

DRAFT Community Communication Recommendation

K. Solender; 07.16.18

The Charter Review Commission believes that governments must responsibly use their resources to provide services that meet the needs of constituents. Local governments answer to state and federal laws and guidelines for effective operations, but most of all, they answer to the people they serve. Ultimately, government accountability is about maintaining the trust between government officials and citizens. The Commission believes that the City Manager and members of City Council won't be able to fulfill their roles if citizens don't trust them to make decisions that serve the best interest of the community. Core values such as integrity, equality, and transparency should provide the foundation for every decision and policy.

The Commission would like to see the City Manager, City Council, and indeed all City staff embrace their responsibility to communicate effectively with the citizens of Cleveland Heights by ensuring frequent opportunities for meaningful community engagement about projects, programs, and initiatives.

Suggestions:

- A conversation series in which residents meet in small groups with the City Manager.
- A regular schedule of roundtable discussions, public meetings, or workshops with City Council members and residents in locations around the city.
- Use of web-hosted video to disseminate City information and messages.
- For further information sharing and collection of feedback, consider use of an online forum where citizens can read what others are saying about important city topics, then post their own statements. City officials would read the statements and incorporate them into their decision process. One provider of such a tool is [OpenGov](#), a non-partisan company whose mission is to broaden civic engagement and build public trust in government.
- Develop a reporting mechanism for ensuring that City Council and City staff are accessible via e-mail and direct phone lines and in-person, and promptly respond to public inquiries and comments. *[Does something like this already exist?]*