

**SUBJECT: WEB LINKING POLICY**

Purpose of the City's Internet Website

The City's Vision Statement is: "The City of Madison will be a safe and healthy place for all to live, learn, work and play". The City's website can facilitate that vision by providing useful information to its citizens, visitors and businesses. The City's website is used to enhance and promote the City, to make people aware of available community services, and to provide information about the City's operations and activities. The City's website is not a public forum for expressive activity.

Background

Having a presence on the World Wide Web allows the City to link to other organizations' websites consistent with the above purpose. This is typically done in order to provide related information to someone coming to the City's website. The City exercises no editorial control over any of the information contained in these other organizations' websites. In addition, the City has no control over decisions made by these other organizations as to what websites to which they decide to link. As a result, it is possible that someone starting with the City's website could eventually link to information which may not be related to the City, or that the viewer may find offensive, or which may negatively impact the City's Vision Statement. Such links may interfere with the purpose to which the City's website is dedicated. While this cannot be totally prevented, we can attempt to minimize the probability of it happening by developing some guidelines that can be used in determining whether the City should link to an organization's website.

This APM applies to all City agencies.

Guidelines For Site Inclusion

- Government sites
- Tourism sites related to the greater Madison area
- Sites which contain community information, e.g., civic, recreational, educational and the like, for the greater Madison area
- Local news media sites
- School sites
- Library sites
- Sites which contain regional cultural information
- Benevolent and charitable organizations' sites that provide or promote local community services
- Sites for organizations which are funded by the City, e.g., through Community Services or CDBG
- Sites of non-profit professional organizations of which the City or its agencies are members
- Sites which contain information related to the greater Madison area deemed to be of use to the City, its citizens, visitors, or businesses
- Sites of a similar character to sites listed above which would likewise support the City's Vision Statement

### Guidelines For Site Exclusion

- Sites containing information promoting any illegal activities
- Sites for which the focus is to market a particular commercial service or product (see Acknowledgements below)
- Sites containing information which would violate any of the City's Affirmative Action Policies, Equal Opportunity Ordinance, Ethics Ordinance, or which may be in violation of any other City ordinances, or State or Federal laws
- Sites unrelated to the City of Madison and the surrounding community
- Sites for a specific political candidate or political party—rather, the City may link to independent organizations such as the League of Women Voters
- Sites containing material which is harmful to minors
- Sites which are not consistent with the purpose of the City's Internet Website set forth above
- Sites containing material which is obscene, profane, defamatory, libelous or fraudulent

### Acknowledgements

From time to time, a for-profit commercial company may partner with the City on a particular project and/or they may contribute towards a project. An acknowledgement for that company's contribution can be made. Including the company's logo along with the acknowledgement is also acceptable. In keeping with the above guidelines, no direct link should be made to the company's web pages.

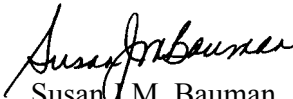
### Disclaimer

The City of Madison is not responsible for the content of any website to which it provides a link.

### Decision Making Authority

The decision to link to an organization's website can be made by each individual Department or Division Head or their designee. Information Services is available for consultation to assist in the decision. Organizations wishing to appeal the decision of an agency should be instructed to submit their appeal in writing to the Information Services Director. The decision of the Information Services Director shall be final. Any denial of a request to provide a link should be documented and forwarded to the Information Services Director. Links will be removed if found to violate this APM.

The City reserves the right to limit the number of websites to which it links in order to ensure the usefulness and effectiveness of the website for its intended purpose.

  
Susan M. Bauman  
Mayor

APM No. 3-13  
May 14, 2002