



# city of PALM COAST

Administrative Services & Economic Development  
Central Services Division

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## MEMO

**To:** Jim Landon, City Manager

**From:** Beau Falgout, Administrative Services & Economic Development Director  
Cindi Lane, Communications & Marketing Manager

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**Subject:** Alternative Proposal

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### INTRODUCTION

The Communications & Marketing Division is constantly evaluating and reevaluating our approaches to marketing City events and services. In addition, the Division is always looking for new ways to engage and communicate with our residents. This is exactly why over the past year the Division has expanded the use of social media platforms and marketing to reach more residents with targeted messaging for events, services, and public information that reinforces our brand. When the Division was approached about the opportunity to engage residents using radio, we were excited about another channel to reach residents and reinforce our brand. In addition, our team experienced a lot of success with radio in reaching residents during Hurricane Matthew.

Our team huddled to reevaluate our approach to radio as discussed with City Council, not only to attempt to address City Council concerns, but also to maximize our reach with limited marketing dollars. In addition, we were encouraged by City Council's broad support of getting the positive message out about City events and services and our team would like to capitalize on that support. As requested by City Council, our team is proposing an alternative proposal for consideration.



## **ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL**

The City radio show is a strategy to market upcoming City events and communicate with residents about City projects, programs, and services. In addition, the radio show provides a regular opportunity to reach a broad audience. When our team huddled, we reevaluated if a radio show was indeed the best way to accomplish this strategy. This alternative approach addresses this strategy, by using not only radio, but also multiple channels to maximize our reach and limited marketing dollars. In addition, our goal is to implement this alternative proposal for 6 months and evaluate the results as our team constantly does for all communication and marketing efforts.

### ***Targeted Paid Radio Advertising***

In the past, the City has sparingly used radio advertising as a channel to reach residents. Radio has a broad reach and can be an excellent channel to reach residents about upcoming events and public service announcements. For this reason and based on the possibility of more advantageous pricing, our team is recommending an annual contract for radio advertising across multiple stations that would include regular advertisements for upcoming City events. In addition, our team would recommend that if there are limited events to advertise during any particular week that ad time would be used for public services announcements (i.e. Smoke alarm battery change out, PEP system alarm, recycling, swales, etc.). In addition, our team would like to see any contract negotiated include free or reduced ad time for additional public service announcements. Our team would propose to spend approximately \$8,000 annually, but consistent with this proposal, would implement for 6 months (approximately \$4,000) and evaluate the results.

### ***Unpaid Radio Appearances***

City staff and elected officials have made appearances on local radio stations promoting City programs, projects, services, and events. We should continue to avail ourselves of these opportunities in the future as radio reaches a broad audience and these opportunities have no direct cost to the City.

### ***City Pod Cast***

Over the past year, City staff has expanded the use of non-traditional media channels to reach residents, especially social media. We now have over 11,000 Facebook followers and have a presence on YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram. In addition, we have seen the power of multimedia, especially photos and video, in conjunction with social media platforms. For example, during Hurricane Matthew, we were able to reach 347,717 through our various social media posts and videos. While traditional media channels, such as television, newspaper, and radio need to be part of our strategy, non-traditional media channels provide unique opportunities to reach residents at typically lower cost with the ability to measure results.

Our team is excited about our proposal to start a City Pod Cast. A pod cast is a lot like a radio show, except a pod cast is on demand and does not air during a certain time slot. In addition, from a staff perspective, a podcast could be a weekly show, but can also be subject or topic driven, which does not commit staff to a weekly production schedule, which can be overwhelming at times. Listeners can download on a regular basis, or can download a specific episode because they are interested in the subject or topic. In addition, podcasts can be integrated into our social media platforms, which can be shared and liked by our residents, and City staff can track the effectiveness. In addition, we could integrate the paid radio advertisements and public service announcements previously mentioned into the City Pod Cast.

Furthermore, a City Pod Cast could further City Council's Strategic Action Plan by addressing several performance measures, especially the City Council performance measure related to creating a Virtual Citizen's Academy. The audio captured through the City Pod Cast along with other multimedia could be used to build a Virtual Citizen's Academy.

Our initial concept is that the Discover Palm Coast Pod Cast would be a staff hosted and driven program that would focus on the subjects and topics previously mentioned in connection with City radio show. The Pod Cast would feature guests from time to time, including City Council members, similar to the introductions conducted at Citizen Academy nights. Our team would need some time to research technology and equipment that may be necessary to implement, but because of TV199 equipment and staff experience, our team feels implementation would be low cost and relatively easy. Of course, this will be a large

undertaking for our Division and we would look towards our interns coming aboard this summer to help in getting this strategy started.