

Corporate Communications

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

Branch Manager:
Trish Webb

2016-2018 Business Plan



**building
a great city**

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

Our Branch	17
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CONTRIBUTION TO THE CITY'S VISION

The Way Ahead	18
Council Initiatives	20
CLT Strategic Focus Areas	21
Branch Initiatives	23
Building a Great City	24

RISK IDENTIFICATION AND EMERGING ISSUES

Risk Identification	26
Emerging Issues	27

BRANCH STRUCTURE & PROGRAMS 28

PLANNED CHANGES – FINANCIAL IMPACTS

2016-2018 Plan – Branch Summary	33
---------------------------------	----

APPENDIX

Appendix I – Summary Alignment of Outcomes & Performance Measures	34
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Message from the Branch Manager



“Corporate Communications’ goal is to help people see their role in building a great city, and to access a variety of perspectives so the wisdom of residents and city staff is available to decision-makers.”

Thanks are due to the women and men who deliver the City’s Corporate Communications services within City Departments or in one of the centrally-managed services. Their continued dedication to the people of Edmonton has helped to increase the opportunities for dialogue among members of the public, Council and Administration, and is helping the City achieve the reputation it deserves. As a Branch, we are truly proud to serve and our function connects us to all Branches on a daily basis, providing a unique perspective on what it means to operate as one city.

Trish Webb, Branch Manager
Corporate Communications



Our Branch

Corporate Communications Branch helps to maintain and build the City's reputation and raise awareness of the long-term vision of the City, its goals and objectives, and most importantly, the many City programs and services available to residents. The Branch facilitates cross-departmental interactions, disseminates information, fosters engagement and promotes Council's decisions. The Branch's centrally-managed functions -- Media Relations, Creative Services and Office of Public Engagement support and add valuable advice by communications staff working directly with city departments.

Branch Goals and Outcomes	
Branch Goal	Branch Outcome
<p>Goal 1:</p> <p>City of Edmonton residents, businesses and stakeholders are informed, engaged and support Council's decisions and how those decisions are made.</p>	<p>Outcome 1.1:</p> <p>Residents, businesses and stakeholders have the information they need from the City of Edmonton.</p>
	<p>Outcome 1.2:</p> <p>Council has the information required to make the best decision possible and the tools and support to communicate and, where possible, to celebrate their accomplishments.</p>
	<p>Outcome 1.3:</p> <p>Residents, businesses and stakeholders see their input considered in decision-making and feel they are welcome participants in public engagement processes.</p>

	<p>Outcome 1.4: Residents, businesses and stakeholders see the City of Edmonton as a good steward of public resources.</p>
<p>Goal 2: City of Edmonton employees understand and are aligned with the City’s direction and undertakings and see how they contribute to COE outcomes.</p>	<p>Outcome 2.1: Engaged, collaborative employees.</p>
<p>Goal 3: Edmonton has a confident, progressive global image.</p>	<p>Outcome 3.1: Advanced confident, progressive image for the City.</p>

Contribution to the City’s Vision

THE WAY AHEAD

The City of Edmonton’s strategic plan, The Way Ahead, identifies four conditions of success for achievement of outcomes. One condition is effective communications. Though this is a shared responsibility of all staff and Branches, Corporate Communications Branch is responsible for strategizing, advising and providing the services that achieve effective communications.



**THE WAY WE GROW -
EDMONTON IS ATTRACTIVE AND
COMPACT**



Communications in support of the goals within this plan will be primarily delivered through Communications staff supporting the Sustainable Development Department, and those within the Reputation Unit and Office of Public Engagement. These sections will support high-profile files, such as regional annexation, Rogers Place, Blatchford and the dramatic growth and redevelopment of downtown. They will ensure messages draw a link between the role transformational projects play in creating a strong downtown, and the benefits of a strong central city to the entire region.

**THE WAY WE MOVE -
EDMONTONIANS USE PUBLIC TRANSIT
AND ACTIVE MODES OF
TRANSPORTATION**



Communications staff supporting the Transportation Department help to advance the goals and initiatives that will enhance the way Edmontonians move, including use of active modes of transportation, advocacy campaigns in support of infrastructure funding, construction projects, snow and ice control, pothole filling and other traffic management needs. Communications staff in the Office of Public Engagement provide advice and support for major projects and initiatives.

**THE WAY WE LIVE -
EDMONTONIANS ARE CONNECTED TO
THE CITY IN WHICH THEY LIVE, WORK
AND PLAY**



The Way We Live speaks to the many ways in which the City affects quality of life through the delivery of a very broad range of services. The Communications Branch plays an important role in this strategy through the manner and focus of citizen-facing communications.

Many of these services are provided through the communications staff embedded in Community Services who manage cemeteries, parks and recreational facilities, attractions -- all of which contribute to the way people live.

The Branch is committed to providing relevant information in a timely fashion that is appropriate to the message. Crisis Communications processes, have also been created to ensure the safety and well-being of Edmontonians during extreme weather or other events that disrupt daily life.

Corporate Communications also supports the Council Initiative on Public Engagement, which speaks to the need to ensure citizens have the ability to influence public policy appropriately, and that elected officials and other decisions-makers have access to the information they need.

**THE WAY WE GREEN -
EDMONTON IS AN ENVIRONMENTALLY
SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT CITY**



The Communications Branch will continue to work to provide timely, appropriate information and support to social marketing efforts that advance public awareness and acceptance of the City's environmental initiatives. In addition to supporting efforts to influence citizen behavior, the Image, Reputation and Marketing Section will pursue opportunities to showcase the City's environmental accomplishments, including transformational projects like Blatchford.

**THE WAY WE PROSPER -
EDMONTON REGION IS A CATALYST FOR
INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS GROWTH**



Goal One of The Way We Prosper calls for an improved image, brand and reputation for the City of Edmonton as a key factor in achieving its economic aspirations. The Image, Brand and Reputation Section provides a focused approach to creative services and branding, and to transformational projects. This section will continue to work with Make Something Edmonton, Edmonton Tourism, and the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation to develop a stronger brand and reputation for the city and the region.

COUNCIL INITIATIVES

The Council Initiative on Public Engagement commenced in January 2014 with a direction to re-envision the City's approach to public engagement with citizens. The two Council leads - Councillors Ben Henderson and Michael Walters are committed to advancing the City's public engagement with citizens through to the 2017 municipal elections. This initiative is supported by the Communications Branch through the Office of Public Engagement. The initiative aligns with Branch objectives to increase the City's capacity for two-way dialogue with the public. The Edmonton Insight Community, a new online public input tool piloted by Corporate Communications, fosters in-depth opinion research and dialogue and aligns with the objectives of the Council Initiative and the Open City Initiative.

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM - STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

Focus Area: Communications Approach and Expectations	
Element	Branch Tactics
<p>The City’s business plans, projects and decisions include proactive, strategically-aligned communications plans that serve the needs of Council, the public and staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Corporate Communications Strategic Plan endorsed by CLT. ● Communications Branch structure adjustments to align with plan. ● Ensure employees are appropriately informed about city programs, issues and initiatives. ● Celebrate and promote staff contributions with emphasis on cross-departmental. ● Foster and support opportunities for interactions across departments and all staff levels ● Communicate opportunities for employees to connect with each other. ● Enhance and support development of better internal communications.
<p>Edmonton’s reputation is enhanced as a globally competitive, highly reputable and recognized City both nationally and internationally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with EEDC and Make Something Edmonton to refresh and extend the City’s brand through a coordinated approach (will include creation of consistent, attractive, modern visual identity). ● Embark on and support activities that enhance Edmonton’s reputation as a great place to live, work, go to school, visit and invest (e.g. events, WinterCity Strategy, relationships with external stakeholders). ● Support transformational projects for the City and raise their profile nationally and internationally (e.g. Blatchford, Rogers Place, Downtown).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pursue strategically significant awards and national media opportunities to position city as a municipal leader (e.g. AUMA, Employer of Choice) .
Positive and open citizen engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support the development of a public engagement strategy to guide the public consultation process and create consistency across the organization. ● Identify new/alternative opportunities to connect with residents (e.g. - use of Insight community). ● Leverage social media to enhance dialogue with citizens. ● Implement best practices and new innovations in communications channels to reach a diversity of stakeholders in targeted and cost-efficient approaches (e.g. apps, social media). ● Enhance public awareness of city programs, initiatives and Council decisions through a One City voice to communications that respects the citizen perspective.

BRANCH INITIATIVES

Goal	Strategy or Tactic
<p>Goal 1:</p> <p>City of Edmonton residents, businesses and stakeholders are informed, engaged and support Council's decisions and how those decisions are made.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain and enhance communications platforms that disseminate information in a manner that is timely, clear, accessible and relevant so residents know if there is an opportunity or expectation for their involvement or other actions. ● Provide toolkits to assist Council and corporate leaders in effectively communicating their progress. ● Reports to Council contain clear, relevant information that provides Council with necessary and appropriate information to inform decision-making. ● Promote and celebrate Council decisions and accomplishments. ● Support the development of a public engagement strategy to guide the public consultation process and create consistency, not uniformity, across the organization. ● Identify new and/or alternative opportunities to connect with residents. ● Enhance public awareness of city programs, initiatives and Council decisions through a One City voice that respects the citizen perspective.
<p>Goal 2:</p> <p>City of Edmonton employees understand and are aligned with the City's direction and undertakings and see how they contribute to COE outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure employees are appropriately informed about city programs, issues and initiatives. ● Celebrate and promote staff contributions with emphasis on cross-departmental involvement and innovation. ● Foster, support and promote opportunities for interactions across departments and all staff levels to help employees to connect with each other. ● Enhance and support development of better internal communications practices, and channels, including opportunities for employee input.
<p>Goal 3:</p> <p>Edmonton has a confident, progressive global image.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop an image and reputation strategy that builds on the platform articulated by Make Something Edmonton. ● Create a consistent, attractive, modern visual identity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure Edmonton is positioned as an excellent host city and partner with events team to promote major international events in Edmonton. ● Embark on and support activities that enhance Edmonton’s reputation as a great place to live, work, play, go to school, visit and invest. ● Promote transformational projects. ● Pursue strategically-significant awards to position City as leader among municipalities.
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BUILDING A GREAT CITY

Corporate Communications will leverage the process and findings of the Council Initiative on Public Engagement to inform future approaches to public engagement through the advisory functions of the Office of Public Engagement. In addition to the public-facing activities of the engagement, a committee of Branch Managers will discuss the governance options for public engagement that will support the findings and recommendations from the Initiative.

While the Branch does not have sole responsibility for improving the effectiveness of public engagement activities undertaken by various departments, it has the potential to better coordinate and support effective approaches and through its research function, to measure how well they are received.

The Open City initiative outlines the values and approaches required to create new channels for engagement; Corporate Communications is dedicated to ensure the content conveyed through those channels meets the needs of Council, Administration and the public. Innovations in this area are intended to increase the effectiveness of engagement, responsiveness to issues and ability to effectively reach out to the public in the event of a crisis.

The opportunity to refresh the City’s brand through an updated visual identity arises from a number of sources, including the mandate inferred by goal one of The Way We Prosper and the publicly-expressed wishes of the Mayor and some Councillors. Visual consistency will increase, benefiting the City’s image and building its brand.

Changing workstyles that enhance the ability of employees to collaborate will be supported by changes to workplaces, especially the Edmonton Civic Tower and renovated City-owned facilities. Internal Communications has a lead role in ensuring the messaging and activities supporting workstyle changes and the process of moving staff are consistent with culture change values and objectives.

Culture in the Workplace

Issues to be Actioned	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information about what is happening within the Branch is not as widely shared as employees would like (so everyone can get the information when needed) 2. Employees do not receive enough training to do their jobs effectively 3. Employees in the branch are spread out and embedded within departments and want more connections to whole Communication team
Desired Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Branch information is (more) widely shared (greater communication) 2. Employees receive more, appropriate training 3. Branch employees feel like a team; they know each other and collaborate more often, even though physically separated
Culture Outcome Focus Areas:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engaged Employees, Effective Leadership 2. Engaged Employees, Collaborative Workplaces 3. Engaged Employees, High Performance 4. Engaged Employees, High Performance, Collaborative Workplaces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Engaged Employees ◆ Effective Leadership ◆ High Performance ◆ Collaborative Workplaces ◆ Citizen Focus 	

Employee Engagement Survey Performance - Corporate Communications

Survey Participation Rate	2012: 92%	2014: 95%	
Employee Engagement Survey Performance (% favourable survey response)	2012 (Actual)	2014 (Actual)	2016 (Target)
● Overall Engagement	69.4%	69.5%	71.5%
● Overall Culture	68.8%	63.2%	70%
● Overall Workplace	64.5%	60.8%	68%
● Overall Job Satisfaction	66.0%	59.5%	68%
● Overall Immediate Supervisor	72.4%	70.7%	75%

Risk Identification and Emerging Issues

Risk Factor	Likelihood (1 to 5)	Impact (1 to 5)	Mitigation Strategy	Risk Owner
Failure to identify and mitigate issues leads to reputational damage.	3	5	Dedicated support, daily cross-departmental media call; dedicated communications resources in each department flag emerging issues and develop and/or implement mitigation strategies.	Corporation
City is not seen as modern and progressive because visual identity lacks consistency and city signature is outdated.	5	3	Visual identity and graphic standards update is underway.	Corporation and Branch
Insufficient resources to meet departmental needs undermines city's ability to meet its goals.	4	4	Corporate initiative on Communications will clarify challenges and offer approaches that maximize resources and identify gaps.	Corporation
Release of inaccurate or misleading information undermines public trust in administration and Council, damages City's reputation, generates legal actions.	3	5	Communications staff prepare departmental and corporate spokesperson through general and specific media training; media relations unit coordinates news releases and provides quality control for traditional and social media outreach.	Corporation and Branch
Natural or industrial disaster occurs without adequate resources or clear approaches to information dissemination inhibits ability of residents to protect themselves and their property.	2	5	Crisis communications plan is in place and a more-than-adequate number of communications staff are trained to fulfill the appropriate roles in the Emergency Operations Centre.	Corporation and Branch

EMERGING ISSUES

The experience people have with private sector vendors in online tools and marketing creates expectations for responsiveness and personalization from public entities that the City is currently not equipped to meet.

Public expectations of government transparency and public influence on decision-making is growing, challenging the city to respond and in some cases to alter processes and policies. The Open City Initiative tackles this challenge and is creating a need for greater information services in an “open by default” approach.

The proliferation of social media tools and their use by City employees creates a reputational risk for individuals and the corporation if they are used indiscriminately, not properly maintained and updated, or misused by destructive individuals and/or groups. However, it also creates great opportunity for engagement and dialogue.

Upcoming elections can dramatically alter the political landscape, which has repercussions for public advocacy in support of infrastructure funding and other grant programs.

Complexity of regional issues requires a coordinated, integrated approach to ensure that Edmonton can realize its aspirations to be a globally competitive city.

Fiscal environment is driving greater public scrutiny of spending decisions by Administration and Council particularly those that have a longer term benefit that is more difficult to comprehend than the immediate impact on budget.

Branch Structure and Programs

Public Communications	Media Relations and Issues Management	Internal Communications	Image, Reputation and Marketing
Strategic communications support for Sustainable Development, Financial Services and Utilities, Community Services and Transportation (includes support for internal information, public information, media relations, campaigns, publications)	Strategic communications advice on media relations approaches, media monitoring, training, standards, and oversight/quality control of City's media releases, corporate spokespeople	Strategic communications support to Corporate Services Department (includes support for internal information, public information, media relations, campaigns, publications)	Strategic communications support to transformational projects and major events (includes support for internal information, public information, media relations, campaigns, publications for Blatchford, Rogers Place, Annexation, regional files, civic events)
Public opinion research and survey coordination	Strategic communications advice on social media approaches, social media monitoring, training, standards and oversight of City's social media channels	Manage and coordinate central internal communication channels (Great City News, One City, City Manager's blog)	Protocol service to corporation includes event organization and hosting
Office of Public Engagement - Advice and Guidance on public engagement approaches	Crisis Communications	Support to Culture Strategy	Council Services (speeches, proclamations)
	Issues Management	Advice and guidance on internal communications	Graphic standards, video production, advertising



Program 1: Public Communications

This area works with Community Services, Financial Services and Utilities, Sustainable Development and Transportation Services Departments to speak with a unified voice, representing One City with clear strategies and conveying a positive reputation. Work focuses on transparency of City business, proactive information openness and responsiveness in interacting with residents and meaningful engagement in which citizens feel heard. A wide range of communications tactics are used to convey timely, accurate and relevant information on City programs and services.

Cost Drivers

The main cost drivers are the continually growing demand for public information about City programs, services and emerging issues. Communications needs increase with expanded services such as new recreation facilities and Light Rail Transit expansion. New projects in Public Communications include enhanced public engagement and the Council Initiative on Engagement. New services have been required to support eServices, the Open City Initiative and new projects in various Departments.

Service Standards

The Communications Policy, Media Relations Directive, Public Involvement Policy, and City Audit on Social Media and Public Involvement guide strategies to ensure residents have access to clear, timely, accurate and responsive information about services, new programs, initiatives or issues. Multiple methods inform and engage Edmontonians, using mainstream media, online surveys, multi-media production, publications, advertising, media relations, social media, special events, external displays, and crisis communications. Communications plans for each project or program set service levels appropriate for the intended outcome, which may include increasing awareness, changing perceptions or influencing behaviours of target audiences. Public involvement plans for each project set appropriate engagement methods for the specific need, based on the spectrum of possible levels of involvement in decisions, and requirements for informing participants about their input.



Program 2: Media Relations and Issues Management

This area provides central coordination and support for the City's relationships with the media, and oversight for the City's corporate social media strategy and presence. In addition, it is also responsible for communications support to the Office of Emergency Management including training and deployment of communications staff able to respond during a crisis. When there is a media matter or issue matter that is corporate in nature or involves more than one department, this unit provides support to issues management.

Cost Drivers

The main cost driver is the amount of information needing to be communicated to the public through media and social media - it increases when there are new programs, initiatives or projects being planned by the City.

Service Standards

Communications Policy, Media Relations Directive and City Audit on Social Media guide strategies to ensure residents have access to clear, timely, accurate and responsive information about services, new programs, initiatives or issues. The Branch manages a response protocol for timely and coordinated responses to media enquiries and social media comments or questions.

Communications tracks the amount of media stories that result in positive coverage for the City as well as reach of social media.

Program 3: Image, Reputation and Marketing

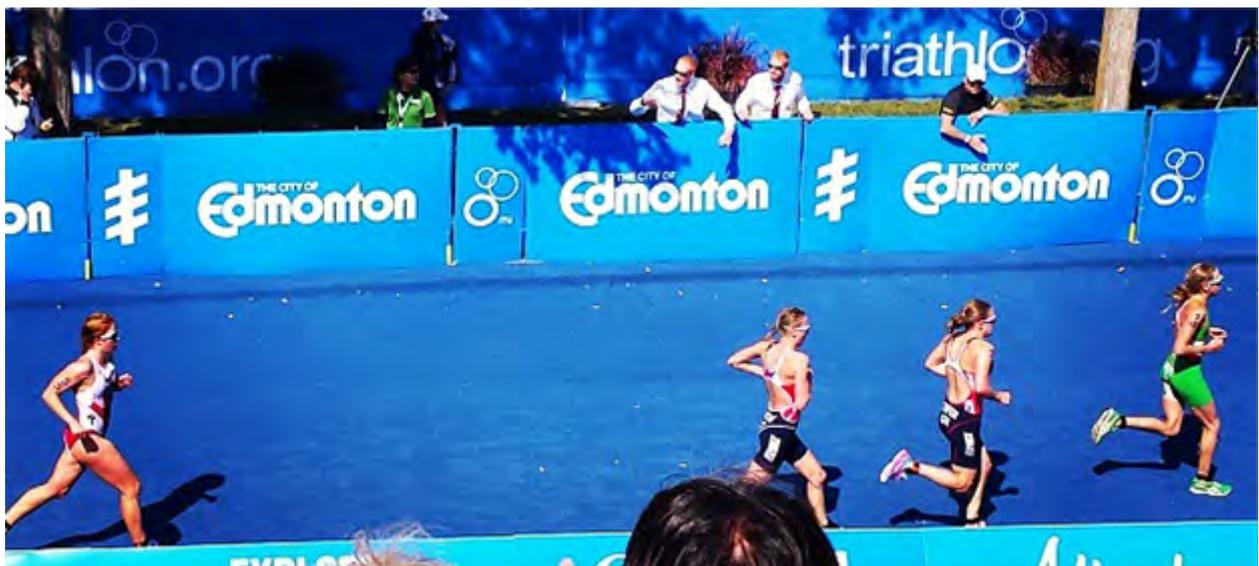
The portfolio plays an integral role in advancing and protecting Edmonton's reputation and image, for the Corporation and the community. This team provides strategic and innovations communications, marketing, event, and protocol support for major and transformational projects, major national and international events, and intergovernmental initiatives. This area also plays a vital role in advancing partnerships and building strong relationships in the city including the military, Edmonton Tourism, Make Something Edmonton, Edmonton Oilers and other key stakeholders.

Cost Drivers

Increasing awareness of the importance of building the reputation of Edmonton, both the corporation and community, is a key driver of this portfolio. As well, increasing demands for communications, marketing, protocol, event planning and creative services to support the City overall and major initiatives. The scope and number of transformational projects and major events has a direct impact on the activities of this section, which drives costs.

Service Standards

The Reputation portfolio works collaboratively with Edmonton Economic Development Corporation, Edmonton Tourism and Make Something Edmonton to advance Edmonton's image and brand. As well, new interim visual standards have been introduced as a stepping stone towards updating the overall City look to ensure this important aspect of our image reflects a globally progressive city. This area aims to offer outstanding service in direct client services, creative services, and protocol.



Program 4: Internal Communications

The Internal Communications Section (IC) is responsible for overall corporate-level internal communications channels such as greatcitynews and onecity employee intranet, as well as communications planning and implementation for the City Manager, Corporate Services Department, the Culture program, Open City, the Innovation program, and the Civic Accommodation Transformation program. In addition, IC is undertaking research and development work (as time and resources allow) targeted at elevating the effectiveness of internal communication. This work includes communications audits, mapping employee demographics and communication networks, internal social media, an employee app for smartphones, and exploring the use of employee data streams that may be used to better target internal communications.

Cost Drivers

The need for employee communications is driven in a large part by the need for communication about programs that directly impact employees, as well as programs that affect employees' delivery of services to citizens. Culture communications and change management comprise a significant component of the need for employee communications.

Service Standards

Corporate Communications Strategy, Internal Communication Strategy, and Culture Communications Strategy, as well as Corporate Communications policies establish standards for this area. A Corporate Communications document defining staff roles and responsibilities is currently in development, as is a Culture Communications Plan that supports a recently revised Corporate Culture Strategy.

Planned Changes 2016 - 2018

Financial Impact

The following Branch Summary Table includes the planned changes, as summarized on the following pages, to deliver the services described in the Business Plan.

Corporate Communications 2016-2018 Plan - Branch Summary

(\$000)	2015 Budget	2016 Plan	2017 Plan	2018 Plan
Revenue & Transfers				
User Fees, Fines, and Permits	-	-	-	-
Grants	-	-	-	-
Transfer from Reserves	-	-	-	-
Total Revenue & Transfers	-	-	-	-
Expenditure & Transfers				
Personnel	8,900	9,400	9,700	9,900
Non-Personnel	1,500	1,700	1,700	1,600
Intra-Municipal Recoveries	(1,800)	(1,900)	(1,900)	(1,900)
Total Expenditure & Transfers	\$8,600	\$9,200	\$9,500	\$9,600
Net Operating Requirement	\$8,600	\$9,200	\$9,500	\$9,600
Full-time Equivalents	84.1	84.1	84.1	84.1

CHANGES TO MAINTAIN CURRENT SERVICE LEVELS

The additional costs in personnel are due to salary settlements and merit increases (\$333K) and a reduction in salary discount (\$150K) due to vacancy rates and backfilling of vacancies through temporary positions.

The additional non-personnel costs are due to adjustments for the City Hall School Program and Civic Retirement Event.

Appendix 1

Corporate Outcome or Conditions of Success	Branch Outcomes	Branch Performance Measures	Branch Target			Branch Strategies, Tactics or Actions
			2016	2017	2018	
The Way Ahead						
Corporate Outcome: Edmontonians are connected to the City in which they live, work and play	Communications Branch positions Edmonton positively in support of building pride in the city	a) Surveyed citizens report they would recommend Edmonton as a good place to live, visit and work. b) Public Engagement and Survey connections; surveyed participants feel heard c) Positive tone of local and national media stories d) National Perception of Edmonton Study (Longwoods) of correlation between strengths and perceived attributes	a) 80% work; 80% live; 70% visit. b) satisfaction with process - establish baseline c) 80% positive media coverage d) happens in 2018	All +2%	All +2%	a) Awards Strategy; Major Events Strategy; Brand Strategy b) Council Initiative on Public Engagement; Survey and Insight Community recruitment and retention strategy c) Local and national Media Relations strategy; d) Brand Strategy
The Way Ahead Condition of Success: Effective Communication and CLT Strategic Focus Area: Communications	Branch delivers effective communications in support of City programs, services, campaigns, projects Employees in the City state that there is good internal communications	a) Citizen satisfaction with engagement processes b) Internal satisfaction with communications support c) Engagement & Diversity survey - increase in the scores	a) establish baseline % aggregate satisfaction b) establish baseline c) +2	a) and b) +2% c) same or +	same or +	a) and b) Enhanced Communications planning and strategies with clients, ensuring measurable objectives for each plan, increased surveying pre and post campaign, engagement surveying Support Council and Administration in their communications with staff and the public with a focus on being transparent, proactive, clear, engaging c) Tools and training to improve internal communications