

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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### Overview

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way residents communicate and obtain information online, City of Maplewood employees may consider using social media tools to reach a broader audience. The City encourages the use of social media to further the goals of the City and the missions of its employees, where appropriate.

City government social media and other web-based resources may be modified or removed by the City at any time and without notice, as necessary to maintain the integrity of both communications and information technology functions. The City of Maplewood has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is "spoken" on behalf of the City on social media sites. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of social media.

Social media websites can offer many different ways for users to interact, such as instant-messaging, blogging and commenting, online forums, status updates, link sharing, video conferencing and photo- and video-sharing. Twitter, Vimeo, Nextdoor, and Facebook are examples of social media websites.

### Scope

1. All City of Maplewood social media sites posted by employees will be subject to approval by the City Manager who may delegate this review function to the Communications Manager.
2. The City of Maplewood's website ([www.MaplewoodMN.gov](http://www.MaplewoodMN.gov)) will remain the City's primary and predominant Internet presence.
  - 2.1. The best, most appropriate City of Maplewood uses of social media tools fall generally into three categories:
    - 2.1.1. As marketing/promotional channels which increase the City's ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience.
    - 2.1.2. As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible (example: emergency information).
    - 2.1.3. A two-way communication, promoting transparency and social engagement in government.
  - 2.2. Wherever possible, content posted to City of Maplewood social media sites will also be available on the City's main website.
  - 2.3. Wherever possible, content posted to City of Maplewood social media sites should contain links directing users back to the City's official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with the City of Maplewood.
  - 2.4. All City of Maplewood social media sites shall comply with all appropriate City of Maplewood policies and standards.
3. City of Maplewood social media sites shall comply with City of Maplewood policies and administrative rules.

4. City of Maplewood social media sites are subject to State of Minnesota public records laws. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication, is a public record. The Office of City Clerk is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for public records on social media. Content related to City business shall be maintained in an accessible format and so that it can be produced in response to a request. Wherever possible, such sites shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure. Users shall be notified that public disclosure requests must be directed to the City Clerk's Office.
5. Minnesota state law and relevant City of Maplewood records retention schedules apply to social media formats and social media content as reflected in the City's records retention policy.. In most cases, content on the City's social media sites is expected to be transitory, incidental or non-vital in nature and therefore shall be retained "until read". However, any content posted that does constitute the official record will be retained according to the City of Maplewood records retention schedule on a City server in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible. City of Maplewood social media site articles and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed:
  - 5.1. Comments not topically related to the particular social medium article being commented upon;
  - 5.2. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
  - 5.3. Profane language or content;
  - 5.4. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
  - 5.5. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
  - 5.6. Solicitations of commerce;
  - 5.7. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
  - 5.8. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
  - 5.9. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.
  - 5.10. Any harassing comments.

### **Guidelines**

The City of Maplewood will determine, at its discretion, how its web-based social media sites will be designed, implemented and managed as part of its overall communications and marketing strategy. City-related social media sites administered by the Communications Division may be modified or removed by the city at any time and without notice.

These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available.

1. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law. When a person's comment is removed, the City will post a reason for removing the post and archive it for data practices and records retention purposes. The record shall be maintained for 3 years.
2. The City will approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible, enterprise-wide.
3. All new social media tools proposed for City use will be approved by the Communications Manager.
4. Individual City departments are discouraged from requesting an individual social media presence, and should instead utilize the City's official pages in coordination with the Communications Department.
5. Administration of City of Maplewood social media sites.

- 5.1. The Communications staff will maintain a list of social media tools which are approved for use by City departments and staff.
- 5.2. Communications staff will maintain a list of all City of Maplewood social media sites, including login and password information. Departmental public information officers will inform Communications staff of any new social media sites or administrative changes to existing sites.
- 5.3. The Communication staff must be able to immediately edit or remove content from all social media sites.
- 5.4. The Communications Manager, City Manager and Department Heads may monitor content on each of the social media sites to ensure adherence to the Social Media Policy for appropriate use, message and branding consistent with the goals of City of Maplewood.
- 5.5. Violation of these standards may result in the removal of pages from social media outlets. The Communications Manager retains the authority to remove information and site access to department personnel.

### **Potential Uses for Social Media**

Uses for Social Media include (but are not limited to):

1. Sharing published news releases from the Maplewood
2. Publicizing Parks and Recreation and other programs sponsored by Maplewood
3. Publicizing new services, holiday closings or other information normally only found on the city's primary website
4. Issuing emergency alerts, road closures, or weather alerts affecting large numbers of citizens.
5. Engaging with citizens, local businesses and other relevant local groups and organizations, and responding to questions and inquiries
6. Enhancing Maplewood's brand by posting creative, interesting and fun updates on various Social Media sites
7. Using various communications methods including, but not limited to, text, photography and video

### **Centralization: Employees, Non---Communications Departments, and Elected Officials**

For the purposes of integrity, efficiency, expediency, and consistency, Maplewood's social media outreach will be centralized to the City's communications department and then distributed to individual departments. This may change in the future based on changing needs. In such a case, any departments wishing to create social media accounts on their own must receive approval from the Communication manager before implementation and follow the guidelines provided by the communications department.

Employees representing the City of Maplewood on the City's social media sites must conduct themselves professionally at all times as representatives of the City.

Elected officials should comply with the guidelines outlined in the City's Technology, Communications, and Social Media Policies. Two-way communication between elected or appointed officials should be strictly avoided in order to prevent violating the Open Meeting Law.

The information expressed on a city social media page does not necessarily reflect the opinions and position of the City of Maplewood government or its officers and employees.

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