



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP CITY OF BAY CITY

Tuesday, November 18, 2025 at 5:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS | 1901 5th Street

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor: Robert K. Nelson

Mayor Pro Tem: Jim Folse

Council Members: Benjamin Flores, Jim Folse, Bradley Westmoreland, Susan Reardon, Blayne Finlay

Vision Statement

We envision Bay City as a thriving, family-centered community where our citizens can live, work, worship, and play, while welcoming visitors to experience our beautiful environment and diverse culture.

AGENDA

THE FOLLOWING ITEM WILL BE ADDRESSED AT THIS OR ANY OTHER MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL UPON THE REQUEST OF THE MAYOR, ANY MEMBER(S) OF COUNCIL AND/OR THE CITY ATTORNEY:

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE MAYOR THAT COUNCIL WILL RETIRE INTO CLOSED SESSION FOR CONSULTATION WITH CITY ATTORNEY ON MATTERS IN WHICH THE DUTY OF THE ATTORNEY TO THE CITY COUNCIL UNDER THE TEXAS DISCIPLINARY RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS CLEARLY CONFLICTS WITH THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT (TITLE 5, CHAPTER 551, SECTION 551.071(2) OF THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE).

CALL TO ORDER AND CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM

PUBLIC COMMENTS

REGULAR ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND/OR APPROVAL

1. **Presentation of Communications Report** - Ray Beltran, Communications Manager
2. **Discuss, consider, and/or approve the City of Bay City Communications Policy** - Ray Beltran, Communications Manager
3. **Discuss, consider, and/or approve the City of Bay City Communications Plan** - Ray Beltran, Communications Manager

ITEMS / COMMENTS FROM THE MAYOR, COUNCIL MEMBERS AND CITY MANAGER

ADJOURNMENT

AGENDA NOTICES:

Attendance By Other Elected or Appointed Officials: It is anticipated that members of other city board, commissions and/or committees may attend the meeting in numbers that may constitute a quorum of the other city boards, commissions and/or committees. Notice is hereby given that the meeting, to the extent required by law, is also noticed as a meeting of the other boards, commissions and/or committees of the City, whose members may be in attendance. The members of the boards, commissions and/or committees may participate in discussions on the same items listed on the agenda, which occur at the meeting, but no action will be taken by such in attendance

unless such item and action is specifically provided for on an agenda for that board, commission or committee subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act.

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING

This is to certify that the above notice of a Regular Called Council Meeting was posted on the front window of the City Hall of the City of Bay City, Texas on **November 11, 2025 before 5:00 p.m.**

Any questions concerning the above items, please contact the Mayor and City Manager's office at (979) 245-2137.



**AGENDA REQUEST
BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF BAY CITY, TEXAS**

Meeting Date:	11/18/2025	Date Submitted:	11/10/2025
Prepared By:	Samantha Denbow	Presented By <i>(if different)</i>	Ray Beltran
Department:	Communications	Type of Agenda Item:	Department Report

ITEM TITLE: Communications Report

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Presentation of Communications Department report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/BACKGROUND

Presentation of the highlights and ongoing updates of the Communications department.

Strategic Plan 2.1

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS ADDRESSED:

	☐		☒		☐		☐		☐		☒
Safety & Community Appearance		Community & Civic Engagement		Infrastructure		Planning & Development		Culture & recreation		Operational Excellence	

FINANCIAL NOTES

NA

RECOMMENDATION:

ATTACHMENTS:



**AGENDA REQUEST
BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF BAY CITY, TEXAS**

Meeting Date:	11/18/2025	Date Submitted:	11/10/2025
Prepared By:	Samantha Denbow	Presented By <i>(if different)</i>	Ray Beltran
Department:	Communications	Type of Agenda Item:	Regular

ITEM TITLE: Communications Policy

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Discuss, consider, and/or approve City of Bay City Communications Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/BACKGROUND

The City of Bay City's first comprehensive Communications Policy is being presented in a workshop setting to provide Council with full visibility into its purpose, scope, and application. While communications policies are typically adopted administratively, this foundation version is being shared with Council for initial review due to its organization-wide impact.

Strategic Plan 2.1

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS ADDRESSED:

	☐		☒		☐		☐		☐		☒
Safety & Community Appearance	☐	Community & Civic Engagement	☒	Infrastructure	☐	Planning & Development	☐	Culture & recreation	☐	Operational Excellence	☒

FINANCIAL NOTES

NA

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the approval of the Communications Policy.

ATTACHMENTS:

CITY OF BAY CITY

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

FOR CITY EMPLOYEES



Approved on November XX, 2025.

CITY OF BAY CITY COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The purpose of the City of Bay City (COBC) Communications Policy is to establish guidelines on City Communications and ensure all communications issued, released, and published are authorized by the Communications Department prior to being shared. This policy has been shared with City of Bay City leadership, and directors. The final draft has been reviewed and approved by City of Bay City Leadership [Review and approval pending].

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1. COMMUNICATIONS GOALS

1.1 POLICY OVERALL GOAL

- 1) The main goal is to maximize our visibility among the approximately 18,000 constituents of the City of Bay City (COBC) through public, digital, and mainstream media. Ultimately, we want to ensure that we do not miss opportunities to promote and share the great work we are doing. This can only be accomplished if we work together. The Communications department/team will determine and provide the necessary strategy and support to effectively highlight our work and successes.
- 2) This policy has been developed to ensure consistent messaging and adherence to brand standards from the Communications Department. The intent of this document is to have clear guidance for overall COBC communications.
- 3) Ensure the accuracy (spelling, grammar, date, time, etc.) and consistency of all communications being shared across channels.

1.2 COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT GOALS

- 1) Develop and implement Communications/Marketing Plan for local and regional audiences to expand reach, as well as promote our work and impact.
- 2) Create awareness about the City of Bay City's vision, goals, and impact.
- 3) Communicate and connect with the City of Bay City residents effectively.
 - I. Inform constituents with updates about issues, projects, and events that affect them.
 - II. Engage constituents in dialogue about the issues, challenges, successes, and impact of the City's work in their lives.
- 4) Communicate effectively to internal and external audiences during emergencies.
 - I. Inform staff and community about important updates and provide guidance during emergencies

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In general, the role of the Communications Department is to act as a clearinghouse for outgoing mass communications and as a consultant to other City departments on marketing and media-related issues. Our goal is to coordinate, clarify and ensure continuity in messages and publications issued by the City.

2.1 COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) Be aware of all activities in, and all actions of, the City.
- 2) Assist media in gaining information from department directors, City Council members, Commission and Advisory Board members and public records.
- 3) Track media coverage of City-related meetings, events and issues.
- 4) The announcement of major City decisions or significant events.
- 5) Approve all news releases prepared by City departments before distribution.
- 6) Release City reports, press releases, and announcements, simultaneously to appropriate news media representatives.
- 7) Coordinate all media interactions.

2.2 ROLE OF DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

- 1) Keep the Communications Department informed of employee or department accomplishments, and items of human interest. Such stories promote positive public relations. Examples include recognition of employees who complete their education, ceremonial events such as retirement of a tenured employee, or departmental participation in a community event or fundraiser.
- 2) Ensure information relating to all activities within the city is provided to the Communications Department.
- 3) Keep the Communications Department informed of any potentially negative press.

2.3 ROLE OF CITY EMPLOYEES

- 1) Use chain of command to inform direct supervisor and/or department director and notify the Communications Department of activities - positive or negative - that are likely to draw media interest.
- 2) ALWAYS inform the Communications Department by telephone or e-mail when contacted by the media - especially regarding a controversial issue. All contacts to and from the news media must be handled by the Communications Department. Due to the nature of the job, Police and Fire may be unable to contact the Communications Manager/Public Information Officer immediately. In these types of situations, it is important that the Communications Department is made aware of the interaction as soon as possible.
- 3) Direct all media inquiries to the Communications Manager/Public Information Officer.
- 4) Be available to the Communications Department for questions related to media inquiries.

3. GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The Communications Department is responsible for overall messaging that speaks on behalf of the City of Bay City.

The Communications Manager, Communications and Cultural Arts Director, City Manager, and Mayor have approval and regulatory authority to speak on behalf of the City and City departments.

All other requests for official statements must be sent to the Communications Department for review and approval. Communications may include print materials, flyers, articles, social media, news outlets, TV, radio, video, alerts, and SMS texting.

To support the implementation and maintenance of the City's Communications Policy, the Communications Department is responsible for developing procedures, guidelines, and training related to City communications that are accessible to all City departments. The Communications Department shall collaborate with the Information and Technology Department to develop and maintain policies governing the appropriate use of technology and electronic devices for communications purposes. Together, these departments shall ensure that the City's digital communications infrastructure, including the official City website and associated online platforms, is properly maintained, secure, and consistent with City branding and accessibility standards.

The Communications Department has authority to enforce, update and implement changes to the City's Communications Policy and/or procedures with approval of City Manager.

PUBLIC INFORMATION:

Public Information Act:

All emails, texts, and other electronic communications related to official COBC business are subject to the Public Information Act (PIA), regardless of the device or account used. Personal devices or accounts used for COBC business may be subject to inspection. To ensure compliance and proper records retention:

- Use COBC email or phone lines for all COBC business whenever possible. This is the preferred standard practice and should be the primary methods of communicating city business.

Personal devices should not be used for City business unless absolutely necessary. When used, employees must ensure that any communication related to City business is properly retained and accessible to the City upon request. Under the Texas Public Information Act, any communication about official City business, regardless of what device or email account is used, can be considered a public record.

- If you use personal email, forward a copy to your COBC account. Forwarding those messages to an official City email account ensures they are properly archived and retrievable if requested.
- If texting about COBC business (beyond transitory messages like scheduling or quick updates), copy the text to your COBC email. Copying important texts to a City email ensures they are archived and accessible for recordkeeping or open records requests.
- Public information requests are received by the COBC Secretary's Office.

All employees are responsible for ensuring that communications concerning City business, regardless of platform or device, are preserved in accordance with the City's Records Retention

Schedule and the Texas Public Information Act. When in doubt, staff should forward or copy such communications to their official City account.

3.1 EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- 1) All COBC external communications must include the COBC logo/seal and be approved by the Communications Department. The Communications team will provide a set of tools that include marketing materials templates that can be utilized for overall communications efforts. COBC Departments with approved department logos must also include the COBC logo/seal for any public facing communications and printed materials used for external communications. To request a template or the creation of other communications tools, please send your requests to the Communications team by online request form.

3.2 INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- 1) All internal communications will be guided by the COBC's vision and goals.
- 2) All internal communications must be reviewed by City Manager, department director (or department designee) and/or Communications Department.
- 3) COBC Department Directors are responsible for distribution of city-wide messages, notices, or alerts regarding their department. Communications Department retains authority for final approval of distribution of city-wide communications.

3.3 BRAND IDENTITY

3.3.1 BRANDING GUIDE

The COBC Communications Department will develop a Branding Guide that provides guidelines and best practices for City branding that all City departments must adhere to.

3.3.2 OFFICIAL LOGO USE

Logos must not be created or altered independently by departments without involvement and approval from the Communications Team. Unauthorized or unapproved logos are not permitted on any COBC materials.

4. COMMUNICATIONS REQUESTS

The Communications Department shall produce and disseminate materials that effectively inform, engage, and represent the City of Bay City. Deliverables must meet established standards for quality, timeliness, and accuracy. All communications activities shall align with approved messaging, branding, and public information policies. The Communications Team welcomes opportunities to support and collaborate on projects to help raise awareness about COBC programs and initiatives. Departments can send project requests to the Communications Team via online request form or email. Requests for communications support may include but are not limited to:

- Development of marketing materials
- Strategic communications planning and execution

- Social media
- Media outreach
- Event support
- Special Projects / initiatives
- Signs/displays – City departments should remain neutral and not advertise non-city sponsored events, with few exceptions within departments. City Hall is off limits and not included.

City departments must include Communications Department in advanced planning required for special projects, initiatives, and large events that may generate significant public interest, controversy, include sensitive topics, require public engagement, and/or informative/educational aspects.

Requests should be submitted at least 2 weeks in advance of planned distribution dates to allow for strategic planning and integration into existing communications efforts as well as design creation, review, execution, and distribution. This will allow for appropriate prioritization, tracking, and improve outcomes for communications efforts.

Standard thresholds for deliverables are located in Appendix B.

For emergency requests, please be sure to note in the email subject line to ensure it is reviewed as such.

5. WEBSITE

- 1) The Communications Team is responsible for www.baycitytx.org. The team works with COBC Information Technology Department to develop and approve the technical and architectural structure of the website. The Communications Team is responsible for daily management of the website which includes graphics, photography, and overall content/messaging.
- 2) Departments will be responsible for assigning a website administrator and providing appropriate website content on a timely basis as well as regularly providing updates for their areas to ensure information is relevant and supports their overall efforts.
- 3) Working with COBC departments, the Communications Department will coordinate with department staff designated as website administrators to update and ensure information on the site is up to date.
- 4) The design and consistent look of the website and associated pages are guided by standards developed by the Communications Department. The goal for the website is to achieve a consistent look that is easy to navigate and accessible to the public.
- 5) New requests/additions to the website should be sent directly to the Communications Department.

6. SOCIAL & DIGITAL MEDIA POLICY

The Communications Department is committed to sharing relevant and reliable

information with constituents, staff, stakeholders, and partners. The department reserves the right to determine the method, timing, and content shared on official COBC digital channels that include, but are not limited to, social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Nextdoor, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Only the Communications Department or its designee is authorized to post content to any website or social media site belonging to or maintained by COBC.

All designated employees who are authorized to post content on social media and/or COBC website must complete training through the Communications Department to ensure that social and digital media visible to public maintain the standards and practices set by the City's Communications Policy.

Official COBC Business and Non-City Social Media Platforms

To ensure consistency, transparency and compliance with state law, employees shall not use personal, department or city social media accounts to engage with, comment within, or administer non-city social media groups, chats, or forums for the purpose of conducting or discussing official COBC business.

Social and Digital Media Definitions are located in Appendix A.

All COBC staff are expected to observe regulations governing the use of electronics, specifically Section 2.12, the COBC Computer and Electronic Communication Devices contained in the COBC Personnel Guidelines.

COBC communications tools should be used in ways that provide clear communication, maximize transparency, maintain the security of the city's network, and are in keeping with professional standards. This includes the use of social media. Therefore, the use of social media on behalf of COBC must be done thoughtfully and in a manner that will minimize risk. The methods through which this should be achieved are outlined in this policy.

COBC has the following official pages:

Facebook: City of Bay City, TX USA

Instagram: @cityofbaycitytx

YouTube: @CityofBayCityTexas

Twitter: @CityOfBayCityTx

LinkedIn: City of Bay City, TX

In addition to the official social media pages, COBC also has additional pages that fall under the COBC communications umbrella. These pages are to be used as tools to communicate and/or promote events, programs, city department services and information. The pages are managed and administered by corresponding departments/teams with the Communications Department retaining overall

authority social media pages falling under the COBC Communications Umbrella.

Pages include:

1. Pages: the following are COBC Department Facebook pages

- Municipal Court
- Police Department
- Parks & Recreation
- Riverside Park
- Public Library
- Sargent Library
- Regional Airport
- Fire Marshal
- Main Street
- Visit Bay City: Tourism

2. Additional social media: the following accounts were created as tools.

- Visit Bay City: Instagram
- Visit Bay City: Twitter
- Parks and Recreation – Instagram, Twitter
- Riverside Park – Instagram, Twitter

3. Festival pages: the following pages are created as tools for annual city events

- Camofest: Website, Facebook
- Day of the Dead: Website, Facebook

Although these pages and/or accounts are not solely managed by the COBC Communications Department, the team can share relevant and reliable information to constituents, staff, stakeholders, and partners. The department page/account main administrator (for example, parks pages will be managed by the Parks and Recreation Department) will assign a staff member to manage and maintain the page/account. Assigned staff members are expected to monitor messages and comments, and ensure constituent questions and concerns are being answered. The COBC Communications Team and the department page/account main administrator reserve the right to determine the method, timing, and content shared on official COBC pages/accounts. Only the COBC Communications Department or the department staff assigned to manage the page are authorized to post content to and/or maintain these specific pages.

Requests for new pages or platform accounts must be sent to the COBC Communications Department first. The COBC Communications Department is the only department with authority to create, combine, or sunset any social media account that falls under the COBC Communications umbrella without departmental discussion.

6.1 ACCEPTABLE USE

6.1.1 PROFESSIONAL USE

COBC's social media communication should remain professional in nature and should always

be conducted in accordance with COBC communications policy, practices, and expectations. For the purpose of this policy, Professional Social Media Use is defined as any use of the COBC social media pages, accounts, etc., by the COBC Communications Manager, departments or any authorized staff.

The expectations of professional use of COBC social media are the following:

- Social media postings containing obscene or sexually explicit language, images or acts and statements or other forms of speech that ridicule, malign, disparage, or otherwise express bias or are harassing, or demeaning toward COBC employees, city officials, vendors, or others who perform services and work with COBC are prohibited. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Vulgar, physically threatening or harassing language.
 - Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, marital status, familial status, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, source of income or other protected status under applicable law.
 - Inappropriate sexual content or similar links.
 - Private or otherwise confidential information.
 - Content that promotes illegal activity or encouragement of actions that may compromise public safety.
 - Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.
 - Comments not topically related to the original article or post.
 - Organized political activity, or comments in support of or opposition to political candidates, campaigns or ballot measures.
 - Promoting or advertising a commercial transaction, organization or event that is not sponsored or in direct relationship with COBC.
 - Information that may compromise safety or security of the public or public systems.
- Only the COBC Communications Team and designated authorized staff have the authority to access COBC social media channels. Access to these channels without the direct approval of the COBC Communications Team and/or Agents is prohibited. In the event that any employee uses COBC social media without the direct approval of the COBC Communications Department, COBC reserves the right to block access to its networks or social media channels.
- Employees may not disclose confidential information from any department, including confidential information relating to ongoing investigations, or disclose confidential information to third parties who have provided information to any department, including federal, state and Protected Health Information as defined in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) information.
- Use of COBC social media channels, pages, and content for personal use or interests is

prohibited and must remain relevant to city business and stay within the scope of guidelines and best practices.

- The COBC Social Media Policy may be revised at any time.

6.1.2 EDITING/REMOVING POSTS FROM COBC PAGES

It is never COBC's preference to remove content from our social media pages. In certain instances, however, it may be necessary to edit or remove posts from COBC social media channels in order to ensure COBC is providing updated, accurate information. If it is necessary to edit a post and update the misinformation, designated staff may edit accordingly using approved process and procedures to ensure compliance. Any questions should be directed to the Communications Department.

Posts may be edited or removed from COBC pages under the following circumstances:

- Information in the post is dangerously incorrect or misinformative.
- The act of posting a separate retraction or update would not be a sufficient solution.
- The post does not meet the requirements laid out in the COBC Social Media Policy, Communications Plan or Branding Standards.
- When warranted, the authorized staff shares a corrected version of the post as soon as possible after deleting the original content.
- All edits, removals, or other modifications to posts must follow applicable state laws regarding data retention and archiving, ensuring that original content is properly preserved and documented before deletion or alteration.

Authorized staff should always consult with the Communications Department before deleting a post on any of the COBC social media pages. Communications Department maintains authority to remove posts or comments on any COBC social media pages.

6.2 PERSONAL USE

Staff may publish or share COBC-related content on personal social media profiles. These profiles/accounts should remain personal and be used to share personal opinions or non-work-related information. Following this principle helps ensure a distinction between sharing personal and agency views. Employees should not use the COBC logo as a profile logo. COBC-related content, shared, posted, or otherwise published, must not conflict with COBC policies, nor violate the privacy of employees or constituents.

Employees should be aware that any content published on a social media profile is inherently public, regardless of privacy settings. This includes but not limited to: content posted on professional and personal social media pages and profiles. COBC maintains the right to appropriately discipline employees for the improper publication of both personal and COBC-related content on personal social media profiles. Employees must not use official agency social media for political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions, to engage in private

business activities, or in a manner that violates ethical or legal standards. Before sharing on social media profiles, staff should always consider the possibility that it could be printed on the front page of the newspaper or used in attempt to harm your reputation or the COBC reputation.

To report questionable content or misinformation, email communications@baycitytx.gov immediately and include a screenshot, if possible.

COBC employees are encouraged to communicate in the following professional manner:

- As public servants, employees are cautioned that speech during or after work hours, made pursuant to their official duties, is not protected speech under the First Amendment and may form the basis for discipline if deemed detrimental to COBC. COBC employees shall assume that their speech and related activity on social media sites will reflect upon COBC. Speak respectfully about COBC and its current and potential elected officials, employees, customers, residents, contractors, and business associates. Do not engage in behavior that reflects negatively on COBC's reputation. The use of copyright materials, unfounded or derogatory statements, or misrepresentation is not viewed favorably by COBC and can result in disciplinary actions up to and including employee termination.
- Write knowledgeably, accurately, and use appropriate professionalism. When using social media, COBC employees should be mindful that their communications become part of the worldwide electronic public domain. Personnel should be aware that privacy settings and social media sites are subject to constant modifications and should never assume that personal information posted on such sites is protected or secure.
- The personal use of social media by COBC employees can result in members of the public forming opinions about COBC and its officials, employees, and business associates. COBC employees should consider potential risks and repercussions for any social media activity that may impact COBC's image.
- Refrain from sharing content that could potentially be considered offensive or inappropriate. Consider all forms of social media free and open to the public, regardless of privacy settings. COBC employees should consider their personal reputation, and the reputation of COBC by extension, to be attached to everything written on their social media sites.

Employees are reminded that comments about COBC business or confidential matters made on personal time using personal devices are not private and may be subject to public access under applicable laws. Such comments may violate COBC policies, including those governing confidentiality, professionalism, and conduct. Employees should be aware that inappropriate, offensive, or otherwise unprofessional statements made on personal social media platforms that reflect negatively on the City or interfere with City operations may result in disciplinary action,

up to and including termination.

Provided, however, these guidelines are not intended to bar or discourage employees from engaging in protected concerted activity. Employees are not barred from exercising their right to act together to try to improve their pay and working conditions, including, without limitation, communicating whether through social media or otherwise to achieve such purpose.

6.3 PERSONAL PRIVACY

COBC reserves the right to monitor social media postings of employees. Any information that employees post on any social media may be accessed by COBC at any time, without prior notice. Access to any social media sites from COBC computers or other devices is prohibited at any time during work hours unless permission is granted for the purposes of conducting COBC business. Limited personal social media use on personal devices may occur but should not interfere with productivity or expected work performance.

Use of COBC social media to make personal comments on COBC business and confidential matters is prohibited regardless of how or when communicated. Users should have no expectations of privacy. Social media is not a secure means of communication.

7. MEDIA POLICY

7.1 MEDIA INQUIRIES

Inquiries from the news media will be given high priority and will be responded to as quickly and efficiently as possible. COBC employees are to promptly direct all media inquiries to the Communications Department at communications@baycitytx.gov and/or call the Communications Manager/PIO. The Bay City Police Department is the exception to this policy as they are the only city department with a designated PIO for media inquiries.

Due to what are often very tight timeframes, every effort will be made to meet media deadlines and ensure that all information released to the media is accurate. It is important that all departments respond as soon as possible when a member of the Communications Department requests information for media requests.

7.2 OFFICAL NEWSPAPER OF RECORD

In accordance with Texas state law and the COBC Charter, the City will designate an official newspaper for all legally required public notices, ordinances, meeting announcements, bid solicitations, and other official publications mandated by law will be published to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and to provide transparency to the public. City departments are responsible for these types of notices and should notify the Communications Department of public notices. Additional media outlets may be utilized for advertising and announcements that do not require specific legal requirements. All communications with media outlets must be approved by

Communications Department.

8. CITY-INITIATED PRESS COVERAGE

- 1) The Communications Department has the sole authority to seek press coverage for any COBC event, campaign, or issue from media officials or personalities.
- 2) Press Releases:
 - I. Communications Department will provide templates and guidelines for COBC Department press releases. Department heads or designated staff are authorized to complete press release drafts using supplied templates and submit to Communications Department for approval prior to distribution.
 - II. The Communications Department may suggest other methods of publicizing the event, occasion, or accomplishment, such as e-mails to members/constituents/subscribers or social media posts. They may also determine that such methods are preferable and should be used in lieu of a release.
 - III. If any changes are made to the event for which the communication was written, organizers must inform the Communications Department immediately by email or call.

9. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Guidelines and protocols for managing communications during a crisis or emergency are detailed in the COBC Crisis Communications Plan.

During the event of an emergency in COBC and/or Matagorda County, staff will receive updates via email or alerts from the City Manager and/or the Communications Department that can be shared externally, unless noted otherwise. It is important that messaging during emergency incident is consistent and accurate. Please refrain from sharing rumors, misinformation, or confidential information.

To prevent miscommunication, confusion, and/or incorrect information that can affect the safety of the public, staff should not create or send information related to the emergency without approval from the Communications Department and/or City Manager.

All personnel involved in emergency response communications should review and familiarize themselves with these guidelines in advance.

During an incident or crisis, all previously planned social media posts should be delayed until after event has concluded. Communications Department will post to COBC page and tag additional city departments to establish message alignment and present a unified voice. City departments outside of Communications should not post emergency information to their respective pages.

10. APPENDIX A. SOCIAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions apply:

“Social Media” are third-party websites containing information that is intended to facilitate communications, influence interaction with peers and with public audiences about some topic, typically via the Internet and mobile communication networks. Types of social media include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and any other social media outlet that serves the purpose of sharing information

“COBC Social Media Sites” are pages, sections or postings in Social Media websites that are established or maintained by an employee of COBC who is authorized to do so as part of the employee’s job. COBC Social Media Sites are intended to be used for COBC business, to communicate with office holders or COBC staff, and/or communicate or gather feedback from residents and other interested parties.

“COBC Social Media Content” is information posted or provided to a COBC Social Media Site by a COBC employee when such activity is a part of the employee’s duties.

“Social Networking” is the practice of engaging in business and/or social contacts by making connections via interactive Web-based applications.

“Blog” is a web site that contains an online personal journal with reflections, comments, and often hyperlinks provided by the writer.

“Post” is to display an announcement in a place for public view on a social media.

“Comment” means a response to a COBC article or social media content submitted by any person or entity.

“Link” is short for “hyperlink” which connects a hypertext file to another location or file typically activated by clicking on a highlighted word or icon at a particular location on the screen.

“Public Information” is any information collected, assembled, or maintained by COBC in the transaction of official business pursuant to Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code.

“Group” is a space within a social media platform where multiple users can communicate or share content around a shared topic or purpose; a COBC Group is created or managed by authorized staff for official City business.

“Event” is a social media feature used to promote or organize scheduled activities; a COBC Event is created or managed by authorized staff to share information about City-sponsored or City-related activities.

11. APPENDIX B. STANDARD THRESHOLDS FOR DELIVERABLES

Deliverable Type	Expected Standard / Threshold	Quality Benchmark
Press Releases & Media Advisories	Issued within 24–48 hours of an approved announcement, decision, or event.	Clear, factual, AP-style, includes at least one key message and quote from authorized spokesperson.
Social Media Content	Minimum of 3–5 posts per week per active COBC social media channel, adjusted based on campaigns, priorities, or emergencies.	Engaging, visually aligned with COBC brand standards, and compliant with City social media policy.
Website Updates	Routine content updates within 2 business days of receiving approved materials.	Accurate, ADA-compliant, consistent with City tone and information hierarchy.
Graphic Design / Visual Materials	First draft within 5 business days of request unless otherwise approved by the Communications Manager.	Consistent with City branding and visual identity guidelines; professional layout and quality.
Internal Communications	Key messages or employee notices distributed within 1 business day of approval.	Clear, concise, actionable, and aligned with organizational values and transparency goals.
Public Information Campaigns / Major Projects	Campaign plan and content calendar developed within 2 weeks of project approval.	Measurable objectives defined; outcomes reviewed post-campaign for effectiveness and reach.

12. APPENDIX C. CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

INSERT CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



**AGENDA REQUEST
BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF BAY CITY, TEXAS**

Meeting Date:	11/18/2025	Date Submitted:	11/10/2025
Prepared By:	Samantha Denbow	Presented By <i>(if different)</i>	Ray Beltran
Department:	Communications	Type of Agenda Item:	Regular

ITEM TITLE: Communications Plan

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Discuss, consider, and/or approve City of Bay City Communications Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/BACKGROUND

The Communications Plan is being presented in a workshop setting to provide an overview of how the organization currently communicates with the public and to outline the additional methods planned for rollout in the coming year. The plan serves as a roadmap highlighting existing practices, identifying opportunities for improvement, and introducing new tools to enhance public outreach and information sharing.

While the plan outlines direction, priorities, and expansion of communication practices, it is intentionally high-level and does not include specific performance metrics at this stage.

Strategic Plan 2.1

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS ADDRESSED:

	☐		☒		☐		☐		☐		☒
Safety & Community Appearance	☐	Community & Civic Engagement	☒	Infrastructure	☐	Planning & Development	☐	Culture & recreation	☐	Operational Excellence	☒

FINANCIAL NOTES

NA

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the approval of the Communications Plan.

ATTACHMENTS: