

The following is a list of ideas for your Community's Awareness Program:



Contests

- [Poster Contests](#) (see resource on poster contests)
- [Essay Contests](#) (see resource on essay contests)
- [Design a Flag](#) – for those communities who do not have a flag, the Awareness Program is the perfect opportunity for citizens in your community to become involved by holding a flag design contest. The winning design becomes the basis for the community's new flag.
- [Name a Street Contest](#)- offer a contest to community members to name a new street, or re-name an existing one.
- [Mayor / Chair for a Day](#) – run a contest for the position.
- [Photo Contest](#) – ask the residents to submit photos showing why their community is the best place to live. (i.e., Heritage sites, scenery, great recreation facilities, etc.)
- [Local Government Awareness Quiz](#) – develop a quiz for adults and for school students to fill out about their local government and board of education.
- [Crossword Puzzle](#) – incorporate local government and education services and terms in a crossword puzzle to be placed in your community paper. Individuals who complete their puzzles submit them to municipal/ regional district/board office for a draw. Prizes can be determined by the local government. (i.e., dinner at restaurant, free passes to recreation centre, etc.)
- [History of the Community](#) – have citizens develop material about their community which could be displayed in the local government hall or other public places.

Community Events

- [Sporting Event](#) – organize an event where the Council/ Board challenges a local organization/community group to a game of softball, etc.
- [Open House/Tours](#) - of municipal halls, regional board offices, fire stations, police stations, water treatment plants, education/school offices, etc. You could encourage people to visit different places by issuing “passports” that are stamped at each place, with prizes awarded for completed passports. Or you could profile unique school programs in a central open house at the board of education office or school.
- [Community Family Night](#) – perfect opportunity to meet informally with members of the community at your local recreation centre for a swim night, dance, or talent contest.
- [Awards Event](#) – provide awards to those individuals contributing to the community.
- [Pancake breakfast or community picnic](#)- host a pancake breakfast or community picnic with Mayor and Council.
- [Family Day](#) - organize a “Tree Planting / Family Fun Day”.
- [Open Council / Board Meeting](#) – provide citizens with an opportunity to meet elected officials and staff. This could be an invitation to attend a council/board meeting or host an informal social evening at your local government building.

Community Advertising

- [Brochure](#)- create and distribute a brochure on your local government or board of education, highlighting the different departments and roles of elected officials.

- **Mall or Work Fair Display** - set up displays at malls or work fairs discussing local government's role in the community. ie. engineering department, fire department, bylaw enforcement, education, etc.
- **Advertising Campaigns** - conduct advertising campaigns in newspapers and on radio about your local government.
- **Signage** - have promotional signage for "Local Government Awareness Week" on civic facilities and schools.
- **Promotional Items** - create promotional give-away items such as pens, pins, bags, stickers.
- **Calendar** – develop a calendar for distribution to your residents that indicates key community events and dates important to the local government. You might illustrate it with pictures taken by residents that feature local landmarks.
- **Newsletter** – pictures and interviews local elected officials and staff. Ask your local community paper to assist in the promotion of your Awareness Program. As with a Speakers' program, you may want to tie a Newsletter in with public consultations on your budget process.
- **Organize a "Speakers Bureau" of Council/Board or Staff** - speakers could be available to speak about local government to community organizations such as the Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, senior's centres or schools. You may want to tie this activity in with any public consultations being undertaken as part of the budget development process.
- **Job Shadowing** – arrange for students to work in your city hall or board office through work programs. By shadowing or working with specific staff members they will gain knowledge about local government.
- **Proclamation** - proclaim one week/day of the year as Local Government Awareness Week. Write up a press release and/or invite your local newspaper to

publish your events. (see sample proclamation to get you started).

- **Website** - think about profiling employees on the website- what they do, what they like about working for the local government, etc.

Activities for Schools

- Invite members of council, trustees or staff to speak to a class or a school assembly.
- Hold a mock council or board meeting in your classroom.
- Hold mock elections in your classroom.
- Work with schools to appoint "youth advisors" to council committees.
- Hold a colouring contest for kids in early primary grades.
- Encourage students to consider local government careers. Host a job fair, or develop a job shadowing program appropriate to the age of the students you're working with.

Social Media

- Develop short videos for posting on YouTube; promote those videos through Facebook and Twitter. Profile people and places in your community, and try to give people a "behind the scenes" look at the more interesting services your community provides.
- Use Facebook or Twitter to organize a community scavenger hunt, or a community trivia contest, with prizes (ie, fitness pass).
- Host a live web Q&A session with members of council.

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