



**August 22, 2025**

**Official statement from the City of Bay City regarding social media misinformation.**

Dear Citizens of Bay City,

City leadership is aware of recent statements and accusations circulating on social media regarding documents, contracts, and credit card records made by individuals who may or may not understand the legal processes of City operations and finances. Attacks on cities via social media are not new; however, the City has elected to respond with an official statement due to the extent and nature of the misleading and defamatory claims in order to protect the integrity of the fiscal and administrative reputation of the City, its staff, officials, and partners. While much of this information is already public through the City's Transparency Page, context is critical to avoid misinterpretation. This includes (but is not limited to):

**Budget Cycle:** The City budget is adopted each October and reflects projections for the fiscal year.

**Grants & Expenses:** Some grants and expenditures span multiple years, which is normal for municipal operations.

**Financial Reports:** The budget outlines planned spending but does not show the City's full financial position. Residents should review the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR), and investment reports for a complete picture. Citizens should note that state law requires the City to publish a complete set of financial statements, and the CAFR exceeds the minimum requirement.

City staff and Council take offense at accusations of corruption when our financial processes are award-winning, transparent, audited, and accountable under state law. We caution residents to be wary of "investigations" or "audits" that may heavily rely on artificial intelligence or incomplete reviews, as these can be inaccurate or misleading.

Per City personnel policy, only a designated Public Information Officer (PIO) or City Manager may issue official public comments on City issues or problems. City staff cannot individually respond to online allegations but in an effort to correct misinformation and respond to requests for public comment, the City's PIO is providing official statements to ensure accurate and consistent information is shared. As the Lynn Group has previously provided an official statement and fact sheet covering City business, which City leadership concurs with, responses to those accusations will be limited. Due to the plethora of comments and claims made in bad faith, we could not address all of them.

The City welcomes constructive feedback through proper channels but will not allow misinformation or defamation to undermine public trust. We encourage residents to rely on official City sources for accurate information and seek reputable sources when researching information. The City's website contains a wealth of accurate information concerning policies, financial records, and more. Government accountability is vital, but spreading information or documents without context and framing them with half-truths, lies, assumptions, or insinuations of misconduct, does not promote transparency or trust. Instead, it undermines accountability and misleads the community.

The City of Bay City continues to work to reflect our core values of integrity, excellence, and transparency in the work and services provided to its residents and community.

For more information, please contact:

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