

CITY OF NANAIMO

BUSINESS CASE – Legislative Services Department: Records Management Clerk Position

CURRENT OVERVIEW

The Legislative Services Department provides legislative, policy and administrative expertise and services to Council, committees, task forces and City departments to ensure the City conducts its business in a manner that is consistent with provincial legislation and City bylaws. The department manages all requests received under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA), oversees records management services, liability claims and municipal elections.

The Records Management Unit within the Legislative Services Department includes four positions:

- Records/Information & Privacy Coordinator (1)
- Records and Information Specialist (1)
- FOI Claims & Records Clerks (2)

Under the direction of the Deputy City Clerk, the Records/Information & Privacy Coordinator is responsible for ensuring adherence to the City's requirements under FOIPPA, liability claims and records management processes for the City.

The Records and Information Specialist is responsible for coordinating and supporting the migration of the City's corporate records into an Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS), and providing advice and guidance to all City departments to support their continued participation in the records management program.

The FOI/Claims & Records Clerks are responsible for compiling, reviewing and assisting with the severing of documents in response to requests made under FOIPPA, processing liability claims, and assisting with the implementation and maintenance of an electronic records management system, among other duties.

The City is currently several years into a corporate-wide Records Management Project (RMP). This is a joint project between the IT Department and the Legislative Services Department, but it is a Legislative Services initiative led by the Records Management Group.

The goals of the RMP are to have City documents and records managed and stored in a manner that will satisfy all governmental regulations and provide a streamlined way for employees to search for and access records. Additionally, the purchase and implementation of an EDMRS will allow for records identification, and under the records retention schedule, for proper destruction at the appropriate time. The project is supported by "Records Management Bylaw 2012 No. 7150", which establishes records management procedures for documents and records of the City of Nanaimo. Implementation of Laserfiche, the City's EDRMS, occurred in 2021 and records are being actively moved into the system.

BUSINESS ISSUE

When the RMP was initially brought forward to Council in 2017, additional staff were not requested, but it was noted by the consultant involved in the project that the current staffing level in the Records Management Group was not sufficient and additional staff would be required in the future to ensure successful implementation and on-going maintenance of the project.

The last few years have seen a significant increase in workload for the Records Management Group due to a variety of factors:

- Prioritization of the RMP and associated tasks.
- The City's commitment and increase in FOI education in 2019 led to more awareness of privacy requirements throughout the organization.
- Increased internal and external awareness of FOIPPA resulted in more inquiries from staff and requests from the public.
- Updates to FOIPPA, as well as increased internal awareness of privacy requirements, led to a continued upswing in requests for mandatory Privacy Impact Assessments.
- Complexity of FOI requests increased and all requests are required to be responded to within legislated time frames.
- Increase in number of electronic records created and classified, due to the shift to remote work environments.
- Increase in requests for physical records to be classified and retained or destroyed.
- Records are being actively moved into the City's EDRMS increasing the need for system and staff support.
- The EDRMS is a complex software that the Records Management Group must learn to use and support at the same time they are implementing it throughout the organization.
- SARC renovations did not consider records management or storage space, forcing departments to "archive" their records.
- Shortage of staff due to high staff turnover.

In order to ensure the RMP is successful, a full time Records and Information Specialist position was added in July 2021 dedicated to the ongoing implementation, support and coordination of the project. This position is responsible for coordinating and supporting the migration of the City's corporate records into Laserfiche, the City's EDRMS, and providing advice and guidance to all City departments to support their continued participation in the records management program.

As per the RMP pilot project goals, the ingestion of electronic records from the shared drives of Legislative Services, CAO's Office, IT and HR has been steadily occurring since the software go-live in October 2021. Due to staffing issues, the HR department had to stall their involvement in the pilot project until further notice. The HR repository has been designed and deployed so that once they have the resources to commit to the project they will be able to jump back in. The pilot project was completed at the end of July 2022. For the remainder of 2022 the Records Management Group will review lessons learned & begin planning for full implementation to all City departments.

Due to the volume of work involved in overall planning, oversight, communication and change management for the project as a whole, as well as the design, deployment and implementation of the EDRMS, the Records Management Unit have required unbudgeted additional temporary staff to undertake the task of records ingestion in order to meet the July 2022 deadline. From early May 2022 to the end of June 2022 there was one temporary staff assigned solely to the ingestion of records for 8 weeks.

The two FOI/Claims & Records Clerks are the current clerical staff that have records management duties. Their responsibilities include processing requests for information under FOIPPA, assisting with the coordination of liability claims received by the City and maintaining claims files, completing various routine records management tasks not associated with the RMP or EDRMS, and various other duties. Of these various tasks, FOI requests and claims contain strictly legislated timelines which requires those tasks

to be prioritized. It has consistently been challenging for the FOI Clerks to find an achievable and appropriate balance between their various tasks, and the additional burden introduced by the RMP and EDRMS ingestion.

As the RMP expands to include additional City departments it is evident that there will be a need for more clerical support. In addition to tasks associated with moving records into the EDRMS, there is the ongoing maintenance of the Records Management Manual and procedures, permissions and security management, and ongoing training and support for departments actively using the EDRMS. This technical and background support for the program will be critical in the maintenance of the EDRMS, and will require significant ongoing training.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

The addition of a new Records Management Clerk position is anticipated to:

- Ensure the RMP is given the full attention it requires in order to be successful and completed on time and on budget.
- Ensure that after the implementation of the project a resource is dedicated to clerically assisting the Records & Information Specialist to manage the ongoing tasks associated with the City's overarching records management requirements such as:
 - Archiving records
 - Records destruction
 - Coordinating physical records storage
 - Physical records conversion to new Records Classification and Retention Schedule
 - Maintenance of records already converted into the system
 - Managing tasks within the EDRMS
 - Maintenance and compliance with records management policies and procedures
 - Supporting departments as they transition to the new records management system
 - Supporting the Records/Information & Privacy Coordinator to educate staff throughout the organization on the new program requirements.

OPTIONS

Option #1 –Add a Permanent Full-time Records Management Clerk to Legislative Services in 2023

Create a permanent full-time Records Management Clerk position (35 hours/week), reporting to the Records/Information and Privacy Coordinator, in the Legislative Services Department.

Benefits:

- The Records/Information & Privacy Coordinator will oversee the day to day progress and operation of the RMP and will be able to focus on oversight of the Records Management Program as a whole, the Privacy Management Program implementation, and all other duties as required.
- The Records and Information Specialist will be able to focus on planning, coordinating and supporting the migration of the City's corporate records into the EDRMS, and providing advice and guidance to all City departments to support their continued participation in the records management program.
- Legislated requirements such as City-wide FOIPPA training will be able to be completed.
- Will allow for FOI/Claims & Records Clerks to return to focusing their time between FOI/Claims and records management duties.
- Reduction or elimination of unbudgeted temp labour is expected.

- Manageable workloads would improve employee wellness and resiliency with less potential of burnout.

Weaknesses:

- Permanent increase to the operating budget of the Legislative Services Department.
- Staff training will need to occur which will take significant time and resources.
- Future workload is expected to continue as the program expands to integrate with our other City software programs.

Financial Analysis:

- Position is anticipated to be at a CUPE level 8, subject to JE.
- Estimated budget impact in 2023 for wages and benefits is \$66,100 based on an April 1st start date.
- Estimated budget impact in 2023 for additional annual costs is \$1,800 for memberships, training and network charges.
- One-time costs upon the creation of the position are projected at \$2,400 for the purchase of office equipment.

Option #2 – Add a Temporary Full-time Records Management Clerk to Legislative Services in 2023

Hire a temporary full-time Records Management Clerk position (35 hours/week) for 12 months.

Benefits:

- Temporary relief to the workload associated with RMP tasks.

Weaknesses:

- Temporary increase to operating budget for Legislative Services.
- Temporary solution as it is known that work required will continue beyond one year.
- Staff training will need to occur, likely taking as much as the entire year, only for the position to end.
- Potential drain on the already depleted temp worker pool.

Financial Analysis:

- The position is anticipated to be a CUPE level 8, subject to JEC.
- Estimated budget impact for 2023 for wages and benefits is \$62,400 based on an April 1st start date.
- Estimated budget impact in 2023 for additional annual costs is \$1,300 for network charges.
- One-time costs upon the creation of the position are projected at \$2,400 for the purchase of office equipment.
- The total estimated budget impact for 2023 and 2024 is \$91,800.

Option #3 – Status Quo

Benefits:

- No increase to operating budget for Legislative Services.

Weaknesses:

- RMP will take longer to complete.
- Loss of momentum with project end delayed.
- RMP will likely be over budget as more consultant time will be required to complete the project and will increase costs.
- Staff members will continue to split their focus between FOI/Claims and records management duties and accumulate unbudgeted overtime.
- Status quo may result in deteriorated quality of work, employee burnout, lower levels of employee retention and increased sick time.
- Legislated FOI requirements may not be completed in as timely and as efficient of a manner.
- Departmental work plan will need to be readjusted to accommodate extended RMP timeline.

RECOMMENDATION

Option #1 – Add a permanent full-time Records Management Clerk to Legislative Services in 2023.