Strategic Communications Plan

City of Punta Gorda, Florida

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Agenda

- Plan Objective

- Discovery Recap

- Target & Comparative Analysis

- Appropriate Growth Approach

- Elements of a New City Branding

- Strategic Communications Recommendations

- Fees

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Plan Objective

Create a three-year strategic communications plan to provide city leadership with a clear roadmap towards more organized, coordinated and effective communications and branding for the City of Punta Gorda.

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Plan Objective

City of Punta Gorda 2017 Strategic Plan:

"...identify [the city's] brand and market its lifestyle and infrastructure qualities with the assistance of its many partners."

"Develop a cost effective strategic communications/marketing plan for the City."
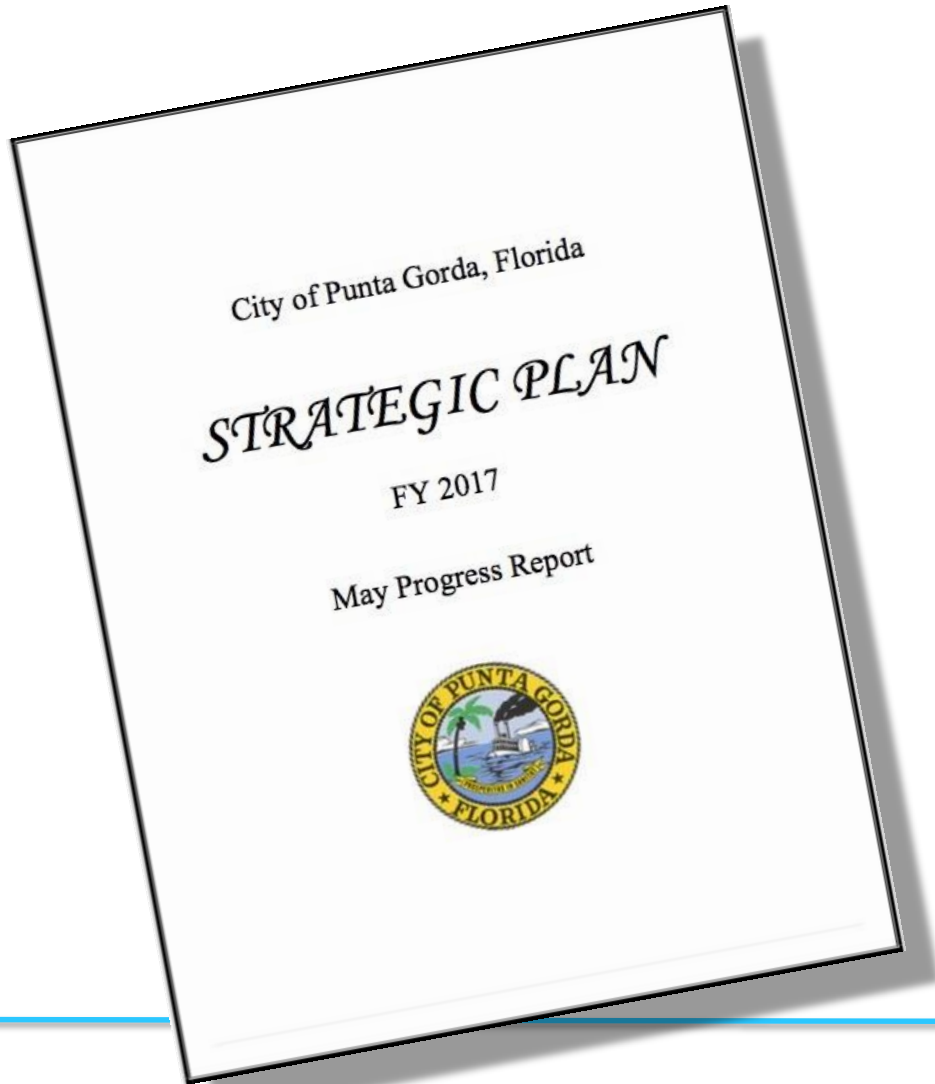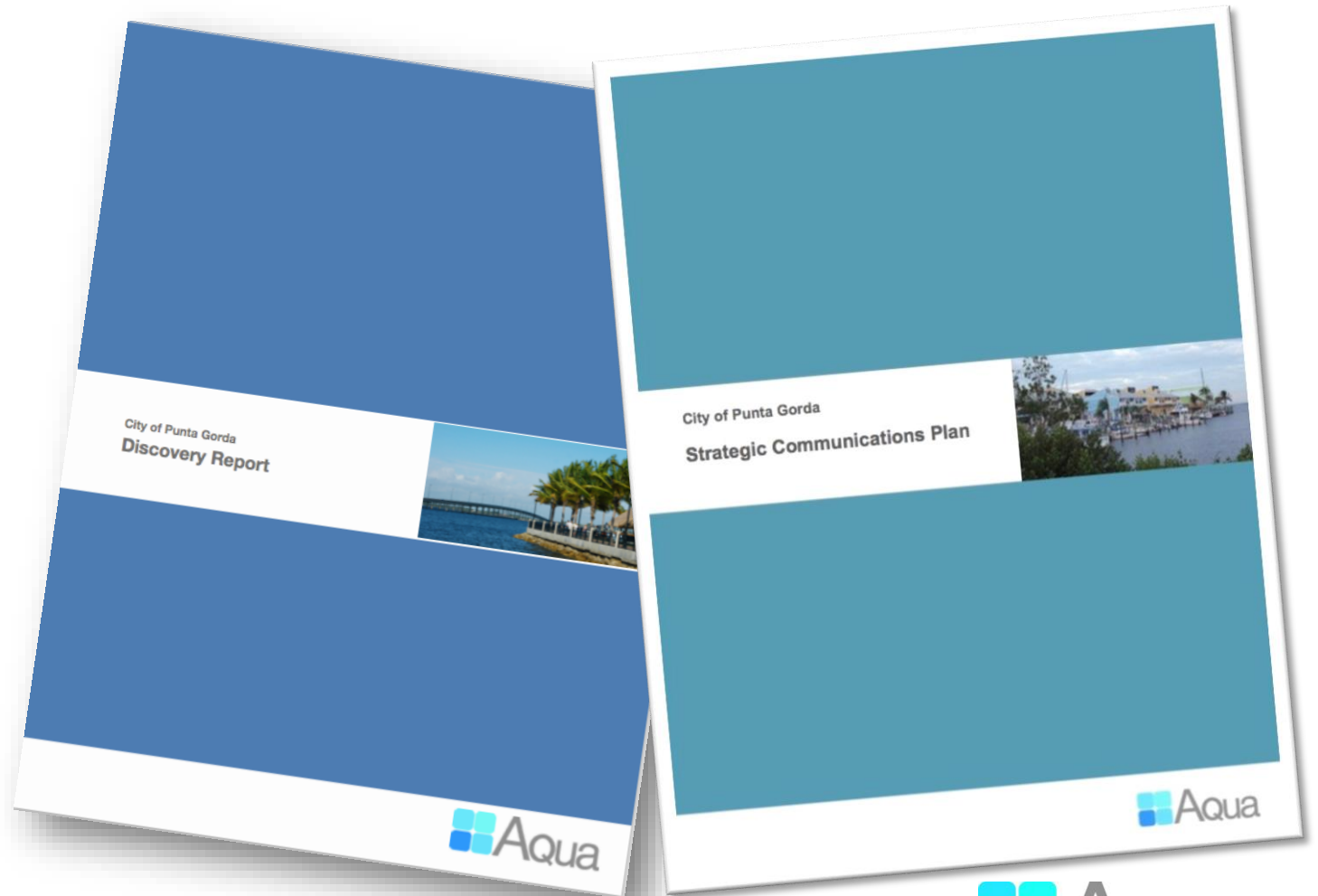
Plan Objective

- *Reclaim the leadership role in defining the city through coordinated communications efforts.*

- *Develop consensus to support an economic development strategy focused on appropriate future growth.*

- *Centralize city communications to ensure consistency, quality control, and message discipline.*

- *Educate both city leadership and key community stakeholders regarding city messaging and branding.*

- *Provide tools for city leadership and key community stakeholders to adopt and promote city messaging and branding.*

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Where We Are in the Process

- **Discovery**
  - *Complete. Report Issued.*

- **Brand Creation**
  - *In Development.*
  - *Delivery and testing.*

- **Formal, Written Plan**
 - *Complete. Report Issued.*

City of Punta Gorda
Discovery Report

City of Punta Gorda
Strategic Communications Plan

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Discovery Recap

Community Attributes Assessment:

Conclusions –

- *Primarily residential*

- *Up to date*

- *Little issue with "urban blight"*

- *Little housing for younger, working families*

- *Lots still available for building*

- *Affordable*

- *Exceptional recreational offerings*

- *Charming, walkable downtown*

- *Strong sense of history*

- *Visitation potential*
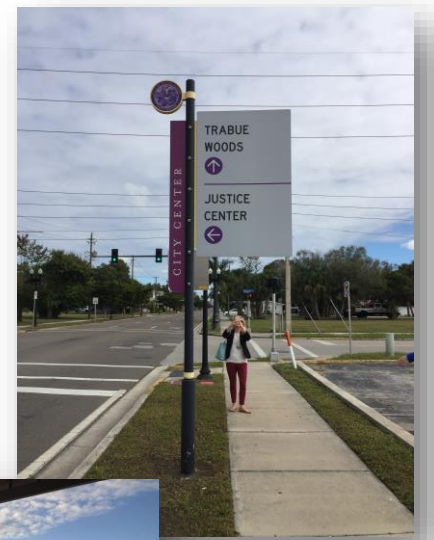
Discovery Recap

## Promotional/Communications History

- *City hasn't "promoted" itself as a place to live, visit or relocate a business*

- *Promotion left to others*
  - *Chamber*
  - *County VCB*
  - *Department of Economic Development*

Discovery Recap

Promotional/Communications History

- *City hasn't "promoted" itself as a place to live, visit or relocate a business*

- *Promotion left to others*

- *By doing so, city surrenders control of image and message*

- *City has several channels of communication in place*
    - *Website*
    - *City Manager's Weekly Report*
    - *Televised City Council meetings (YouTube)*
    - *Social Media platforms*
    - *Press Releases*
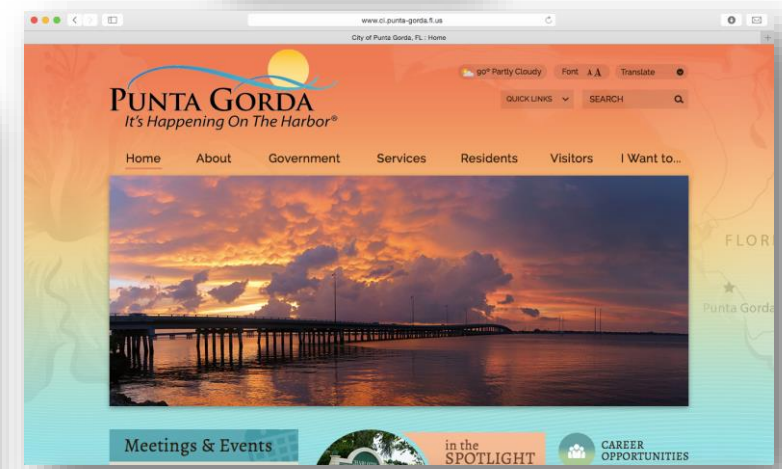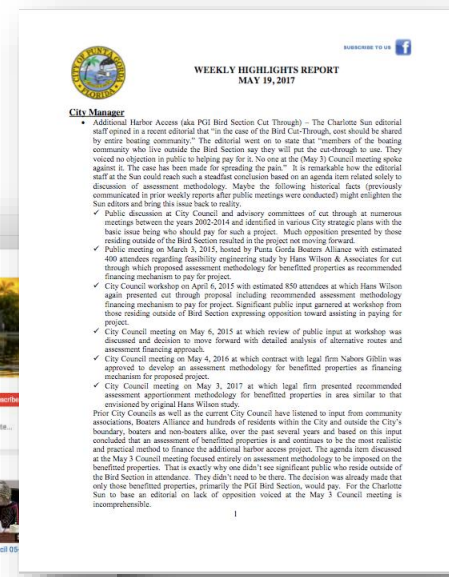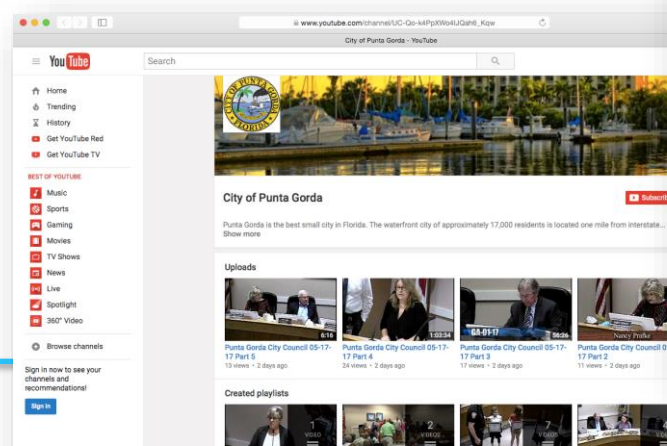
Discovery Recap

Stakeholder Participation

Key groups noted:

- *Team Punta Gorda*
- *The Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce*
- *One Community One Message (OCOM)*
- *Fishermen's Village Merchant's Association*
- *The Charlotte County Visitor & Convention Bureau*
- *The Charlotte County Econ. Dev. Partnership*
- *Enterprise Charlotte Economic Council (ECEC)*
- *The Punta Gorda Airport*
- *The Punta Gorda Downtown Merchants Association*
- *The Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association*
- *Burnt Store Isles Association*
- *Bernice A. Russell Community Development Corporation*
- *The Seminole Lakes Homeowners Association*
- *Burnt Store Meadows Property Owners Association*
- *Visual Arts Center*
- *Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce*
- *Trabue Woods Economic Development Corporation*

- Online survey received over 442 responses

- High level of engagement

- Many involved in several groups at once

- Many attempting to define P.G. themselves

- Strong engagement a result of Hurricane Charley

- Some claim "too many organizations swimming in different directions"

- Also realtors, restaurants, lodging have extensive outreach. Should be considered key in future branding

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Discovery Recap

Promotional/Communications History

- *Conclusions:*

    - *City should take control of its message and image*

    - *Without a single point of coordination and contact, city may be vulnerable*

    - *Inconsistent, inefficient communications likely*

    - *Difficult during emergency response*

    - *Opportunity for more channels and devices aimed at the specific target audiences*
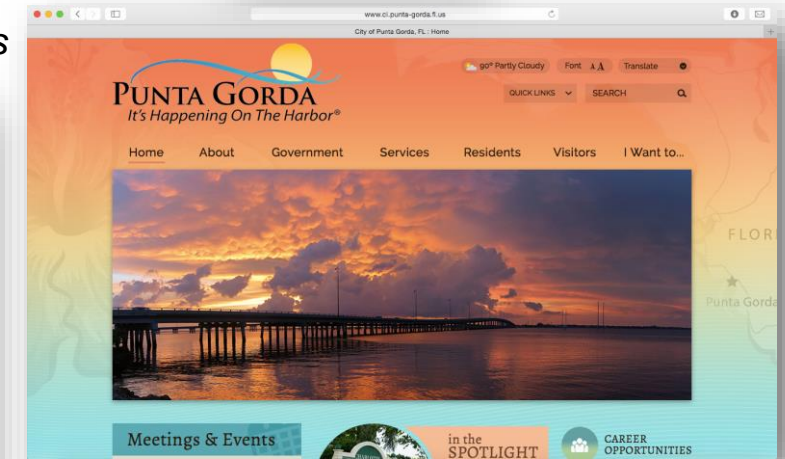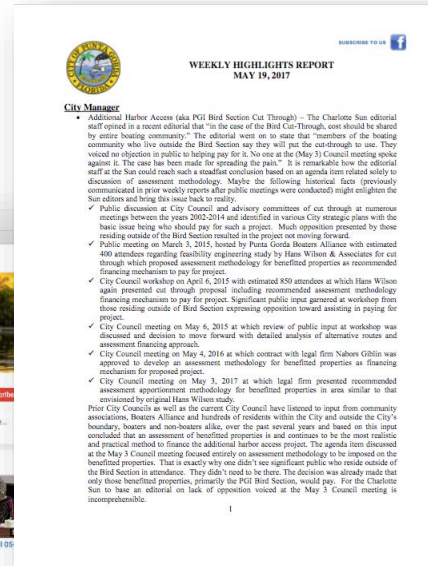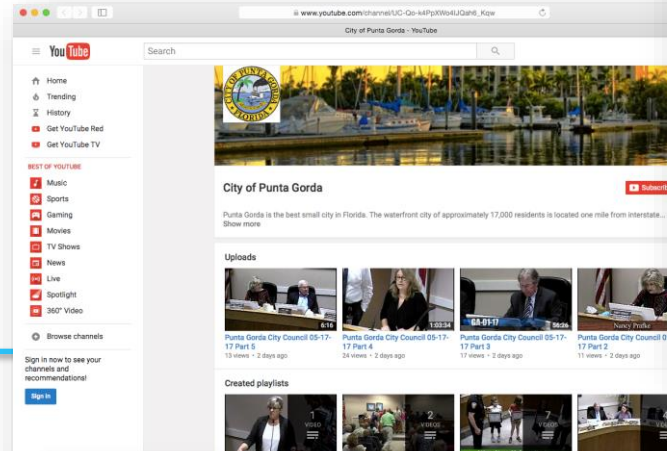
Target & Comparative Analysis

City of Punta Gorda should focus on two target groups:

Internal: -Stakeholder groups within the community:

- City Leadership
  - o City Council
  - o Senior Staff
  - o Rank & File

- Residents
  - o Neighborhood Assoc.
  - o Involved Citizen Groups
  - o Civic Assoc.

- Business
  - o Chambers
  - o Merchant's Assoc
  - o Individual Businesses

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Target & Comparative Analysis

City of Punta Gorda should focus on two target groups:

Internal: -Stakeholder groups within the community:

- Other Important Groups

  o Charlotte County Visitors & Convention Bureau
  o Charlotte County Economic Development Partnership
  o Trabue Woods Economic Development Corp.
  o Bernice Russell Community Development Corp.
  o Punta Gorda Visual Arts Center
  o Charlotte Symphony
  o Other local arts & culture groups

Target & Comparative Analysis

City of Punta Gorda should focus on two target groups:

External: -Focus on relocation & visitation:

- Relocation targets

  o Potential business relocations
  o Potential residential relocations

- Visitors

  o Tourism industry

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Target & Comparative Analysis
Comparative Review and Analysis

- *Cities identified most consistently were:*
  - *Venice*
  - *Naples*
  - *Sarasota/St. Armand's*
  - *St. Augustine*
  - *Safety Harbor*
  - *Tarpon Springs*
  - *Dunedin*
  - *Mr. Dora*
  - *Sanford*
  - *Stuart*

Target & Comparative Analysis

Comparative Review and Analysis

- Level of brand development varied from city to city

- Some cities demonstrated aggressive economic development efforts

- Almost all cities have designated communications person reporting directly to leadership
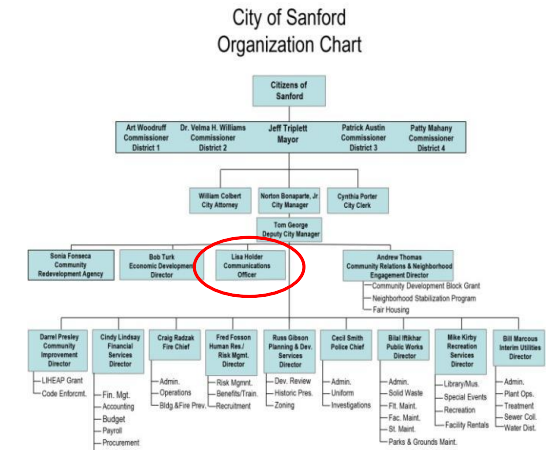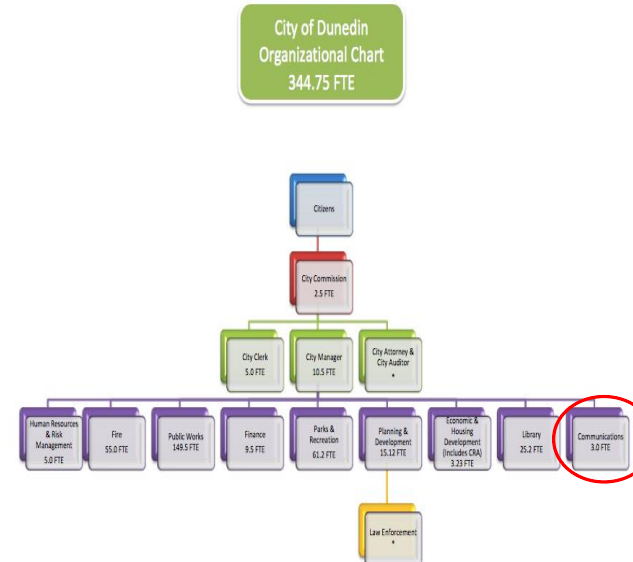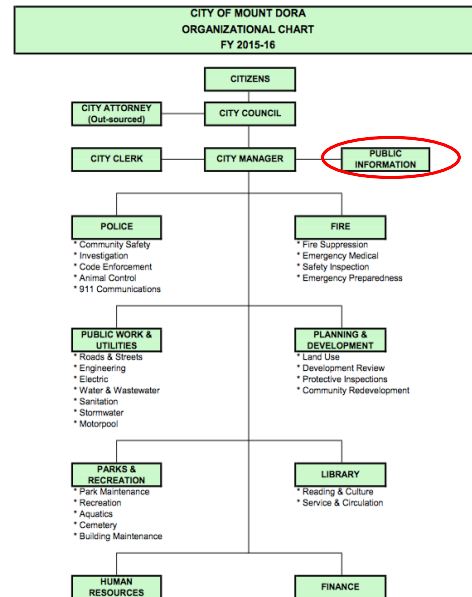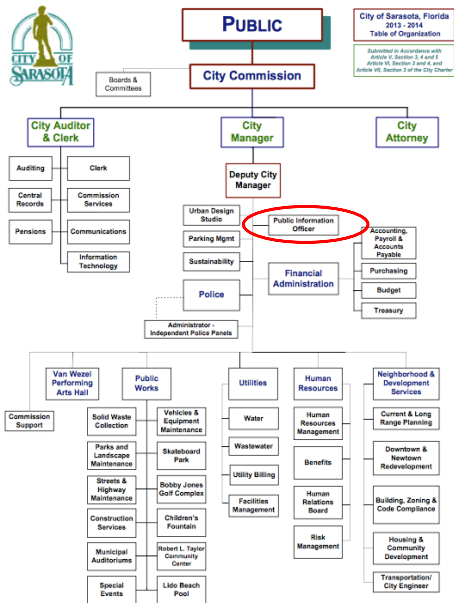
Appropriate Growth Approach

- City of Punta Gorda is at a critical decision point.

- The city must grow to survive.

- Sustained growth requires proactive steps to encourage new investment.

- Development of a communications strategy to support economic growth is essential.

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Appropriate Growth Approach

- Majority of the city understands the importance of future growth.

- Equal majority concerned unchecked growth will threaten the small-town charm and character that defines Punta Gorda.

- City must position itself as supporting a strategy of encouraging "appropriate" growth.

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Appropriate Growth Approach

- Communications strategy must focus on "appropriate" growth approach:

- Community must:
  o Understand what appropriate growth is
  o Embrace the idea
  o Be ambassadors for the message

City of Punta Gorda
Strategic Communications Plan

Elements of a New City Branding

Existing Brand Recap:

- *No official branding process to this point*

- *OCOM's "It's Happening on the Harbor"*

- *Only a logo and tagline*

- *No objective, third-party process*

- *No evaluation through research*

- *Agency concerned that it's vague, does little to distinctly define city.*

- *Used inconsistently*

- *Agency to suggest a number of alternatives*

Elements of a New City Branding

Elements to be reflected in new branding:

- *Intimate*
- *Connected*
- *Relaxed*
- *Safe*
- *Historic*
- *Small-town (Not a city. But feels like a neighborhood.)*
- *Not just a "town," but a "community."*
- *Harborside*

- *Hometown feeling*
- *Mid-American values*
- *Enclave of homogeneous people with shared values*
- *Surrounded by water*
- *Most affordable waterfront in Florida*
- *Punta Gorda sells itself with great lifestyle*
- *More of a community than a city*

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Strategic Communications Recommendations

Three year blueprint

- Year One: Focus on the development of essential tools to effectively promote the city's attributes and consistently communicate its messaging.

- Year Two: Use tools to implement tactics to create a multi-phase, highly visible campaign to promote the city of Punta Gorda to several target groups.

- Year Three: Incorporate longer-term measures (such as capital projects) to further promote brand and encourage perpetual, ongoing awareness.

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Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year One

Goal: Development of strategies and tactics to encourage community support for an "appropriate" growth approach to future development, the adoption of new city vision, messaging and branding, and the implementation of changes to the City's communications protocols to improve message/brand discipline.

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Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year One

Tactic:

- City Council Work Sessions to Allow Productive Leadership Discussion.

  - Alternate weeks to Council meetings
  - Less structured, collegial exchanges – No Roberts Rules
  - Opportunity for open dialogue on city communications issues

Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year One

Tactic:

- Formation of Blue Ribbon Panel on Responsible, Planned Growth.

    - Key stakeholders, elected leadership, citizens develop ideas for encouraging community acceptance and education of appropriate growth.
    - Recommendations are non-binding.
    - Members to assist in creating community support.

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Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year One

Tactic:

- <u>Create Communications Manager Position – New Protocols</u>

- Consistent unified voice is essential.
- All communications supervised by one person.
- Improve crisis communications, media relations, brand adherence, resident response, economic development.

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Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year One

Tactic:

- **VIP Stakeholder Vision & Branding Presentations**

  - "Road show" explaining importance of appropriate growth strategy.
  - Education of city messaging, branding, vision.
  - Generate community acceptance & good will.

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Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year One

Tactic:

- <u>Create Orientation Materials for New, Incoming Individuals</u>

- Turnover & attrition erode sustained support and brand awareness.
- Materials provide primer on Punta Gorda, key messages, vision, branding, culture.

Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year One

Tactic:

- **Drafting Talking Points Collateral for Public Distribution**

  - To encourage adoption of appropriate growth strategy together with vision and branding.
  - Public collateral pieces expressing key ideas given to public, business owners, Chambers, city employees, County tourism & economic groups.

Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year One

Tactic:

- Enhance Punta Gorda Website to Reflect New Vision & Branding

- Website must reflect branding, priorities, vision.
- Website is first place people go to learn about city.

Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year One

Tactic:

- Create Micro Website Focused Exclusively on Visitation & Relocation

  - Provide a one-stop source for considering Punta Gorda as a tourist destination, new residence or business relocation.
  - Site provides data, testimonials, latest news, social media links, etc.
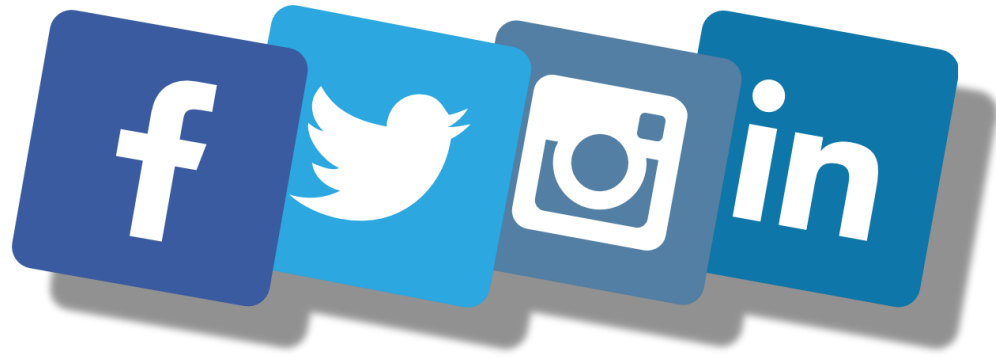
Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year One

Tactic:

- <u>Creation of New, Externally-focused Social Media Channels</u>

- Provide regular, positive information intended to portray Punta Gorda as a desirable place to live and visit.
- Creation of a Social Media Content Marketing Plan to guide year-long calendar of postings.

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Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year One

Tactic:

- **Redesign of existing Printed Materials to Reflect New Vision**

    - All city collateral should suggest a coordinated campaign to promote the common vision and branding of the city.

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Strategic Communications Recommendations

Year Two

Goal: Create and execute a multi-phase, highly visible campaign designed to attract attention to, and effectively disseminate the City of Punta Gorda's unified and coordinated messaging, thus creating widespread excitement about the city, leading to tangible economic results.

Year Three

Goal: Encourage the perpetual, ongoing awareness and embracing of the city's messaging, vision, and brand.

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Fees

Services:

- Aid in organizing, presenting and documenting community outreach, workshops, panel meetings, VIP events and other presentations.

- Guide, orient and mentor new Communications Manager.

- Graphic design and creation of all required collateral materials.

- Aid in online promotion, including web, social media, microsite management, etc.

- Aid in creation of Content Marketing Plan.

- Redesign all existing city collateral.

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Fees

FY 2017-18

▪ Communications Manager Salary Range	$61,713 – $95,600
▪ Fixed Agency Fee ($6,750/month)	$81,000
▪ Anticipated outside vendor charges	$50,000
	$192,713 - $226,600

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Questions?

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