

COUNCIL POLICY



Document Name: Social Media

Department Name: Communications and ~~Engagement Stakeholder Relations~~

Document Number: ~~COM-140~~ PRC-140

Effective Date: May 10, 2022

Next Revision Date: May 10, 2025

STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE

~~This Policy aligns with the Municipality's goal of building a responsible government by demonstrating accountability, integrity and transparency in all that it does, and by enhancing participation in Municipal activities.~~

- Strategic Priority 1 – Responsible Government

POLICY STATEMENT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The Municipality is committed to open and transparent communication on Social Media ~~as a way to~~ enhance ~~engagement~~ connections and strengthen relationships with the public, and ~~as a way to~~ promote Municipal values, programs, and services. ~~The purpose of this Policy is to establish a guideline that ensures the use of Social Media occurs in an appropriate, effective, and secure manner, and is in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.~~

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Definitions:

- 1.1. "Social Media" means mobile-based and Internet-connected applications and tools that support the sharing and publication of various types of information among people. Social Media services can include, but are not limited to, popular web-based blogs and networking websites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, ~~Tumblr~~, Reddit, Instagram, ~~Flickr~~, SnapChat, TikTok, and YouTube.
- 1.2. "Social Media Account" means an approved Municipal account with specific user identification and associated login credentials providing access to a Social Media platform. ~~These accounts are administrative accounts and not accounts of elected officials.~~

2. Responsibilities:

- 2.1. **Council to:**
 - 2.1.1. approve this Policy; and
 - 2.1.2. approve any ~~future~~ amendments ~~as required~~ to this Policy.
- 2.2. **Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) ~~or designate~~ to:**
 - 2.2.1. recommend any amendments to this Policy; and

2.2.2. support the implementation of this Policy.

~~2.3. Deputy Chief Administrative Officer and Executive Directors:~~

~~2.3.1. support the implementation of this Policy;~~

~~2.3.2. recommend any amendments to this Policy as required.~~

2.4. **Directors to:**

2.4.1. support the implementation of this Policy;

2.4.2. recommend any amendments to this Policy as required;

~~2.4.3. identify opportunities where the use of Social Media may benefit decision making or services delivery;~~

2.4.4. consult with Communications and ~~Stakeholder Relations~~ Engagement to utilize Social Media platforms consistent with the General Principles in this Policy; and

2.4.5. communicate, implement, and deliver this Policy, any related Administrative Procedures, and other ~~related~~ relevant guidelines as required.

2.5. **Director, Communications and Engagement to: ~~Director of Communications and Stakeholder Relations~~**

2.5.1. ensure implementation and communication of this Policy to employees.

~~2.5.2. Assist other departments in creating and using Social Media platforms that are consistent with this Policy;~~

~~2.5.3. Monitor all activities on Municipal Social Media Platforms for relevancy, consistency, and accuracy.~~

3. **General Procedures Principles:**

3.1. **Compliance:**

3.1.1. Communication through Social Media must comply with ~~the Municipality's~~ Code of Conduct Directive (HRM-600-D) and all other relevant Policies, Directives, and guidelines, as well as provincial and federal legislation.

3.2. **Uses of Social Media:**

3.2.1. The Municipality will use Social Media to release official and authorized Municipal communications to residents and stakeholders.

~~3.2.2. The Municipality will use Social Media to:~~

~~3.2.2.1. Inform the public; and~~

~~3.2.2.2. Engage the public and solicit feedback on issues and decisions that have significant impact on citizens and the Municipality.~~

3.2.3. Communications and ~~Stakeholder Relations~~ Engagement will govern and monitor all use of Social Media communications from ~~the Municipality~~ Municipal Social Media Accounts. This will include ~~including~~ a review of all Social Media platforms annually to ensure relevancy and consistency.

3.2.4. Only designated employees ~~are allowed to~~ may use Social Media on behalf of the Municipality.

3.3. Emergency Communication:

- 3.3.1. In the event the Regional Emergency ~~Operations~~-Coordination Centre and the Crisis Communications Team are activated, the Communications and ~~Stakeholder-Relations~~ Engagement Department will create and manage all communication for the duration of the crisis.
- 3.3.2. Only official Municipal Social Media Accounts will release information about the emergency. Scheduled posts on any other Municipal Social Media Accounts will be suspended.

4. Rescind and Replace

This Policy rescinds and replaces the Social Media Policy COM-140, dated October 18, 2016.

APPROVAL

This Policy was approved by Council. It will be reviewed not later than its next Revision Date to determine its effectiveness and appropriateness. It may be assessed before that time as necessary.

Sandy Bowman, Mayor

Jade Brown, Chief Legislative Officer

Date

SUPPORTING REFERENCES AND POSITION RESPONSIBLE

Legal References:	Copyright Act, RSC 1985, c C-42 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, RSA 2000, c F-25
Cross References:	Code of Conduct HRM-600-D Social Media Procedure PRC-140-P01
Position Responsible:	Director, Communications and Engagement Stakeholder Relations

COUNCIL POLICY DETAILS AND REVISION HISTORY

Date	Action	Description
October 18, 2016	Introduction	New Policy to cover Social Media.
May 10, 2022	Revision – Minor	Revisions to the Policy, including a change to the Policy prefix (COM to PRC), minor revisions to the definitions, revised responsibilities, revised procedures, new legal references, and new Policy format