2 clicks	4
Key services and actions are easy to complete	3
BRAND	
The design reflects the City's brand, priorities, and professionalism	4
Content is organized around user needs rather than internal departments	3
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Navigation labels intuitive and resident-focused	4
The search function returns useful and relevant results	3
TOTAL	**36/50**

WEBSITE

- Strengths
  - Strong resident-service orientation
    - High-demand resources are surfaced as practical entry points
  - Content reflects RA's unique role
    - The website clearly explains that Reston Association is not a municipality, but a community association.
  - Recreation and amenity information is easy to understand
    - Pages for recreation passes and facility rentals help residents quickly understand what is available and how to access it.
- Weaknesses
  - **6.4** AIM Score
  - **18** Violations
  - **3** Potential Violations
    - Redundant overuse of links throughout the site



JOY RIOT

NEWSLETTER ASSESSMENT SCORE: 14/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Subject lines and headlines are clear, specific, and scannable	1
Content is organized for quick reading	1
ACCESSIBILITY	
Layouts are mobile-friendly and easy to read	1
Key information is placed prominently	1
USER EXPERIENCE	
Links and calls to action (CTAs) are clear and easy to access	1
Newsletters direct readers to useful city resources	2
BRAND	
Design is consistent with the City's brand	1
Newsletters balances news, services, events, and community updates	2
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Content is timely, useful, and relevant to the audience(s)	2
Content encourages continued engagement or readership	2
TOTAL	**14/50**

NEWSLETTER

- Weaknesses
  - Content is long, dense, and cluttered
    - Information is packed closely together, which makes the newsletter harder to scan and can overwhelm readers looking for quick updates.
  - Information hierarchy feels random
    - Important updates, events, reminders, and resources do not always appear prioritized by urgency, audience need, or desired action.
  - Calls to action are weak or missing
    - The newsletter often shares information without clearly directing readers to register, learn more, RSVP, pay, apply, attend, or take the next step.



Volume 4 Issue 1 January 2026

THE RESTON LETTER

This is a complimentary copy of The Reston Letter. While the paper will continue to be available for free at locations around town, home delivery is now offered by subscription.

Subscribers—known as Friends of The Reston Letter—receive early access to each issue, along with exclusive local deals, special gifts, and invitations to members-only events.

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New leader brings fresh vision and deep community focus to Reston's arts scene

By Ellyn Wexler, Staff Writer

By the time Jonell Logan became Executive Director and Curator of Tephra Institute of Contemporary Art in October 2024, she had already been impressed by the organization's history and ambition. Tephra's 50-year legacy, strong exhibitions, and committed board drew her in, as did its mission to deepen engagement with contemporary artists while serving as a cultural connector.

"Now that I am here, I've learned even more about the amazing leaders and artists who have been a part of Tephra ICA," she said. "I'm glad to be a part of this organization."

Reston's longstanding embrace of the arts also resonated with Logan, who said the idea that the arts have always been central to community life here is both "exciting and inspiring." That sense of connection aligns closely with how she views Tephra's role in the region. Logan sees the organization as a place where artists, neighbors, and visitors can engage with contemporary art in accessible, meaningful ways.

"This work can be challenging, both thematically and visually," she noted. "But Tephra ICA is committed to making it more approachable, one visitor at a time." That commitment to approachability hasn't limited the organization's reach. Tephra routinely links Reston with the broader art world, often presenting artists who later exhibit internationally or receive major awards.

The months ahead will further that momentum. In January, Tephra will host its first regional artist residency with Abdulrahman Naanseh, who will transform the gallery into a working studio where visitors can watch new pieces take shape. In the spring, an exhibition will pair painter Janet Lonn Hill with ceramicist Andrew Casto, creating a dynamic dia-

Continued on page 2

Jonell Logan serves as Executive Director and Curator of Tephra Institute of Contemporary Art in Reston Town Center. Photo courtesy of Tephra ICA

Reston homicide fans Department of Homeland Security-Fairfax County immigration enforcement conflict

By Gene Powell, Staff Writer

A Dec. 17 homicide in Reston has sparked the latest in sharp exchanges between the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Fairfax County officials over the county's policies on DHS immigration efforts.

Marvin Morales-Ortez, 23, faces charges including second-degree murder in connection with the shooting death of his reported former roommate, Marvin Ernesto Morales, 40, at a home in the 12300 block of Fan Shell Court. DHS has described Morales-Ortez as a "criminal illegal alien" from El Salvador.

Morales-Ortez was arrested following an intense two-hour police search that caused two Reston area schools—Hunters Woods and Dogwood—to go into lockdown. In online statements and news interviews, federal and county officials provided various versions of events surrounding Morales-Ortez' release from county detention a day before the killing.

The incident fans a long-running conflict involving a 2021 "Public Trust and Confidentiality Policy" adopted by the county Board of Supervisors in response to Trump administration immigration policies. DHS wants the county to honor its request for detention, but the county's policy requires a judicial warrant.

A DHS press release on Dec. 19 said local officials "have blood on their hands" because the county did not honor a Sept. 14 DHS arrest detainer. The department also said Morales-Ortez had been released Dec. 16 without notifying federal immigration officials. "If Fairfax County would have…honored our detainer, then this tragedy may never have happened," federal posts said.

Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid said in a statement that her office "follows all local, state, and federal laws when determining whether a person is subject to release from the Fairfax ADC (Adult Detention Center)."

Both DHS and Kincaid referred to earlier criminal charges against Morales-Ortez. He had faced "malicious wounding" and "brandishing a firearm" charges in a September incident, as well as charges for "assaulting law enforce-

Continued on page 3

SHE KILLS MONSTERS
by Qui Nguyen
A Dungeons & Dragons Quest for Sisterhood and Self-Discovery
January 16 - February 1, 2026
RestonPlayers.org

bulletin

Reston Community Players opens "She Kills Monsters," former Seahawks and pro football player gives away hundreds of gifts, how Instagram unites our community, a Reston author's new book

education

Broadway Night presented by SLHS Chorus coming soon, SLHS robotics club, Making an Impact column, crossword, new summer adventure camp opens registration

kids

New look for kids' puzzles, a mystery, find the differences, artwork idea, recipe for energy bites

lifestyle

A Restonian's 3D design business, report on 20171 Real Estate market in Reston, upcoming Friends of Reston gala

opinions

Restonian's What's In and What's Out' take on 2025/2026, Dr. S. on handling disappointment

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1

JOY RIOT

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 33/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of the piece is immediately clear	5
Key message(s) are understandable within seconds	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Are typography, spacing, and contrast legible and accessible?	2
Is contact information easy to find?	4
USER EXPERIENCE	
Is the copy concise, useful, and easy to scan?	4
Does the visual hierarchy guide the reader effectively?	3
BRAND	
Does the design reflect the City's brand system?	1
Do graphics or visuals support the message?	3
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Does the content reflect audience needs?	3
Does the piece include a clear next step, QR code, URL, or call to action?	4
TOTAL	**33/50**

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS

- Strengths
  - Important materials receive more polish
    - Higher-priority or more formal communications tend to feel more considered, with stronger layouts, cleaner hierarchy, and a more professional presentation.
  - Core information is usually present
    - Most pieces communicate the key details residents need, such as what the item is about, who it affects, and where to find more information.
- Weaknesses
  - Flyers often deviate from the brand system
    - One-off flyers frequently use unrelated colors, fonts, layouts, and graphic styles, making them feel disconnected from RA's broader identity.
  - Brand standards are not consistently applied
    - Some materials appear to make little effort to follow a shared visual system, which weakens recognition and makes communications feel fragmented.



VIDEO ASSESSMENT SCORE: 42/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose is clear within the first few seconds	5
Key messages are communicated clearly and effectively	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Captions and/or accessibility supports are included	5
Tone is authentic, inclusive, and appropriate for local government	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Visuals support audience(s) understanding of the message	5
Video length is appropriate for the platform and audience(s)	5
BRAND	
Content aligns with city's communication goals	5
Audio, visuals, and editing are professional and clear	3
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Openings capture audience(s) attention quickly	3
Desired takeaway and/or next steps are clear	1
TOTAL	**42/50**

VIDEO

- Strengths
  - Key messages are communicated effectively
    - The videos tend to explain the main point in a clear, straightforward way, without overcomplicating the message.
  - Length is appropriate for the platform
    - Videos are typically concise enough to hold attention and communicate the message without feeling unnecessarily long.
- Weaknesses
  - Next steps are the biggest gap
    - The videos often communicate information well, but they rarely make the desired action clear, such as where to learn more, register, attend, apply, or follow up.







JOY RIOT

https://youtu.be/JmEax6wxZtQ?si=t9tqP1cNUP0KSnGW | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YPJKoxGjCb4 | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1xiCx9aSuw

SIGNAGE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 40/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of signage is immediately clear	5
Messages are concise and easy to understand	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Text size, contrast, and layout are both accessible and legible	5
Icons and/or symbols are clear and universally understood	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Signage helps users navigate, decide, or take action	1
Signage is placed where users need/look for the information	1
BRAND	
Design aligns with the City's visual identity	3
Signage feels maintained, professional, and trustworthy	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
The most important information is visible first	5
Hierarchy of information is clear from the intended viewing distance	5
TOTAL	**40/50**

SIGNAGE

- Weaknesses
  - Directional signage is limited
    - Signage does not consistently guide residents from parking areas, pathways, or facility entrances to specific destinations.
  - Signage is missing from many recreation facilities
    - Some recreation spaces lack clear, visible signage, making it harder for residents and visitors to confirm they are in the right place or understand what is available



JOY RIOT

EVENTS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 31/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Event purposes are clearly communicated	5
Essential details are easy to find; including date, time, location, and registration	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Presentations and materials are accessible and easy to understand	3
Attendees can easily navigate the event experience	2
USER EXPERIENCE	
Events feel organized, welcoming, and professional	4
Events create meaningful opportunities for participation or feedback	3
BRAND	
Branding, signage, and materials are consistent and clear	1
Promotion reaches the intended audience(s) effectively	2
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Timely follow-ups post-event share outcomes and/or next steps	2
Community voices are encouraged and heard	4
TOTAL	31/50

EVENTS

- Weaknesses
  - Event branding is inconsistent
    - Event materials and listings do not always feel visually connected to Reston Association's broader brand system.
  - Website descriptions are often too short
    - Many event listings provide only basic information, without enough context to explain what attendees can expect.
  - Event listings lack supporting visuals
    - Most website listings do not include photos or maps
  - Navigation details are limited
    - Without maps, parking guidance, facility photos, or arrival instructions, residents may not have enough information to confidently plan their visit.



JOY RIOT

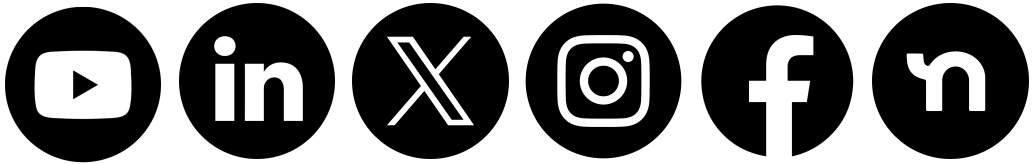
SOCIAL MEDIA ASSESSMENT SCORE: 41/45

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Posts are clear, concise, and useful to residents	5
Each social account has a clear purpose and audience	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Graphics, videos, and captions are accessible and platform-appropriate	5
Posting cadence is regular and is a sustainable frequency	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
It is clear which city and/or city department owns each social channel (and information pertains to owner)	5
Social content balances service updates, engagement, storytelling, and urgent information	5
BRAND	
Branding and visual identity is applied consistently across all social channels/profiles	3
Overall social presence feels unified while allowing departments to speak with expertise	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Social content is coordinated across departments, platforms, and service areas	*n/a*
Resident questions, concerns, and service needs are answered and/or escalated in a timely and appropriate manner	4
TOTAL	**41/45**

PLATFORMS BY DEPARTMENT

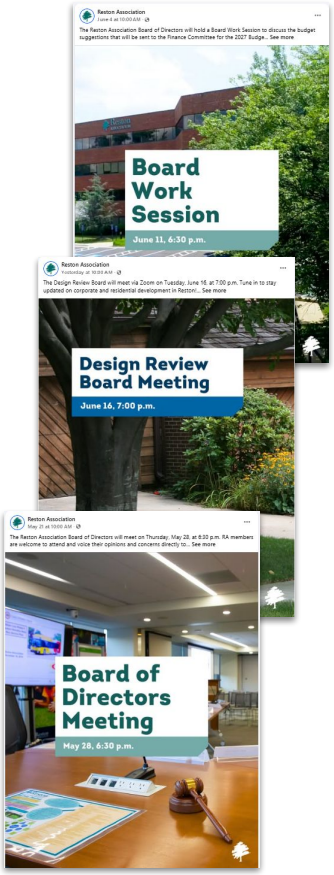
RESTON ASSOCIATION*



**Note: Reston is a census-designated place within Fairfax County, and the Association operates as a not-for-profit community association. As a result, Reston Association does not operate its own municipal departments, such as police, fire/rescue, or other city/town agencies.*

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Strengths
  - Social visuals are relatively consistent
    - Reston Association's social channels use more consistent visual treatments than some of its other communications, helping posts feel more recognizable and connected.
  - Posting cadence is strong
    - RA maintains a steady daily osting rhythm.
  - Instagram uses video content effectively
    - RA makes good use of videos on Instagram to highlight community spaces, events, recreation, and resident-facing programs in a more engaging way.
  - Content feels useful and community-oriented
    - Posts generally support RA's role by promoting events, amenities, services, environmental stewardship, recreation, and member updates.



JOY RIOT



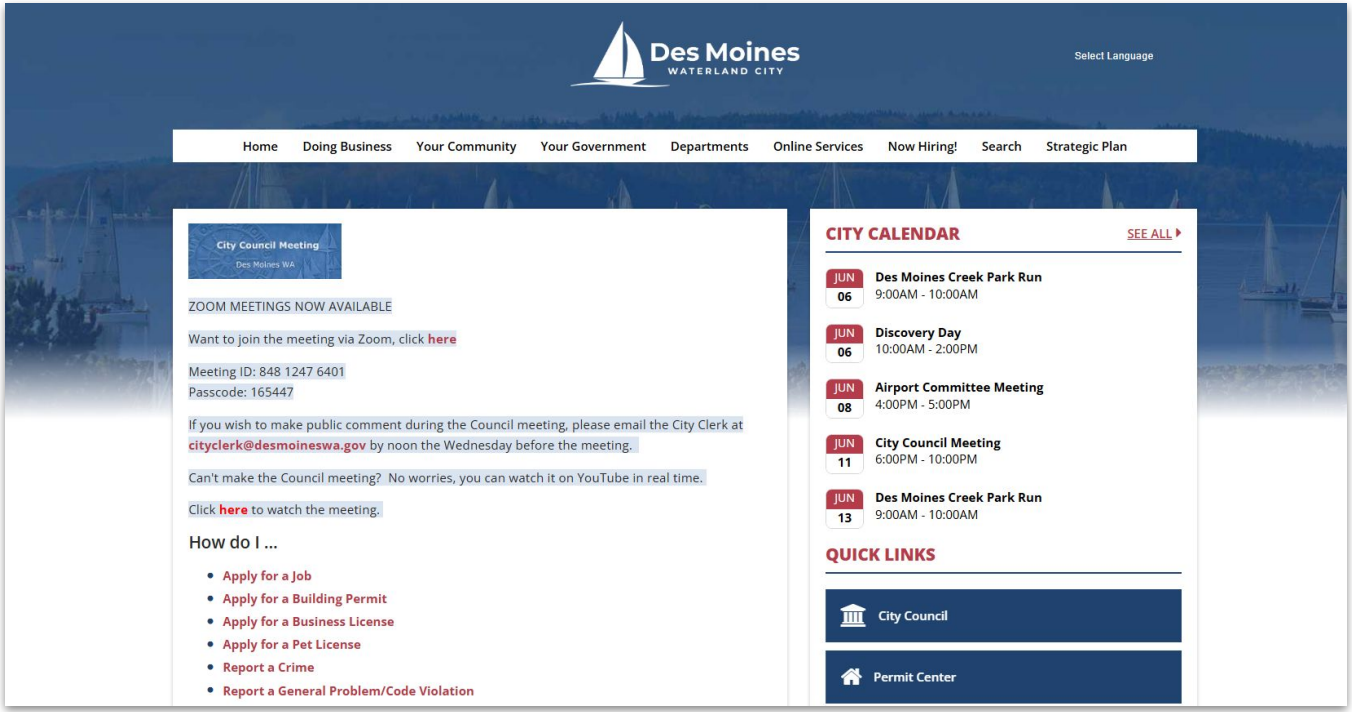
JOY RIOT

WEBSITE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 24/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Language is clear, plain, and accessible to public audiences	5
Important information is current, accurate, and easy to scan	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
The site is mobile-friendly and accessible	4
Contact information is easy to locate	1
USER EXPERIENCE	
Information is easy to find within 1–2 clicks	2
Key services and actions are easy to complete	2
BRAND	
The design reflects the City's brand, priorities, and professionalism	1
Content is organized around user needs rather than internal departments	1
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Navigation labels intuitive and resident-focused	2
The search function returns useful and relevant results	2
TOTAL	**24/50**

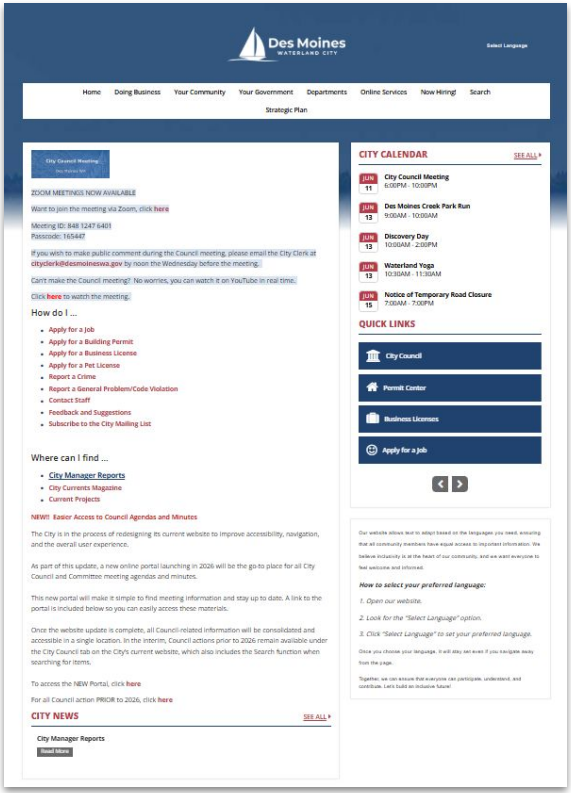
WEBSITE



JOY RIOT

WEBSITE

- Weaknesses
  - The design feels extremely dated
    - The website's visual presentation feels behind current municipal standards, which weakens credibility and makes the experience feel less professional.
  - The site lacks a clear brand identity
    - Color, typography, imagery, and layout do not communicate a strong sense of place or a recognizable Des Moines identity.
  - Navigation feels clunky and overlapping
    - Categories are not always distinct, and similar information can appear in multiple places, making it harder for users to know where to go.
  - Contact information is absent
    - Key local authorities, staff, and public-facing roles do not provide contact information



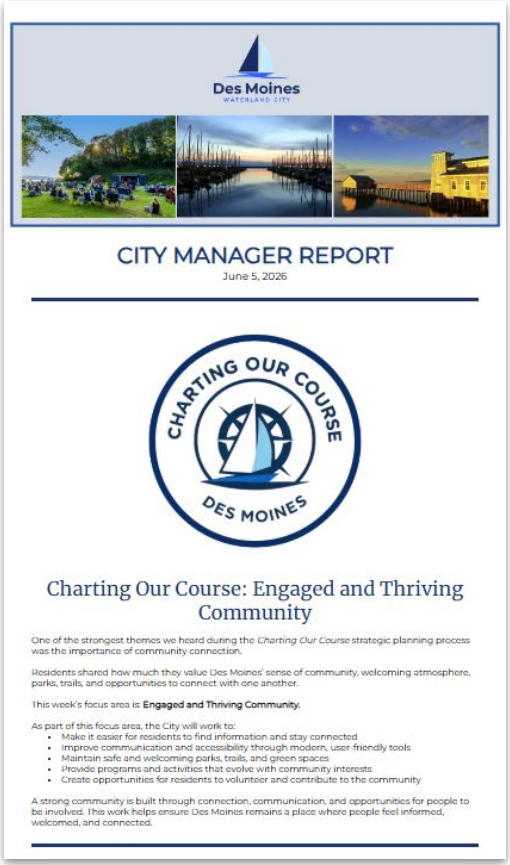
NEWSLETTER ASSESSMENT SCORE: 19/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Subject lines and headlines are clear, specific, and scannable	1
Content is organized for quick reading	1
ACCESSIBILITY	
Layouts are mobile-friendly and easy to read	3
Key information is placed prominently	2
USER EXPERIENCE	
Links and calls to action (CTAs) are clear and easy to access	1
Newsletters direct readers to useful city resources	1
BRAND	
Design is consistent with the City's brand	3
Newsletters balances news, services, events, and community updates	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Content is timely, useful, and relevant to the audience(s)	2
Content encourages continued engagement or readership	1
TOTAL	**19/50**

NEWSLETTER

- Weaknesses
  - Content is dense and difficult to scan
  - The content mix feels unfocused
    - Personal or low-priority notes, such as thanking someone for finding a phone in the water, distract from more useful resident information.
  - Calls to action are limited
    - The newsletter often shares information without clearly directing readers.
  - Event information lacks hierarchy
    - Listing 50+ events at the end without links, grouping, or prioritization makes the section feel overwhelming.



JOY RIOT



JUNE 2026 NEWSLETTER

The City's newsletters conclude with long, undifferentiated lists of events without context, descriptions, or direct links. This reduces usability for residents, makes it harder to identify relevant opportunities, and weakens the newsletter's ability to drive meaningful participation.

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 22/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of the piece is immediately clear	5
Key message(s) are understandable within seconds	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Are typography, spacing, and contrast legible and accessible?	2
Is contact information easy to find?	1
USER EXPERIENCE	
Is the copy concise, useful, and easy to scan?	2
Does the visual hierarchy guide the reader effectively?	2
BRAND	
Does the design reflect the City's brand system?	0
Do graphics or visuals support the message?	1
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Does the content reflect audience needs?	3
Does the piece include a clear next step, QR code, URL, or call to action?	1
TOTAL	**22/50**

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS

- Weaknesses
  - Contact information is often missing or buried
    - Long-form documents do not always make it easy for residents to find who to contact, where to ask questions, or what the next step should be.
  - A clear brand system is not consistently applied
    - Even official city documents can feel disconnected from a shared visual identity, with limited consistency in layout, typography, color, or formatting.
  - Event flyers are overly dense
    - Flyers often include large amounts of text without enough hierarchy, making it difficult for residents to quickly scan the event name, date, time, location, and call to action.



VIDEO ASSESSMENT SCORE: 23/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose is clear within the first few seconds	2
Key messages are communicated clearly and effectively	2
ACCESSIBILITY	
Captions and/or accessibility supports are included	5
Tone is authentic, inclusive, and appropriate for local government	3
USER EXPERIENCE	
Visuals support audience(s) understanding of the message	2
Video length is appropriate for the platform and audience(s)	5
BRAND	
Content aligns with city's communication goals	2
Audio, visuals, and editing are professional and clear	0
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Openings capture audience(s) attention quickly	1
Desired takeaway and/or next steps are clear	1
TOTAL	**23/50**

VIDEO

- Strengths
  - Past video content shows stronger production value
    - Older video content appears to have more intentional editing, clearer storytelling, and a more polished presentation.
- Weaknesses
  - Current video content is limited entirely to meetings
  - Posting cadence is inconsistent
    - The timing of uploads can feel disconnected from the actual meeting date, such as older meetings being posted long after they occurred.
  - Meeting recordings feel low-production
    - City Council meetings appear to be recorded directly from Zoom.
  - Audio and visual quality are uneven
    - When council speakers attend by cell phone or remote connection, the video experience can feel less professional and harder to follow.







PROFESSIONAL QUALITY VIDEO (2022)

JOY RIOT

https://youtu.be/kOF1HLwHZeg?si=Wg8gnBa_1CmU2e_K | https://youtu.be/9BoDAf55dcE?si=VtU1tTgt9WM3ixIO | https://youtu.be/vdiIUBMk2O4?si=UNoDLb2c3baeKk0P

SIGNAGE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 45/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of signage is immediately clear	5
Messages are concise and easy to understand	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Text size, contrast, and layout are both accessible and legible	5
Icons and/or symbols are clear and universally understood	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Signage helps users navigate, decide, or take action	5
Signage is placed where users need/look for the information	4
BRAND	
Design aligns with the City's visual identity	3
Signage feels maintained, professional, and trustworthy	3
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
The most important information is visible first	5
Hierarchy of information is clear from the intended viewing distance	5
TOTAL	**45/50**

SIGNAGE

- Strengths
  - Signage is clear and functional
  - Directional guidance is present
    - Clear directional cues.
  - There are identifiable systems in place
    - Signage appears to follow a recognizable structure in most locations.
- Weaknesses
  - Parks and Recreation signage shows some inconsistency
    - Certain Parks and Recreation signs appear to vary in style, layout, or treatment, creating small breaks in an otherwise functional wayfinding system.



JOY RIOT

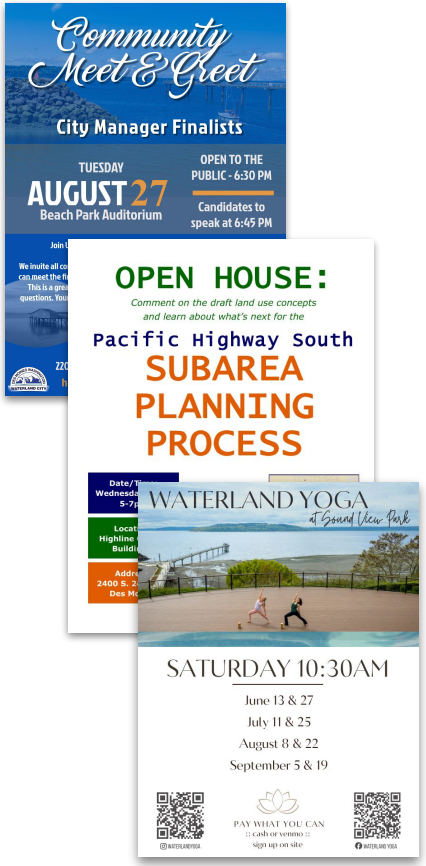
EVENTS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 21/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Event purposes are clearly communicated	1
Essential details are easy to find; including date, time, location, and registration	2
ACCESSIBILITY	
Presentations and materials are accessible and easy to understand	3
Attendees can easily navigate the event experience	1
USER EXPERIENCE	
Events feel organized, welcoming, and professional	2
Events create meaningful opportunities for participation or feedback	2
BRAND	
Branding, signage, and materials are consistent and clear	1
Promotion reaches the intended audience(s) effectively	3
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Timely follow-ups post-event share outcomes and/or next steps	3
Community voices are encouraged and heard	4
TOTAL	**21/50**

EVENTS

- Weaknesses
  - Event branding is not clearly systemized
    - Event materials do not appear to follow a consistent visual system, making them difficult to immediately identify as city communications.
  - Website listings often lack important details
    - Many event pages do not provide enough information about accessibility, parking, wayfinding, arrival instructions, or what attendees should expect on site.
  - Some events lack descriptions entirely
    - Listings may include a title, date, and time, but little to no explanation of the event purpose, audience, value, or next steps.



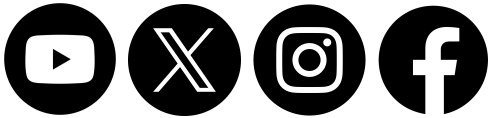
SOCIAL MEDIA ASSESSMENT SCORE: 34/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Posts are clear, concise, and useful to residents	3
Each social account has a clear purpose and audience	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Graphics, videos, and captions are accessible and platform-appropriate	2
Posting cadence is regular and is a sustainable frequency	2
USER EXPERIENCE	
It is clear which city and/or city department owns each social channel (and information pertains to owner)	5
Social content balances service updates, engagement, storytelling, and urgent information	5
BRAND	
Branding and visual identity is applied consistently across all social channels/profiles	1
Overall social presence feels unified while allowing departments to speak with expertise	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Social content is coordinated across departments, platforms, and service areas	2
Resident questions, concerns, and service needs are answered and/or escalated in a timely and appropriate manner	5
TOTAL	**34/50**

PLATFORMS BY DEPARTMENT

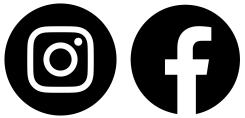
CITY GOVERNMENT



POLICE DEPARTMENT



VISIT DES MOINES



COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT



JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Strengths
  - Posting cadence is regular and reliable
  - Cross-posting is generally attributed
    - When overlap occurs between city and departmental accounts, it often happens through direct reposts or shared content, which helps clarify the source.
- Weaknesses
  - Resident questions and concerns receive limited response
    - Comments and resident questions are not always acknowledged or escalated.
  - Some departmental content feels off-topic
    - Department accounts post content that does not clearly connect to their role, such as a police account posting general reminders about daylight savings.
  - There is no clear visual system
    - Graphics, templates, colors, typography, and post styles vary across accounts, making the overall social presence feel disconnected from a unified city brand.





JOY RIOT



FARMERS BRANCH

JOY RIOT

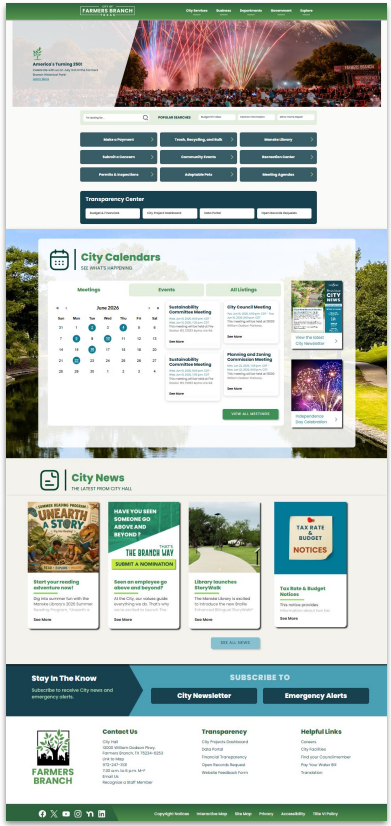
WEBSITE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 42/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Language is clear, plain, and accessible to public audiences	5
Important information is current, accurate, and easy to scan	3
ACCESSIBILITY	
The site is mobile-friendly and accessible	1
Contact information is easy to locate	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Information is easy to find within 1–2 clicks	5
Key services and actions are easy to complete	5
BRAND	
The design reflects the City's brand, priorities, and professionalism	5
Content is organized around user needs rather than internal departments	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Navigation labels intuitive and resident-focused	5
The search function returns useful and relevant results	3
TOTAL	**42/50**

WEBSITE

- Strengths
  - Key actions are easy to find
    - Farmers Branch pulls out common resident tasks and high-priority services, making the site feel practical and user-focused.
  - The site is visually polished
    - Clean layouts, strong imagery, and modern design treatments create a professional and approachable user experience.
- Weaknesses
  - **4.4** AIM Score
  - **50** Violations
  - **27+** Potential Violations
    - Low-contrast color palettes, empty headings, missing labels, missing alt text



JOY RIOT

NEWSLETTER ASSESSMENT SCORE: 42/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Subject lines and headlines are clear, specific, and scannable	3
Content is organized for quick reading	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Layouts are mobile-friendly and easy to read	3
Key information is placed prominently	4
USER EXPERIENCE	
Links and calls to action (CTAs) are clear and easy to access	3
Newsletters direct readers to useful city resources	5
BRAND	
Design is consistent with the City's brand	5
Newsletters balances news, services, events, and community updates	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Content is timely, useful, and relevant to the audience(s)	5
Content encourages continued engagement or readership	5
TOTAL	**42/50**

NEWSLETTERS

- Strengths
  - Content connects readers to useful resources
    - Newsletter sections often point residents toward city services, programs, events, and additional information.
  - The content mix is relevant to residents
    - Updates generally cover practical community information, including events, services, public notices, and city resources.
- Weaknesses
  - Some sections become too long-form
    - Certain updates include more copy than needed, which can make the newsletter harder to scan quickly.
  - The design can feel graphically busy
    - While the newsletter is branded, some sections use enough competing visuals, colors, or layout elements that the hierarchy becomes less clear.





JOY RIOT

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 42/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of the piece is immediately clear	4
Key message(s) are understandable within seconds	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Are typography, spacing, and contrast legible and accessible?	5
Is contact information easy to find?	3
USER EXPERIENCE	
Is the copy concise, useful, and easy to scan?	4
Does the visual hierarchy guide the reader effectively?	4
BRAND	
Does the design reflect the City's brand system?	5
Do graphics or visuals support the message?	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Does the content reflect audience needs?	5
Does the piece include a clear next step, QR code, URL, or call to action?	3
TOTAL	**42/50**

PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS

- Strengths
  - Print materials follow a cohesive brand style
    - Farmers Branch's print communications feel clearly informed by an established visual system, with consistent use of color, typography, layout, and graphic treatments.
  - The overall presentation feels polished
    - Print pieces tend to look intentional and professionally designed, reinforcing the City's brand and creating a more trustworthy resident experience.
- Weaknesses
  - Some materials lack strong calls to action
    - Important pieces, including reports or longer documents, do not always make the next step clear for residents.
  - Dense content can still be an issue
    - Some materials include a lot of copy, which can make them feel text-heavy even when the layout is generally organized.



VIDEO ASSESSMENT SCORE: 47/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose is clear within the first few seconds	5
Key messages are communicated clearly and effectively	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Captions and/or accessibility supports are included	5
Tone is authentic, inclusive, and appropriate for local government	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Visuals support audience(s) understanding of the message	5
Video length is appropriate for the platform and audience(s)	5
BRAND	
Content aligns with city's communication goals	5
Audio, visuals, and editing are professional and clear	4
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Openings capture audience(s) attention quickly	5
Desired takeaway and/or next steps are clear	3
TOTAL	**47/50**

VIDEO

- Strengths
  - Video quality is a clear investment area
    - Farmers Branch uses high-quality video production, polished editing, and more advanced visual effects than many peer communities.
  - Video lengths are appropriate for the audience
    - Most content feels concise enough for social and digital platforms while still giving residents the information they need.
  - Spanish-language access is a major strength
    - Spanish options are available for much of the video content, helping the City reach a broader resident audience.
  - The tone feels approachable
    - Videos generally feel friendly, accessible, and community-oriented rather than overly formal or institutional.







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https://youtu.be/6lty3wpN9nc?si=pdfwL21hv-i5KJ4b | https://youtu.be/ZrngfSPuVFI?si=PkO6cAFNiVInh5Xf | https://youtu.be/Eq1tv-2z0tw?si=pyyWl3sHJuFCmrV8

SIGNAGE ASSESSMENT SCORE: 38/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Purpose of signage is immediately clear	5
Messages are concise and easy to understand	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Text size, contrast, and layout are both accessible and legible	5
Icons and/or symbols are clear and universally understood	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
Signage helps users navigate, decide, or take action	2
Signage is placed where users need/look for the information	2
BRAND	
Design aligns with the City's visual identity	2
Signage feels maintained, professional, and trustworthy	5
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
The most important information is visible first	5
Hierarchy of information is clear from the intended viewing distance	4
TOTAL	**38/50**

SIGNAGE

- Weaknesses
  - Design styles are inconsistent
    - Signage varies in color, typography, layout, and materials, making the overall system feel less cohesive than the City's stronger print and digital communications.
  - Signage is missing from some facilities
    - Not all public-facing facilities appear to have clear or visible signage, which can make it harder for residents to confirm they are in the right place.



JOY RIOT

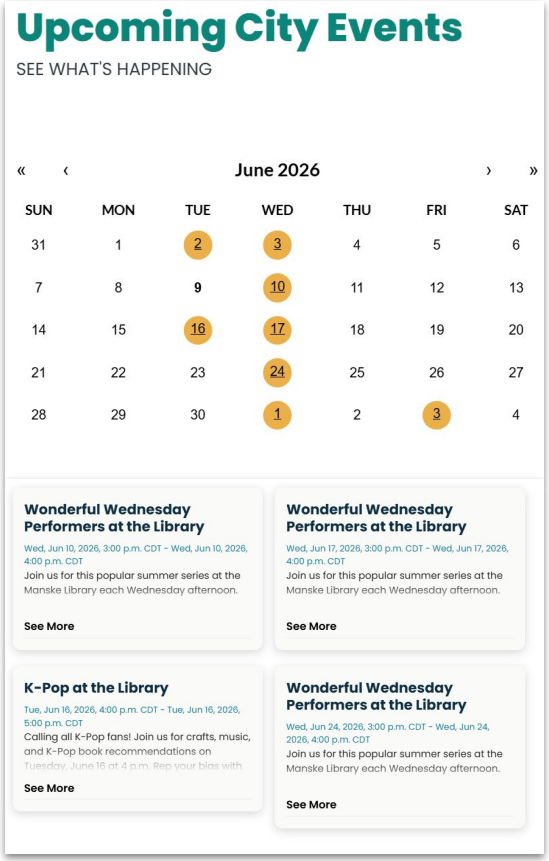
EVENTS ASSESSMENT SCORE: 38/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Event purposes are clearly communicated	4
Essential details are easy to find; including date, time, location, and registration	4
ACCESSIBILITY	
Presentations and materials are accessible and easy to understand	4
Attendees can easily navigate the event experience	4
USER EXPERIENCE	
Events feel organized, welcoming, and professional	4
Events create meaningful opportunities for participation or feedback	4
BRAND	
Branding, signage, and materials are consistent and clear	3
Promotion reaches the intended audience(s) effectively	3
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Timely follow-ups post-event share outcomes and/or next steps	3
Community voices are encouraged and heard	3
TOTAL	**38/50**

EVENTS

- Strengths
  - Essential details are usually present
    - Many event pages include the key basics residents need, such as date, time, location, registration links, pricing, parking, or “know before you go” information.
- Weaknesses
  - Promotion and branding are not always fully unified
    - Events are easy to find, but listings and event systems vary across city pages, library calendars, and meeting platforms.
  - Accessibility and navigation details are uneven
    - Accessibility, site navigation, arrival instructions, and accommodations are not consistently visible across event types.
  - Follow-up is not always built into the event experience
    - Community events do not always appear to have recap content, outcomes, or next steps after the event.



JOY RIOT

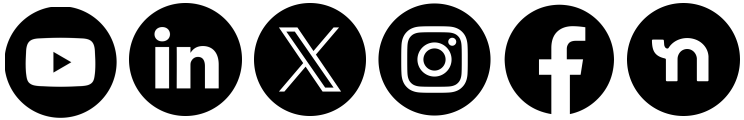
SOCIAL MEDIA ASSESSMENT SCORE: 37/50

Scoring Scale: 1 = Poor/Absent; 2 = Inconsistent or limited; 3 = Functional but average; 4 = Strong and mostly effective; 5 = Excellent/Best Practices.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE
CLARITY	
Posts are clear, concise, and useful to residents	4
Each social account has a clear purpose and audience	5
ACCESSIBILITY	
Graphics, videos, and captions are accessible and platform-appropriate	4
Posting cadence is regular and is a sustainable frequency	5
USER EXPERIENCE	
It is clear which city and/or city department owns each social channel (and information pertains to owner)	5
Social content balances service updates, engagement, storytelling, and urgent information	5
BRAND	
Branding and visual identity is applied consistently across all social channels/profiles	2
Overall social presence feels unified while allowing departments to speak with expertise	3
ACTION & ENGAGEMENT	
Social content is coordinated across departments, platforms, and service areas	3
Resident questions, concerns, and service needs are answered and/or escalated in a timely and appropriate manner	1
TOTAL	**37/50**

PLATFORMS BY DEPARTMENT

CITY GOVERNMENT



POLICE DEPARTMENT



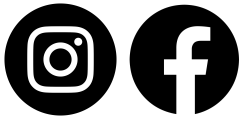
DISCOVER FARMERS BRANCH



FIRE DEPARTMENT



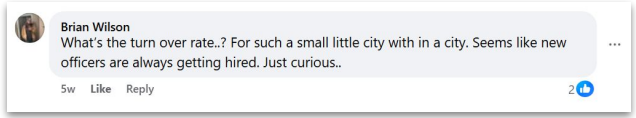
PARKS & RECREATION

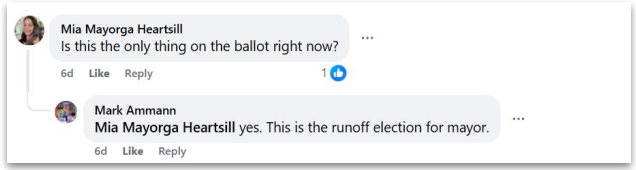


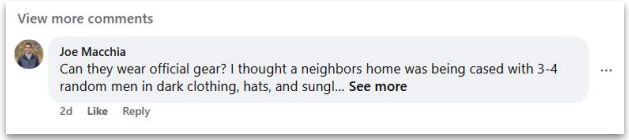
JOY RIOT

SOCIAL MEDIA

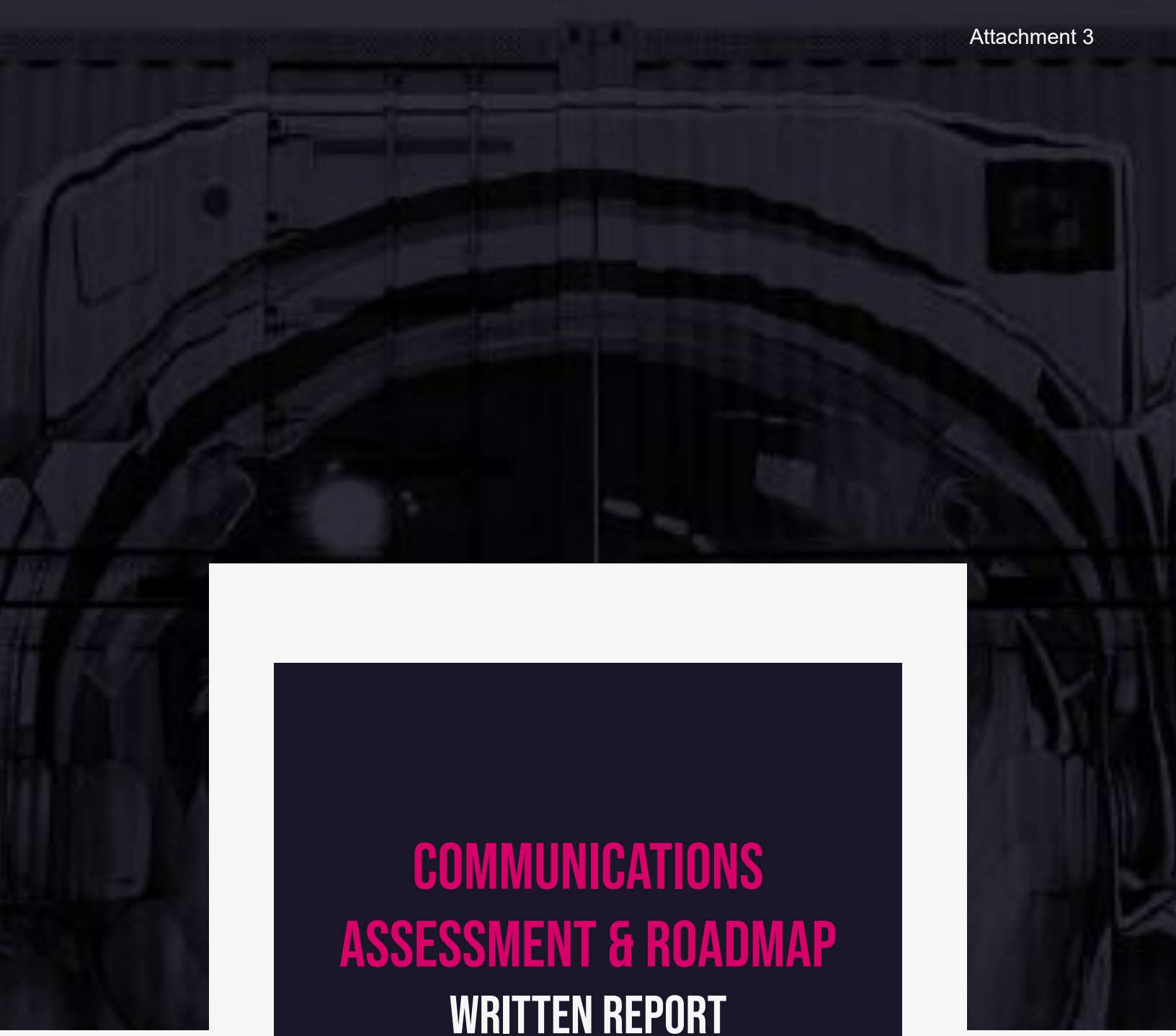
- Strengths
  - Social content is active and useful
    - Farmers Branch maintains a steady social presence with updates around events, services, programs, and community information.
- Weaknesses
  - Resident questions and comments are not consistently answered
    - Comments often appear to receive little or no visible response, which limits social media's effectiveness as a two-way communication tool.
  - Styling is inconsistent across posts
    - Graphics, colors, typography, and layouts vary, making the social presence feel less cohesive than the City's stronger website and print materials.











COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT & ROADMAP

WRITTEN REPORT

August 13, 2026

Prepared for:

CITY OF Northglenn

JOY RIOT

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1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Northglenn engaged Joy Riot to conduct a comprehensive communications and marketing assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of its current communications ecosystem and identify opportunities for improvement. As communities increasingly expect transparent, accessible, and engaging communication from local government, Northglenn recognized the need for an independent evaluation of its communications practices, tools, staffing, resources, and brand positioning.

PURPOSE

The assessment was initiated to better align citywide communications efforts with community expectations, industry best practices, and the City Council's strategic priorities. The goal was to provide a comprehensive review of Northglenn's communications and marketing operations and develop strategic recommendations to guide future efforts. Specifically:

- **Evaluate** the City's communications and marketing strategies, channels, staffing structure, and available resources.
- **Identify** organizational strengths, communication gaps, and opportunities for improvement.
- **Assess** the effectiveness, consistency, accessibility, and reach of existing communications efforts.
- **Benchmark** Northglenn's practices against peer municipalities and industry standards.
- **Develop** recommendations for a sustainable, measurable, and forward-looking communications and marketing strategy.

The assessment was guided by the City's broader goals of building trust and transparency, strengthening community identity and pride, increasing engagement and participation, supporting economic vitality, improving organizational efficiency, adapting to evolving resident expectations, and establishing meaningful performance measures that focus on outcomes rather than activities.

METHODOLOGY

Joy Riot conducted a multi-phase assessment designed to evaluate Northglenn's current communications environment and identify opportunities for strategic improvement. The methodology included:

Discovery and Current State Assessment

- Interviews and focus groups with City Council members, city leadership, department staff, and key stakeholders.
- Review of existing communications policies, plans, procedures, branding materials, and organizational practices.
- Audit of external communications channels, including the City's website, social media, newsletters, print materials, videos, signage, events, and public engagement efforts.
- Evaluation of internal communications practices, employee engagement efforts, staffing structure, and communications resources.

Benchmarking and Best Practices Review

- Comparison of Northglenn's communications and marketing activities against peer municipalities and recognized industry standards.
- Evaluation of emerging trends, best practices, technology solutions, digital engagement strategies, and storytelling approaches.

Gap Analysis

- Assessment of message consistency, audience reach, accessibility, equity, and inclusion across communication channels.
- Evaluation of alignment between communications efforts, community priorities, and City Council goals.
- Review of media relations, crisis communications capabilities, reputation management practices, and digital performance metrics.
- Identification of opportunities to enhance, consolidate, or discontinue communications tools and tactics.
- Evaluation of staffing, training, technology, and resource needs.

The findings and recommendations presented in this report are intended to provide Northglenn with a practical roadmap for strengthening communications, enhancing community engagement, and building a cohesive and recognizable city brand for years to come.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Northglenn does not have a communications effort problem—the City has a communications system problem. Across the organization, departments are producing valuable information, supporting major initiatives, and maintaining active public touchpoints. However, these efforts operate independently, without a shared strategy, a consistent message, or a unified sense of what Northglenn should be known for. The result is a city that is more compelling than its communications currently reveal.

This assessment recommends a shift from a reactive, department-by-department approach to one that is intentional, coordinated, and measurable. This includes:

- **Defining** the Northglenn story.
- **Clarifying** channel roles and ownership.
- **Strengthening** brand consistency.
- **Setting clear** communications priorities.
- **Equipping staff** with the systems and tools to plan ahead and execute more effectively.

With these pieces in place, Northglenn can move beyond simply informing the public, and begin using communications to build trust, reinforce identity, and make the City's value visible to everyone it serves.

3. FINDINGS

The following highlight key themes and findings from our audit. For more detailed findings, please see the Detailed Findings Document.

ALIGNMENT & EXPECTATIONS

Overall, both staff and Council have a desire to improve the current communications ecosystem through:

- Modernizing the communications channels and content.
- Improving the timeliness of content and engagement with the community.
- Strengthening the internal systems and processes—including coordination across departments—to build a more cohesive and scalable communications approach.
- Emphasizing transparency, education, and community storytelling.

Council is expecting more frequent and more accurate content, as well as a wide variety of communications methodologies to keep up with the digital landscape, while also being mindful of older generations and underserved communities.

While staff are eager to do more and improve communications overall, there is a concern that they don't have the capacity, resources, or communications training to fulfill every request to the quality, frequency, and timeliness desired.

Additionally, there is a need to have a better grasp on communications priorities, evaluating the urgency, and an ability for a more strategic approach ahead of things that can be planned.

The goal is to create alignment and set expectations on the best way to do that moving forward, understanding staff capacity, budgets, and the ever-evolving communications landscape.

THE NORTHGLENN BRAND

Northglenn has a standout visual identity, but lacks a clear cohesive message and tone. Additionally, while City Council and staff see Northglenn as a "hidden gem"—having many amenities and offerings of a large city, but with a strong sense of community of a small town—the awareness of Northglenn and all it has to offer declines significantly outside its borders.

Content from the Department of Parks, Recreation & Culture helps to increase the reach and perception of Northglenn through a wider radius beyond the local community.

However, there are concerns that the crime recap videos the Police Department posts bi-weekly have a negative effect on perceptions—positioning Northglenn as high-crime, and going against the community feel.

CHANGING COMMUNICATIONS LANDSCAPE

How people consume information is constantly evolving. We're seeing a rise in digital and social media engagement, though that needs to be balanced for certain demographics who may not be as digitally savvy or as connected to government communications. Similarly, there's a greater expectation of instant gratification when it comes to information, though that needs to be balanced with quality over quantity so as not to overwhelm or get lost in the shuffle.

In this new environment staff must focus on four key rules of public communications:

Timeliness: Share information early enough for people to understand their options and take action. Timely communication helps the community respond with confidence.

Accuracy: Provide clear, verified information from a dependable source. Accuracy builds credibility and strengthens public trust in the municipality.

Frequency: Communicate often enough to remain visible without overwhelming the audience. A thoughtful cadence helps keep residents informed and engaged.

Consistency: Use consistent messaging, visual standards and practices across departments and channels. Consistency makes municipal information easier to recognize and understand.

EVALUATION OF CURRENT CITY COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK

There are typically three types of communication frameworks found in local governments:

THE CENTRALIZED GATEKEEPER: THE TOWN HALL BOTTLENECK	THE DECENTRALIZED WILD WEST: EVERY DEPARTMENT FOR ITSELF	THE HYBRID NETWORK: COORDINATED CITY
The City Manager or Communications Director sits at the center of a strict hierarchy. No department is allowed to post on social media, talk to the local newspaper, or issue a statement without explicit sign-off from the central office.	There is no central coordination. The City, Police Department, PRC, and Economic Development all have their own independent social media accounts, managed by whoever has a spare ten minutes.	This model establishes clear departmental responsibilities. The central Communications Team or City Manager sets the overall communication policy, provides pre-approved templates, and handles high-level crises (like city budget deficits or major natural disasters). However, individual departments are trained and empowered to communicate their daily operational realities.

Below is a summary of how each framework functions.

MODEL	PRIMARY CONTROLLER	BEST USE CASES	CORE RISK PROFILE
CENTRALIZED	City Manager / Communications Team	Budget announcements, active litigation, severe crises.	Severe information blockages and delayed safety updates.
DECENTRALIZED	Individual Department Staff	Daily community engagement, departmental events, police outreach.	Conflicting narratives and severe loss of brand identity.
HYBRID	Shared (Hub & Spokes)	Modern civic operations require both agility and safety.	Requires ongoing training, alignment, and coordination.

Currently, Northglenn utilizes a loosely structured "Hub-and-Spoke" (hybrid) framework, routing central brand authority through the City Manager's Office while maintaining highly specialized communication nodes for its key service departments. The goal is that the new Communications Director can refocus the "Hub" and help manage the communications on the "Spokes."

THE CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE & LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT

At the center of the city's messaging stands the City Manager's Office. This office is responsible for the overall performance of all municipal departments and plays a defining role in shaping, coordinating, and managing the city's marketing, marketing channels, and public communications.

To execute this, the City Manager's Office houses four (4) distinct areas that heavily engage in public communications:

- **Public Communications**: Led by one Communications Director, the team includes one (1) Senior Public Communications Specialist, one (1) Public Communications Specialist (Frozen).
- **Special Events:** Housed within the Public Communications their main role is to coordinate all planning, logistics, and execution of City events. The two (2) special Events Specialist and one (1) part-time special Events Specialist Assistant play a vital role in the success of Northglenn's many community events, but sit outside the main communications functions of the Public Communications Department.
- **Community Engagement**: Although not directly tied to communication strategy and planning, Community Engagement manages connections and provides involvement, interaction and problem resolution through volunteer services, community outreach, neighborhood programs, events, and proactive relations with residents.
- **Economic Development**: Although the department does not have staff dedicated to marketing and communications as their primary responsibility, its current staff do fulfill communications and marketing functions in addition to their main roles.

THE CORE ROLE OF PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

The Public Communications Department functions as the city's central newsroom. It handles the day-to-day communications strategy, delivering timely information to residents regarding municipal programs, major construction progress, and unforeseen emergency updates.

Beyond pure information sharing, this team organizes large-scale city events, ensures cross-promotion across various city channels, and manages active PR crises.

SUPPORTING CITY COUNCIL

The Public Communications team also serves as the primary communications arm for the Northglenn City Council. This means the Northglenn City Council, its committees, and the city's various Boards and Commissions rely on the central team for their marketing and event needs. When Councilmembers need to share specific updates in their capacity as elected officials, the team assists them by writing ward-specific stories for the City Newsletter, organizing ward constituent meetings, and preparing pre-packaged digital content that Councilmembers can distribute to their own networks.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

While aligned with the City Manager's core goals, the Economic Development Department focuses its communications outward on the business community to strengthen the local tax base and attract new employers, developers, and retailers.

- Economic Development Specialist (1) Filled
- Economic Development Coordinator (1) Filled
- Economic Development Director (1) Filled

To do this, the department manages highly targeted business-to-business (B2B) communications channels:

- **Market Data & Professional Pipelines**: Providing free access to data assets that help businesses make strategic expansion and relocation decisions.
- **Annual Business Appreciation Event**: Hosting a community-wide recognition event to celebrate local businesses.
- **Business Directory**: Maintaining a free public index to increase visibility for local enterprises.
- **Business E-Newsletter**: Distributing a monthly newsletter keeping local owners informed of regional opportunities and regulatory updates.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE (PRC)

Because the Parks, Recreation, and Culture (PRC) department manages highly visible physical spaces—such as the recreation center, senior programs, public parks, and theater

programs—its communication needs are uniquely hands-on and experiential. PRC's goal is to turn public amenities into highly accessible and engaging experiences.

PRC's marketing and communications functions fall within two (2) distinct divisions of the department; Recreation and Culture.

RECREATION

Physical wellness, community engagement, leisure activities, and programming for residents of all ages is the focus of the Recreation division of PRC. Its marketing and communications staff include:

- Recreation Assistant Marketing (1) Vacant

CULTURE

The Culture division manages cultural initiatives through **Northglenn Arts**, offering visual and performing arts classes, public art installations, and educational programs. Its marketing and communications staff include:

- Theatre Coordinator Marketing (1) Filled

Please note that Northglenn Arts works in partnership with the Northglenn Arts and Humanities Foundation (NAHF). Regarding marketing, Northglenn Arts relies on the NAHF for approximately $30,000.00 annually to fund marketing efforts, including media buys and printed marketing materials.

Although PRC has only two (2) dedicated marketing FTEs spread across Recreation and Culture, many staff fulfill communications and marketing functions in addition to their main roles.

Together, this team maintains its own subset of localized marketing channels:

- **Seasonal Activity Guide**: The PRC's primary recurring publication, used to market recreational classes and cultural events.
- **Targeted Social Media**: Independent, brand-specific digital accounts tailored to reach audiences interested in Northglenn Arts and general recreation.

- **Arts Promotion & Ticketing**: Targeted marketing campaigns, digital ticketing platforms, and direct mail campaigns specifically for gallery seasons and show promotions.
- **Sponsorship & B2B Menus**: Specialized guides helping local businesses sponsor city parks and recreational assets.
- **On-Site Messaging**: Managing digital displays, flyers, and banners inside the Northglenn Recreation Center to capture foot traffic.
- **Outdoor Wayfinding**: Developing trail signage and park-user communications to support long-term initiatives like the Northglenn Playbook.

THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Police Department represents the most autonomous spoke in the hybrid communications model. While broader city narratives remain centralized, the high-pressure nature of public safety requires a dedicated, specialized Public Information Officer (PIO) to manage law enforcement updates and crisis communications.

The PIO operates closely alongside the department's Professional Standards Division—which handles localized community relations, special events, and grant management—under three unique operational realities:

- **Real-Time Life Safety**: The PIO works in a high-stakes, rapid-response environment where messaging directly impacts physical safety, such as pushing out active shooter alerts, critical incident updates, traffic diversions, or coordinating Emergency Operations Center activations.
- **Operational Transparency**: A large portion of police messaging relies on translating data-informed policing metrics to build community trust—such as communicating the rollout of the Axon Records Management System (RMS) or clarifying speed camera and traffic enforcement data.
- **Strict Statutory Boundaries**: Unlike any other city department, the Police PIO must carefully balance the public's right to know with statutory restrictions, victim privacy laws, and the legal preservation of ongoing criminal investigations.

Northglenn has 6.00 FTEs across these departments with primary communications responsibilities.

COMPARISON TO PEER CITIES

Six cities were chosen and approved by Council to benchmark Northglenn against. These peer cities were determined based on evaluating some of Northglenn's direct neighbors, as well as similar cities across the country based on population, distance to urban center, median household income, and similar demographics.

Within each city, we evaluated their staffing structure, in-house capabilities, and methodologies for communicating with their audiences.

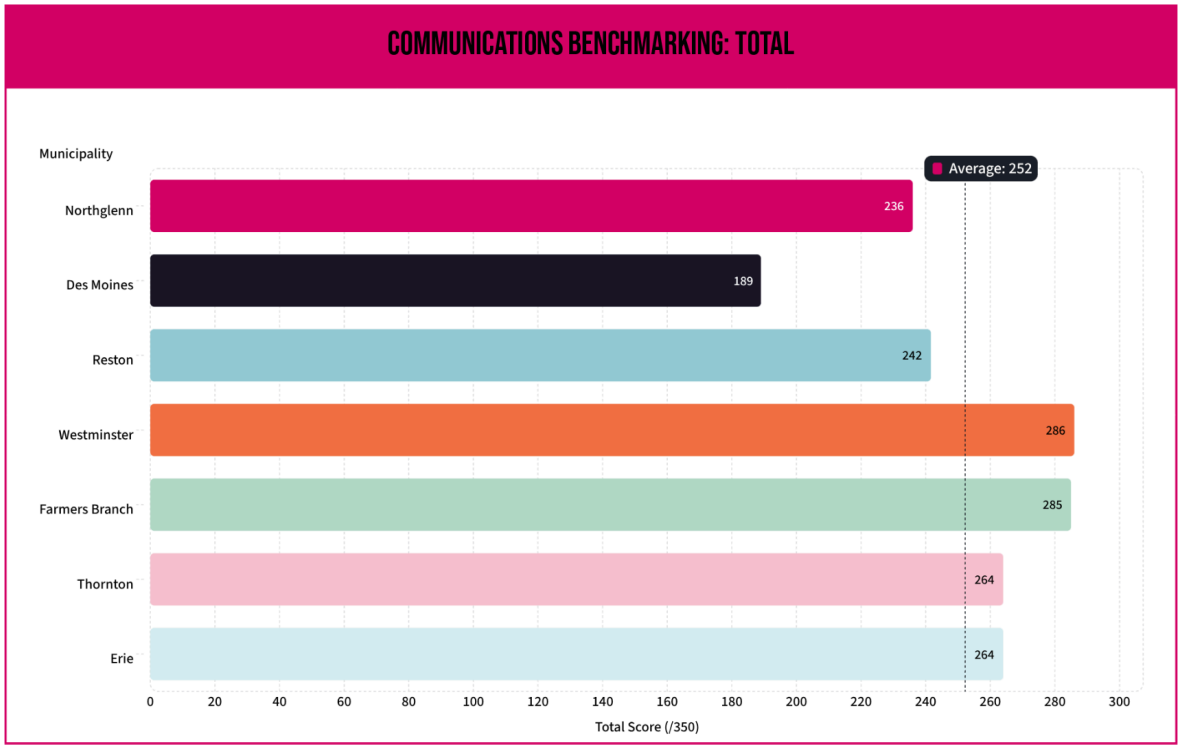


BEST PRACTICES EVALUATION OVERVIEW

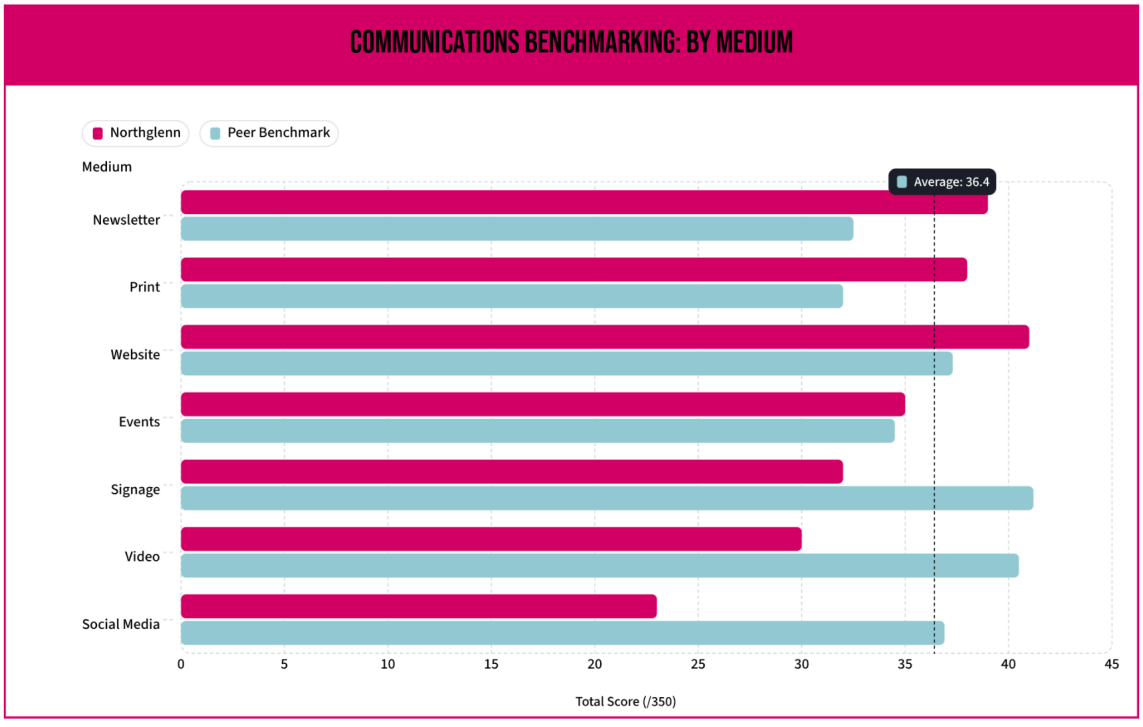
We evaluated Northglenn's communications channels based on best practices and benchmarks using a 50-point scoring framework that evaluated five strategic categories:

- **Clarity**. Is information easy to understand, current, and useful?
- **Accessibility**. Is the experience inclusive, legible, and easy to use?
- **User Experience**. Can audiences find, navigate, and complete tasks?
- **Brand**. Does it feel consistent, professional, and aligned?
- **Action & Engagement**. Does it guide people toward clear next steps?

From an overarching communications perspective, Northglenn falls below average compared to these six peers.



While Northglenn exceeds individual peer benchmarks for website, newsletter, and printed communications, it falls far behind when it comes to video content and social media.



Northglenn has significant communications resources and staffing compared to its neighbors considering its general fund budget.

COMPARATIVE BUDGET & PERSONNEL

MUNICIPALITY	FTE COUNT	FY 2026 GENERAL FUND	ESTIMATED COMMS PERSONNEL COST
Northglenn, CO	6.00 FTE	$40.4 Million	$750,000
Thornton, CO	11.00 FTE	$195.0 Million	$1,450,000
Westminster, CO	17.90 FTE	$165.0 Million	$1,100,000
Farmers Branch, TX	14.00 FTE	$85.9 Million	$580,000
Erie, CO	8.00 FTE	$42.0 Million	$480,000
Des Moines, WA	4.50 FTE	$26.1 Million	$520,000
Reston, VA (RA Core)	1.00+ Core FTE	N/A (Private HOA)	$650,000

COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS

WEBSITE	TOTAL SCORE: 41/50

KEY TAKEAWAY:

The Northglenn website outperforms peer municipalities in four of five categories. The one exception, **Brand**, trails peers by 2.0 points, signaling a clear opportunity to strengthen city identity and storytelling across the site.

DOING WELL

- Strong resident usability: clear navigation, quick links, service pathways, contact information, and Access Northglenn.
- Clear, plain-language content that surfaces timely updates and common resident needs.
- Strong accessibility posture, including ReciteMe, accessibility feedback, and stated WCAG/Colorado standards.
- Common tasks are easy to find and complete.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Brand storytelling is underdeveloped; the site feels more functional than distinctive.
- Homepage and priority pages could better reflect Northglenn's people, neighborhoods, parks, civic life, and quality of life.
- Some technical accessibility issues remain, including landmarks, heading structure, and potential mobile friction.
- Search could better support plain-language resident questions.

NEWSLETTERS[1]

TOTAL SCORE: 39/50

KEY TAKEAWAY:

Northglenn's newsletters are standout performers from a best-practices perspective. Northglenn leads peers in four of five categories, with **Action & Engagement** scoring a perfect 10 based on the presence of strong engagement-oriented elements, such as clear Calls to Action (CTAs), scannable content, and actionable next steps.

DOING WELL

- Strong CTAs, useful links, and clear pathways back to city resources.
- Newsletters are timely, useful, and action-oriented.
- Distinct but connected newsletter identities for resident and business audiences.
- Strong civic and business engagement value.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Content can be dense and hard to scan quickly.
- Mobile readability and accessibility could be improved.
- Important information should rely less on embedded graphics and long-form layouts.

PRINT[2]

TOTAL SCORE: 38/50

KEY TAKEAWAY:

Print is one of Northglenn's strongest relative performers. The City leads in **Accessibility, User Experience, and Brand**—outpacing peers by 2.8 points in brand alignment. The primary gap is **Action & Engagement**, where materials often lack clear next steps for residents.

DOING WELL

- Clear purpose, strong hierarchy, and generally polished execution.
- Major documents feel professional, credible, and aligned with city communications.
- Print materials generally use helpful visuals & organized content.
- Strong relative performance compared with peers.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- CTAs and next steps are not always strong or consistent.
- Contact information is inconsistently included, placed, and formatted across print materials.
- Cross-department print standards could be tighter.
- Some pieces inform well but do not clearly drive action.

[1] The Newsletter audit included the eConnection, Catalyst, Business Connection, Northglenn Arts, and Recreation e-newsletters. The Northglenn Connection print newsletter was also evaluated under the "Newsletters" category and is therefore excluded from the Print score.

[2] The Print audit included, but was not limited to, activity guides, water quality reports, strategic plans, departmental and interdepartmental flyers, municipal court monthly reports, annual budgets, and printed schedules.

SOCIAL MEDIA

TOTAL SCORE: 23/50

KEY TAKEAWAY:

Social media is Northglenn's **weakest-performing channel** relative to peers — trailing in every single category. The UX gap is 5.2 points and Brand scores just 2.0, reflecting the impact of fragmented, ungoverned departmental accounts with no unified strategy.

DOING WELL

- Broad platform presence and large overall audience.
- Many posts share useful service updates, reminders, events, and alerts.
- Some accounts maintain regular posting and timely information.
- Captions and platform-appropriate copy are often present.
- PRC short-form content drives sustained growth on Facebook.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Channel roles and audiences are unclear across the ecosystem.
- Brand identity is fragmented across departments, platforms, templates, and tones.
- Residents may need to follow multiple accounts to get a complete picture.
- Engagement feels one-way because visible response and escalation are limited.
- Police/crime-heavy content can dominate perception and disconnect from broader city positioning.

VIDEO

TOTAL SCORE: 30/50

KEY TAKEAWAY:

Video represents Northglenn's **largest competitive gap** across all channels. Police video content often departs from the broader city government brand. Additionally, most videos across platforms end without a clear next step, leaving the purpose, takeaway, or desired viewer action unclear.

DOING WELL

- Topics are generally clear and appropriate for local government.
- Captions/accessibility supports are a relative strength.
- Mayor's Minute and City-Platform Video lengths are generally platform-appropriate.
- Tone is often service-oriented and community-appropriate.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Law enforcement content can dominate or work against broader city positioning.
- Law enforcement video lengths frequently exceed best-practices.
- Brand expression is generally inconsistent between departments.
- Many videos lack clear takeaways, CTAs, or next steps.

	• Openings do not always hook viewers or explain why the topic matters. • Production quality, audio, pacing, editing, and visual hierarchy are inconsistent.

SIGNAGE	TOTAL SCORE: 32/50

KEY TAKEAWAY:

Signage is a clear weak point, with **inconsistent brand application** throughout the City's signage system. Parks, Recreation, & Culture (PRC) signage is generally the strongest and most consistent area. Tier-3[3] entryway pole signs are underwhelming and easy to miss, while Tier-2 arterial signage strays from brand standards. Departmental signage is at times disconnected from the broader municipal identity.

DOING WELL	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Signage is generally functional, clear, and well-placed. • Strong wayfinding support, especially around facilities and recreation spaces. • Most signage feels maintained, professional, and trustworthy. • Signs help users navigate, identify spaces, and make decisions.	• Citywide signage does not consistently reinforce a clear sense of place or arrival. • Limited city-identifying signage may contribute to confusion between Northglenn and neighboring communities. • Citywide signage standards are not fully systematized. • Brand consistency varies by location and department. • Some signs need larger type, simpler hierarchy, and stronger contrast for distance viewing.

EVENTS[4]	TOTAL SCORE: 35/50

KEY TAKEAWAY:

Events demonstrate strong community quality — outperforming peers in Accessibility, User

[3] Entryway signage tiers refer to those delineated by the Entryway Signage Program, November 7, 2022 Memorandum.

[4] The Event Communications assessment included, but was not limited to, city webpages, online calendar listings, registration pages, departmental and interdepartmental flyers, printed and digital schedules, social media promotions, newsletter content, event maps, and logistical materials, if and when present.

Experience, and Brand. But **clarity lags significantly**, trailing peers by 2.8 points. Incomplete event information undermines what is otherwise a compelling community programming strength.

DOING WELL	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Complete, regularly updated digital event calendar. • Thorough seasonal activity guides available to the public. • General event details are generally prioritized and clear in digital materials. • Clear, streamlined registration process for City activities. • Prominent contact information for relevant event coordinators and administrators. • Supplemental resources included on event webpages.	• Event clarity is inconsistent; purpose, audience value, and participation details are not always obvious. • Event information can be fragmented across city pages, external sites, registration tools, and supporting materials. • Accessibility details are not centralized and standardized on event pages. • Post-event recaps, feedback loops, and "what we heard / what changed" follow-ups are limited. • Outcomes of participation are not always visible afterward.

PROCESSES

Overall, communication workflows, processes, and approval structures are not consistently documented or standardized. Additionally, due to the nature of the level of unplanned communications in municipal communications, and current open Communications Director position, there's a lack of strategic oversight and planning ability across departments to create the cohesion and planning desired.

Parks, Recreation & Culture has a well-planned editorial calendar. A format that can be shared with other departments as a template for a great planning tool. Their challenge is being able to hit every single touchpoint due to the sheer number of events, activities and programs they have to promote each month.
The Police Department approval process starts with the Public Information Officer (PIO) creating the content, going to the Deputy Chief of Police for review and approval. Not all departments or content creation methods have the levels of review and approval required to ensure accuracy, consistency, and brand compliance.

With the recent introduction of a monthly cross-department communications meeting, City staff are working toward a more cohesive planning process, and more opportunities for cross promotion.

QUALITY CONTROL

When it comes to quality control, there are some key challenges that arose in our audit that have a direct impact on the quality of the communications produced. In this case, the quality we're referring to includes timeliness, accuracy, consistency, and on-brand.

- **No strategic oversight**. Right now, the departments are primarily working in silos, though with the recent introduction of cross-departmental communications meetings, you're already one step closer to building the brand cohesion required.
    - There's more good news: this is something that is actively being worked on in hiring a new Director of Communications. This person would set the brand and communications strategy, manage the overarching editorial calendar, and establish ways departments can work together to build the Northglenn brand.
- **Undefined roles**. When it comes to the communications needs, there are some staff that know exactly what's needed, and there are others where communications is just a part of their role by team necessity and therefore aren't fully trained in the best practices. Similarly, there are go-to people that different departments and Council regularly tap for support, but they're already navigating too many priorities.
    - By better defining the roles and responsibilities, you can better set expectations and know the right place to go for the appropriate needs.
- **Lack of formal process**. There's a consensus that a formal defined process would help both staff and Council understand:
    - Who to go to for which communications needs, including who has the expertise to execute certain skilled tasks
    - What the review and approval process should look like
    - How everyone can ensure they're promoting Northglenn as a whole
- **Bottlenecks**. Current unstructured information intake and approval processes have created bottlenecks. For example, while the Parks, Recreation & Culture team has a general idea of what events are upcoming, they don't always have all the information needed from partners to begin promoting when they'd like to. Additionally, there are times when known approvers are too busy so things either get stuck or go out without the final approval required.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS (START, STOP, CONTINUE)

The good news is that you're not broken. Your team is doing a lot of things right and exceeding expectations in some areas across best practice and peer benchmarks. The following outlines our recommendations for continued improvements based on best practices.

OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

As mentioned earlier, Northglenn utilizes a loosely structured, informal "Hub-and-Spoke" (hybrid) framework, routing central brand authority through the City Manager's Office/Communications Team while maintaining highly specialized communication nodes for its key service departments. We are recommending that Northglenn formalize its hybrid framework with specific areas of responsibilities spelled out for both the Communications Team and staff within individual departments.

1. THE CENTRAL HUB: COMMUNICATIONS TEAM FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The central Communications Team serves as the city's strategic anchor, brand protector, and organizational enabler. Rather than micro-managing daily operational tasks, the Hub focuses on governance, high-level strategy, executive support, and maintaining quality control across all municipal channels.

Strategic Governance & Brand Integrity

The Communications Team owns the Strategic Governance & Brand Integrity of the city. They establish the foundational rules of engagement by creating citywide branding guidelines, messaging frameworks, and standardized style manuals. To streamline compliance for departments, the Hub designs pre-approved templates for digital and print media and curates a central, searchable database of approved logos, photography, and creative assets.

Quality Control & Content Creation

To ensure the city doesn't overwhelm residents or contradict itself, the Communications Team builds and maintains the citywide editorial calendar. They oversee all major citywide content creation and quality control across core public channels, including the city newsletter, master website, and main Facebook page. Under this formalized model, the central team acts as the final traffic stop—systematically approving and monitoring departmental social media posts to ensure they align with the master calendar's timing and standards.

Executive, Media, and Crisis Management

When the stakes are high, the Hub takes complete control of the microphone. They provide dedicated Executive & Elected Official Communication Support, crafting speeches, talking points, and non-partisan messaging for the Mayor, City Council, and city boards. They manage all Media and Government Relations, acting as the sole point of contact for journalists. Most critically, the Hub orchestrates the response to high-level crises, ensuring unified, legally compliant, and accurate messaging during public safety emergencies or organizational disruptions.

Departmental Enablement

The Hub's secondary identity is that of a supportive partner. They drive cross-departmental coordination so that separate wings of city government are aware of each other's initiatives. They also provide ongoing departmental training and support, equipping non-communications staff with the basic skills, media literacy, and tool training required to execute ground-level messaging safely.

2. THE OPERATIONAL SPOKES: DEPARTMENTAL FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Under this formalized framework, individual departments are no longer passive bystanders; they are empowered content owners. Staff within departments use their specialized, on-the-ground expertise to connect directly with the specific segments of the community they serve. Department staff are responsible for real-time Program and Service Content Creation—drafting their own posts, building localized flyers using the central team's pre-approved templates, and capturing the day-to-day realities of their field work.

Localized Planning & Execution

Every department manages its own departmental content calendar, which feeds directly upward into the master citywide calendar. This ensures that a department's planned announcements do not conflict with major city news. Department staff are responsible for real-time Program and Service Content Creation—drafting their own posts, building localized flyers using the central team's pre-approved templates, and capturing the day-to-day realities of their field work.

Frontline Quality Control & Storytelling

Before any draft leaves a department to be reviewed by the central Hub, it must pass through the department's own internal quality control check. Department heads or designated leads review content for operational accuracy, technical jargon, and basic alignment with city policies. Finally, departments act as the city's primary scouts for positive messaging; they are

uniquely positioned to look for and share success stories and best practices from the field, passing those narratives up to the central Hub to be amplified on a citywide scale.

THE FRAMEWORK IN ACTION: A SEAMLESS WORKFLOW

In practice, this formalized relationship creates a smooth, predictable loop:

- A department like Parks, Recreation and Culture wants to announce a new community program.
    - They draft the post locally, pull a pre-approved graphic layout from the central database, and schedule it on their departmental content calendar.
        - They perform an internal quality check for accurate dates and times, then submit it to the citywide editorial calendar.
            - The central Communications Team reviews it to ensure it doesn't conflict with a major public announcement, verifies the branding looks crisp, and approves the post for publication.

Strategy stays at the center; execution lives on the front lines.

STAFFING CAPACITIES/BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS

Like many communities across the country, Northglenn faces budgetary headwinds and must find ways to increase efficiencies and to do more with less. We are not recommending additional staff on the Communications Team or at the departmental level. Instead, we suggest the City focus on developing the “skills” needed to manage a modern public-facing communications program.

Currently the City lacks someone dedicated to filming and editing video, nor a person (either full-time or part-time) dedicated to disseminating and monitoring social media content. These functions are now filled in an ad hoc fashion. Such a system has a detrimental effect on Timeliness, Accuracy, Consistency, and Frequency. We strongly recommend the City develop these skills within the Communications Team and at the department level to mitigate bottlenecks in its work flow.

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

The City is currently without a Communications & Community Engagement Director. The importance of the quality of the candidate to Northglenn's communication strategy and implementation cannot be overstated. Below is a summary of the key qualities and competencies the role requires.

Position Summary

The Communications & Community Engagement Director designs, implements, and leads the City's hybrid "hub-and-spoke" communications strategy. Rather than acting as a strict bureaucratic gatekeeper, this modern leader serves as the strategic "Hub"—creating unified branding, crisis protocols, and templates, while actively training, equipping, and empowering individual departments (Public Safety, Public Works, PRC) to act as agile, responsive "Spokes" in their daily operations.

The ideal candidate balances high-level strategic narrative planning with a passion for coaching departmental staff to communicate authentically, safely, and instantly with our residents, as well as managing the official, non-partisan communication needs of elected leadership.

Key Responsibilities

1. Strategic Governance & Brand Integrity (The "Hub")
2. Departmental Empowerment & Training (The "Spokes")
3. Executive & Elected Official Communication Support
4. Crisis & Operational Communications
5. Media & Community Relations

Key Competencies for Success

The "Player-Coach" Mentality: In a small city, you cannot just delegate. You must be willing to write the press release and teach a Public Works supervisor how to take a clear smartphone photo of a water main repair.

High Emotional Intelligence: Because the hybrid model relies on trust, the Director must build strong, collaborative relationships with Directors who may be protective of their operational independence.

Agility and Poise: The ability to pivot instantly from a quiet day of writing the annual report to handling an active emergency with calm, clear-headed authority.

Technical Savvy: Proficiency with modern communications tools (e.g., Canva, social media schedulers, website CMS, emergency notification systems like Everbridge/CivicReady).

OVERARCHING COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY



DEFINE A CLEAR NORTHGLENN STORY

Establish a shared brand narrative that consistently communicates what Northglenn offers and what makes it distinctive.



CREATE A SURROUND-SOUND APPROACH

Coordinate messages across departments and touchpoints so audiences encounter consistent communications multiple times, in multiple ways.



STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS WITH TARGET AUDIENCES

Tailor messaging for residents, businesses, and visitors while ensuring all audiences experience the same core brand.



ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Develop timely, relevant, and action-oriented communications that encourage audiences to engage with City programs, events, services, and initiatives.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Every communication should reinforce the Northglenn story through these four principles.



BE CONSISTENT

Present one clear voice, visual identity, and message across departments and communication channels.



PUT AUDIENCES FIRST

Develop communications around the needs, questions, and experiences of the intended audience.



REMAIN AUTHENTIC

Use real stories, people, and experiences to reflect the character of Northglenn, rather than simply describing it.



STAY ACTION-ORIENTED

Ensure every communication has a clear purpose and helps audiences understand what to do next.

BRAND & KEY MESSAGING

VALUE PROPOSITION

A value proposition defines the **benefit** Northglenn offers its audiences—the reason residents, businesses, and visitors should see value in choosing to live, work, or visit here.

From a communications perspective, it provides a clear foundation for all messaging, keeping communications focused on what matters most to the audience. To serve that purpose, it should be:

- **Distinctive**, reflecting what makes Northglenn meaningful or different.
- **Benefit-focused**, centered on what people gain from Northglenn.
- **Audience-centered**, reflecting the needs and priorities of residents, businesses, and visitors.
- **Foundational**, giving communications a consistent value to build from.

Northglenn is a vibrant city that has a lot of great amenities, but with a small-town feel. It's a place where people come to start their family, expand their roots, and become neighborly. It's a place that supports its local businesses and provides a lot of opportunity for economic development. And it's a place that attracts visitors to its experiences and cultural events to expand their horizons. The interconnectivity of this creates a community that grows together and supports each other in many ways. And that's what makes this place so special.

THROUGH WORK, RECREATION, AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT, OUR COMMUNITY GROWS TOGETHER.

KEY MESSAGE

The key message is an internal touchstone—what you're trying to get across in all you do. To serve that purpose, it should be:

- **Easily remembered**.
- **Repeatable** by anyone speaking on behalf of Northglenn.
- **Relevant** to all three key audiences: residents, businesses & visitors.
- **Usable** across every City department.

Grounded in the brand positioning, and welcoming spirit inherent to Northglenn, the key message focuses on bringing people into the fold to embrace the possibilities the City has to offer, and build the future that matters most to them—as a resident, business, and visitor.

NORTHGLENN WELCOMES YOU TO THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY.

Whether it's buying a house, growing your family, opening a business, attending an event, enjoying a park, or engaging with your neighbors, "the next opportunity" can look different for everyone. Northglenn provides a customizable foundation for that opportunity.

Additionally, "the next opportunity" gets at Northglenn's forward momentum. It's constantly evolving and improving, and the community shapes what comes "next."

The following chart shows how the overarching key message is applicable to each audience.

	RESIDENTS	BUSINESSES	VISITORS
HOW THEY'RE INVITED	By making it easy to participate in community life through accessible services, programs, events, and transparent communication.	By fostering a supportive environment where businesses are welcomed as valued partners in the community's success.	By showcasing welcoming experiences, vibrant destinations, and opportunities to explore everything Northglenn has to offer.
WHAT "THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY" MEANS	A new way to get involved, connect with neighbors, access support, or help shape the community around them.	A chance to start, grow, build relationships, and contribute to a community invested in their success.	A new experience to discover, a reason to stay longer, or an invitation to return and explore more.

AUDIENCE & ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

RESIDENTS

WHAT THEY NEED	CURRENT GAP	OPPORTUNITY
Residents need clear, timely communications that make daily life easier, explain City decisions, and reinforce trust that the City is listening and responding.	Northglenn provides functional information, but resident communications are not always consistent, proactive, connected across touchpoints, or reflective of the City's warmth and small-town character.	Shift resident communications from mostly informational to more proactive, explanatory, and community-building.

KEY MESSAGE SUPPORT POINTS

- Neighborhood-scale living makes it easy to recognize familiar faces, build relationships, and become part of the community.
- Accessible parks, trails, recreation center, and community spaces create natural gathering places where connections form through everyday activities.
- Year-round community events and local traditions provide recurring opportunities to engage with other residents and strengthens community pride.
- An approachable and visible City government makes residents feel connected to local leadership and invested in shaping their community.

MEDIA

- Web
- Print
- Newsletter
- Organic Social
- Advertising

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- **Maintain an always-on social presence**. Treat social media as a real-time communications channel for questions, timely issues, events, safety updates, and resident needs.
- **Make participation easier**. Promote meetings, surveys, programs, events, and volunteer opportunities with clear CTAs, plain-language summaries, and reminders across channels.
- **Close the loop after engagement**. After meetings, surveys, events, public input, or major decisions, explain what was heard, what changed, and what happens next.
- **Turn residents into storytellers**. Feature resident voices, volunteers, families, City staff, traditions, and community moments to build pride and make communications feel more personal.

BUSINESSES

WHAT THEY NEED

Businesses need communications that make Northglenn feel supportive, opportunity-rich, responsive, and easy to navigate for existing businesses, prospects, developers, entrepreneurs, and partners.

CURRENT GAP

Northglenn's Economic Development platform is resource-rich, but it often functions more like a directory than a persuasive business case.

OPPORTUNITY

Evolve Economic Development communications into a stronger recruitment, retention, and confidence-building tool.

KEY MESSAGE SUPPORT POINTS

- A collaborative relationship with Economic Development provides businesses with direct access to resources, guidance, and City support.
- A loyal local customer base encourages businesses to become recognized community partners rather than simply places to shop.
- Community events and partnerships create opportunities for businesses to build visibility and meaningful relationships beyond traditional marketing.
- An engaged business environment encourages collaboration among local organizations, employers, and community partners.

MEDIA

- Web
- Print
- Newsletter
- Organic Social
- Paid Social

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- **Create clearer audience pathways**. Continue organizing content around common business needs, including starting, growing, relocating, developing, hiring, promoting and accessing funding.
- **Highlight business momentum**. Continue sharing grants and available resources while expanding coverage of openings, expansions, and redevelopment successes.
- **Establish proactive outreach**. Continue using newsletters, direct outreach, relationship- building and quarterly networking or roundtable events to keep businesses informed and engaged.
- **Make economic development more visible**. Increase the presence of economic development content across citywide social media, newsletters, website updates, events and partner channels.

VISITORS

WHAT THEY NEED

Visitors need communications that make Northglenn feel easy to discover, easy to navigate, and worth choosing for events, recreation, arts, culture, and family-friendly experiences.

CURRENT GAP

Northglenn's parks, events, and local experiences give outsiders a reason to visit, but current communications do not always make that value visible or compelling.

OPPORTUNITY

Position Parks, Recreation & Culture as one of Northglenn's strongest destination-building tools.

KEY MESSAGE SUPPORT POINTS

- A diverse mix of public and specialty events provides authentic experiences that reflect the character of the community.
- Community events and seasonal programming invite visitors to participate alongside residents, creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.
- Convenient access from across the Denver metro makes Northglenn easy to explore as both a destination and a repeat visit.
- Local businesses and gathering places offer opportunities to experience the community through its people, not just its amenities.
- An approachable environment encourages visitors to return and discover something new with each visit.

MEDIA

- Web
- Organic Social
- Paid Social
- Advertising

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- **Package experiences around planning moments**. Organize content around questions like "What's happening this weekend?", "What should I know before I go?", and "What else can I do nearby?"
- **Make social more experience-driven**. Use short-form video, event photography, staff picks, seasonal guides, and attendee-generated content.
- **Curate reasons to visit year-round**. Create seasonal guides, event roundups, family activity lists, recreation spotlights, arts and culture highlights, and itineraries.
- **Build partner-based promotion**. Work with local businesses, regional tourism organizations, influencers, vendors, performers, and community organizations to extend reach beyond City-owned channels.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES

START	STOP	CONTINUE
Developing and annually reviewing a citywide communications policy defining governance, standards, and cross-department expectations.	Relying on informal, department-specific practices for creating content and messaging.	Reinforcing organizational values.
Standardizing workflows, intake, turnaround times, approvals, departmental responsibilities, and spokesperson authority.	Determining spokesperson authority on a situational basis.	Recognizing communications as a strategic function that supports trust and service delivery.
Training City Council and staff on communications processes, expectations, and brand standards.	Managing communications standards in separate, disconnected documents or unwritten norms.	Commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility, and non-discriminatory language throughout communications.
Documenting crisis communications protocols, backup contacts, escalation pathways, and activation triggers.		Efforts to increase cross-department coordination (i.e. Internal Marketing Committee meetings with representatives from key departments).
Establishing governance for digital communications, including AI and social media.		

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES

START

Developing a citywide communications strategy with defined goals, audiences, priorities, and success measures.

- Led by the Director of Communications.

Organizing communications around strategic priorities and target audiences rather than departments.

Seeking community feedback to inform communications strategies and priorities.

Implementing standardized KPIs to measure effectiveness.

Reviewing communications strategies annually using KPI data, audits, and community feedback.

- Led by the Director of Communications.

Reporting annual communications performance and progress to City Council.

STOP

Inconsistently tracking/measuring success across departments and channels.

Relying on ad hoc content creation and planning measures.

Anchoring channel-investment and messaging decisions to data more than two years old

- *The 2021 Resident Survey and early-2023 social media benchmarks are the most recent figures cited in the reviewed materials.*

CONTINUE

Using communications to promote city services, community events, emergency updates, and civic participation.

Utilizing communications as a tool for public engagement and awareness.

Implementing a master editorial calendar to track all communication efforts and assist in long-term planning.

- The Director of Communications must regularly monitor the calendar, enforce adoption, track progress, and lead long-term planning

Providing information through multiple communication channels.

BRAND GUIDELINES

START

Adding direction for brand voice, tone, messaging, video and photography into the brand guidelines.

Expanding application standards for branded assets (e.g., facilities, vehicles, signage)

Creating standardized templates for recurring communications and marketing materials.

Expanding and organizing Monarch & NIC into a centralized asset library for templates, photos, videos, and brand resources.

- *Managed by City Communications.*

Reviewing brand guidelines on a regular cycle (e.g. annually).

- *City Communications will facilitate review process and distribution of updated guidelines.*

STOP

Maintaining inconsistent asset storage of informal file sharing of official brand materials.

Leaving departments to create recurring materials from scratch and/or on use-basis.

Leaving departments to tell different versions of the Northglenn story.

Using brand assets that do not comply with brand standards.

CONTINUE

Using the existing brand guidelines (i.e. logo system, typography, color palettes, etc.).

Ongoing reinforcement of consistent branding across all communications touchpoints.

Using brand assets that comply with brand standards.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

START	STOP	CONTINUE
Documenting distribution channels for internal message types (e.g. leadership updates, policy changes, project news, urgent notices).	Leaving the employee intranet as a passive resource repository.	Holding quarterly (or more frequent) “all staff” meetings led by the City Manager.
Measuring effectiveness of internal communications (e.g. awareness, reach, engagement, intranet usage).	Making communications decisions without subsequent evaluation measures in place to determine effectiveness.	Holding Internal Marketing Committee meetings with representatives from key departments.
Leveraging the NiC as a more dynamic, centralized hub; ensure navigation is organized and resources are kept current.		Publishing bi-weekly City Manager reports to all staff members.
Evaluating internal communications on a regular (e.g. annual) cycle using KPI data and employee feedback.		Publishing weekly City Manager emails to City Council and key staff members.
Establishing an ongoing cross-department channel (e.g. dedicated Teams channel) for day-to-day updates, questions, and coordination between Internal Marketing Committee meetings.		Including “Team Northglenn”/”Northglenn Proud” messaging in emails to staff.
Having the Communications Director (one hired) issue a recurring communications update; send to key staff, mirror the City Manager report.		Aligning internal communications with an annual staff-selected team theme (e.g., "Horsepower" – Strong, Steady, and Ready).
		Fostering pride in public service and the City’s mission.
		Commitments to strengthening cross-department collaboration.
		Recognizing the importance and value of communications as a strategic asset.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES

START	STOP	CONTINUE
Publishing how employee feedback informs organizational improvements on a consistent basis. Standardizing planning across engagement activities (e.g. shared calendar). Tracking participation across employee engagement opportunities to identify trends, patterns, concerns, and opportunities for action. Proactively promoting engagement opportunities to departments and teams with historically lower participation. Evaluating employee engagement practices on a regular cycle (e.g. annually).	Collecting employee feedback without consistently communicating resulting actions and progress back to staff.	Reinforcing organizational culture through staff vision, mission, and values. Recognizing employee contributions through the “Give A Wow” program and bi-weekly City Manager Report. Offering year-round engagement opportunities (e.g. staff events, listening sessions, department celebrations, annual events, Employee Appreciation Week, etc). Fostering cross-department collaboration through committees (e.g. Wellness, Joy, Northglenn Next). Collecting employee feedback through engagement surveys and the Idea Box. Investing in employee benefits (i.e. City’s increased contribution to staff retirement, review of human capital reinvestment/benefits).

TACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

NEWSLETTER

START	STOP	CONTINUE
Print (Northglenn Connection): Building shorter, more scannable content blocks. Adopting a more consistent column-count between pages. Highlighting priority information for easier scanning. **Digital** (eConnection, Catalyst, Business Connection, Northglenn Arts, Recreation E-Newsletter, & Culture eNews): Making top stories, deadlines, and action items easier to scan quickly. Ensuring important details are included as readable text for accessibility. Varying content structure while keeping the overall system consistent. Adding clearer summaries, hierarchy, and "what matters most" cues.	**Print** (Northglenn Connection): Burying important information within dense body text. **Digital** (eConnection, Catalyst, Business Connection, Northglenn Arts, Recreation E-Newsletter, & Culture eNews): Overloading newsletter sections with dense copy. Embedding key information only in images or graphics.	Using clear calls to action and practical resource links. Connecting readers back to city services, departments, and resources. Maintaining distinct newsletter identities for resident and business audiences. Using newsletters to support civic participation, business engagement, and public awareness. Sharing timely, useful, and action-oriented updates. Keeping recurring sections that help readers know what to expect (i.e. Legislative Recap).

PRINT

START	STOP	CONTINUE
Standardizing CTAs, QR codes, URLs, contacts, and deadlines.	Developing print materials with disregard for shared brand style guidelines.	Producing polished, professional major documents.
Creating shared print style standards across departments.	Allowing department materials to drift visually.	Using clear hierarchy, headings, and organized layouts.
Designing print pieces to guide audiences from awareness to action.	Using busy or low-contrast layouts without reviewing for ADA compliance.	Supporting key messages with photography, icons, and graphics.
Building templates for common print needs.		Keeping information easy to understand quickly.
Adding accessibility checks for contrast, type size, spacing, and readability.		Using print to support resident information and city initiatives.

WEBSITE

START	STOP	CONTINUE
Refreshing visuals to better show people, neighborhoods, parks, civic life, events, and quality of life.	Treating the website primarily as a service directory.	Prioritizing clear, resident-friendly language.
Strengthening priority pages with clearer positioning and community identity.	Leading with generic or infrastructure- heavy imagery that does not reflect community life.	Keeping common resident tasks visible and easy to complete.
Auditing pages for landmarks, heading structure, mobile usability, and screen reader flow.[5]	Letting low-resolution icons or visuals weaken otherwise useful sections.	Maintaining strong quick links and service pathways.
Conducting an annual content audit for outdated information and/or incorrect information.[6]	Allowing technical accessibility gaps to remain unresolved.	Making contact information easy to locate.
	Publishing event pages without logistics, registration, parking, or accessibility details.	Supporting accessibility through ReciteMe, feedback channels, and accessibility commitments.
		Using Access Northglenn as a clear resident service and feedback pathway.

[5]The city has completed an initial ADA compliance scan. A full-scope compliance scan needs to be completed. An AI usage policy is currently being implemented across the organization.
[6] The City has established a recurring schedule for departmental page updates; however, this process does not currently include comprehensive or formal website audits.

EVENT COMMUNICATIONS

START	STOP	CONTINUE
Centralizing event information in one place.	Creating new social accounts for individual events.	Providing clear logistics for major events.
Immediately clarifying each event's purpose, audience, and value.	Assuming audiences understand why an event matters.	Using events for direct resident engagement.
Adding consistent accessibility details to major event pages.	Excluding essential accessibility information on event webpages.	Producing useful seasonal event and activity guides.
Creating public recaps, summaries, and updates after events.	Letting participation end when the event ends.	Including essential event details, relevant contacts, and additional resources on event webpages.
Turning survey feedback into visible improvements.	Keeping feedback and evaluation mostly internal.	
Including disclaimers on event pages when key details are not yet confirmed.	Distributing participation pathways across disconnected pages and third-party platforms without context (Northglenn Arts).	
Communicating the full patron experience, including venue accommodations, accessible seating, sensory supports and accommodation-request procedures.		

SIGNAGE

START[7]	STOP	CONTINUE
Creating citywide standards for type, size, hierarchy, contrast, materials, and placement.	Allowing one-off signage styles to dilute the system.	Maintaining clear, functional wayfinding.
Auditing signs in real-world contexts: driving, walking, parks, events, and facilities.	Designing signs that work up close but fail at viewing distance.	Placing signs where users naturally need information.
Using larger type and simpler hierarchy for distance-based signage.	Letting department or facility signage drift from the City identity.	Supporting navigation, identification, and decision-making.
Strengthening Tier 2 & Tier 3 signs to signal arrival and civic pride.	Relying on inconsistent contrast, scale, or layouts.	Keeping signage professional, maintained, and trustworthy.
Improving Tier 2 & Tier 3 entryway signage to signal arrival and reinforce civic pride.		Continuing strong facility and recreation center wayfinding.
		Making key information visible first.

[7] Any proposed update, modification, replacement or expansion of the City's signage system should be undertaken in consultation with, and subject to coordinated review by, the Parks, Public Works, and Planning departments.

VIDEO

START	STOP	CONTINUE
Opening and closing each video with a stronger hook, purpose, and call to action.	Publishing videos without a clear audience or purpose.	Keeping videos concise and platform-appropriate.
Improving audio quality with professional-quality stock music and equipment.	Recapping events without a clear takeaway.	Using video for timely updates and public information.
Building a balanced police content strategy across service, prevention, trust, community, and civic pride.	Ending videos without a clear call to action or next step.	Maintaining an appropriate local government tone.
Creating shared brand standards for city video content.	Using generic visuals or effects that weaken professionalism, including stock-image thumbnails, stock footage, and low-resolution static imagery.	Humanizing city services and staff when relevant.
Producing monthly, rather than bi-weekly, police recap videos with platform-appropriate runtimes.		Introducing topics clearly early in the video.
Using eye-catching, brand-consistent thumbnails.		Spotlighting local businesses, awards, amenities, and attractions.
		Diversifying city video content with human- and local-interest features.

SOCIAL MEDIA

START	STOP	CONTINUE
Defining a clear role, audience, and content lane for each channel, organized around resident needs.	Operating disconnected departmental accounts as separate brands.	Sharing timely service updates, reminders, alerts, and event information.
Consolidating one-off and hyper-focused pages into primary channels.	Letting visual style, tone, and templates vary widely across accounts.	Maintaining presence across major platforms.
Developing a unified visual system for events, alerts, reminders, meetings, closures, police updates, and PRC programming.	Making residents follow multiple accounts to piece together basic city information.	Using captions and platform-appropriate copy.
Using a shared content calendar to coordinate timing and reduce duplication.	Allowing police or crime-heavy content to dominate the City's public perception.	Using social media as a practical distribution channel for resident information.
Establishing clear response and escalation expectations for resident concerns.	Leaving resident questions or concerns visibly unanswered.	Posting regularly where cadence is already sustainable.
Elevating people-first content: staff spotlights, event recaps, community stories, business wins.	Posting without a coordinated cross-department plan.	Continuing to use social for urgent communications when needed.
	Treating social media as one-way broadcasting.	Keeping useful, timely information flowing to the public.

POLICE CONTENT

Our research has found concerns that the crime recap videos the police department posts bi-weekly have a negative effect on perceptions—positioning Northglenn as high-crime, and going against the Police Department's community policing ethos. We are recommending that the videos focus on the department's community outreach programs and initiatives. In an effort to promote transparency, we recommend that a narrative incident report be posted on the Department's website. We also recommend that the footage that captures proper policing techniques be curated for internal training and recruitment efforts. The City should also consider highlighting the individual efforts of their Officers at the monthly Council meetings when appropriate. The following are general best practices when it comes to police content on social media.

A BALANCED CONTENT MIX

Across platforms, continue pairing enforcement and incident updates with prevention, education everyday service to reflect the full scope of police work.

USE A CONSISTENT, STEADY VOICE

Carry a clear, professional, and useful tone across routine posts, public safety updates, video, and other department communications.

SHOW THE HUMAN SIDE OF SERVICE

Build communications around the officers, residents, relationships, and everyday interactions that demonstrate what public service looks like in Northglenn.

KEEP ENFORCEMENT IN PROPORTION

Communicate significant incidents transparently, while ensuring imagery and frequency do not unintentionally define the department's overall presence.

5. ROADMAP (18 MONTHS)

The following roadmap outlines key tasks to act on these strategic recommendations. The recommended completion timeframe is the time the task should be completed within.

TASK	PRIORITY	COMPLETION TIMELINE GOAL (IN MONTHS)					
		0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
FOUNDATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS							
COMMUNICATIONS POLICY DEVELOPMENT							
DEVELOPMENT OF CITYWIDE COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES • Define governance, standards, & cross-department expectations. • Define departmental roles, responsibilities & spokesperson authority. • Document intake, workflow & escalation processes. • Create a crisis communications playbook. • Develop AI & digital communications standards.	HIGH						
PUBLISH COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES & RESOURCES	MEDIUM						
TRAIN CITY COUNCIL & STAFF ON POLICIES, STANDARDS & STRATEGIES	MEDIUM						
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT							
DEVELOPMENT OF CITYWIDE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY	HIGH						
ALIGN COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT; CREATE CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL CONTENT CALENDAR Utilize PCR editorial calendar as a template.	HIGH						
IMPLEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORKS E.g. standardized KPIs, reporting dashboards, and performance benchmarks accessible across departments.	HIGH						
REPORT COMMUNICATIONS PERFORMANCE	MEDIUM						
INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS							
FORMALIZE INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK Document distribution channels for internal message types (e.g. leadership updates, policy changes, project news, recognition, and urgent notices).	HIGH						
ESTABLISH INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS KPIS Use KPI data to evaluate communications effectiveness (E.g. awareness, reach, engagement, intranet usage, etc).	HIGH						
OPTIMIZE THE NIC EMPLOYEE HUB Organize navigation, centralize employee resources, and establish governance.	MEDIUM						
ESTABLISH ONGOING CROSS-DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS Launch a dedicated Teams channel for day-to-day updates; once Communications Director is hired, publish a recurring (weekly or	MEDIUM						

bi-weekly) communications update to key staff; model after the City Manager report/email.							
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE NEEDS							
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT							
FORMALIZE COMMUNICATION ONCE EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK IS RECEIVED Consistently communicate resulting actions and/or progress made back to staff.	**HIGH**						
STANDARDIZE EVENT PLANNING; CREATE AN EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY CALENDAR Utilize PCR editorial calendar as a template. Give access to all planning committees; publish activity calendar across the organization at the beginning of each month.	**MEDIUM**						
RECORD EVENT ENGAGEMENT TO INFORM FUTURE EFFORTS Track participation rates to identify trends, impact, and opportunities for action; use findings to tailor outreach to under-participating departments.	**MEDIUM**						
STAFFING, RESOURCES & TRAINING							
HIRE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR	**IMMEDIATE**						
PROCURE & STANDARDIZE CONTENT CREATION TOOLS ACROSS ALL DEPARTMENTS E.g. Canva or Adobe Express where templates can be created, stored, and updated.	**MEDIUM**						
DEVELOP STAFF MEDIA TRAINING PROGRAM Either created and run by the Communications team or outsourced.	**MEDIUM**						
DEVELOP COUNCIL TRAINING PROGRAM • Media Training. • New Council Member training on communications processes, roles & responsibilities.	**MEDIUM**						
PUBLIC COMMENT TRAINING (ELECTED OFFICIALS & STAFF)	**MEDIUM**						
BRAND							
EXPAND BRAND GUIDELINES Include brand voice, tone, messaging, photography/videography guidelines, asset application guidelines (facilities, vehicles, apparel, signage, etc).	**HIGH**						
CREATION & ENFORCEMENT OF CONTENT GUIDELINES This should include the visual identity, tone and personality, key messaging, and specific guidelines for video and social media.	**HIGH**						
PRODUCE TEMPLATES E.g. collateral, recurring social posts, signage.	**HIGH**						
REFRESH & EXPAND CENTRALIZED ASSET LIBRARY (MONARCH & NIC) E.g. collateral, templates, photo & video assets.	**HIGH**						
IMPLEMENT BRAND STANDARDS ACROSS ORGANIZATION Roll out updated guidelines, templates, and digital assets.	**MEDIUM**						

TACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION							
WEBSITE							
CONDUCT AN ADA COMPLIANCE AUDIT ACROSS ALL WEBSITE SUBPAGES AND EMBEDDED DOCUMENTS	MEDIUM						
AUDIT ALL WEBSITE SUBPAGES AND EMBEDDED DOCUMENTS FOR OUTDATED, INACCURATE, OR INCONSISTENT INFORMATION	MEDIUM						
IMPLEMENT JSON-LD SCHEMA AND STRUCTURED HTML ON KEY WEBPAGES; REMOVE, UPDATE, OR REPLACE EMBEDDED PDFS AND WEBPAGES CONTAINING OUTDATED INFORMATION	MEDIUM						
IMPLEMENT A REFRESH OF KEY WEBSITE VISUALS AND COPY	MEDIUM						
NEWSLETTER							
REFRESH DIGITAL NEWSLETTER TEMPLATES TO ALIGN WITH BEST PRACTICES AND BRAND GUIDELINES	LOW						
AUDIT THE EXISTING NORTHGLENN CONNECTION TEMPLATE TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVED CLARITY, USABILITY, AND ENGAGEMENT	LOW						
REFRESH THE NORTHGLENN CONNECTION PRINT TEMPLATE BASED ON AUDIT FINDINGS AND BRAND GUIDANCE	LOW						
PRINT							
PRODUCE TEMPLATES E.g. flyers, brochures, pamphlets, reports.	MEDIUM						
DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A WRITTEN TRANSLATION PLAN FOR LEP POPULATIONS	MEDIUM						
VIDEO							
PRODUCE TEMPLATES E.g. transitions, intros, outros, thumbnails.	MEDIUM						
ORGANIZE DIGITAL ASSETS & MAKE AVAILABLE TO DEPARTMENT STAFF E.g. collateral, photo & video assets	MEDIUM						
TRAIN CITY STAFF OR HIRE CONTRACTOR FOR VIDEO PRODUCTION & EDITING Consider investing in inexpensive video editing software like OpusClips and sharing licenses across departments.	MEDIUM						
SIGNAGE							
ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERDEPARTMENTAL, CITYWIDE SIGNAGE STANDARDS AND TEMPLATES	MEDIUM						
AUDIT EXISTING SIGNAGE FOR COMPLIANCE, CLARITY, PLACEMENT, AND BRAND CONSISTENCY	MEDIUM						
REMOVE, UPDATE, OR REPLACE NON COMPLIANT SIGNAGE IN ALIGNMENT WITH BRAND STANDARDS	MEDIUM						
DEVELOP ADDITIONAL SIGNAGE IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROPOSED ENTRYWAY SIGNAGE PROGRAM	MEDIUM						
EVENT PROMOTION							

IMPLEMENT A THREE-TIER EVENT PROMOTION SYSTEM THAT DEFINES THE LEVEL OF COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT EACH EVENT RECEIVES	HIGH						
PRODUCE TEMPLATES FOR RECURRING TIER-1 & TIER-2 EVENT COLLATERAL	HIGH						
STANDARDIZE EVENT PAGE TEMPLATES TO CLARIFY PURPOSE, AUDIENCE, ESSENTIAL DETAILS, & ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION	MEDIUM						
ESTABLISH A STANDARD POST-EVENT SURVEY PROCESS TO COLLECT FEEDBACK FROM ATTENDEES, PARTICIPANTS, STAFF, AND PARTNERS	MEDIUM						
CREATE AN INTERNAL REVIEW PROCESS TO IDENTIFY RECURRING FEEDBACK THEMES AND DETERMINE WHICH IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED FOR FUTURE EVENTS	MEDIUM						
SOCIAL MEDIA							
DETERMINE WHETHER EACH RETIRED PAGE SHOULD BE ARCHIVED, UNPUBLISHED, OR LEFT UP WITH A PINNED REDIRECT	HIGH						
LAUNCH A FOLLOWER MIGRATION CAMPAIGN • Publish and pin an initial post explaining where followers should go for future information. • Repost the transition message at least 3 additional times over the next 3 months. • For event-specific platforms, post again when annual promotion resumes.	HIGH						
UPDATE LINKS, TEMPLATES, PRINTED MATERIALS, AND EVENT PAGES TO POINT TO THE CORRECT OFFICIAL CHANNELS	HIGH						
MONITOR FOLLOWER MIGRATION AND CONFUSION FOR 60-90 DAYS	MEDIUM						
COMPLETE ACCOUNT RETIREMENT • Archive or delete general-purpose accounts after a one-year transition period; event-specific accounts after the next run of the event concludes. • Transfer reusable assets, photos, videos, FAQs, and historical content to the shared archive.	MEDIUM						
CONFIRM TIKTOK OWNERSHIP UNDER PRC WITH CITY COMMUNICATIONS OVERSIGHT	MEDIUM						
CREATE AND IMPLEMENT AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL KNOWN ISSUES DOCUMENT INCLUDING SAMPLE RESPONSE TEMPLATES	MEDIUM						
POLICE CONTENT							
RETIRE THE BI-WEEKLY REPORT FORMAT	HIGH						
CREATE & IMPLEMENT A SHORT-FORM MONTHLY REPORT VIDEO STRUCTURE	HIGH						
CREATE & IMPLEMENT A LONG-FORM MONTHLY WEB REPORT STRUCTURE • This long-form report will absorb the current monthly statistical report found on the City's website.	HIGH						
CREATE & IMPLEMENT 3-5 RECURRING PEOPLE-FIRST SERIES	MEDIUM						
INFLUENCER AMPLIFICATION							

IDENTIFY 5-10 TRUSTED LOCAL VOICES FOR AN INITIAL PILOT W/BASIC ELIGIBILITY AND QUALITY CRITERIA	MEDIUM						
DEVELOP SIMPLE CREATOR GUIDANCE IN ACCORDANCE W/ CONTENT GUIDELINES	MEDIUM						
TRACK WHICH CREATOR CONTENT DRIVES REACH, ENGAGEMENT, SAVES, SHARES, AND POSITIVE SENTIMENT	LOW						
EXPAND THE PROGRAM ONLY AFTER THE PILOT PROVES USEFUL AND MANAGEABLE	LOW						
ONGOING/LONG-TERM CONSIDERATIONS							
CONTINUE MONTHLY ALL-DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATIONS MEETINGS • Share successes. • Share updates for upcoming three months, with next month being priority. • Brainstorm cross-promotion opportunities.	ONGOING - MONTHLY						
CONDUCT ANNUAL POLICY REVIEWS & UPDATES	ONGOING - ANNUAL						
EVALUATE & UPDATE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY	ONGOING - ANNUAL						
REVIEW & UPDATE BRAND GUIDELINES	ONGOING - ANNUAL						
EVALUATE & REFINE INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS	ONGOING - ANNUAL						
EVALUATE & ENHANCE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT	ONGOING - ANNUAL						

6. METRICS AND MILESTONES

To evaluate effectiveness and success, there are some key qualitative methods and milestones to hit, as well as quantitative data you can use for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Qualitative evaluations and milestones:

- Hitting roadmap milestones before or by the timing outlined in the previous section.
- Quarterly audit and evaluation of internal brand and communication consistency, and corrections for moving forward.
    - These corrections can be to ensure staff are adhering to the brand or content guidelines; it may also mean that brand or content guidelines need to be updated to address certain recurring issues.
- Anecdotal feedback or social media commentary.

Quantitative KPIs to track progress:

- Overall community satisfaction should be measured through an annual or biannual survey, asking the same questions to view progress or changes over time.
- **Website**
    - Increased traffic to the site
    - Task completions
    - ADA compliance scans
- **Emails & E-newsletters**
    - Increased open rate
    - Increased click rate
    - Increased subscribers; decreased unsubscribes & bounces
- **Events & Programs**
    - Increased registration
    - Increased attendance/participation
- **Video**
    - Video Completion Rates (VCR)
    - Engagement Rate
- **Social Channels**
    - Increased followers
    - Increased engagement rate (interactions / views)
    - Increased reach & impressions
    - Sentiment analysis is positive in comments
- **Media Relations**
    - Increased earned media mentions
    - Positive sentiment analysis
    - Number of corrections or clarifications required