

## How Municipal Government Works and How You Can Be Involved

### Canada's Three Levels of Government

Level	Jurisdiction	Title	Leader		Responsibilities include:
Federal	All of Canada	Government of Canada	Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Liberal Party of Canada		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canadian citizenship</li> <li>• Royal Canadian Mounted Police</li> <li>• National Defence</li> <li>• Currency</li> <li>• National Parks</li> </ul>
Provincial	All of Alberta	Government of Alberta	Premier Danielle Smith, UCP Party		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Hospitals</li> <li>• Child care</li> <li>• Highways</li> <li>• Drivers' Licences</li> <li>• Drinking water standards</li> </ul>
Municipal	Individual cities, towns, or villages	City of Edmonton	Mayor Amarjeet Sohi		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency services</li> <li>• Public transportation</li> <li>• Snow removal</li> <li>• Garbage collection</li> <li>• Community centres</li> </ul>

#### Who is the Mayor?

The Mayor of Edmonton is the head of the municipal government. He is also the City's representative at meetings, public functions, ceremonies, and other events. He is the chief spokesperson for the City, and he works closely with other communities and the Government of Alberta. The people that live in Edmonton, and are eligible to vote, decide who represents the city as its Mayor.

#### Who is a City Councillor?

In addition to the Mayor, there are 12 members of City Council. Each represents a different area of the City of Edmonton called a ward. The people that live in each ward, and are eligible to vote, decide who represents them as City Councillor. You can see which ward you live in by looking at [this map](#).

The Councillors and Mayor work together to make decisions about plans, strategies, and policies to govern our city. You will also see members of City Council attending meetings, public functions, ceremonies, and other events, particularly in the area of the city that the Councillor represents. This is because the City of Edmonton's Councillors want to build relationships with the people living in the city, and learn what they are happy about and what they want to see change.



## **Who can run for City Council?**

In order to run in a municipal election, a person must:

- Be allowed to vote in the election (so, 18 years or older and a Canadian citizen);
- Must live in Edmonton for at least six months in a row before Nomination Day; and
- Must comply with everything in the Local Authorities Election Act.

The Local Authorities Election Act includes several rules, such as:

- You must be in good financial standing with the City of Edmonton;
- You cannot be currently employed by the City of Edmonton (if you are a City employee, you must take a leave of absence); and
- You must not have been convicted of an offence under the Local Authorities Election Act in the previous 10 years.

Once the election is over, the Mayor and Councillors attend several weeks of orientation. This teaches them the basic information that they need to be on City Council.

## **What does the City of Edmonton do for you?**

The City of Edmonton's responsibilities include:

- Emergency services;
- Maintaining local roads;
- Snow removal;
- Garbage, water, and sewage systems;
- Parks, recreation centres, and libraries;
- Buses and the LRT; and
- Planning the city's streets and buildings

The City of Edmonton manages these things and many more, making sure everything works together to create a great place to live.

## **How does the City of Edmonton do those things?**

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) is a law that tells us how Alberta's municipalities function. There are three important themes in the MGA:

- How do we build and grow?
- How are local decisions made?
- How do we pay for services delivered?

Following the MGA's guidelines, the City of Edmonton is able to write bylaws, which are municipal-level laws that keep the city running smoothly.

Over 12,000 people work for the City of Edmonton to make sure that the services it provides are taken care of efficiently and effectively. They all report to Linda Cochrane, the City Manager.

The City Manager reports to City Council, and is the connection between City Council, who make the plans, and the employees who carry out plans for the City of Edmonton.

City Council sets the City of Edmonton's policies to match the needs of the residents. When making decisions, City Council considers the advice of expert employees, as well as the opinions of the public.

Aileen Giesbrecht the City Clerk is the primary contact regarding City Council business. The Office of the City Clerk manages Council and Committee meetings, runs municipal elections, runs the municipal census, manages quasi-judicial boards, and assists with appointments to agencies, boards, and commissions. It also manages corporate records, oversees

information access inquiries, ensures protection of personal information and privacy, and manages bylaws.

## **What can I do to help the City of Edmonton make those things better?**

### 1. Make your opinion heard:

- If you have questions or concerns about something going on in the city, you can call 311.
- Let City Council know what you think, by contacting the Councillor for your ward.
- Come to a Council or Committee meeting.

### 2. Remember to vote:

- Once you turn 18, you can participate in the municipal election every four years. Residents vote for the Councillor in their ward and for the Mayor.
- Your job is to vote for the candidate you think will do the best job of making good decisions about the City of Edmonton's plans.
- Voting is the most important part of democracy. It allows residents to keep their elected officials accountable. If a Councillor is doing a good job of representing their ward, residents can re-elect them. If not, the residents have an opportunity to pick someone new.
- Remember, residents won't be well-represented, no matter who they elect, if they don't communicate with their Councillor!

### 3. The Hierarchy of Citizenship: three levels of being a good, better, or best citizen are:

- [Be polite and follow the rules](#)
- [Volunteer](#) and [Donate](#)
- Make your voice heard for change by doing any or all of the following:
  - [Request to speak at Council or Committee on topics that impact you](#)
  - [Write to your Councillor](#)
  - [Participate in Elections](#)