

## Social Media Policy

---

**Authority:** Chief Administrative Officer

**Effective Date:** February 14, 2025

**Signature:** 

**Future Review Date:** 2029

**Responsibility:** Corporate Communications

**Last Review/Revision:** 2018

**References:** People Policies, Workplace Violence, Bullying and Harassment, Records Information & Management Policy, Corporate Identity Policy, Alberta Human Rights Code, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom, *Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act*, *Municipal Government Act*

**Replaces:** Social Media Policy A-C-025

---

**1.0 Purpose:** This policy defines the standards and responsibilities for the professional use of Social Media by Town of Stony Plain Employees and Volunteers. It aims to protect the Town's brand and reputation, promote effective communication with the community, and ensure accountability in maintaining a respectful and consistent online presence.

**2.0 Scope:** This policy applies to all Town of Stony Plain Employees and Volunteers.

### 3.0 Definitions:

**Administrator:** means the individual(s) responsible for managing Content, messages, calls, community activity, ads, and insights on Corporate and Specialized Social Media.

**Content:** means anything posted on Social Media.

**Corporate Social Media:** means the official Town of Stony Plain Social Media.

**Employees:** means permanent, part-time, temporary, casual, contract, seasonal, and interns who are employed by the Town of Stony Plain.

**Personal Social Media:** means the private accounts belonging to Employees and Volunteers.

**Public Social Media:** means all other Social Media pages including, but not limited to, chat groups, business pages, and other public figure pages.

**Social Media:** means websites and applications that enable Users to create and share Content or to promote communication. Examples of Social Media include but are not limited to Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok and YouTube.

**Social Media Code of Conduct:** means the guiding document to be referenced when monitoring Corporate and Specialized Social Media accounts.

**Specialized Social Media:** means the Social Media owned by the Town of Stony Plain, identified by including mention in the page description, bio, etc. (except for Tourism Social Media), and managed by the business unit who created it. Examples include but are not limited to Explore Stony Plain, Stony Plain Outdoor Pool, Stony Plain Golf Course, Shikaoi Exchange – Town of Stony Plain, Stony Plain Youth Centre, and Heritage Park – Stony Plain.

**Tourism Social Media:** means the official Tourism Social Media operated by the Town of Stony Plain.

**Users:** means a person who uses, reads, or engages with Social Media.

**Volunteer:** means any group or person engaged in work on behalf of the Town.

**4.0 Statement:** Social Media serves as a strategic tool for the Town of Stony Plain, functioning as a platform that fosters professional communication practices with residents, businesses, and visitors. The Town recognizes the power of this tool in connecting with the community and endeavours to utilize it to provide timely, accurate, and relevant information while aiming to protect the Town's brand and reputation.

## **5.0 Standards:**

- 5.1 Employees and Volunteers will be respectful on Social Media at all times.
- 5.2 Corporate and Specialized Social Media accounts are not used to promote individual opinions, political opinions, political campaigns, or religious views.
- 5.3 Common disclaimers such as “shares don’t imply endorsement” or “all views are my own” do not absolve Employees and Volunteers from adhering to this policy.
- 5.4 No confidential information shall be posted on any Social Media.
- 5.5 Employees and Volunteers are expected to support the policies, programs, and decisions of the Town and not publicly criticize the Town or its partners on Personal or Public Social Media.
- 5.6 Employees and Volunteers shall not engage in hostile back and forth dialogue with anyone on Social Media.
- 5.7 All Corporate Social Media accounts must be registered using the same handle @StonyPlainAB, if available
- 5.8 All Specialized Social Media accounts must include “Stony Plain” in the handle and/or page name.
- 5.9 Administrators are responsible for maintaining existing and future Specialized Social Media accounts to protect the brand and reputation of the Town of Stony Plain.
- 5.10 The Town of Stony Plain’s current People Policies may be applied in the event this policy is not followed.

## **6.0 Roles & Responsibilities**

- 6.1 Corporate Communications
  - 6.1.1 Create and maintain Town of Stony Plain Corporate Social Media accounts and approve the creation of Specialized Social Media, in accordance with the Request for

- 6.1.2 Specialized Social Media Procedure and the accompanying application form. Responsible for assigning and removing Administrator privileges to Specialized Social Media.
- 6.1.3 May remove Specialized Social Media Administrator status if accounts are harming or negatively impacting the reputation of the Town of Stony Plain.
- 6.1.4 Create and schedule Content, monitor, and respond to questions and comments from residents and Users on Corporate Social Media.
- 6.1.5 Enforce the Social Media Code of Conduct to address controversial and sensitive online Content about the Town, members of Council, Employees, and Volunteers.
- 6.1.6 Shall remove offensive Content from Corporate Social Media accounts and enforce the three- strike system on all Social Media in accordance with the Social Media Code of Conduct.
- 6.1.7 Responsible for managing Content, messages, calls, community activity, ads, and insights for Corporate Social Media.

6.2 Specialized Social Media Administrator(s)

- 6.2.1 Create and schedule regular and relevant Content, monitor the account, respond to questions and comments from Users, and when applicable, share Content from Corporate Social Media.
- 6.2.2 May create, share or post Content on behalf of an external organization if requested by the external organization, and the Content is relevant to the Specialized Social Media.
- 6.2.3 Enforce the Social Media Code of Conduct to address controversial and sensitive online Content about the Town, members of Council, Employees, and Volunteers.
- 6.2.4 Shall remove offensive Content from Specialized Social Media accounts in accordance with the Social Media Code of Conduct.
- 6.2.5 Shall notify Corporate Communications of any staffing changes that would affect Administrator privileges.

**7.0 Policy Review:** This administrative policy shall be reviewed within four years of being implemented, with any changes being submitted to the Chief Administrative Officer for approval.

**Table of Appendices:**

Appendices do not form part of this policy and are attached for reference purposes only.

Appendix A	Social Media Code of Conduct
Appendix B	Request for Specialized Social Media Procedure

## Social Media Code of Conduct

The Town of Stony Plain maintains social media pages to provide platforms for information sharing and user engagement. The intention of these pages is to provide publicly accessible spaces where users can find information on Town events, programs, projects, and policies and provide their own feedback.

Pages are monitored during office hours from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM (MST), Monday through Friday. Messages and comments sent outside of these hours may receive a response within the next three business days.

### Moderation

Authorized moderators are responsible for monitoring and responding to comments and messages that pertain to the Town of Stony Plain within three business days. All comments posted and direct messages sent to our pages are moderated and subject to review as per the Social Media Policy. To ensure our social media pages remain welcoming and productive spaces, moderators may remove comments and take appropriate action regarding direct messages that violate the terms outlined below.

The Town welcomes commentary but will not tolerate comments or direct messages that are offensive to an individual or an organization, rude or harassing in tone, or abusive.

### **We reserve the right to remove comments or take appropriate action regarding direct messages that are:**

- Racist, hateful, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, contain slurs, or are otherwise contrary to the principles of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*
- Abusive or rude in tone, either to Town staff or to other commenters
- Aggressive, violent, threatening, or references to self-harm or harm of a third party
- Negatively targeting and personally identifying, either about the poster, Town employee(s), elected official(s), or a third party
- Encouraging of conduct that may or would violate the laws of relevant jurisdictions
- Unproven or inaccurate accusations against individuals or organizations
- Unproven or inaccurate factual claims
- Obscene or pornographic
- Posted for advertising purposes
- Any other message that moderators believe does not add to the normal flow of debate and/or are specific to the post

Comments or direct messages meeting any of the above conditions may be removed, and appropriate action may be taken. Users who repeatedly and/or purposefully violate these rules may be temporarily or permanently prevented from accessing the Town's social media pages. Users will be held accountable by a 'three strike' system wherein they will be banned from all Town pages after three recorded offenses.

While moderators do their best to ensure comments adhere to these rules, the Town is not able to moderate every inquiry. People should not assume information or links included in comments made by

users on Town channels are factual, or that the opinions they contain are supported by the Town of Stony Plain.



## **Request for Specialized Social Media Procedure**

---

**2025**

Approved by: Corporate Communications

Approved date: February 14 ,2025

## Contents

---

Introduction .....	3
Definition .....	3
Procedure.....	3
Review Process .....	4
Appendix A.....	5

## Introduction

This procedure supports the Social Media Policy by defining the process for requesting and managing Specialized Social Media accounts. To provide timely, accurate, and relevant information while protecting the Town's brand and reputation, all Specialized Social Media accounts must comply with the standards set out in this procedure.

## Definitions

Definitions in this procedure align with those outlined in the Social Media Policy unless otherwise specified:

- **Administrator:** Refers to the individual(s) responsible for managing Content, messages, calls, community activity, ads, and insights on Specialized Social Media.
- **Content:** Refers to anything posted on Social Media.
- **Corporate Communications:** A Business Unit within the Department of the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (OCAO).
- **Social Media:** Refers to websites and applications that enable Users to create and share Content or to promote communication. Examples of Social Media include but are not limited to Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok and YouTube.
- **Specialized Social Media:** The Social Media owned by the Town of Stony Plain, identified by including mention in the page description, bio, etc., and managed by the business unit who created it. Examples include but are not limited to Stony Plain Outdoor Pool, Stony Plain Golf Course, Shikaoi Exchange – Town of Stony Plain, Stony Plain Youth Centre, and Heritage Park – Stony Plain.
- **Users:** Refers to a person who uses, reads, or engages with Social Media.

## Procedure

### 1. To request a Specialized Social Media account:

1.1. Fill out the attached Request for Social Media Application Form to confirm the business unit's capacity with good rationale.

1.1.1. The application must be approved by the Manager of Corporate Communications, the employee's direct supervisor, and the business unit's General Manager.

1.1.2. Corporate Communications will review the form for completeness and alignment with the Town's strategic goals. Feedback will be provided to the applicant if further clarification is required.

1.1.3. If an application is rejected and the business unit disagrees with the rationale, the issue may be escalated to the Chief Administrative Officer for final review.

### 2. If a request for a Specialized Social Media account is approved:

2.1. Corporate Communications will create the new page and assign Administrator privileges within five business days of approval.

- 2.2. Corporate Communications will ensure “Stony Plain” is included in the account handle, page name, etc.
3. The business unit responsible for the new page will ensure:
  - 3.1. The account’s auto-response message contains after-hour contact information, states monitoring occurs during regular business hours, and clarifies message response times (two to three business days).
  - 3.2. The account proactively protects the Town’s brand and reputation as outlined in the Social Media Policy.
  - 3.3. Operations align with this procedure and the Social Media Policy.
  - 3.4. Corporate Communications is notified to any “strikes” against users as outlined in the Social Media Code of Conduct.
4. If a Specialized Social Media account is no longer required or fails to meet the standards outlined in this procedure, the following steps must be taken:
  - 4.1. The business unit must notify Corporate Communications of the intent to deactivate the account, including a rationale.
  - 4.2. Corporate Communications will review the request or identify issues with the account's maintenance and provide guidance.
  - 4.3. Once confirmed, Corporate Communications will deactivate the account.

## Review Process

This procedure shall be reviewed within four years of being implemented, with any changes being submitted to Corporate Communications for approval.

## Request for Specialized Social Media Application Form

*This form must be completed and submitted as part of the application process.*

### Introduction

This application form is part of the "Request for Specialized Social Media Procedure" and supports the Town of Stony Plain's Social Media Policy. After reviewing the Social Media Policy, complete the following form to request the creation of a new Town social media account. Upon submission to Corporate Communications, your request will be reviewed to determine the next steps.

### Requestor Details

Name: Click or tap here to enter text.	Email: Click or tap here to enter text.
Title: Click or tap here to enter text.	Business Unit: Click or tap here to enter text.
Phone: Click or tap here to enter text.	

### Factors to Consider

Before completing this form, ensure you can affirm the following:

- The account's purpose aligns with the Town's Strategic and/or Department Plans.
- The audience uses social media.
- Adequate resources are available to manage the account.
- Content will be posted consistently and will engage the target audience.
- The business unit has strategies to address potential risks such as negative comments or resource limitations.

If you can affirm these points and conclude that a dedicated social media account is necessary, proceed with filling out the rest of this form and obtain the necessary approvals from your supervisor/manager, General Manager, and the Manager of Corporate Communications.

### Social Media Account Details

Social Media Platform requested: Click or tap here to enter text.

Proposed name of account: Click or tap here to enter text.

Proposed date of account launch: Click or tap here to enter text.

What is the purpose of the new social media account(s)? Please list goals, what you hope to accomplish and how it aligns with the Town's Strategic and Department Plans.

Click or tap here to enter text.

What unique role will this account fulfill that cannot be met through existing Corporate or Specialized Social Media accounts?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Who are you trying to reach? Be specific and include rationale for why this target audience would not be reached effectively through content posted to Corporate Social Media.

Click or tap here to enter text.

On a scale from 1 to 10 how would you rank your familiarity with the Social Media platform you are requesting? (1 being not at all and 10 being very familiar)

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐

What education and/or Social Media training courses have you taken?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Describe your experience with “professional” Social Media management.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### **Content Plan**

What type of content do you plan to post (e.g., announcements, events, educational posts)?

Click or tap here to enter text.

How frequently will you post (e.g., daily, weekly)?

Click or tap here to enter text.

### **Risk Assessment**

List any potential risks you might be aware of and strategies to mitigate those risks. Some examples of potential risks are reputation damage, negative comments or complaints, and time and resource limitations.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### **Team Details**

Who will be responsible for the activity on the account?

Click or tap here to enter text.

If this person is away, who is the backup?

Click or tap here to enter text.

How many hours per week will these people dedicate to managing your Social Media account?

Click or tap here to enter text.

### **Metrics and Success**

How will you measure the success of this account (e.g., engagement metrics, audience growth, specific goals achieved)?

Click or tap here to enter text.

How often will you evaluate and report on these metrics?

Click or tap here to enter text.

### **Supervisor/Manager – Fill Out This Section**

I will ensure this Specialized Social Media account will continue to be managed during staff leaves of absence, turnover, etc.      Yes ☐ No ☐

I will ensure that those responsible for this Specialized Social Media account will obtain Social Media professional development.      Yes ☐ No ☐

## Approval Sign-Off

*Please ensure the following signatures have been obtained prior to submitting to Corporate Communications.*

Click or tap to enter a date.

Date

Requestor

Click or tap to enter a date.

Date

Supervisor/Manager

Click or tap to enter a date.

Date

General Manager

## Corporate Communications Approval Sign-Off

Click or tap to enter a date.

Date

Manager of Corporate Communications