

Section: Communications	Policy Number: C – 1.2
Sub-section: Municipal Website	Effective Date: November 19, 2018
Subject: Guidelines, roles and responsibilities	Revision Date:

Municipality of North Perth Municipal Website Policy

1.0 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines, roles, and responsibilities for the management and maintenance of the Municipality of North Perth website (www.northperth.ca).

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT:

The Municipality of North Perth website is the primary source of online information exchange with the public and is the Municipality’s official internet presence. A strong online presence is important for the Municipality to provide services to its residents and businesses, as well as attract future visitors, residents, and businesses.

The guidelines outlined in this policy will assist in ensuring that the North Perth website is up-to-date, accurate, accessible, easy to use, and a convenient source for municipal information.

3.0 SCOPE:

This policy applies to the Municipality of North Perth website (www.northperth.ca); including all current and future landing pages and any other approved Municipal websites.

4.0 DEFINITIONS:

“Accessibility” or **“Accessible”** is a general term used to describe the degree of ease that something (e.g., device, service, environment) can be used and enjoyed by persons with a disability. The term implies conscious planning, design, and/or effort to ensure it is barrier-free to persons with a disability, and by extension, highly usable and practical for the general population as well.

“Chief Administrative Officer” or **“CAO”** means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Municipality of North Perth.

“Clerk” means the Clerk of the Municipality of North Perth or Deputy Clerk.

“Content Editor(s)” means Municipal employees who make routine edits to their respective department pages and submit content changes and additions to the Website Administrator(s) for review/approval and publishing to website.

“Content Management” refers to the process of determining what information will be offered on the Municipality of North Perth’s website. Content management includes, but is not limited to, the tasks associated with routine maintenance as defined under this policy.



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“**Content Management System**” or “**CMS**” is an application that allows users to create, edit, and manage online content. The Municipality of North Perth’s website uses the i:Create Content Management System, a product of the eSolutionsGroup.

“**Council**” means the Council of the Municipality of North Perth.

“**Department Head**” means the Director or Manager of a Department of the Municipality of North Perth, and who is a member of the Senior Management Team.

“**External Link**” refers to any hyperlink that takes the website user from the Municipality’s official website to the website of another organization, association, or group.

“**Landing Pages**” refers to the pages of the Municipality of North Perth website managed and maintained by the North Perth Public Library, North Perth-Spinrite Child & Family Centre, and the Listowel BIA.

“**Objectionable Material**” refers to content that contradicts the principles established by the Ontario Human Rights Code or materials of a pornographic, profane or sexually explicit nature, as well as content that may offend based on race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnicity, citizenship, creed, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, family status, religion or disability.

“**PDF**”, or Portable Document Format, is a file format that provides an electronic image of text or text and graphics that looks like a printed document and can be viewed, printed, and electronically transmitted or published.

“**Routine Maintenance**” includes, but is not limited to, the following tasks: updating the calendar of events, posting public notices, news, or other materials related to the Municipality, posting material as requested by various department heads, correcting information posted online in order to ensure accuracy, verifying all hyperlinks to ensure that they are functioning, conducting accessibility checks, posting Council, board and committee meeting minutes, posting Council agendas, and taking down any information that is deemed outdated and/or inaccurate.

“**Website(s)**” refers to the official Municipality of North Perth website at www.northperth.ca, including all website landing pages (e.g., North Perth Public Library, Listowel BIA, North Perth-Spinrite Child & Family Centre), and any other domain name(s) the Municipality acquires for official Municipal use.

“**Website Administrator**” means a designated Municipal employee(s) who is responsible for the creation, review, and approval of website content and ensure overall compliance with website content guidelines.



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5.0 POLICY CONTENT:

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The Municipality of North Perth website is structured and maintained through the i:Create Content Management System (CMS), a product of the eSolutionsGroup. Updates and upgrades to the i:Create CMS and its related modules may result in changes to the roles and responsibilities outlined below.

I. Website Administrator

The designated Website Administrator is responsible for the content management and routine maintenance of the website, as well as the removal, alteration, and addition of information found on departmental pages when deemed necessary or requested by a Department Head.

The Website Administrator will review website content changes and additions published by content editors to ensure compliance with website content management guidelines, as outlined in this policy.

The Website Administrator is responsible for all parts of the Municipality’s website, except for:

Landing Pages

The Municipality’s website currently has four “landing pages” that are separate but included on the general website (i.e., North Perth Public Library, North Perth-Spinrite Child & Family Centre, Listowel BIA, and North Perth Summer Day Camps).

Support Staff of the Library, Daycare, Listowel BIA, and Parks & Recreation Department are responsible for the content management and routine maintenance of their respective landing pages. Landing pages must comply with the guidelines set out in this policy and should stay as consistent as possible with the language, style and format of the general website.

BIDS & TENDORS

As per the Municipality of North Perth Procurement By-law, the Municipality uses the software application BIDS & TENDERS for all Procurement Requests, unless otherwise stipulated.

As a component of the Municipality’s website, Finance support staff will be responsible for the management of the BIDS & TENDERS page on the Municipality’s website.

Clerk’s Department

To ensure accuracy and that legislative requirements are met, the Clerk will be responsible for the content management and routine maintenance of the following website components:



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- Council and Committee Calendar, including Meeting Agendas and Minutes
- By-laws
- Zoning and planning, including Notices for Public Meetings Zoning and By-law Amendments
- Applications, Licences and Permits
- Municipal Elections

This list is not binding and may be adjusted at the discretion of the CAO and/or agreement of the Website Administrator and Clerk.

II. CAO

The CAO, in consultation with the Senior Management Team, is responsible to designate the role of Website Administrator to the appropriate Municipal employee.

The CAO is responsible to ensure Department Heads perform reviews of their department website sections, as described in section 4.1.3.

The CAO will instruct and provide the Website Administrator with the authority to conduct a review of the website, and/or sections of the website, when deemed appropriate. Any major website content or structure revisions resulting from this review will be discussed with the CAO and relevant Department Head, where appropriate.

The CAO will inform the Website Administrator of any website content additions or revisions as requested by Council.

The CAO will inform the Website Administrator of Council decisions and other Municipal news/public notice announcements that should be communicated on the website.

III. Department Heads

Each Department Head will perform a semi-annual review (e.g., seasonally) of all website material posted under their department's website section. The Department Head will inform the Website Administrator of any changes or updates that need to be made to the website content in order to ensure accuracy and relevancy.

Apart from semi-annual reviews, Department Heads may request their department information on the website be reviewed, amended or removed anytime throughout the year.

Department Heads will communicate service and/or program changes or Council decisions that affect their department and should be communicated to the public via the website with the Website Administrator. The Department Head and Website Administrator, with input from the CAO when appropriate, will decide by which method the information should be communicated through the website (e.g., news item, public notice, alert banner, displayed on homepage, creation of new interior page, etc.).



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IV. Municipal Employees

Municipal employees with i:Create CMS training may publish routine materials to the website under their department’s pages as content editors. Examples of routine materials include, but are not limited to, municipal employment postings, recreation calendar events, newsletters/guides and schedules, public works public notices, etc. Municipal employees will work with the Website Administrator to ensure that routine materials are consistent with the general format and language of the website.

5.2 Content Management Guidelines

Content on the Municipality’s website must meet one or more of the following criteria in order to be posted:

- a) Provides public information about events, activities and services provided by, in association with or supported by the Municipality or a board/committee of the Municipality.
- b) Provides public information about events, activities and services provided by, in association with or supported by upper tier governments that directly affect residents, visitors and persons conducting business in the Municipality.
- c) Deemed by Council to be of interest to the Municipality of North Perth, its residents and/or visitors.

Further:

- Content that includes objectionable material, as defined under this policy, is prohibited from appearing on the Municipality’s website.
- Content must be approved by the appropriate Department Head.
- Content must include requirements for plain language and accessibility. *The Canadian Style Guide* provides a comprehensive guide for writing and editing, including requirements and best practices for writing in plain language. Find the guide here <http://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/tpv2guides/guides/tcdnstyl/index-eng.html?lang=eng>.
- Content must be checked thoroughly for accuracy (e.g., spelling, grammar, factuality) in order to maintain the professional image of the Municipality and the website.
- If content is adapted from a third party source, proper copyright permissions or acknowledgements must be documented.
- The language, style and format of content must be consistent throughout the website.
- If PDFs or external links are published on the website, they must be set to open in a new browser window. All PDFs published to the website and created by the Municipality should meet accessibility standards.
- Images must be formatted and appropriate for website use (e.g., good quality, not distorted). Images used on the main page must have a landscape orientation for



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proper formatting. Images containing individuals can only be used if consent is received prior to use.

- Out-of-date content and information should be regularly removed from the website to avoid user confusion.

5.3 External Links

I. Criteria for Posting External Links

The Municipality will consider posting external links on its website if the link meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Connects the public with information and services provided by upper tier governments or government-funded agencies or boards in Canada.
- Provides further information on subject matter found on the Municipality’s website. Such information must be provided by an official and/or accredited source.
- A Municipally affiliated organization, service club or registered charity (direct partnership by way of funding, sponsorship, staff resources or in-kind contributions);
- A business improvement area operating within the municipality.
- A professional association as determined solely by the Municipality of North Perth.
- Any organization approved by Council.

The Municipality will not post external links on its website for:

- personal websites;
- websites that contain objectionable material as defined in this policy or links directing visitors to objectionable material;
- individual businesses, except when part of a Municipal website Business Directory developed for economic development and tourism purposes and/or the Listowel BIA; and/or
- political parties or candidates.

II. Removal of External Links

External links will be removed by the Municipality without notice if, but not limited to, any of the following conditions apply:

- the site’s original information has been altered or the context of the information has changed;
- the site no longer meets the conditions listed above for acceptable external links;
- in the Municipality’s sole opinion, the information on the site has become inaccurate and/or not credible;
- page formatting, lengthy download times or advertising makes accessing information difficult;



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- e) the link returns a “not found” error;
- f) the link promotes, exhibits, illustrates or manifests objectionable material, as defined in this policy; and/or
- g) the site and content does not comply with municipal, provincial or federal legislation.

The i:Create CMS module Link Checker will be performed on a routine basis by the Website Administrator to identify any links on the Municipality’s website that are no longer active and/or are broken.

Notwithstanding the criteria listed in sections 4.3.1. and 4.3.2., the Municipality reserves the right to post, refuse to post any external links on its website or delete links already posted on its site at any time, without notice.

III. Requesting an External Link

Requests to add an external link to the Municipality’s website, according to the criteria listed above, should be submitted info@northperth.ca for consideration.

5.4 Community Calendar

The Municipality will post information regarding community activities, programs, meetings, and events organized by the Municipality and other organizations on its website Community Calendar. The Municipality reserves the right to post any other events to the Community Calendar that it deems to be in the community’s interest.

I. Criteria for Publishing Events Submitted by the Public

Members of the public may submit event information to be added on the website Community Calendar if the event is open to the public, occurs within the boundaries of North Perth or the County of Perth, and meets one of the following criteria:

- organized or funded by another level of government;
- organized by a government-funded agency or board;
- organized by a Municipality of North Perth affiliated group;
- funded in full, or in part, by the Municipality of North Perth;
- sponsored by the Municipality of North Perth;
- organized by a registered charitable organization operating within the Municipality of North Perth or the County of Perth;
- organized by a service club operating within the Municipality of North Perth performing work that benefits North Perth residents;
- organized by a business improvement area or Chamber of Commerce located in the municipality for general promotional purposes; and/or
- located in a facility owned by the Municipality of North Perth.



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Events submitted by the public will not be published on the website Community Calendar if they:

- a) are commercial in nature and, in the Municipality’s sole opinion, are attempting to advertise, promote, or sell products or services of an individual or an individual business;
- b) promote, exhibit, illustrate, or manifest objectionable material, as defined in this policy;
- c) do not comply with municipal, provincial, or federal legislation;
- d) are political in nature or promote a certain political party or candidate; and/or
- e) promote an individual religion or religious service.

Notwithstanding the criteria listed above, the Municipality reserves the right to post, refuse to post, or remove any event from the website Community Calendar at any time, without notice.

II. Submitting an Event

Requests from a member of the public to add an event to the website Community Calendar must be submitted on the Community Calendar page of the website. Users who wish to submit events are required to create an account prior to posting to the Community Calendar.

To be considered for publication, an event submission must be accompanied by the event title and event details, including date, time and location, and contact information of an individual from the event organizing committee. Anonymous postings of events will not be published.

The Website Administrator will be responsible to monitor, approve, and/or disapprove Community Calendar event submissions.

5.5 Public Inquiries

The Municipal website provides members of the public the ability to contact Municipal staff or councillors through an email function, as well as issue reporting and customer service feedback forms.

As per section 7.1 of the Municipality of North Perth’s Customer Service Policy, website users requiring a response to a non-routine inquiry will be required to provide name, home address, telephone number and email address to municipal staff. Failure to provide the requested contact information will result in the request not being process.

This requirement assists staff in prioritizing inquiries made by North Perth residents through email and allows for easier follow-up to inquiries. Visitors to the Municipal website are prompted to provide this information when they open the e-mail pop-up window.



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5.6 Advertising

The Municipality will not publish any advertisement on its website submitted by an organization, business, or individual, unless the advertisement is for a community event that involves the Municipality of North Perth as a funder, sponsor, or recipient of funds.

5.7 Accessibility

The Municipality of North Perth values the contributions and participation of all citizens in the municipality. To facilitate involvement, the Municipality is committed to provide goods, information, services and programs that are accessible to all.

As per the Municipality of North Perth Corporate Accessibility Policy and Procedures, “*Websites or web content controlled directly by the Municipality or through a contractual relationship that allows for modification of the product shall conform to the World Wide Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCA) 2.0, at Level A and AA in accordance with the schedule set out in the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards*”.

5.8 Privacy

Content containing personal information available through the website must comply with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection to Privacy Act*.

5.9 Disclaimer

While the Municipality of North Perth will make every effort to ensure the accuracy and completeness of website content, the Municipality does not guarantee the quality, accuracy, or completeness of any information on the website. In the event of a discrepancy between content on the website and the information contained in official records of the Municipality, the information contained in official records will be deemed as accurate.

The Municipality of North Perth does not make any representation or warranty, expressed or implied, concerning the accuracy, quality, likely results, or reliability of the information contained on externally linked websites.

External communications received through www.northperth.ca will in no way be deemed to constitute official legal notice to the Municipality or any of its agencies, officers, employees, or representatives.

6.0 POLICY COMMUNICATION:

This policy will be communicated to the Council and staff of the Municipality of North Perth. The policy will be posted on the Municipality of North Perth Website and the North Perth WIN.



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7.0 POLICY REVIEW:

This policy will be reviewed once per Council Term or more often as needed.

8.0 COMPLIANCE:

In cases of policy violation, the Municipality may investigate and determine appropriate corrective action.

9.0 REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

North Perth Corporate Accessibility Policy and Procedures

North Perth Communications Plan

10.0 REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Date	Comments
1		Issue Date