



# **Website Standards and Guidelines**

Version 1  
February 11, 2022

## Document Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide direction in establishing and maintaining consistent content and links across our website.

## Website Purpose

The purpose of our website is to provide online government services, education, and access to information regarding services, meetings, programs, activities, policies, documents, and facilities we provide that promote the community's public health, safety and welfare.

## Accessibility

### *Audits*

The City of Killeen partners with AudioEye to make the website accessible to all site visitors. AudioEye provides a monthly report of errors they have found. When applicable, the Webmaster updates the website content to remediate the error.

### *Training*

All website editors will receive training on a consistent basis, including but not limited to webinars, white papers, conferences, and specific CivicEngage training.

### *Resources*

- Website accessibility resources are available on the CivicEngage Help Center.
- The Help Center also houses the Engage Exchange to communicate with other CivicEngage developers and users from around the United States.
- CivicPlus also hosts webinars at least once a month that can be viewed in the Help Center.
- [Website Content Accessibility Guidelines information](#)

## Roles & Responsibilities

- Departments (or divisions or programs) are responsible for notifying Website System Administrators through the Communications Request Form when information or files need to be posted or removed.
  - Departments should review their website content once a month to look for outdated content, including documents.

## General Guidelines

- **ALWAYS click the “Save As Copy” button prior to editing a page.** This will ensure you have a backup copy of the original page to revert to.
- To request a variation from the ‘Standards and Guidelines’, email a business case to the Webmaster at [communications@killeentexas.gov](mailto:communications@killeentexas.gov).
- The unit of measurement used throughout this document when referencing dimensions of images will refer to pixels (px) and the width as the first value.

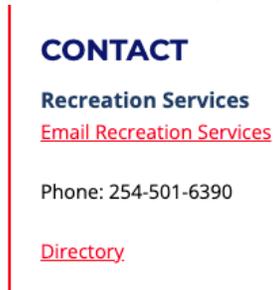
## Website Content

The content material placed on the website should be consistent with the Website Purpose. Senior Management or the Communications Department, or their designee, reserves the right to remove content material not being maintained or that does not adhere to our standards and guidelines.

## Contact Information Standards

As a minimum, contact information (physical address, email address or phone #) is accessible or viewable on a department's homepage with the following information:

- 8 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. (Hours of operation)
- Phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx (Main department contact phone number)
- Fax: xxx-xxx-xxxx
- Photo Example:



## Custom HTML

- When inserting custom HTML, we ensure that the tags and layout adheres to the latest web standards. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring the content/layout adjusts for mobile devices correctly.
- Departments can test the mobile responsiveness of their content by using the [Responsinator website](#) or by using the tools in your browser.

## Department Landing Page

- The department's Mission, Vision, Values statement, and/or History is placed on an interior web page.
- Department landing pages will include contact information in the upper right-hand corner of the screen and should include phone number(s), location(s), mailing address, email address(es), and hours as applicable.

## Documents

### Accessibility

- Documents added to the website are accessible for site visitors using assistive devices and technologies.

### Links

- Links to documents, forms, and maps open in a new window.
- A link that will open a file indicates the type of file within the link's display text.
  - Dog Licensing Form (PDF)
- More information about document links can be found in the [Links section](#).

### Naming

- All documents have names that are clear and concise and that will make sense to all citizens
- All documents include the extension in parenthesis after the title to warn users that they are opening a PDF document, not a web page. Some examples:
  - Dog Licensing Form (PDF)
  - Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting Agenda (PDF)
  - 2022 - 2023 Fee Schedule (PDF)
  - Fee Calculator (XLS)

### *File Type*

- Documents should be converted to PDF file format unless there is a specific business need to have other file formats (Word, Excel) available.
  - PDFs protect the integrity of the document, while other formats present a risk of the document being changed or modified.
  - Adobe Acrobat is a free download that any user can obtain to read documents, while other file types, such as Microsoft Word, may require expensive software to access.

### **Font Styles**

- Underlining is only used for hyperlinks, as to not confuse users who might think they can click on that area of the screen.
- We avoid using all caps for anything except acronyms.

### **Footer**

The footer throughout the site will remain consistent throughout the website.

### **Grammar & Tone**

- Content copy will be grammatically correct and written in clear, concise sentences.
- The average citizen skims website content and, so we keep information simple so content is easy to comprehend.
- We keep our audience and the purpose of the content in mind when writing and formatting content for the website. We know our audience and that while some content is meant to engage, some is meant to inform or educate and some content has to simply direct users to contact a real person.
- We may write in a more conversational tone when writing for the web; however, we avoid using slang and jargon.
- Put the most important information at the top.
- Do not use run-on or fragment sentences.

### **Headings & Page Titles**

- Page titles are clear and concise and accurately describe the content found on the page. For example: “Content Policy Documents” is much clearer than just “Documents.”
- Headings are used to break up content and provide the user guidance as to what information is in the text below it.
- Headings are created with title case and should be clear and concise.

### **Images**

Images used on the site are used to enhance the content on the page. A large number of our visitors use a tablet or smart phone to view our website, so we keep pages clean and uncluttered, with a minimum of photos for easy navigation.

#### *Selecting an Image*

- We avoid pictures that:
  - Can be construed as campaigning or favoring one politician.
  - Highlight another agency’s services.
- Pictures are reviewed monthly and adjusted accordingly for seasonal or current community activities.

#### *Sizing an Image*

- All images will be automatically compressed to optimal website resolution

- Images will not appear stretched
- Images must be of high quality and not appear pixelated

### *Formatting*

- Graphics used on the website will be either .jpg (NOT .jpeg) or .png.

### *Alt Text*

We ensure images have a descriptive alt text for users with screen readers. File names and single words do not make usable alt text entries.

- Examples
  - Instead of “cop car” we would use “black and white police cruiser with lights on”
  - Instead of “little girl” we would use “young girl participating in recreation program”
- Text in an image
  - If an image contains both an image and a caption/marketing message (e.g., an image of a child swimming with the text "Sign Up for Summer Swimming!"), only the text will be represented in the alt text.
- Data in an image
  - If an image contains actual data like a chart or graph, the alt will specify this so that screen reader users can find assistance (e.g., "Graph of Average Temperatures" or "Diagram of a typical water bill with detailed explanations"). The information depicted in the image will be made available on the page (or a separate, hidden page) or in an accessible document.

### *Graphic Buttons*

- These are the round buttons on the home page and interior pages. They are reserved for the most frequently sought-out action items and are consistent throughout the site.

### *Slide Shows*

- We limit the total number of images on a slideshow to a maximum of four (4) total. If more than four (4) images are needed for display, we link to a photo gallery. We limit the number of slideshows on a page to one (1).
- To indicate that there are multiple images in the slideshow, we use arrows (“<”, “>”) to scroll through the images for consistency. We also use the numbers option to display the image count below the slideshow to allow the visitor to control the slideshow speed.
  - Arrow background will be black or white and the arrow will use the other color.
  - We label each of the images on the slideshow with alt text, a title, and a caption.

## **Links**

### *All Links*

- The only links that are set to open in a new window/tab are those that direct the user to a document, form, or map. All other links are set to open in the same window/tab.
- We do not write out the URL in the text, as it is difficult to read and decipher where that link is going. Instead, we link the title of the website, page, etc.
- Emails are masked and use <mailto:> at the beginning of the link.
  - Text: Email Jane Doe
  - Link: <mailto:janedoe@civicplus.com>

- Telephone numbers are turned into hyperlinks. We use <tel:> at the beginning of the link and do not add dashes between numbers.
  - Text: 123-456-7890
  - Link: tel:1234567890
- We avoid using terms like “click here,” as they don’t indicate to the user where the link is going to take them. They also hinder the usability of the site for someone utilizing a screen reader. Instead, the link’s display text indicates what is found at the link.
  - Instead of “to view the training document, click here,” we use “View the training document (pdf)” or “Training Document (PDF)”
- A link that will open a file indicates the type of file within the link’s display text.
  - Dog Licensing Form (PDF)
  - Fee Calculation Worksheet (XLS)

### *Internal Links*

- Links to documents, forms, and maps open in a new tab/window. All other links open in the same window.

### *External Links*

- Links to documents, forms, and maps will open in a new tab/window. All other links open in the same window.
- We have a natural synergy to information provided on the website that is consistent with our goals, policies, and the Website Purpose.
- Are to a website that is managed in a professional manner (i.e., fully operational and available most of the time).
- We are the authority when we can be, but we don’t create content that we are not the authority on. We link to an authority’s website rather than replicating their information. This allows residents to easily access information without our team committing to updating and maintaining content.
- Examples of external links:
  - Governmental agency or governmental organization, or special purpose district which provides information related to the Website Purpose.
  - Partnering agencies.
  - Utilities
  - Public safety related websites, including hospitals.
  - Educational facility, such as a library, museum, school and university.

## **Lists**

- Long lists within text are broken out into bulleted lists, so that they can be easily scanned.

## **Search Engine Optimization**

### *Page Descriptions*

- Page descriptions are complete for every page. They help search engines determine what pages display in results. They also help guide users to the correct information by providing better details on what can be found on the page.
- Page descriptions accurately describe the content on the page, including any major topics that are covered.
- Page descriptions are displayed below page titles when using the Pages Widget.
- Example
  - Page name: Solid Waste & Recycling

- Page description: Learn about the city's garbage and recycling programs.

## Tables

- To be ADA compliant, all columns have headings.
- Tables will be kept small and short for citizens that require a screen reader or other assistive devices.
- If the information we're displaying in a table doesn't consistently fit under the headers for that table, that information is not be displayed in a table.

## Video

- Video is a powerful communication tool.
- Videos embedded on pages are responsive in size. We can use the [Embed Responsively website](#) to quickly generate a responsive embed code for videos from YouTube, Vimeo, and other popular video hosting sites.

## Modules

### *Agenda Center*

- Documents' display text follows the guidelines in the [Document Naming section](#).

### *Alert Center*

- Home Page alerts are only used in certain circumstances. For example:
  - Public Health (advisories, outbreaks, etc.)
  - Public Safety
  - Weather
- The Communications Department must approve all alerts for the home page.

### *Archive Center*

- We archive documents that we need to keep a past record of for legal purposes.
- Our Documents' display text follows the guidelines in the [Document Naming section](#).

### *Document Center*

- Documents' display text followd the guidelines in the [Document Naming section](#).

### *Form Center*

**All forms must include a ReCaptcha element in order to prevent malicious attacks against the form.**

The Form Center is not an encrypted way of collecting information. As such, CivicPlus recommends that forms that contain specific kinds of identifying information should be not be created in Form Center. CivicPlus recommends any form with potentially identifying information remain as is or be turned into a PDF that must be printed and mailed or brought in for submission. Identifying information includes:

- Social Security numbers
- Driver's license numbers
- Tax ID numbers
- W2 or other tax documentation or information
- Birth certificate copies
- Account numbers

### *Notifications*

When sending notifications from modules and categories with this functionality turned on, it is important to write clear messages.

In order to allow residents to sign up for notifications, the fields "Email List", "Allow Subscribers" and "Allow SMS" must be selected in the category settings.

## Subject

The Subject field will be the subject line of the email a subscriber receives. Replace the pre-populated text with something more user-friendly.

## Comments

The Comments field is the body of the email a subscriber receives. If this field is left empty the body of the email will be a single hyperlink so write a short one-sentence summary of the information they will find on the website.

## Mobile Text/Push Message

The Mobile Text/Push Message field is the text message a subscriber receives. This message should tell the subscriber who the message is being sent to in addition a one-sentence summary of the information they will find on the website.

## Definitions

The following terms shall have the following definitions:

- a. **“CivicPlus”** – Creator of our Content Management System (CMS). They provide local government website design and professional services for cities, townships and counties of any size.
- b. **“CivicEngage”** – Our Content Management System (CMS). Its tools are designed specifically for local government needs.
- c. **“Content Management System (CMS)”** – is a computer application that supports the creation and modification of digital content using a simple interface. We have selected CivicPlus as our CMS provider. The CMS is called “CivicEngage.”
- d. **“Communications Department”** can be reached at 254-501-7755.
- e. **“Department”** shall mean any department or agency that posts content to the website.
- f. **“Department Head” or “Director”** shall refer to the individual who is head of a department, or elected agency.
- g. **“Document Center”** is a location within the Content Management System (CMS) where documents should be uploaded for use within the pages of the site. The document center has been organized with descriptive folder names to easily identify the department/division that is utilizing the documents within.
- h. **“External Links”** shall mean a hyperlink on the our website that takes the user to a website maintained by another party.
- i. **“Image Repository”** is a location within the Content Management System (CMS) where images should be uploaded for use within the pages of the site. The image repository has been organized with descriptive folder names to easily identify the department/division that is utilizing the images.
- j. **“Interior Page”** shall mean a webpage that is limited to the content of a specific department.
- k. **“Internal Link”** shall mean a hyperlink on the website to a page that exists on the website, even if it takes the user to another department’s content.
- l. **“New Information”** shall refer to any new pages or content added to the County website.
- m. **“Organization”** - The City, its board members, departments, divisions, agencies and employees.
- n. **“Public Health, Safety and Welfare”** shall mean the protection and well-being of the general public.
- o. **“System Administrator (System Admin)”** shall mean the website editors with the highest level of permissions for the website. They have rights to all pages and modules. The System Admin can be contacted at 254-501-7755.

- p. **“Website”** shall mean the public web pages hosted on one of the County’s web servers with a County Domain Name.
- q. **“Uniform Resource Locator (URL)”** shall mean the specific location or address of material on the internet.
- r. **“Update”** shall refer to the maintenance of existing information on the website.

## Version Updates

The following updates have been made to the document:

July 7, 2022: Document Finalized

February 11, 2022: Document Created