Proposed Changes to Council Procedures Bylaw

Public Backgrounder

Background

- Procedures Bylaw 18155 that will change the distribution date for Council/Committee agendas and reports from "10 clear days prior to the meeting" to "the Thursday prior to the meeting"
  - Councillors in favour: S. Hamilton, A. Paquette, A. Sohi, M. Janz, K. Tang, E. Rutherford, A. Stevenson
  - Councillors in opposition: A. Knack, T. Cartmell, A. Salvador, J. Rice, and J. Wright
  - Councillor absent from vote: K. Principe
- Administration stated they would provide select stakeholder groups, such as advisory committees, with earlier access to Council/Committee reports.

Key Messages

- The Edmonton Chamber of Commerce strongly opposes the proposed amendments because if approved these changes will leave two working days before a Council/Committee meeting for Edmontonians and Councillors to gather opinions on municipal affairs.
- These amendments will severely limit accessibility, public participation and transparency in municipal governance.
- While City Administration has stated that select stakeholder groups will receive the information early, the Edmonton Chamber is steadfast in our belief that providing early access to select stakeholders, rather than all Edmontonians, is unrealistic, not transparent, and will create administrative burden.
- City Administration claims that current publication timelines are difficult to achieve however, rather than limiting Edmontonians' access to meeting materials, by reducing our time to view the items, we are urging Administration to focus on finding administrative efficiencies under the existing timeframes to maintain municipal transparency and accountability.
- We are asking the Mayor and City Council to reconsider this motion at their first meeting back from the summer on August 20th.

Stakeholder Impact

Edmontonians	Will have less time to review materials, form an opinion, and voice concerns to city staff and elected officials on municipal matters.
Councillors	Ability to govern and hold Administration to account will be impaired. In many cases, they will only have 2 business days to review materials, engage stakeholders, and formulate opinions before voting on significant matters.
Community organizations	Will have less time to review materials, create awareness, solicit organizations feedback, and speak on behalf of their constituents at Council/Committee meetings.
Advocacy groups	Will have less time to review materials, communicate them to groups stakeholders, solicit feedback, and advocate on their behalf to City Council and Administration.
Media outlets	Will have less time to review materials, create awareness of municipal affairs, and contribute to a healthy public dialogue and local democracy.