

OPTIC Organizational Assessment Report

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Date: July 27, 2026. Review period: July 2 to July 27, 2026.

Framework and Standards

This assessment is built to two nationally recognized standards. It is organized around the Baldrige Excellence Framework (NIST) Criteria for Performance Excellence, government and nonprofit version (Leadership, Strategy, Constituents, Measurement and Analysis, Workforce, Operations, and Results), and it applies the 3CMA (City-County Communications and Marketing Association) communications-audit method, including 3CMA guidance to measure communications by impact and outcomes (reach, engagement, experience, and opinion), not workload alone. Section 3 is a structured communications audit; the consolidated gap analysis and improvement plan are provided in the companion Communications Inventory and Recommendations.

1. Executive Summary

Over the first 30 days, OPTIC completed a full assessment of the City's communications operation: its functions, tools, staffing, and interdepartmental relationships. The office is fundamentally sound and, in several areas, performing above expectation, most visibly in accessibility compliance, earned media, and the on-time delivery of the Council Chamber audiovisual and broadcast go-live under difficult conditions. The two clearest gaps are (1) the absence of a formal performance-measurement framework, which is the concern Council raised directly, and (2) website content accuracy in department-owned sections. Both are addressable and form the backbone of the 60 and 90-day plans. A recurring theme in the findings: several of the most visible problems (Council Chamber infrastructure, stale department web content, inconsistent director engagement) originate outside OPTIC's direct control, and OPTIC is now the office coordinating the fix and documenting the path forward. In line with these standards, the report separates output measures (volume and reach), which OPTIC can already show, from outcome measures (changes in awareness, behavior, and opinion), which the 60-day performance-management work is built to capture.

2. Methodology

- Requested communications meetings with all Department Directors and designated City Manager's Office staff. Status as of this report (tracked live on the Department Coordinator Network board):
 - **Met at director level:** Community Development (Director Ocasio, 7/23) and the City Clerk (Roland), Community Services (Director Watson). Stockton Fire Department (Chief Carr), IT (Director Jamil Niazi)
 - **Reschedule pending:** Public Works (Director Basalusalu), Economic Development (Director McCarty routed to a coordinator).
 - **Request sent, awaiting a date:** Municipal Utilities, Office of Violence Prevention, Human Resources, Ecological Sustainability, and Administrative Services.
 - **Covered per City Manager:** the City Manager's Office, via DCM Crew and Christine Tien.
 - **Excluded (documented):** City Attorney's Office and Police (own PIO).
- Evaluated all OPTIC functions: strategic communications, media relations, social media, website management, Ask Stockton, and performance management.

- Reviewed supporting materials: the FY25-26 Communications Plan, website analytics (Sprout Social), the media contact database, the Council Chamber AV third-party IT operations report, and OPTIC's own production and tracking systems.

3. Function-by-Function Evaluation

3.1 Strategic Communications

Current state: Active and responsive, but historically run without a written, measurable strategy.

Strengths: strong output and executive communication (cross-department AV status updates positively received by leadership and Public Works). Deficiencies: no documented citywide communications strategy or engagement framework yet. Recommendation: build the Citywide Communications and Public Engagement Strategy (60-day).

3.2 Media Relations

Current state: Standardized this period. Built a Media Inquiry Tracker that auto-timestamps every inquiry and measures against a 90-percent-acknowledged-within-1-business-day standard; established the Policy 13.01.030.01 response process (City Manager notification plus Council summary). Strengths: fast turnaround; a comprehensive media contact database; consistent earned media. Deficiencies: the process is new and needs a full measurement period to prove the rate. Recommendation: sustain the tracker; formalize the Media Response Protocol (60-day).

Draft status: this assessment currently covers Sections 1 through 3.2. The remaining function evaluations (social media, website management, Ask Stockton, and performance management) and the appendix are pending. The consolidated gap analysis and recommendations are provided in the companion Communications Inventory and Recommendations.