

Shoreline Policy and Procedure

City Manager’s Office - City of Shoreline’s Social Media Policy (Internal) – CMO 10-1

Subject: Internal City of Shoreline Social Media Policies and Procedures	Code and statutory authority: Public Records Act, Chapter 42.56 RCW
Effective Date April 30, 2010	Approved By: City Manager, Robert Olander
Prior Versions and Related Policies: City of Shoreline Social Media Policy (External Users)	

1.0 PURPOSE

Social Media (defined here as the use of third party hosted online technologies that facilitate social interaction and dialogue) provides alternative ways for the City of Shoreline to share information with a broader audience. Social Media includes social networking sites like MySpace and FaceBook, micro-blogging tools such as Twitter and audio-visual networking sites such as YouTube. The City encourages the use of Social Media sites and tools to further the goals of the City and the missions of its departments, where appropriate.

This policy establishes guidelines for the City of Shoreline’s use of Social Media.

2.0 DEPARTMENTS AFFECTED

All City departments.

3.0 PROCEDURES

3.1 Creating Department Social Media Sites

- 3.1.1 Prior to creating a Social Media site, departments should consider the need and value of a department- or program-dedicated site versus relying on the City-wide site (if available) or City website to disperse department or program information. Since Social Media sites lose the interest of their audiences when not updated regularly, department staff should calculate the time and effort it will take to maintain a site so that visitors continue to find value over time. As a rule of thumb, Social Media sites should be updated at least once per week.
- 3.1.2 Departments must obtain approval from the City Manager prior to creating a Social Media site.

- 3.1.3 Once approval is received from the City Manager, the department must use the common Social Media site format and guidelines developed by the Communications Specialist to create the Social Media page in order to ensure appropriate information is posted and to maintain consistency with other City Social Media sites.
- 3.1.4 The Communications Specialist shall maintain a list of all City Social Media sites that are operating. Departments must inform the Communications Specialist if they intend to stop operating their Social Media site.
- 3.1.5 The Department director must appoint a specific staff member(s) to maintain and monitor the Social Media site. Directors are responsible for ensuring their staff follows the procedures set forth in this Social Media Policy.
- 3.1.6 In compliance with sections 3.2 and 3.3, department staff are responsible for regularly posting information, monitoring comments, removing any prohibited content as set forth in section 3.2.2, and saving content required under the Public Records Act as described in Section 3.3.
- 3.1.7 A Comment Policy Notice must be displayed on all Social Media sites that allow posts, indicating the discussion is moderated and inappropriate content will be removed. The City's External Social Media Policy must be linked to the Notice.

3.2 Information Posted on Social Media Sites

3.2.1 City-Posted Information

- 3.2.1.1 The most appropriate uses of City Social Media sites are: (1) for time-sensitive and emergency information; and (2) as a communications/promotional/marketing tool which increases the City's ability to broadcast its message to the widest possible audience.
- 3.2.1.2 Department moderators must maintain accurate City information on Social Media sites by frequently reviewing and updating it as necessary and appropriate.
- 3.2.1.3 In order to ensure appropriate retention of public records, most content posted by the City departments on City Social Media sites should not be original source content (content that has not been created anywhere else; only exists on the Social Media site), but rather a secondary copy of information that is posted

either on the City website or contained in an electronic record or a hard copy.

3.2.1.3.1 If original content is posted on a Social Media site, that information must be copied from the site, pasted into a Word document and saved in a searchable electronic folder.

3.2.1.4 A link to the City's website, www.shorelinewa.gov, must be included on all Social Media sites, directing users back to the City of Shoreline website for in-depth information on the posted content.

3.2.1.5 Councilmembers, Commissioners and other officials and appointed volunteers (i.e., members of the Planning Commission, PRCS Board, Library Board, Economic Development Advisory Committee and ad hoc appointed citizen advisory committees) should not comment or otherwise communicate on the City's Social Media sites; participating in online discussions may constitute a meeting under the Open Public Meetings Act.

3.2.2 Information Posted by Outside Individuals

3.2.2.1 For all City Social Media sites that allow posts, those sites are limited public forums, moderated by City of Shoreline staff to ensure content posted by outsiders users is appropriate.

3.2.2.1.1 Posted content (including comments, photos and links) must be related to the topic(s) posted by the City to be considered appropriate.

3.2.2.1.2 Inappropriate and prohibited content subject to immediate removal from the site, includes content that:

- Is not topically related to the particular article being commented upon.
- Promotes or advertises commercial services, entities or products.
- Supports or opposes political candidates or ballot propositions.
- Is obscene.
- Discusses or encourages illegal activity.
- Promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance,

national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.

- Provides information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
- Violates a legal ownership.

3.2.2.2 Inappropriate content must be removed immediately and retained as required under the Public Records Act and described in section 3.3 by the site moderator.

3.3 Retention of Posted Information

3.3.1 Information posted on the City’s Social Media sites is subject to the Public Records Act and associated retention schedule. Original source content posted on Social Media sites must be retained for three years from the date of posting.

3.3.2 Department staff is responsible for ensuring retention of the original source content in organized, searchable electronic file folders. The records should be retained in such a manner that entire folders can be deleted after hitting the three year mark.

3.3.2.1 City-Posted Information

3.3.2.1.1 If original source content is posted by the City on City Social Media sites, that content must be saved in a Word document and retained in a searchable folder.

3.3.2.2 Comments Posted by Outside Users

3.3.2.2.1 All comments posted by outside users on City Social Media sites, including those that are inappropriate and removed by staff, must be retained. Staff must copy these posts, including the City information to which they are responding if applicable, into a Word document to be retained as detailed in 3.3.2.

3.3.2.2.2 In addition, when staff removes inappropriate content, they need to include their name and the date and time the content was removed.

4.0 QUESTIONS

All questions relating to this policy should be directed to the Communications Specialist in the City Manager’s Office.