OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

BUSINESS PLAN 2017 & 2018

Edmonton

MESSAGE FROM THE BRANCH MANAGER

In 2015, the Office of the City Clerk developed a three-year business plan to accompany the City's first three-year budget cycle. That business plan included a collection of projects and ongoing work for 2016 to 2018 inclusive. Since approval of the business plan the Office of the City Clerk has made significant progress on this work.

Several important changes have led us to create a new business plan for the remainder of the budget cycle; 2017 and 2018. When I took on the role of Branch Manager in December 2015, I needed to contribute to the business planning process for the Office of the City Clerk. Further to that, in March 2016 the City of Edmonton underwent an organizational alignment that affected most business areas. In this process the Office of the City Clerk was moved from the Corporate Services department to the Office of the City Manager.

The Office of the City Clerk will continue with the work detailed in the initial business plan with a few small changes. We will continue on the path of modernizing processes through innovation and technology. We will continue to embrace the philosophy of open and transparent government. We will continue to encourage and provide opportunities for the community to participate in their municipal government. Changes to business planning are the result of our evolving political environment, the need to integrate with other departments, and collective wisdom gained over the last two years.

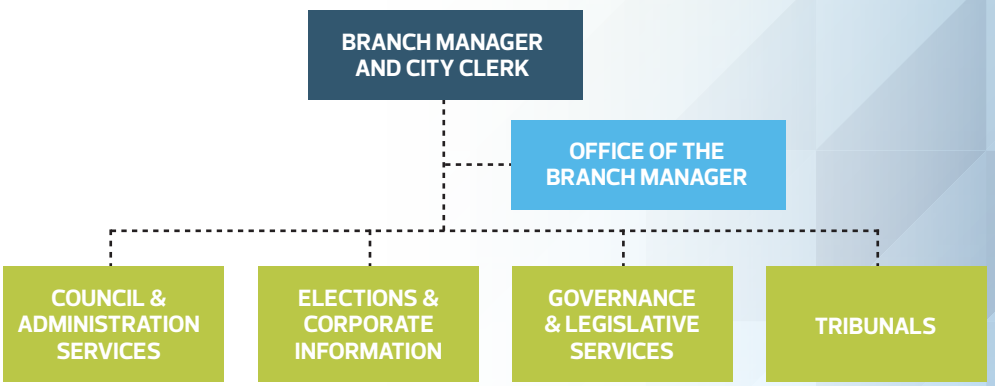
This business plan provides a new overview of what will be accomplished in 2017 and 2018. I look forward to working with the caring, knowledgeable, professional, and engaged staff of the Office of the City Clerk to see our plan to fruition.

Linda Sahli
Branch Manager
and City Clerk

OUR BRANCH

In addition to legislation, our priorities and goals are influenced by the City's elected officials, Executive Leadership Team, and the evolving needs of our diverse and growing resident base.

It's an exciting time to be part of the City of Edmonton. Citizens expect to have a voice in local government and the Office of the City Clerk is on the front line of that interaction. The Council and Committee meetings that our branch manages provide a venue for citizens to present their perspectives to our elected officials. Our civic agencies, boards, and commissions are built on citizen participation and add irreplaceable value to our city. The tribunals provide an opportunity for citizens to challenge some decisions that affect them. Information management works to ensure transparency by ensuring information is available to the public by design or request, yet protected when necessary. Civic elections are the most prominent opportunity for citizens to have a voice, and our branch leads the endless planning and legislative alignment required for this event.



Services provided by our branch include:

Council and Committee meeting management

Council governance

Municipal Elections

Census

Council support

Assessment Review Board

Subdivision and Development Appeal Board

Community Standards and Licence Appeal Committee

Civic agency governance

Records management

Information access and privacy (FOIP)

OUR FOUNDATION : OPENNESS, INTEGRITY, SERVICE

We value ethical standards, public trust, and commitment to professionalism. We do the right thing. We are open to input and feedback, and we are willing to do things differently. We hold ourselves accountable.

At the Office of the City Clerk our contribution to Council, the city and corporation is delivered on the principles of openness, integrity, and service.

OPENNESS

Openness is about transparency and access to knowledge and information. The City's philosophy is that information is accessible to the public by default, with exceptions made when required by legislation. The Municipal Clerk has historically been integral to upholding this value, and our contribution today remains a foundation for open government.

Because the City creates and uses so much information every day, making information available to the public can be an enormous undertaking. Our role is to help ensure that employees throughout the City can readily find and access information, both for business purposes and to respond to information requests. We also believe that it is important to proactively disseminate information to the public through the City's Open Data Catalogue, website, and other venues.

We ensure that citizens have opportunities to participate in decision making with the expectation that the resultant decisions will be wiser and more legitimate. We believe all voices and perspectives should be heard, and that all stakeholders must be aware of decisions. We balance the right of the public to transparent decision making with the privacy needs of individuals.

INTEGRITY

One of the most challenging responsibilities of the Office of the City Clerk is upholding the integrity of the independent operations that are foundational and critical to a transparent, trusted and open government.

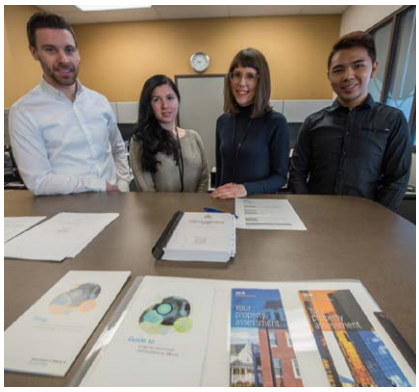
This means that some decisions, like those of the Returning Officer, Clerk of the Quasi-Judicial Tribunals, and the Corporate FOIP Head, must be independent of any undue influence of Administration or Council, favoritism, or special access. Office of the City Clerk employees in decision-making roles must be especially mindful to conduct themselves in a fair and impartial manner and avoid any actions that create an appearance of partiality.

> "No other office in municipal service has so many contacts. It serves the mayor, the city council, the city manager (when there is one), and all administrative departments without exception. All of them call upon it, almost daily, for some service or information. Its work is not spectacular, but it demands versatility, alertness, accuracy, and no end of patience. The public does not realize how many loose ends of city administration this office pulls together."
>
> Professor William Bennett Munro, 1934

SERVICE

We understand that Edmontonians have high expectations and we are always looking for ways to provide the best service to residents, as well as City Council, City leadership, staff from across the organization, and our regional and intergovernmental partners. Our continued commitment to our customers requires that services remain relevant to the changing needs of our diverse community. We must listen, seek to understand expectations, and adapt by identifying opportunities to develop solutions and services that deliver value.

We appreciate that our customers come from diverse backgrounds and we treat everyone with respect, fairness, compassion, and dignity. We are open to better ways of doing business and are willing to take risks and deviate from the status quo.



OUR GOALS

1. **Enhance citizen engagement in local government**

- Maximize opportunities that encourage citizens to learn about and participate in civic affairs
- Modernize democratic processes to reduce barriers to citizen participation in civic affairs (internal factor)
- Adapt to changing demographics and expectations of a growing population to provide for continued interaction with Council and the democratic process (external factor)
- Actively engage with the public and collect meaningful feedback for evolving services

2. **Facilitate open and transparent government and decision making**

- Ensure information is open by default and protected by design
- Lead a one city approach to information management
- Improve and expand stakeholder knowledge of good information management practices, including privacy, access, and records management

3. **Enhance Administration's capacity to provide information and advice to Council**

- Standardize and document procedures for improved and collaborative report writing and meeting management
- Prepare training and communications for corporate processes for which the Office of the City Clerk is the steward
- Participate in legislation reviews to ensure the City's position is reflected
- Identify and respond to legislative changes that impact the City's governance

4. **Nurture a vibrant culture where employees feel appreciated, recognized and affirmed**

- Deliver and support initiatives resulting in engaged employees, effective leadership, collaborative workplaces, and high performance teams
- Manage change and support the branch through organizational changes, staff movements and other impactful events
- Ensure effective two-way communication between branch management and staff

5. **Promote innovation and find efficiencies for continuous improvement**

- Ongoing review of the Office of the City Clerk business processes
- Look for ways to leverage change to improve service and processes
- Optimize the Office of the City Clerk operations to prepare for progress
- Work with other branches to identify opportunities for better integration

6. **While following all applicable legislation, the Office of the City Clerk supports the City's Vision, Council priorities, and Executive Leadership Team strategic focus areas**

- Work to ensure that Council has the best information and advice to help them to make good decisions for citizens
- Provide regular Branch information and performance measures to assist in decision-making, and increase awareness and accountability of core operations
- Review legislation, policies and procedures in response to any organizational changes
- Protect Council by meeting all legislative requirements

Refer to Appendix I to see alignment of strategic goals to Executive Leadership Team's focus areas and Council strategy.

OUR WORK

OFFICE OF THE BRANCH MANAGER

Heather Morrison,
Strategic Coordinator

Established in 2016, the Office of the Branch Manager works to facilitate and support the work of the branch. Our section is responsible for leading branch-wide initiatives to increase organizational capacity and meet branch objectives, leading business planning, as well as representing the branch in City-wide initiatives.

We also play an integral role in supporting Executive Leadership Team with information and advice relative to governance and legislation. This support informs corporate decision making and lends clarity to their role with respect to Edmonton City Council.

The Office of the Branch Manager provides a strategic approach to branch work. Our team works closely with Branch Leadership to support functions related to employee engagement, technology, internal communications, budget, and culture. This work helps ensure productive and knowledgeable staff with a broad understanding of branch work and how it aligns with Council's direction. Our team works to build capacity and enable success, deliver core services, and cultivate innovation.

Projects and Initiatives for 2017 and 2018 include:

Strategic Plan

The Office of the Branch Manager will lead the development of a branch strategy that aligns our work with Council direction and Executive Leadership Team's focus areas, including a more citizen-centric focus. Employees from across the branch will be included in the process to ensure a collaborative approach, strong understanding of branch direction, Executive Leadership Team's focus areas, and highest buy-in. The strategic plan will help direct branch work for the 2019 business plan and performance measures.

Information Management Strategy

Information is our most important asset, and how that information is managed is critical to the City's success. A corporate-wide strategy to connect and align all information management related work will help ensure information is accessible, secure, well-managed, and available for future generations.

Branch Culture and Engagement Plan

Action plans are under development in response to results from the 2016 Employee Engagement and Diversity Survey. The Office of the City Clerk had a 92% participation rate and above-average results, but work will be done to maintain and improve results in these areas:

- Job satisfaction and opportunities for growth
- Information sharing and partnerships
- Leadership and supervision

Lynne Turvey
Manager,
Council and
Administrative
Services

COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Council and Administrative Services delivers operational and administrative support to the the Office of the City Clerk, the Office of the Councillors and, as requested, the Office of the Mayor.

Our team is responsible for distributing correspondence for Council members as per the Procedures and Committees Bylaw. We work with the Governance and Legislative Services section to prepare Council meeting notices, update public and internal meeting calendars, and register public hearing speakers.

In addition to providing reception services to the branch's main office in City Hall, our team provides administrative support by managing accounts payable, employee training, and telephone services. We support the Council Services Committee by helping to develop meeting agendas and prepare reports. We also coordinate and oversee the occupational health and safety program for the branch and coordinate OHS initiatives for the Councillors' and Mayor's offices.

The Council and Administrative Services team works with business partners and shared service providers to support financial, human resources, information technology, legal, security, procurement and office infrastructure services to the Councillors' Offices. This includes managing all aspects of the City's employment agreements with up to 24 employees who report directly to 12 Councillors, publishing Councillors' expenses, and coordinating access to information requests for the Councillors' and Mayor's offices. We also work with the Office of the Mayor to ensure that cross-functional procedures

and processes are managed effectively and efficiently. Many of these cross-functional requirements are governed by Provincial legislation, City bylaws or City policies. They include budgetary compliance, expense reporting, annual disclosures of affiliations and perquisites, and access to information requests.

Projects and Initiatives for 2017 and 2018 include:

Municipal Election Support
During a municipal election year like 2017, our team ensures pre-election office requirements are completed for outgoing Councillors and that incoming Councillors are introduced to administrative, financial and office processes.

POSSE Correspondence Integration
The Council and Administrative Services team will continue to liaise with the working committee that has been tasked with establishing a common automated process for management of departmental correspondence and inquiries, using improved POSSE technology. Our team will assemble information and recommendations for the Councillors' offices regarding opportunities for improved constituent correspondence tracking.

Active Intruder Response Guidelines
The team will adapt security guidelines developed for the Office of the City Clerk for introduction to the Offices of the Mayor and Councillors. These guidelines will be used in the event of a City Hall lockout, lockdown or active intruder incident.

ELECTIONS AND CORPORATE INFORMATION

The Elections and Corporate Information section is responsible for conducting Edmonton's civic election every four years and a municipal census every two years. In the intervening years we review our election processes, develop technology requirements for future elections, and look at data to determine if a ward boundary review should be recommended to Council.

Our section also supports a city-wide framework for the management of information, which includes developing policies, standards, and strategic direction for the creation, security, accessibility, retention, disposition, and preservation of records.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act is provincial legislation that ensures accountability through open and transparent government while ensuring privacy is maintained where required. The City Clerk is the delegated Corporate FOIP Head.

The City's FOIP program is a foundation for Open City Policy C581, which facilitates Edmontonians' right to access City information. When records are requested through an access to information request, including requests for private reports, FOIP staff review the records to determine what information can be made available to an applicant. Known as exceptions to access, the FOIP Act includes a list of reasons why information may, or must, be withheld from an applicant.

Our section manages the City's FOIP program by providing consultation and advice to City leadership and FOIP Coordinators in all departments, responding to information requests, and providing training to all City staff. We also represent the City in mediations and inquiries with the provincial Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Laura Kennedy
Deputy City Clerk, Elections and Corporate Information and Returning Officer

Projects and Initiatives for 2017 and 2018 include:

General Election 2017

The General Election is a complex project that involves technology, outreach, communications, candidate forums, as well as work with the school boards to conduct their elections. Up to 3,000 temporary workers are hired for the election.

Census 2018

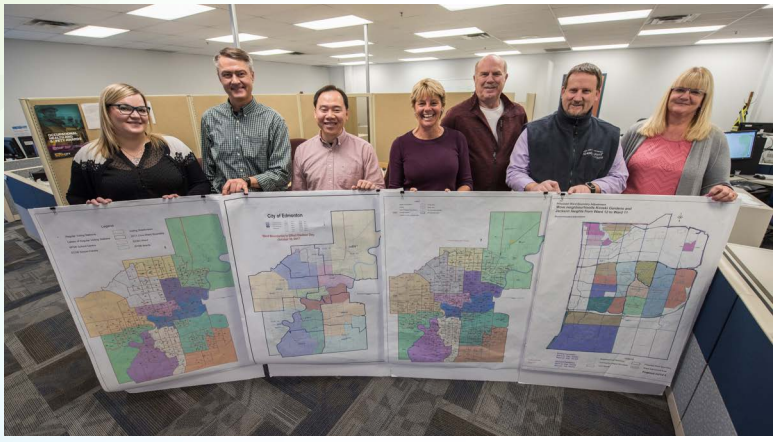
The biennial city-wide census is conducted to determine population and to collect demographic data from residents. The City of Edmonton relies on census data for business and service planning by all departments, as well as by the Edmonton Public Library, the Edmonton Police Service, schools, community organizations, and the private sector. The 2018 Census will continue to use an online component, as well as tablets to ensure accurate information collection.

Google Taxonomy

This project will develop and pilot a classification and retention tool in Google Drive using the Cit-e File classification and retention schedule. This will provide a framework to manage the creation, use, receipt, access, maintenance, retention and disposition of City records with Google Drive.

Memo Repository

In 2017, the Office of the City Clerk will create a memo repository that will allow the public more timely and consistent access to correspondence between Administration and Council.



GOVERNANCE AND LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

Located in City Hall, the Governance and Legislative Services section manages all aspects of City Council and Committee meetings. We assist Administration and City Council in complying with legislation in the decision-making process, which also applies to the extended governance model for civic agencies, boards, and commissions. Our staff support and attend all Council and Committee meetings and produce the public record.

As steward of the legislative process for the City of Edmonton, the Meeting Management Team is responsible for ensuring all aspects of Council and Committee meetings are conducted within the bounds of the Municipal Government Act, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and the City's Procedures and Committee Bylaw 12300. The team ensures Council and Committee decisions are enforceable, transparent, and retrievable.

We provide procedural advice during Council and Committee meetings and policy advice to Council and Administration. All reports from Administration are reviewed by our team to ensure recommendations are acceptable from a governance perspective, thereby ensuring Council and Administration are operating within their designated spheres of influence. The team is integral in facilitating public access and participation in municipal governance.

The Civic Agencies Team is responsible for advising City Council on the governance of internal and external agencies, boards, committees, commissions, and corporations, which are a key component of Council's governance model and an opportunity for citizens to participate in local government. The team manages civic agency recruitment and provides basic orientation, to support Council in the appointment of Councillors, citizens, and nominees from organizations to various civic agencies.

Denis Beaudry
Deputy City Clerk,
Governance and
Legislative Services

Projects and Initiatives for 2017 and 2018 include:

Review of Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Committees
The City of Edmonton's agencies, boards, committees, and commissions are a critical component of the City's public engagement strategy and Council's governance structure. There are approximately 60 internal and external groups, each with its own purpose and membership. These have evolved over time in both necessity and mandate, and some agencies have matured beyond their need. While smaller reviews of specific groups and mandates have been conducted, an overall review of the agencies, boards, committees, and commissions has not.

Review of the Procedures and Committees Bylaw
The current bylaw is lengthy, written in technical language, and difficult to understand for those unfamiliar with parliamentary process. This review will allow Administration to create a bylaw that is written in plain language and is easy to understand. Meeting processes will be updated to reflect best practices.

Modernization of technology used to manage Council's meetings
The Meeting Management Team currently uses many different software components. Although we are leaders in technology and innovation, some of those components are growing obsolete or their contracts will soon expire. This project will procure and implement a new, more unified technology solution to enhance the efficiency and transparency of Council meeting processes.

Training and orientation of new Council
City Administration provides orientation and other training after every municipal election to equip Council with the knowledge for proper oversight and governance. The *Modernized Municipal Government Act* will add updated requirements to orientation. Starting this year, Councillor orientation will also include sessions on Indigenous Awareness and Gender-Based Analysis Plus.

TRIBUNALS

Sheila McDonald
Deputy City Clerk, Tribunals

The Tribunals Section supports the Assessment Review Board, the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board, and the Community Standards and Licence Appeal Committee. These quasi-judicial tribunals are independent bodies where citizens can appeal decisions made by City Administration, allowing them the opportunity to be heard on matters that affect them. The City Clerk is the Clerk of these governance bodies.

Appeals related to property assessments, business revitalization assessments and local improvement taxes can be made to the **Assessment Review Board**. The **Subdivision and Development Appeal Board** hears appeals related to development approvals and refusals, stop orders and subdivision approvals and refusals. The **Community Standards** and **Licence Appeal Committee** hears appeals related to business licence decisions, Vehicle for Hire licence decisions, weed control notices, and *Municipal Government Act* Orders.

Once an appeal is received, a hearing is scheduled where independent adjudicators review the matter, assess the evidence presented and make a decision following the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

Our staff provide administration and support to the boards to help them fulfill their mandates. We also provide citizens with information, facilitate training for Board Members, implement technology solutions and improve processes for all three tribunals.

We are committed to continuous improvement that benefits both tribunal members and citizens.

Projects and Initiatives for 2017 and 2018 include:

Municipal Government Board Training
We plan to develop training for Municipal Government Board Members who participate in our Composite Assessment Review Board panels. The goal of the *Introduction to the Edmonton Assessment Review Board* is to educate the new Municipal Government Board Members on the Edmonton Board Member practice guide, paperless hearing procedures and use of Gmail.

Tribunals Website
We plan to work with the City's Web Office to make the Tribunal's website more mobile friendly so citizens can access information more easily.

Board Member Evaluation Form
We plan to work with the School of Business to finalize a reflection tool for Board Members that helps evaluate their City's performance on the Assessment Review Board. We also plan to develop new evaluation forms for the Assessment Review Board Vice Chairs and Chair to assess Board Member performance in these specific roles. These forms will be revised to be used as an evaluation tool for the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board.

APPENDIX I

Alignment of Office of the City Clerk strategic goals with Executive Leadership Team focus areas and Council strategy.

OCC Strategic Goals	ELT Focus Areas	The Way We Live
Enhance citizen en gagement in local government	**3. Well-informed citizens who understand the links between their needs, the vision and goals of the City of Edmonton and its performance**	1.6.2 Provides opportunities for citizens to participate on boards and agencies that advise City Council and Administration. 1.6.3 Provides and promotes innovative methods to reduce barriers to participation and engage citizens in local government.
Facilitate open and transparent government and decision making		1.6.1 Provides access to its municipal political leaders and the civic administration.
Enhance Administration's capacity to provide information and advice to Council	**2. A fully informed City Council, armed with current, valid practical data and information about the performance of the City of Edmonton and strategic advice and guidance on future opportunities**	
Nurture a vibrant culture where employees feel appreciated, recognized and affirmed	**1. Fully engaged, accountable, high performance teams throughout the City of Edmonton**	
Promote innovation and find efficiencies for continuous improvement		
While following all applicable legislation, the Office of the City Clerk supports the City's Vision, Council priorities, and ELT strategic focus areas	**4. Strong effective and mutually beneficial relationships with other orders of government, the business community, educational institutions and arts, culture and recreation organizations**	