

Edmonton Chamber of Commerce Policy Committee's Get a Makeover

In order to bolster the expertise and relevance of Edmonton Chamber of Commerce committees in an evolving business climate and to create closer alignment between priorities, policies and programs at the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, on June 28 the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce board of directors approved a committee restructuring proposal resulting in changes to the existing structure.

Prior to the changes taking effect the Chamber's standing policy set up consisted of four committees identifying issues and developing policy in the following key areas: federal provincial finance & taxation, municipal finance & infrastructure, planning & development and environment.

Since each committee plays a key role in flagging issues of importance for Edmonton's business community as well as a key role in helping to develop a chamber response to emerging issues, it became apparent that the old structure of the committees needed renewal to better align with the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce's long term vision and growing needs.

As a result, the following committee changes (in bullets below) will take full effect this fall and will become operational during the next round of meetings starting September 2011.

- The mandates and membership of the Municipal Finance & Infrastructure and Planning & Development committees will be amalgamated into a single committee named **Municipal Affairs Committee**.

The new Municipal Affairs Committee will monitor, advise and develop policy on the following business issues: growth strategies, planning and management of major strategic regional infrastructure, transportation systems, capital plans, development regulations, permitting and approval processes, regional governance and inter-government relations of the city, Capital Region Board and province.

- The 'finance' aspects from the Municipal Finance & Infrastructure committee will be transferred to the Federal Provincial Finance & Taxation Committee.
- The name of the Federal Provincial Finance & Taxation Committee will be changed to **Finance & Taxation Committee** (to reflect the addition of municipal finance issues).

By monitoring the activities of the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta and by developing policy positions for submission to the appropriate levels of government, the work of the Finance & Taxation Committee will focus on the following key themes: budgets; fiscal policies, positions and programs; tax policies and statutes and, in collaboration with other standing policy committees take the lead in monitoring and analyzing the operating and capital budgets, taxes, levies and fees of the City.

- The title and membership of the Environment Committee will be expanded to add a stronger focus on energy issues, resulting in the **Energy & Environment Committee**.

Although the actual terms of reference for this committee will not change significantly, the committee's membership will be expanded to give the committee a strengthened capacity to deal with current and emerging energy issues. The Energy & Environment Committee will continue to provide direction on energy related strategies, regulations and policies related to the development, promotion and implementation of environmental policies and programs that impact business.

In addition to the changes mentioned above, the board of directors also mandated the creation of two task forces that align with key strategic priorities. Both task forces will be operating this

fall and will run until June 2012. The final project from either task force will be a set of recommendations submitted to the board of directors in June 2012 on their respective mandate.

The **Economic Diversification Task Force** will provide direction on the chamber's role in helping to diversify Edmonton's economy.

The **Workforce Development Task Force** will provide direction on the chamber's role in helping solve workforce challenges.

Presently the recruitment committee, comprised of chamber staff, chairs and key business volunteers are undergoing an attraction and selection exercise to ensure that a fair and balanced representation of chamber members exists on each committee and task force.

If you are an employee working in a senior management position with an Edmonton Chamber of Commerce member company and would like to learn more, please contact Manager, Policy & Research, Berenika Kienc at bkienc@edmontonchamber.com.

If you do choose to put your name forward for consideration, please note that all applications will be weighed against current and emerging expertise needs of each committee and task force. Company representation will also be considered to ensure a balanced business perspective exists within each group.