

Title: Plain Language
Effective Date: 2026 July 28
Responsible Business Unit: Marketing & Communications

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this Administration policy is to:
- a) Articulate the roles and responsibilities of Administration to communicate with Calgarians, Council and interested parties in a way that is easily understood by the intended audience; and
 - b) Ensure The City of Calgary's (The City) written materials help Calgarians, Council and interested parties understand information about City services, decisions and emergencies.

2. APPLICABILITY

- 2.1 This Administration policy applies to:
- a) All City of Calgary employees; and
 - b) Suppliers producing written materials on behalf of The City.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 City Administration will:
- a) Provide written materials regarding City programs, services, committees, facilities and projects in plain language; and
 - b) Make best efforts to use plain language in other documents provided to Calgarians, except when legal, contractual and technical language is required.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Employees are responsible for:
- a) Following City plain language guidelines when preparing written material(s); and
 - b) Sharing plain language guidelines with external parties producing written material(s) on behalf of The City.
- 4.2 The Marketing & Communications business unit is responsible for:
- a) Administering this policy.
 - b) Making plain language guidelines available to Employees and Suppliers.
 - c) Supporting Administration's objectives through the application of plain language in written communication materials.

- 4.3 Suppliers producing written materials on behalf of Administration are responsible for applying plain language guidelines in written materials for Calgarians, Council and Administration.
- 4.4 Supervisors are responsible for promoting plain language practices with their employees.

5. CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

- 5.1 Employees who fail to adhere to this Administration policy may be subject to corrective action, including dismissal from employment, in accordance with the Labour Relations standard, the Exempt Staff policy, the Alberta Police Act and associated Regulations or the specified terms outlined in their employment contract.
- 5.2 Suppliers who fail to adhere to this Administration policy may be subject to corrective action, in accordance with their contract and agreement.

6. DEFINITIONS

- 6.1 In this Administration policy:
 - a) **Employee** means any person employed by The City and reporting to a City of Calgary business unit, department, the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, the Office of the Chief Operating Officer, the Office of The Mayor, the City Auditor's Office, the Calgary Housing Company, and the Calgary Police Service, including those working under an employment contract with The City;
 - b) **External party(ies)** means any organization or individual outside The City, including partners, agencies, consultants, contractors and other service providers.
 - c) **Interested party(ies)** means a person or group of people who are interested in, and impacted by, the outcome of a situation, and this includes those who have either a direct or indirect role in the situation;
 - d) **Plain Language** means written material that is clear, concise and well organized so the intended audience, can access, understand and use the information;
 - e) **Supervisor** means any employee (exempt or unionized) who has direct supervisory responsibility for employees;
 - f) **Supplier** means a sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity that offers construction, consulting, goods and services, or information technology for sale, including their employees, representatives and subcontractors. Supplier may also be referred to as a contractor; and
 - g) **Written material(s)** means print and digital content created to provide information or calls to action for an intended audience, including, but not limited to, reports, memos and presentations.

7. ASSOCIATED GOVERNANCE

- 7.1 This Administration policy is established in accordance with:

- a) The *Municipal Government Act (Alberta)* which describes the responsibility of the Chief Administrative Officer to implement the policies and programs of the municipality.
- b) The *City Auditor Bylaw (34M2020)* which establishes and describes the responsibilities of the City Auditor to implement policies and programs, as permitted under s. 210 of the *Municipal Government Act*.
- c) The *Unanimous Shareholder Agreement* between Calhome Properties Ltd. operating as The Calgary Housing Company”, section 1.6.
- d) The *Communications policy* which outlines how Administration governs internal and external communications.
- e) The *Social Media, Media Relations and Public Statements policy* which outlines how The City and its employees interact with social media, the media and members of the public.
- f) The *Web policy* which formalizes The City’s commitment to provide and maintain consistent, cohesive and straightforward internal and external web presences.
- g) The *Engage policy* which provides the guidelines for the development and implementation of engagement processes at The City, including Calgarian-centric service delivery, equitable opportunity for public input, and use in Council decision-making.
- h) The *Transparency and Accountability policy* which defines how The City will ensure it is transparent and accountable to the public.
- i) The *Corporate Records Management policy* which outlines The City’s commitment to document activities and decisions through the creation of official records to support timely and accurate access to, and information about, City programs and services.

8. HISTORY

Action	Date	Approval	Description
New	2026 Jun 29	ELT2026-0624	Developed this Administration policy to replace the Plain Language (Council) policy, and updated content to use current language and best practices. Effective Date of July 28, 2026, based on the date of Council’s rescindment of the Plain Language (Council) policy.