CITY OF REDONDO BEACH	ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY / PROCEDURES (APP)
Number: 4.04	*Subject:* Web Publishing Standards
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I.   PURPOSE & SCOPE

To define the guidelines and best practices for development and maintenance of the City's Web site information architecture and design.

II.   GENERAL INFORMATION

All Redondo Beach government offices, departments, agencies, governing bodies, boards and commissions are eligible to post content, or request the posting or hypertext linking to appropriate information to support their mission or service initiatives. Unless sponsored by an eligible user as defined above, other individuals or groups are not eligible to post content on the City site.

The City uses Civica content management software to develop Web page information. Multiple users throughout all departments have access to Web content. All persons with access to City Web content and all departments should refer to the Web Publishing Standards whenever developing, changing or maintaining information on Web pages.

III.   PROCEDURES

Refer to the attached Web Publishing Standards.

IV.   EXCEPTIONS

None.

V.   AUTHORITY

By Authority of the City Manager

_____
Louis N. Garcia
City Manager

CITY OF REDONDO BEACH

WEB PUBLISHING STANDARDS

Created by the City Manager's Office
December 2003

Approved by:

_____
City Manager, Lou Garcia

WEB PUBLISHING STANDARDS
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WEB PUBLISHING STANDARDS

I. Background

The City's E-government Strategic Plan, completed on January 15, 2002, identified the development of a new Web site, with easily managed content, as "the most important near-term e-government objective." A team of employee representatives from each department was established to select and implement a new Web site design and content management system that would facilitate the delivery of accurate and up-to-date information to the public in the most effective manner. The team conducted a nation-wide study of award-winning Web sites and developed a vision for a City Web presence that would be service oriented, user friendly, easy to manage and easy on the eyes. The team developed the main goals for development of the Web site which included:

- *To improve public access to City government information and services.*
- *To increase department use of the Web site as a customer service tool.*
- *To provide a uniform and consistent look and feel to City Web pages.*
- *To easily integrate with and complement third party applications.*

The new site went live in September, 2002.

II. Purpose

It is the purpose of the City of Redondo Beach Web site, WWW.REDONDO.ORG, to provide accurate, non-editorial content that will inform, educate, and enlighten the Citizens of Redondo Beach about the functions, services, activities, issues, operations and projects of their municipal government. When and where appropriate, the Web site will be used to facilitate the delivery of direct services provided by the City to its citizens and visitors.

All Redondo Beach government offices, departments, agencies, governing bodies, boards and commissions are eligible to post content, or request the posting or hypertext linking to appropriate information, to support their mission or service initiatives. Unless sponsored by an eligible user (as defined above), other individuals or groups are not eligible to post content on the City site.

The purpose of the City of Redondo Beach Web Publishing Standards document is to provide guidelines that will assist in presenting the site as a unified resource and presence for the City. While each Department is responsible for information relevant to their Department function, the site is designed to eliminate a strictly departmental approach in favor of a functional approach which is more likely to provide a meaningful and pleasant experience for visitors to our site. Thus, department pages reside under the City's web site "umbrella" and site development is approached as a team, to ensure consistency, accuracy, attractiveness and usefulness to our audience.

This document defines the guidelines and best practices for development and maintenance of the City's Web site information architecture and design. Contained herein are generally accepted standards and best practices established using the recommendations of the Web Site Standards Commission, World Wide Web Consortium, review of industry best practices, past Web site experience, and Web Site Development Team input. The standards will ensure the functionality and integrity of the entire site.

This document is intended to be a living document, and to be revised as new technologies and design techniques become proven and accepted, and as the "bottom line" standard for hardware and software changes.

III. Intended Audience

This document is intended for Web page content developers and editors in each department of the City. It acquaints developers with an overview of the Web Site architecture and development platform. It outlines the guidelines that should be followed when performing site development and maintenance.

IV. Webmaster Team

A team of three or more employees serve as the City's Webmaster team, under the direction of the City Manager's Office. The team members represent a variety of departments and are generally familiar with all aspects of the City so that all Departments can be served. The Webmaster team has the following responsibilities:

- Monitor and respond to all relevant email received by the Webmaster and Intranet accounts, including additional accounts populated by surveys or other forms.
- Manage and maintain all "common" pages to the site (those not belonging to a specific Department, including the City's Homepage).
- Approve news articles and press releases prior to posting on the Web site. (In cooperation with public information staff.)
- Recommend information, services, and features to be developed and included on the site.
- Manage and maintain the navigational menus throughout the web site.
- Monitor all pages of the site for appropriate content and adherence to the standards herein.
- Manage and maintain all aspects of the City's Intranet site not developed through administrative modules
- Assist Department representatives with content changes, adds, etc., as needed.
- Provide training to department users in Web site related skills.

V. Web Publishing Procedures and Review Process

The Civica Web Content Management System allows departmental users to add or update content instantly via the Calendar, News/Announcements, FAQs, Filebank and A-Z Index modules. In addition, departments can develop pages of content for the City Web site and submit them to the Webmaster Team for linking to the Web site navigational structure. (The Webmaster Team will also create pages for a department upon request.)

In order to be linked to the City's navigational structure pages must comply with the City's Web Publishing Standards.

How to submit Web pages for review:
   1) Create or edit pages in accordance with the Web Publishing Standards contained in this document (using Word, Excel, Front Page, Adobe Acrobat or Civica Administration System.)
   2) Send altered or new page(s) via e-mail with the subject "Request Web Page Review" to rbwebmaster@redondo.org.
      With the page(s), include:
         a. Your name
         b. Your department, office, or project
         c. URLs for all new or changed pages
         d. Page titles and keywords for pages (see Section VII. Search Capability)

Proposed changes to "common" pages (those not assigned to a specific Department, including the City's Homepage), should be highlighted within the original page and sent (preferably electronically) to the Webmaster team at rbwebmaster@redondo.org. Likewise, should new common pages be proposed, the information shall be sent to the Webmaster team electronically, preferably in HTML

format. The Webmaster team shall determine the most suitable manner of posting the material proposed, including the location of the information within the file structure of the web site, page titles, and need for/location of graphic illustrations, hyperlinks, etc.

The Webmaster team will review submitted Web pages for consistency with the City's Web Publishing Standards. If pages do not agree with the standards, the Department representative will be informed of the corrections necessary for the page. Department representatives are encouraged to contact the Webmaster team via rbwebmaster@redondo.org to discuss extensive changes before they are implemented.

Example situations that would prompt Web page removal and/or Webmaster correction:
The page...
- is inaccessible to users with disabilities and does not provide an accessible alternative.
- violates state or federal law or City policy.
- features commercial advertising.
- features an unofficial version of the City logo.
- conveys disruptive or harmful misinformation.
- features inappropriate material, including obscene, harassing, or discriminatory language.
- contains serious spelling, grammatical or content errors.

If incorrect content, spelling, grammatical or format errors are found on the existing site at any time, any member of the Webmaster team may immediately correct the page and notify the responsible department.   In most instances, the Department representative(s) will be notified and given the opportunity to correct the deficiency before the Webmaster team takes action.

If content or formatting is found to be seriously inappropriate, or if standards have not been followed, the Webmaster team shall correct (or delete) the page immediately and notify the Department representative(s).   Depending upon the nature of the problem, restricted access or other action may be recommended to the City Manager.

VI. Navigation
The goal of our government Internet web site is to present a citizen-centric view. The citizen should be able to browse multiple service and department pages using a common overall navigation scheme. Design guidelines to accomplish this include:
- Along the top of each page within the site, blue "pull-down" menu buttons allow for easy public access to all City Departments, services offered, and major topics of interest.
- A depth navigation "breadcrumb" trail placed immediately below the blue menu buttons to help familiarize the user with the architecture of the site and show "the path taken" to the current page. An example of a breadcrumb trail is:

- Further navigation links along the left-hand side of each page.
- A Search box in the upper right-hand corner.
- Concise, readable pages of information. Excessively long scrolling pages should be avoided.

Only the Webmaster Team and Information Technology Department shall have access to the navigation system. All requests for changes to the navigation scheme shall be addressed to the Webmaster Team at rbwebmaster@redondo.org.

VII. Pop-Up Windows

Opening new browser windows or pop-up windows shall be minimized to the maximum extent possible. The following are criteria for when a new browser or pop up window should be considered:

- To display an example Web site or image.
- To offer the user the opportunity to browse through many items or graphics (e.g., photograph thumbnails) and to enlarge the graphic from the base page.
- When leaving the official City web site through an external link.

VIII. Frames

Frames are not allowed on the City Web site. [Frames allow an author to divide a browser window into multiple (rectangular) regions. Multiple documents can be displayed in a single window, each within its own frame. Graphical browsers allow these frames to be scrolled independently of each other, and links can update the document displayed in one frame without affecting the others. Frames can cause problems with earlier browsers, leading to disruption of the site display.]

IX. Search Capability

The ability to perform keyword searches is extremely valuable for the user to locate desired information on a site. To allow for the successful search of a specific page, a page title and keywords for that page must be assigned. Page titles and keywords are loaded through the navigation software, and thus shall be sent to the Webmaster team for posting to the site. Page titles and keywords shall be appropriate, unique and standalone. Whatever text included as the page title appears as the clickable link on the Search Results page. It also appears on the title bar at the top of the browser and is the default title when the page is saved as a bookmark.

X. Design Standards

The following design standards will assist in maintaining the design integrity of the City Web site.

- Do not use underlined text, as this is the standard format for hyperlinks, and thus may confuse the user.
- Use Tahoma, size 10 for "body" text, and use black colored text against a white background.
- Use Tahoma font, red in color (HTML color code #990000) with font size of 14 for all title text.
- On certain occasions, when "highlighting" of body text is desired, a dark blue text (#000080) is allowed. Red (#990000) may also be used as an alternative highlighting color. Hyperlinks shall be underlined and shall be in the same dark blue (#000080) color. Hyperlinks may appear in bold. The red and dark blue colors have been chosen for their contrast against a white background and to complement the colors existing in the City's Logo.
- Headings of sections within a page shall appear in bold and aligned to the left.
- All pages shall be viewable without the use of a horizontal scroll bar. Page data is entered into cells of a table. Cell and table widths are not to be altered.
- Paragraphs may be aligned to the left or center, or justified.
- Avoid acronyms, unless they are typical terms your audience expects. If an acronym is used, a definition of the acronym shall be included on the page, and the acronym (with definition) shall be sent to the Webmaster team for inclusion in the City's "Glossary of Government Terms."
- Images must be appropriate for the subject of the page. Flashy graphics, blinking and animation shall not be used unless necessary for explanation of content.   Extraneous objects and images will be removed because they consume excessive system resources.
- Pages should be designed from existing pages or from a template page (master_template.asp). The width and height of the table cells should not be manipulated, as they have been carefully measured to allow for items such as the navigational bar (on the left side of each page).

Page Attribute	Hex. Color Number	Name	Color
Background of page	#FFFFFF	White	
Background of table *	#FFFFFF	White	
Body Text (10 pt. Tahoma)	#000000	Black	
Title (14 pt. Tahoma)	#990000	Red	
Links	#003399	Dark Blue	

* For maximum readability, it is highly recommended that table backgrounds be white. However, some tables may necessitate a colored background. Maximum readability should be the objective.

XI. Image Files
Graphic images must be in .JPG or .GIF format and should be as small as possible to reduce file size and download time. It is recommended that graphic images not exceed 50kb in file size (preferably, less than 35kb in file size).

XII. Tables
Tables may be used when showing data in columns or rows. Borders for the table or for cells within the table, must be appropriate in thickness and style. The border size shall be no greater than a value of "2". Borders shall be in one of three colors: black (#000000), dark blue (#000080), or red (#990000). Fill for a table must be complementary to the border color, yet must contrast enough to create readable text within the table. For this reason, a white fill is strongly encouraged.

XIII. Copyright
All images, sounds and text created or designed by City personnel for the City's web site are the property of the City and, therefore, can be used as desired without any infringement concern. Items obtained from a supplier or downloaded from the Internet (whether purchased or not) are subject to the use restrictions of the supplier. If you are not sure of the use restrictions, check with the supplier, owner, author. Any items causing copyright concerns should be reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

XIV. Use of City Logo
The City logo appears at the top-left of every page in the City's site. The need for including another logo on a page is not anticipated. However, if a logo is needed, web-ready versions of the logo are available for download from the City's Intranet site. The official logo shall not be manipulated in any way. If approved by the City Manager's Office, other allowable versions of the logo may be loaded to the site by the Webmaster. Use of the City logo must adhere to the City's Graphic Standards Manual (available on the City's Intranet).

XV. Editorial Style Guide
Should the City ever create an Editorial Style Guide, or other document meant to produce consistency among spelling, grammar, capitalization, punctuation, etc., all content delivered to the City's web site shall conform to the standards therein.

XVI. Keeping Content Current
Because content is the focus of the City's web site, web pages must be maintained and kept up-to-date. For example, once an event, class, or deadline has passed, information about it should be removed from the Web site, unless placed in an "archive" page or on a Calendar.

Take advantage of automated Web site features by assigning an end date for news items and announcements. In addition to removing out-of-date information, "stale" content (old articles, news, and announcements) should be archived on a regular basis. Furthermore, only active files should be

kept on the Internet server. Inactive files, such as old Web pages, shall be removed from official directories and stored either locally or on the City's network. The City's Web server shall not be used as a file server or backup system.

XVII. Advertising on City Web Pages
Commercial advertising is not permitted on any City web page. In terms of events, only events sponsored in any way by the City shall be listed (fee waivers, subsidy, etc.). Non-commercial advertising of a non-profit activity or Department event is permitted on the site.

XVIII. Appropriate Content
All pages must not violate state or federal law, or City policy. Also, pages must not feature obscene, harassing, or discriminatory content or contain any other inappropriate information. Personal viewpoints shall not be presented within the text of a page. Great care should be given to monitoring the content of external sites whose links appear on City pages. Owners of domain names change frequently, and what is appropriate now may not be so under a new owner.

Examples of appropriate Web page content include up-to-date contact information (phone, fax, e-mail, mailing address); the latest department, office, or project news and events; original articles; commonly requested forms; and other resources. Web pages should convey a professionalism and character similar to that of the community.

XIX. External Links
All external links shall be clearly labeled as a link that will send the user to a new domain outside of the City's site. External links should be constructed to open in a new window.