1. POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE
The City of Walnut Creek ("City") recognizes the importance of social media in communicating with the public, and has an over-riding interest and expectation in protecting the integrity of the information posted on its social media sites and the content that is attributed to the City and its officials. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the City's social media outlets maintain the professional image of the City of Walnut Creek and meet legal standards.

In addition, this policy shall establish oversight, administration and management guidelines for departmental use of social media to further the goals of the City.

2. SCOPE
This policy applies to City of Walnut Creek elected and appointed officials, employees, volunteers, contractors and any other representatives acting on behalf of the City or any of its Departments and Divisions.

This policy does not establish employee guidelines pertaining to personal use of social media, which can be found in other City policies.

3. DEFINITIONS
Social media, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as Internet-based media that has a participatory element, including but not limited to websites, blogs, wiki pages, user-generated video and audio sites, and online social networks. (Current examples include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Wikipedia, YouTube, flickr, Smug Mug, etc.)
4. RESPONSIBILITY

ADMINISTRATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

A. The Communications Manager must be able to immediately add, edit or remove content from all City sanctioned social media sites/accounts, including but not limited to access in crisis situations. Therefore, the Communications Manager will:

1. Maintain a list of social media tools that are approved for use for City business.

2. Maintain a registry of all City social media presences, including log-in and password information.

3. Will review concerns raised by Department Directors regarding public comments.

4. Have the right to monitor content on City social media sites to ensure compliance with the City's Social Media Policy and the interests and goals of the City.

5. Create style and usage standards for specific social media tools as appropriate.

B. Department or Division responsibilities:

1. Will be responsible for adding, editing, monitoring, and removing content from all social media sites their Department or Division may create, including review of comments from the public. Guidelines for staff will be provided and updated periodically by the City's Communications Manager.

2. Accounts inactive for 90 days or longer shall be subject to deactivation.

C. Employee responsibilities

1. Any employee authorized to post items on any of the City's social media sites shall review, be familiar with, and comply with the City's Social Media Policy, the social media sites' use policies and terms and conditions and any related guidelines issued by the Communications Manager.

2. Any employee authorized to post items on any of the City's social media sites shall not express his or her own personal views or concerns through such postings. Postings on any of the City's social media sites by an authorized City employee shall only reflect the views or concerns of the City.
5. PROCEDURE

A. GENERAL

1. The City will utilize social media to engage, build relationships with, and provide useful information to the City’s residents, partners and stakeholders. We will build awareness of the City’s Mission through providing relevant, timely information and opportunities for interaction.

2. Our goals in using social media include:
   a. Expanding visibility and outreach;
   b. Increasing credibility with the public by posting relevant information and offering transparency;
   c. Building affinity; creating a media presence that positively promotes the City and/or its Divisions/programs;
   d. Increasing engagement from the public as visitors/fans/members;
   e. Disseminating time-sensitive information efficiently and quickly.

3. The City’s website (www.walnut-creek.org) will remain the City’s primary and predominant internet presence.
   a. Where appropriate, content posted to City social media sites will also be available on the City’s official website.
   b. Where appropriate, content posted to City social media sites should contain links directing users back to the City’s official website for further information and services.

4. All official social media presences are to be listed on the City of Walnut Creek website to assist the public in identifying official social media presences.

5. All City social media sites shall comply with usage rules and regulations provided by the site provider, including privacy policies.

6. The City reserves the right to terminate any City social media site at any time without notice.

B. CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

1. Staff must obtain their Department Director’s approval prior to creating a social media site or account on behalf of the City.
2. Before creating a social media site or account, the Director will consider whether social media is appropriate and/or useful to the Department or Division.

3. All City social media sites or accounts created by Departments or Divisions are subject to prior written approval by the City’s Communications Manager.

4. All City social media sites shall utilize official City contact information for account set-up, monitoring, and access. The use of personal email accounts or phone numbers by any City employee, official or volunteer is not allowed for the purpose of setting up, monitoring or updating a City social media site.

C. ADHERENCE TO LAWS, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

1. All City social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies, including all applicable City policies or guidelines.

2. Any person representing the City on any social media site shall conduct himself or herself at all times as a professional representative of the City and in accordance with all City policies.

D. PUBLIC RECORDS

1. The City is subject to the California Public Records Act. All social media sites shall clearly indicate that any article and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure as required by law.

2. Retention of Records: Due to the temporary nature of postings and comments on social media sites, postings and comments shall not be considered permanent records of the City and retained as such unless printed, filed or otherwise saved by the Department or Division staff responsible for the social media site.

   a. Content removed pursuant to this policy shall be printed out prior to removal and forwarded to the Communications Manager for retention. Removed content will be retained by the Communications Manager for two years, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available.

E. CONTENT STANDARDS

1. Any City social media site that elicits or allows comments from the public shall be designated as a limited public forum for First Amendment purposes. As such, and in order to promote the City's goals articulated above and remain in compliance with other laws, City social media site content and
comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed and shall be promptly removed:

a. Profane or threatening language or content;

b. Sexual content or links to sexual content;

c. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation;

d. Solicitations or 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;

h. Potentially libelous or defamatory comments;

i. Private or personal information published without consent.

2. Users posting to the City’s social media sites shall be informed that the City disclaims any and all responsibility and liability for any materials that the City deems inappropriate for posting.

3. These guidelines will be posted on the City’s website and must be made available to social media users by hyperlink.

6. POLICY HISTORY AND CITATIONS

This is a new policy issued in January 2012, there are no amendments yet. Social media standards issued by the Communications Manager are periodically updated and attached to this policy and considered incorporated herein.

This policy was issued on January 3, 2012 and approved by:

Ken Nordhoff
City Manager

Attachment: City Facebook Standards
This Facebook standard is an attachment to the City’s Social Media Policy.

**Purpose**

This standard is designed for City departments looking to drive traffic to Department or Division websites and to inform more people about City activities. These standards shall be used in conjunction with the Social Media Use policy. As Facebook changes, these standards may be updated as needed.

**Establishing a page**

When a Department or Division determines it has a business need for a Facebook account and has approval of the Department Director, it will submit a request to the Communications Manager. Once approved, the Department will create a basic page. Applications shall not be added to the Facebook page without the express written permission of the IT Division. The department’s director or designee will register the page with a City email address. Personal Facebook profiles shall not be used to administrate City pages.

**Type of Pages**

The City will create “pages” in Facebook (not a personal page). Facebook “pages” offer distinct advantages including greater visibility, customization and measurability.

**Format**

- For ‘category’ description, choose “companies and organizations” (first dropdown menu), then “government organization” or a category that best describes the division/program’s mission (second dropdown menu).
- The main image shall be the Department or Division logo or an appropriate photo. It may also be the City’s logo.
- Departments will include a mission statement or appropriate text in the “About” box on the Wall Page.
- Departments will include a statement linked to the Terms of Use app that contains the following:
  - “This is an official Facebook page of the City of Walnut Creek (or relevant program or department). For more information about the City of Walnut Creek, please visit [www.walnut-creek.org](http://www.walnut-creek.org). This site is intended to serve as a mechanism for communication between the public and the department on the listed topics, and as a forum to further the mission of the department. Any comment submitted to this page and its list of fans may be considered a public record which is subject to disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act. Public Information Requests must be directed to the Communications Manager.”
  - The statement will also include a link to the City’s Social Media webpage.
• If comments are turned on, the statement linked to the Terms of Use app on the Wall Page shall also include a Comment Policy Box with the following disclaimer:
  o “Comments posted to this page will be monitored and inappropriate content will be removed as soon as possible. Under the City of Walnut Creek Social Media Use Policy, the City reserves the right to remove inappropriate content, including, but not limited to, those items that have obscene language or sexual content, threaten or defame any person or organization; violate the legal ownership interest of another party; promote illegal activity; and promote commercial services or products. The City disclaims any and all responsibility and liability for any materials that the City deems inappropriate for posting, which cannot be removed in an expeditious and otherwise timely manner.”
• A link to www.walnut-creek.org will be included on the Info page.
• The page name must be descriptive of the department or division/program. Each department will choose carefully with due consideration given to abbreviations, slang iterations, and proper grammatical usage.
  o The Communications Manager will approve proposed names.
  o As soon as is reasonably possible (currently, when a page has 50 fans), the page should be given a unique url to make it easy to find, e.g. Facebook.com/cityofwalnutcreek.

“Liking” other Facebook pages

• City department and project pages shall be fans of the City of Walnut Creek’s main Facebook page, and when appropriate, should be fans of other City of Walnut Creek department and program Facebook pages.
• City department and project pages shall not be fans of pages created by individuals; commercial or political interests; employee bargaining units; or other pages that fall outside of into the “Terms of Use” guidelines.

Page Administrators

• A successful page requires constant attention. The department’s director will designate one or more staff members as page administrators who will be responsible for monitoring the department’s Facebook page. Only designated department staff members will make posts.
• The Department’s Director or designee will be responsible for ensuring content is not stale. The department will designate one or more back-up administrators.
Comments and Discussion Boards

- Comments to the Wall generally will be allowed if the Department/Division regularly monitors content (at least once a day during normal workdays). Otherwise, comments shall be turned off.

- Discussion Boards shall be turned off unless approved by the Communications Manager and the Department Director.

Photos and Video

- Page administrators may add photos and videos to the department’s Facebook page. If there are photos or videos of the public, staff must secure waivers by individuals depicted in those photos/videos unless they were taken in a public area or at a public event, where there is no expectation of privacy. Photos/videos of City employees taken during regular work hours may be posted without obtaining waivers.

- The ability for fans to post photos, videos and links shall be turned off unless approved in advance by the Communications Manager and the Department Director.

Style

- Departments will use proper grammar and standard AP style and will avoid the use of jargon and acronyms that are not commonly known. Facebook is more casual than most other communication tools, but communications must still professionally represent the City at all times.

Prepared by: Gayle Vassar, Communications Manager
January 3, 2012