



# Corporate Policy Manual

Policy Name: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy Number: <b>CP-2024-05</b>
Adopted: <b>May 22, 2024</b>	Division/Department: <b>Customer Experience and Communications</b>
Authority: <b>Council Resolution No. RES-2024-168</b>	Supersedes: <b>Social Media Policy (2015)</b>
Review by Date: <b>January 2027</b>	Last Modified: <b>N/A</b>

## 1. Purpose

The Social Media Policy (“Policy”) establishes a protocol and guidelines for the appropriate use and management of the Town of Midland social media accounts used to communicate with residents and stakeholders.

## 2. Policy Statement

The Town of Midland supports the use of social media to deliver timely, effective communication to the public in an open and transparent manner. The Town’s website is the primary source of online information and is the Town’s official communications channel, however the Town will also use a variety of other accepted media and communications tools, including social media.

The Town has a primary account on multiple social media platforms as the Town of Midland, as well as several service-area specific accounts that reflect service-related needs and focus. All social media accounts that are administered by staff, as part of their assigned duties for the Town of Midland, are subject to this policy.

Town use of social media shall comply with applicable law, terms of use for each social media site, Town by-laws and policies, and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). Content created on all Town accounts are official records and are subject to the Town’s current records retention schedule and by-law, as amended.

## 3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy:

- a) **“Corporate accounts”** means the Town of Midland’s primary social media accounts that provide public communications for all municipal departments and are managed by authorized Town employees.
- b) **“Content”** means any information, photos, videos (reels), or captions added (posted) to the Town’s social media accounts.

- c) **“EOC”** means a Town facility designated as the Emergency Operations Centre which may be activated in the event of an emergency or potential emergency.
- d) **“Official record”** means any record of information created in any form including electronic means that is evidence of the business of the Town of Midland.
- e) **“Authorized Town accounts”** means other approved Town of Midland social media accounts set up by departments in addition to Corporate Accounts and are managed by authorized Town employees.
- f) **“Post”** means content or a message that is published or shared on the Town’s social media accounts.
- g) **“Social media”** means the various online digital technologies or applications that facilitate the sharing of information and enable users to create and share content in real time or to participate in social networking.

#### **4. Scope**

- a) This Policy applies to social media use for official and authorized Town purposes.
- b) This Policy applies to all Town employees and others who are authorized to post information on Town social media sites on behalf of the Town.
- c) This Policy applies to social media users who comment on, share posts from, send messages to or visit the Town of Midland social media accounts.
- d) This Policy does not apply to employee, Council, Committee or Board member personal use of social media accounts conducted on personal equipment for personal uses.

#### **5. Responsibility and Accountability**

- a) The Customer Experience and Communications division is responsible for the overall implementation and monitoring of the policy.
- b) The Customer Experience and Communications division is responsible for the management, monitoring and evaluation of the Town’s primary corporate accounts.
- c) Designated staff in service areas are responsible for content development, posting and monitoring authorized Town accounts related to specific service areas in accordance with this policy, and as approved by the leadership in their service area, and in consultation with Customer Experience and Communications.
- d) The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that all employees and users are informed of this policy.
- e) Employees are responsible for understanding and adhering to the spirit and intent of this policy, and to the Staff Code of Conduct when commenting or engaging with the public on both personal or authorized Town social media accounts regarding Town business or Council decisions. ‘Employees’ includes but

is not limited to full-time, part-time, contract, seasonal, casual, student, co-op workers, Members of Council, Volunteer Firefighters, and the public regardless of workplace location, including workers working on site, remotely, in a hybrid model or are mobile.

## **6. Authorized accounts**

- a) All social media accounts that are administered by staff, as part of their assigned duties for the Town of Midland, are required to be authorized by the leadership of the service area, in consultation with the Customer Experience and Communications division.
- b) The creation of any new Town accounts or channels must be authorized by the leadership of the service area, in consultation with the Customer Experience and Communications division.
- c) The Customer Experience and Communications division must have administrative access to all authorized Town accounts, and a record of all staff designated on the account.

## **7. Town-generated Content**

- a) The Town uses social media as part of its corporate communications for a variety of reasons:
  - i. To provide engaging avenues to communicate with our residents and the public.
  - ii. To increase awareness of municipal services.
  - iii. To encourage residents to attend Town events and Town meetings.
  - iv. To re-share information relevant to the public posted by neighbouring municipalities, other levels of government and service providers on their official social media accounts.
  - v. To utilize social media tracking and analytical tools to evaluate the Town's communications program.
- b) Town posts will include links to the Town's website as the official electronic channel of communication for the Town.
- c) All Town posts on the Town's primary corporate accounts and any content shared is at the discretion of the Communications division, and from time to time, in consultation with the CAO (Chief Administrative Officer), senior staff, and departments.
- d) The Town's Emergency Response Plan outlines the crisis communications procedure if the EOC has been activated.

## **8. User-Generated Content**

- a) The Town does not create content or post information submitted by individuals, organizations, or for third-party events; however, it may reshare posts that may be important or of interest to residents and visitors to Midland.
- b) The Town will not post or share objectional information that:
  - i Does not comply with Town policies or by-laws, provincial or federal legislation.
  - ii Is political, religious, or derogatory in nature.
  - iii Promotes business services or products or events of business services, other than sponsors of Town events, events or activities supported by the Town, or third-party events taking place on municipal property that are open to, and invite, public participation.

## **9. Citizen Engagement and Conduct**

- a) Comments and messages from social media users are welcome on Town accounts and will be monitored by authorized employees to ensure appropriateness and that they do not contain (not limited to):
  - i Comments not related to the post or article.
  - ii Comments that violate the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms including obscene, derogatory, racist, insulting, or threatening language and remarks.
  - iii Sexual comments or links to sexual content.
  - iv Promotion of political, religious, or business services or products.
  - v Comments considered to be defamatory or disrespectful to Town staff, Council members, board or committee members, volunteers, or other Town representatives, as outlined in the Town's Respectful Workplace Policy.
  - vi Comments not in compliance with privacy legislation.
  - vii Comments promoting misinformation.
- b) The Town reserves the right to hide or delete comments, block, or ban users from the Town's social media channels for non-compliance with this Policy.
- c) The Town reserves the right to remove or limit the ability for citizens or users to comment on Town social media posts at any time deemed appropriate.

## **10. Response Time on Comments and Service Requests**

- a) The Town's social media accounts are monitored during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- b) Staff will address appropriate comments within 2 business days based on the Town's Customer Service Standards Policy. Not all comments will receive a response.
- c) Service requests or concerns with roads, sewer or watermain issues submitted by private direct message (DM) to the Town's social media accounts may result in delayed response, including after business hours. For immediate concerns citizens should refer to the Town's Contact Us page on the Town's website as the official channel to request service.

## **11. Policy Review**

This Policy will be reviewed once per Council term or as required.

## **12. References**

- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Council Code of Conduct – By-law 2019-10
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Town of Midland Respectful Workplace Policy
- Town of Midland Customer Service Standards Policy