

**City of Brentwood**  
**City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 1 of 14	

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**  
Approved: February 10, 2016

**A. PURPOSE**

More and more members of the public receive information from the internet and communicate through social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and similar sites. The City of Brentwood wishes to further its goal of communicating with the public about City programs, projects, policies and other efforts by the use of City-sponsored social media. This policy establishes guidelines for employees' use of City-sponsored social media.

**B. GENERAL**

**1. City's primary internet site.** The City's website (<http://www.brentwoodca.gov/>) is the City's primary internet presence, serving as the main hub of online activity and establishing the legitimacy of the Brentwood "brand" for all affiliated City-managed web sites and platforms. Other City social media sites must be consistent with the primary site, and should always direct the User to the primary site for more information.

**2. Uses and approval.** Social media is used to increase the City's ability to communicate messages to the widest possible audience (Users) about City efforts, co-sponsored activities, special events, and as a secondary emergency notification source. The City's social media may be interactive, for receiving comments from the public, and for public conversations about the City.

All City-sponsored social media tools must first be approved in writing by the City Manager or his or her designee, consistent with this Policy. Each authorized employee, username and password must be registered with the IS Division. (See Sections E.1 and E.2.)

**3. Prohibited content.** Articles, posts, and comments on the City-sponsored sites containing any of the following forms of content are not allowed and will be removed as soon as possible:

- a. Profane language or content.
- b. Content that promotes or disseminates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.
- c. Sexual content or links to sexual content.
- d. Solicitations of commerce.
- e. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
- f. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems
- g. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party, such a copyright or trademark restrictions.
- h. Comments relating to political campaigns, candidates or ballot measures, except for legally permitted City dissemination of factual information on a ballot measure.

The City-sponsored social media sites are City-owned and operated, and not a traditional public forum. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Policy or state or federal law.

**City of Brentwood  
City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 2 of 14	

**C. PRIMARY USES OF CITY SOCIAL MEDIA**

**1. City events and programs.** The City may post events and programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the City or those which the City is providing support for in some manner (such as those held on City property, those with City-approved street closures or those receiving some financial assistance from the City).

**2. Links to Other Organizations.**

- a. Businesses. Although solicitation of commerce is not permitted, businesses or other entities which are designated sponsors of the City events described in section C.1 above can be identified (by name and/or logo) and added to a posting regarding the event. However, City social media sites will not cross-link with for-profit businesses nor promote such businesses in relation to their sponsorship of an event (e.g., “liking” the business on Facebook or “following” on Twitter).
- b. Governmental or non-profit organizations. The City may allow links to websites and social media sites of other organizations if the information is consistent with this Policy and the City’s Website Policy No. 10-22, Section 6, External Links *[add link here]*.

**3. Emergency information.** Although it may be used, City-sponsored social media will NOT be the primary tool used for disseminating emergency information. The County Warning System will remain the primary source of that information.

**D. POSTING REQUIREMENTS**

**1. Link to and coordination with City website.** Wherever possible, content posted to the City’s social media sites will contain hyperlinks directing users to the City’s website and also be made available on the City’s website in a timely manner.

**2. Compliance with all City Policies.** Staff use of the City’s social media sites must comply with other, related City policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, the City’s conflict of interest code, personnel policies and applicable ethics rules. Specifically:

Council/Administrative Policy:

- 110-05 (City Council) Ethics and Conduct
- 00-04 Records Retention Policy
- 00-08 Response to Public Records Act Request
- 10-10 Information Systems Policy
- 10-22 Website Policy
- 20-03 Gifts and Gratuities

Other Policies:

- Conflict of Interest, adopted by City Council Resolution
- Personnel Rules

**City of Brentwood**  
**City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 3 of 14	

**3. Public Records Act; Records Retention.** Information posted on a City-sponsored site is a public record, under the California Public Records Act (Government Code §6250 and following; art. 1 Cal, Const. §3), and City staff responsible for posting, monitoring and responding must:

- a. maintain all the information as is technologically feasible for the time period specified in the City's Records Retention Policy (00-04).
- b. retain any content removed (based on this Policy) including the time, date and identity of the poster when available, in accordance with the City's Records Retention Policy.

Any content maintained in a social media format, including a list of subscribers and posted communication (unless removed), is a public record. The Department maintaining a site is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request made on social media, in collaboration with the City Clerk and City Attorney. (See Council/Administrative Policy Nos. 00-04 and 00-08.)

**E. ADMINISTRATION OF CITY SOCIAL MEDIA SITES**

The Public Information Officer is responsible for posting content, upkeep and monitoring of any City-sponsored social media site. If the City does not have a designated Public Information Officer, the City Manager may designate one or more persons to assume the duties and responsibilities of the Public Information Officer outlined herein.

**1. Authority; Considerations.** All City-sponsored social media sites must first be approved by the City Manager or his or her designee, consistent with this Policy. If a Department will have independent authority under this Policy, the Department Head must identify in writing any designee and that person's level of authority. The range of authority might include: posting independently; posting after text approved by Department Head; authority to reply to online public comments; authority to remove inappropriate content (see Section B.4 above) after consultation with the City Attorney.

Before the City Manager approves the use of a new social media site, City staff shall review and provide the City Manager information on the following criteria:

- a. Benefit to the City and the public.
- b. Time demands on City staff, and the impact on the staff's regular workload.
- c. Network bandwidth requirements and impacts.
- d. Costs of hardware and software.
- e. Reputational risk to personnel.
- f. Potential for exposure or leakage of sensitive or protected information such as copyrighted material, intellectual property, or personally identifying information.
- g. Potential for malware introduction into the organization's IS environment.
- h. The potential use of non-public entity sections of Social Media web sites.
- i. Ability to maintain City-related content as a public record.
- j. Adequate preparation of guidelines for the particular site or platform, to be attached to this Policy.
- k. How much control the site allows the City to have over the content.

**City of Brentwood**  
**City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 4 of 14	

**2. List of authorized employees, sites, login and password information.** The Public Information Officer, City Manager and Information Systems Division shall maintain a list of the City's social media sites from all Departments, including: employees authorized to post, monitor and remove information; their scope of authority. The account login must be associated with a City of Brentwood email account and not with an individual's private account.

**3. Guidelines for each site.** For each City-sponsored social media site, guidelines shall first be developed and approved by the City Manager, and then maintained by the designated Department. The guidelines will include standards and processes for managing the site, and branding standards. When approved, each set of guidelines becomes an attachment to this Policy and is listed at the end of the Policy.

**4. Guidelines applicable to all City-sponsored social media sites.**

a. Disclaimer. City staff shall incorporate the following language into each City-sponsored social media site:

*This is an official page of the City of Brentwood. For more information about the City, please visit [www.brentwoodca.gov](http://www.brentwoodca.gov). This City-hosted site is intended to serve as a means for communication between the public and the Department on the listed topics, and as a limited forum to further the mission of the Department.*

*Any comment submitted to this page, and its list of followers, may be considered a public record, subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act. Please direct any public information requests to the City Manager.*

*The City monitors comments posted to this account. The City may remove inappropriate content that violates the standards of its Social Media Policy, Section 3.B. The City disclaims responsibility for inappropriate posting which is not removed in a timely manner.*

b. Photos and Video.

- i. The Department Director or designee is responsible for providing the photographic and video content.
- ii. The Department must secure the right to use photos or video from the author or owner if the content was not produced by the City. The Department must also secure any waivers from individuals depicted in photos or video if required by generally applicable City policy or law. (See Waiver form, attached.)
- iii. Links to external photos or video are permitted, but may only be used when content is relevant and Department receives necessary permission, such as copyright, or photo/video waiver. (See Policy No. 10-22, Website Policy, Section 6, External Links.)
- iv. Photo and video quality shall be as high definition quality as possible.
- v. Department may only submit videos to a City-approved social media site.
- vi. If technically possible, the ability for the public to post photos, videos and links shall be turned off unless otherwise directed by the City Manager or Public Information Officer.

**City of Brentwood  
City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 5 of 14	

c. Style. Departments must use proper grammar and standard Associated Press (AP) style (where possible, due to space restrictions), and must avoid the use of jargon and abbreviations. Communications must represent the City's high standards.

**5. City responses on non-City approved sites.** In selected circumstances it may be appropriate for the City to respond to false information or rumors posted on a non-City site. These responses should be done in a timely fashion and provide the public with factually accurate information without expressing opinions or engaging in policy discussions. Responses are not warranted when there is a difference of opinion or the original posting is critical of the City, but does not contain factual errors. Any responses must comply with these standards.

a. Only the Public Information Officer may post the approved response, using his or her name and title. The City will respond to information on these other sites only when the City Manager, Public Information Officer or Department Head determines that it is reasonably necessary to correct misinformation and/or protect the City's property, reputation, and/or employees.

b. The City shall monitor and only respond to forums or blogs that are affiliated with a local news publisher. The City may respond to state or federal forums or blogs affiliated with state or national news publishers.

c. Responses shall be factual in nature, limited to information necessary to correct inaccurate or false information. A response must be done with maximum courtesy, respect and professionalism.

**ATTACHMENTS**

A Sample waiver form (Section E.4.b)

**Site Guidelines** attached and made a part of this Policy:

- B Facebook Guidelines
- C Twitter Guidelines
- D LinkedIn Guidelines
- E Nixle Guidelines (PD)

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gustavo "Gus" Vina, City Manager

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**City of Brentwood  
City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 6 of 14	

**City of Brentwood  
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY: SAMPLE WAIVER FORMS (Policy Section B)**

**PHOTO AND VIDEO RELEASE**

I consent to the City's use of the attached photo(s) or the video(s) described below of myself or my minor child(ren), without obligation or liability to me. I understand these photos and/or videos may be used for the City's publicity or promotional purposes on the City's web site, social media sites, and/or printed materials.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Photos to be released are attached.

Videos to be released are described below, including situation and date recorded.

**City of Brentwood  
City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 7 of 14	

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY: SITE GUIDELINES**

<u>Contents:</u>	<u>Page</u>
B. Facebook Guidelines	8
C. Twitter Guidelines	11
D. LinkedIn Guidelines	14
E. Nixle Guidelines	16

**FACEBOOK GUIDELINES**

These *Facebook Guidelines* supplement the City's Social Media Policy. The Guidelines include standards and processes for managing the site, and branding standards. They must be updated as needed. Whenever these Guidelines refer to the Director, they include the Director's designee.

**A. Guidelines applicable to all City-sponsored social media sites.** The City's use of Facebook must be consistent with the Social Media Policy. See, in particular, the Guidelines at Section E.4 regarding Disclaimers, Photos and video, and Style.

**B. Description and Purpose.** Facebook is a social networking site that describes itself as "a social utility that connects you with the people around you." Businesses, non-profits, and government agencies may also use Facebook to promote activities, programs, projects and events. This site is designed to send online traffic to City websites and inform more people about City activities. The City anticipates using the Facebook interactive components.

**C. Establishing a page.** Whenever a Department determines it has a business need for a Facebook account, it will first submit the request to the City Manager. (See Social Media Policy section E.1.) If approved, the IS Division will work with the Department to create a basic page for the Department.<sup>1</sup> The Department may not add applications to the City's Facebook site without the express written approval of the IS Manager. The Department's Director will register the page with a City email address. Personal Facebook profiles may not be used to administer City pages unless approved by the IS Manager.

---

<sup>1</sup> The City will create 'pages' in Facebook, not 'groups'.

- Click "Create Page" on the left navigation pane. A new page will open with options for the type of page. Click on "company, Organization or Institution." On the dropdown menu, choose "Government."
- The main image must be the City logo or an appropriate photo. If a Department has its own logo, this may be used if approved by the City Manager.
- The Department will manage permissions, and limit the Country to USA.
- The Default Landing Tab must be set to INFO. This will ensure people are directed to the disclaimer information and the City's website.

**City of Brentwood**  
**City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 8 of 14	

**D. Type of ‘Pages’; Format.** Facebook ‘pages’ offer distinct advantages including greater visibility, customization and measurability.

1. Departments will include a mission statement, contact information and appropriate text in the introduction box on the Facebook Main Landing Page (FBML).
2. Using the FBML static page application, a boilerplate section should contain a Department/program description and the Disclaimer language from Policy Section E.4.
3. Any additional pages must be linked to the City’s website and to the City’s main Facebook page.
4. City Department pages should ‘like’ other City Facebook pages, and may ‘like’ non-City pages consistent with the City’s Social Media Policy for linking from the City’s website. (See Social Media Policy section C-2.)
5. If a Department has a Twitter feed, then the option to sync Facebook posts to Twitter should be enabled to ensure consistent information is disseminated. Use of aggregator programs (such as Hootsuite) may also be used for cross-platform dissemination of information.

**E. Page Administrators.** A successful page requires consistent attention. In general, the Department should post at least twice per week. The Department’s Director will designate one or more staff members as page administrators who are responsible for monitoring and posting on the Department’s Facebook page. Only these designated staff members may post or monitor the page. (See Social Media Policy section E.2.) The Director is responsible for ensuring content is not stale.

**F. Comments and Discussion Boards.** Comments to the Timeline are currently not allowed. Facebook users can comment on a City post, but may not post content of their own to the City’s pages. Users also have the option of contacting the City’s Facebook page administrator by direct messaging.

**G. Applications.** Applications developed by Facebook can be useful by (among other things) allowing users to stream video and music, post photos, and view and subscribe to RSS feeds. Facebook-developed applications may be used if they serve an appropriate and a valid business purpose, add to the user experience, and are approved by the IS Division. Applications developed by third parties will not be used. The IS Division may remove an application at any time if it determines that the application is causing a security breach or spreading a virus.

**H. Archive.** Each Facebook page will be set up in conjunction with a City email account, and that account will archive all posted content. Content that cannot be retrieved from Facebook via the API (Application Programming Interface) and needs to be retained as a record may be printed or stored in any other medium and maintained according to the City’s Records Retention Policy (No. 00-04).



**City of Brentwood**  
**City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 9 of 14	

**TWITTER GUIDELINES**

These *Twitter Guidelines* supplement the City's Social Media Policy. The Guidelines include standards and processes for managing the site, and branding standards. They must be updated as needed. Whenever these Guidelines refer to the Director, they include the Director's designee.

**A. Guidelines applicable to all City-sponsored social media sites.** The City's use of Twitter must be consistent with the Social Media Policy. See, in particular, the Guidelines at Section E.4 regarding Disclaimers, Photos and video, and Style.

**B. Description and Purpose.** Twitter is an online social networking service that enables users to send and read short 140-character messages called "tweets". Registered users can read and post tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. Businesses, non-profits, and government agencies use Twitter to promote activities, programs, projects and events. This site is designed to send online traffic to City websites and inform more people about City activities. The City anticipates using the Twitter interactive components.

Twitter accounts will serve three primary purposes:

1. Disseminate immediate interesting or important information to residents when posting a news item on the City's website is not necessary, possible or timely;
2. Promote City-sponsored meetings, events, programs, and facilities; and
3. Refer followers to a news item or content hosted on the City's website or other City-sponsored social media.

**C. Establishing an account.** Whenever a Department determines it has a business need for a Twitter account, it will first submit the request to the City Manager. (See Social Media Policy section E.1.) If approved, the IS Division will work with the Department to create an account for the Department. Each Department may have only one Twitter account. The Department may not add applications to the City's Twitter site without the express written approval of the IS Manager. The Department's Director or designee will register the account with a City email address. Personal Twitter profiles may not be used to administer City accounts unless approved by the IS Manager. Account information, including usernames and passwords, shall be registered with the IS Division.

**D. Content; Format.**

1. A Department's Director shall hold and maintain that Department's Twitter account.
2. The main image must be the City logo or an appropriate photo. If a Department has its own logo, this may be used if approved by the City Manager.
3. A Department's Twitter biography and/or background information will include a link to the City's website and include the Disclaimer language from Policy Section E.4.

**City of Brentwood  
City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 10 of 14	

4. If comments are turned on, there must also include a Comment Policy Box with the following disclaimer:

*The City monitors comments posted to this account. The City may remove inappropriate content that violates the standards of its Social Media Policy. The City disclaims responsibility for inappropriate posting which is not removed in a timely manner.*

5. Twitter usernames must begin with “Brentwood...” (e.g. BrentwoodPD, BrentwoodRec, BrentwoodMgr), unless otherwise approved by the City Manager.
6. Information posted on Twitter shall conform to existing City protocols, and those of the Department posting the information. Tweets must be relevant, timely and informative.
7. As much as possible, Twitter content should mirror information presented on the City’s website and other, existing information dissemination mechanisms. The Department Director must ensure that information is posted correctly the first time.
8. The Department’s Director must be responsive to those constituents who communicate via Twitter @reply or direct message functions. Communication with followers must be timely and consistent with this policy and existing standards.
9. The City’s Twitter accounts may allow linking to non-Twitter accounts as long as links are consistent with the City’s adopted policy for linking to the City’s website. (See Social Media Policy, Section C.2.)

**E. Archive.** The Department’s Director must maintain an electronic record or printout of any information necessary to retain for purposes of public records retention, in accordance with the City’s Records Retention Policy (No. 00-04).

**City of Brentwood**  
**City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 11 of 14	

**LINKEDIN GUIDELINES**

These *LinkedIn Guidelines* supplement the City's Social Media Policy. The Guidelines include standards and processes for managing the site, and branding standards. They must be updated as needed. Whenever these Guidelines refer to the Director, they include the Director's designee.

**A. Guidelines applicable to all City-sponsored social media sites.** The City's use of LinkedIn must be consistent with the Social Media Policy. See, in particular, the Guidelines at Section E.4 regarding Disclaimers, Photos and video, and Style.

**B. Description and Purpose.** LinkedIn is a social networking site for people in professional occupations. Many City staff and members of the community have LinkedIn accounts. By procuring and maintaining a LinkedIn company page, the City Departments can communicate information directly to business and community leaders, alerting them to news and directing them to the City's website for more information. LinkedIn will have an interactive component.

LinkedIn accounts will serve three primary purposes:

1. Disseminate immediate interesting or important economic development information to residents and businesses;
2. Promote City-sponsored meetings, events, programs and facilities, and job announcements; and
3. Refer followers to a news item or content hosted on the City's website or other City-sponsored social media.

**C. Content.**

1. The City will have only one company page. That page will be administered by the Public Information Officer. The main image will be the City logo. Account information, including username and password, will be registered with the IS Division.
2. The City's LinkedIn biography and/or background information will include a link to the City's website and include the Disclaimer language from Policy Section E.4.
3. Information posted on LinkedIn shall conform to existing City protocols, and those of the Department posting the information. Posts must be relevant, timely and informative.
4. As much as possible, LinkedIn content should mirror information presented on the City's website and other, existing information dissemination mechanisms. The Department Director must ensure that information is posted correctly the first time.

**City of Brentwood**  
**City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 12 of 14	

**D. Archive.** The Department’s Director must maintain an electronic record or printout of any information necessary to retain for purposes of public records retention (that is not available from the application), in accordance with the City’s Records Retention Policy (No. 00-04).

**City of Brentwood  
City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 13 of 14	

**NIXLE GUIDELINES**

These *Nixle Guidelines* supplement the City's Social Media Policy. The Guidelines include standards and processes for managing the site, and branding standards. They must be updated as needed. Whenever these Guidelines refer to the Chief of Police, they include the Chief of Police's designee.

**A. Guidelines applicable to all City-sponsored social media sites.** The City's use of Nixle must be consistent with the Social Media Policy. See, in particular, the Guidelines at Section E.4 regarding Disclaimers, Photos and video, and Style.

**B. Description and Purpose.** Nixle is a multi-channel social media tool, primarily used by government, law enforcement and education agencies. Nixle provides public subscribers the ability to incorporate users based on geographic proximity, without requiring users to subscribe to multiple jurisdictions. Nixle has the ability to push information out to subscribers through e-mail, text or web, and to choose what level of importance a notification is given, allowing subscribers the ability to tailor what messages they receive.

Nixle has the ability to integrate with the City's Facebook and Twitter accounts, allowing a single message to go out through multiple channels.)

Brentwood Police Department is the only department in the City authorized to use Nixle.

**C. Content.**

1. Nixle support. Nixle support creates the page for the City, using logos and information provided by the City. Changes are submitted to Nixle support.
2. Link and Disclaimer. The City's Nixle will include a link to the City's website.
3. Alert Level. Nixle posts fall into four categories, prioritized by urgency:
  - a. Traffic – used for localized traffic issues, such as roadwork, street closures or high traffic use on major arterials.
  - b. Community – used for day-to-day communications and notification of upcoming Department events, such as Citizens Academy, Police Open House, or Street Smarts program information.
  - c. Advisories – Need-to-know information for community members, including information about crimes occurring in specific areas (e.g. neighborhood burglaries) or safety reminders; and
  - d. Alerts – used in the event of an emergency. Examples include: serious vehicle accident, earthquake, or major incident.

**City of Brentwood**  
**City Manager Administrative Policy**

Subject: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	Date: 2-10-16
	Page 14 of 14	

4. Posts generally. In general, the majority of Nixle posts would be specific to Brentwood, as the primary intent is to keep the community informed regarding public safety issues in the City. However, there may be times the City would use Nixle for regional issues of interest (such as Amber Alerts, major freeway incidents in the area, wildfires, or other catastrophic events).

5. Posting standards. Posts put out via Nixle fall under the purview of Brentwood Police Department. As such, posts will be written by the Public Information Coordinator working with the Brentwood Chief of Police or his or her designee. Posts must be approved by the Chief or designee and must meet all guidelines for release of information under the established guidelines of the City.

**D. Archive.** The Chief of Police must maintain an electronic record or printout of any information necessary to retain for purposes of public records retention, in accordance with the City's Records Retention Policy (No. 00-04).