

CITY OF GRAND FORKS			
POLICY TITLE:	SOCIAL MEDIA	POLICY NO:	207
EFFECTIVE DATE:	April 11, 2016	SUPERSEDES:	
APPROVAL:	Council	PAGE:	1 of 3

PURPOSE

The City of Grand Forks Social Media Policy No. 207 establishes a framework for staff when engaging and posting on the municipality’s social media accounts.

POLICY

The City uses social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) and websites to communicate City initiatives, goals and objectives with the community and various stakeholder groups.

The goals of the City’s social media accounts are to provide timely and accurate information and promote the goals of the municipality. The City’s social media accounts are not intended to be used for political forums or information outside of the City’s intent.

PRIMARY GOALS

- Increase awareness of municipal services and City events including Council meetings, Public Hearings, departmental public events, municipal special events, and relevant regional events.
- Disseminate time-sensitive information accurately and quickly.
- Develop trust and opportunities to build stronger relationships with community members.
- Correct misinformation, remedy mistakes, or alter services.
- Disseminate Emergency Operations information as determined by the Communications department.
- Additional information may be provided at the discretion of the Communications Department.

PROCEDURE

TIMELINES

Information posting and maintenance will occur during office hours Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (excluding statutory holidays). The Communications department will ensure social media sites are monitored and updated each business day during normal business hours.

Inquiries or requests for action stemming from the City's social media sites will be forwarded by the next business day to the appropriate department for follow up.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF APPROPRIATE USE

The Communications department reserves the right to remove or restrict any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or applicable law. Communications will retain a record of the removed material.

The following information will not be included on the City's social media sites:

- a. Libellous or defamatory statements
- b. Obscene language or sexual content
- c. Discriminatory content
- d. Illegal activity promotion
- e. Commercial promotion unless approved through the Communications Department
- f. Negative in nature

DISCLAIMER

The following disclaimer is posted on Facebook:

We value the opportunity for dialogue that this Facebook page provides, but reserve the right to remove any comments that we deem discriminatory, slanderous, or obscene. Comments should reflect the topic or subject.

RECORDS

Information provided on social media will link to existing City records via the City website where possible. Information will be made accessible to Corporate Services. All City of Grand Forks social networking sites shall adhere to applicable Provincial, Federal and local laws, regulations and policies.

The Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act applies to social media content and therefore content must be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with the Act.

SCOPE

- Social Media profiles and websites representing the Mayor and Members of Council are exempt from this policy, as are sites representing individuals and Committees of Council that do not fall under City employee mandate or this policy.
- Social Media profiles and websites representing Members of Council will not act as official information platforms on behalf of the City of Grand Forks. Any information to be communicated to the City's followers via social media will be provided by the Communications Department or designate.
- City Council acknowledges that it is not their role to report directly on City related business and will use their social media profiles and websites as a secondary information source once matters have been officially released through/from the City. Council will use the designated sharing tools on the various social media platforms based on this direction.

RESPONSIBILITY

- This Policy applies to social media use for official and authorized City purposes.
- The City's presence on Facebook and Twitter is managed by the Communications Department or designate.
- The Communications Department may assign administrators from other departments to post department related information to Facebook, adhering to the direction of this policy. The Communications Department will ensure that, as well as communication activities, communications through social media channels are accurate, consistent and professional.
- Employees assigned to represent the City on social media are expected to conduct themselves at all times in accordance with the City's Code of Ethics Policy.
- City staff not assigned as administrators are discouraged from providing comments on The City's social media sites. Staff may make suggestions to the Communications Department for content on social media sites.