

| <b>City of Prince Albert</b><br><b>Statement of POLICY and PROCEDURE</b> |  |                      |                 |
|--|--|----------------------|-----------------|
| Department:  | Corporate Services                             | Policy No.           | <b>43.1</b>     |
| Section:   | Communications                                 | Issued:              | March 22, 2010  |
| Subject:   | <b>Website – External Links Policy</b>         | Policy Effective:    | August 11, 2014 |
| Council Resolution # and Date:   | Council Resolution No. 0540 of August 11, 2014 | Page:                | 1 of 4          |
|  |  | Replaces:            | 43              |
| Issued by:   | Kiley Bear, Communications Manager             | Dated:               | March 22, 2010  |
| Approved by:   | Steve Brown, Director of Corporate Services    | Procedure Amendment: |                 |

## 1. POLICY

- 1.1 External links to third party sites will not be provided unless it can be demonstrated they are directly associated with the City and they help meet a clear user need.
- 1.2 If a user need is clearly met by a site which is broadly commercial (i.e. selling services), the City would consider linking to it as long as the content is free to access and does not require payment or registration before the user need can be met.
- 1.3 If it is determined that a link qualifies, the placement of the link on the website must fit logically within the existing structure of the website at the time.
- 1.4 The City may provide links to websites that are not controlled, maintained or regulated by the City of Prince Albert and as such the City is not responsible for the content of those websites.
- 1.5 The City will not provide links to external sites that:
  - promote hate, bias, discrimination, pornography, libellous or defamatory content;
  - lobby, advocate, or advance the policies and priorities of a particular industry, organization or enterprise.
  - further the agenda of a political organization or a candidate running for office.

## 2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The City of Prince Albert is committed to the ongoing improvement of its website so that information is accurate, relevant, useful and easy to find.
  - 2.2 The City's website is an important asset for the City of Prince Albert. This policy recognizes that the website must first and foremost the purpose of the
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City's website is to communicate information about City operations to the residents and businesses of Prince Albert.

- 2.3 This policy also recognizes that external links can be a valuable tool for users of the City of Prince Albert's website by linking them to relevant external agencies, groups and businesses that are associated with the services provided by the City of Prince Albert.
- 2.4 It is therefore, the purpose of this policy to establish guidelines regarding the inclusion of external links on the City's website that are fair to the organizations, businesses and groups that would like to use the City's website for promotional purposes.

### **3. SCOPE**

- 3.1 City of Prince Albert website [www.citypa.ca](http://www.citypa.ca).

### **4. RESPONSIBILITY**

- 4.1 It will be the responsibility of the Communications Manager, in consultation with the applicable content owner, to determine if an external link meets the criteria of this policy.
- 4.2 If it is determined that an external link is permitted on the City's website, the placement of the link on the City's website will be at the discretion of the Communications Manager in consultation with the content owner.
- 4.3 It will be the responsibility of the content owner to ensure that external links are valid and operational and to request that links be updated or removed.
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## 5. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 External Link – An external link is a link to a website with a URL address that is different than the City of Prince Albert homepage of <http://www.citypa.ca>.
- 5.2 Content Owner – A city employee designated by the Department Head to be responsible for the accuracy of specific content areas on the City's website and ensuring that external links are valid and operational and to request that links be updated or removed.

## 6. REFERENCES & RELATED STATEMENTS OF POLICY & PROCEDURE N/A

## 7. PROCEDURE

- 7.1 Any request by an external group to provide a link on the City of Prince Albert's website will need to be forwarded to the Communications Manager along with the preferred website page(s) on which the external group would like the link to be placed.
- 7.2 In consultation with the content owner, the Communications Manager will determine if the request is appropriate. The following criteria will be used to evaluate the organization/business request for an external link:
- Is the business/organization directly associated with the City of Prince Albert? For example, does the City provide in-kind support of any kind to the organization? Does the City have representation on the organization's board of directors?
  - Does the link help meet a clear user need? For example, will the link complement the information on the City's website and be a logical extension of information that is already found on the City's site?

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Other questions that may be considered before a request is approved are:

Are we being impartial?

Do other providers deliver a similar set of information, and if so, why would we choose one over another?

Is the external content free to access?

Is the ownership of the external site clear?

7.3 If the request is determined to be appropriate, the Communications Manager will work with the content owner to determine the appropriate placement of the link on the City's website. Placement of the link must fit within the existing structure of the website at the time of the request. The City is under no obligation to create new pages to accommodate the request. Placement can be reevaluated as the website evolves.

7.4 If it is determined the request is not appropriate, the Communications Manager will communicate the decision and reasoning to the organization/group that made the request.

## **8. APPEAL PROCEDURE**

8.1 If an external group or organization's request to place their web address on the City website is declined, the group/organization can make an application to City Council by outlining the reasoning for the request.

## **9. APPENDIX**

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