



## Media Relations Policy

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**Authority:** 379/15, 96/24

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**Department Responsible:** Strategy and Engagement

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### 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The Town will ensure open, honest, and clear channels of communication with members of the Media. The key objectives are to engage the community through two-way communication, increase the awareness of the Town's services, and improve accountability through accurate and timely information.
- 1.2 The Town is aware that the Media is one of the most effective ways to publicize information about the Town's services, programs, and events. This policy is intended to promote the Town and protect its identity while ensuring timely, consistent, and accurate communications.

### 2. Scope

- 2.1 The policy applies to all Town of LaSalle employees, members of Council, members of committees, volunteers, and any person who has been retained and/or engaged to act on behalf of the Town of LaSalle, save and except LaSalle Police Services.

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1 In this Policy,

**Department** means the Director of the Strategy and Engagement Department and the Corporate Communications Officer.

**Director** means the Director of the Strategy and Engagement Department or their designate.

**Employees** means all employees, members of committees, volunteers and any person who has been retained and/or engaged to act on behalf of the Town.

**Media** means communication outlets that gather and share information such as print media, publishing, news media, photography, cinema, broadcasting, advertising, and social media.

**Media Advisory** means an invitation to representatives of communication outlets to attend a planned event to share information on behalf of the Town.

**Media Release** means official information provided to communication outlets that enables them to develop stories.

**Public Service Announcement** means a message that is shared to provide general information to the public.

**Town** means the Corporation of the Town of LaSalle.

**Website** means the Town's websites that are the primary source for information about the services, programs, events, etc.

## **4. Policy**

### **4.1 Procedures and Practices**

- 4.1.1 The Director oversees this policy and designates the official spokespersons for the Town and can assign others who may speak on behalf of the Town from time to time.
- 4.1.2 Requests from members of the media should be directed to the Department. The Director shall ensure that any requests from the Media are directed to the most knowledgeable staff.
- 4.1.3 Individuals not listed in Schedule "A" should ensure that all media requests are directed to the Department.
- 4.1.4 Individuals listed in Schedule "A" who have received a media request shall notify the Department following the interview and provide details about the media contact information and the discussion.
- 4.1.5 Enquiries from the Media, whether by phone, email, letter, or in person, should be addressed promptly, as time permits, to accommodate publication, posting, or broadcast deadlines.
- 4.1.6 The Department may provide support and advice to spokespersons about discussions with members of the Media.

- 4.1.7 The decision to issue a comment, statement, Media Release or to grant an interview is overseen by the Director.
- 4.1.8 Potential issues that may negatively impact the public's image of the Town are to be shared with the Director as soon as they are identified. The Director, in consultation with the CAO, Deputy CAO and/or Director of the appropriate department, shall coordinate a response.
- 4.1.9 The Department will maintain a current list of media contacts.
- 4.1.10 All information shared with the Media will contain branding elements to identify that it is from the Town.
- 4.1.11 Media Releases may be reactive (in response to an inquiry, event, or situation) or proactive (providing information about Council decisions, special events, plans, notices, etc.). All Media Releases will be issued by the Department. Employees are required to provide information to the Department to be used in Media Releases as required.
- 4.1.12 Once a Media Release, a Public Service Announcement, and/or a Media Advisory is issued, a copy will be forwarded to Council members and Department Heads as information.
- 4.1.13 Media Releases and Public Service Announcements are shared on the Website.
- 4.1.14 The Department will monitor media exposure, will share with appropriate staff, and respond as required.

## **4.2 Spokespersons**

- 4.2.1 The Mayor is the official spokesperson on behalf of Council. All media inquiries made to any member of Council shall be directed to the Mayor for an official comment. The Mayor, at their discretion, may choose to designate another member of Council to respond to a media inquiry.
- 4.2.2 Schedule "A" defines who are spokespersons. From time to time, Schedule "A" spokespersons may need to designate an alternate spokesperson on their behalf. In these cases, Schedule "A" spokespersons must consult the Director prior to the designation.
- 4.2.3 Those Employees who are designated as spokespersons on behalf of the Town should present concise and accurate information. Spokespersons must only speak on their area of expertise; they are not to offer an opinion or interpretation of a decision made by Council. They must not share confidential or sensitive information.

4.2.4 Any quotes used in information released to the Media will be pre-approved by the spokesperson making the statement.

### **4.3 Communications in an Emergency**

4.3.1 In the event of an emergency, the Town of LaSalle Emergency Response Plan supersedes the Media Relations Policy. The Town of LaSalle Emergency Response Plan outlines the protocol for communication during emergency situations.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

5.1 The Director of the Strategy and Engagement Department is responsible for this policy.

## **6. References and Related Documents**

Code of Conduct for Council and Local Boards Policy  
Town of LaSalle Employee Code of Conduct  
Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

## **7. Attachments**

Schedule "A"-The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle Spokespersons

## **The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle – Media Relations Policy**

### **Schedule “A” – The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle Spokespersons**

The following is a list of employees who have the authority to share information and/or answer questions with members of the media as it relates to their expertise and experience. In consultation with the Director of the Strategy and Engagement Department, the individuals listed below may designate an alternate spokesperson on their behalf should they be unable to share information and/or answer questions from media representatives in a timely manner. In addition, other approvals of spokespersons may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

- Chief Administrative Officer
- Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
- Director of Finance/Treasurer
- Director of Council Services/Clerk
- Director of Culture and Recreation
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of Planning and Development
- Director of Public Works
- Director of Strategy and Engagement
- Fire Chief/Director of LaSalle Fire Service
- Corporate Communication and Promotions Officer

The Mayor is the official spokesperson on behalf of Council.