THE CITY OF CALGARY
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COUNCIL POLICY

Policy Title:	**Plain Language Policy**
Policy Number:	**CS014**
Report Number:	**PFC2013-0234**
Approved by:	**Council**
Effective Date:	**2013 May 27**
Business Unit:	**Customer Service and Communications**

BACKGROUND

The City of Calgary has an obligation to communicate with citizen and stakeholders:

- effectively, and
- in a way that is easily understood by the intended audience.

To achieve this, The City is committed to using plain language in its communications.
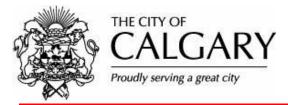
PURPOSE

The Plain Language policy describes The City's expectations about the use of plain language in City communications. This helps make sure citizens have the information they need to be involved in decision-making that impacts their lives.

The Plain Language policy directs that best efforts be made to use plain language, taking into consideration legal, contractual and technical language constraints.

POLICY

Definitions:

- **Citizen:** A resident of the city of Calgary.

- **Stakeholder:** A person or group of people who can influence the outcome of a situation. This includes those who have either a direct or indirect role in the situation.

Information regarding City programs, committees, facilities and projects will be presented in plain language.

Plain language means:
- using a conversational tone,
- speaking directly to the intended audience, and
- providing information that helps meet their needs .

Information is in plain language when it is:
- clear,
- concise,
- well-organized, and
- easily understood and acted upon by the intended audience.

Scope:
- This policy applies to communications between The City and citizens and stakeholders.

PROCEDURE

- The director of Customer Service & Communication will develop Standards for Plain Language.
- The City will adhere to those standards when communicating about City programs, committees, facilities and projects.
- The City will conduct a plain language review every two years and report the results to The Standing Policy Committee on Utilities and Corporate Services.

AMENDMENTS

- None