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MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Eric Linton, City Manager
Date: April 27, 2015
Subject: **Updated Website Link Policy**

BACKGROUND

In November 2011, City Council established a Website Link Policy to better serve residents, visitors and potential residents and to be supportive and inclusive of community groups by placing links on the City's website. With the launch of the city's new website in early 2015 the city continues to offer government agencies, appropriate certified community organizations, and other groups as outlined in the policy's criteria an opportunity to provide a URL link to the group and/or organization's website within the City's website (www.dunwoodyga.gov).

DISCUSSION

Staff has updated the parameters and processes used in decisions regarding the inclusion of external links within the Website Link Policy guidelines and provided a revised draft policy for Council's consideration. The purpose of the attached Website Link Policy update is to clearly define the criteria, process and exceptions related to the parameters used in decisions regarding the inclusion of external links on the city's website.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adopting the updated Website Link Policy and placing new links on the existing Residents Tab on the City's website under the heading "Looking for Something or Someone?"

WEBSITE LINK POLICY

I. Background

The City of Dunwoody's website serves as an electronic resource for citizens. It provides information including city events, services, initiatives, meetings, policies, ordinances, and departments. The website is also designed for use by individuals or businesses located outside of Dunwoody, including those who may be considering visiting or moving to Dunwoody. To better serve our residents, visitors, and potential residents, and to be supportive and inclusive of our community groups the City of Dunwoody provides links to select external websites.

II. Purpose

This policy has been designed in order to outline the parameters and process to be utilized in decisions regarding the inclusion of external links the city's website. This policy does not create any rights to be linked on the city's website and is not meant to create a public forum of any kind.

III. Definitions

City website means the website for the City of Dunwoody linked to www.dunwoodyga.gov.

IV. Criteria

- Official site of a state, local or federal governmental agency, the Library System, the DeKalb County public school system or boards or agencies related to those entities.
- Related pseudo-governmental agencies (such as Chamber of Commerce, Dunwoody Convention & Visitors Bureau, Perimeter Community Improvement Districts, etc).
- Public / Private partnerships. This includes groups or organizations currently housed or permanently utilizing a city run property/ facility.
- Online tools necessary to access documents, downloads, photos or locations included in the city's website. Examples of these online tools include: (a) links to download client based tools (Adobe Acrobat); (b) online tools that assist users in accessing locations referenced on the City's site (G.I.S. or Google maps).
- Utility companies that provide services to city residents, including but not limited to electricity, garbage, recycling, and water.
- Official Homeowners Associations, which have been certified and licensed by the state of Georgia.

V. Scope

The scope of this Website Link Policy applies to all current and future requests for inclusion on the City's website from entities meeting the criteria as defined above. The city of Dunwoody reserves the right to remove any and all links at any time, without notification to the linked party.

VI. Process for Addition of Community Group

The City shall utilize the following process for approving and adding community groups to the City's website:

1. Application

The chief executive officer, or his or her designee, of any entity, school/institute of higher education, government agency may make application to the city for inclusion on the city's website on a form prescribed by the city.

2. Application Review

- a. Upon the receipt of a complete application for inclusion on the city's website, the City Manager, or his or her designee, shall review the application to verify the organization meets the above stated criteria.
- b. Prior to making a determination of whether to add an organization's link on the city's website, the City Manager may seek to determine if the website of the organization includes material or information that violates Georgia's obscenity laws or copyright laws would be prohibited from being linked to a federal or state government website. If the organization's website does contain such material or information, the application shall be denied and any existing links for the organization on the city's website shall be removed. This condition shall apply to all organizations granted website links throughout the duration of their inclusion on the city's website.

3. Application Approval or Denial

- a. The city's approval or denial of an application for inclusion of a link on the city's website shall be provided to the applicant in writing within 30 days of the receipt of a complete application. Failure by the city to respond within 30 days does not automatically signify the city's approval of the application.
- b. Inclusion of a link on the city's website is not an endorsement of or a recommendation for the entity or agency. The city is not responsible

for materials, content as well as additional links, which can be found on these sites.

4. Adding Links

- a. If approved, at the sole discretion of the city, the city will add a link for the organization to the city's website within 30 days of the approval.
- b. The city's webpage of community links will be accompanied with a disclaimer message indicating that by clicking on such links the user is leaving the city's website and that the city does not endorse or take responsibility for content on the website.

VII. Exceptions

As a .Gov internet domain, the city's website does not list non-government advertisements or political/campaign information.

A. No non-Government Advertisements

The Dunwoody website will not be used to advertise for private individuals, firms, or corporations or to imply in any manner that the government endorses or favors any specific commercial product, commodity, or service.

B. No Political or Campaign Information

The Dunwoody website is for the operation of government, not the political, political party, or campaign environment. No campaigning can be done using the Dunwoody website. No direct links or references to websites created or operated by a campaign, campaign entity, or political committee will be allowed. No political sites or party names or acronyms will be linked.

VII. Responsibility

The City Council and the City Manager all have specific duties in regards to Website Link Policy.

A. City Council

1. Adopt a policy for adding links of community groups to the City's website.
2. Update the policy for adding website links for specific entities as needed to best reflect the needs of the community.

B. City Manager

1. Ensure the city maintains a form to appropriately gather information for the review of a request to be added to the city's website.
2. Ensure applications are reviewed in a timely manner.
3. Make decisions as to the approval or denial of groups applying for a link on the city's website.
4. Ensure links for approved organizations are added to the city's website.

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