



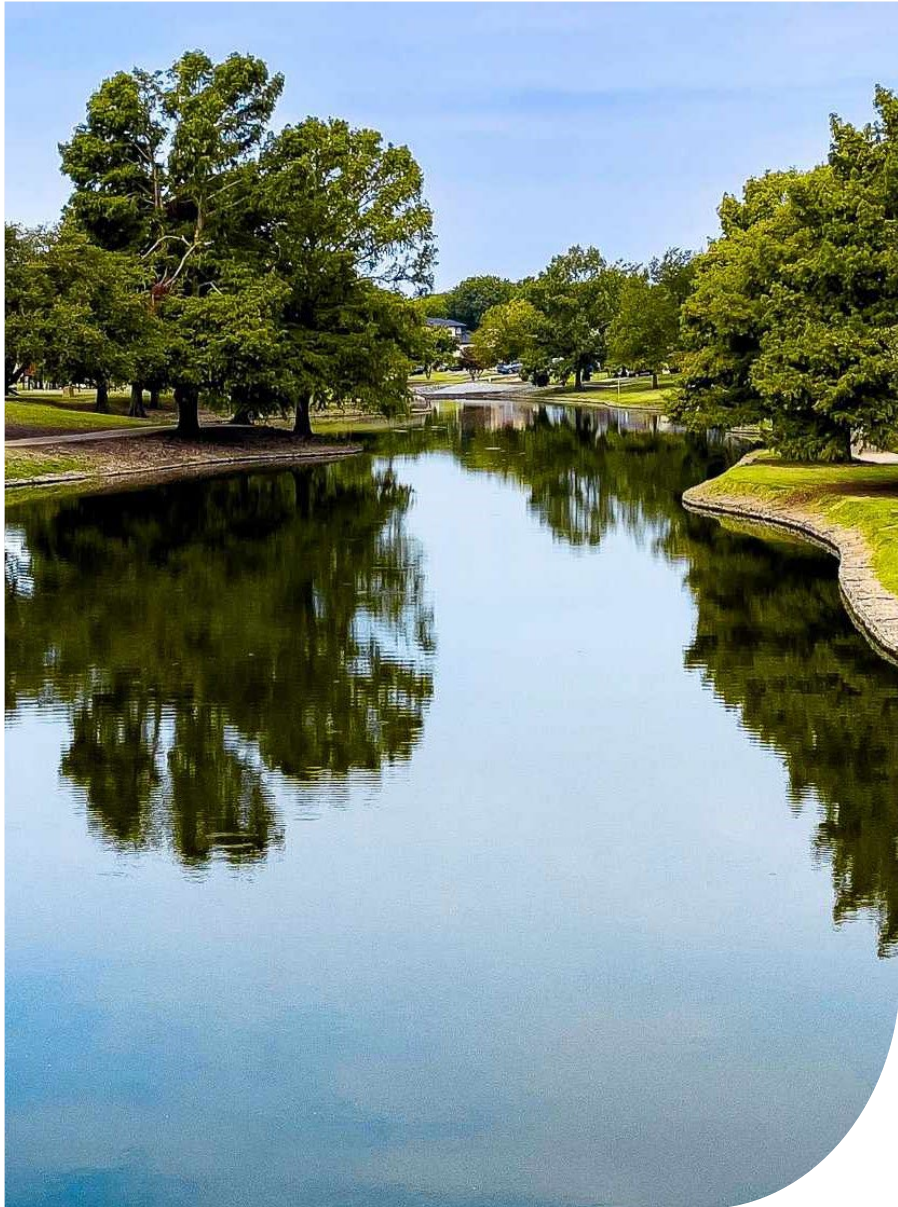
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Media Engagement Guidelines

City Council Orientation | June 23, 2026

Presented By: Communications Division





Media Engagement Guidelines

Purpose of Today's Briefing

- 1** Provide the Mayor and City Council with a clear understanding of expectations for media engagement.
- 2** Reinforce goals of accurate, unified, transparent communication.
- 3** Ensure alignment with Texas Open Meetings Act, Public Information Act, and the City's Media Relations Policy.

Council-Manager Form of Government

Council sets policy: City Manager oversees administration.

Media engagement should reflect this structure: Council speaks to policy, staff to operations.



Media Engagement Guidelines

Roles and Responsibilities



Council

Represents policy direction; obtains info through City Manager.



City Manager

Primary spokesperson for operations; ensures message consistency.



Communications/PIO

Prepares and verifies official information.



Directors

Provides expertise, but does not issue policy statements.



Overarching Principles for Media Engagement



Accuracy: statements grounded in City records; the communications team can verify facts.

Transparency: clarify personal views vs. Council positions.

Professionalism: maintain a friendly and respectful tone.

Media Relations: Foster positive relations with local media.

Media Outlets

National News Media – Cover issues of national interest.

Local News Media – NBC5, WFAA, KERA, DMN: cover local issues in North Texas.

Community News Media – Branch Herald: Cover community news and events.

What Council Members May Do

AND

What Council Members Should Avoid

Do's

- Express individual views on policy.
 - Use disclaimers when views differ from adopted action.
 - Say "No Comment" when appropriate.
 - Notify City Manager when engaging with the media.
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Don'ts

- Discussing personnel, procurement, litigation, or confidential matters.
- Implication of quorum consensus outside posted meetings.
- Issue statements conflicting with adopted policy.
- Sharing non-public information.

Handling Media Inquiries

Operational Questions - City Manager.

Policy Questions - Council may answer; notify City.

Sensitive Issues - Coordinated talking points developed.



Crisis/Public Safety Communication Expectations

Emergency communications flow through the Emergency Operations Center.

During emergencies, a separate Crisis Communications Action Plan is activated.

Communications support the Emergency Operations Center during a crisis.

It's recommended that Councilmembers avoid independent statements during crises.

It's important to have ONE VOICE during emergencies.

Public Safety Communication is handled by the Public Safety Communication Specialist.

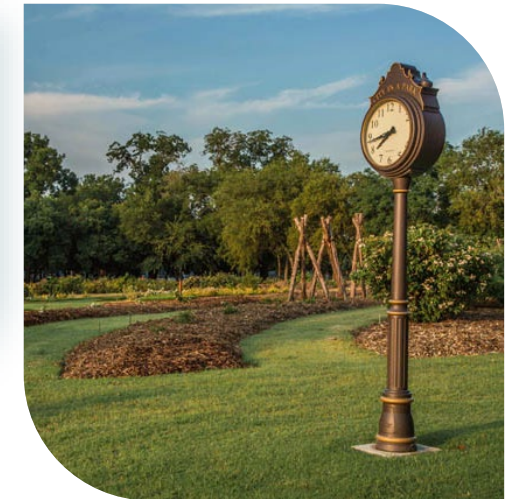
Use of Social Media

- Promote City programs and Events.
- Repost or share the City's social media posts.
- Recommend responding to comments with statements of fact.
- City-branded content should be fact-checked.

Media Engagement Guidelines

Training & Continuous Improvement

Annual review of these guidelines – preferably at Council orientation.



Questions



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