TOWN OF STONY PLAIN

POLICY MANUAL **Records and Information Management**	**Date Approved: October 14, 2008** **Resolution No.: 393/10/08/SP**
	Department: Finance & Admin **Division: Administration**

Purpose

The Town has identified the need to address non electronic and electronic records issues at both the corporate and department level. All records in the context of business processes are the official record of the corporation. The goal of the process is to create an integrated, robust solution for managing information (records) on a go-forward basis.

The integration of non-electronic and electronic records management systems will consist of policy, procedures, identification of roles and responsibilities, accountabilities, guidelines and business rules.

Policy Statement

Records that are in the possession of employees of the Town of Stony Plain are assets that require management to ensure they serve current operational purposes and potential legal and historical purposes.

This records and information management policy outlines:
- Definitions
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Accountabilities
- Training
- Relevant Legislation and References

Definitions

Active Record: Information that is consulted routinely in the performance of work.

Archives: The non-current records of an organization preserved or appropriate for preservation because of their continuing or enduring value. A place where important historical documentation is permanently maintained.

Classified Filing: A system in which related material is filed under a major subject heading. Also known as the encyclopedia system.

Disposition: In records retention programs, the process of destroying obsolete records.

Functional Classification System: Type of file plan that the Town of Stony Plain has adopted to be the structure for the storage of information in the records management system. Functional Classification system is based on the Organizational Chart and identifies three levels of classification when deciding where to store a document:

1) Function
2) Activity
3) Transaction

Inactive Record: Information that has completed its usefulness. The information is not used as reference material nor has been actively searched for a set period of time

Information: Processed data for use in the organization; analysis or summary of data into a meaningful form.

Life Cycle: Information is defined by its usefulness to the organization. The value of most information tends to decline as time passes. Life cycle is defined through legislation and corporate decision.

Record: Information, in the custody or under the control of the corporation regardless of medium (paper, book, microfilm, card, magnetic tape, disk, map, databases in electronic systems, etc.), that must be retained and filed in official records systems, and managed in accordance with corporate policies, standards, and best practices as they:

- are required to support business operations;
- document and provide evidence of business transactions;
- are required by legislation;
- protect the rights of citizens and the town of stony plain;
- provide evidence of compliance with accountability or other business requirements;
- will have some future business, financial, legal, research or archival value to the corporation and its citizens.

Records Inventory: A complete listing of all the records of an organization by records series, together with necessary supporting information.

Retention Period: The length of time which a record must be kept, based on rules, before it can be destroyed. Records not authorized for destruction are designated for permanent retention (minutes, bylaws, etc.) or archived.

Retention periods for temporary records may be expressed in two ways:

- A fixed period from the time records in the system is created. For example, the phrase "destroy after 7 years" provides the authority to destroy the record 7 years after its creation/cutoff date, or
- A fixed period from the time the event took place. Examples of this kind of retention are identified as: "After completion" (in the case of a study, project, audit); After the sale or transfer (as in property); "After publication" (as in monthly reports); After superseded" (as an administrative directive); "After revision" (in the case of forms); "After acceptance or rejection" (in the case of applications).

Retention Schedule: Lists an organization's records and prescribes how long they must be retained. The retention schedule defines the concept that all information has a life cycle. The records retention schedule is the organization's official policy authorized via bylaw for information retention and disposal.

Transitory Record: Transitory records have only a temporary usefulness and are required only for a limited period of time. Transitory information is used to create a document but does not become part of the final document. Transitory records should not be filed in official records systems as these records are not required to meet any statutory obligation or to sustain administrative or operational function.

Transitory records include:

- Duplicates and copies of materials which are maintained only for convenience or reference and for no other substantive purpose, and the original copies of which are in the custody of the corporation;
- Direct mail including advertising material such as brochures, company profiles, sales letters, menus, catalogues, price lists and notices or invitations received by the corporation that were not solicited by the corporation and that are not related to any official action;
- Drafts and working papers such as correspondence and reports, informal, research or rough notes, editing and formatting notes, and calculations;
- Routine requests for information, routing slips and envelopes;
- Telephone messages, calendars and diaries which do not provide important evidence related to a process or project;
- Opened envelopes;
- Notices of community affairs, employee meetings or holidays;
- E-mail and other electronic records documenting routing activities and containing correspondence with no substantive information of little or no consequence; or containing substantive information which has been incorporated into an administrative or operational filing system;
- Electronic files and records, including paper printouts and related documentation, that were created for the sole purpose of testing system performance;
- Electronic files copied from a master file or database without changing it, and used to produce hard copy publications, printouts of tabulations, ledgers, registers or reports;
- Electronic files copied from a master file or database for the purpose of information interchange;
- Publications such as books, magazines, periodicals, pamphlets, brochures, journals, newspapers, and published software documentation obtained from outside sources; and
- Anything created for the purpose of storing information but either has not been used or has been erased, such as obsolete forms, audiotapes, dictation tapes, videotapes, diskettes, magnetic tapes, disk drives, and optical disks.

Vital Records: Records containing information required to re-establish or continue an organization in the event of a disaster, records containing unique and irreplaceable information necessary to recreate an organization's legal and financial position and preserve the rights of the organization and its employees, customers, shareholders and other constituent groups. Vital records include records whose informational value to the organization is so great, and the consequence of loss are so severe, that special protection is justified in order to reduce the risk of loss.

** If you are uncertain if something is a record, consider it a record until such time as the status can be determined in consultation with the departmental Records Coordinator.

Roles and Responsibilities

Maintaining and providing access to electronic/non-electronic records over time is a shared responsibility. The Town of Stony Plain relies on a multi-disciplinary team approach to create best practices for sound records management.

1. Employees

   a) Each and every individual in the employ of the Town of Stony Plain will be responsible for the maintenance and filing of all documents which they create.

   b) Documents will be classified as a record in the electronic management system utilizing processes and securities which are assigned to each user. It is the responsibility of the employee (in conjunction with their manager) to notify the Records Management personnel for security and rights adjustment.

   c) Employees will not alter, delete or create folders within the electronic management system without first requesting the change to the Records Management (ERMS) team. Changes will be made by the Administrator of the records system.

   d) Each department within the Town of Stony Plain office will have a representative who will act as the departmental resource person. This person will also liaise between the ERMS committee and the department as a whole.

   Filing of Documents to the ERMS
   e) Rules (retention periods) will be applied to each and every document that is saved electronically or in the case of paper documents, scanned into the system and filed according to the Functional Classification System.

   f) Every attempt will be made to scan non-electronic information for storage, access, retrieval, and file maintenance to the electronic file management system. Documents which are not able to be scanned will be provided to the Records Administrator for manual file creation and documentation.

2. Records Management Personnel

   The Records Administrator, as indicated by the organizational chart, is responsible for all aspects of the Town's Records and Information Management Program. This includes:
   - the design, implementation and maintenance of records systems, regardless of media and their operations;
   - for training users on records management and records systems operations as they affect the individual;
   - setting practices in accordance with standards;
   - ensuring that the system is at all times able to produce its records as evidence during the usual and ordinary course of business.

<u>Records Maintenance</u>

The Records Administrator must:

a)   amend and update the records management and records systems operations as they affect individual practices in accordance with the procedures manual;

b)   maintain the file classification system up to date to reflect the activities and transactions of the Town;

c)   apply the approved records retention and disposition in a consistent manner.

<u>Records Disposition</u>

d)   Records may be eligible for final disposition when their scheduled retention periods have expired. Providing there are no outstanding litigation issues and no outstanding FOIP requests, destroying of the document according to the retention schedule can occur. Destroying of documents early could cause serious legal and financial risks to the Town of Stony Plain. However, keeping documents too long also has potential legal and financial risks and serves no purpose, takes up space and resources.

e)   Disposition of information will not take place without the consent of the affected department regardless of the disposition schedule. Disposition can take the form of destroying the information through recording the information as being obsolete and sending for shredding or transfer of the information from site to off-site for archives. Archived records will be accessible via request to the records personnel.

f)   Records may be permanently loaned or released to the Provincial Archives of Alberta, Multicultural Heritage Centre, Museum or other archival entity on the approval of the designated officer (Records Administrator). These records shall be recorded on a "Certificate of Gift" form, or equivalent documentation, as provided by the archival entity. This latter document will be permanently retained in the Town's records system.

<u>Review</u>

g)   Yearly review of the policies and procedures manual will be completed by the records management personnel to determine best practices and policies.

h)   Yearly review of the records system will be completed by the records management personnel to confirm compliance with current legislation and retention schedule.

Accountabilities

1.   Each Town employee and records personnel will be accountable to the Council bylaws and to policies and procedures set out by the records management team and administered by records personnel.

2.   Employees who do not adhere to the bylaws, policies and procedures will be held liable and disciplined as required.

Training

1. Each Town employee will be orientated to the non-electronic records system by the departmental records liaison.

2. Each Town employee, who has access to the Electronic Records Management System, will be trained in accordance with the policies and procedures created for the program.

3. Training will be honed to the specific needs of the employee wherever possible.

4. Staff will receive periodic updates from the records management personnel on best practices, information regarding upgrades, and tips and shortcuts as applicable.

Relevant Legislation and References

Records and information management is extensively governed by international, federal and provincial legislation, regulations and best practices. The foundation of the Town's policy is built on the industry standards and legislation, and a list of supporting documents has been included for reference. This list is subject to change by the approving authorities.

Access to Information Act, RSC 1985, c.A-1
Alberta Evidence Act, RSA 2000, c. A-18
ARMA International   http://www.arma.org/
Bill C-8: The Library and Archives of Canada Act
Canada Evidence Act, RSC 1985, c.C-5
Canada Revenue Agency Act, RSC 1999, c. 17
Document Disposal Act, RSBC 1996, c.99
Electronic Transactions Act, SA 2001
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, RSA 2000 (FOIP)
International Organization for Standardization 15489:2001 (ISO)
Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000. c.26.1
Personal Information and Privacy Act , SA 2003 (PIPA)
Personal Information Protection & Electronic Documents Act. RSC 1985 (PIPEDA)