



## REPORT

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**TO:** Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

**FROM:** Laura Stervoski, Communications Specialist

**DATE:** April 14, 2025

**REPORT NO.:** ADMIN-2025-007

**SUBJECT:** Bluesky Social – The New Emerging Social Media Platform

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### RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. ADMIN-2025-007 dated April 14, 2025, regarding Bluesky Social – a new emerging social media platform, be received for information.

### KEY POINTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- Bluesky is a new emerging social media platform and has been identified as a potential alternative to X.
- Changes in X have resulted in decreased user engagement and increased concerns over content moderation.
- Bluesky has the potential for rapid user adoption during a time of social and political change.
- Communications will adopt a graduated approach that will see the Town engage and encourage the community to transition from X to Bluesky over time.

### BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

Corporate Communications manages the social media platforms/channels on behalf of the corporation. These platforms/channels are part of the division's overall strategy to inform, educate, and engage with the Halton Hills community.

Currently, staff manage four channels, issuing an estimated combined 2000 posts annually.

As part of staff's ongoing due diligence, staff regularly research and review new and emerging social media platforms. In doing so, staff note the rise of Bluesky as a potential viable option to X. Staff began to look at alternatives last year given the current socio-economic environment. Recognizing that changes in X have resulted in the platform's decreased user engagement and increased concerns over content moderation, staff believe it is advantageous to begin a transition to Bluesky while maintaining a presence on X.

Bluesky has rapidly grown as a social media platform, boasting approximately 30 million users as of November 2024. This growth has been driven by users seeking alternatives to X, particularly in the wake of significant changes and controversies surrounding X's management and content policies.

**Platform Features:** Bluesky offers a text-oriented platform where users can post messages up to 300 characters long. It operates on an open framework, allowing users to post messages to servers tailored for specific interests or communities.

**Growth Trends:** The platform saw a significant increase in users following the U.S. election, adding one million users in a single week. This trend highlights the platform's potential for rapid user adoption during periods of social and political change.

**User Engagement:** Bluesky's design and user experience have been compared to the early days of Twitter, with the focus on a lighter, friendlier environment, free from advertisements and hate speech.

**Approach to Transition:** To ensure a smooth transition from X to Bluesky, staff will adopt a gradual approach that engages the community and brings them along in the process. Implementing promotional and communication efforts will be crucial to increasing awareness and adoption of Bluesky. Rather than deciding on a hard deadline now, staff will remain flexible so as to be responsive while managing the transition. By monitoring user engagement and growth on Bluesky while simultaneously keeping an eye on X, staff can make informed decisions and adjustments.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This report is administrative in nature and does not have an impact on the Town's Strategic Plan.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:**

This report is administrative in nature and does not directly impact or address climate change and the Town's Net Zero target.

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:**

Public Engagement was not needed as this report is administrative in nature.

**INTERNAL CONSULTATION:**

The Mayor, SMT, and staff have been advised of the details in transitioning to this new emerging social media platform.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

This report is administrative in nature and does not have any financial implications.

Reviewed and approved by,

Alexandra Fuller, Director of Communications

Damian Szybalski, Commissioner of Community Services and Acting Chief  
Administrative Officer