

Previous Council Direction, Background

The previous Council policy formal review (“formal review”) was undertaken between 2016 and 2019. The results were presented to the Priorities and Finance Committee on 2019 December 3. On 2019 December 16, Council directed Administration to delay the launch of the next formal review until the conclusion of the One Calgary Policy Review pilot project (“the pilot project”).

KPMG was retained to undertake the pilot project, and subsequently delivered recommendations regarding the overall management of The City of Calgary’s policies. A report on the outcomes of the pilot project was delivered to Council (C2020-0863) on 2020 July 27. The report included direction for staff within the City Clerk’s Office and the Corporate Governance Service to bring forward to the Executive Leadership Team (“ELT”) an implementation plan for the KPMG recommendations. A report to ELT was delivered on 2021 January 26 (ELT2021-0034). This report recommended a multi-year implementation plan to advance the maturity of The City of Calgary’s policy framework.

Key changes to policy management have been made to incorporate recommendations from the pilot project into the current formal review:

- A formal review process for Administration policies was developed prior to final reporting on the Policy Review Project. The Administration policy review was timed to occur in tandem with the current formal review, in a four-year cycle. The tandem review is being led jointly by the City Clerk’s Office for Council policies and the Corporate Governance Service for Administration policies. The KPMG recommendation to reduce the formal Council policy review timeline to three years has been deferred until the completion of the existing tandem review. Analysis of the feasibility of compressing the review period from four years to three years, either for Council policy, Administration policy, or both, will occur at that time. The four-year formal review timeline is detailed in Attachment 2 of the Council Policy Program Update report.
- Robust policy development and evaluation resources were added to the formal review – including key concepts and contact information for subject matter experts in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Climate, and Resiliency.
- Development of a typology of distinct policy tools (e.g. policies, bylaws, procedural documents, frameworks, etc.) is ongoing throughout the formal review.

Other policy framework improvements will launch in phases as corporate realignment and resourcing stabilizes. The policy framework is a living tool to maintain and communicate the corporate approach to policy management by:

- Determining appropriate level for policy ownership;
- Applying an organization-wide lens earlier in policy development;
- Enlisting a stakeholder group such as the Corporate Governance Committee, or a Community of Practice to resolve tension or conflict between policy directions;
- Develop online support/training materials for corporate staff developing or reviewing Council or Administration policy
- Enhancing tools for accountability and compliance; and
- Conducting service reviews and policy maturity assessments.

Following the 2021 January report to ELT (ELT2021-0034) and the adjustments to the formal review, the City Clerk’s Office and Corporate Governance Service initiated the first year of a new formal review cycle in 2021 January.