

# CITY OF CASTLEGAR

## EMPLOYEE POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

Social Media			
Section:	Administrative	Resolution No:	253-11
Policy Number:	1.11	Amended by:	
Effective Date:	June 20, 2011		

### **GENERAL STATEMENT:**

The City of Castlegar will use social media and social network sites to further enhance communications with residents and others in support of City goals and objectives. Designated City staff across the organization will have the ability to publish articles, facilitate discussions and communicate information through various media related to conducting City business. Social media facilitates further discussion of City operating and service issues and furthers the goals of citizen engagement and education by providing members of the public the opportunity to participate.

### **DEFINITION:**

Social Media is any form of online publication or presence that allows employees to provide City information through the media of an internet based application.

### **POLICY APPLICATION:**

The City may use social media websites for the purpose of facilitating two way communications with the community. In addition social media allows the City of Castlegar to:

1. Help achieve City and Council strategic goals.
2. Provide a venue in which the City can celebrate the community by publicizing events and sharing stories, videos and photos.
3. Encourage citizen participation and support a strong civic culture.
4. Monitor and respond to current topics and emerging issues quickly.
5. Proactively share stories to address current issues and projects.
6. Expand City communication through the internet.
7. Increase transparency of government.
8. Listen to residents and customers and so assist the City to improve City services, programs and practices.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

While using or establishing a City presence using social media, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. All social media sites must be approved by the City Chief Administrative Officer. The Chief Administrative Officer may designate any departmental employee or volunteer to administer the site(s) that has a complete understanding of this policy and appropriate content and technical expertise.
2. The content on social media sites shall adhere to City policies and federal and provincial regulations.

3. Content on social media sites will be monitored to ensure adherence to this policy for appropriate use, message and branding consistent with the mission and values of the City. The City retains the authority to remove information from the sites as deemed appropriate.
4. Whenever possible links to more information should direct users back to the City's official website for more information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with the City.

### **Internal comment guidelines for social media sites**

Designated staff members posting to the social media sites are responsible for regularly reviewing comments and posting feedback. Staff should be knowledgeable about the topic and able to answer questions about the subject. The following guidelines should be followed when posting to a social media site:

- a) Write what you know. Make sure that you write and post about your area of expertise and ensure that the information you provide is both factual and accurate. Write in the first person.
- b) Be transparent and honest. Any dishonesty will be quickly noticed in social media environments.
- c) Be judicious. All statements must be true and not misleading and all claims must be substantiated.
- d) Be responsible. What you write is ultimately your responsibility. When responding to a request or questions, or stating information on behalf of the City, be sure you are the right person to be doing so. When in doubt, consult your supervisor or department head.
- e) It is a conversation. Talk to the reader like you would talk to real people in professional situations. Avoid bureaucratic language, formal language or industry jargon. Do not be combative.
- f) Be open. One of the great benefits of social media is the interaction between us (you) and our citizens. Take in ideas. Share relevant feedback and input with colleagues. When in doubt, talk to your department head or the CAO.
- g) Did you make a mistake? If so, admit it. Be upfront and quick with your correction.
- h) If it gives you pause, pause. If you're about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, don't shrug it off and hit post. Take a minute to review the guidelines and try to figure out what's bothering you and then fix it. If you're still unsure, check with your department head or the CAO. All posts are to be submitted to the designated staff before being put on the City's social media venues.

### **Do not write any content or postings that involve or are related to the following:**

1. Harassing statements.
2. Anything which a person of reasonable sensitivities may find to be offensive.
3. Matters in litigation or otherwise in dispute, or that could be in the future
4. Non-public information of any kind.
5. References to illegal or banned substances and narcotics unless for public educational purposes.
6. Pornographic, sexually-oriented, or otherwise offensive or illegal materials.
7. Defamatory, libelous, offensive or demeaning material (do not engage in a combative exchange)
8. Solicitation of business
9. Comments supporting and/or opposing political campaigns or referendums
10. Information that might compromise the safety or security of public buildings or activities
11. Disparaging/threatening comments about or related to anyone
12. Personal, sensitive or confidential information of any kind about yourself or others.

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**Public comments guidelines for social media sites:**

Social media websites that are maintained by the City should display a link to the public comment guidelines. These guidelines are:

*Welcome to the City of Castlegar, <insert name of social media website here>! The purpose of this page is to share information of public interest with our many residents, businesses and visitors. We hope to be able to provide you with the most recent news stories, photos and videos from the City of Castlegar. If you are looking for the official source of information about the City of Castlegar, please visit our website at [www.castlegar.ca](http://www.castlegar.ca). We value the opportunity for dialogue that <insert social media website here> provides and while this is a public forum, it is also a family friendly one and we ask that you follow our posting guidelines. The City reserves the right to remove any comments that contain vulgar language, personal attacks of any kind, or that is deemed discriminatory, slanderous or obscene. Comments should reflect the topic or subject. We do not allow graphic, obscene, explicit or racial comments or submissions nor do we allow comments that are abusive, hateful or intended to defame anyone or any organization. We do not allow posts that are solicitations or advertisements for commercial entities (excluding charitable events), products, political organizations or candidates. We do not allow comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity. We reserve the right to delete comments that are spam or include links to other sites. You agree to participate at your own risk, taking personal responsibility for your comments, your username and any information provided*