



CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY
SOCIAL MEDIA SITE POSTING POLICY

1. **BACKGROUND:** The City of Traverse City encourages the use of social media technologies to enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange in support of the City's mission. By openly sharing knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned, we can provide more effective solutions, and enhance efficiencies within the business of government. The City's social media pages, including, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube are intended to serve as another way in which our community can connect and learn about City services, events and activities. Just like public meetings and the many other ways we engage one another, our social media pages are intended for our community to foster a dialog regarding topics that pertain to city business, and to have constructive discussions.

This policy is structured into two sections; the first being a general policy and guidelines for anyone posting to the City's social media pages, and the second being additional guidelines for City Employees who post to the City's social media pages.

As the technology evolves, this policy will evolve; but in general terms, the use of social media technology follows the same standards of professional practice and conduct associated with everything else we do.

2. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for posting content to the City of Traverse City's social media pages.
3. **SECTION I – GENERAL POLICY:** This policy shall apply to all users of the City's social media pages, including the general public, City staff, City Commission Members, and members of City Boards and Committees.

Comments noting the positives about our city are always welcome of course; but so too are constructive criticisms. The City actively monitors its social media pages and takes your input seriously; so we encourage everyone to be respectful and thoughtful in their comments.

You are fully responsible for everything that you submit in your comments, so please remember that all posted comments are in the public domain. Comments may be retained by the City of Traverse City and may be subject to disclosure, if requested under the Freedom of Information Act. The City of Traverse City reserves the right to delete comments that are generally understood as any of the following:

- a. Comments not related to City business or not related to the original posted social medium content being commented upon;

- b. Comments in support of, or in opposition to, political campaigns or ballot proposals;
- c. Violent, racist, discriminatory, obscene, or profane language or content;
- d. Sexual or violent content or links to sexual or violent content;
- e. Comments that physically threaten any person or organization;
- f. Comments that contain random or unintelligible text;
- g. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
- h. Copyrighted material or other content that violates the legal ownership interest of another party;
- i. Commercial advertisements for products or services;
- j. Comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity;
- k. Multiple, off topic posts or repetitive posts that are copied and pasted;
- l. Anonymous postings, or multiple postings by the same user or individual using a fictitious or different name;
- m. Posted content that contains personal information, including, but not limited to, identification numbers, phone numbers, e-mail addresses.

The City reserves the right to ban users who continually violate the above policy and guidelines.

The City shall post the content of Section I in a prominent location on the City's Official website and on its social media pages. Placing a link on a social media page linking to the City's Official website meets the requirements of this section.

4. **SECTION II – EMPLOYEE POLICY:** In addition to the guidelines in Section I, City employees shall follow the guidelines in this Section II:

a. **Content:**

The City Clerk or his/her designee shall have the sole authority to administer and moderate the content of the City's social media pages.

b. **Authority to Post on the City's social media pages as the Official City Position:**

For consistent communications practices, all posts as the City's official position on its social media pages shall be made by the City Clerk or his/her designee. In the event of an emergency situation, or any situation deemed appropriate by the City Manager, the City Manager or his designee may post to the City's social media pages as the official City position.


c. **Other employees posting to the City's social media pages:**

Other employees may respond to an official post, but must include a disclaimer that reflects that the content contained therein is in no relation to their professional duties as an employee of the City of Traverse City. Employees shall, in no way, attempt to convey their position as the Official City position.

d. **Prohibited Content (in addition to that identified in Section I):**

1. Information about actual or potential claims and/or litigation involving the City of Traverse City
 2. Intellectual property of others, without written permission
 3. Personal, sensitive or confidential information about anyone which would constitute an invasion of an individual's privacy
5. **PENALTY FOR VIOLATION:** Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

I certify that this policy was adopted by the City Commission for the City of Traverse City on November 17, 2014, and amended on May 18, 2015 and August 7, 2017, at a regular meeting held in the Commission Chambers, Governmental Center, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, Michigan.



Benjamin C. Marentette, CMC, City Clerk