

I. Proposed electronic property assessment notices

(A) Information Security

In 2012, the Assessment business unit launched a secure web environment, known as Assessment Search, where assessment information (including personal information) about an individual property can be assessed by its respective owner(s) through a secure login process. Concurrent to the development of Assessment Search, the Information Technology business unit and the Corporate Security business unit developed The City's Identity Management (IDM) protocols, which were integrated into The City's myID customer interface, allowing for individual user log-in security across various City services, including a required e-mail address for each myID account.

In 2012, Assessment Search adopted The City's IDM protocols through myID in the implementation of its identity security measures. At that time, the privacy protection measures within Assessment Search were approved by The City's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy ("FOIP") Office through a Privacy Impact Assessment ("PIA") submitted for the development project.

To enable access to email addresses of individual myID accounts for the purpose of sending notification of assessment documents under this bylaw, the Assessment business unit will be submitting a PIA, for FOIP Office approval, towards fully integrating the enhanced myID to its Assessment Search secure web portal. Only upon approval of this PIA by the FOIP Office will Assessment Search be permitted access, by the IT business unit, to myID's customer email addresses to send notifications to assessed persons of their assessment notices being available online through Assessment Search. The Assessment business unit PIA to enable access to an individual's email address (within myID) will supplement the PIA already approved in 2012 for the personal information currently managed through Assessment Search, as well as the PIA approved for myID's IDM system.

(B) Subscribing to electronic property assessment notices within Assessment Search

By default, property owners will receive their property assessment notices in hardcopy form by mail. Only if an owner expressly, through their Assessment Search myID account, subscribes to receive paperless notices will the hardcopy notices be discontinued for their property.

Since the launch of Assessment Search in 2012, on each property assessment notice is a unique access code for the property owner to link their specific property, through the Assessment Search secure portal, to their unique myID account. Once a property is linked through the access code, that user's myID account provides access to their property's factual details (including personal information related to their property) and factual details of other Calgary properties (with all personal information of the other owners removed).

With the proposed electronic notice process, for any property linked to an Assessment Search myID account using the unique access code on the hardcopy assessment notice, the myID user will have the option on the Assessment Search dashboard to subscribe to receiving future assessment notices electronically. If the myID user subscribes to electronic notices then, with any future assessment notice mailing, an email will be sent to the email address registered to that myID account stating that a property assessment is available to be viewed as of that mailing date through Assessment Search. The sending of this email will replace the mailing of the hardcopy assessment notice for that property.

If an Assessment Search myID user elects for electronic notices, all properties linked to that user's account will be selected for electronic notices on the Assessment Search dashboard. The user can however unselect any individual property if they wish to have paper assessment notices mailed for that property.

For any property with multiple owners, if any owner elects for electronic notices, then any and all properties of the joint owners will receive notices electronically. Assessment Search will allow the multiple owners to independently access assessment information and electronic notices through their respective IDM accounts.

For added security, in any email notification of a paperless notice, no actual assessment notice will be attached to the email; rather the email will merely state that the PDF assessment notice is available for viewing within the Assessment Search portal using their myID account.

Any property owner receiving an electronic notice will also have available, via their secure access to Assessment Search, electronic versions of any property assessment insert and/or brochure that were otherwise included with hardcopies notices for that year. In this regard, a property assessment notice package will be identical, whether received in hardcopy or electronic form.

Similar to hardcopy notices, a property owner's deadline to file an ARB complaint for a property receiving an electronic notice will be 60-days following the Notice of Assessment date; which, pursuant to the MGA, is seven days after the notice is mailed, whether by postal mail or email.

(C) Unsubscribing from electronic property assessment notices

Unsubscribing to electronic notices can occur in one of three ways,

1. Within Assessment Search using their myID account, a user can at any time can unsubscribe to receiving emails from the Assessment business unit and thereby have the account revert to receiving hardcopy assessment notices by postal mail. For any property with multiple owners, if one owner unsubscribes, then any and all other owners receiving electronic notice emails for that property will be unsubscribed, and future notices will be sent to the owner mailing address as registered at the Land Titles Office.
2. By calling the Assessment business unit, an owner can unsubscribe to electronic notices. This added customer service feature is needed for exceptional circumstances where (a) a myID user for the property that subscribed to electronic notices is unable to unsubscribe through Assessment Search or (b) a joint property owner that is not an myID user disagrees with another owner electing for electronic notices.
3. If a property is sold, then the account will revert to paper form for future assessment notices, to be mailed to the mailing address of the new owner(s) as registered at the Land Titles Office. This will ensure that the property's vendor will not receive any future assessment notice electronically (containing personal information of the purchaser) for that property, and the property's purchaser will not be able to see any past electronic assessment notice (containing personal information of the vendor) on Assessment Search when linking their new property to their respective myID account. A new owner of a sold property will have to, with their respective myID account, subscribe for electronic notices through Assessment Search after they receive their first assessment notice in paper form with a corresponding unique access code to link that new property to a myID account.

(D) Development and launch of electronic assessment notices

The software development enabling paperless notices will enhance the Assessment Search dashboard to (a) add subscribe buttons for paperless notices as well as terms and conditions to an electronic notice agreement for the myID user to opt-in (b) add unsubscribe buttons for the myID user to opt-out, at their discretion, if paperless notices are not to their liking, and (c) make available PDF versions of notices to the user, through their myID account, after they have elected for paperless notices.

Assessment Search electronic notice software development will take approximately 12 weeks, excluding user acceptance testing. The enhanced Assessment Search dashboard is planned for launch in Q3 2019, whereby customers will be able to elect for 2019 Supplementary Property Assessment notices and 2019 Amended Property Assessment Notices to be paperless. With the 2020 Annual Property Assessment Notice mailings in January, paperless notices will be available to customers for the first time, for a full calendar year.