

Auditor General Finds Numerous Opportunities for Improvement in City Processes, Procedures and Transparency

November 26, 2019

Ottawa – Today, Auditor General Ken Hughes tabled his 2019 Annual Report and within it identified ways of improving effectiveness, efficiencies and communications in City programs and services.

There are seven reports in the Auditor General's 2019 Annual Report. These include:

Stage 2 Light Rail Transit (LRT) Project Procurement

- Lack of a reporting protocol in the Delegated Authority report sidelined Council for most of the procurement process
- Not publishing the Request for Proposals kept both Council and the public in the dark
- There are opportunities to improve the process by ensuring evaluators have appropriate procurement experience

Fire Services – Fire Suppression

- The collective agreement limits senior management's ability to effectively and efficiently manage the service
- The recruitment process is long, inefficient and resource intensive
- There are opportunities to improve the representation of diversity groups – particularly women

Benefits

- Failure to adhere to the City's Procurement By-Law saw a contract payout increase by 89% (\$290,571)
- The City's costs for benefits are rising significantly faster than the increase in numbers of beneficiaries
- There are opportunities to save money if contracts are adhered to and services not duplicated

City Estimates

- Operational and performance reporting by OC Transpo to the Transit Commission has been suspended since 2015 because of impending LRT service
- OC Transpo does not include fare evasion and STO transfers in current calculations or forecasts
- There is a need to include a fare survey to accurately understand trip rates by fare type
- There are opportunities to improve the short-term ridership forecast and stormwater costs estimates

“We have found, in all these audits, opportunities to improve the processes,” said Auditor General Ken Hughes, “and in doing so, sometimes save money.”

The Auditor General’s Office also audited:

- City’s Superannuation Fund: a grandfathered pension fund from the old City of Ottawa and former Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton - that ended in 1965, is well managed
- The Light Rail Transit – Land Negotiations and Purchases: all practices and procedures adhered to the appropriate acts, policies and procedure
- The Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department – Land Management System: presented In Camera

“In these seven audits, we were able to make 36 recommendations,” observed Mr. Hughes, “and the City agreed with all of them.”

To review the reports tabled today at the Audit Committee, visit the Auditor General’s website at ottawa.ca.

For more information:

Ines Santoro
613-580-9602
oag@ottawa.ca