



# COUNCIL MONTHLY REPORT

**DEPARTMENT: ADMINISTRATION**  
**SOCIAL MEDIA/COMMUNICATIONS**

**MONTH: May 2016**

## SOCIAL MEDIA

The City currently has two social media accounts: Facebook and Twitter. The CVB has separate Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. In keeping with the larger population's use of social media, the City's Facebook account is the most active.

Engagement is increasing as people get used to visiting our social media accounts as reliable sources of information. Feedback from users and two-way conversations on timely issues is becoming the norm. High engagement is particularly evident when there are alerts, such as severe weather or power outages. Police news in general has high engagement.

Social media activity is being tracked based on the list below. A recent Events category has been added to track notices and live posts about City events.

Type	Description
Events	City special events (Safe Streets, etc.)
City Services	General city information related to services (pool closed, etc.)
Alert	Police information; time and subject sensitive
News/Information	Feature news; lighter (yard of the month, employee awards, city news)
Meeting Notice	Council, P&Z, Civic Club meetings

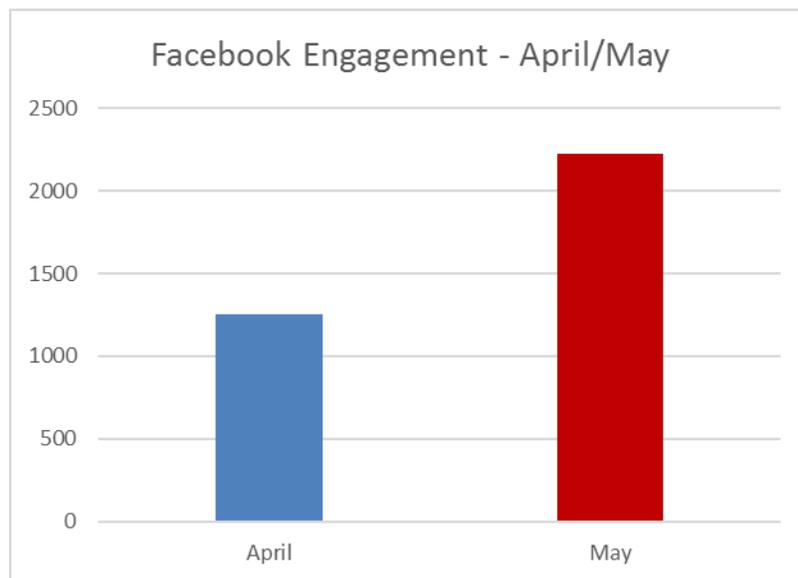
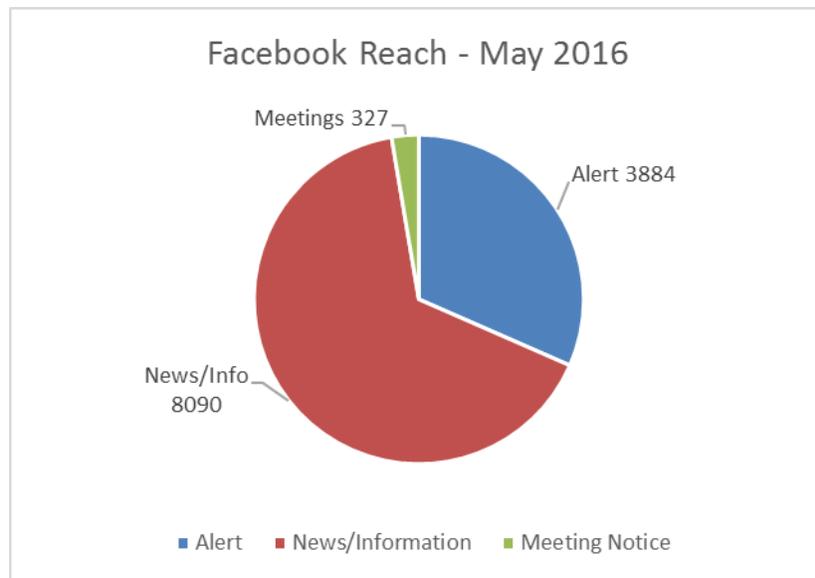
## FACEBOOK

Followers (Fans): 630

The City's Facebook page is a "fan page" which has followers instead of friends. The forum has more social tone and is not dominated by hard news. Our Facebook account gains followers every month as a result of exposure and increasing engagement.

### Reach/Engagement Drivers

The news/information category is very broad. The number of news/information posts outnumbered others, but in May, the main driver of Facebook reach and engagement was alerts related to severe weather. We began posting notices about severe weather on May 26 when the storms hit the area and continued through May 27. Updates were continuous and provided information about road closures, school closures, high water areas, and other alerts. A secondary driver of Facebook activity during May was the swearing in of Mayor Wheeler and Councilmember Raymaker.



- Audience Growth – We are averaging 16 new fans per month, with the greatest increase in April when we gained 43 new fans. Reach and engagement have increased significantly as people react to the information that we post to our accounts.
- Sentiment Analysis – Fans are mostly positive about our posts, with a small percentage that respond with cynical or negative comments. As we listen to the conversation, we will learn what is important to the audience and can respond and/or inform accordingly.
- Resonance – Outbound posts that resonate most with the audience are related to crisis and human interest. Examples of crisis are police alerts about crime activity, flooding, and road closures. Examples of human interest are employee recognition (particularly police), stories of altruism, and new city officials.
- Response Time – The City’s response time to inquiries is good and we strive to be prompt, helpful and accurate. Posts made by fans at night that are not viewed until the next day show a longer response time. Occasionally,

more information is needed to respond accurately, which can also increase response time. The goal is to continue being as prompt as possible in responding to our audience.

- New Feature – Facebook is testing a new feature aimed at encouraging users to share more information. The feature will allow users to post to their news feed only without it appearing in their timeline. Such posts will disappear from view quickly as new posts push them down in the news feed, very similar to Twitter. While Facebook is still the largest and most widely used platform, this feature is in response to a reported decline in shares and posts as other social media platforms gain audience share.
- Goals: Improve coordination between departments to schedule posts across a timeline to avoid a shotgun effect. Multiple posts that are close together can divide attention and distract from the goal of informing.

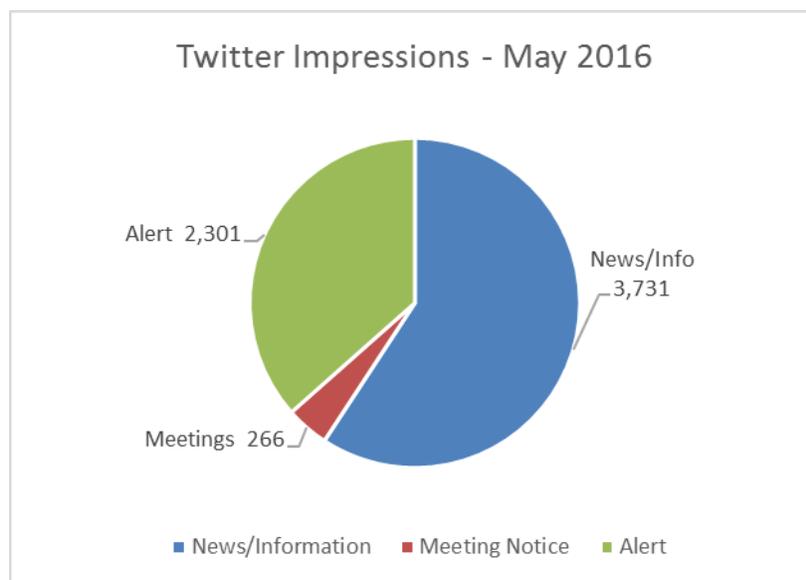
## TWITTER

Followers: 864

Following: 157

Twitter is the second most popular social media platform. It is most widely used in emergency communications and social activism, and has a broader business application than Facebook. It is also a growing news source for many users. An estimated 23% of internet users have Twitter accounts. Similar to Facebook and other social media networks, the higher the education and income, the greater the use of Twitter.

The News/Information category is very broad. The number of news/information posts outnumbered others, but in May, alerts about severe weather, flooding and road closures dominated the engagement once again.



- Audience Growth – We are averaging 25 new followers per month with the biggest recent jump being in April when we gained 37 followers. This increase is attributed to our timely posts about road closures and flooding during the first round of severe weather. Engagement and retweets have increased significantly during the last two months. We are also seeing a number of retweets by the media.

- Resonance - Twitter is more difficult to predict than Facebook. Oddly enough, the post with the highest engagement (+50%) in May was a notice that CISD would be closed due to widespread power outages and flooded roadways.
- New feature: Twitter recently made a small, but significant change and the app is now categorized as News instead of Social Networking in the iOS app store. Following a weak quarter, Twitter is working to redefine itself as a news source about what is happening live rather than being compared to Facebook.
- Goals: Step up our Twitter activity using multimedia when possible and increase the number of accounts we follow to extend our reach.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA SUMMARY**

We experienced a second round of severe weather and flooding in May and the City focused on quickly posting critical information to assist the public. It was a team effort as police department and public works personnel advised staff at city hall of road closures and other issues to help them inform the public. Based on feedback from our online audience, it was greatly appreciated.

The effective use of social media is based on authenticity, listening, engaging, and responding. Unlike web sites, which push out information in one direction, social media generates dialogue. It's easy in the traditional business environment to assume we know what our audience thinks and what they want, but we are often surprised by their feedback.

## **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Web Site:**

The City's web site is regularly updated with pertinent information that is beneficial to users. Our site was a reliable resource for the public during the recent election.

### **Newsletter:**

The City's newsletter has expanded slightly and will shift to two issues per year in addition to the annual report. The most recent issue included a more detailed overview of our budget process, debt, financial transparency, capital projects and tax revenue. We will produce the next issue in the fall.

SUBMITTED BY:

