

Vision Statement

The City of Edmonton Archives is the steward of Edmonton's history through the preservation and provision of access to authentic and trustworthy records of the Corporation, citizens, local organizations and businesses.

Mission Statement

The City of Edmonton Archives serves employees of the Corporation, citizens of Edmonton and wider research community by effectively acquiring, managing, preserving and making accessible records of significance that document the City as well as the lives and work of citizens, organizations and businesses in Edmonton.

Mandate

As per City Policy C448 *The City of Edmonton Archives* and according to applicable legislation, the City of Edmonton will provide a planned program for the acquisition, management, preservation, and provision of access to records of legal, administrative, evidentiary, cultural and historical value:

- Of the Corporation
- Of City Officials
- Of City sponsored organizations and events
- Of Organizations connected with the City
- From public and private collections when deposited by the owners

Organizational Structure

The City of Edmonton Archives is a unit within the City of Edmonton Citizen Services Department. It is part of the Heritage Unit, under Edmonton Valley Zoo and Specialty Facilities in the Community and Recreation Facilities Branch.

The City of Edmonton Archives is part of the City's Heritage Unit, and we work in collaboration with the City of Edmonton Artifacts Centre. The Heritage Unit is by the City of Edmonton Archivist. The City Archivist guides the work of the Archives, which is then carried out by Archivists and support staff.

Governance

The City of Edmonton Archives is governed by a variety of internal and external policies, legislation, and standards, including:

External Governance

- Municipal Government Act (MGA)
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP)
- Copyright Act
- The Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) Archivist's Code of Conduct
- Canadian Council of Archives (CCA) Rules for Archival Description

City of Edmonton Governance

- City Policy C448 *The City of Edmonton Archives*
- City Policy C503 *Records Management for Members of City Council*
- City Bylaw 12101 *Corporate Records and Information Management Bylaw*

Goals

- We ensure a strategic and consistent approach to our work that accurately reflects the Archives aspirations and yet is grounded in our capabilities.

Acquisition

The City of Edmonton Archives has a planned, coordinated, and consistent approach to acquisition in order to have an authentic and inclusive collection that is representative of Edmonton. The City of Edmonton Archives has a legal obligation to acquire City records designated as archival in the Corporate Records Retention and Disposition Schedule of the City of Edmonton. Our mandate also includes acquisition of private records at the Archives' and donors' discretion.

The City of Edmonton Archives (CoEA) has a dual mandate (currently under Policy 448). First it is to acquire records from the Corporation of the City of Edmonton to document, as fully as possible, the operations and the decisions of the Corporation. Secondly, it may acquire from private producers to capture the rich and diverse experiences of living, working and participating in Edmonton's communities.

Goals

- We document transfers and donations fully for transparency and to inform the work of future archivists as they manage the collection over time.

City Records

We work in cooperation and partnership with information and FOIP managers at the Office of the City Clerk and the Corporate Records Centre as well as Departmental Records Advisors.

- On overall management of City Records as appropriate
- To transfer material as per Corporate Records Retention and Disposition Schedules
- To capture security and access classification of accession

We conduct preliminary appraisal to ensure capture of the best possible evidence of City functions and activities:

- While drafting and reviewing Retention and Disposition Schedule
- During Transfer process
- During triage/re-boxing

Municipal Boards and Agencies

There are organizations created by City Council or that are connected but at arm's length from the Corporation (for example, Edmonton Historical Board, Edmonton Sports, Arts, Heritage, Combative Sports Councils, etc.) whose records are under the City of Edmonton Archives' mandate but are not subject to the City's Records Retention Schedules.

Private Records

We work in cooperation and partnership with donors to transfer material that best documents the people of Edmonton and what it's like to live and work here.

We collaborate with other archives to ensure donations are made to the most appropriate institution that can best manage, preserve and make them available for use.

We keep donations intact and do not split material between institutions. The Archives generally respects the collection mandates of other archival institutions and tries to work cooperatively with their representatives and producer(s) to determine which institution is most appropriate to hold the material. In cases where multiple repositories have an interest in the material, only one should acquire it. If deemed desirable by both institutions, the City Archives will work with other institutions to repatriate or consolidate previously distributed fonds.

We conduct preliminary appraisal to ensure capture of the best possible evidence of life and work in Edmonton:

- During donation process (conversations with donors, acquisition meetings)
- During triage/re-boxing

We conduct monetary appraisals, upon donor request, according to national standards.

We respect donor wishes where possible with reasonable requests for restrictions on access to the records. Restrictions will be removed at a time mutually agreed upon by the Archives and the donor.

Scope of the Collection

The Archives' collections policy as outlined in our Mandate is to accept City Records as per the Corporate Records Retention and Disposition Schedules developed by the Records Management Section within the Office of the City Clerk in consultation with the Archives and the various City business units. It also accepts donations of Private Records which relate to activities of the people, organizations and businesses within the corporate boundaries of the City of Edmonton and tell the stories of those experiences.

City of Edmonton Archives employees need to be aware of the scope of its collection especially in regards to:

- preventing overrepresentation (either by dominant groups already well represented or through inappropriate focus on one group or area).
- being aware of gaps in the collection and, if possible/desirable, looking for ways to fill these gaps.
- being aware and respectful of some communities/groups' mistrust of government and its institutions (building trust, allowing for the Freedom To Be Forgotten, or documenting in non-colonial ways).
- being aware of personal bias as it may affect acquisition strategies and decisions.

The desired level of Private Records donation is at the fonds level. Related groups of records best capture lives and activities within their contexts and are a richer resource than individual items, a publication, or an object.

The Archives generally acquires records in the English language but records in other languages could be acquired if they fit the collection mandate for the City collection. The Archives may obtain assistance to appraise, process and describe records produced in other languages, to be determined on a case by case basis.

Many types of record formats are acceptable (textual, graphic, etc.) but producers should consult with the Archives for certain material as outlined in donation documents. For example, there are different considerations with audio visual and digital material and more information may need to be gathered to inform the Archivists' work.

In the case of accessions coming to the City Archives which contains objects, the curatorial staff of the City Artifact Centre will be consulted to determine if they will acquire them as part of the City Collection. Documentation will be shared to maintain intellectual control and context.

Records Management

The City of Edmonton Archives manages records to gain physical and intellectual control to both preserve the material and make it discoverable and ready for access by consumers.

Goals

- To document the “who, what, when and why” of processing material, particularly arrangement and appraisal decisions.
- To keep accruals and fonds intact:
 - By keeping material together except in cases of unique storage requirements, and then maintaining intellectual control by documenting separations
 - By not splitting material between institutions
- To conduct considered appraisal and sometimes re-appraisal and deaccession of material that does not fit our collection mandate.
- To maintain information on City Council and Departments, documenting structure and functions to best reflect the evidentiary nature of the material and provide openness, transparency and accountability over time.

Physical Processing

To obtain physical control to protect and extend lifetime in a way that maintains integrity, reliability and authenticity (re-box, re-house, migrate, stabilize, repair or copy, etc. if necessary).

Intellectual Processing

To provide access points that facilitate discovery, capture the context of creation and outline the functions and activities represented in the material.

To document access conditions (if any) based on the contents of the records and in collaboration with FOIP managers at the Office of the City Clerk and/or donors where appropriate.

To arrange and describe material in a way that best respects the original order and producer’s structure (if present) while making it readily discoverable and accessible.

Preservation

The City of Edmonton Archives creates secure, long term, optimal storage conditions for the unique requirements of the disparate media in our holdings in order to protect them from harm, maintain accessibility, and extend life and usability.

Preventative – stabilizing at-risk material at accession and when processing, creating preservation and or access copies as necessary.

Planned – stabilizing previously stable material that has become at-risk over time, creating preservation and or access copies before reaching a crisis point.

Reactive – to respond according to our emergency / disaster recovery plan should disaster occur.

Goals

- We ensure optimal storage conditions and maintain the integrity and usability of the material over time.
- We maintain a secure repository with controlled access: preventing theft, loss and/or modification to the collection.
- We maintain and follow emergency and disaster recovery plans.
- We ensure the continuity of the Archives by building capacity, continually developing skills, and by maintaining sustainable growth.

Access

The City of Edmonton Archives provides access to our holdings via the best method possible, allowing consumers to use and benefit from the collection while maintaining the integrity of the material and respecting applicable legislation and privacy.

Goals

- We create a welcoming atmosphere (online and onsite) and foster positive experiences.
- We support City administration by providing access to historic corporate records relating to current work.
- We assist researchers in their work by facilitating access to the records through reference service available in person, by email, and over the telephone.
- We provide in person access through a Reference Room with self-serve options.
- We provide an online presence to provide access to finding aids and, where appropriate, records.
- We provide material in the best medium available; originals if possible but access copies if necessary.
- We protect the integrity of original material, maintaining continued accessibility.
- We foster an awareness of archives as unique and irreplaceable.
- We provide outreach programs to inform and engage with City employees and the citizens of Edmonton and the larger research community.

Date Adopted: August 11th, 2020