

City of Kyle Communication Plan

Team Kyle Culture is based on the Core Values (KYLE) listed below:

KNOWLEDGE- Knowledgeable in all aspects of job and City operations; maintains high quality of work; follows health and safety guidelines.

YES-ATTITUDE- Demonstrates superior customer service; treats other employees and citizens with kindness; promotes goodwill; solves conflict with tact.

LEADING EDGE- Continually looking for areas to improve upon; decisive and adaptive; supports new ideas; a driver for change. Innovative.

EMPLOYEE ACCOUNTABILITY- Actively seeks and gives performance feedback to determine developmental opportunities; uses feedback as an opportunity for continuous improvement. Takes accountability for their mistakes and learns from them.

Section 1: Plan Purpose, Protocol, and Information Distributors

- Generate useful, accessible content
- Establish cohesive content standards through a recommended Style Guide
- Designate responsive and knowledgeable public information distributors
- Structure communication engagement guidelines
- Share crisis communication plan
- Establish public engagement behavior standards, procedures, and platforms
- Support internal communication standards

Section 1.1 Public Information Protocol

The Director of Communications, as the Public Information Officer (PIO), coordinates City of Kyle communications. A copy of any mass communication (such as press releases, Everbridge Notifications, letters to large numbers of residents or businesses, etc.) from any Department to the public will be sent to communicationsdept@cityofkyle.com at least 48 hours prior to its release

Section 1.2 Content Authority

The Director of Communications or designee may remove any content that violates the Communications Plan or for any other reason. The Director of Communications or designee has the authority to edit any communication submissions for the purposes of clarity, accuracy and professionalism.

Section 2: City of Kyle Content Guidelines

It is our goal to regularly generate useful, accessible, and transparent content for our residents, businesses, guests, and other stakeholders.

Section 2.1 Appropriate and Inappropriate Content

Content should promote and adhere to the City of Kyle core values. Content will be crafted keeping the suggested Style Guide and Content Quick Guide in mind.

Appropriate content includes:

- City of Kyle news, events, programs, services, and initiatives.
- Resources relevant to residents, businesses, and visitors.
- Policies, crises, social movements, and environmental factors that affect the region.

Inappropriate content includes, but is not limited to:

- Confidential or proprietary information, unless authorized for disclosure.
- Commentary or personal opinions.
- Language or material that may be considered profane, offensive or obscene.

- Content in support of or opposition to political campaigns.
- Content promoting goods or services not otherwise available to the public (i.e. promoting receipt of free food or services).
- Content that discriminates on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, military status, citizenship status, economic status, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation.
- Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.

Section 2.2 Accessible and Transparent

Web accessibility means that websites, tools, and technologies are made so that people with disabilities can use them. They can also aid those that do not speak English fluently. Our Content Quick Guide is a useful tool on accessible and transparent content.

- Our website can be easily translated into various languages. PDFs cannot, so when possible write your content into the website.
- Links should go where intended and when possible open a new window instead of changing the page.
- The W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) develops technical specifications, guidelines, techniques, and supporting resources for accessibility solutions. These are considered international standards for web accessibility and we should strive to follow them. These standards work to make content screen reader accessible as well as other accessibility options. Screen readers are software that allow blind or visually impaired users to read the text that is displayed on the computer screen with a speech synthesizer or braille display.
 - To help screen readers, hyperlinks must provide context of where the link is going. Instead of “Click here” or “Learn more” use “online payment” “meeting agenda” “building permit” or other descriptive language.
 - An image should have “alt text” saved to it. This text displays if an image is unable to load and is read aloud to those with visual impairments.
 - Using built in heading features in Microsoft Word or our website (H1, H2, H3 etc.) assists screen reader users to speed read through a page or document and help the user focus on the information they want.
 - If generating a table without detailed supporting text, request IT assistance to make it screen reader accessible.
 - Content should have a visual contrast to allow for ease of viewing. This means white text should not be placed on a light beige background.

Content should be clear and concise. By being concise, content will resonate with more audiences. Our Content Quick Guide has helpful tips.

- Avoid industry jargon if simpler language is available. While our jargon may be more technically accurate, it will confuse the general public.
- Content should include contact information to allow for follow-up questions.

Section 2.3 Templates

Templates are available through the City of Kyle's One Drive

To maintain a unified and professional look, templates have been created for the following:

- Letterhead (general)
- Press releases
- PowerPoints
- Memo
- Resolutions
- Proclamations
- Project Pages

Section 2.4 Logo and Mark Use

Official City of Kyle logos and official mark are available City of Kyle's One Drive. The City of Kyle logo should be used on official communications such as resident mailings, letterhead, envelopes, business cards, press releases, etc. Approved department logos may be used in lieu of or in addition to the City of Kyle's logo.

Administration may grant use of our logos to community-based or recognized non-profit organizations. The City of Kyle's logo may not be used on personal documents/materials, to promote a private business (unless used to promote a co-sponsored community event).

Section 2.5 Department Content

Departments are responsible for creating content on a regular basis for use in City of Kyle publications. Content should include fully written and proofed articles, as well as photos or images that meet platform standards as outlined in the City of Kyle's Communication Plan.

All content should be reviewed by at least one other person before sharing.

Section 3: Website and E-Newsletter

The City of Kyle website is the core of our communication outreach. When possible, all other communication avenues should direct back to the website.

Section 3.1 Department Content Responsibility

Each department will keep their website content updated, relevant, and stylistically consistent. Pages will have seasonally appropriate information. Each department should have at least one web content editor and should strive for at least two.

The Department Web Content Editor/s will be responsible for the department's website content, and for submitting relevant news articles and calendar events to the Communications Department. The Department Web Content Editor will, on a quarterly basis, check their part of the website for broken links and outdated information. Calendar content will be reserved to City of Kyle or City of Kyle Partner events and meetings.

Resources Content Quick Guide and Communication Calendar are helpful tools.

Section 3.2 Legal Notices

The City of Kyle staff liaisons or City Secretary, or their designee, will ensure that the required meeting notices and agendas for City of Kyle Board/Commission Meetings are posted to the website in accordance with the Open Meetings Act and any subsequent legislation regulating internet notice posting.

Section 3.3 E-Newsletter

E-Newsletters are distributed every Friday and when necessary for timely distribution of public information. Any department can submit content for inclusion in newsletter by sending to Communications Department. Submissions are due by Wednesday at 5pm.

Section 4: Digital Billboards

The City of Kyle partners with owners of digital billboards to announce important community information as approved by the Communications Department. These rules and guidelines are to ensure proper and best use of the signs. All departments interested in using billboards should contact Communications Department.

Section 5: Social Media

Official City of Kyle social media accounts are an extension of all City of Kyle communications. Social networking sites should link back to the official city website for forms, documents and other information.

All social media pages must be in the City of Kyle's name. The log-in, password for access, and employee access list must be submitted to the Communications Department. The Communications Department will have final determination of who can post on each account. Each account must have a primary and secondary administrator who are familiar with the Communications Plan and IT Technology Use Policy.

Each Social Media Page will include a statement of scope and comment policy.

Section 5.1 Facebook, Twitter and Nextdoor

The City of Kyle reserves the right to remove any comments that violate our social media policy such as:

- Profane, obscene, violent, sexual, or pornographic content and/or language;
- Personally identifiable information, such as Social Security Numbers;
- Content that violates federal, state or local law.

Be timely, concise and conscientious in response to comments. Information should direct back to primary City of Kyle resources such as Department contacts or the website when possible. View our response guide to determine when a response should be provided.

Do not alter previous posts except when absolutely necessary. All posts should be reviewed by one other person before sharing.

Posts will be shared regularly and pre-scheduled when possible to allow for consistent, reliable posting. Seasonal items and holidays are examples of posts that can be pre-scheduled. Regularly check scheduled items to make sure content is still relevant and appropriate. Disable scheduled posts when they may be distracting such as during an emergency. Hashtags will be investigated for appropriate content history before use.

All posts should have image or video content and, when possible, link back to our website. All images shall have "Alt Tags" to improve accessibility as discussed in the Content Quick Guide.

When sharing posts on behalf of another agency or non-profit, the City of Kyle will share their post and will not create the post for them. This protects the City of Kyle from responsibility if the information in the post becomes inaccurate.

Posts that may generate follow up phone calls will be run by the Department Head.

Section 5.2 Youtube

This channel posts public meetings and videos of useful, informative content as well as City of Kyle promotional materials.

Public comments may be disabled, comments regarding public meetings can be submitted by email or our electronic public comment form.

Section 5.3 New Platform Evaluation

No social media page will be created without approval from the Communications Director. Consideration will include:

- Viability of Platform: Is the platform offering content in a new or more successful way than existing platforms? Is it expected to be stable for an extended period of time? Will residents use this platform?
- Resources: Does the platform take too much additional staff time? Does the platform have an additional cost?
- Tone: Is the platform's tone and intent consistent with City of Kyle's values?

Section 6: Public Access Channel - Kyle10

The channel's programming mission is to provide municipal and community information.

Section 6.1 Programming Content

While the primary content creator will be the Communications Department, the City of Kyle may also share relevant content from other government or non-profit agencies as determined by the Communications Department.

Section 6.2 Programming Schedule

A rebroadcast of the City Council meetings can be viewed on every Wednesday at 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM. All other content must be programmed around this schedule.

Section 7: Press Releases/Media Interviews, Water bills and Misc.

Section 7.1 Press Release and Media Engagement

Press releases and media interviews must be pre-approved by the relevant Department Head or Communications Director.

Press Releases will include a staff contact name, phone number, and email address as a designated spokesperson or subject matter expert.

The Communications Department shall be promptly notified of all media interviews.

Section 7.2 Water Bills and Miscellaneous

Water Bill inserts require approval from the Communications Department and must be requested 21 days before the water bills are submitted to our distribution agency.

Email signatures noting name and title at the bottom of the email should be used and include a contact phone number.

Section 8: Mass Public and Crisis Communication

Section 8.1 Crisis Communication and Emergency Operations

Follow the Emergency Operations Plan.

Section 8.2 Everbridge and Mass General Public Notification

The City of Kyle uses Everbridge as a mass notification system. When possible, all Everbridge notifications and notification areas will be reviewed by the City Manager's Office before release. Preapproved topics include:

- Road Closures
- Flooding and Severe Weather
- Public Safety Emergency Response
- Missing Person
- Reports of Police or Criminal Activity
- Boil Order

Everbridge notifications can be released by the City Manager's Office, Public Works, or Police. Additional access may be provided at the City Manager's discretion.

When releasing a message, be aware of the time of day. Also be brief with text message content due to character limitations by cellphone providers (Less than 160 characters).

Section 9: Strategic Communication

Strategic Communication is aligning internal and external communication with our mission, core values, financial plan, and general strategic goals.

Section 9.1 Keeping Colleagues Informed

Copies of mass notifications that may generate questions will be shared with staff who field general inquiries. The content creator should also include where to direct inquiries. This can include social media posts that could reasonably be expected to generate questions.

Content creators will also evaluate if a partner agency should be informed of the notification.

Department Heads and General Inquiry staff will receive the e-newsletter.

Section 9.2 Communication Plan Updates

This policy will be reviewed and updated biennially or on an as needed basis.