



About the Catalogue: <https://cityarchives.edmonton.ca/>

This site contains catalogue entries about the City of Edmonton Archives collection. It also has photographs and digitized records.

Although we are adding digitized material, you may need to come to the Archives to view some documents, listen to some audio files or watch some videos.

Contact the Archives if you have any questions: 780-496-8711 or cms.archives@edmonton.ca

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About Archival Description

The City of Edmonton Archives follows the national descriptive standard, *The Rules for Archival Description* (RAD).

Unlike library catalogues which describe individual items (like a book or a magazine), archives describe collections. At the City of Edmonton the governmental records are usually described as part of Departmental or Sectional units. They are listed as Record Groups or RG numbers. Some of the collections are called *fonds* - usually private aggregations of personal, family, business, or organizational records. These usually have an MS (for manuscript) number.

Hierarchical based archival description captures essential contextual and provenance information through units of description: fonds/collection, series, sub series, file and item levels. For example:

Description Level	Example
Fonds / Record Group Collection	RG-7 Corporate Communications Department
Series	Series 2 Citizens Action Centre
Sub Series / Function	Sub Series 2.1 Administration
Item	File 1 Scrapbook: Steve Fonyo's "Journey for Lives" in Edmonton

In each of the descriptions there are fields which will give you information about the creator (or collector) of the records, what kinds of records are in the fonds, and if it was arranged by the creator or by the archivists - and how that arrangement works. All of those details should help you determine if the records you are looking for are in the archives - and if they are where you might find them. The description may also include a **finding aid** - which will consist of a list of files and if the collection is divided into series, sub-series and items - there will be more details in those descriptions.

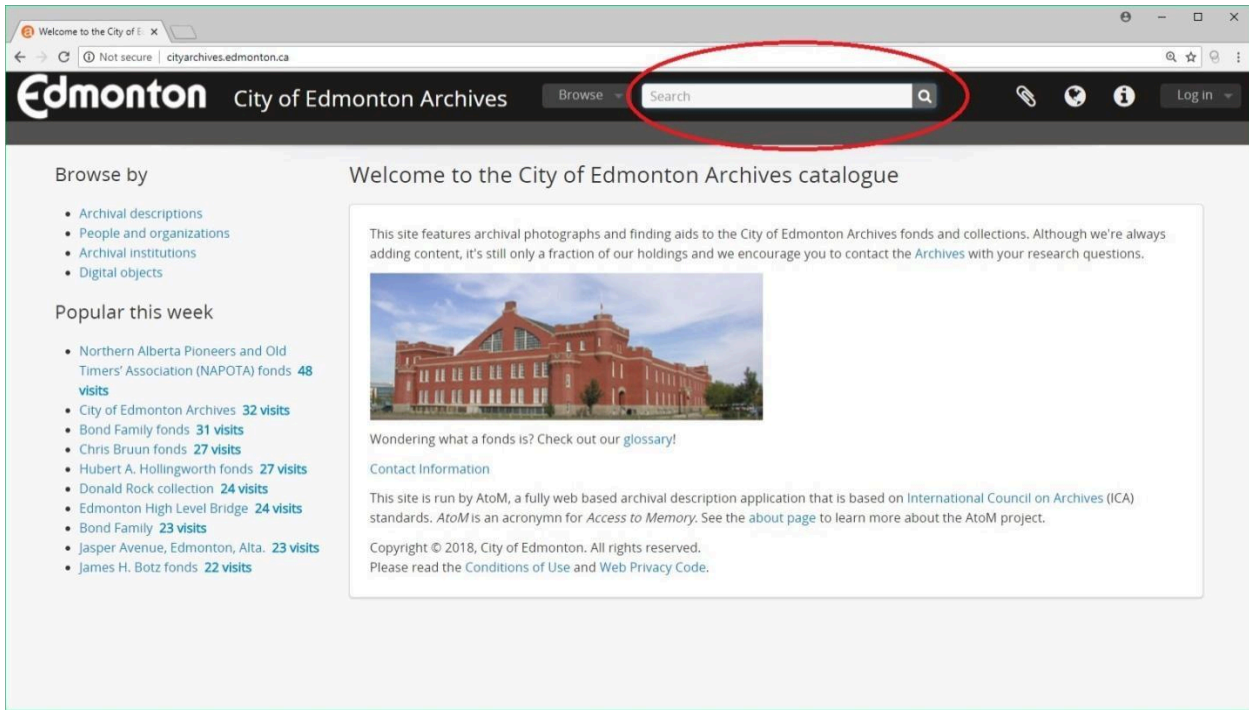
The finding aids are found under the directory listing of fonds / series and can be opened up in a separate tab by right clicking on the cover or the spreadsheet and selecting the “open in a separate tab” option. The .pdf documents are keyword searchable by using Control-F to open a search bar at the top of the document for entering your search term.

Archival description focuses on access points; overall date ranges, names and functions. Item level description is generally for things such as images or audio visual recordings.

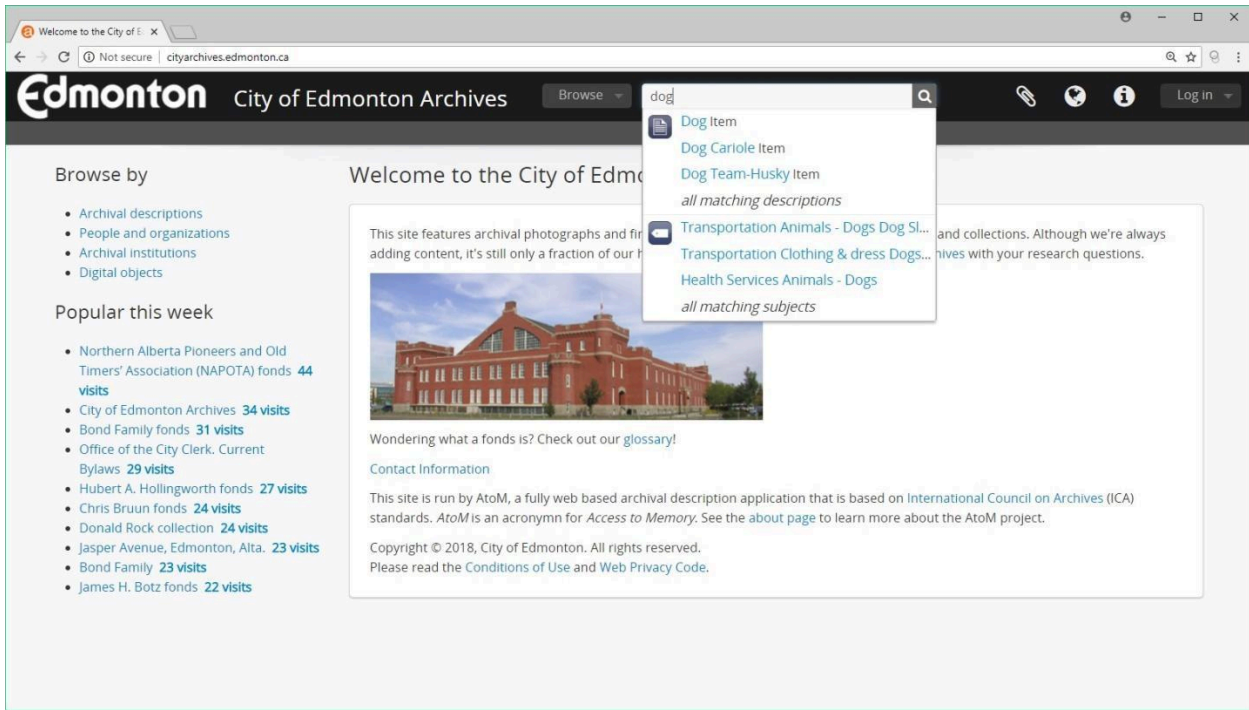
Simple Search

The easiest way to search the whole catalogue is a keyword search in the search box in the black toolbar at the top of the webpage.

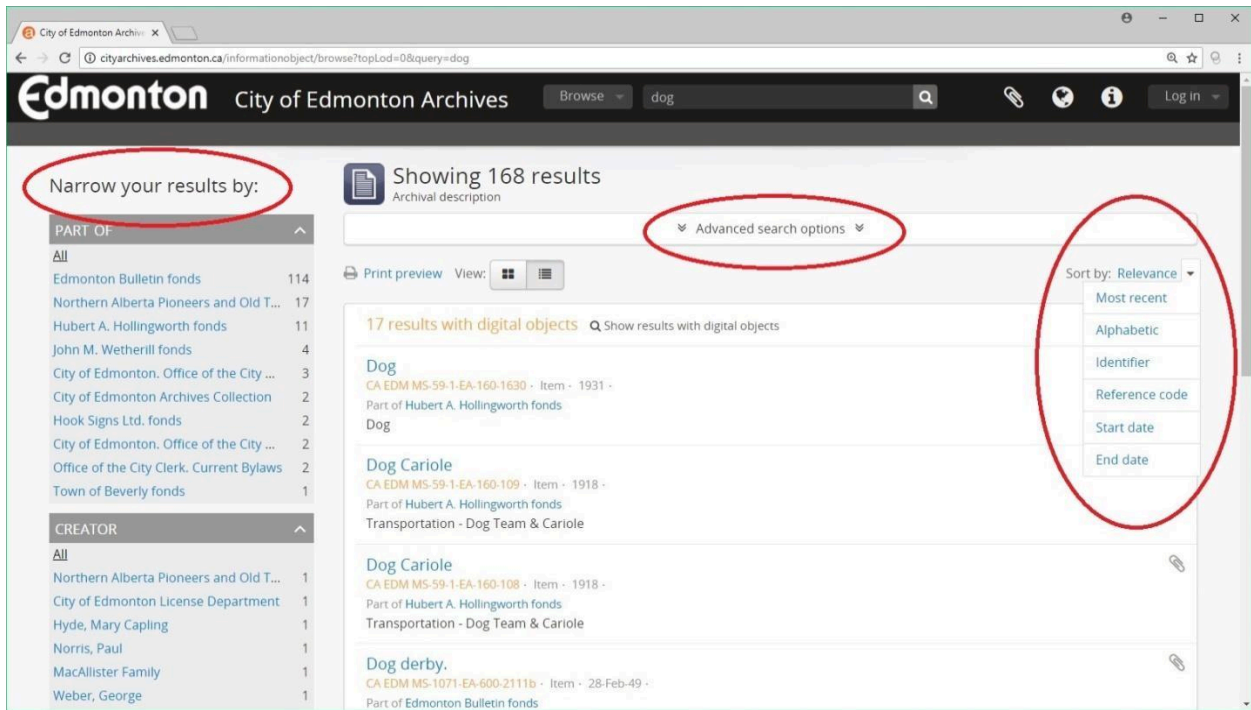
This search is best if you are interested in everything widely relating to a particular subject (dogs for example) or if you know exactly what you're looking for (RG-8 for example).



Once you start typing, the catalogue will automatically start filtering results for you, you can either select from these choices if you see one that is relevant, or hit enter or click on the magnifying glass to search the entire catalogue.



Search Results Page



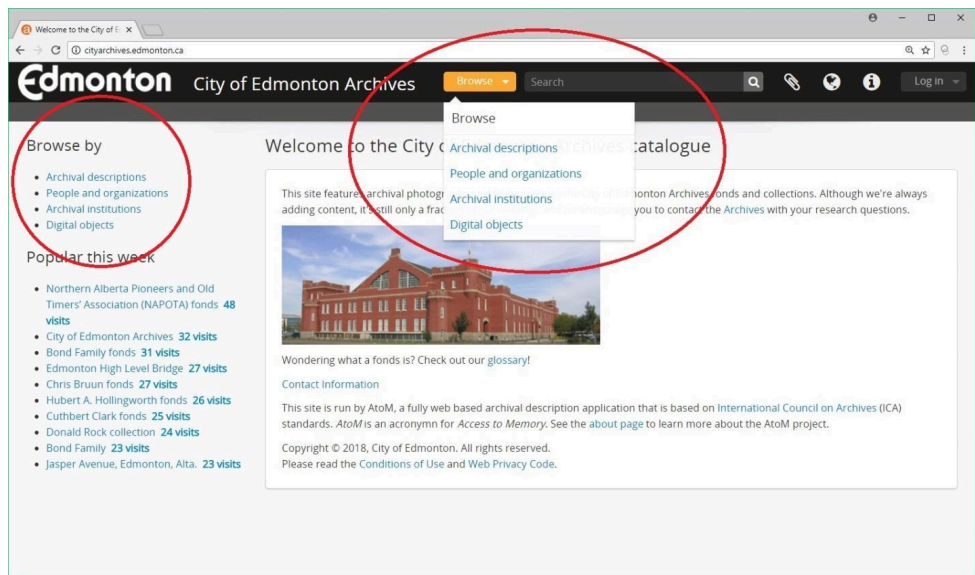
Click on any of these links to be taken to the catalogue entry. You can also sort the results using the drop down menu on the right or narrow them using the filters on the left hand side of the page. Or you can add further keywords by opening the **Advanced search options** and adding criteria.

If you want to look at several items in the result page you can open them one by one in another tab by right clicking on the title and selecting “open link in new tab”.

Browse

This feature is handy if you know what type of catalogue entry you’re interested in (photographs, descriptions or finding aids for example). Selecting from these menus will narrow the search to only that type of catalogue entry.

There are two Browse features, one on the left hand column of the home page and one in the toolbar at the top of the website.



Browse Options Defined

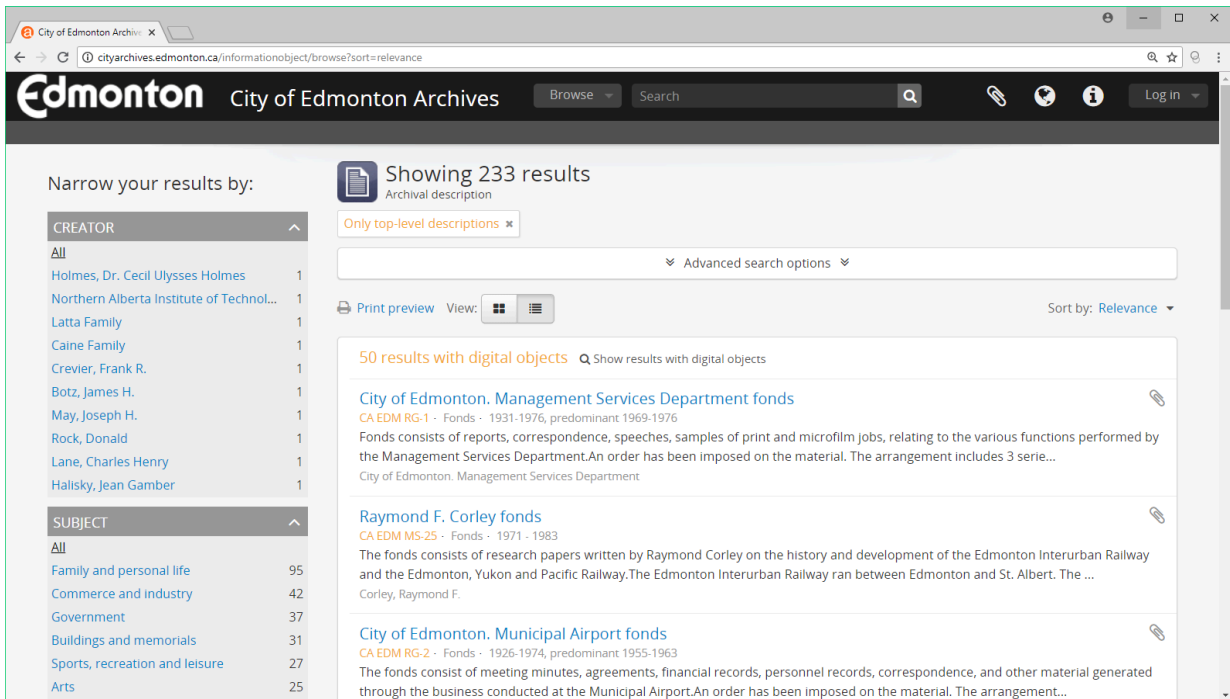
Archival Descriptions: This will search for all the descriptions of our collections. Archival descriptions are guides that give researchers contextual information and access points (names, titles and date ranges) to a set of records. Finding aids explain the who, what, where, when and why of the records.

People and Organizations: Biographical and administrative histories on the people and organizations that have created the material in our collection.

Archival Institutions: Information about the City of Edmonton Archives, including contact information. This catalogue also contains digitized current bylaws from the Office of the City Clerk so there is information about their office here as well.

Digital Objects: This includes jpegs and pdfs; material found here includes photographs, digitized bylaws and finding aids like box lists.

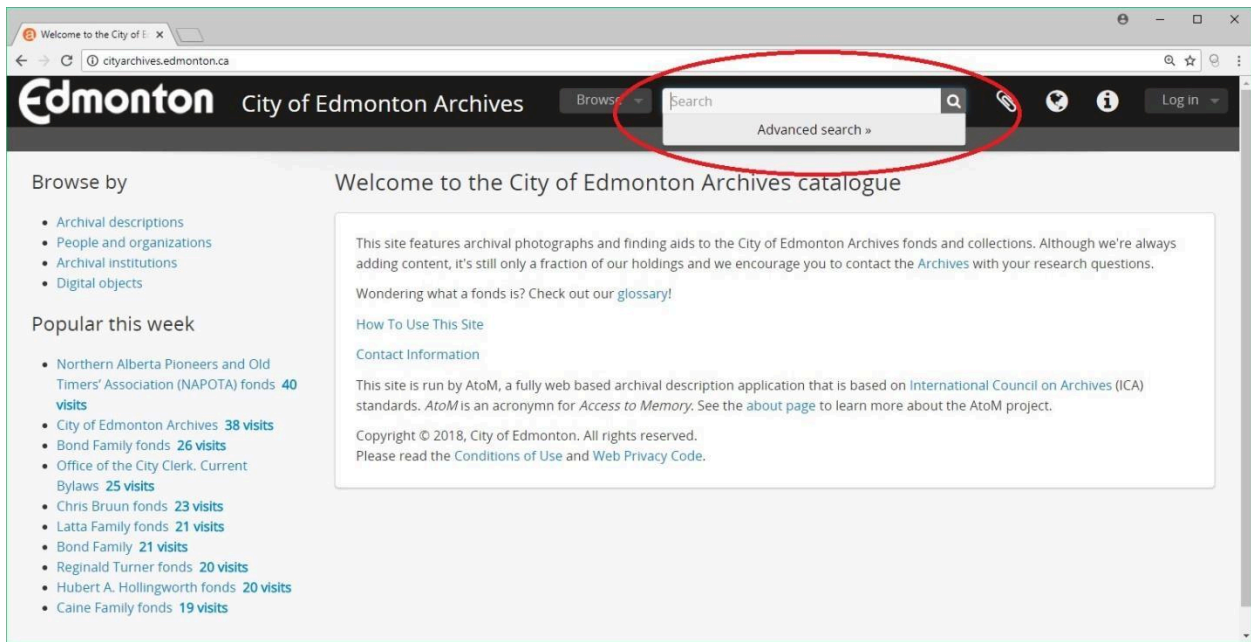
Selecting any of these options takes you to a search results screen for only that type of content:



Targeted Searches

1. Advanced Search

To access the **Advanced search** feature select the simple search bar in the black toolbar at the top of the page and the Advanced search icon appears below the box. Select it and it will take you to the Advanced search interface.



There are various ways to enter search terms, limit and filter results. Note, you can keep adding to this search to refine your search and it will retain parameters until you hit **Reset**.

Advanced search options

Find results with:

Search

in

Any field

Add new criteria

Limit results to:

Top-level description

Filter results by:

Level of description

Digital object available

Finding aid

Copyright status

General material designation

☐ Top-level descriptions ☒ All descriptions

Filter by date range:

Start

End

YYYY-MM-DD

YYYY-MM-DD

☒ Overlapping ☐ Exact

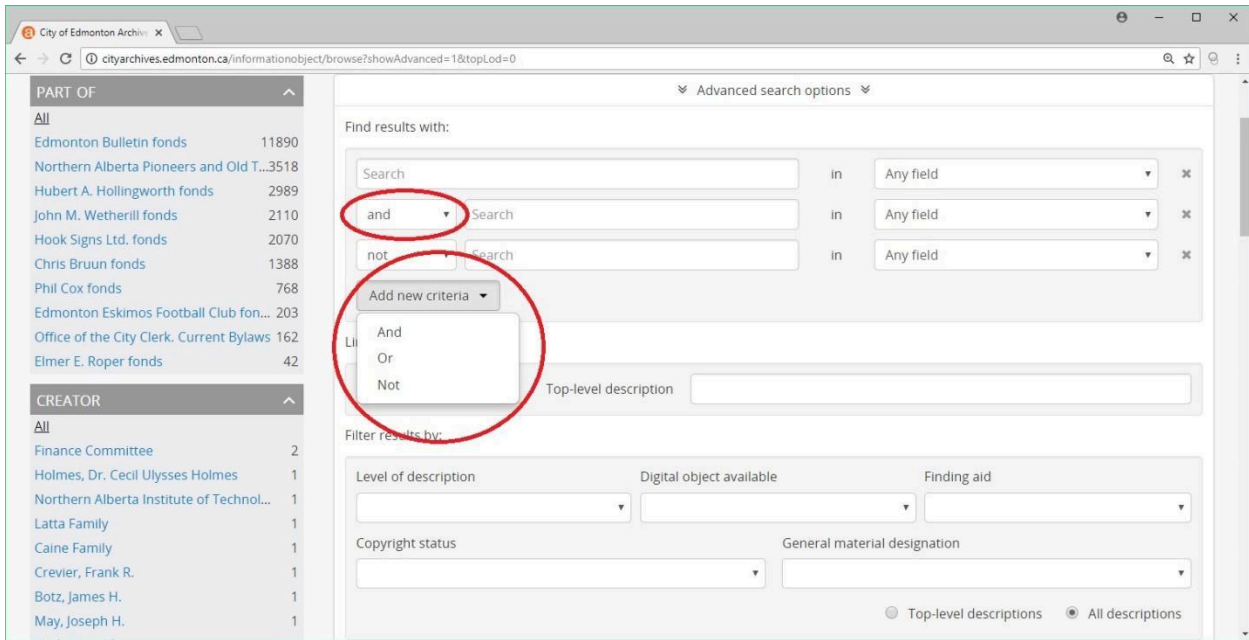
?

Search

Reset

1.1 General Search Tips

The **Find results with:** section is designed to use Boolean markers (AND, OR, NOT) to broaden or narrow your search.



Use **Add new criteria** to select the appropriate marker

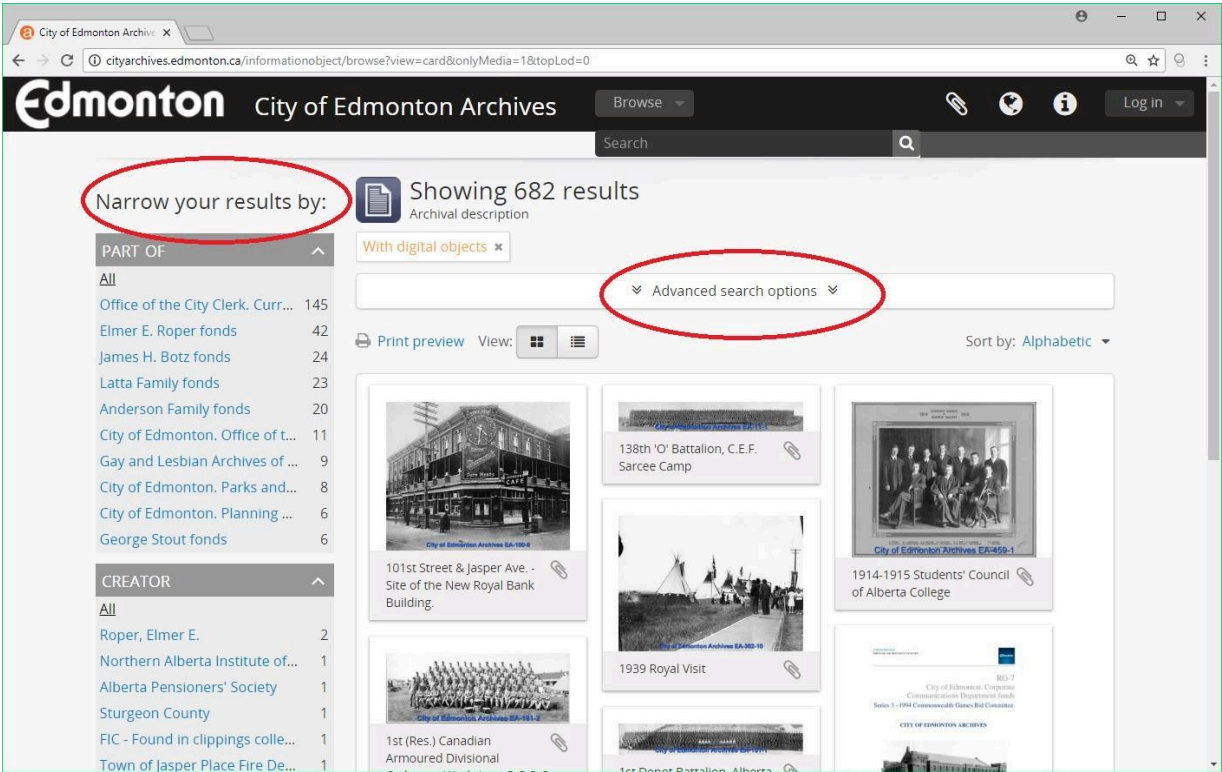
- AND narrows your search as both words must be present
 - Searching **Cat AND Dog** will only return records that are about both cats and dogs
- OR broadens search as either word may be present
 - Searching **Cat OR Dog** returns records about cats, about dogs, and about cats and dogs
- NOT narrows search by excluding the second word
 - **Cat NOT Dog** returns records about cats but excludes those that are about both cats and dogs

There are also special characters you can use to refine your search:

“ ”	To search for specific terms or phrases use quotation marks, the text enclosed in the quotes must appear exactly as provided <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “towel” will find towel, but not towels
*	Use an asterisk to broaden your search or if you’re not sure if the keyword should be plural or not <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Car* will search for car, cars, carpet, carpentry, etc.• Edmont* will search for Edmonton and Edmontonian
?	Use ? as a single character wildcard <ul style="list-style-type: none">• p?per will find paper and piper but not pepper

1.2 How to search for Historic Photographs

To browse historic photographs in the catalogue, select **Advanced search options** under the Search box.



You will then need to select the Graphic material - photograph menu item under the **General material designation** field on the advanced search screen. This will generate around 43,000 results - so you will also want to select and fill out various other fields (criteria, date, etc.) in the **Advanced search options**

You can reorganize the results with the drop down on the right. You can narrow the results using the filters on the left hand side of the page or by clicking on **Advanced search options** and entering keywords.

The results will be shown as thumbnails, which you can click on to bring up larger images and descriptions of the items.

If you want to look at several items in the result page you can open them one by one in other tabs by right clicking on the title and selecting "open link in new tab".

1.3 How to Search for a Blueprint

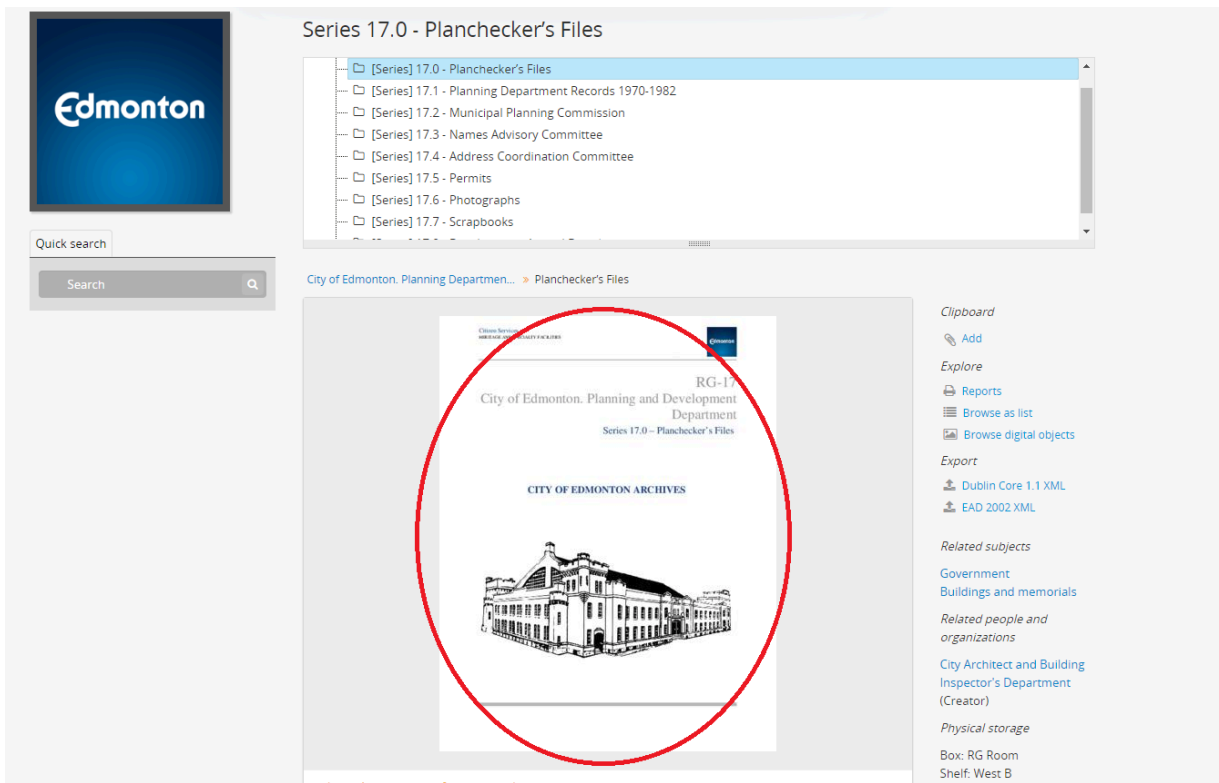
The majority of our blueprints are for commercial properties but we do have a small number of residential blueprints.

If the building you are looking for was built after 1978, the City of Edmonton Archives will not have the blueprint. Please contact the Permits and Licensing Service Centre at 780-442-5054.

[RG-17 City of Edmonton. Planning Department fonds, Series 17.0 Planchecker's Files](#) consists of over 12,000 architectural drawings ranging from single page details of a part of a building to a full set of blueprints for the entire building.

Click on the PDF finding aid.

There may be blueprints or architectural drawings in other fonds as well, but they can be located by searching the finding aids (or doing an **Advanced Search** and choosing the **General material designation** of “architectural drawings”).



The finding aid will open in a separate tab. Search for your building within the PDF.

Try searching by the building’s civic address. If you get no results, you can also try searching for the building’s name or by the date.

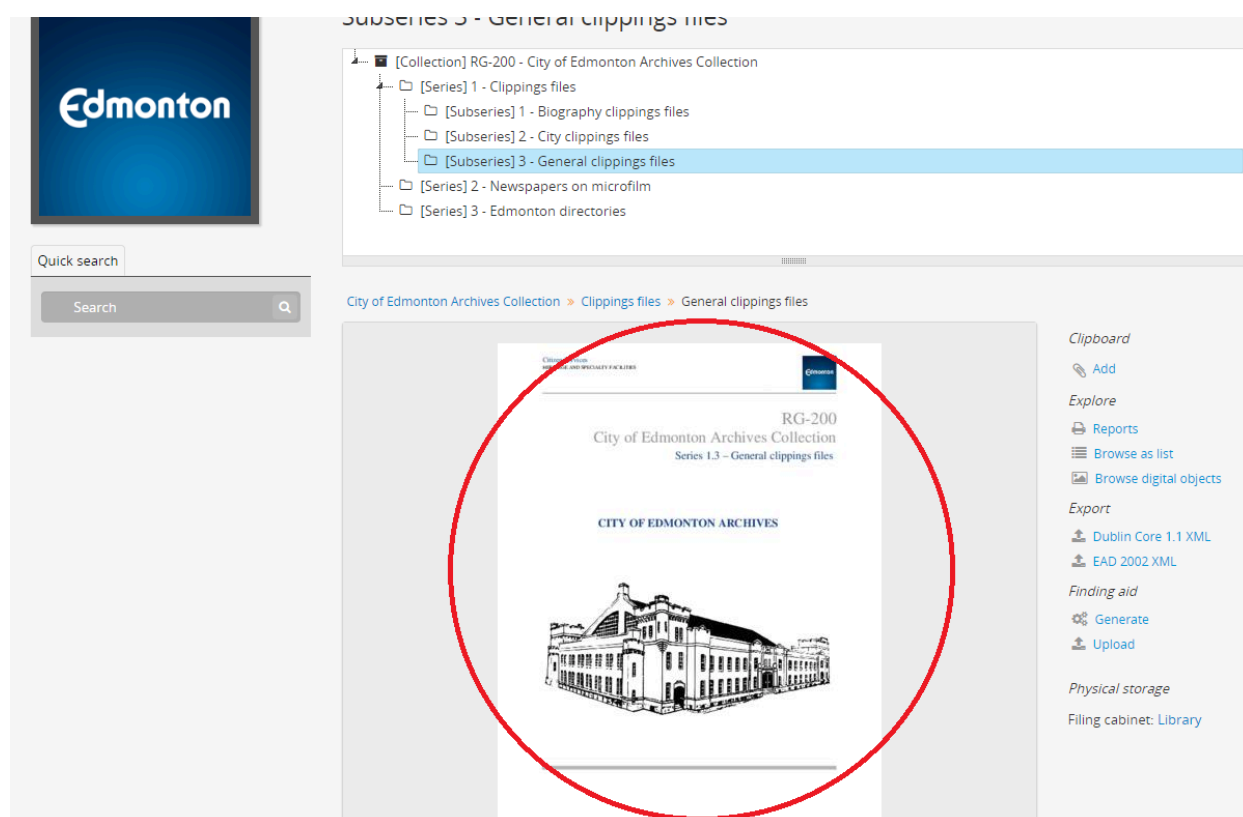
PLEASE NOTE: The Planchecker’s Files finding aid lists blueprints that are publicly available. The City of Edmonton Archives also holds some blueprints which may be only accessible to the building owners. If your building was built in 1978 or before, and you have found no result in the Planchecker’s Files, please contact the reference desk at cms.archives@edmonton.ca or 780-496-8711 and tell us the building’s civic address. Please note that we will not search the Planchecker’s Files - we will search only files not currently available on the website.

1.4 How to Search for Newspaper/Magazine Clippings

Our clipping files - material from newspapers, primarily the Edmonton Journal and Edmonton Bulletin - are now in [RG-200 series 1](#).

Biography clippings are in [subseries 1](#), City clippings for topics related to the government of the City of Edmonton are in [subseries 2](#), and general clippings are in [subseries 3](#).

To search these, go to the page you're interested in, then click on the PDF finding aid.



The finding aid will open in a separate tab. Search for your topic within the PDF.

1.5 A Note About Numbering Systems

There are numerous numbering systems used at the City of Edmonton Archives, which help staff find material. In our holdings, you will find the following:

- RG = Records Groups (or government records)
- MS = Manuscript (or privately donated records)
- EA = photographs
- EB = photographs in albums
- ET = transparencies (such as slides)
- EAM = maps
- EAP = posters
- EAA = artwork
- GP = government reports
- Dewey = published material found in our reference library

1.6 Tips to Search for Government Records

The Archives has over 700 metres of processed material created by the City. The material has been arranged according to department, function, and/or collection. These are the current *fonds* and collections available in the Archives:

- [RG-0: FIC - Found In Clippings collection](#)
 - Contains archival material removed from clippings files.
- [RG-1: City of Edmonton. Management Services Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-2: City of Edmonton. Edmonton Municipal Airport *fonds*](#)
- [RG-3: City of Edmonton. City Assessor's Department *fonds*](#)
 - Includes tax assessment information.
- [RG-6: City of Edmonton. Office of the Mayor *fonds*](#)
 - Contains records created by various Edmonton mayors.
- [RG-7: City of Edmonton. Corporate Communications Department *fonds*](#)
 - Includes City newsletters, as well as records from the Citizen Action Centre and from various major events and celebrations.
- [RG-8: City of Edmonton. Office of the City Clerk *fonds*](#)
 - Includes committee and Council minutes, bylaws, contracts, and election enumeration and census records.
- [RG-11: City of Edmonton. Office of the City Commissioners *fonds*](#)
 - Includes indexed correspondence on a wide variety of topics from the 1920s to the 1960s.
- [RG-12: City of Edmonton. Edmonton Health Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-14: City of Edmonton. Computing Resources Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-15: City of Edmonton. Office of the Councillors *fonds*](#)
 - Contains records created by various Edmonton aldermen and councillors.
- [RG-16: City of Edmonton. City Architect and Building Inspector's Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-17: City of Edmonton. Planning Department *fonds*](#)
 - Includes blueprints, building permit registers, and records on naming, historic buildings and from the development appeals board.
- [RG-18: City of Edmonton. Finance Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-19: City of Edmonton. Land Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-20: City of Edmonton. Recreation Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-21: City of Edmonton. Parks and Recreation Department *fonds*](#)
 - Includes records from a variety of services and attractions operated by the City.
- [RG-22: City of Edmonton. Parks Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-23: City of Edmonton. Business Development Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-24: City of Edmonton. Community and Family Services Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-25: City of Edmonton. Bylaw Enforcement Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-26: City of Edmonton. License Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-27: City of Edmonton. Edmonton Public Library *fonds*](#)
- [RG-28: City of Edmonton. Office of the Auditor General *fonds*](#)
- [RG-29: City of Edmonton. Personnel Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-40: City of Edmonton. Telephone Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-50: City of Edmonton. Engineers Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-60: City of Edmonton. Police Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-70: City of Edmonton. Fire Department *fonds*](#)
- [RG-71: City of Edmonton. Edmonton Ambulance Authority *fonds*](#)
- [RG-78: Commonwealth Games collection](#)

- [RG-80: City of Edmonton. Edmonton Power *fonds*](#)
- [RG-90: City of Edmonton. Edmonton Transit System *fonds*](#)
- [RG-100: Town of Strathcona *fonds*](#)
- [RG-101: Town of Jasper Place *fonds*](#)
- [RG-102: Town of Beverly *fonds*](#)
- [RG-103: Village of West Edmonton *fonds*](#)
- [RG-104: Village of North Edmonton *fonds*](#)
- [RG-105: Sturgeon County *fonds*](#)
- [RG-106: County of Parkland \(MD of Stony Plain\) *fonds*](#)
- [RG-200: City of Edmonton Archives Collection](#)
 - This fonds was created as a place to describe material collected by the Archives for researchers, which doesn't fit into a *fonds* elsewhere. It includes clippings, newspapers on microfilm, directories, aerial photographs, fire insurance plans, oral history interviews, maps, local history publications, and government reports.