

ICRC Communications & Marketing Plan

Version 3.0

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Components Overview

The following communication components offer an attainable, timely, and budget-friendly communications and marketing strategy for the Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC). This communications plan could be implemented in approximately 30 days, excluding ongoing communications (emails, press releases, etc.). The goal of this Communications Plan would be to address the questions posed by citizens and press alike regarding the following questions:

1. *What is the City Charter? Where can we find it?*
2. *What is the Commission's background and mission?*
3. *How was the Commission selected?*
4. *What is the Commission currently working on?*
5. *Who are the Commissioners & their staff? (Link to Applications, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)*
6. *Where and when are the Commission meetings?*
7. *How can citizens and press get involved or communicate with the commission?*
8. *What is the target timeline for the Commission?*

● Website Presence

○ New Logo

- We propose an Austin Redistricting logo - **Due date: 9/7/2013**

○ ICRC Domain Name

Due Date: 9/7/2013

- Can be purchased for <\$20/year
- Can forward to City of Austin website URL
- Easy to say when speaking with press & public
- Easy for others to remember and access quickly
- Represents who we are & what we are doing
- For example, California's was "WeDrawtheLines.ca.gov"
- Proposed Domain:
 - AustinRedistricting.com

○ Website Resources

Due Date: 9/30/2013 (All Sections Created & Populated)

- If we choose to keep using the City of Austin website for our website, then it needs to at least have a more accessible structure.
- We need to be able to control it ourselves.
- Message Team can work on creating copy and handouts for the sections of the website.
- We need organized sections on website for easy access:
 - About -

Section Due Date: 9/15/2013

- Visual Timeline
 - Key Considerations/Priorities
 - Background
 - Mission
 - Charter
 - FAQ
 - Commissioner Bios
 - Commission Staff
 - Commission Jobs
- Meetings

Section Due Date: 9/7/2013

 - Notices & Agendas
 - Meetings Schedule & Locations
 - How to Submit Public Input
 - Documents & Citizen Communication
 - Meeting Videos
 - Meeting Minutes
- Press

Section Due Date: 9/15/2013

 - Press Kit
 - Press Releases
 - Press Articles
- Maps

Section Due Date: 9/30/2013

 - Submitted Maps
 - How to Present a Map (tips on preparing/presenting map; eventual info on our map drawing stations/locations)
- Contact

Section Due Date: 9/7/2013

 - Main Phone Number
 - Main Email
 - Social Links (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- **Citizen Outreach**
 - **Public Input Meetings - Finalize Dates & Publicize**

Due Date: 8/31/2013

 - We propose we lock in the dates for the meeting so we can begin publicizing them.
 - We propose Saturday public forums for the month of October.
 - We propose Wednesday business meeting for the month of October.
 - We can lock down the venues after locking in the dates.
 - **Email Outreach**

Due Date: 9/7/2013 (Initial Setup) & 9/15/2013 (First Email Sent Out)

- Step 1: Obtain Email Marketing Platform
 - We need to either tap into the City's email marketing platform or purchase our own.
 - Proposed option is Constant Contact (Craig is familiar with it) - \$15/month for up to 500 contacts
 - \$30/month for up to up 2500 contacts
 - If we go paid route, many local, Austin-based vendors exist to keep marketing dollars local.
 - Every page on our website can have a place where someone can submit their email address to stay updated on our meetings.
 - We can also import the City's list of individuals who requested to hear about ICRC/10-1 updates (adhering with CAN-SPAM laws).
- Step 2: Schedule and Send Weekly Emails to List
 - Keep it simple - email could take Craig 15-30 minutes each week (perhaps Mon or Tues if we maintain Wed/Sat meeting schedule) to prepare and send
 - Sections could include:
 - "Status Report" - Where we met that week, how many people spoke/were in attendance, etc. *Very objective section which will not include any conclusions*
 - "In the News" - Links to press articles that week about process
 - "Get Involved" - List next meeting date & location
- **Social Media Outreach**

Due Date: 9/7/2013 (Initial Setup) & Ongoing

 - Create a Facebook Page for the ICRC (Free) (Facebook.com/AustinRedistricting)
 - Create a Twitter Account for the ICRC (Free) (Twitter.com/AustinRedistricting)
 - Broadcast meeting notifications, status reports, and news articles to audience
 - Ryan, Carmen, and/or Rachel could provide admin support
- **Direct Mail Campaign**

Due Date: TBD (If Needed)

 - Large or small scale campaign to City of Austin residents
 - Perhaps sent out via City of Austin PIO resources (i.e. possibly budget neutral?)
 - Possible calendar format showing meeting dates/locations, briefly outlining mission & "How to Testify"
 - Direct mail is not in my domain of expertise - would need a subject matter expert to handle this.
- **Facebook Advertising Campaign**

Due Date: TBD (If Needed)

- Run a series of advertisements targeting City of Austin residents on Facebook
- Advertise public hearings
- Relatively low-cost option (proposed monthly budget of less than \$100)
- Ryan, Carmen, or Rachel could set up

- **Media Outreach**

- **Press Releases**

Due Date: Ongoing

- Develop a media list of reporters and emails that we can reach out to with updates
- Any major votes should be followed by media releases.
 - Topics
 - When possible, press releases should be issued when a vote is passed on any of the following:
 - Meeting Dates/Locations
 - Commission Milestones (First Hearing, First Map Presentation, etc.)
 - *Criteria to be added as commission work develops*
 - Press releases should be issued (when possible) no less than 48 hours before/after an event/meeting occurs.

- **Press Kit**

Due Date: 9/15/2013

- A press kit offer members of the press and public easily accessible, prepackaged information about an organization.
- Message Team will be responsible for creating the press kit copy & documents.
- The ICRC press kit should include:
 - Background & Mission
 - Copy of Charter (in full)
 - Commissioner Bios
 - Useful Links to Relevant Web Pages
 - Image Files (Commissioner Photos; Commission Logo)
 - Contact Information
 - Interview Request Protocol

Timeframe for Implementation of Plan

(If Approved)

Completed:

- ★ **8/29/2013** - TJ completed Twitter Account Set Up - @AustinRedistrict
- ★ **8/30/2013** - Craig setting up meeting with City Clerk Office to work on website restructuring & to forward AustinRedistricting domain if we purchase it
- ★ **8/30/2013** - Digital Copy of Final Charter Obtained (for use in Press Kit & Website)
- ★ **8/30/2013** - Cathy working on FAQ to be used in website & press kit
- ★ **8/30/2013** - Rachel working on "How to Submit Public Input" form (using California form as a model/example) to use on website & press kit

Deadlines This Week (Pending Approval):

- ☐ **8/31/2013** - Approve Communications Plan
- ☐ **8/31/2013** - Approve purchase of AustinRedistricting.com domain
- ☐ **8/31/2013** - Approve purchase of Constant Contact email system
- ☐ **8/31/2013** - Approve logo for Austin Redistricting
- ☐ **8/31/2013** - Approve meeting dates for publication
- ☐ **9/7/2013** - Craig to set up Facebook.com/AustinRedistricting
- ☐ **9/7/2013** - Craig to set up Constant Contact email system
- ☐ **9/7/2013** - Have City Clerk put Constant Contact signup form or link to form on website
- ☐ **9/7/2013** - Begin tweeting meeting locations and dates from @AustinRedistrict account
- ☐ **9/7/2013** - Bios & headshots from Commissioners & Staff (plus any links to FB/LinkedIn/etc.) due & post on website
- ☐ **9/7/2013** - FAQ for website due for review (Cathy working on this) & post on website
- ☐ **9/7/2013** - "In the News" Links for website due (someone to compile - Harriett?) & post on website
- ☐ **9/7/2013** - "How to Submit Public Input" form due (someone to create) & post on website/link to FAQ

Deadlines Next Week (Pending Approval):

- ☐ **9/15/2013** - First email on Constant Contact sent out by Craig to audience
- ☐ **9/15/2013** - Press Kit due and post on website
- ☐ **9/15/2013** - Press List of Media Names/Emails Due (someone to compile - Craig or Rachel?)
- ☐ **9/15/2013** - "How to Present a Map" form/tips & notes due (someone to create) & post on website *could possibly be done later once mapping consultant is hired