

Memorandum

REPORT TO: City Commission

FROM: Chuck Winn, City Manager

SUBJECT: Ordinance Dissolving Department of Strategic Services and Creating Department of Communications & Engagement

MEETING DATE: July 21, 2026

AGENDA ITEM TYPE: Ordinance

RECOMMENDATION: **Consider the Motion:** *I move to provisionally adopt this Ordinance Dissolving Department of Strategic Services and Creating Department of Communications & Engagement.*

STRATEGIC PLAN: 1.2 Community Engagement: Broaden and deepen engagement of the community in city government, innovating methods for inviting input from the community and stakeholders.

BACKGROUND: Earlier this year, the Bozeman City Commission adopted four overarching priorities to guide the City's work:

- Advance Bozeman as a safe and welcoming place for all.
- Engage meaningfully with the community.
- Bridge the affordability gap.
- Protect Bozeman's heritage, neighborhoods, and natural environment.

A strong and intentional communication and community engagement strategy is fundamental to achieving each of these priorities and the work plans that support them. Effective communication and engagement efforts help connect elected officials and staff with the community, improve the quality of public decision-making, and strengthen public trust in local government. These functions are integral to nearly every service the City provides.

Currently, Communications & Engagement operates as a division within the City Manager's Office and is responsible for a broad range of citywide initiatives and programs, including working with the local press, social media, the Neighborhood Program and the Inter-Neighborhood Council, the MSU Bozeman Town and Gown program, Belonging in Bozeman initiatives, podcast production, the City newsletter, and graphic design services including managing content on the city's website. Communication & Engagement also oversees the city's engagement efforts and Engage Bozeman Platform.

Establishing Communications & Engagement as a standalone department led by a director-level position will further strengthen the City's ability to coordinate and integrate communication and engagement efforts across the organization while continuing to improve service delivery and public outreach.

This organizational change will not increase the total number of City departments or department heads. The proposed ordinance eliminates the Strategic Services Department and establishes the Communications & Engagement Department in its place. Functions previously housed within Strategic Services are currently reporting to an Assistant City Manager.

UNRESOLVED ISSUES: None

ALTERNATIVES: As directed by the Commission.

FISCAL EFFECTS: Any additional costs are offset by the elimination of the Strategic Services Director position.

Attachments:

[Ordinance Final cp 7 6 26 cw.docx](#)

Report compiled on: July 16, 2026