

# CLERKS

## VALUE STATEMENT

*I expect my municipality to provide information and access for my municipal government and meet legislative requirements regarding council operations and access to information in a timely and readily accessible manner.*

# CLERKS

## What is this Service?

The Office of the Clerk is responsible for a variety of corporate, administrative and legislative functions and coordination of all requests received under provincial freedom of information legislation.

## Services May Include:

- Legislative support to Councils, Standing Committees, Sub-committee and Volunteer committees
- Processing of official correspondence to and from Councils
- Coordination of all requests received under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Registration of Births and Deaths
- Issuance of marriage licenses and various other business licenses and permits
- Coordination of municipal elections (every four years)
- Serves as a general information office with respect to a broad range of inquiries from the public
- Some municipalities may act as agents on behalf of Health Information Custodians and are subject to the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)

## Influencing Factors:

### Influencing Factors: Committee and Council

- **Citizen Participation:** Affects number of deputations and time in committees spent on deputations also notices and deputation requirements/volume.
- **Complexity:** Type of meeting, length of meeting and the scope of subject matter discussed at Council/Committee.
- **Council Authority:** Consent agenda or not; amount of delegated decision-making – whether Standing Committees or Community Councils can make final decisions and pass by-laws without going to Council i.e., Standing Committee versus Committee as a Whole.
- **Government Structure:** Regional or Single Tier municipality; size of the municipality; number of Councilors; number of standing committees and advisory Bodies - inclusion of Tribunal Council? Inclusion of Committee of Adjustment?
- **Organizational Form:** The size, administrative structure (centralized vs. decentralized) and responsibilities that lie within departments, i.e., agenda preparation, and culture of the organization.

- **Political Climate:** Whether reports are discussed in detail, whether there are many recorded votes.
- **Practices and Processes:** Turnaround time for the preparation of agenda/minutes and the degree of automation; report generation through a few Commissioners or many department heads; By-law procedures; Clerks' processes; and how long debates are allowed.

### Influencing Factors: Freedom of Information

- **Citizen Engagement:** State of interaction with citizens and the amount of citizen trust/distrust of the organization.
- **Complexity:** Types and number of requests including files, email correspondence, text messages, etc.; amount of time required, issue, number of departments impacted, number of pages to be reviewed, number of 3rd parties involved, litigation involvement, requests for politicians' records and files.
- **Contentious Issues:** Whether there are prevailing major issues in the municipality, e.g., major construction projects, road widening, bids for international events, etc.
- **Nature of Requests:** Media/special interest groups/individuals/businesses.
- **Organizational Form:** Size, administrative structure (centralized vs. decentralized) and culture of the organization; and amount of training provided to Municipal staff who handle requests.
- **Political Climate:** Related to availability of information from elected officials such as meeting calendars.
- **Practices & Policies:** Responsiveness of the organization to requests; number of routine disclosure policies.
- **Privacy Protection:** Growing trend to spend time assessing privacy concerns, e.g., software agreements, privacy breaches, increased focus on privacy being brought forward to PIC (Privacy and Information Commissioner).

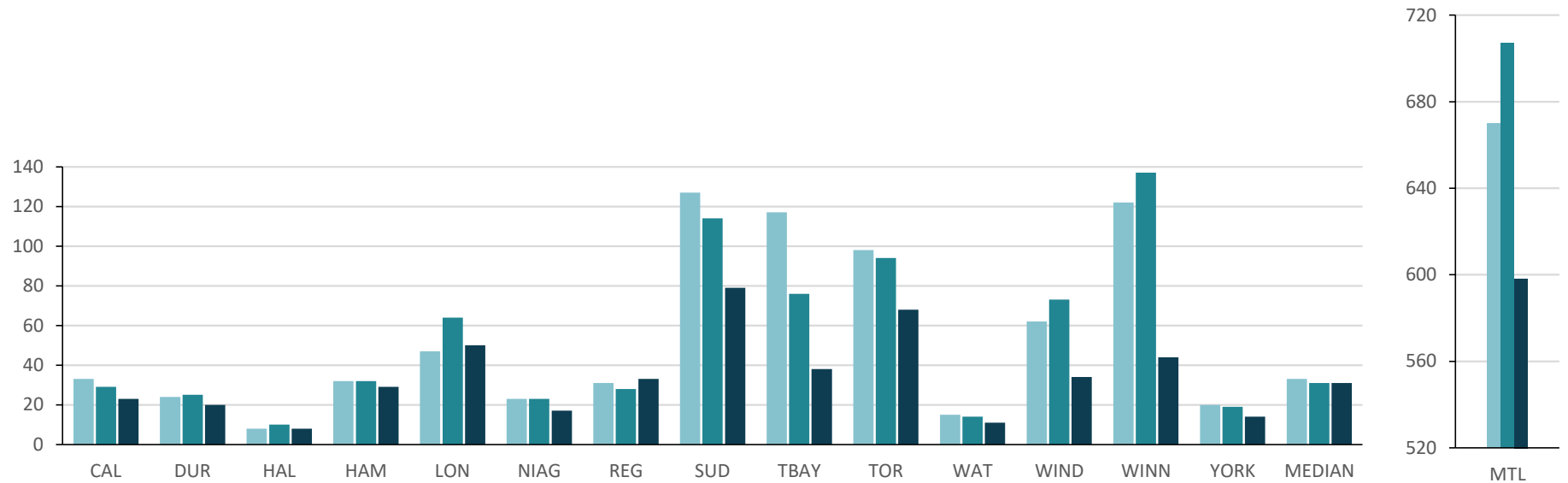
### Extenuating Circumstances:

- **COVID-19 Pandemic:** Across many municipalities, there were fewer FOI requests in 2020, which may be attributed to COVID 19. As a result, there was some impact to response times as well as program costs per formal request. Municipalities were able to transition to or utilize on-line/digital systems and processes to facilitate the resumption of service delivery and to respond to FOI requests.

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**Figure 5.1 Number of Formal Freedom of Information Requests per 100,000 Population**

This measure identifies the number of legislated freedom of information (FOI) requests, including Councillor requests that have gone through the FOI process in the reporting year.



2018	33	24	8	32	47	23	31	127	117	98	15	62	122	20	33	670
2019	29	25	10	32	64	23	28	114	76	94	14	73	137	19	31	707
2020	23	20	8	29	50	17	33	79	38	68	11	34	44	14	31	598

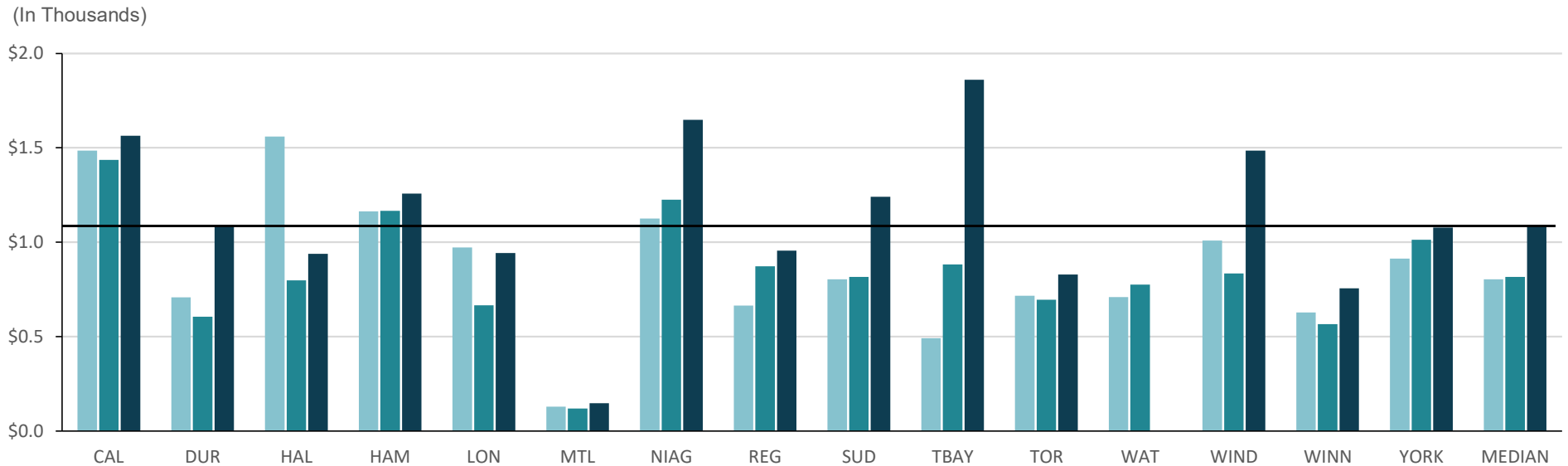
Source: CLKS270 (Service Level)

Montréal: Due to a decentralized model, when the City of Montréal receives a proper request, it may be forwarded to one or all of their 19 Boroughs, which significantly increases the number of requests, e.g. A request submitted to the City and sent to 7 of 19 Boroughs would count as 8 requests.

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**Figure 5.2 Direct Cost for Freedom of Information Program per Formal Request**

This measure reports the cost to respond to freedom of information (FOI) program requests. The variety and complexity of these requests will impact the cost associated with administering the program.



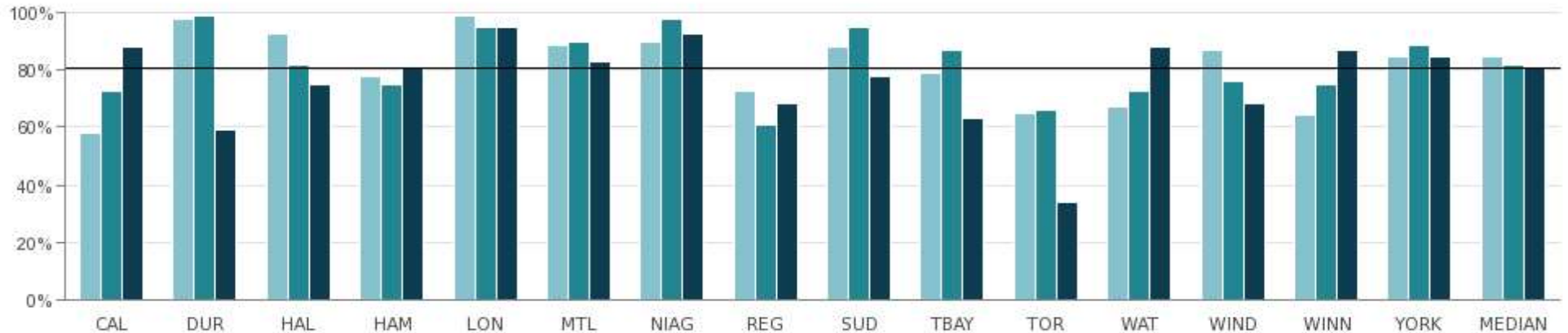
2018	\$1,485	\$708	\$1,560	\$1,164	\$972	\$129	\$1,125	\$665	\$804	\$492	\$717	\$709	\$1,009	\$628	\$914	\$804
2019	\$1,436	\$606	\$798	\$1,166	\$666	\$120	\$1,225	\$873	\$816	\$883	\$696	\$776	\$834	\$566	\$1,013	\$816
2020	\$1,564	\$1,086	\$938	\$1,257	\$943	\$147	\$1,648	\$956	\$1,241	\$1,860	\$829	N/A	\$1,485	\$756	\$1,078	\$1,082

Source: CLKS370 (Efficiency)

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**Figure 5.3 Percent of Formal Freedom of Information Requests Completed Within 30 Days**

The measure identifies the number of formal freedom of information (FOI) requests, including Councillor requests that have gone through the FOI process, that were completed within 30 days. The variety and complexity of these requests will impact the timelines associated with administering the program.



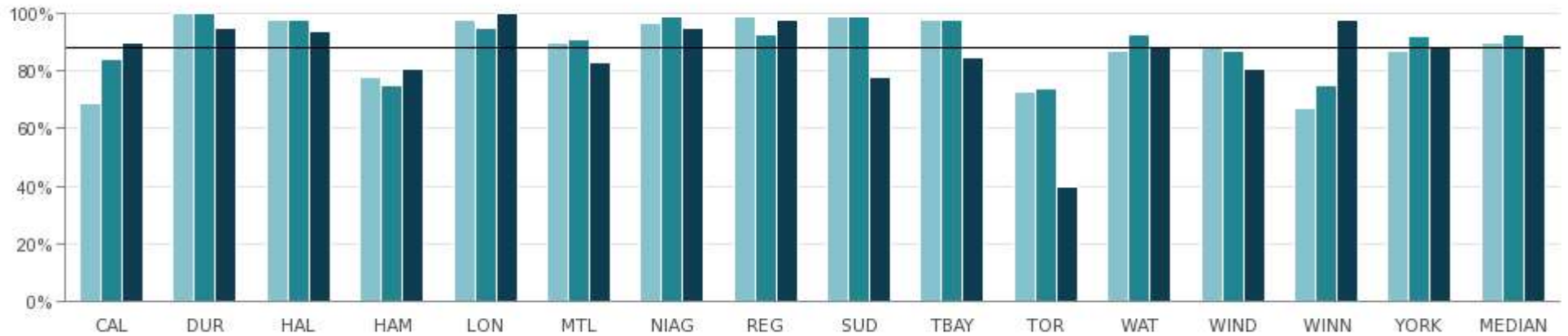
2018	58%	98%	93%	78%	99%	89%	90%	73%	88%	79%	65%	67%	87%	64%	85%	85%
2019	73%	99%	82%	75%	95%	90%	98%	61%	95%	87%	66%	73%	76%	75%	89%	82%
2020	88%	59%	75%	81%	95%	83%	93%	68%	78%	63%	34%	88%	68%	87%	85%	81%

Source: CLKS470 (Customer Service)

## Clerks

**Figure 5.4 Percent of Formal Freedom of Information Requests, Extensions and 3rd Party Notices Completed Within Legislated Timelines**

The number of formal freedom of information (FOI) requests, including Councillor requests that have gone through the FOI process, and handled within the legislated timelines applicable to the municipality. The variety and complexity of these requests will impact the timelines associated with administering this program.



2018	69%	100%	98%	78%	98%	90%	97%	99%	99%	98%	73%	87%	89%	67%	87%	90%
2019	84%	100%	98%	75%	95%	91%	99%	93%	99%	98%	74%	93%	87%	75%	92%	93%
2020	90%	95%	94%	81%	100%	83%	95%	98%	78%	85%	40%	88%	81%	98%	88%	88%

Source: CLKS475 (Customer Service)