

# Branch — Corporate Communications

## Introduction

Corporate Communications is responsible for managing the image, brand and reputation of the City of Edmonton with all its audiences.

The Branch exists to help City business units inform and engage Edmontonians in municipal matters and civic services. Effective communication services helps ensure citizens are aware of what is available to them, and supports informed decision-making around the choices available to our community.

In developing proactive and strategic messages, Corporate Communications helps the organization speak with a unified voice and with a citizen-perspective about the long-term vision of the City, our objectives and goals, and more immediately, the portfolio of City programs and services available to Edmontonians.

Outcomes Corporate Communications aims to achieve:

- Edmonton and the City of Edmonton have a positive image, brand and reputation, locally and nationally
- Edmontonians are proud of their city
- Citizens, Councillors and employees believe they receive timely, accurate and complete information regarding emergent issues, city services and activities that are important to them
- Citizens value the information services from the City and two-way communications and connections with the City of Edmonton
- City employees, contractors and citizens understand, support and work toward common goals

Whether it's online, in print, in social media or mainstream media, the branch helps citizens find information on public

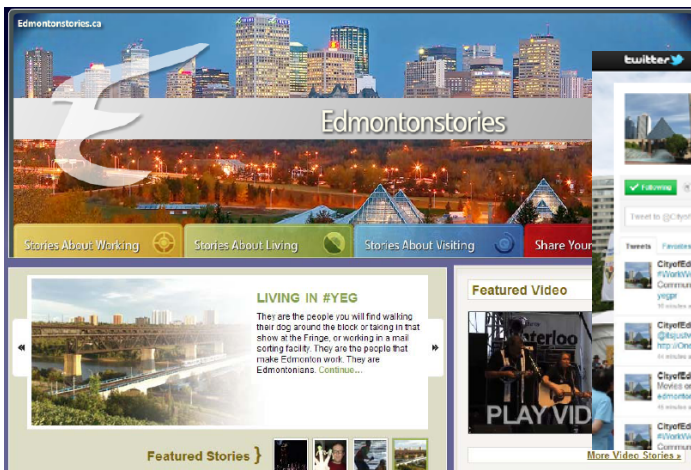


involvement opportunities, policy decisions, taxation, road upgrades, transit schedules, attractions, events ... everything the City does and more.

Working with community partners, Corporate Communications also helps build local pride and enhance awareness of Edmonton to attract people, investment and visitors.

The branch coordinates a range of activities to showcase Edmonton to the world, including Edmontonstories.ca – a multiyear campaign based on sharing the experiences of our city to support visitor and newcomer attraction efforts; international, national and local media relations; and coordination of public consultations on major projects and proposals such as the Downtown Arena, LRT expansion and Rosedale redevelopment.

Every day, our public information officers who work with news media or direct-to-citizen communications help deliver information on issues important to Edmontonians, while building confidence in the responsiveness, effectiveness and accountability of local government.



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Corporate Communications is responsible for helping departments, branches and project teams connect with Edmontonians, by providing the information needed to understand issues and initiatives, and by providing opportunities for two-way communications between staff and citizens that enables public inquiry and feedback.

Media relations and public relations based on strategic planning helps the City more effectively advance business objectives and provide services that respond to citizens' needs and expectations.

Through advertisements, publications, promotions and events, Corporate Communications helps build awareness for activities and opportunities for Edmontonians to be engaged in their community. Crisis and issues management helps provide effective resolution for the benefit of all residents.

Activities in 2011, up to September 30, include:

- 63 proactive message management issue briefings for City Council and City Managers
- 1,013 City Hall events hosted
- 645 Council briefs for public events
- 121 Mayor's proclamations and 142 messages from the Mayor in welcome letters and program guides
- 418 Certificates for Edmontonians from Council
- 161 Speeches for Councillors at civic events
- 598 news releases, media advisories and PSAs
- 4,488 media stories in local print, TV and radio

In 2010, the latest year for complete results, the city had 223 national news stories with positive coverage of Edmonton, with an estimated reach of 134,780,500 people.

### Opportunities and Challenges

Corporate Communications managed the creation of an internal blog for the City Manager and an Inside Edmonton blog for use by Transforming Edmonton and Me (TEAM) and any other city-wide initiative that involves change. The new communications vehicles are the first to offer two-way discussions between managers and all employees through comment areas. This new multi-directional format, with video capability, aims to reduce one-to-one email messages about new initiatives; helps share important corporate information with "one voice"; and empowers staff to seek clarification on what an initiative means to them - a critical ingredient for learning in times of change.

Corporate Communications has a small team that manages and nurtures the City's social media activity to strengthen direct connections to Edmontonians in a very cost-effective manner. With thousands of followers on Twitter and

Facebook, and expanded reach through effective search word strategies, the City is capitalizing on this growing method to disseminate breaking news and alerts, promote city activities, and engage Edmontonians in conversations with City subject matter experts. Combined with comments to the City blog and YouTube posts, we are connecting with more Edmontonians each day, with minimal investment.

### Service and Budget Review

Corporate Communications has enhanced the reach and frequency of the City Link internal employees newsletter by adding enhanced online distribution. The online distribution is able to address more timely issues than the monthly print edition. The print distribution has been reduced in the past year, maintaining distribution to centres where staff do not have desktop or email access. With the move to the Google cloud platform and the affordable ability to provide all employees with email access, print production will be further cut. The cost savings has been significant and will continue in 2012 as \$60,000 will be saved as we move entirely to online distribution.

Communications has reduced use of consultants and reallocated a position to a digital communications specialist to retain knowledge and expertise in the organization, while enhancing exposure of an online multimedia newsroom. The shift will reduce expenditure by more than \$20,000, and create an internal capacity to connect directly with Edmontonians and national media through photography, video and other online media.

In 2012, Corporate Communications reduced its overall budget by 2.8% which includes \$568,000 in service and budget review reductions. These reductions include reduced printing for City Link; reductions in general contractors and corporate promotions; fewer productions of Edmonton This Week radio show; decreased national media pitching and hosting; reduced marketing for EdmontonStories.ca; discontinuing the corporate retirement event; eliminating the High Level Bridge Great Divide Waterfall budget; and deferring a three-year funding agreement for a joint venture with the University of Alberta for the Centre for Public Involvement.

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### Approved 2012 Budget - Branch Summary (\$000)

	2010 Actual	2011 Budget	\$ Change '11-'12	2012 Budget	% Change '11-'12
<b>Revenue &amp; Transfers</b>					
User Fees, Fines, Permits, etc.	\$ 15	\$ 75	\$ -	\$ 75	-
Grants	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer from Reserves	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Revenue &amp; Transfers</b>	<u>15</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Expenditure &amp; Transfers</b>					
Personnel	5,200	5,688	213	5,901	3.7
Materials, Goods & Supplies	162	141	(35)	106	(24.8)
External Services	1,771	1,700	(356)	1,344	(20.9)
Fleet Services	-	-	-	-	-
Intra-municipal Services	196	42	20	62	47.6
Utilities & Other Charges	129	129	5	134	3.9
Transfer to Reserves	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	7,458	7,700	(153)	7,547	(2.0)
Intra-municipal Recoveries	(455)	(713)	(167)	(880)	23.4
<b>Total Expenditure &amp; Transfers</b>	<u>7,003</u>	<u>6,987</u>	<u>(320)</u>	<u>6,667</u>	<u>(4.6)</u>
<b>Net Operating Requirement</b>	<b>\$ 6,988</b>	<b>\$ 6,912</b>	<b>\$ (320)</b>	<b>\$ 6,592</b>	<b>(4.6)</b>
<b>Full-time Equivalents</b>	64.3	61.8		61.8	

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## Budget Changes for 2012 (\$000)

### Revenue & Transfers - Changes

#### **User Fees, Fines, Permits, etc. \$0**

Revenues remain consistent in 2012.

### Expenditures & Transfers - Changes

#### **Personnel \$213**

Movement within the salary ranges, changes in benefits and the last year of a 3 year 1% LAPP contribution increase account for \$134.

#### **Material, Goods & Supplies (\$35)**

The increase relates to inflation at \$4. The remainder is reclassification between materials and intra-municipal services.

#### **External Services (\$356)**

Inflationary costs account for \$45. The reduction of \$550 relates to the Service and Budget Review, however Council approvesto add back\$150 for Public Involvement as one-time subject to Executive Committee.

#### **Intra-municipal Services \$20**

The increase relates to a reclassification between intra-municipal services and materials.

#### **Utilities & Other Charges \$5**

The increase relates to inflation of \$3. The remainder due to an adjustment to telephone equipment.

### Full-time Equivalents - Changes

There is no change to Full-time Equivalents.