



Recommendations for the City Manager Search

Issue

It is one of the first orders of business for the newly elected Mayor and Council to hire a new City Manager. Council has approved the hiring of an experienced and capable interim City Manager to give themselves time to update their bylaws regarding the hiring process for a new City Manager, and an ad hoc committee of City Council has been appointed to pursue this in a timely fashion and has already drafted the terms of reference for their path forward. The Chamber is very supportive of these actions and applauds the direction Council has taken. The specific details of the hiring process itself have yet to be established, and the Chamber, on behalf of the 15,000 business owners and employees that they represent, would like to express several recommendations for the consideration of the ad hoc committee.

Background

The Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce fully understands and supports that City Council has set the strategic direction and vision for the city and is the final authority on all major decisions, specifically around the hiring of the City Manager. The City Manager has the potential to shape the vision and direction of the city's economic and social development through their recommendations to council, and through the day to day cultivation of ideas, philosophies and work culture within the administration. The selected individual will have a profound impact on future decisions which will impact the lives of every citizen and business in our city.

Due to the immense influence that the City Manager will yield, and the vested interest that citizens and businesses have in the hiring of this individual, we appreciate the responsibility City Council has in conducting this hiring process in the most rigorous, open, and transparent manner to ensure that the best individual for the job is selected and that this individual possesses qualifications and professional philosophies that align with the interests of the people of Lethbridge. To adequately gauge the opinions and priorities of the community, we believe that an essential part of an open and transparent search would be engagement with community stakeholders to gather community opinions and priorities for the hiring committee to keep in mind when making their selection. As a significant stakeholder and tax contributor, we believe that the business community can contribute an important voice in these consultations.

Recommendations

The Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce recommends that the City Manager ad hoc Committee consider the following recommendations:

1. Engage an executive search firm in accordance with the requirements of the Purchasing Policy for the Engagement of Professional Services, to conduct an extensive nation-wide search for the most qualified candidate. The executive search firm should have extensive experience and demonstrated success in:

- a. Recruitment, project management and candidate generation for senior municipal related positions.
- b. Comprehensive existing candidate databases of senior municipal management candidates.
- c. Position competency and profiling development, as well as candidate assessment tools.
- d. Advanced interview process facilitation experience.
- e. Ability to train and support selection committee members on interviewing and selection best practices.

2. Engage, in a defined and time sensitive manner, key stakeholders amongst council, staff, and community groups, including representatives from the business community, in identifying the required competencies and stakeholder expectations of the ideal candidate, challenges in the position, opportunities for making changes, and expectations in the short and long term.
3. Have ad hoc Committee recommendations on the recruitment strategy and on the city bylaw review available to the public at least 1 week prior to a City Council vote on them.
4. Include a human resources professional with specific expertise in recruitment and selection to sit as an *advisory only* member of the Selection Committee to support members of City Council who make up the selection committee.