

LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

Department Service Levels

Overview

Legislative Services supports City Council by managing all legislative matters and facilitating Council meetings. This department is responsible for overseeing municipal elections, conducting the municipal census, and administering the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) program. It also reviews all policies, bylaws, contracts, and agreements to safeguard the organization's legal rights and ensure compliance with the City's legal and legislative requirements. The primary mission of Legislative Services is to promote an open and transparent government, fostering trust and confidence in the decision-making process and enabling meaningful public participation.



CITY OF
FORT SASKATCHEWAN

DEPARTMENT SERVICE LEVELS

Service level documentation includes Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) data to support service level understanding and enhance understanding of program costs.

PBB is a business planning and budgeting tool to help better understand City programs. Prioritization through results and attributes scoring shares new information about programs and the budget.

Results are drawn from the City's strategic plan and other guiding documents.

Attributes are additional characteristics that also affect a programs overall relevance and prioritization.

Individual results/attributes are scored 0 to 4 with score of 4 being critical in achieving result/attribute and score of 0 not having influence.

The total combined score of results and attributes places individual programs in a quartile grouping with quartile 1 and 2 programs more aligned with strategic goals, results and attributes and quartile 3 and 4 programs less aligned.



Assessment Review Board

PBB Program Area Description/Overview:

Coordinate and provide support for the legislated Assessment Review Board (ARB) hearings, ensuring that the principles of natural justice are upheld. Liaise with the Capital Region Assessment Services Commission (CRASC) to coordinate any necessary ARB hearings.

For detailed information about program costs, revenue, full-time equivalents, basic program attributes, and program results, refer to the [Program Summary Report](#).

Reason for Offering: The ARB is a legislated program that provides a mechanism by which property owners may challenge (appeal) the municipality regarding their property tax assessment, which may result in a hearing of the ARB.

Inventory/Volume/Demand: Appeals to the ARB must be received within 60 days from the Notice of Assessment date. The volume is dependent on the number of appeals received. Some complaints may be resolved prior to a hearing date; however, those that are not resolved will proceed to an ARB hearing.

Frequency or Response Timing: In accordance with applicable legislation, an ARB hearing must be held before December 31st of the year during which the complaint is filed. Legislative Services processes complaints immediately upon receipt.

Standard Operating Procedures/Specifications: All of the processes for the ARB are prescribed by the *Municipal Government Act* and the *Matters Relating to Assessment Complaints Regulation 2018*.

Service Levels: Legislative Services:

- Is responsible for the receipt and review of ARB complaint forms, ensuring all relevant information is included in the complaint application, allowing the complaint to proceed to a hearing.
- Responds to complaints and inquiries during the annual complaint period, or as they arise.
- Works with the Capital Region Assessment Services Commission, which is contracted to facilitate the hearing process, including scheduling notices and coordinating hearings with local or composite review boards.
- Attends hearings and provides assistance to the Provincial member during the hearing, as required.

Policy Alignment: Assessment Review Board Bylaw C8-20; Assessment Complaints Designated Officer Bylaw C7-20

Legislation, Regulations or Standards: *Municipal Government Act; Matters Relating to Assessment and Taxation Regulation 2018*

Profile of Users: Fort Saskatchewan farmland, residential, and commercial property owners are eligible to submit a complaint to the ARB.

Bylaw and Policy Development and Management

PBB Program Area Description/Overview:

Oversee, assess, and offer guidance and recommendations for the development of bylaws and policies to ensure content accuracy, proper formatting, language consistency, and compliance with legal and legislative requirements.

For detailed information about program cost, revenue, full-time equivalent, basic program attributes, and program results, refer to the [Program Summary Report](#).

Reason for Offering: Bylaws are one of the ways in which a Council may make decisions, meaning the management of these bylaws is a key function of the organization. Policy oversight within a municipality is necessary to ensure compliance with legislation and appropriate processes are in place, for both internal and external users.

Inventory/Volume/Demand: There is a continuous and growing need for new and amended bylaws and policies. This demand often arises from changes in legislation, internal or external practices, or directives from the Council.

Frequency or Response Timing: Legislative Services regularly receives and responds to requests for assistance with bylaws and policies. Response times are prioritized based on the urgency of the need, and some requests may require immediate attention.

Standard Operating Procedures/Specifications: It is expected that members of the Legislative Services Department will provide assistance and guidance on document preparation, ensuring that all documents comply with legislative and legal requirements.

Service Levels: Legislative Services:

- Assists with and provides guidance during the development of new bylaws and policies.
- Liaises with the City departments on the review and drafting of documents.
- Ensures documents meet legal and legislative requirements.
- Provides guidance on the approval process.
- Coordinates external legal support, as required.
- Tracks current bylaws and policies for any necessary follow-up, review, or approval.
- Assists with or drafts over 100 bylaws, policies, procedures, or associated documents annually.

The Legislative Services Department is responsible for providing timely responses and guidance to both internal and external requests.

Policy Alignment: Policy Development & Management Policy and Procedure GOV-019-C.

Legislation, Regulations or Standards: The applicable legislation or regulations are dependent on the subject matter of the bylaw or policy document.

Profile of Users: For the development of bylaws and policies, the primary users are City staff. However, for accessing these documents as sources of information and guidance, the users include City staff, the public, and external stakeholders.

Census

PBB Program Area Description/Overview:

Oversee all aspects of conducting the municipal census in accordance with legislative requirements. Ensure that necessary data and reports are available to City Administration and the public, facilitating future planning and program development.

For detailed information about program cost, revenue, full-time equivalent, basic program attributes, and program results, refer to the [Program Summary Report](#).

Reason for Offering: Collecting current population data is crucial for planning to meet the needs of a growing and diverse city. Census information supports various initiatives and organizations in delivering a broad array of municipal services or the planning of major infrastructure projects. The City conducted a municipal census in 2023, another in 2024, and will plan to conduct another in 2025.

Frequency or Response Timing: The municipal census is conducted under the direction of the Council. The Administration typically recommends conducting an annual census in response to anticipated community growth, as the provincial government allocates funds based on municipal census data.

Standard Operating Procedures/Specifications: The authority to conduct a municipal census is granted by the *Municipal Government Act*, and processes are prescribed by the *Municipal Census Regulation*.

Service Levels: Legislative Services:

- Oversees all aspects of conducting a municipal census, ensuring that processes align with legislation.
- Hires and trains enumerators to collect data from residents who did not submit their information online.
- Processes the census data export, compiling resulting statistics into a summary report.
- Conducts the census based on need and approval of funding through the annual budget.

Legislation, Regulations or Standards: *Municipal Government Act* and the *Municipal Census Regulation*

Profile of Users: The provincial government, other levels of government, City departments, the public, as well as businesses and community organizations.

Contract and Agreement Administration

PBB Program Area Description/Overview:

Provide advice and procedural support, and handle the review and execution of City documents. This includes scrutinizing documentation for accuracy in content, proper formatting, consistent language, and compliance with legal and legislative standards.

For detailed information about program cost, revenue, full-time equivalent, basic program attributes, and program results, refer to the [Program Summary Report](#).

Reason for Offering: Contract and agreement administration is a necessary part of municipal operations, as municipalities are corporations. Legal instruments such as contracts provide clarity for the parties involved and ensure stability for municipal services and projects. Legislative Services' oversight of contracts and agreements aims to ensure legal and legislative compliance, minimize risk to the City, and maintain control of their storage and tracking for record-keeping purposes.

Inventory/Volume/Demand: As municipal services and projects are on-going, there is a constant demand for contract and agreement oversight.

Frequency or Response Timing: The Legislative Services Department regularly participates in the review and execution of contracts and agreements. Response times are prioritized based on the urgency of each document, with some requiring immediate attention.

Standard Operating Procedures/Specifications: It is expected that members of the Legislative Services Department will provide legal and legislative assistance and guidance to staff involved in preparing contracts and agreements. When a matter is beyond the scope of what City administrative staff is equipped to manage, legal counsel is retained.

Service Levels: Legislative Services:

- Assists with providing guidance to staff on the use of template documents for contracts, agreements, leases, licenses, request for proposals, etc.
- Liaises with the originating department on the review and drafting of documents.
- Ensures documents meet legal and legislative requirements.
- Provides guidance on the approval process.
- Coordinates external legal support, as required.
- Tracks current bylaws and policies for any necessary follow-up, review, or approval.
- Assists with or drafts approximately 200 to 300 documents annually.

The Legislative Services Department is responsible for providing timely responses and guidance to internal and external requests for contracts and agreements.

Policy Alignment: The applicable City policies or procedures are dependent on the subject matter of the contact or agreement.

Legislation, Regulations or Standards: The applicable legislation or regulations are dependent on the subject matter of the contact or agreement, but the primary authority to enter into legally binding agreements stems from the *Municipal Government Act*.

Profile of Users: A significant portion of the users for this program consists of internal City staff. However, there are also occasions that require the Legislative Services Department staff to collaborate with the public and external stakeholders.

Council and Council Meeting Support

PBB Program Area Description/Overview:

Oversee all aspects related to the preparation of Council and Committee of the Whole meetings. Provide administrative support for the Mayor and Councillors, such as arranging schedules, and coordinating and approving expenses. Manage and support all aspects of the processes for elected official and public member board and committee appointments. Support the interview process for the Application Review Committee, which provides recommendations to Council for public member appointments.

For detailed information about program cost, revenue, full-time equivalent, basic program attributes, and program results, refer to the [Program Summary Report](#).

Reason for Offering: There are legislative and operational requirements associated with providing support to the Council and overseeing Council meetings. City Council is required to provide direction and carry out its role pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act*. Legislative Services staff provide support to Council members to assist them in carrying out their roles and ensuring that necessary legislative processes are conducted.

Inventory/Volume/Demand: Council and Council-related matters often require daily support to ensure the needs of members and timelines for the preparation of Council meeting agendas are met.

Frequency or Response Timing: Requests submitted by members of the Council are given priority response. The timeline for including items on the Council agenda is at least two weeks, which includes the time from the initial submission of items to the preparation of the meeting agenda.

Standard Operating Procedures/Specifications: In addition to the documents and legislation noted below, specific processes are followed for use of the agenda meeting software, eSCRIBE.

Service Levels: Legislative Services:

- Coordinates agenda and minute preparation, and oversees the parliamentary and electronic functions for approximately 25 Council and 10 Committee of the Whole meetings annually.
- Provides administrative support to both the Mayor and Councillors, including arranging meetings, handling registrations, and preparing monthly expense submissions.
- Oversees the annual budgeting and accounting for the Mayor and Councillors.
- Posts all Mayor and Councillor expenses on the City's website.

Policy Alignment: Meeting Procedures Bylaw C29-22; Council Code of Conduct C18-22; Council Committee Appointments Policy & Procedure GOV-017-C; Council Remuneration & Expenses Policy & Procedure GOV-009-C

Legislation, Regulations or Standards: *Municipal Government Act*

Profile of Users: Internal users include members of the Council, City staff, the public, and external stakeholders. City Council is elected by and serves the public; Legislative Services plays a crucial role in ensuring transparent and accountable local governance.

Municipal Elections

PBB Program Area Description/Overview:

Coordinate and manage all aspects of municipal elections, by-elections and questions, as well as elections for the public and separate school board trustees. Ensure all legislated processes are followed.

For detailed information about program cost, revenue, full-time equivalent, basic program attributes, and program results, refer to the [Program Summary Report](#).

Reason for Offering: This legislated program provides the citizens of Fort Saskatchewan with the vital opportunity to exercise their democratic right to participate in the municipal election process. Municipal elections play a crucial role in shaping local governance and public policy. Participation in an election is a core democratic right, and the Municipal Election program is a core function of the Legislative Services department.

The Legislative Services department plays a crucial role in developing protocols to facilitate the local execution of these elections, ensuring that all eligible voters have equitable access to voting opportunities. These efforts are designed to uphold the integrity of the electoral process and promote inclusive participation across the community.

Inventory/Volume/Demand: The preparation for a municipal election begins in the preceding year, and the work resulting from the election carries on for weeks. When an election is underway, it dominates the capacity of the department.

Frequency or Response Timing: Municipal elections are regularly held every four years, but may be required outside of this four-year cycle in certain circumstances.

Standard Operating Procedures/Specifications: It is a requirement of the municipality to conduct an election in accordance with the municipal bylaws and policies, as well as the provincial legislation outlined in this section.

Service Levels: Legislative Services:

- Ensures that all required and legislated documentation is properly prepared and available for conducting municipal elections every four years, as well as for by-elections and questions, as needed.
- Oversees all aspects of conducting elections and questions posted to the residents, ensuring a fair and impartial process is followed.
- Assists candidates throughout the election campaign period, ensuring all candidates are provided with the information they require to participate in the electoral process.
- Works with applicable school boards to coordinate elections for school board trustee positions.
- Hires and conducts the training for election workers.
- Meets and prepares newly elected Council members on administrative matters and logistics following a municipal election.
- Is involved with the planning and delivery of Council's Orientation following a municipal election.

The Legislative Services Department is tasked with overseeing all aspects of an election, ensuring compliance and readiness across multiple areas. This includes updating and obtaining necessary approvals for all bylaws, policies, and related documentation; confirming details and logistics for voting sites; conducting a Candidates Information Session; overseeing the hiring and training of election workers; providing in-person and drive-through advance voting, institutional voting, and special ballots; and managing all essential processes for both pre- and post-election day.

Policy Alignment: Elections Bylaw C4-21; Election Signage Bylaw C7-19; Election Campaign Provisions Policy GOV-012-C

Legislation, Regulations or Standards: *Municipal Government Act; Local Authorities Election Act*

Profile of Users: The users of this program are the candidates and electors of the City of Fort Saskatchewan.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP)

PBB Program Area Description/Overview:

Oversee the provision of the City's FOIP program as a public body, ensuring the City remains compliant with legislation. Legislative Services staff aid members of the public and Administration when seeking to access to information, or for any privacy-related matters.

For detailed information about program cost, revenue, full-time equivalent, basic program attributes, and program results, refer to the [Program Summary Report](#).

Reason for Offering: This is a legislated program that provides a process for individuals who wish to obtain records from the City of Fort Saskatchewan.

Inventory/Volume/Demand: The number of FOIP requests remains consistent but is trending higher as time passes. As the city continues to grow, administrative functions such as the FOIP program will see increased demand.

Frequency or Response Timing: Upon receiving a FOIP request, the municipality has 30 days (subject to certain exemptions) to provide the applicant with a response. This includes all recovery of records, severing information in accordance with FOIP, and preparing all documentation in response to the request.

Standard Operating Procedures/Specifications: Due to the 30-day timeline and the scope of the search and review of documents, responding to a FOIP request is considered to be a priority. All decisions relating to the search, review, and release of records must be completed pursuant to legislation, as noted below.

Service Levels: Legislative Services:

- Provides guidance to Council, Administration, and the public as needed, on privacy legislation, processes, and questions which may occur.
- Is responsible to receive all FOIP request applications.
- Oversees and conducts the FOIP request review process, ensuring legislative compliance throughout, and only releasing records which are permitted by legislation.
- Assists with training members of Administration, as needed.
- Ensures the City is compliant with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- Responds to approximately 30 to 40 formal FOIP requests for information annually.

The Legislative Services Department is responsible for receiving any FOIP request applications, followed by completing all processes received for search, review, and release of City records.

Policy Alignment: Access to Information & Protection of Privacy Policy & Procedure GOV-001-A

Legislation, Regulations or Standards: *Municipal Government Act; Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act*

Profile of Users: Users could be anyone who wishes to submit a request to obtain information from the City.

Insurance Administration and Risk Management

PBB Program Area Description/Overview:

Oversee and implement the City's insurance program. Liaise with the City's insurer, Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA), and City Administration to assess the City's risks and determine the required levels of insurance protection. Provide insight on risk management matters and make recommendations on how to best mitigate the City's risk. The Risk Management program also aims to develop strategies to minimize these risks, monitor risk exposure, and coordinate training for city staff on risk avoidance and mitigation techniques. This proactive approach ensures that the city can effectively respond to and recover from incidents that may affect its services and financial stability.

For detailed information about program cost, revenue, full-time equivalent, basic program attributes, and program results, refer to the [Program Summary Report](#).

Reason for Offering: The Insurance Administration and Risk Management Program is essential for identifying, assessing, and managing potential risks to the City's operations, assets, personnel, and members of the public.

Inventory/Volume/Demand: Following sustained efforts to educate staff on risk management processes and improve risk mitigation strategies, among other initiatives, the City has experienced a reduction in insurance claims.

Frequency or Response Timing: Depending on the severity of the incident, current processes direct staff that internal notifications of incidents are received within 5 minutes of an incident's occurrence. If a claim is managed in-house, an investigation and action plan are completed within 24 hours to 3 days after the incident. If the claim is referred to the City's insurer, the review of the incident is conducted within a timeline of 1 to 3 days.

Standard Operating Procedures/Specifications: Claim procedures are developed internally. Management of the insurance policy is completed through the guidelines provided by RMA, as well as through the City's internal processes.

Service Levels: Legislative Services:

- Promotes safety within the organization, to minimize the level of risk.
- Responds to and coordinates internal and external claims which the City may be connected to.
- Actively participates as a member of the Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee.
- Develops and reviews the City's programs and processes to gain an understanding of the level of risk which might exist, or to determine where potential efficiencies could occur.
- Along with the Health & Safety Officer, investigates safety incidents which occur within the City.
- Responds to approximately 20 to 25 internal and external claims annually.

Policy Alignment: Facility Users Insurance Requirements Policy GOV-003-A; Insurance Claims Policy FIN-015-A; Hazard Identification Assessment and Control Policy and Procedure SAF-200-A; Asset Management Policy GOV-025-C; Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee Terms of Reference SAF-011-A; Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee Policy SAF-010-A

Legislation, Regulations or Standards: *Municipal Government Act*

Profile of Users: This program serves City staff, as well as by members of the public, and other external stakeholders.

Legislative and Legal Support

PBB Program Area Description/Overview:

Provide legislative and legal assistance and advice to Administration and coordinate external legal support when necessary. Additionally, Legislative Services monitors and manages the City's total budget for external legal expenses to ensure efficient use of resources.

For detailed information about program cost, revenue, full-time equivalent, basic program attributes, and program results, refer to the [Program Summary Report](#).

Reason for Offering: The Legislative and Legal Support Program is an essential component of municipal operations, ensuring legislative compliance and minimizing the City's risk exposure. Providing support to City staff and securing external legal advice are crucial aspects of this program, integral to the effective functioning of municipal operations.

Inventory/Volume/Demand: As municipal services and projects are on-going, there is a constant demand for legislative and legal support to City staff.

Frequency or Response Timing: Frequency for the Department's involvement in legal and legislative matters is often daily. Based on the need, Department members prioritize responses to these matters, often on an immediate basis.

Standard Operating Procedures/Specifications: It is expected that members of the Legislative Services Department will provide legal and legislative support and guidance to City staff as needed. This includes clarifying and interpreting legislation, as well as facilitating access to external legal assistance, advice, opinions, or representation.

Service Levels: Legislative Services:

- Is responsible for prioritizing responses and guidance from City staff on their legal and legislative inquiries and other related matters.
- Conducts research into legal and legislative matters primarily for internal purposes.
- Coordinates external legal assistance as required.
- Receives daily requests for legal assistance or clarification on legislation.

Legislation, Regulations or Standards: *Municipal Government Act* and the *Legal Profession Act*

Profile of Users: City staff would be the primary users of this program.

Records Management

PBB Program Area Description/Overview:

Oversee all aspects of the City's records management program, ensuring that all processes comply with the Records Management Bylaw and associated procedures for managing both physical and electronic records.

For detailed information about program cost, revenue, full-time equivalent, basic program attributes, and program results, refer to the [Program Summary Report](#).

Reason for Offering: Records Management is a critical operational program designed to provide the municipality with oversight and assurances for the secure, legislatively compliant storage, maintenance, and disposition of records. This program ensures that both physical and electronic records are preserved according to legal standards and organizational policies, facilitating efficient access and protecting the integrity of information over time. Additionally, it supports transparency and accountability by enabling accurate record-keeping and timely access to public records to internal staff or external entities through the FOIP program.

Inventory/Volume/Demand: The Records Management Program addresses daily requests for the coordination of records and the retrieval of information. These requests range from retrieving archived records to filing and storing current records, as well as assisting in the development of workflows and storage solutions for both physical and electronic records. Requests can vary in urgency and complexity but can sometimes require immediate attention.

Frequency or Response Timing: Requests for information received by the Records and Information Governance Officer are treated as a priority, with the records or the findings being returned as promptly as possible. This ensures timely access to information and supports efficient decision-making across the municipality.

Standard Operating Procedures/Specifications: The Records Management Program utilizes Laserfiche and Infolinx software systems, guided by City policy documents, bylaws and relevant provincial and federal legislation. As the City further integrates Microsoft 365 into daily operations, the Records and Information Governance Officer will work with members of the IT Department to determine the most effective methods for transitioning the City's electronic operational records to SharePoint.

Service Levels: Legislative Services:

- Oversees the City's Records Management Program and works to ensure the effective and efficient use of the City's records management tools.
- Provides internal assistance with the retrieval of City records.
- Oversees the use of and assists with the training of the Laserfiche software, which is used for the retention and disposition of electronic records.
- Assists to promote departmental practices align with the City's long-term Records Management goals.
- Participates in the implementation of organizational software, to ensure compatibility with Records Management software systems.

Policy Alignment: Records Retention Bylaw C15-99 and Corporate Records Management Procedure GEN-006

Legislation, Regulations or Standards: *Municipal Government Act*

Profile of Users: Primarily the Records Management Program is used internally by City staff but does service external parties through the FOIP program.

Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB)

PBB Program Area Description/Overview:

The Legislative Services department wholly manages the City's SDAB program. The SDAB is a quasi-judicial body required to be established by municipalities by the *Municipal Government Act*. The SDAB hears appeals of decisions made by the Development or Subdivision Authority regarding subdivisions or development permits. When an individual, corporation, or other entity is dissatisfied with a decision made concerning the subdivision or development of land within the municipality, they can appeal to the SDAB.

For detailed information about program cost, revenue, full-time equivalent, basic program attributes, and program results, refer to the [Program Summary Report](#).

Reason for Offering: The SDAB is crucial in ensuring that there is a fair and transparent process in place for handling appeals related to land use, planning, and development within the municipality.

Inventory/Volume/Demand: The demand for SDAB hearings is based on the number of decisions rendered by the development or subdivision authorities which may be subject to an appeal. When an appeal is received, the SDAB must commence a hearing within 30 days, and the resulting decision must be made and circulated within 15 days.

Frequency or Response Timing: The frequency of appeals is based on actual need. Upon receipt of an appeal, SDAB hearings must be held within 30 days.

Standard Operating Procedures/Specifications: It is a requirement of the SDAB program to follow legislative processes for the timing and scheduling of hearings.

Service Levels: Legislative Services:

- Is responsible for the receipt of SDAB appeals, ensuring all relevant information is included in the appeal application, which would proceed to a hearing.
- Following receipt of an appeal, steps are taken to coordinate the hearing process, ensuring legislative notifications and other requirements are followed.
- Attends, provides administrative and parliamentary support, and completes the record of decisions for all hearings.
- Prepare all records required for the SDAB hearing, including the agenda and resulting decision.

Policy Alignment: Subdivision and Development Appeal Board Bylaw C31-18; Land Use Bylaw C23-20

Legislation, Regulations or Standards: *Municipal government Act*; Subdivision and Development Appeal Board Regulation; Subdivision and Development Regulation

Profile of Users: Fort Saskatchewan residents, landowners, and anyone who could be impacted by a decision of the Subdivision or Development Authority, are eligible to submit an appeal to the SDAB.