



EXAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This Social Media Policy (“SMP”) governs and provides guidance to officers, council members, and applicants or nominees for officer or council member positions with the City for the publication of and commentary on social media, including such social media now existing and as may be developed in the future. This SMP is in addition to existing policies, as such may be amended from time to time, regarding computer and technology uses within the City.

A. For the purposes of this SMP, social media shall mean any application, platform, forum, or facility for online messaging, publication, or commentary of information; mass distribution via text, MMS, SMS, or similar technology; including without limitation social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube, in addition to blogs, wiki’s, video postings, and similar sites.

B. This SMP is adopted due to the pervasive nature of social media and the problems and confusion that can result when others are unable to distinguish an officer’s or council member’s personal life from their public persona and leadership role in the City. Other than an incidental mention of the council member’s position as council member or officer of the City, any publication or commentary which suggests affiliation with the City, must be authorized in writing by the Manager or City Council in advance. Use of the City logo is prohibited unless authorized in writing by the Manager or City Council in advance. Uses of social media carry similar obligations to other forms of public commentary or publication on behalf of the City.

C. Social media usernames and logo information may not use the City’s name or the names of its affiliates without prior written approval from the Manager or City Council. Profiles, publications, or commentary on social media sites must be consistent with the public information available on any the City website or publication about any officer or council member. Profiles on social media sites that identify the individual as an officer or council member of the City should use the officer’s or council member’s official City photograph, if available.

D. Publications and commentary must strictly comply with the City’s confidentiality policy set forth in this Code. Officers and council members must protect their own privacy and the privacy of others and should use access limitations on social media sites to restrict public access to information not otherwise available on the City website or other publications. While it is acceptable to discuss the City favorably in your dialog with friends and the community, officers and council members must not disclose confidential information on social media sites. City officials’ use of social media must comply with the same ethical standards that the City officers and council members must otherwise follow.

E. Officers and council members must be honest and fair in all their dealings and with regard to their publication and commentary on social media. Officers and council members must use discretion, caution, and respect when using social media. Officers and council members must not disparage the City or its actions, shareholders, other officers, and council members. Do not comment or publish any statement on a social media site which the officer or council member would not state in a face-to-face meeting. Do not comment or publish any information using social media that would call into question any officer's or council member's integrity, fairness, or fitness for office.

F. Unlawful use of the City computers, technology or social media is strictly prohibited. Officers and council members shall not utilize the City computers, technology, or social media to harass or threaten any individual, and in all respects must comply with the harassment policy set forth in this code when using the City computers, technology, and social media. Computers and technology are the City property and should not be used for personal uses. However, this SMP applies to an officer or council member's use of their own personal computers as well.

G. Officers and council members shall not direct family, friends or third parties to publish or comment on social media anything prohibited by this SMP.