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1. PURPOSE

Overview

The Web Governance Policy outlines the management and governance of the City of San José website, SanJoseCa.gov, and its multiple subsites.

This policy promotes clear Citywide standards and rules informed by authoritative best practices; provides a framework for establishing clear content management responsibilities; and supports the efficiency and effectiveness of the City's online community.

The outcome of this policy will ensure that web users can find and use the information they need quickly, easily, and intuitively, and that staff responsible for maintaining websites will keep them accurate, current, and useful.

Guidelines/Compliance

SanJoseCa.gov is a rich platform that provides City services and information to the public, offers channels for productive community engagement, and showcases the City's achievements and innovations. It is a strategic communications asset for all aspects of the City's operations to serve both the people of San José and the world. Because of site's broad reach, and with more than 100 City staff members handling portions of the site, the Web Governance Policy establishes standards and guidelines that encourage clarity, accuracy, consistency, regulatory and policy compliance, and ease-of-use throughout the website and its subsites.

2. SCOPE

Governance Structure

The **Web Governance Advisory Board** sets the direction and oversees policies for the City's website and the web operating environment based on best practices.

It is initially composed of representatives from: City Manager's Communications Office; City Clerk's Office; Airport; Information Technology Department; Environmental Services Department; Library; Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services; Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Department; Police Department; and Transportation Department. Representatives from other departments may be added or exchanged as appropriate.

3. AUTHORITY

Responsibilities of Web Governance Advisory Board

In response to industry trends, changes in technology, and the needs of web users and staff who maintain websites, the Advisory Board has the following responsibilities:
- Review and establish appropriate Citywide policies, processes, and procedures to govern current and future website standards with regard to both content and technology
- Advocate for site quality and content integrity

- Review and recommend global changes as needed to taxonomy, structure, branding, navigation, styling, etc.
- Ensure compliance with all legal and regulatory standards, including accessibility and security issues
- Recommend additional templates or changes to existing templates
- Facilitate and resolve non-compliance issues
- Identify opportunities and resources for continuous improvement

4. POLICY

4.1 Maintain a Unified Website

It is the policy of the City of San José to maintain a single, unified website consisting of:
1) a single URL and domain name
2) a standard web template
3) a consolidated server environment.

The City uses the domain of SanJoseCa.gov for external-facing purposes. All City departments, divisions, programs, services, or other operating units of the City should use the official City domain: SanJoseCa.gov. All subsites that serve City programs should be entered through SanJoseCA.gov with no other visible URL unless exempted as noted in Section 4.2.

4.2 Domain Exceptions and Subsite Requests

In recognition of the diverse offerings and people's informational needs, this policy provides a mechanism to allow limited exceptions under special circumstances to the use of the City of San José primary domain name. Exceptions require approval from the City Manager's Office. The City Manager's Office retains complete discretion. To make a request, fill out the online form.

This policy establishes exception criteria, an exemption process, and a reconsideration process for exemption requests that have been denied.

When determining to grant domain exceptions and subsite requests, the City Manager's Office will consider various criteria including but not limited to the following outlined below. Applicants may suggest additional factors that might be appropriate for consideration.

Exceptions and domain management criteria for the City's unified website standards include:

4.2.1   Sites for departments or programs that operate as an enterprise that competes with non-City entities

a. The site provides or markets services that are unusual for municipal government.
b. The site competes with organizations in the private sector or other public organizations in our region.

4.2.2 Regional partnerships or intergovernmental efforts

a. The site is an intergovernmental organization or a partnership whose target audience is a regional audience.
b. The majority of the site's content is provided or maintained by organizations outside the City.
c. The site's content is maintained by both City and non-City sources.
d. The site's sponsoring organization has a separate governance structure.

4.2.3   Other factors

a. The site replicates a "best-practice" model in municipal web service delivery.
b. The site under the City's brand would impair its primary purpose.
c. The applying organization has a long-term, stable mission and plan.
d. The site does not conflict with the City's branding efforts.

4.2.4 Exceptions generally will not be granted for:

a. Special events or short-term activities that would require an impractical investment of resources to market the site for a limited period.
b. "Dot com" domains for business purposes that are inappropriate for a municipal or non-profit activity.
c. Entire or substantial parts of City departments. Mineta San José International Airport, San José Police Department, and San José Public Library Department are exempted based on long-standing practice and the departments' independent technology environments.

4.3 Information Technology Department Coordinates Exempted Domains

The San José Information Technology Department should acquire and retain any reasonable alternative domains suggested by City organizations to protect these domains from misuse by others.

All domain names exempted by the Web Governance Policy shall be owned by the City and managed by the IT Department. All registrations for exempt domain names by departments shall be made by the IT Department. This is to avoid the complications that arise when multiple organizations make conflicting applications with registration agencies.

4.4 Website Roles and Permissions

The City Manager's Communications Office has access to all areas of SanJoseCa.gov. To ensure consistent quality, the CMO will work with Web Content Managers in all departments to ensure conformance with the City's style, conventions, and branding.

Permissions for the Web Content Management system (Web CMS) are determined by user groups, which are generally the same for all editors assigned to specific areas (e.g., all users in the DOT Publishers user group have the same privileges.) Departmental web content managers should maintain a current list of web editors and their access privileges.

For the following scenarios, fill out the [online form](#) for assistance:
- To get a copy of department's Web CMS user list
- To change staff member's permission level for Web CMS
- To revoke staff member's access level to the Web CMS (employee switched departments or roles, or no longer works for the City)

4.5 Departmental Quality Control and Workflow

Web Content Managers for each department are responsible for determining their own internal workflow. Depending on the size and complexity of the department's webpages, the department web content management structure may include:

- **Department Web Content Manager, Web Administrator** and/or **Department Webmaster** who oversee department/office's navigation, content, and Web CMS users.
  - This position is considered the content owner for the entire departmental website
  - Responsibilities include:
    - Designating staff for overseeing specific content within the department's site.
    - Conducting departmental web content quality reviews, with a minimum of one review per year.
- **Website Publisher** who can make edits and publish live to the site
- **Website Author** who can write and edit web content but must get approval before content is live on the site.

In some departments, one or more staff members may serve multiple roles.

The City Manager's Communications Office will regularly audit department sites for quality, such as spelling, grammar, and style. Departmental web audits, conducted by this office, will take place at least once every 18 months. Web editors must work together to prevent typos, grammar errors, and content errors. The following practices are recommended:
- When a Website Author makes changes to existing pages, a second person should review the content before it's published
- Website Publishers should use the "Check Spelling" box within the Body Text area before submitting changes. It won't catch everything but it is still a useful tool.

4.6 Training/Education

Only Web Editors who have taken formal training will receive access to the Web CMS. The department Web Content Manager is responsible for initial training, after which web editors may use various support documents and training webinars by visiting the CivicPlus Connection training website. (Note: You must be logged in to visit the training site.)

The City Manager's Communications Office will provide quarterly in-person training sessions for departmental staff on how to edit their sites. Trainees are responsible for learning the material and how to use tools, practicing what they learn, and utilizing the training and City style documents.

Website standards and basic formatting rules are available on the City intranet.

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4.7 Content and Style

Use plain language on the website whenever possible. According to the Federal Government's Plain Language website, http://www.plainlanguage.gov/, it is "communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it."

Web visitors are task-oriented; they skim and scan to get their informational needs met. Subheadings and bulleted and numbered lists enable efficient scanning by the reader. For further guidance, review the City Style Guide and Website Basic Formatting Standards.

4.8 Visual Content

Professional-quality photography and video help make the City's website attractive and useful and contribute to a positive image of the City of San José.

Use documentary-style images that capture authentic and vibrant interactions among residents and services. Showcase photos that reflect San José's broad diversity in ethnicity, age and socioeconomic spectrum of neighborhoods. Avoid artificial-looking situations or obviously posed photos.

Departmental Web Editors are responsible for all photos on their pages. It is recommended to keep photos **under 50KB** to allow for quicker page load times.

Permission to photograph and/or videotape of individuals for use in City materials, such as print, electronic newsletters, web, and social media, is recommended. A release form is available online. More videotaping/photography as well as image guidelines are available on the City's intranet.

To address accessibility compliance (Section 4.11), Web Editors must include "Alt Text" so that those who are visually impaired and using text browsers can know what the picture or illustration looks like. The World Wide Web Consortium Accessibility Guidelines suggest that you imagine reading the picture/illustration aloud over the telephone. What would you say about the image to make your listeners understand it? Shorter is better: A good rule of thumb is to keep it between 5 and 15 words.

4.9 Use of Social Media and New Technologies

The Web-Based Communications Policy contains the policy and guidelines related to social media and other web-based technologies.

Contact the City Manager's Communications Office for approvals prior to setting up Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and other social media sites. For additional information on guidelines, standards and request forms, visit the social media section of the City's intranet for employees only.

4.10 Hyperlinks and iFraming

Sanjoseca.gov and the City's intranet use the same Web Content Management System. No other software product may be used within the City's approved Web CMS and its architecture.

- Hyperlinks. All Web Editors are responsible for ensuring that links are live and tested. Links should take users to sites that have current and accurate information.
  - Links will be set to open within the City website unless the hyperlink is a link to a page outside SanJoseCa.gov. Documents such as PDFs are to open in a new window.
  - As outlined in the 1.7.5 E-Government Policy, the City "will link to sites of its choosing which contain data regarding the City and the Bay Area, its residents, businesses, and visitors, if linking to the site furthers a specific purpose of the City that is articulated in an official written expression of City policies or purposes."
  - For additional guidance, reference Section 5 of the E-Government Policy. Questions about hyperlinking can be submitted through the online form.

- iFrame. Additional content may "iFramed" when appropriate. Note that iFramed content will not show up on the mobile site. Also, this content is not searchable through SanJoseCA.gov's search function. Also, external hosting is required. Use the online form for questions about iFrames and external hosting.

4.11 Accessibility

All Web Editors should be familiar with and follow ADA Accessibility Compliance guidelines. The Citywide Web Content Manager will run all site pages through a W3C compliant validation product annually to ensure Section 508C compliance for the disabled.

Information about web accessibility resources is available on the City's intranet. Federal guidelines can be found here: http://www.section508.gov/.

4.12 Language Access

To support San José's diverse community, the translation of pages on SanJoseCa.gov is performed by Google Translate. The free third party service assists web visitors in understanding information in a variety of foreign languages. Google Translate, which the City does not control, provides automated computer translations that may not give you an exact translation all the time.

The City does not control or warrant the accuracy, reliability or timeliness of any information translated by Google Translate and will not accept liability for loss incurred as a result. Some files and other items cannot be translated including but not limited to graphical buttons, drop down menus, graphics, and photos. In addition, some applications and/or services may not work as expected when translated.

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 Intranet

An internal website that is only accessible by City of San José employees.

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5.2 Subsites

A website that is nested within and is subordinate to SanJoseCa.gov, which is the top-level site. A subsite can have independent administration, content contributors and browsing permissions. Examples include Municipal Code and SJPermits.org.

5.3 Web Accessibility

Developing websites to be accessible to people with a diverse range of hearing, moving, sight and cognitive abilities.

5.4 Web Usability

Ease-of-use when a user accesses a website. Web usability includes the ability to understand a website's information and find answers to users' key questions before they leave the site.

5.5 Web CMS

A web content management system is a software system that facilitates the creation, management, storage and display of web content.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 Analytics

Web analytics are available for SanJoseCa.gov. Departments wanting to track page views do not need to embed codes on their own. Departments that wish to use this data should request reports through the online form.

6.2 Mobile Applications

Departments, divisions and programs should coordinate with the City Manager's Communications Office prior to launching mobile applications to ensure they follow City of San José branding and compatibility standards.

6.3 Working with Web Vendors and Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

All work orders for website work that require more than 40 hours of work on the City's public-facing website must be approved by the City Manager's Communications Office.

Coordination with the City Manager's Communications Office is also required for any request for proposals (RFPs) issued for public-facing website work before the RFP is issued.

This coordination enables web project efficiency, compliance with the Web Governance Policy, reduced redundancies, and advance collaboration among departments with similar online service delivery needs.

6.4 Contact Information

For any questions concerning the Web Governance Policy, contact the Web Governance Advisory Board through the [online form](#).

Approved:

/s/ David Vossbrink	September 17, 2015
David Vossbrink	Date
Director of Communications	

Approved for Posting:

/s/ Jennifer Schembri	September 17, 2015
Jennifer Schembri	Date
Director of Employee Relations	
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