



## *City of Camarillo*

# ***CITY COUNCIL POLICY***

---

Section: General Administration

Date Adopted: October 22, 2003  
Last Amended: December 9, 2020

Subject: **Public Information and Communication Media**

Number: 2.01

Page 1 of 6

---

### **PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for disseminating public information to residents through the City's various communication media.

### **POLICY**

The City utilizes a variety of communication techniques and media outlets to provide public information of interest and benefit to the community. Such communication should serve a governmental purpose and offer information on local civic affairs, services, programs, events, and special achievements. Communication, whether written or oral, should be current, accurate and complete, and presented in a manner that is clear, concise and courteous.

#### **A. Responsibilities**

The City Council, as elected leaders and policymakers, sets the tone for communicating to the public and the news media. Councilmembers shall clearly distinguish between statements that are representative of, or authorized by, the Council as a whole, and statements that express individual opinions or positions.

The City Manager, or designee, as the principal contact for the public and news media, will exercise professional judgment regarding public information and interpretation of Council policies and actions. The City Manager, or designee, is responsible for coordinating the City's communication media, responding to news media inquiries, addressing policy questions, and resolving disputes or complaints from the public.

Department Heads and supervisors are responsible for responding to routine citizen inquiries. All City employees will strive for positive communication and public relations when providing information to citizens.

B. Communication Media Outlets

The City's media outlets for disseminating public information may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Mailed CityScene newsletter.
2. City of Camarillo official website.
3. City social media sites.
4. Government cable television channel (CATV) under the City's jurisdiction, including City-produced programming.
5. VC Alert.
6. Press releases and announcements in news publications.
7. City Hall information kiosks and bulletin boards.
8. Information brochures and mailers, including utility billing inserts.
9. City marquee sign.
10. Email notification through Constant Contact.
11. Open Gov / Open City Hall.

C. Content of Public Information

1. Eligible Content. The types of public information presented through the City's various communication media must serve a governmental purpose or must meet one or more of the following criteria:
  - a. Covers topics and activities that are appropriate for the general public.
  - b. Exhibits and promotes civic pride.
  - c. Enhances the image and reputation of the City.
  - d. Advertises and informs of availability and use of municipal services and utilities.
  - e. Promotes and informs of City-sponsored events, programs and projects.

- f. Educates or informs on issues of public health and safety.
  - g. Promotes community-based events that enjoy broad citizen support and involvement and present positive aspects of the City.
  - h. Provides information on community-based resources and/or programs of social, educational, recreational or cultural benefits.
  - i. Provides news or announcements on special actions or accomplishments by the City, community organizations, and/or residents, businesses, or developments.
2. Ineligible Content. The types of information that are not eligible for presentation through the City's communication media include but are not limited to the following:
- a. Promotion or advertisement of privately-owned businesses and commercial enterprises.
  - b. Messages or support for religious organizations.
  - c. Messages or support for political candidates and campaigns.
  - d. Promotion or support for special interest groups that do not serve a governmental or civic purpose.
  - e. Advocacy or debate on non-Council approved issues or disputes.
  - f. Programs that are not open to the general public or that are regular meetings of a service organization or club.

D. Use of Social Media

1. Definitions

- a. "Social media sites" refers to online platforms used to create accessible, expandable and upgradable publishing technologies through and on the internet.
- b. "City" means the City of Camarillo.
- c. "City social media sites" means the Facebook page and YouTube channel that the City has previously established, and includes other platforms that the City will establish and maintain.

- d. "Posts" or "postings" mean information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication posted on City social media sites.
- e. "Comment" or "Comments" mean and include any information, articles, words, pictures, videos or any other form of communicative content posted by others on City social media sites.

2. General Guidelines

- a. The City's official website at [www.cityofcamarillo.org](http://www.cityofcamarillo.org) (or any domain owned by the City) serves as the City's primary location of electronic information. All official City presences on social media sites or services are considered an extension of the City's information program. When possible, City social media sites will link to the official City website for forms, documents, online services, and other necessary information.
- b. The establishment of a social media site is subject to approval by the City Manager upon the policy decision of the City Council.
  - i. Social media site accounts will be created using an official City email account and will bear the name and official seal of the City as applicable to the social media site.
  - ii. All City social media sites will utilize authorized City contact information for account set-up, monitoring, and access.
  - iii. Use of personal email accounts or phone numbers by City employees for the purpose of setting-up or administering a City social media site is prohibited.
- c. Content posted on City social media sites is subject to oversight by the City Manager or designee(s).
- d. All City social media sites must adhere to applicable federal and state laws, City ordinances, regulations and policies, including but not limited to the California Public Records Act, the Ralph M. Brown Act, and laws and policies regarding records retention, conflicts of interest and copyright.
  - i. Any content maintained on City social media sites that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication may be considered a public record and subject to public disclosure.

- e. Members of the City Council, and any City appointed Commission, Committee or Board subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act may share any published postings to promote City news and/or events. They must not:
  - i. Comment, “like”, or interact on City social media sites.
  - ii. Use any form of electronic communication to respond to or engage in serial meetings.
  - iii. Discuss, deliberate, or express opinions on any issue within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body on the City’s social media sites.
- f. City social media sites must comply with usage rules and regulations required by the site provider, including privacy policies.
- g. Rules applicable to the use of City social media sites, as determined appropriate by the City Manager, must be made available to all City social media site users on each City social media site and on the City’s website.

3. Content Standards and Guidelines

- a. The content of City social media sites must comply with this Policy 2.01.
- b. Any employee authorized by the City Manager to post items on City social media sites must review, be familiar with, and comply with the social media site’s use policies and terms and conditions.
- c. Any employee authorized by the City Manager to post items on City social media sites must not express his or her own personal views or concerns through such postings. Postings on City social media sites by an authorized City employee must only present factual information regarding the City’s policies and programs.
- d. Content posted to City social media sites should contain hyperlinks directing users to the City’s official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services whenever possible.
- e. Postings may be made primarily during normal business hours. After-hours or weekend postings may be made when the news or information is relevant to an event or activity occurring, in the event of a disaster/emergency situation, or as otherwise authorized by the City Manager.

- f. Postings must not contain information that is confidential as defined by any City policy or state or federal law.
- g. Postings must not contain any employee's personal information, except for the names of employees whose job duties include being available for contact by the public.

4. Comment Guidelines

- a. City social media sites are intended to disseminate information and direct viewers to more in-depth information or resources on the City's website.
- b. The City reserves the right to implement or remove any functionality of City social media sites, when directed by the City Council. This includes, but is not limited to, posting of information, articles, pictures, videos, comments, or any other form of communication in City social media sites.
- c. The City will continue to encourage members of the public to contact the City directly via phone, email or in person with questions or concerns related to City business, or engage with City officials through the Open City Hall platform that is embedded within the City's official government website: [www.cityofcamarillo.org](http://www.cityofcamarillo.org).
- d. City social media sites will provide the public with instructions on contacting the City via phone, email or website.