

[This is a copy of a records request made to the city of Bloomington by Dave Askins of The B Square Bulletin on Sept. 30, 2026.]

Request 26-707

I would like electronic copies of any written policies, standards, guidelines, directives or other instructional documents established or expressly adopted by the City of Bloomington to govern how its communications staff distinguish between:

1. Official government communications intended to inform residents about city operations, services, policies, decisions, public meetings and opportunities for civic participation; and
2. Communications intended primarily to promote, publicize, enhance the public image of, or generate favorable publicity for the city government, the mayor or other individual elected city officials, regardless of whether those communications constitute explicit political campaigning.

I am specifically seeking guidance established, issued, approved or expressly adopted by Bloomington city officials for application to the city's own communications operations.

This includes any such guidance addressing editorial decisions about content, framing, tone, presentation, the prominence given to elected officials, or the distinction between institutional communications on behalf of the city and publicity on behalf of an individual officeholder.

Clarification of scope and exclusions:

This request is *not* intended to encompass:

- General employee handbooks, HR policies, personnel codes of conduct or prohibitions against campaigning on city time.
- General writing, grammar, branding, formatting or social media policies that do not substantively address the distinction described above.
- Externally published journalism, public relations, ethics or communications guidelines, unless an existing city record documents their express adoption as a standard applicable to Bloomington's own communications operation.

The mere possession, circulation, citation or consultation of an externally authored resource does not, by itself, place that resource within the scope of this request.

Please include responsive guidance in effect at any point from Jan. 1, 2024, through the date of this request, including any revisions or superseded versions during that period, regardless of when originally created.

The request encompasses responsive records maintained by the city's communications office, the Office of the Mayor, or any other city office responsible for establishing or supervising the city's official communications standards.

If no records responsive to the substantive scope of this request are located, please indicate that in the response.

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