

The Edmonton logo, featuring the word "Edmonton" in white sans-serif font on a dark blue rectangular background.

City of Edmonton

# **SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES**

*(Supplement to Admin Directive A1446A – Communications) December 2015*



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The City of Edmonton Social Media Guidelines provide an overview of approved practices for creating, posting and working with social media.

The guidelines are designed to help you better understand the opportunities, manage the risks and ensure that as an employee of the City you understand the responsibilities and boundaries associated with using social media in your work.

Here are definitions of the most commonly-used terms and abbreviations in the document:

**SOCIAL MEDIA** – Internet-based websites and applications that enable the creation and sharing of content or to participate in social networking.

**CONTENT** – Any information that is communicated on a social media channel.

**MAIN CITY SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS** – this refers to the City of Edmonton social media accounts that are managed and maintained by the Media Relations Unit.

**SOCIAL MEDIA ADMINISTRATOR** – The individual who is in charge of a specific social media account. This person has the ability to moderate a social media account including posting, commenting and deleting comments based on the City of Edmonton's Social Media Terms of Engagement.

**COE / THE CITY / CITY** – means The City of Edmonton

**MRU** – means the Media Relations Unit, Corporate Communications.

As social media constantly changes, so will these guidelines. The latest version will be available on the City's OneCity website and Communications Google Site. Please contact the Media Relations Unit at [ocmccmediarelationsunit@edmonton.ca](mailto:ocmccmediarelationsunit@edmonton.ca) if you have suggestions or questions.

# WHY DOES THE CITY USE SOCIAL MEDIA?

*Prior to social media, the public's main source of information from the City of Edmonton was mass media such as television, newspapers and radio. With increased public access to the internet and the rise of social media, the public is now able to stay informed and engage with the City online. This creates a dynamic communications opportunity that is constantly developing and changing. Social media contributes to the overall communications goals for the City which include having a global progressive image and keeping stakeholders informed and engaged. The unique benefits of social media include:*

## INCREASE CITIZENS' ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT

Social media provides a direct connection between the public and the City and fosters public engagement. The City uses social media to provide real-time information to citizens on issues, programs and services, and news and events that affect them. The City's presence on social media, using various platforms and accounts, provides citizens with different options to connect with the City.

## BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH CITIZENS, PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Using social media regularly, the City is able to create relationships with citizens and organizations in the community. The City is able to support and share information from partner organizations and stakeholders which reinforces current bonds and builds stronger ties.

## PROVIDE BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE

As social media use continues to rise, it provides an increasingly popular option for citizens to ask the City questions. Social media can be used to respond to inquiries from the public in a timely manner.

## INCREASE THE LEVEL OF TRUST IN CITY GOVERNMENT

The public has often shown reluctance in trusting any level of government. As part of its efforts to build trust Edmonton has committed to being as transparent and open as possible in providing public access to information (see [Open City Policy – C581](#)). Social media is a key tool in building high levels of trust through continual, timely, and accurate engagement.

## ENHANCE THE REPUTATION AND IMAGE OF THE CITY

Social media is an excellent way of showcasing different projects and programs that are enhancing our City and making it stand out from the crowd. The City's social media accounts are entry points for our citizens and people worldwide to see what Edmonton is about. It is important that social media be exciting and vibrant as it is often the first impression the world receives of us.

## CREATE A DIALOGUE WITH THE PUBLIC

Social media offers the opportunity to engage in a real-time, back and forth conversation with the public. This enables stronger two-way communication that displays openness and transparency.

# WHY DOES THE CITY USE SOCIAL MEDIA? (cont.)

## MANAGE MESSAGES BY CREATING CONTENT THAT STANDS ALONGSIDE MASS MEDIA

The City can use social media to clarify stories in mass media that are inaccurate or need supplemental information. Social media can also promote stories in mass media, but this is usually not done to avoid any perception of bias. Social media can be an additional tool to promote News Releases, PSAs and Media Advisories, but can also be used to break stories to the media.

## PROVIDE ADDITIONAL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY

In the event of an emergency, social media allows the City to reach citizens quickly and effectively. The City can provide updates to help keep citizens safe, secure, and informed.

## PROVIDE GREATER SCOPE TO ADJUST COMMUNICATIONS QUICKLY WHEN NECESSARY

Social media allows the City to manage issues as they arise. Staff using social media can monitor trends and conversations on social media allowing the City to prepare key messages and be on top of issues before they escalate. Mass media and the public often look to the City's social media channels for the latest news and information.

## REACH SPECIFIC AUDIENCES ON SPECIFIC ISSUES

The City's social media provides messages from all different City departments in an effort to represent what is happening at the City. The public follows the main City accounts knowing that they will receive valuable information about all City services. The City also has more specific social media accounts to connect with specific groups of people on more concentrated issues such as Parks, Recreation Centres and Urban Planning.



## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

*Social Media is a communication and engagement tool used by the City of Edmonton. City of Edmonton's Corporate Communications, Media Relations Unit is responsible for the coordination and management of the City's main social media accounts. MRU works with Corporate Communications staff to ensure social media contributes successfully to the City's Communication Strategy.*

This section delineates the groups and individuals involved with social media and a short explanation of their responsibilities.

**CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS**

While the conduct of each and every employee has an influence on the image of the City, Corporate Communications is the area responsible for managing the overall image, brand and reputation of the City of Edmonton. Corporate Communications is also responsible for ensuring the City achieves its communications objectives. Social media has been identified as a key component in promoting and maintaining the reputation of the City in the Corporate Communications Business Plan.

**CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER (CCO)**

The CCO is committed to supporting social media as an integral component of communications. The CCO approves the creation of any social media accounts affiliated with the City of Edmonton.

**MEDIA RELATIONS UNIT (MRU)**

The Media Relations Unit handles media requests, media monitoring, media training, crisis communications and issues management. The Media Relations Unit also manages and monitors the main City of Edmonton social media accounts, provides advice and strategy for social media campaigns, and training for City of Edmonton employees who are interested in using social media in the workplace.

**COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORS/COORDINATORS, PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENTS**

Each department has multiple communications staff who are engaged in the creation and editing of social media content for the main City social media accounts. Communications staff act as an intermediary between their clients and the Media Relations Unit in developing social media content for their departments that will be posted on the main City social media accounts. Communications staff are also the point of contact for clients looking to start a new social media account.

**SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT ADMINISTRATORS**

Social Media Account Administrators are staff at the City who manage various City social media accounts. They are responsible for the content posted on the accounts that they manage. Social media account administrators are responsible for maintaining a strong social media presence that reflects the City's vision. All administrators must receive social media training from the MRU and display a willingness to participate in further learning in social media.

**OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

The Office of Emergency Management ensures the City of Edmonton is prepared for and can respond to a serious incident or disaster. There are various staff in Corporate Communications who are trained to act as a Public Information Officer when the office's Emergency Operations Centre is activated. This role includes managing and monitoring social media. In the event of a major crisis, administrators from the main City accounts will advise other social media administrators on emergency messaging.

**CITY COUNCIL AND THE MAYOR**

Many City of Edmonton elected officials have their own social media accounts but are not required to follow the policies in the *Social Media Guidelines*.

## CONDUCT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

*Participating in social media carries a certain amount of risk. To manage the risk effectively, all City employees need to know, understand and put into practice the guidelines for acceptable use of social media.*

**USING CITY OF EDMONTON SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS**

If you are authorized to use any of the City's social media accounts, you are effectively acting as a spokesperson for the City and must conduct yourself accordingly by following the *Corporate Communications Administrative Procedure and Directive* and the *Code of Conduct*. Ideally, authorized users are City employees who have knowledge on how to use social media and training on how the City of Edmonton uses social media.

For further information on social media conduct please see sections 6 and 7 which discuss best practices and engagement.

**DEALING WITH SENSITIVE MATTERS**

Occasionally you may encounter an individual or organization that is engaging with the City in a disrespectful manner. If this user is trying to engage with the City, you can follow the *Social Media Terms of Engagement* (Appendix i) to determine if their comments warrant a response. Social Media Administrators have the ability to hide and delete posts or block users. It is preferred that comments are hidden before they are deleted or blocking a user is considered. Please contact MRU if you see activity that violates the *Social Media Terms of Engagement* on City social media accounts.

It is not the City's preference to ban or block users on social media, but if an individual violates the City's *Terms of Engagement* repeatedly then there is recourse for denying them access to that social media account. Keeping a record of these violations is suggested, if the individual or group in question contacts media or tries to take legal action.

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONTRACTED ORGANIZATIONS**

There are times when one may contract an individual or group for Communication needs. If this group/individual is using the City's social media accounts, they must be authorized to do so through the Media Relations Unit.

When using any of the City's social media accounts, they must follow the Social Media Guidelines. If they are using their own account(s) it should be clarified in their contract what their responsibilities concerning social media will be as they do not have to follow the City's Social Media Guidelines. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to: Who will create, post and share social media messaging, which accounts (City and non-city) will post about the project, what can be said about a project on social media through corporate and personal accounts and key messaging

**USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PERSONAL USE**

As a citizen you are encouraged to use social media to be informed about the City. However, as an employee, you are still perceived by members of the public as a representative of the City, even if you include a statement that your opinions are your own. Consistent with the Employee Code of Conduct, if it is reasonable that you could be identified as a City employee, you may not voice personal opinions in public forums about Council decisions, fellow employees, your workplace, or City projects and programs, if such opinions could cause harm to the image or reputation of the City, or damage the City's relationship with its citizens or other stakeholders in the community. Likewise, employees must uphold anti-discrimination and anti-harassment principles as set out in the City's Respectful Workplace Policy and Procedures (A1127), and as outlined in the Alberta Human Rights Act. All social media platforms, including blogs, are considered public forums, and social media accounts have personal profile pages containing information that can be used to identify you as a City employee.

You also must take care not to use or disclose any other person's personal information that you become aware of as a result of being a City employee. Likewise, you must not use or disclose any confidential or proprietary information of the City."

**CONSEQUENCES FOR ABUSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

In the event a City employee uses City social media in a manner that violates the City's Code of Conduct or these Social Media Guidelines, the user may lose access to that social media account, and may face disciplinary action up to and including termination.

CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

The City has many social media accounts, which can be found at [edmonton.ca/socialmedia](http://edmonton.ca/socialmedia). For further information on these accounts please see [Appendix ii](#).

The main City of Edmonton accounts are managed by the Media Relations Unit and include:

TWITTER

[@CityofEdmonton](https://twitter.com/CityofEdmonton)

FACEBOOK

[www.facebook.com/cityofedmonton](https://www.facebook.com/cityofedmonton)

INSTAGRAM

<https://www.instagram.com/cityofedmonton/>

YOUTUBE

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CityEdmonton>

PINTEREST

<https://www.pinterest.com/cityofedmonton/>

TRANSFORMING EDMONTON BLOG

<http://transformingedmonton.ca/>

These accounts provide a place online for citizens to access information, engage and communicate with the City. The City has an established reputation and a large following of users on these social media accounts.

Content for these accounts is created by Corporate Communications staff and passed on to MRU for scheduling and posting.

The main accounts include posts on News Releases, Public Service Announcements, City programs, campaigns, traffic and weather alerts and emergency response. They are also used to answer inquiries from the public. Here are some other types of messaging we provide on social media:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| + Promotion of an event or activity the public is invited to participate in                               | + Responding to questions the public may have about City services/operations/ events  |
| + An announcement that does not warrant a news release  | + Create, post and invite people to events  |
| + Seeking public feedback   | + A project, program or initiative that portrays the City of Edmonton (and city as a whole) as an innovative and desirable place to live and is transforming Edmonton |
| + A change to City service or operation   |   |
| + Public safety messaging linked to an annual campaign  | + Provides a more personal perspective than a news release  |
| + A City contest  | + Providing information on the history of Edmonton and how we are always connected to the heritage of the City  |
| + Support of an external organization's initiative that the City is sponsoring or is directly involved in |   |
|   | + Emergency messaging and notifications   |

STARTING A NEW  
CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT

The scope of the City's main social media accounts is quite exhaustive, but in certain cases departments or individuals may believe that they need a dedicated social media presence, and that is certainly possible. The Media Relations Unit is here to help determine if a new social media account is the best solution, with final approval obtained from the CCO.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Social media allows a department or area to create a dynamic engaging relationship with the public and provides a great outlet for solidifying the reputation of the City. Before starting a new social media account there are a number of factors that must be taken into account. Building an audience on social media takes time and commitment to provide regular, interesting content. With time and engagement a dedicated social media account can be a valuable part of a communications strategy.

Here are some factors to consider:

ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH SOCIAL MEDIA?

Seems like a simple question, but you have to know how to use social media before you start an account. MRU provides social media training on request and if you would like to learn more about the different social media platforms and how to use them.

IS YOUR AUDIENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

When creating a social media account dedicated to a certain topic its audience should be in mind. Different people use different social media channels and some don't use it at all. Find the best channel for your audience.

CAN YOUR GOALS BE MET THROUGH THE CITY'S CURRENT CHANNELS?

Keep in mind that the City has a robust and growing following on all channels, and it may be more beneficial to your project to leverage what already exists. It takes a dedicated campaign to grow followers, and to reach the level of influence that you may need to attain your communications goals.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS NEW ACCOUNT?

What are your intentions in starting a new social media account? If the account is just for a one-time event maybe it would be better to promote through other methods.

DOES THE ACCOUNT ALIGN WITH THE CITY'S GOALS?

It is important that what you are trying to achieve aligns with the City's [vision and strategies](#). To learn more about these see the City of Edmonton website.

Your Departmental goals may be different from the City's goals, but you should make sure that the account will cover both of them.

DO YOU HAVE THE RESOURCES TO MANAGE THE ACCOUNT FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD OF TIME?

The main City social media accounts have a dedicated presence every regular workday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.. Not every social media account will be maintained at that level but most accounts require substantial time commitments to be effective. At least one day per week of staff time should be allocated to updating, engaging and managing the account as a minimum.

WILL THE CONTENT OF YOUR ACCOUNT COMPLY WITH FOIP, CASL AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LEGISLATION?

It is important to keep in mind any legislative requirements that may impact your social media account, such as the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP), Canadian Anti-Spam legislation, and intellectual property legislation. If you have any questions or concerns that are not addressed elsewhere in these Social Media Guidelines, you should contact the Office of the City Clerk (FOIP & Information Services) or the Law Branch for guidance.

STARTING A NEW CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT (cont.)

CAN YOU PROVIDE ENGAGING  
CONTENT ON A REGULAR BASIS?

The ability to run a successful social media account ultimately depends on content. Putting out new posts or updates every day is great, but they must have a purpose and connect with your audience. In order to have a successful social media account your content must be consistent and engaging.

If you can answer all of the questions above and believe you still need a dedicated social media account, here are the next steps in the process:

1

Read through the *Social Media Guidelines*. This will familiarize you with the City's social media accounts and best practices.

2

Discuss your intention to start a new social media account with your supervisor and your Corporate Communications Advisor. You need permission from your supervisor to pursue an account and your Communications Advisor is there to provide advice on whether you should have a social media account. If there are any questions that your Communications Advisor cannot answer they will consult with the Media Relations Unit.

3

Complete a *Social Media Account Request Form* (Appendix iii) and submit it to your Communications Advisor, who will review the proposal and submit it to the Media Relations Unit. MRU will review the proposal and seek final approval from the Chief Communications Officer.

If the account is approved:

Upon approval of the social media account MRU will set up a meeting between the administrator of the new account and their Communications Advisor. This meeting will look at creating the new account, getting set up and any questions any of the parties attending may have.

The new account administrators will be trained on the specific platform they will be using. Training will be conducted by MRU in conjunction with your Communications Advisor.

If the account is denied:

MRU and the CCO must have a valid reason for denying a new social media account and this will be discussed in a meeting with the proposed account administrator and their Communications Advisor. Alternative solutions will be proposed to make sure that there is another method for getting this information out to the public.

The following is a list of items to keep in mind when filling out

STARTING A NEW CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT (cont.)

COMPLETING A CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT REQUEST FORM

The [City of Edmonton Social Media Account Request Form](#) can be found online or as *Appendix iii* at the end of these Guidelines.

the City of Edmonton Social Media Account Request Form:

+

General information (Name, Department, Contact information)

+

Which social media platform you will use (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

+

The proposed launch date of your social media account

+

If you currently manage any social media sites for the City or if you have any other social media responsibilities

+

Your familiarity with social media including your estimated skill level

+

How the account will align to your Department's goals

+

How the account will align to the City's goals

+

How you plan to use the social media account (promotion, engagement, information, etc.)

+

The type of content you will be presenting through your account

+

How long do you plan to use the account for

+

The resources available to maintain the account

+

Proposed name and branding for the account

+

Approval signature from your direct supervisor/director

CLOSING A SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT

At all times City social media accounts and related contacts shall remain the exclusive property of the City. If you would like to close your social media account or an account no longer in use please contact MRU.

# CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

*Content is any information that is posted on social media including words, pictures, videos, links, and anything else displayed on a social media account. Content is what drives social media. Content is what attracts followers, promotes engagement, creates controversy and helps people in an emergency. Content can take many forms, but the best content is engaging, exciting, informative and accurate. Every piece of content means something to your viewers.*

### BEST PRACTICES FOR CREATING CONTENT

The main City social media accounts are an excellent way to get a message across to the public because of the level of engagement and number of followers they have. This section outlines best practices for creating social media.

#### Social media should be engaging

Content needs to be interesting otherwise the public will not be engaged. Engaging the public leads to conversations, creates relationships and makes people feel like their opinion is worth something. Keep these words in mind: interesting, unique, thoughtful, positive, proactive, humorous.

#### Social media should educate or inform

The City is a public service and exists to help citizens. Our content is used to educate the public on new programs, initiatives and policies.

#### Social media should be varied

Try to create social media posts that sound unique and exciting. When creating a campaign it is easy to re-use the same tweet over and over again, but changing the wording or adding multimedia content keeps the messaging fresh and keeps engagement high.

#### Social media should be focused

Social media posts are meant to be short, as the attention dedicated to a single post is often less than a couple of seconds. Try to get your message across in the least space possible.

#### Social media should catch your eye

The City's social media posts compete with millions of others every day. Including media (graphics, videos) in your post, especially something unique, will likely get attention and improve your engagement rate.

#### Social media should respect the follower

Respect your audience. Even if your followers may not be familiar with a specific program or initiative, they are the people that the City serves and we need to treat them as you would want to be treated.

#### Social media should be part of a larger communications strategy

It's great to promote on social media, but it works even better when it is a part of a larger whole like a communications strategy. Social media is just one part of your arsenal, but an important one.

## CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT (cont.)

### SOCIAL MEDIA USE MUST COMPLY WITH LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

#### FOIP

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP) applies to the collection, use and disclosure of any personal information by the City, including personal information that is collected, used or disclosed on social media. Personal information means information about an identifiable individual such as the person's name, address, age, and health information. It also includes the person's opinion and photographic image. Subject to a few exceptions, the individual's personal information cannot be disclosed by the City, including through social media, without the individual's written consent. FOIP also requires that the City give notice of the intended use of any personal information it collects from individuals. The Law Branch can assist you with meeting the FOIP requirements for your intended social media use.

#### Intellectual Property Legislation

It is important to keep in mind that the creator of any original work, including any piece of artwork, music, photograph, written work or trademark, owns the rights to that original work. Unless a City employee has created the work in the course of their employment duties, (and subject to a few exceptions), the City cannot use or share an image of that original work without the written consent of its creator. The Law Branch can assist you with meeting the requirements of intellectual property legislation.

#### CASL

It is important to ensure that your social media account use complies with the Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL). CASL prohibits any person (including the City) from sending a "commercial electronic message" (CEM) to an electronic address unless the sender has the consent of the message recipient and includes

certain content, specifically the ability to unsubscribe and contact information for the sender. A CEM is one that contains commercial content (or includes a hyperlink to commercial content), such as promoting City services or events for which a fee is charged. An "electronic address" is an address used in connection with the transmission of an electronic message to an electronic mail account, an instant messaging account (including direct messages sent social media accounts), a telephone account, or a similar account. It does not include content posted on City websites, or tweets/ Facebook postings that do not direct or link the message to a particular person. CASL does not prohibit using social media, such as Twitter, to advertise City services or programs as long as other individual Twitter users are not mentioned in the posting. Retweets may be considered CEMs if they include the handle of the original author. Non-compliance with CASL carries significant penalties. If you are considering sending any electronic communications that may qualify as a CEM, please contact the Law Branch for assistance.

### CREATING CONTENT

Social media platforms provide opportunities to present a message in varied ways. A promotion could be a tweet, a Facebook event, a photo on Instagram and a YouTube video, all of which would increase your audience and showcase the promotion in a different way. You are not limited in the amount of social media platforms you use, but oversaturation of social media is undesirable and MRU may limit the amount of posts for a specific campaign. To get a better idea of how many posts a specific campaign needs, please see the [Template for Submitting Social Media Posts \(Appendix v\)](#). At this time you can provide content for Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube and Transforming Edmonton.



CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT (cont.)



TWITTER

Twitter is a social media platform that allows users to send messages (tweets) to their followers. The City of Edmonton Twitter account started in February 2009. The City uses Hootsuite Pro to monitor the account. Hootsuite is a social media management system whose user interface takes the form of a dashboard, and supports social network integrations for Twitter, Facebook and various other social media platforms. The majority of content is provided by Communications staff and scheduled by MRU in advance. It has become a popular source for breaking news and is often used by the media to find news stories. It is a platform that focuses on creating two-way conversations. There are many Edmontonians who are prolific on Twitter and constantly interact with the City.

Creating a Tweet:

Twitter allows you to tweet (send a message) to everyone who follows you or who searches content included in a tweet. You can also Retweet (re-post someone else's tweet) to all your followers, or Direct Message (send a private message) to anyone on Twitter.

Here are the types of tweets:

**TWEET:** a message you send out to all of your followers

**REPLY:** a tweet directed at a certain user or users, but can be seen by anyone. To send to a certain person begin the tweet with their username (also known as their handle) e.g. (@cityofedmonton, @doniveson)

**MENTION:** A tweet that has a user's handle in the tweet. They will be notified of this tweet, but it will be seen by all of your followers. (e.g. Thanks to @yegparks for promoting #yeg's fantastic spray parks!)



**RETWEET:** You can repost a person's tweet to your followers by pressing the retweet icon.

**DIRECT MESSAGE:** You can send private tweets that will only be seen by the person you are sending them to.

Basics:

- + Tweets can be a maximum of 140 characters, including all spaces and punctuation. Direct Messages can be up to 10000 characters.
- + You can provide a link in a tweet to a website, video, etc. When submitting links please provide the complete, original URL. No matter the size of the link we can shorten it for you. This shortened form will take up 18 characters of your tweet. This shortened link can be tracked for analytics and reporting.
- + You cannot hyperlink words in a tweet, but you can have more than one link in a tweet (not recommended).
- + An image can be attached to a tweet. An image will take up 22 characters. Your image should be in the highest quality possible. Images need to be submitted in JPG, PNG or GIF format and under 5 MB.
- + Hashtags are keywords that have a # in front of them. These allow you to reach a certain audience as Twitter users search or follow certain hashtags. Some common ones used in Edmonton are #yeg, #yegtraffic and #yegwx. Most North American cities use their airport code to identify themselves on Twitter. See Appendix vi for popular Edmonton hashtags. Try to use the hashtags the City already uses and limit the number of hashtags used in each tweet. If you would like to create a new hashtag please contact MRU or speak with your Communications Advisor.
- + When creating a response to a tweet make sure you remember to count the characters of the user's username you are responding to, as it will take up space in the tweet. Eg. @doniveson = 10 characters.

CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT (cont.)

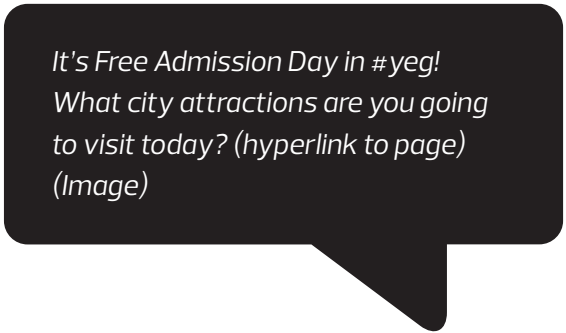


TWITTER (cont.)

Tone and content specific to Twitter:

- + Use plain language. Imagine the audience has limited to no understanding of the topic you are presenting.
- + You have limited space, but make it fun and engaging.
- + Simplicity
- + If you're running a campaign with multiple tweets, try to make them all different. Repetitive tweets get less engagement.
- + Ask a question, even if you aren't looking for an answer. It can start a conversation.
- + Keep them short. Shorter tweets are more likely to get retweeted.

Example:



85 characters (content and punctuation) + 19 characters (hyperlink) + 22 characters (image) = 126 characters



CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT *(cont.)*



FACEBOOK

Facebook is a social media platform where users create their own page which can be updated with content at their discretion. Users receive information via their newsfeed, which features updates from pages they like, friends or advertisers.

The main Facebook page for the City of Edmonton was created in February 2009 and features posts and events. Users have the ability to like (an easy way for a user to let someone know that they enjoyed a post), share (sharing a post allows a user to share the post with their friends), or comment on any of our posts or events. MRU has the ability to schedule a Facebook post to go out at any time. When Facebook users like our page, they will receive posts from us.

Basics:

- + A Facebook post is limited to 5000 characters, but it is recommended that you limit each post to a maximum of 4 sentences.
- + Please include a link to a webpage for more information, unless the post is just a statement (weather emergency, snow removal, etc.)
- + Include a high quality photo. If you don't include a photo, Facebook will auto-populate the post with a photo from the website link you provided, but the image could be low resolution.
- + You can also post a video link, or upload a video to Facebook.
- + To create an event on Facebook, provide MRU with the details and a photo and we can set it up for you.

CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT *(cont.)*



INSTAGRAM

The City started using Instagram in 2014. We use Instagram to share photos of events or things happening in Edmonton. We can post City related images. The usual rule is the more interesting the image the better the engagement will be. Instagram is owned by Facebook, but uses usernames with an @ symbol and hashtags like Twitter. Users can discover photos by searching hashtags or following other accounts.

Basics:

- + To have a photo posted on Instagram, please provide the photo at a minimum of 512x512 pixels and a short one or two sentence description.
- + If you are mentioning a person or organization that has an Instagram account it is best to tag them in the post with their Instagram username (@cityofedmonton, @yegparks). If you don't know if they have an Instagram username MRU can check for you.
- + Use appropriate hashtags to tag your photo and if we think any are missing we will add them for you.
- + You can also post a video up to 15 seconds long on Instagram.

## CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT (cont.)



### PINTEREST

On Pinterest you pin something to your board. You can have multiple boards, each about a different topic, and then pin as much as you want to each board. Pins are limited to 500 characters and have to have an image accompany them. If you are looking to have a dedicated board on Pinterest for your Department or area, MRU can help set that up.

#### Basics:

- + Please provide the photo with a minimum of 735 pixels for best quality.
- + Provide a description of the photo, event or initiative that is a maximum of 500 characters.
- + You can provide a location for your event as we can geotag (assign a geographical location) to Pinterest posts.

## CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT (cont.)



### YOUTUBE

YouTube is a video sharing site that the City uses to feature videos from all different City departments. You can post, comment, have followers and subscribe to different channels, as with other social media platforms.

#### Basics:

- + MRU posts videos to YouTube.
- + Information that is needed to be included to post a video is the name of the video, a description and keywords.
- + Videos can either be private (not viewable), unlisted (viewable only with a link) or public (viewable to anyone). This setting can be changed at any time.
- + If your video contains copyright music, even if a release for the music has been granted, MRU will need a copy of the release for their records. YouTube needs to be notified of all copyright content in videos in order for them not to be flagged for matched third party content.
- + If you have a series of videos a new playlist can be created to group all those videos together.

CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT *(cont.)*



TRANSFORMING EDMONTON

The [Transforming Edmonton](#) blog was created to give a voice to City employees who want to connect with Edmontonians and share stories about how civic services and programs contribute to [The Way Ahead](#) and its long-term goals to improve our city.

City employees are invited to share information on programs that may not be in the news spotlight or stories that need more context. Staff can use text, images and video to go behind the scenes on complex topics to help Edmontonians learn what it takes to deliver municipal services.

Most importantly, this is a vehicle to share information, then listen to what citizens say about a topic. The blog is a great way to stimulate a discussion and get ideas and opinions on City activities.

Transforming Edmonton was created in late 2009 and was refreshed with a new look in late 2013. In 2015, the blog had 75,920 Pageviews.

A post on Transforming Edmonton (TE) should ask a question, engage readers, inform or tell a story. TE is usually reserved for stories that are unique and have not been picked up by media. Re-hashing a Public Service Announcement or News Release is not what the blog is for, but telling a story about someone who benefitted from a City service is.

Content for TE is approved by Communications staff at the City, but does not have to be written by Communications staff. Departmental clients are encouraged to use Transforming Edmonton as a platform for telling a story about their area, their staff or their campaigns. The author of a post should be the subject matter expert or the Communications staff in that area. If City employees are interested in writing a blog post, they should get in touch with their Communications Advisor for assistance.

Basics:

- ✚ Posts should be between 350 and 750 words in length. This is a recommendation and not a requirement
- ✚ Include at least one high resolution photo with the post
- ✚ Multiple photos and video are encouraged. Include captions for each photo
- ✚ The post must be approved by your Communications Advisor

✚ Final approval is at the discretion of MRU

**IMAGES ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

By using the correct image sizes for your social media posts, you will provide the best quality media for your audience. For a continually updated source of recommended image sizes see [Sprout Social's Social Media Image Guide](#). For more information on image sizes contact MRU.

USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Before posting a photograph in any social media, you will need to take into consideration the following points:

- ✚ the City must either own the copyright or have a license or written consent to use the photograph
- ✚ if the image of an identifiable individual appears in the photograph, FOIP requirements must be taken into consideration. Photo consent forms of individuals must be managed and retained in a manner that allows for access in the future, and in accordance with the applicable FOIP retention schedule.
- ✚ pieces of artwork must not appear in the photo without the written consent of the artist

CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT *(cont.)*

SUBMITTING CONTENT

When preparing social media posts for the main City accounts, please use the Social Media Template (Appendix iv). Once your social media posts are drafted they can be delivered to MRU by email through [ocmccmediarelationsunit@edmonton.ca](mailto:ocmccmediarelationsunit@edmonton.ca). If you are not in Corporate Communications please send your posts to your Communications Advisor and they will forward it to MRU. Posts should be delivered at least one business day before they are to be posted. If analytics are needed for any of the posts please let MRU know when you submit the posts.

Please submit your Transforming Edmonton blog posts as a Google Drive folder including the Google Doc and all images.

RUNNING A CONTEST ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Have a campaign that needs that extra boost? Are your clients looking at giving away some promotional items to garner interest in an upcoming event? Maybe a contest on social media is the way to go. Even if your engagement is already above average, a properly run contest really piques the public's interest and can raise awareness online.

It's not as easy as just giving something away though. You need to think about why you want to have a contest, if it aligns to your campaign goals and have a clear set of rules.

A couple of things to consider:

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE BEFOREHAND

*First question to ask yourself: Does my audience use social media? If the answer is 'no' or 'maybe' you can stop reading right now. Certain people use certain social media channels and you should make sure you know this information before writing a plan for a contest.*

PICK YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL CAREFULLY

*Once you know your audience, make sure that those people use the social media channel you want to use. It is easier to run a contest on Facebook than it is on Pinterest. Using a unique hashtag on Twitter or Instagram makes it easy to track entrants. If you're looking for responses to a question, Twitter will only allow 140 characters, but Facebook will allow multiple sentences. These are just a few of the things to consider when creating a plan for a social media contest. If you're looking for any advice, contact MRU for assistance.*

MAKE SURE IT ALIGNS TO YOUR GOALS

*Don't have a contest for the sake of having a contest. Make sure that what you are doing is relevant to your message or campaign. Also, try to give away prizes that are related to the campaign.*

MAKE IT SIMPLE

*With all these things to consider it doesn't sound like it will be simple to run a social media contest, but really it is. You will get more engagement the easier it is for people to enter. If you can't explain your contest in under three sentences it is too complicated. If you can explain your contest in one tweet that is ideal. The 'value' of your prize should be equal to the amount of effort required to enter.*

*To run a contest on social media or any other way you will have to have a set of rules approved by the City's Legal team. It is a statutory requirement to give adequate and fair disclosure to potential contest entrants of the contest information. Once the contest rules have been prepared, they should be forwarded to the Law Branch with sufficient time for review prior to the planned commencement of the contest.*

*Appendix v contains a checklist of the information that must be specified in the Contest's Rules and Regulations. Once completed it must be reviewed by Legal. Once approved by Legal, it will then need to be posted on an appropriate City webpage (the webpage about the project, initiative or campaign).*

For a complete list of Contest Rules, please see [Appendix v](#).



ENGAGEMENT

*Some organizations use social media like a one-way street, pumping out information, but not providing an opportunity for interacting with the public. The City's social media is meant to spark an interactive experience where we can foster relationships with our citizens and other people around the world.*

Engaging with the public, via your own City social media account or one of the main City accounts, is an excellent way to know what they are interested in, but allows you to shape future content to serve them better.

*Here are some key guidelines to keep in mind when engaging with your followers:*

**Treat everyone with respect and equality**

No matter the comment or quality of conversation, treat everyone with respect. It doesn't matter if you've seen a comment many times before, treat it the same as you would of the first time. The public appreciate a response, even if we can't give them the exact answer they are looking for. The exception to this is if the comment or question violates the City's *Social Media Terms of Engagement*. Do not respond to comments that violate the Terms of Engagement; ignore them or hide them (on Facebook) as necessary. If they continue, contact MRU about next steps.

**Promote Two-Way Conversations**

If you provide opportunities for the public to respond to posts, expect to be involved in some social media conversations. You will gain a better perspective on how the public is responding to certain issues and can use that feedback to alter future campaigns or projects as necessary.

**Provide Accurate Information**

If you receive a question that you don't know how to answer, ask for help. Don't just guess and post a response. There are subject matter experts throughout the City who will be able to help you out. If finding an answer will take an extended amount of time, let the individual know that you are looking for information and

will share the answer as soon as possible. It's better to spend that extra time researching the right answer than to immediately post something inaccurate.

**Be Timely With Your Responses**

There is an expectation from the public that we provide an answer as quickly as possible on social media. It is important to constantly monitor your account or reply to comments flagged by MRU as quickly as possible, as long as you have correct information that can be presented in a polite, respectful way.

**Tone**

We're not a machine and we don't want people to think we are. There are real people behind every social media account and we want to portray that. Social media gives the City an opportunity to be freer in its language, have more fun and be friendly. Something as simple as an exclamation point or saying 'hi' or 'thanks' in a tweet, makes it more caring and personable.

**Everything You Post is Public**

Everything you put on social media is public and even direct messages could be seen by other people in the future. Keep this in mind when creating content and answering questions. Do not divulge any confidential information on City social media.

**We Are One Voice**

As One City we have One Voice. Most social media accounts are managed by different people, but the public doesn't know that. We should aim to keep a cohesiveness among our social media accounts that showcases a clear, coherent voice that is recognizable as the City.

ENGAGEMENT *(cont.)*

**RESPONDING TO SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTS**

The City strives to address concerns from the public. We respond to general inquiries in a timely manner during business hours using messaging from edmonton.ca, Communications staff and 311 scripts.

Inquiries that require additional details or personal information will be replied to, asking them to use our 311 services.

Responding to comments and queries on social media is not always necessary. The *Social Media Terms of Engagement*, mentioned earlier, are a guideline to the types of comments and questions we will respond to.

If a comment or question is posted in response to a social media post you submitted, MRU will flag the comment and send it to you. It is requested that you provide a response following the engagement expectations listed above.

You should always have key messages in place when creating social media. Great content usually leads to engagement which means you will receive feedback or questions. Have an answer already prepared and you can foster relationships and provide great customer service.

If you manage a City social media account, it is expected that you will respond to comments and questions according to the City's *Social Media Terms of Engagement*.

**SHARING INFORMATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

The focus of the City's social media is on City of Edmonton news, events and activities, but in certain cases we will share information from other organizations.

We will share, like or favourite other organizations social media posts, as long as the City is involved in some way and we have the space in our calendar to do so.

**WE DO NOT SHARE POSTS FROM MEDIA OUTLETS.**

**ANALYSIS AND REPORTING**

Media Relations Unit (MRU) uses Facebook Insights, Twitter Analytics, Hootsuite Pro and Google Analytics to provide data for social media reporting.

MRU provides a monthly media report that contains analytics on the main City social media accounts and the top performing posts of the month. The performance measures contained in this report include for Twitter: overall followers, new followers, number of tweets, number of replies, impressions, engagement rate, retweets, link clicks, replies, favourites and top performing tweets; Facebook: likes, engaged users, daily reach, top posts, shares and comments; YouTube: views, likes, dislikes, comments, shares, top 10 videos, demographics.

MRU also creates a yearly social media report that provides an in-depth look at our social media presence and how it compares to previous years. Analytics for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Transforming Edmonton, Pinterest and the City of Edmonton website are included in the yearly report.

When running a social media campaign through the main City social media accounts you can request analytics on how your posts are doing. MRU provides social media analytics for Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest and Instagram. We can provide Google Analytics for Transforming Edmonton and City of Edmonton websites.

Analytics are a good way to see how your posts are performing and can give you a solid indication of what posts are resonating with the public. If you are managing an account for the City, MRU can provide training to better understand analytics and how they work.

Based in the information included in the Guidelines, it is expected that social media administrators can analyze their accounts to see if they are reaching their goals. MRU can be contacted if advice or additional consultation is needed.

# SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINING

*If you're new to social media or a seasoned veteran, social media training is recommended to make sure you understand how we use social media at the City.*

It is the goal of the City that every employee who uses social media in any capacity receives social media training.

The Media Relations Unit can provide social media training at various levels for any City of Edmonton staff. Priority is given to those staff who are actively involved in social media for the City.

MRU provides group training sessions and individual coaching, depending on the knowledge and needs of the social media user.

MRU provides training on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Hootsuite, YouTube, Pinterest and the Transforming Edmonton Blog. They can also provide training on other aspects of social media such as creating content, best practices and engagement tips.

If an employee is uncomfortable learning in a group setting or has needs that are not covered in the social media training course, MRU offers individual coaching sessions.

For new account administrators, MRU provides coaching on getting an account set up and how to manage it effectively.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO ENROLL IN SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINING PLEASE CONTACT THE MEDIA RELATIONS UNIT AT [ocmccmediarelationsunit@edmonton.ca](mailto:ocmccmediarelationsunit@edmonton.ca).**

# SOCIAL MEDIA IN AN EMERGENCY

*One of the greatest assets of social media is one that we hope that we never have to use and that is as a real-time emergency response. As witnessed in other communities, such as New York during Hurricane Sandy and Calgary during the floods of 2013, social media is an extremely valuable tool during emergency situations where accurate information needs to be sent out to the public as quickly as possible.*

In the event of a major emergency, the City's Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) will be activated and at least one member of the Crisis Communications team representing the City will be there. The team member will manage and monitor the main City of Edmonton social media accounts. Any messages sent through social media must be approved by the EOC Director.

If the emergency situation is escalated, the main City of Edmonton social media accounts will provide appropriate messaging. This is for security measures and to create consistent messaging coming from all platforms. The public will turn to the City during an emergency and we must be ready to respond as accurately and coherently as possible.

EOC may be activated for planned events. A member of the Crisis Communications team will always be present to provide citizens with the latest information from emergency and City partners as it becomes available.

APPENDIX I: SOCIAL MEDIA TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

The City of Edmonton monitors social media comments relating to the City organization and City issues for the purposes of responding to questions and informing Edmontonians, and to help our staff in the operations of services, programs or activities.

The purpose of comments is to facilitate a relevant, on–topic dialogue between the City of Edmonton and the public.

The City of Edmonton strives to respond to relevant questions and comments in a timely matter, but because we cannot engage in all conversations, we reserve the right to use our judgment in selecting the messages we respond to.

Trolls and trolling comments will also not be permitted. The comments you leave should be constructive, helpful, or insightful. Violation of these terms of engagement may result in limited or blocked access.

The City of Edmonton will not engage in conversations that are of the following nature:

- + Comments not topically related to our services or programs
- + Comments that are offensive to an individual or organization, profane, hateful or defamatory, insulting, rude, abusive, aggressive or violent
- + Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, creed, gender, marital status, socio–economic status, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation
- + Sexual content or links to sexual content
- + Messages for advertising/marketing purposes

- + Messages that contain spam
- + Messages that conduct or encourage illegal activity
- + Messages that invade personal privacy
- + Information that could compromise public safety or security, or operations
- + Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party
- + Unintelligible or irrelevant messages
- + Messages that impersonate or misrepresent someone else, including public figures, City staff or City officials
- + Messages that do not add to the normal flow of conversation, dialogue or debate.

THE CITY OF EDMONTON IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY USE OF MATERIAL POSTED BY USERS. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO MODIFY THIS POLICY AT ANY TIME.

APPENDIX II: CITY OF EDMONTON SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

City of Edmonton Parks

These accounts are managed by the Neighbourhood Branch of Community Services.

- + TWITTER @yegparks
- + FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/cityofedmontonparks
- + INSTAGRAM https://instagram.com/yeg\_parks/

ADMINISTRATOR: Community Recreation Coordinator & Director, Neighbourhood Branch, Community Services

PURPOSE: Started in the Summer of 2014, these accounts highlight Edmonton's beautiful outdoor spaces; featuring parks, playgrounds, community gardens, and other natural areas while also highlighting special community programs and events for residents and visitors.

City of Edmonton Attractions

This account is managed by the Community and Recreation Facilities Branch of Community Services.

- + INSTAGRAM https://instagram.com/edmontonattractions

ADMINISTRATORS: Marketing – Digital Content Specialist & Marketing – Strategic Marketing Coordinator, Community and Recreation Facilities Branch, Community Services

PURPOSE: Launched in May 2015 this account highlights the main City Attractions, (Edmonton Valley Zoo, Muttart Conservatory, John Walter Museum and John Janzen Nature Centre) through imagery. Using content from corporate–owned material and user–submitted posts, this account is set to enhance the visual interest of the City's Attractions.

City of Edmonton Recreation Centres

This account is managed by the Community and Recreation Facilities Branch of Community Services.

- + FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/edmonton.reccentres

ADMINISTRATORS: Marketing – Digital Content Specialist & Marketing – Strategic Marketing Coordinator, Community and Recreation Facilities Branch, Community Services

PURPOSE: Launched in 2014 this account highlights the 18 City of Edmonton Recreation Centres. This Facebook page keeps the public informed on new programs, activities, classes, upgrades to facilities and unexpected closures. An excellent source of Rec Centre information that offers additional information not available on the main City accounts.

The account promotes two–way interaction with fans by answering questions and providing information in public comments and private Facebook messages. They also run seasonal contests to help promote the page and increase interest.



APPENDIX II: CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS (cont.)

City of Edmonton Fire Rescue Services

This account is managed by Fire and Rescue Services in the Community Services Department.

+ FACEBOOK  
[www.facebook.com/edmontonfirerescue](http://www.facebook.com/edmontonfirerescue)

ADMINISTRATOR: Communications Advisor, Fire and Rescue Services, Community Services

PURPOSE: A site dedicated to provide information on Edmonton Fire and Rescue Services. On this page you will find updates and information about EFRS training and recruitment, public education and fire prevention, and emergency response. This site is not an outlet to discuss recent fires or emergency operations.

Edmonton Transit System

These accounts are managed by Edmonton Transit under the Transportation Department.

+ FACEBOOK  
[www.facebook.com/takeETS](http://www.facebook.com/takeETS)

+ TWITTER  
[twitter.com/takeETSalert](http://twitter.com/takeETSalert)

ADMINISTRATORS: Interactive Marketing Specialist (Facebook), Customer Information Team (@takeETSalert – manual tweets), @takeETSalert automated tweets from CIS database

PURPOSE: ETS has two sites and each has a different purpose. The Facebook account posts route changes, offers and news. This is an interactive account that promotes conversations and comments. The ETS Alerts Twitter account provides one-way communication using automated tweets about ETS planned detours and bus stop closures alerts. Major service disruptions are manually tweeted.

City of Edmonton Reuse Centre

This account is managed by the Reuse Centre Volunteer Coordinator with support from the Reuse Centre Coordinator in the Waste Management Services Branch in the Financial Services and Utilities Department.

+ FACEBOOK  
[www.facebook.com/edmontonreusecentre](http://www.facebook.com/edmontonreusecentre)

+ REUSE-IT EDMONTON BLOG  
<http://reuseitedmonton.blogspot.ca/>

ADMINISTRATOR: Reuse Centre Volunteer Coordinator and Reuse Centre Coordinator, Waste Management Services Branch, Financial Services and Utilities

PURPOSE: The purpose of both the Facebook page and Blog is to present information on the Reuse Centre, its operations and volunteer programs along with other reuse initiatives in Edmonton, waste management services updates, stories and crafting ideas.

APPENDIX II: CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS (cont.)

City of Edmonton Master Composter Recyclers

This account is managed by Community Relations staff in the Waste Management Services Branch in the Financial Services and Utilities Department.

+ FOR THE LOVE OF WASTE BLOG  
<http://fortheloveofwaste.blogspot.ca/>

ADMINISTRATOR: Program Assistant for Master Composter Recyclers, Program Coordinator for Master Composter Recyclers, Waste Reduction Coordinator and Composting Programs Coordinator, Waste Management Services Branch, Financial Services and Utilities.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the blog is to foster enthusiasm in waste and community spirit among volunteers, share long-form articles about MCRs and waste in Edmonton, and to host these articles in an accessible, long-term spot.

+ FACEBOOK  
[www.facebook.com/groups/96481566101/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/96481566101/)

ADMINISTRATORS: Program Assistant for Master Composter Recyclers, Program Coordinator for Master Composter Recyclers, Waste Reduction Coordinator, Waste Management Services Branch, Financial Services and Utilities.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the account is to foster community spirit among MCRs. It allows them to share ideas and links about waste reduction. It is also meant to facilitate discussion with MCRs and Edmontonians about waste reduction.

Winter City Edmonton

These accounts are managed by the WinterCity office year-round. From October to May, Parodos Communications is contracted to provide essential support.

+ FACEBOOK  
[www.facebook.com/WinterCityEdmonton](http://www.facebook.com/WinterCityEdmonton)

+ TWITTER  
[@WinterCityYEG](http://@WinterCityYEG)

ADMINISTRATORS: WinterCity Coordinator, WinterCity Planner and Parodos Communications

PURPOSE: These accounts were created to support the ten WinterCity Strategy goals in the creation (and organic uptake) of Edmonton's WinterCity spirit. To achieve these goals these accounts are meant to become the hub for conversations about winter in Edmonton and facilitate engagement in the discussion. Others reasons for this account are to create a sense of ownership of the initiative amongst Edmontonians, to stir the emotions of Edmontonians, to showcase the work that has already been done to prove that the initiative is making a difference, and to engage more with partners and ambassadors to ensure that the WinterCity spirit spreads even further.

City Hall School

This account is managed by the City Hall School Teacher.

+ TWITTER  
[@CityHallSchool](http://@CityHallSchool)

ADMINISTRATOR: City Hall School Teacher

PURPOSE: The site for City Hall School – a week long, inquiry based program which allows elementary students to connect with their city and their curriculum.

APPENDIX II: CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS (cont.)

Office of the City Clerk

This account is managed by staff in the Office of the City Clerk.

+ TWITTER  
[@EdmontonClerk](#)

**ADMINISTRATOR:** Meeting Management Assistant, Office of the City Clerk

**PURPOSE:** The site for the Office of the City Clerk advises people of Council Meetings, Committee Meetings, Meeting agendas, and minutes.

Open Data Edmonton

This account is managed by staff in the Office of the City Clerk.

+ TWITTER  
[@OpenDataEdm](#)

**ADMINISTRATOR:** Communications Advisor, Corporate Services

**PURPOSE:** To promote new datasets and engage the developer community.

Edmonton Elections

This account is managed by Edmonton Elections staff during City of Edmonton elections and by-elections.

+ TWITTER  
[@EdmElections](#)

**ADMINISTRATOR:** Communications Advisor, Corporate Services

**PURPOSE:** This account was created for the 2013 City of Edmonton Election and provided information on voting procedures, candidate forums and other election related discourse. It has not been used since October 2013, but the hope is that it will be used during the next municipal election or by-election.

Edmonton Urban Planning

This account is managed by various staff in the Urban Planning Branch of the Sustainable Development Department

+ TWITTER  
[@PlanEdmonton](#)

**ADMINISTRATORS:** Planners, Urban Planning and Environment, Sustainable Development

**PURPOSE:** Urban Planning staff use this account to discuss city-building, events and urbanism. They are fairly active and also post and retweet news from other City accounts.

APPENDIX II: CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS (cont.)

John Janzen Nature Centre

+ FACEBOOK  
[www.facebook.com/JohnJanzenNatureCentre](#)

**ADMINISTRATORS:** Programs Coordinator & Programs Assistant

**PURPOSE:** This page provides updates and news about the John Janzen Nature Centre.

John Walter Museum

+ FACEBOOK  
[www.facebook.com/johnwaltermuseum](#)

+ PINTEREST  
[https://www.pinterest.com/johnwaltermuseu/](#)

**ADMINISTRATORS:** Programs Coordinator, Programs & Special Events Assistant, Curator Assistant

**PURPOSE:** These pages provide updates and news about the John Walter Museum and moments in Edmonton's history.

Muttart Conservatory

+ FACEBOOK  
[www.facebook.com/muttart.conservatory1](#)

**ADMINISTRATOR:** Programs Coordinator

**PURPOSE:** This page provides updates and news on the Muttart Conservatory.

River Valley Programs

+ FACEBOOK  
[www.facebook.com/pages/River-Valley-Programs/288586704504690](#)

**ADMINISTRATOR:** Programs Coordinator

**PURPOSE:** River Valley Programs is an Outdoor Pursuits program run through the City's Community Services department. The account provides information on Outdoor Pursuit programs to community groups, Edmonton and area schools, corporations and the general public.

APPENDIX II: CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS (cont.)

*inVOLved: Edmonton Attractions  
& Recreation Volunteers*

**+ FACEBOOK**  
[www.facebook.com/involvedinedmonton](http://www.facebook.com/involvedinedmonton)

**ADMINISTRATORS:** Zoo Experiences Program Manager,  
Volunteer Services Program Coordinator and Volunteer  
Services Program Assistant

**PURPOSE:** The official Volunteer page for City of  
Edmonton Attractions Volunteer Services.

*Edmonton Youth Council*

This account is managed by members of the Edmonton  
Youth Council.

**+ TWITTER**  
[@EdmYouthCouncil](https://twitter.com/EdmYouthCouncil)

**+ FACEBOOK**  
<https://www.facebook.com/edmyouthcouncil>

**+ INSTAGRAM**  
<https://instagram.com/edmyouthcouncil/>

**ADMINISTRATORS:** Edmonton Youth Council  
Coordinator and other members of the Council

*Edmonton Youth and Skatepark Programs*

**+ TWITTER**  
[@yegyouth](https://twitter.com/yegyouth)

**+ FACEBOOK**  
[www.facebook.com/yegyouth](http://www.facebook.com/yegyouth)

**+ INSTAGRAM**  
<https://instagram.com/yegyouth>

APPENDIX II: CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS (cont.)

*The following accounts are affiliated with the  
City of Edmonton, but are not under the jurisdiction  
of these Guidelines and the Administrative Directive.*

*Edmonton Public Library*

These accounts are managed by  
Edmonton Public Library Staff.

**+ FACEBOOK**  
[www.facebook.com/EPLdotCA](http://www.facebook.com/EPLdotCA)

**+ TWITTER**  
[@EPLdotCA](https://twitter.com/EPLdotCA)

**+ YOUTUBE**  
[www.youtube.com/user/edmontonpl](http://www.youtube.com/user/edmontonpl)

**+ PINTEREST**  
[www.pinterest.com/EPLdotCA/](http://www.pinterest.com/EPLdotCA/)

*City of Edmonton Police Services*

**+ FACEBOOK**  
[www.facebook.com/edmontonpoliceservice](http://www.facebook.com/edmontonpoliceservice)

**+ TWITTER**  
[@edmontonpolice](https://twitter.com/edmontonpolice)

**+ YOUTUBE**  
[www.youtube.com/user/EPSVideoOnline](http://www.youtube.com/user/EPSVideoOnline)

**+ PINTEREST**  
[www.pinterest.com/edmontonpolice/](http://www.pinterest.com/edmontonpolice/)

*Edmonton Police Recruiting*

**+ FACEBOOK**  
[www.facebook.com/joineps](http://www.facebook.com/joineps)

**+ TWITTER**  
[@JoinEPS](https://twitter.com/JoinEPS)

**+ YOUTUBE**  
[www.youtube.com/user/joineps](http://www.youtube.com/user/joineps)

*Edmonton Economic Development Corporation*

**+ FACEBOOK**  
[www.facebook.com/  
EdmontonEconomicDevelopmentCorp](http://www.facebook.com/EdmontonEconomicDevelopmentCorp)

**+ TWITTER**  
[@EEDC](https://twitter.com/EEDC)

*NextGen Edmonton*

**+ TWITTER**  
[@EdmNextGen](https://twitter.com/EdmNextGen)

**+ FACEBOOK**  
[www.facebook.com/edmnextgen](http://www.facebook.com/edmnextgen)

**+ INSTAGRAM**  
[EdmNextGen](https://www.instagram.com/EdmNextGen)

*Fort Edmonton Park*

**+ TWITTER**  
[@FortEdPark](https://twitter.com/FortEdPark)

**+ FACEBOOK**  
[www.facebook.com/fortedmontonpark](http://www.facebook.com/fortedmontonpark)

**+ FLICKR**  
[www.flickr.com/photos/FortEdmontonPark](http://www.flickr.com/photos/FortEdmontonPark)



APPENDIX III: CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT REQUEST FORM

All employees looking to start a new social media account for a City of Edmonton program, initiative or department must complete a Social Media Request Form.

PLEASE FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW COMPLETELY INCLUDING YOUR SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE APPROVAL. AFTER RECEIVING APPROVAL FROM YOUR SUPERVISOR, PLEASE SUBMIT THE COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR.

PERSONAL  
INFORMATION:

Name: _____	Email: _____
Title: _____	Department: _____
Telephone: _____	Supervisor: _____

SOCIAL MEDIA  
ACCOUNT DETAILS:

Social Media Platform requested: _____ _____	What will this new account add that cannot be addressed through existing City of Edmonton social media accounts? _____ _____
Proposed name of account: _____ _____	
Proposed date of account launch: _____	
Proposed date of account closing (if applicable): _____	What type of content will you be presenting through this account? _____ _____
Name and Title of main account administrator: _____ _____	How will this site align to the City's goals? _____ _____
Names and Titles of any additional people who will have access to account: _____ _____ _____	How will this site align to your Department's goals? _____ _____ _____
What is the purpose of the new social media account? _____ _____ _____ _____	What are the resources available to manage this account? (for example, personnel, time): _____ _____ _____

APPENDIX III: CITY OF EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT REQUEST FORM (cont.)

SOCIAL MEDIA  
EXPERIENCE:

On a scale from <b>1 – 10</b> how would you rank your familiarity with the Social Media platform you will be using (1 being not at all and 10 being very familiar):  <b>1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10</b>	Please describe your previous experience in social media and how it will contribute to the administration of this new account: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Do you currently manage any other City social media sites: <b>YES NO</b>	
If you answered ' <b>YES</b> ' to the question above, please list the sites: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	If you have any formal social media training or certifications, please indicate so: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

APPROVAL:

Supervisor	_____	_____
Communications Advisor	_____	_____
Media Relations Unit	_____	_____
Chief Communications Officer	_____	_____
	Please Print Name	Signature
		Date Approved: _____

APPENDIX IV: TEMPLATE FOR SUBMITTING SOCIAL MEDIA

CAMPAIGN NAME – SOCIAL MEDIA – DATES

TWEETS

Date	Tweet

\* Tweets must be 140 characters or less including spaces and punctuation. Link s and Photos: 22 characters

FACEBOOK

Date	Content

Campaign Length / Post Ratio:

- One Week: 2-4 Tweets / 1 Facebook Post
- Two Weeks: 3-7 Tweets / 1-2 Facebook Posts
- Three Weeks: 5-10 Tweets / 1-2 Facebook Posts
- One Month: 8-15 Tweets / 2-3 Facebook Posts

APPENDIX V: SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST RULES

CONTEST RULES CHECKLIST:

- ☐ When the contest starts specifying the date and time.
- ☐ When the contest ends specifying the date and time.
- ☐ Who the contest is open to. This includes age, residence, where to pick up prizes, etc.
- ☐ The geographical area to which the contest relates. For example, the Rules should state that the contest is open to the residents of “the Edmonton Capital Region”, rather than “the Edmonton Area”. If the contest is open to the residents of Canada, then Quebec needs to be explicitly excluded. Quebec has additional legislation with detailed requirements for not only the contest rules but also for the contest advertising.
- ☐ How to enter the contest. The process that an individual must follow to have a legitimate entry in the contest. This includes how many entries are allowed per person.
- ☐ A clause stating that there is no charge or purchase required to enter the contest.
- ☐ The number and approximate value of the prizes, and the basis upon which the prizes will be awarded.
- ☐ Chance of winning (you may state that the chances of winning are dependent of the number of entries received).
- ☐ Any restrictions or limitations to the chances of winning (eg. if City of Edmonton, Valley Zoo or Communication Branch employees are not eligible to win).
- ☐ How the winner will be chosen. For example, if the winner will be selected randomly or will win based on the merit of their entry.
- ☐ When the winner will be announced.
- ☐ Written consent of the winner must be obtained before the winner’s name can be announced in a public forum, because this is personal information under FOIP. Likewise, notification to the winner cannot be done in a manner that is open for the public to see.
- ☐ There must be an element of skill involved (a skill-testing question), this must be referenced when entering the contest. Random contests: person whose name is chosen must answer a skill-testing question. Should be at least a four step process and numbers should be double and triple digits to not be regarded in courts as a ‘sham’. eg. 14 + 12 x 225 – 150 = ?
- ☐ The limit of time to pick up the prize and when it is forfeited or another winner is chosen. The distribution of the prizes cannot be unduly delayed.
- ☐ Requirement for consent to disclosure of name / image in order to claim prize together with notice that the winner may be required to sign a release/ waiver before being awarded the prize.
- ☐ A Responsibility statement that outlines that the City is not responsible for any technical problem that would result in a person entering the contest.

APPENDIX V: SOCIAL MEDIA  
CONTEST RULES (cont.)

Example:“This information is being collected by the City of Edmonton under the authority of section 33(c) of the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP), and will be used for [name of contest] contest purposes. Personal information in the custody or under the control of the City is protected in accordance with the privacy provisions of FOIP. If you have any questions about the collection, you may contact the City of Edmonton [title of contact person] at [phone number or email address], or [mailing address], Edmonton, Alberta.”

CONTEST RULES CHECKLIST :

- ☐
- The contest entry page must contain a FOIP notice that complies with the requirements of FOIP, since the collection of the entrant's name and contact information is a collection of personal information that is subject to FOIP. Under FOIP, the FOIP notice must state:

  - the legislative authority for the collection (eg. section 33c) of FOIP)
  - the purpose for which the information is collected (eg. for xxx contest purposes)
  - the title, business telephone number and address of a person who can answer an individual's questions about the collection. If you wish, the email address of the contact person may be included in addition to (ie. not instead of) the above contact information.

Potential contest entrants must be given notice of the contest rules in a straightforward way without inconveniencing them and prior to their committing to the contest. A link to the contest rules on the main contest page is acceptable, as long as a potential entrant can access the rules before entering the contest. The potential entrant must not have to purchase a product, visit a place of business or be inconvenienced in any way in obtaining this basic information about a contest.

If a social media platform (such as Facebook) is used to promote or administer the contest, there must be compliance with any applicable Terms of Use of that platform. Since social media platform Terms of Use are periodically updated, they should be reviewed prior to each new contest being posted on the platform.

Example of Contest Rules:  
[http://www.edmonton.ca/residential\\_neighbourhoods/NameyourTop3EssentialItemsinyourEmergencyKit.pdf](http://www.edmonton.ca/residential_neighbourhoods/NameyourTop3EssentialItemsinyourEmergencyKit.pdf)

APPENDIX VI: EDMONTON  
SOCIAL MEDIA HASHTAGS

The City of Edmonton uses appropriate hashtags whenever possible to improve the reach of our posts. People use hashtags as search terms for specific topics, allowing them to access posts from accounts that they do not necessarily follow.

Hashtag	Topic/Use	Notes
#yeg	Edmonton, City of Edmonton, Edmonton area issues or events	
#yegtraffic and #yegroadalerts	traffic volumes, backed up traffic, traffic disruptions	
#yegtransit	ETS routes, schedules, service disruptions, service quality, kudos, planning (including LRT)	
#yeglrt #yegtransit	LRT expansion, LRT issue/alert	
#yegfood	food sustainability, restaurant licensing, food-Ag strategy in SD, Food Council, farmers market, locally grown food	
#yegfoodag	Food and Urban Agriculture Strategy	
#yegarts	art gallery, Mayor's awards for art,craft council, Edmonton Arts Council, percent for art policy	
#yegbiz	business, economy, City's Chief Economist reports, CPI, job stats	
#yeggreen	Way We Green, environment programs, recycling	
#yegjobs	job opportunities, career fairs	
#WorkWednesday	Wednesday posts on job opportunities with the City	
#yegarena #yegdt	Downtown Arena	
#yegcc	City Council	
#yegvote	Edmonton Election	
#yegfit	Edmonton fitness, City recreation programs	
#yegmusic	Musical performances in City Hall, Mayor's Awards gala	
#yegtrees	Edmonton Parks/Forestry	
#yeggarden	gardening, community gardens	
#FYIB	Front Yards in Bloom	
#yegphoto #yegphotography	photos in Edmonton	
#yegweather / #yegwx	Edmonton weather/extreme weather events in Edmonton	
#yegbike	Bicycle culture in Edmonton/cycling safety in Edmonton including accidents and regulations/ Edmonton bike trails, lanes and paths	
#transformingYEG	used for Transforming Edmonton blog posts	
#yegparks	in reference to Parks and open spaces in Edmonton. Also used by @yegparks twitter account	
#yegdt	Downtown development	
#yegwinter, @ WinterCityyeg	Edmonton Winter activities and events	
#CityhallX	City Hall Express	





Questions? Email us at [ocmccmediarelationsunit@edmonton.ca](mailto:ocmccmediarelationsunit@edmonton.ca)