SHAKOPEE
PARKS AND RECREATION

Next Review 1/1/2028

SHAKOPEE PARKS AND RECREATION

MARKETING AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

Approved By	Title	Date
[signature]	Director of Parks & Recreation	1/6/2026

Purpose

This Community Relations and Marketing Plan serves as a strategic guide to enhance the City of Shakopee Parks and Recreation Department's visibility, reputation, and engagement with residents, businesses, and visitors. It aligns with the City's mission and vision while supporting the objectives specific to Parks and Recreation. This plan also establishes measurable outcomes and evaluation tools, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement in the City's outreach and marketing efforts.

The plan was developed using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Envision Shakopee 2040 Comprehensive Plan, City-Data.com, the MN Secretary of State, and local demographic and cultural research. By grounding strategies in current data, the City of Shakopee's Parks and Recreation Department ensures marketing and community outreach efforts remain relevant and proactive.

CORE GOALS

- Strengthen trust and transparency between the City and its residents.
- Expand access to information through multilingual and accessible formats.
- Increase awareness of programs, events, and facilities.
- Enhance Shakopee's brand identity to attract residents, businesses, and visitors.
- Foster community connection, volunteerism, and long-term engagement.
- Align all marketing and communication efforts with the City Council's strategic priorities and Parks and Recreation master planning.

Marketing Objectives

COMMUNITY VOICES - *AM I BEING HEARD?*

- Achieve 10% increase in participation from target audiences across social media, listening sessions, and events.
- Identify and analyze underrepresented audience segments to develop tailored content strategies that sustain engagement.
- Increase the department's volunteer base by 15%
- Expand multilingual and accessible content so all residents can engage in a way that feels authentic and comfortable.
    - Spanish (6.5-7%)
    - Somali (2-3%)
    - Russian (Smaller share, but notable % of population)
    - Vietnamese, Khmer, Chinese (Notable % of populations
        - Data taken from (neighborhoodscout.com & city-data.com)
- Launch at least one annual community-wide survey to capture resident satisfaction and ideas for improvement, ensuring feedback directly informs programming and services.

TRUST - HOW IS THE CITY SUPPORTING RESIDENTS?

- Limit response time to three business days for emails, voicemails, and form inquiries.
- Respond to social media comments and messages within one business day.
- Complete annual ADA checks for both physical and digital spaces.

- Create a quarterly "You Asked, We answered" communication piece to demonstrate how resident input is being acted upon.

IMAGE -HOW IS THE CITY BEING PERCEIVED?

- Foster a fluent and consistent brand identity throughout the City through staff training on standard marketing and communication guidelines. This training will take place annually during staff meetings and training sessions with full-time and part-time employees.
- Increase the reach of City-operated channels with at least three appearances in outside media annually.
- Maintain one ongoing social media campaign specific to Shakopee's Parks and Recreation services.
- Develop a proactive media relations strategy to highlight success stories, staff achievements, or parks projects.

SHAKOPEE'S GENERAL TARGET AUDIENCE

- Families with school-aged children (0 to 18)
- New residents
- Active older adults (65+)
- Unheard or underrepresented groups
- Families and residents with disabilities or unique needs
- Tourists, potential residents, and businesses looking to use Shakopee's spaces and amenities.

Situational Assessment

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Looking at the City of Shakopee's demographic trends since 2010, there are a number of changes that show population growth and shifts in the city.

Population

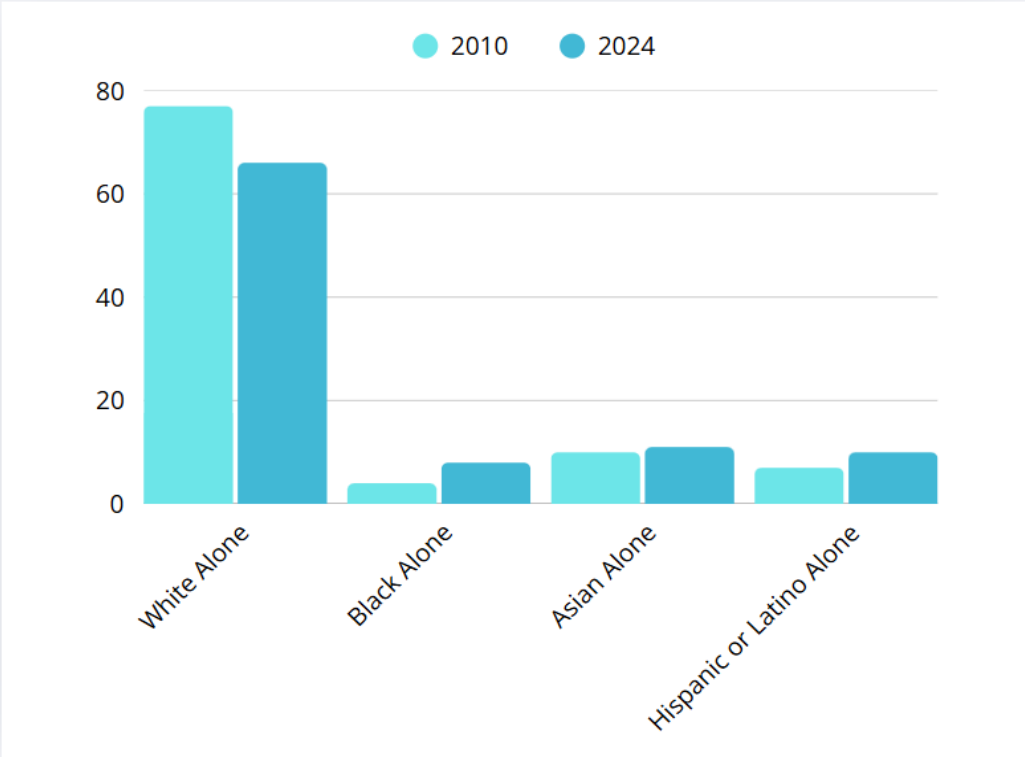
- 2010 (37,076) -> 2024 (48,401). This marks a 30.5% increase in Shakopee's population.

Diversity:

- White alone 2010 (77%) to 2024 (66%)
- Black alone 2010 (4%) to 2024 (8%)
- Asian alone 2010 (10%) to 2024 (11%)
- Hispanic or Latino alone 2010 (7%) to 2024 (10%)

Age Distribution

- Under 18 in 2024 is 26%
- 65 and over in 2024 is 10%
- These numbers show a younger population and a higher percentage of families.



ECONOMIC TRENDS

Median Household Income

- 2013-2017 was an average $84,400
- 2019-2023, the average was $110,989
- This shows a substantial increase in economic growth within Shakopee.

Poverty Rate

- 2017: 6.4% of residents were below the poverty line
- 2024: 5.1% of residents were below the poverty line
- The current poverty rate is down by one percent point after 7 years and has stabilized.

Housing Market/Media Home Value

- The median home value between 2013 and 2017 was $241,100
- The median home value between 2019 and 2023 was $361,400
- This data shows that the housing market is becoming stronger, and there is a higher demand for homes in Shakopee.

SUMMARY OF DATA

The growth of Shakopee's population and increase in diversity over the past decade reflects the evolution of the City's community. The rise in median household income and home values shows economic success among residents and the desire for more homes but also highlights the potential

need for affordable housing options. Shakopee also has a very young sector of its population. This young demographic should guide decision-making when it comes to educational offerings, recreation, and services for families.

To encourage engagement among the growing and diverse population, support young community members, and balance economic prosperity with affordability, City departments should position their focus on developments and initiatives that create inclusivity and address the needs of the growing and diverse population.

Market Coverage by Alternate Providers

GENERAL COMPETITION

- Other community centers (Chaska, Eden Prairie)
- YMCA's (Southdale, Minneapolis)
- Entertainment Centers (Valleyfair)

GYMS & FITNESS

- Orange Theory
- Planet Fitness
- Anytime Fitness
- Lifetime Fitness
- Dakotah! Sport and Fitness

YOUTH PROGRAMS & CHILD CARE

- Local Daycares, churches, and child centers
- Sports organizations (Shakopee Soccer Association, martial arts)
- Other government bodies (Three Rivers Park District, other community centers)
- Shakopee School District and Community Ed
- YMCA (Burnsville, after-school YMCA programs)

YOUTH HANGOUT & PLAYGROUND

- Schools
- Private amenities
- Valleyfair
- Streaming Services, video games, social media, etc.

SWIMMING

- Other Community Centers or city-owned Pools (e.g. Chaska's Fireman's Park)
- Valleyfair's Soak City
- Beaches and Swimming Holes

Segmentation & Target Audience

CORE DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the 2024 United States Census Bureau report, Shakopee has a population of 48,401. This population is 51% female and 49% male. Shakopee's target market is mainly represented in favor of adult female residents. Evidence of this comes from Shakopee's 2023 Community Survey, where female residents ages 35+ made up 54% of total survey respondents.

Data shows that roughly 66% of the population is White, 10% of the population is Asian, 9% of the population is Hispanic or Latino, 8% of the population is Black, 1% of the population is American Indian and Alaskan Native, and 8% of the population is two or more races.

Children & Families with Children

The presence of children in Shakopee (residents ages 0-18) is roughly 32% according to the Census Bureau. According to the 2023 Community Survey, 46% of respondents. This difference in data is most likely due to the selection of random respondents.

Income & Home Value

Shakopee's residents are relatively affluent and high earning, with an estimated median household income of $110,989 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The estimated median value of owner-occupied housing between 2019 and 2023 was $361,400. Despite the relatively high household income in Shakopee, according to the 2023 Community Survey, only 41% of residents believed Shakopee's cost of living to be good or excellent. To further convey residents' struggles with the cost of living, roughly 5% of residents are estimated to be in poverty.

Compared to state averages in median home value ($305,500) and median household income ($87,556), Shakopee ranks higher than state averages.

Education Levels

The City of Shakopee is a well-educated city with most residents attaining a high school diploma or GED (93.1%) and roughly one-third of residents attaining a bachelor's degree or higher (39.9%). Compared to State averages, Shakopee ranks almost identical to the state averages in these categories.

Politics & Religion

According to the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, during the 2024 Presidential election, the City of Shakopee's 23,354 total votes were split evenly between parties, with 46.2% of residents voting for the Republican Candidate, 51.3% of residents voting for the Democratic Candidate, and 2.5% voting for another party or candidate.

Shakopee is home to several different religious bodies and groups. Below are some of the religious organizations that can be found in Shakopee:

Non-Denominational Christian

- River of Life Community Church
- Hosanna Church
- Resonate Community Church
- SkyWater Church

- Friendship Church
- The Light of the World

Catholic

- Parish of Saints Joachim and Anne
- Church of St. Mark
- Church of St. Mary
- Church of St. Mary of the Purification
- Shakopee Area Catholic School

Baptist

- Slavic Baptist Church
- New Hope Baptist Church
- Valley View Baptist Church
- New Hope Baptist Church

Lutheran

- Bloomington Living Hope Lutheran Church
- New Creation Lutheran Church
- King of Glory Lutheran Church
- St John's Lutheran Church
- Mount Olive Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Cross of Peace Lutheran Church

Presbyterian

- First Presbyterian Church

Jehovah's Witness

- Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses

Islam

- Samaha Islamic Center
- Masjid Al-Amin

Evangelical

- Ministerios El Shaddai

The Assemblies of God

- River Valley Church – Shakopee

Recognition

City Data has a large collection of Top 100 Lists. The following lists include Shakopee in the top 10 of each category.

- #44 on the list of "Top 101 cities with the largest percentage of females in occupations: business and financial operations occupations (population 5,000+)"

- #49 on the list of "Top 101 cities with the most local government spending on highway construction per resident (population 10,000+)"
- #18 on the list of "Top 101 counties with the lowest percentage of residents relocating to foreign countries in 2011
- #45 on the list of "Top 101 counties with the lowest number of deaths per 1000 residents, 2007-2013"
- #55 on the list of "Top 101 counties with the largest number of children under 18 without health insurance coverage in 2000"
  Read more: https://www.city-data.com/city/Shakopee-Minnesota.html.

Positioning

BRAND MESSAGE

Vision: Shakopee is a distinctive river town with a variety of business, cultural, and recreational opportunities in a safe, welcoming, and attractive environment. Our vision is for Shakopee to continue being a place where people want to live, work, and play!

Mission: to deliver high-quality services essential to maintaining a safe and sustainable community. We commit to doing this cost-effectively, with integrity and transparency.

Tagline: Innovating. Entertaining. Thriving.

Brand Attributes & Values

- *Integrity*: We say what we mean, and we do what we say.
- *Best for the Community*: We work on behalf of community interests, not individual interests.
- *Accountability*: We are committed to achieving results and accountability for our actions.
- *Innovation*: We strive to creatively improve our services and our community.
- *Welcoming, Open to Difference*: We are receptive, we listen, and we are open to the differences of others.
- *Fair and Consistent*: We are fair, consistent, and respectful in our service to the public.
- *Fun*: We enjoy what we do, and we have fun doing it.

BRAND PERSONALITY

Residents and visitors should see Shakopee as transparent, resourceful, accountable, warm, entertaining, and community-first. Current marketing efforts work to do this through consistent communication via social platforms, welcoming staff and facilities, entertaining events for residents and visitors, and engaging and informative social campaigns.

Shakopee is working to better reach and recognize audiences and community members that currently feel undervalued or underrepresented, growing connections with businesses and groups who could use rental space, and creating a more accessible environment for the community, both in physical and digital spaces.

MARKETING MIX

MARKETING METHODS

METHOD	DESCRIPTION	CONTACT
Social Media Platforms: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn,	Shakopee uses its social media as a two-way communication platform to keep residents involved, engaged, and "in the know" about what is happening around the City. With timely content that addresses City happenings, interactive content to respond to and involve residents in decisions, and using social media to market to out-of-city folks, Shakopee can increase interaction and engagement.	Amanda Lillie Communications Manager Alillie@shakopeemn.gov
Parks and Recreation Activities Brochure	The City's Parks and Recreation brochure is a marketing tool that allows the city to inform residents, both physically and digitally, about entertainment options and ways to get involved with the community. Distribution of brochures both online and in a physical space (lobbies, mailboxes, etc.), the City and Parks and Recreation department can continue to develop resident involvement.	Sherry Devorak Assistant Director of Recreation Sdvorak@shakopeemn.gov
Shakopee Snapshot	The Snapshot is a quarterly newsletter that serves as a direct form of communication, both physically and digitally. The newsletter allows the city to send out important updates and information all in one place, ensuring an easy-to-find and informative resource is there for residents.	Amanda Lillie Communications Manager Alillie@shakopeemn.gov
City of Shakopee Website	The City's website (updated in 2025) serves as a go-to source for everything Shakopee. The site is home to resources like city services, recreation programs, complaint/evaluation forms,	Amanda Lillie Communications Manager Alillie@shakopeemn.gov

	and important news updates. Through easily accessible site features, the City ensures that both residents and visitors have a place to find important information quickly, and the City has a resource to drive engagement beyond city limits.	
Shakopee Government TV	Shakopee's government TV is a tool that helps bring the happenings of the city government to the TV, computer, and phone screens of residents. This tool makes sure that residents, no matter where they are, have access to live and recorded meetings/information about the City.	Amanda Lillie Communications Manager Alillie@shakopeemn.gov
Show off Shakopee Photo Contest	The photo contest is used to engage residents in a fun and creative way. Open to all residents, the photo contest asks residents to submit their photos that highlight different categories like "What makes Shakopee Unique". The winners are featured on multiple City platforms, and the photos have a temporary home at City Hall. This contest is a tool to engage the community, but also help the city understand the things that make the city special to residents.	Amanda Lillie Communications Manager Alillie@shakopeemn.gov
After Council Reports	The after-council reports are a way for the city to provide updated and concise summaries of council meetings. Reports are another way to keep residents informed and engaged with the City Government's decisions. This ensures the City's goal of information being transparent and accessible for all residents.	Amanda Lillie Communications Manager Alillie@shakopeemn.gov

Email Updates	The City's email update system is a tool that keeps residents in the loop about emergencies, events, updates, etc. This tool offers the cities a very direct form of communication with residents.	Amanda Lillie Communications Manager Alillie@shakopeemn.gov
New Resident Guide	The City's New Resident Guide is a way for residents and visitors, new and established, to find the resources necessary to understand City services, ordinances, programs, etc. This guide ensures residents and visitors can find the resources they need to enjoy their time in Shakopee.	Amanda Lillie Communications Manager Alillie@shakopeemn.gov
Volunteer & Sponsorship Opportunities Community Survey	The Volunteer and Sponsorship Opportunities Survey is a way for residents and businesses to get involved with the community. The survey offers a quick way to reach city officials who can connect residents or businesses with the correct opportunity. This tool offers an easy way for community members to become more engaged and involved with the City.	Rachel Bland Community Outreach Cord. Rbland@shakopeemn.gov
Shakopee Maps	Shakopee's Map system is a digital way for residents, businesses, and visitors to locate and understand Shakopee's geography and landscape. From park maps to development maps, the Shakopee Maps site offers a variety of maps to inform and educate the community and visitors about the City.	Amanda Lillie Communications Manager Alillie@shakopeemn.gov
City Hall & Community Center TV Monitors	The City's TV Monitors, which are strategically placed in high-traffic locations in City buildings, offer a way to digitally promote a large amount of information in a physical space. These monitors	Amanda Lillie Communications Manager Alillie@shakopeemn.gov

	are both public and internal facing, making sure that multiple aspects of the community are receiving the information as they pass or glance at the monitors.	
Marquees / Kiosks / Bulletins	With several located across the City, the Marquees, Kiosks, and Bulletins offer a physical space for communication and marketing efforts for people to see and digest as they navigate and enjoy the City.	Rachel Bland Community Outreach Manager Rbland@shakopeemn.gov
City Happenings: Weekly Employee Update.	The Communications department sends out a weekly update to all City employees to ensure that staff are aware of any major updates, changes, or information, as well as anything fun or exciting happening in the community. This ensures staff are engaged and involved in City happenings and feel more connected to their work and the community they serve.	Amanda Lillie Communications Manager Alillie@shakopeemn.gov

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND METHODS

- To track and evaluate the performance of these marketing methods, the City of Shakopee will track and measure:
    - Attendance at programs, events, facilities, or memberships
    - Website visits
    - Usage of feedback forms and results from these forms
    - Tracking increases on socials such as viewership, comments, likes, follows, etc.
    - Analytics for the online versions of the Brochure and Snapshot

Communications Standards & Staff Toolkit

Guidelines in this section outline standards for maintaining the City's voice and a consistent, professional image in all public communications. Resources include the social media policy, brand guide, approved park address list, and formatting standards, website editing guidelines, brochure proofreading requirements, and best practices for the use of AI. These tools ensure that all messaging is clear, accurate, and aligned with the City's established identity.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The City of Shakopee recognizes the value of social media to enhance public outreach, communicate essential information, interact with the community and promote city services, programs, and events.

This policy provides guidelines on how to use social media to create a consistent social media presence that matches the organization's overall communication strategies, protects the organization's brand reputation and encourages City Council members, employees and appointed boards and commissions members to responsibly share the city's message. This policy also covers the private use of the city's social media accounts by all city representatives, including its employees and agents, council members, appointed board or commissioner members and all public safety volunteers to the extent it affects the city.

MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

This policy outlines how the City of Shakopee communicates with the media to ensure the public receives timely, accurate, and consistent information. It defines the City's approach to working with media outlets, including standards for responding to inquiries, complying with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, proactively sharing information that affects City services and residents, and following formal procedures when releasing sensitive or controversial information.

BRAND GUIDE

Shakopee's brand guide is essential to how the city presents itself to the world. It includes elements like logos, color schemes, typography, tone of voice, and messaging that reflect the city's identity, values, and unique character. This consistency helps residents, businesses, and visitors recognize and connect with the city's image throughout marketing and communications efforts.

Without a brand guide, the City's image can become fragmented or unclear, weakening its reputation and appeal. A strong, cohesive brand helps attract tourism, business, and community pride, making the city more competitive than other cities. Shakopee's Brand guide includes:

- City Colors
- City Fonts and Font Usage
- City Logos, Logo Usage, and Logo Formatting

MASTER PARK ADDRESS LIST

Park / Facility Name	Address
17th Avenue Sports Complex	2600 17th Ave. E., Shakopee, MN 55379
Archery Range	551 County Highway 101 N., Shakopee, MN 55379
Autumn Hill Park	1956 Evergreen Lane, Shakopee, MN 55379
Boat Launch	501 County Highway 101 N., Shakopee, MN 55379
Cloverleaf Park	2777 Crane St., Shakopee, MN 55379
Community Center	1255 Fuller St. S., Shakopee, MN 55379
Emerald Lane Park	2600 Emerald Lane E., Shakopee, MN 55379
Glacier Park	8550 Portage Lane E, Shakopee, MN 55379

Green Meadows Park	3100 Thrush St., Shakopee, MN 55379
Hackney Park	575 Hackney Ave., Shakopee, MN 55379
Hamlet Park	7300 Cambridge Road, Shakopee, MN 55379
Hiawatha – Wermerskirchen Park	625 Seventh Ave. E., Shakopee, MN 55379
Holmes Park	628 Fourth Ave. W., Shakopee, MN 55379
Huber Park	150 Fillmore St. N, Shakopee, MN 55379
Ice Arena	1225 Fuller St. S., Shakopee, MN 55379
Jackson Commons Park	2345 Zumbro Ave., Shakopee, MN 55379
Jennifer Lane Park	2500 Jennifer Lane, Shakopee, MN 55379
Killarney Hills Park	1450 Tyrone Drive, Shakopee, MN 55379
Langdon Terrace Park	4194 Rymark Court, Shakopee, MN 55379
Lions Park (disc golf, splash pad, park)	1103 Adams St. S., Shakopee, MN 55379
Log Cabin	1099 Adams St. S., Shakopee, MN 55379
Meadows Park	1566 Sage Lane, Shakopee, MN 55379
Memorial Park	1801 County Road 101 E., Shakopee, MN 55379
Muenchow Park	1255 Fuller St. S., Shakopee, MN 55379
O'Dowd Lake Park	2853 County Road 79, Shakopee, MN 55379
Pheasent Run Park	2075 Cardinal Drive, Shakopee, Minnesota 55379
Prairie Bend Park	1983 Parkway Ave., Shakopee, MN 55379
Quarry Lake Park	6201 Innovation Blvd., Shakopee, MN 55379
Ridge Creek Park	7800 Crossings Blvd., Shakopee, MN 55379
Riverview Park	455 Harrison St. S., Shakopee, MN 55379
Royalty Park	101 Ardennes Ave. W., Shakopee, MN 55379
Saddle Ridge Park	1754 Caspian Lane, Shakopee, MN 55379
SandVenture Aquatic Park	1101 Adams St. S., Shakopee, MN 55379
Savanna Oaks Park	6225 Oxford Road N., Shakopee, MN 55379
Scenic Heights Park	1195 Ruby Lane, Shakopee, MN 55379
Shakopee Skate Park	1255 Fuller St. S., Shakopee, MN 55379
Southbridge Community Dog Park	7101 Southbridge Parkway, Shakopee, MN 55379
Stagecoach Park	1700 Stagecoach Road, Shakopee, MN 55379
Stans Park	1056 Fuller St. S., Shakopee, MN 55379
Tahpah Park	1490 Adams St. S., Shakopee, MN 55379
Timber Trails Park	1397 Blue Heron Trail, Shakopee, MN 55379
Valley Crest Park	1844 Ivy St., Shakopee, MN 55379
Marystown Dog Park	1565 Lusitano St., Shakopee, MN 55379
Westminster Park	801 Valley View Road, Shakopee, MN 55379
Whispering Oaks Park	8975 Horizon Drive, Shakopee, MN 55379
Windermere Park	1850 Windermere Way, Shakopee, MN 55379
Xcel Energy Mountain Bike Trail	6201 Innovation Blvd., Shakopee, MN 55379
Farmstead Bike Park	2345 Zumbro Ave., Shakopee, MN 55379

CITY WEBSITE EDITING GUIDELINES

Updates that Require Communications Approval

- Creating or deleting a web page
- Editing a department home page (same template as site home page)
- Changing an existing page's template
- Updating or editing Quick Links on any page

Accessibility Requirements

- Alt text is required for all images! Describe the content, not emotions. Keep it simple – ideally five words or less!
    - Example: "Children playing at park" (NOT just "photo")
    - For a graphic: "Flyer for SandVenture sale" or "Budget timeline graphic"
- Avoid relying only on graphics or images to convey important information.
    - If you use a graphic (such as an event flyer), make sure all vital information is also included as plain text on the web page for accessibility and searchability.
    - Keep in mind: maintaining both a graphic and a text version of the same content may create extra work — using text alone is often the simpler, more accessible choice.
- Use "Heading" styles (Heading 2, Heading 3, etc.) to structure content.
    - Always move in descending order (H2 → H3 → H4) without skipping levels.
    - On pages with only one or two headings, use H5 or H6.
- Use descriptive text when embedding a hyperlink.
    - Avoid generic language like "Click here."
    - Use specific phrases like "Learn more about permit requirements."
- When possible, avoid using PDFs to convey visually complex or technical information like maps, blueprints, studies with multiple visual elements, etc.
    - If available, upload ADA-compliant PDFs.
    - As the City transitions to all PDFs being ADA-compliant, the Communications Division is here to help with identifying accessible options. Given proper lead time, we can assist you with implementing alternate solutions until PDF accessibility training is available.

Image Upload Guidelines

- Compress images to below 2MB before uploading to improve page load speed.
    - Recommended tool: TinyPNG — free and easy to use.
- Crop and resize images to the correct dimensions before uploading, if possible.
    - In most cases, the recommended dimensions will be in the info box where you upload the image.
- ALWAYS add alt text describing the image content for accessibility.

Best Practices for Uploading Documents

- When uploading PDFs, use clear and consistent file names that include the document title, date of publication or date last updated, and "_ADA" if you're certain the document is ADA-compliant

    - Standard format: Document-Title_YYYY-MM.pdf or Document-Title_YYYYMM_ADA.pdf
        - Community-Engagement-Brochure_2025-06.pdf
        - Weekly-Aquatics-Schedule_2025-04-15_ADA.pdf
        - Downtown-Parking-Map_2024-11.pdf
- If a document is being replaced with a new version, you will need to go back into the document folders and delete the old version once it's replaced.
    - This is necessary because uploading a new file does not overwrite the existing one or retain the same URL unless the new document has the exact same name as the old

Style & Formatting Notes

- Capitalize "City" when referring to the City of Shakopee as the organization.
    - Example: "The City is responsible for maintaining the parks."
    - Do not capitalize when using "city" generically. Example: "There are many parks across the city."

Support

- All training materials will be available under the Communications tab on CityNet – unless your issue is urgent, please use these as your first reference when seeking support, clarity, or answers to questions.
- Communications will be uploading additional mini-videos to CityNet for tips that are specific to the Shakopee site and weren't covered in the Revize training. Stay tuned.
    - Contacts for Questions or Issues: Communications Manager Amanda Lillie

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BEST PRACTICES FOR USING AI

As AI becomes more integrated into our workflows, it's important to use it as a tool but not as a replacement for thoughtful, accurate, human-centered communication. These are our internal best practices for using AI to create public-facing content.

Provide Background for Tone and Voice

- AI is only as good as the information we give it. Make sure you are providing enough context for the AI platform to draft something worthwhile.
- We recommend phrasing prompts like this example: "You are an employee working for a suburban city of approximately 50,000 people. You're hosting a grand opening event for the local sandbottom pool that is well-loved by all. Your tone is excited but professional. Draft three sample press releases/social media posts/marketing taglines for us to use in promoting the event."

Always Review and Edit for Accuracy

- Fact-check everything. AI can generate plausible-sounding but incorrect or outdated information. Verify all facts, dates, names, and links before publishing.

Do Not Ever Copy-Paste Without Editing

- Edit everything that's AI generated. Even if it sounds "good," a direct copy-paste rarely meets the standards of the City of Shakopee voice, tone, or specific needs.

Use the City of Shakopee's Voice, Not a Robot's

- Match the City's style, per our Writing Style Guide. Adjust word choice, sentence structure, and tone to sound like us, not like a software program.
- Prioritize clarity over cutesy. Aim for clean, informative language. Avoid too many puns or plays on words, or unnecessarily wordy phrasing that dilutes your message.

Watch for Tone and Appropriateness

- Avoid tone mismatches. Don't let AI make light of serious topics or overhype routine announcements.
- Be mindful with emojis. Emojis may be appropriate in moderation for casual posts but can be overused or used in ways that undermine credibility (e.g. using emojis that have become slang for private body parts or other potentially inappropriate uses). Stick to our City's voice and tone.

Check Grammar and Punctuation Consistency

- AI doesn't know the City's guidelines for properly and consistently writing dates, times, etc. Always edit to match the City writing guidelines (e.g. "The event is at 1 p.m. Thursday, June 26" NOT "The event is at 1PM, Thursday June 26th."
- Please pay attention to this because CONSISTENCY MATTERS.

Be Aware of Cybersecurity Precautions

- Don't provide AI with personal, protected, or institutional information. AI is an evolving platform with a vast array of security concerns that could put the City of Shakopee at risk. To reduce this risk, refrain from feeding AI any identifying information. Here are some examples:
    - If you have a draft you want it to proofread, remove the words "City of Shakopee" and replace it with "suburban city."
    - Remove names and other identifying information before feeding information to AI.
    - NEVER provide birth dates, financial details, confidential information, drivers license numbers, phone numbers, etc., to an AI platform.
    - When in doubt, don't risk it. You can always generate content the old fashioned way!

BROCHURE PROOFREADING GUIDELINE PARK & FACILITY ADDRESSES:

**See Master Park Address List provided by Communications for accurate park and facility addresses formatted in the City Writing Style. Do not trust Google!

Other Common Addresses:

- Lions Park Pickleball Courts, 1103 Adams St. S.
- Community Center Fitness Studio 1, 1255 Fuller St. S.
- Depart from Community Center, 1255 Fuller St. S.
- Log Cabin, Lions Park, 1103 Adams St. S.
- O'Dowd Lake Park, 2853 County Hwy. 79
- Shakopee Archery Range, 5981 County Hwy. 101: To access, continue past the Minnesota River Boat Launch parking lot on the east side of Hwy. 101. Follow gravel road west under 101 and pedestrian bridges.

Days of the Week

Days of the week need to be abbreviated to three letters with a period. Multiple days should be separated with an en dash (–), not a hyphen (-). No spaces around en dash.

- Examples: Mon.–Fri.; Tue.–Thu.

If a program always takes place on the same day of the week, the day of the week should be called out like this: Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, etc.

Formatting Dates

Months need to be abbreviated to three letters with a period. Multiple dates should be separated with an en dash (–), not a hyphen (-). No spaces around en dash (–).

- Examples:
  - Jan. 22; Sep. 14; Apr. 1–3; Jul. 7–13
  - "No Class" dates should be shown like this: Jun. 24–Aug. 5 (No class Jul. 1)

Formatting Times

Use a.m. and p.m. after times. Multiple times should be separated with an en dash (–), not a hyphen. No spaces around en dash (–). Spell out Noon for 12 p.m.

- Correct Examples:
  - 9 a.m.; 10:30 p.m.; 8:30 a.m–1:30 p.m.; 11 a.m.–Noon
- DO NOT use:
  - PM, AM, P.M., A.M.

Formatting Ages

- Correct Examples:
  - 3–13; 3+ w/ adult; 3–10 w/ adult; 16+; 12+ years (12–14-year-olds must be accompanied by an adult); 50+

Formatting Cost

- Correct Examples:
  - $10/Session; $5/child, adult free
  - Resident and Non-Resident cost:
    - $50 Resident
    - $60 Non-Res

Formatting Registration Deadlines

- Registration deadline: Fri., Apr. 11
- Registration deadline: Tue., Aug. 12, or until capacity is filled.
- Registration deadline: One week prior to trip, or until capacity is filled.

General Formatting Notes

- Ampersands
  - OK to use ampersands with dates in tables due to space constraints
    - Correct Example: Tue. & Thu.
  - Don't use ampersand (&) in program description text. Use "and."

        - Correct Example: Enjoy donuts, juice boxes, and coffee.
- URLs
    - Don't use "www" in web addresses. Use capitalization only in the “ShakopeeMN” portion of the URL or email address
        - Correct Example: ShakopeeMN.gov/registration
        - Correct Example: dnoble@ShakopeeMN.gov; alillie@ShakopeeMN.gov; sdvorak@ShakopeeMN.gov