

City of Kingston

Communications Officer, Housing & Homelessness - Temporary (Up to 2 Years)



Job Number: J0825-0220

Bargaining Unit: Non-Union

Job Type: Temporary (Up to 2 years), Full-time hours

Salary: \$71,467.44 - \$89,291.36/Year

Hours of Work: 35 hrs/week, with the ability to work outside of business hours, including some evenings and weekends. Requirement to attend public engagement events, special events, media events in various locations at various times to support the delivery and execution of said events.

Closing Date: September 17, 2025

Extended Health and Dental Plan paid by employer
Defined Benefit Pension Plan-OMERS

Opening Statement

The City of Kingston is grateful to experience the traditional territories of Anishinabek (Ah-nish-nah-beg), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-o-show-nee) and Huron-Wendat (huron-wen-dat). Kingston is a smart, livable city in the heart of eastern Ontario. Its stable and diversified economy includes global corporations, innovative start-ups and all levels of government.

At the City of Kingston, we believe that diversity and inclusion are essential elements of a thriving workplace. We value the unique perspectives and experiences that each individual brings to our team. As we continue to grow, we are dedicated to creating an environment where all employees feel welcomed, respected, and empowered to contribute their best work. The City of Kingston views diversity as its strength and we encourage applications from individuals of all backgrounds, including those from underrepresented communities.

As staff, you play a pivotal role in enhancing people's lives by delivering exceptional, customer-centered services of the highest quality. Within our highly ethical environment, you'll embrace accountability by consistently going above and beyond, actively listening to our customers, creatively addressing their needs, and maintaining unwavering respect for all individuals you serve. As a result, you'll become an integral part of our qualified and dynamic team, recognized for its compassion, excellence, integrity, inclusivity, and adaptability.

Position Summary

****Note this is a temporary position covering full-time hours for up to 2 years****

The Communications Officer, Housing & Homelessness is a strategic and relationship-focused role dedicated to public engagement, building public trust, fostering collaboration, and enhancing understanding of emergency, transitional, and supportive housing initiatives. This position plays a vital role in shaping how housing and homelessness programs are communicated and received by the community, with a strong emphasis on transparency, empathy, and inclusive engagement.

The Communications Officer provides timely, sensitive, and coordinated communications that support public confidence and continuity of services. By championing trauma-informed and equity-centered public engagement practices, this role ensures that housing and homelessness initiatives are well communicated and supported by the neighbourhoods and community members they are intended to serve.

The Communications Officer leads the development and execution of communication and engagement strategies that clearly articulate the goals, progress, and community impact of housing and homelessness projects. A key focus of the role is cultivating and maintaining strong relationships with residents, community liaison committee members, service providers, Indigenous partners, and other levels of government. Through proactive outreach and responsive engagement, the Communications Officer facilitates open dialogue, gathers meaningful input, and ensures that community voices and those with lived experience inform housing and homelessness program design and delivery.

KEY DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Develop and implement targeted communication plans for projects and initiatives including but not restricted to homelessness, emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, and supportive housing development and construction.
- Support rapid response communications for issues, emergencies and inquiries related to housing and homelessness, ensuring timely response and supporting staff through ongoing issues management.
- Craft clear, accessible, inclusive and culturally sensitive messaging to reinforce the accuracy of information and build public confidence in housing and homelessness programs.
- Collaborate with internal departments, service providers, and community organizations to align messaging and ensure consistency.
- Manage digital content across platforms (web, social media, newsletters) to promote initiatives related to housing and homelessness and share updates with relevant audiences and communities.
- Develop, edit, and publish various written materials for several channels including, news releases, webpage content, media briefs, FAQs, newsletters, video storyboards, radio ads, podcasts, surveys, and social media.

- Liaise with the Graphic Designers on the development, review, and approval of creative materials from concept meetings to final approval.
- Respond to resident and Community Liaison Committee inquiries by phone or email or other form of correspondence if stipulated.
- Design and facilitate inclusive engagement strategies to gather input from residents, community groups and people with lived experience on housing and homelessness projects and service delivery.
- Build and maintain relationships with key participants, including community liaison committees, non-profits and service providers, advocacy groups, Indigenous community members, equity-seeking individuals and other levels of government.
- Organize in-person and online public meetings, prepare meeting safety plans, and focus groups to foster transparency and trust.
- Develop appropriate engagement tools to receive input on projects, policies, and initiatives.
- Moderate community liaison committee meetings, including recording minutes and reporting back to committee members.
- Support departments with engagement delivery and reporting back.
- Represent the organization at community events, forums, and working groups focused on housing and homelessness.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with the media through proactive and reactive media relations.
- Monitor social and traditional media coverage in the sector and provide regular analytics aimed at ensuring targeted messaging reaches and is shared within the community.
- Monitor news coverage through media articles and social media pertaining to the municipality and identifying issues and risks.
- Assist departments with preparation and messaging for interviews and/or responses, acknowledging additional supports may at times be required given the unique sensitivities around this file.
- Organize and maintain records of input collected from engagement activities.
- Maintain corporate records of materials that are developed.
- Develop project level communications and engagement evaluation using data to inform and support decisions on future projects and tactics.
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications, Competencies

- Diploma or degree in Communications, Public Relations, Political Science, Journalism, or related field.

- Minimum of 3 years progressive experience in communications, public relations or public engagement.
- Knowledge and skill in using public engagement systems, tools, processes are required.
- Ability and skill to professionally engage and generate common understandings and create shared vision in environments of diverse participants are required.
- Demonstrated experience using Microsoft Office, Outlook, Excel, Presentation software, Microsoft Teams and Sharepoint, Content Management Systems, Project Management Software are required.
- Experience in meeting facilitation are required.
- Experience creating, planning, and executing various communication tactics with demonstrated experience being creative and innovative are required.
- International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Foundations Training is required. Membership in IAP2 Canada or International Association of Facilitators (IAF) is considered an asset.
- Experience in municipal government with a focus on housing and homelessness is considered an asset.
- Experience working in a fast paced, team environment is considered an asset.
- Experience with printing, websites is considered an asset.
- Experience in conflict resolution is considered an asset.
- Experience with trauma-informed communications and engagement practices is considered an asset.
- Must demonstrate corporate values of Belonging, Collaboration, Accountability, and Innovation.

Skills, Abilities, Work Demands

- The ability to establish credibility and build trusting relationships.
- Exceptional communication skills both in verbal and written.
- A technical aptitude and ability to quickly learn new systems and software.
- Ability to determine the most efficient process in developing communication plans and provide recommendations when necessary to Management.
- Ability to determine when to refer or escalate a problem or question to Management.
- Working knowledge of Canadian Press (CP) Style.
- A strategic thinker that demonstrates creativity, organization, flexibility, negotiation, and political sensitivity skills.
- The ability to work in a multi-task, multi-deadline environment.

- Proficient writing, editing, and proofreading for various communication channels, for accuracy and for content.
- Proficient using social media and social media management platforms.
- A strong understanding of project management.
- Proficiency in data analysis and reporting.
- Strong interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to build and maintain positive relationships with elected officials and the public.
- A strong working knowledge of analytics.
- Exceptional customer service skills.
- A strong work ethic and ability to work independently using initiative to complete tasks and prioritize duties and workload efficiently.
- Strong project management skills and knowledge of project management methodologies and tools is considered an asset.
- Bilingual in English and French, both written and verbal is considered an asset.
- Attending public engagement events, special events, media events in various locations at various times to support the delivery and execution of said events, outside of regular business hours is required. This includes some evenings and weekends.
- Required to obtain and maintain a satisfactory criminal record check.

Closing Statement

Please apply to Career Opportunities at: www.cityofkingston.ca/Careers

Please inform us of any accommodations we need to make to ensure a barrier-free recruitment experience. Accommodations are available in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) at any stage in the recruitment process. We're happy to provide more information if you email us at HRCity@cityofkingston.ca

Your resumé must demonstrate how you meet position requirements. Please upload to your profile any educational Degrees, Diplomas and/or Certificates that are relevant and required for the position. We thank all who apply, however, only those selected for further consideration will be contacted. Information collected will be handled in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.