

**Title: Social Media**

**Policy No: 7006**

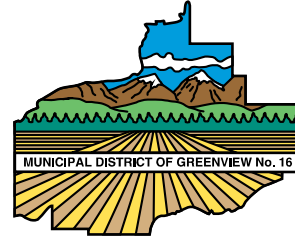
**Effective Date: February 13, 2024**

**Motion Number: 24.02.57**

**Supersedes Policy No: 1036**

**Department: Communications and Marketing**

**Review Date: February, 2024**



**Legal References:**

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. F-25, as amended.

Municipal Government Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. M-26, as amended.

**Cross References:**

- Bylaw 20-851 "Municipal Emergency Management"
- Bylaw 18-797 "Council Code of Conduct"
- Policy 7001 "Communications"
- Policy 2004 "Employee Code of Conduct"
- Policy 1030 "Flag Protocol"
- Policy 1025 "Public Engagement"

**Purpose:** Greenview’s Social Media policy is intended to create a fair and transparent means for Greenview to communicate with residents and stakeholders. This policy establishes direction for the use of Greenview Social Media accounts, and expectations for resident interaction.

Additionally, this policy provides guidelines for Councillor and Employee use of their personal social media accounts in a manner that is not harmful to the reputation of Greenview.

**1. DEFINITIONS**

- 1.1. **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP)** means the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. F-35*, and any amendments thereto.
- 1.2. **Employee** means a person employed by Greenview in any capacity.
- 1.3. **Greenview** means the Municipal District of Greenview No. 16.
- 1.4. **Post** means any posting, including any written comment, content, or image, including but not limited to photographs, video, clip art, scanned images, documents and emoticons.
- 1.5. **State of Local Emergency (SOLE)** means a local state of emergency, as defined by Bylaw 20-851 "Municipal Emergency Management Bylaw" and any amendments or successor legislation thereto.

**2. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 2.1. Greenview supports the use of social media to further the strategic direction and goals of the municipality. Social media provides additional tools and channels that complement traditional communications, marketing methods, and mediums. The purpose of using social media sites is to present matters of public interest.
- 2.2. The public has the right to access and reference Greenview’s social media sites in the same way as traditional communication methods.

- 2.3. Greenview shall treat public engagement on social media sites in the same way as traditional engagement.
- 2.4. Greenview reserves the right to delete or moderate content Posted to Greenview social media sites.

### 3. SOCIAL MEDIA MODERATION

- 3.1. To ensure public accessibility and the protection of all citizens, Greenview reserves the right to remove comments, Posts, or content that contains any of the following:
- A) Confidential or personal information;
  - B) Discriminatory or hateful language;
  - C) Attacks on any person, whether an employee, member of Council or the public;
  - D) Profanity or abusive language;
  - E) Encouragement or demonstration of illegal behaviour;
  - F) Explicit language or links to explicit content;
  - G) Spam;
  - H) Unsolicited commercial advertising that may attempt to sell, promote, or advertise products or services;
  - I) A Post that could compromise the well-being, safety, or security of the public, employees, councillors, or anyone else;
  - J) A Post that may compromise the security of public systems, equipment, buildings, or other property;
  - K) Violation of any municipal, provincial, or federal laws or bylaws; or
  - L) Promotion of individual religions, political parties, or candidates in any election.
- 3.2. Posts made by citizens or third-party contributors do not necessarily reflect or represent the views or opinions of Greenview or its employees. Greenview does not necessarily endorse public comments or Posts.
- 3.3. Engagement on Greenview-owned social media channels is typically considered transitory records and will not be archived, stored, or kept by Greenview. However, by engaging with and using Greenview social media channels, users acknowledge and consent that their engagement (comments, Posts, messages, etc.) may become part of the public record and could potentially be used in Greenview's official documentation. Greenview reserves the right to decide what Posts, comments, or messages may be saved in official documentation.
- 3.4. Greenview is not responsible for any harm, damages, or losses from using third-party social media sites. Participants do so at their own risk and accept that they have no right of action against Greenview in relation to the use of social media.

### 4. PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA

- 4.1. Whether an employee chooses to engage in personal social media is a personal decision and not a business decision. Greenview neither encourages nor discourages an employee's personal use of personal social media. However, activities that affect an employee's job performance, the performance of other Greenview employees, or Greenview business and reputation are still governed by Greenview's Employee Code of Conduct policy whether or not such activities are undertaken through an employee's personal social media account(s).
- 4.2. Greenview employees who maintain personal social media pages or accounts must comply with the following guidelines as they relate to their association with Greenview. Employees will be held accountable for what they write or Post on social media or websites. Inflammatory comments or unprofessional or disparaging remarks made about the

municipality, its employees, customers, vendors, or ratepayers may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- 4.3. This policy is not intended to interfere with the private lives of our employees or restrict their freedom of speech. This policy is designed to ensure that the image and branding of Greenview are maintained, as well as the health and safety of employees.
- 4.4. Employees shall conduct themselves professionally both on and off duty. Where an employee publicly associates with the municipality or is known to be employed by Greenview, all materials associated with their personal page may reflect on Greenview. Please be advised that inappropriate comments, photographs, links, and so on should be avoided.
- 4.5. Posts involving the following will not be tolerated and will subject the individual to discipline:
  - A) Proprietary and confidential information;
  - B) Discriminatory statements or comments of a harassing or bullying nature regarding co-workers, management, customers, ratepayers or vendors; and
  - C) Defamatory statements regarding the organization, its employees, customers, ratepayers, competitors, or vendors.
- 4.6. Where an employee mentions the municipality, they must include a disclaimer stating that any opinions expressed are the employee's own and do not represent Greenview's position, strategies, or opinions.
- 4.7. Employees who use these sites are prohibited from publishing any private organizational information or any negative comments regarding the organization therein.
- 4.8. Greenview employees are prohibited from speaking on behalf of the organization, releasing confidential information, releasing news, or communicating as a representative of the organization without prior authorization to act as a designated Greenview representative.
- 4.9. Use of personal social media may not conflict with any existing policies of Greenview whatsoever. This includes the Employee Code of Conduct Policy.
- 4.10. Employees should abide by these guidelines whether they mention Greenview by name or not. Even if the name is not mentioned in a Post, it is possible a connection can be made back to Greenview which can negatively affect the organization's reputation. Where a connection can be made between a negative or inflammatory Post and the organization, even if not named directly, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 4.11. Employees MUST NEVER:
  - A) Use personal social media accounts to:
  - B) Attack or harass employees, vendors, consumers, customers, contractors or partners, other social media users, etc. Examples of such conduct might include offensive Posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or Posts that contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation or any other status protected by law or Greenview policy;
  - C) Give personal information such as name, driver's license, home address, phone numbers, and social insurance numbers about co-workers, supervisors, direct reports or other staff or ratepayers;
  - D) access or participate in social media activities that promote behaviour which is contrary to the Employee Code of Conduct;

- E) make reference, Post or upload images of vendors, ratepayers, contractors, competitors or partners etc. onto social media sites without approval. In order to comply with privacy and intellectual property laws, it is recommended that permission is obtained before publishing images onto social media channels; and
- F) Spend excessive time on social media during working hours unless work/role related.

## 5. DAYS OF RECOGNITION

- 5.1. This section does not apply to social media posts which seek to promote services and programming offered by Greenview.
- 5.2. Greenview shall give recognition on social media to:
  - A) The statutory holidays outlined in Schedule 'A'
  - B) The days outlined in Schedule 'B' as defined in Policy 1030 "Flag Policy"
  - C) Other days provided they compliment existing municipal services.
- 5.3. Council may direct Administration, by resolution, to give recognition to other commemorative days.

## 6. COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1. Council members are bound by the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw, FOIP, The Municipal Government Act, and any other legislation relating to copyright, privacy, and the disclosure of information.
- 6.2. Council Members who use social media platforms to create an official Councillor profile must ensure that their use of social media does not put Greenview's security, reputation, or information at risk.
- 6.3. Council Members should not use their official "@mdgreenview.ab.ca" email address to create social media accounts.
- 6.4. Council Members shall be held personally responsible for the content they publish on their own political and social media platforms and shall not hold Greenview responsible or liable for any content Posted.
- 6.5. Council Members may be involved in political debate on their political and social media platforms. All actions on Council Members' political and social media platforms shall be conducted respectfully and in accordance with the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw. Bullying, hatred, bigotry, disrespect, harassment, and otherwise bringing Council, Greenview, or Greenview Administration into dispute are prohibited and subject to disciplinary action as determined by Council in accordance with the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw.
- 6.6. Council Members must not act, claim to act, or give the impression that they are acting as a representative of Council as a whole on their political social media platforms. Council Members using social media must make clear that their actions and opinions on social media are their own.
- 6.7. Council Members may not represent themselves as anything other than their official title and capacity on their political and social media platforms.
- 6.8. Council Members may not publish or report on meeting discussions held in closed sessions or other confidential matters on social media, regardless of the profile being public or private.

- 6.9. Council Members may not use the official Greenview logo on their social media platforms.
- 6.10. Greenview’s official social media platforms shall not promote any Council Member’s social media platform. Greenview reserves the right to like or share content that is Posted to the Council members’ social media platforms if the Post is deemed to be of informational value to the community as a whole.
- 6.11. Once an elected official’s term ends or they resign from the position, they must delete or rename their political and social media platforms to reflect that they are no longer a sitting member of Council.
- 6.12. Council acknowledges that it is Administration’s role to release information on Greenview news, announcements, projects, events, and other relevant items and shall not circumvent that duty unless specifically given the authorization to do so by a resolution of Council.
- 6.13. Councillors should refrain from releasing information on their own private or public social media accounts prior to Administration releasing the information to the public.
- 6.14. Council Members recognize that any direction of content, administration, creation of Posts, and general usage of Greenview social media platforms must come from Council as a whole.
- 6.15. Individual Councillors may recommend content to Administration, but Administration manages the content of Greenview social media in accordance with relevant policies and bylaws, and as directed by Council as a whole and is subject to the schedules of content managed by the Communications Department.

## 7. ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1. Employees must ensure that confidential matters are not disclosed on their private social media accounts. Employees are bound by all federal and provincial legislation, and all, Greenview bylaws, policies, and procedures. They must not disclose Greenview information or content they are not specifically authorized to disclose.
- 7.2. The only role of Greenview Administration and social media platforms during a municipal election period is to promote the election itself. Greenview Social Media will not be used to further the campaigns of current or prospective Council Members.
  - A) No sharing of any content for prospective Members of Council shall occur on any official Greenview social media platform.
  - B) To safeguard a fair and equitable election period, effective January 1 of an election year, all links, likes, follows, and any sharing of content with a current Reeve or Councillor shall cease on all official Greenview social media platforms until the Organizational Meeting for the newly elected Council.
  - C) Greenview reserves the right to delete any comments or links Posted to its pages or social media Posts from any persons seeking election to maintain neutrality during the election and to avoid the perception of any candidate endorsement by Greenview.
  - D) The only exception to the above is in the event of a SOLE or community crisis that requires public acknowledgment from a current Member of Council. The Reeve, CAO and/or Director of Emergency Management shall determine what constitutes a community emergency.
- 7.3. Any provision of this policy may be superseded at any time by the Director of Emergency Management during the activation of the Emergency Operations Centre and surrounding an activation of SOLE.

Schedule 'A' – Statutory Holidays

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Heritage Day
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Remembrance Day
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

## Schedule 'B' – Flag Policy Days

Day of Mourning for Persons killed or injured in the Workplace  
National Day of Remembrance of the Battle of Vimy Ridge  
National Day of Remembrance for the Victims of terrorism  
Firefighters' National Memorial Day  
Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day  
National Day of Truth and Reconciliation  
Remembrance Day  
National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women