

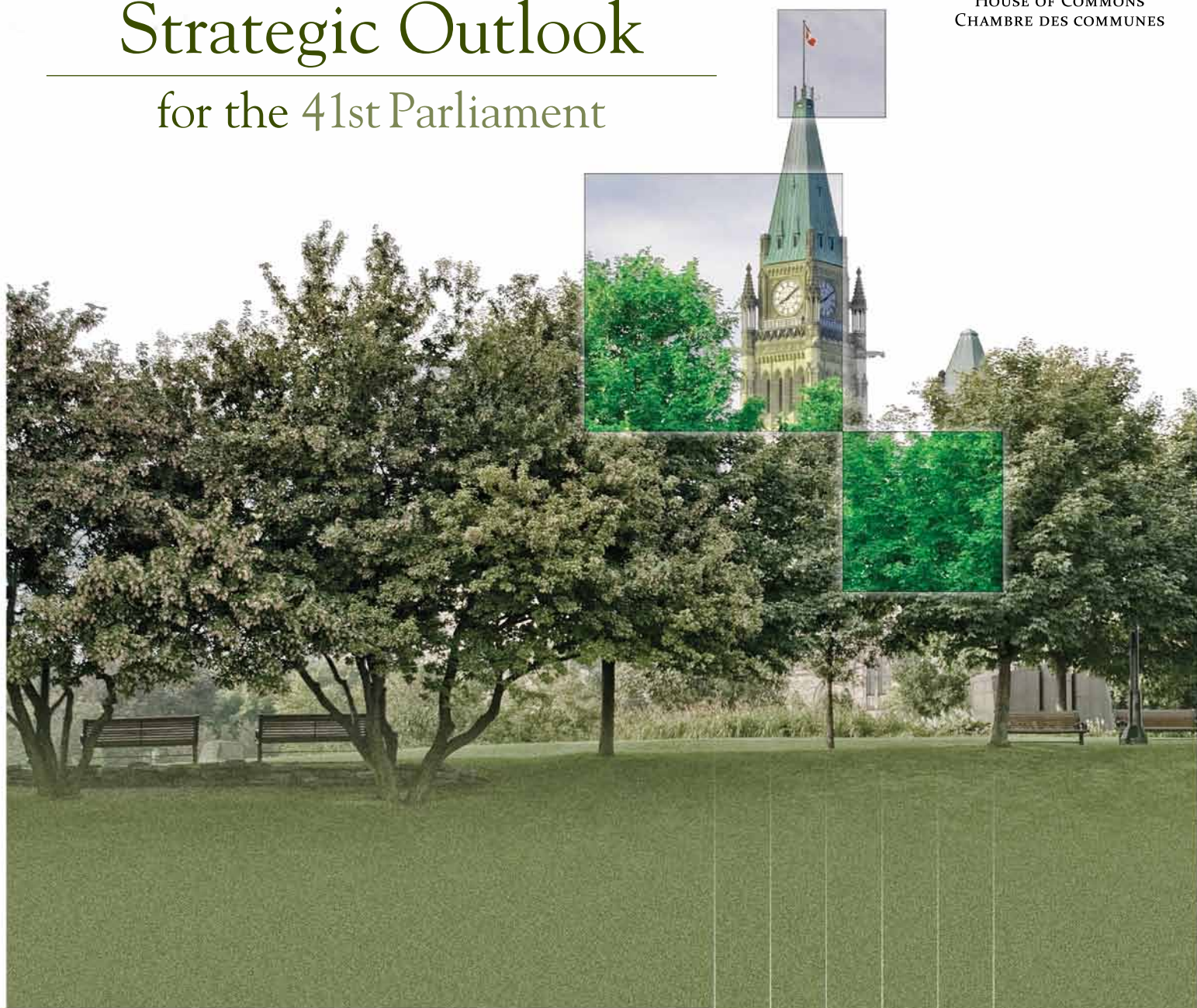


HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES

# Strategic Outlook

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## for the 41st Parliament



House of Commons Administration

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Approved by the Board of Internal Economy



# Message from the Speaker

Every Parliament has its own spirit and character. New faces enter the Chamber for the first time; familiar ones take on different roles or move on to other opportunities. Yet these changes take place within a larger context: the House of Commons' evolution over time.



The House of Commons Administration is responsible for supporting that evolution and for making sure that parliamentary resources and infrastructure are suited to the realities of the day and are ready to adapt to the requirements of tomorrow.

As this evolution occurs, the House Administration is also responsible for supporting the enduring role of the institution itself: providing a sense of continuity from one Parliament to the next and reinforcing the tremendous significance of the House of Commons to Canadian society and democracy. We must always strike a balance between past, present and future.

The next Parliament will see an additional 30 Members of the House of Commons elected. As we carry out our work, we must ensure that Members of the House are equipped to serve Canadians efficiently, responsively and in the ways a modern 21st century nation expects, so they can represent their diverse constituencies and help shape the country's vision and identity.

The plans outlined in this report will show that during the long-term rehabilitation of the Parliament buildings, Members will still have access to the space and resources they need to carry out their work. And by placing a priority on technological advancement and information technology security, Members and their constituents will be able to easily access information on parliamentary proceedings whenever and wherever they need it.

As Speaker of the House of Commons and Chair of the Board of Internal Economy—that oversees the House Administration and governs the House of Commons—I am pleased to present this *Strategic Outlook for the 41st Parliament*, and I look forward to seeing its plans come to fruition for the good of Members, the institution and all Canadians.

**Andrew Scheer, M.P.**

Speaker of the House of Commons

# The Elements of Parliament

## Aspects of the institution and Members' roles within it

### IN THE CHAMBER

Aside from the Peace Tower, the Chamber is likely the most recognizable part of Canada's Parliament. It is where elected Members come together to debate issues of national importance, introduce and discuss potential new laws, and receive official documents tabled by government departments and agencies.

### IN COMMITTEES

In committees, Members investigate the issues that matter to Canadians by studying proposed legislation, examining departmental spending, conducting inquiries, and receiving input from citizens, policy experts and interest groups.

Several kinds of committees exist to advance parliamentary business: standing committees; special committees focused on particular issues; legislative committees that review bills; joint committees that include both Senators and Members; and subcommittees, which are offshoots of the other types of committees.

### IN CAUCUSES

Most Members belong to a political party; together with their colleagues in the Senate—when they have representation there—, they make up their party's parliamentary caucus. Each caucus meets weekly to discuss policies, plan strategies and develop positions on issues being debated in the House of Commons. Held in private, caucus meetings allow Members to express their views and opinions freely and debate policy without compromising party unity.

### IN CONSTITUENCIES

For the 41st Parliament, Canada is divided into 308 constituencies—also called ridings or electoral districts—each of which is assigned a seat in the House of Commons. The Members who represent these constituencies have a responsibility to be available to the people who live there to discuss issues of concern and to help with access to federal programs and services.

Members keep offices and employ staff in their constituencies, allowing the public to connect with them in person. They usually spend one week a month in their ridings (and longer during the summer and from late December to early January).

### INTERNATIONALLY

Whether welcoming visitors to the House of Commons or participating in delegations to foreign legislatures and international conferences, Members play an active role in representing our country to the rest of the world.

The Speaker of the House and his fellow Members are often invited to discuss issues and strengthen relationships with colleagues in other parliaments as well as with the diplomatic community in Canada.

# Message from the Clerk

When Canadians think of the House of Commons, some very specific images likely come to mind: the Peace Tower, the Chamber, or elected Members engaged in debate over issues of national importance. Our role at the House of Commons Administration is to sustain and support these activities, helping to uphold parliamentary tradition, maintain and secure the Parliamentary Precinct, and ensure Members have at their disposal all the tools and resources they need to carry out their work.



At the start of each new Parliament, our Administration is tasked with establishing a *Strategic Outlook*—an articulation of our plans and priorities in pursuit of our overarching strategic goals. Each new *Strategic Outlook* builds on progress made during previous Parliaments, as many of our guiding principles remain relevant and appropriate.

This *Strategic Outlook for the 41st Parliament* outlines our aims in four areas: responding to the evolving role of Members and the institution; enhancing ongoing services to Members and sustaining the institution; promoting understanding and supporting the advancement of Canada's legislative institutions; and applying the highest standards of public sector governance in a parliamentary context. Associated with each of these goals are sets of major initiatives—our plans for achieving the objectives we seek.

Specific major initiatives for this Parliament will include advancing our long-term plan to rehabilitate heritage buildings and provide additional parliamentary accommodations, improving our technology infrastructure while sustaining a secure and responsive environment, increasing the learning opportunities available to parliamentarians

and legislative officials from Canada and abroad, strengthening our Administration's recruitment, retention and succession strategy, and enhancing access to information for both the public and elected representatives. We will also be preparing for the next Parliament, when an additional 30 Members of the House of Commons are expected. All of this will be done while we meet our commitment to manage spending through operational efficiencies and by transforming our approach to service delivery.

The House Administration and I look forward to serving Canada's 41st Parliament with efficiency, creativity and vast expertise in parliamentary tradition—privileged as always to have a part in this central institution of Canadian democracy.

## **Audrey O'Brien**

Clerk of the House of Commons

# The House of Commons Administration

## Governing the House Administration

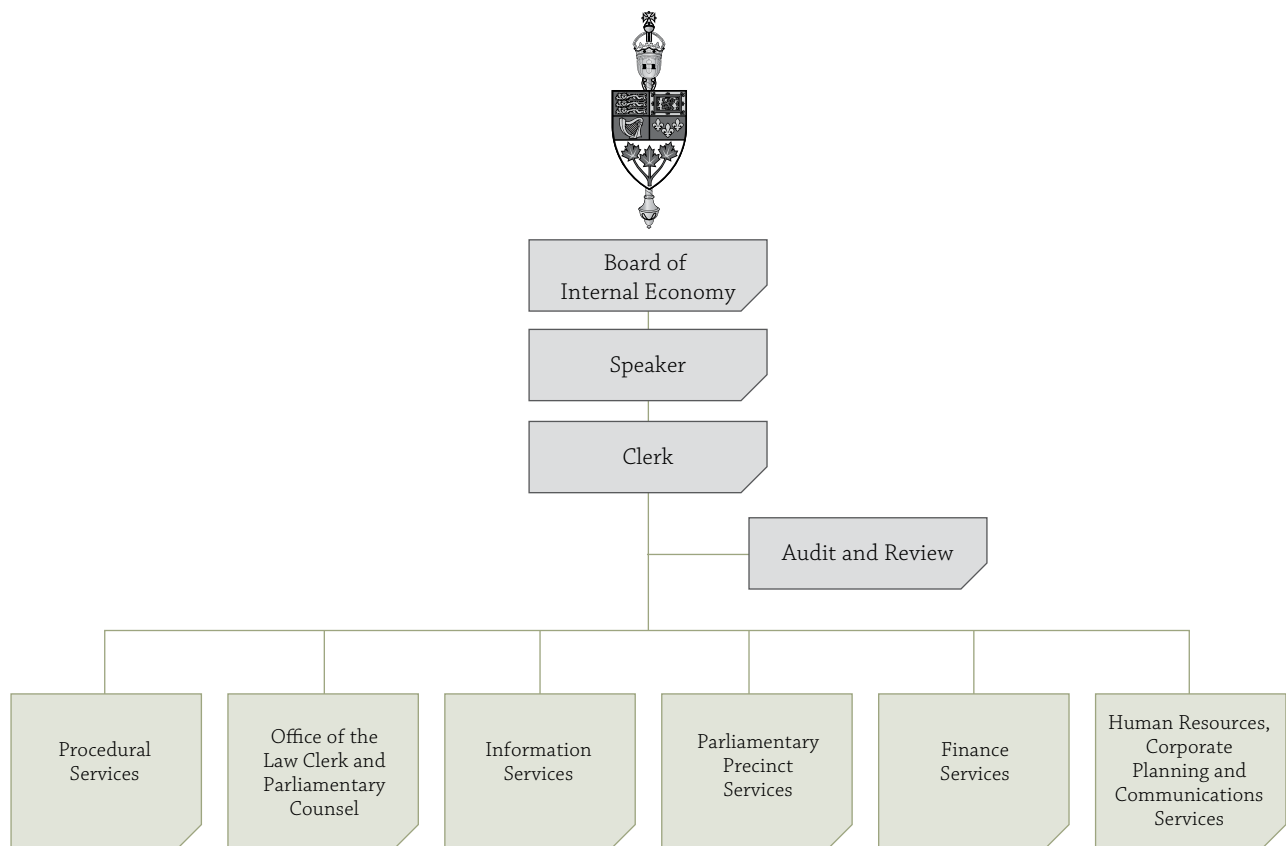
Under the *Parliament of Canada Act*, the Board of Internal Economy governs the House Administration. It is responsible for all matters of financial and administrative policy that affect the House and its Members, premises, services and employees. It has the legal authority to make by-laws—which are tabled in the House—to regulate the use of resources available to the House of Commons.

The Speaker of the House chairs the Board, which is made up of Members from all recognized political parties. The Clerk of the House of Commons serves as Secretary to the Board and, as the senior official of the House Administration, reports to the Speaker. The Board meets on a regular basis; minutes of those meetings are tabled in the House.

To learn more about the Board of Internal Economy and the documents made available to the public, please visit the Parliament of Canada Web site at [www.parl.gc.ca](http://www.parl.gc.ca).

The Board membership as of April 23, 2012 was as follows: Hon. Andrew Scheer (*Speaker of the House of Commons and Chair of the Board*), Mr. Nathan Cullen,

Ms. Judy Foote, Hon. Rob Merrifield, Hon. Gordon O'Connor, Ms. Nycole Turmel, Hon. Peter Van Loan, and Ms. Audrey O'Brien (*Secretary to the Board*).



# Our Guiding Principles

## **Mandate**

The House Administration proudly supports Members of the House of Commons, providing them with the services, infrastructure and advice they need to carry out their work as legislators and representatives in the Chamber, in committees, in caucus and in their offices both on Parliament Hill and in their constituencies.

## **Vision**

To exercise leadership in supporting the House of Commons and its Members, and in the advancement of parliamentary institutions.

## **Values**

The employees of the House Administration are proud to serve the Parliament of Canada by providing excellent service and impartial, expert advice to elected Members, always demonstrating:

### **Respect for the democratic process**

We believe in the importance of parliamentary institutions and the democratic process, and work to foster and strengthen respect for them.

### **Commitment to balancing continuity and change**

We preserve the collective memory of the House of Commons and its traditions while facilitating its evolution to keep pace with Canadian society, and ensure institutional continuity while supporting Members as their needs evolve.

### **Professional excellence**

We work together to provide effective, accountable and non-partisan support by acting ethically, responsibly and with integrity.

# Strategic Objectives and Major Initiatives

To focus its efforts and guide its activities, the House Administration has established **four strategic objectives** to be achieved during the 41st Parliament, each through a set of **major initiatives** that reflect the House Administration’s mandate, vision and values.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	MAJOR INITIATIVES
To respond to the changing needs of Members and the institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the availability of up-to-date information on parliamentary procedures and rules.</li> <li>• Enhance Members' and Canadians' access to parliamentary information.</li> </ul>
To enhance ongoing services to Members and sustain the institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advance the Long Term Vision and Plan to rehabilitate heritage buildings and grounds, and provide additional parliamentary accommodations.</li> <li>• Maintain the flexibility of our technology infrastructure.</li> <li>• Strengthen the guardianship of the institution.</li> </ul>
To promote understanding and support the advancement of legislative institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance learning opportunities for parliamentarians and legislative officials from jurisdictions in Canada and abroad.</li> <li>• Increase public awareness and sustain the independence and traditions of the House of Commons.</li> </ul>
To apply the highest standards of public sector governance in a parliamentary context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen stewardship to ensure optimal use of public resources.</li> <li>• Improve talent recruitment, engagement, succession and retention.</li> <li>• Strengthen environmental management practices.</li> <li>• Advance an integrated approach to information management.</li> </ul>



# Strategic Objective 1

## To respond to the changing needs of Members and the institution

The needs of Members—and of the House of Commons itself—are constantly evolving. To keep pace, the House of Commons Administration must constantly examine and refine its tools, programs and processes to make them as innovative and reliable as possible while still maintaining parliamentary history and traditions.

### An evolving tradition

#### **Improve the availability of up-to-date information on parliamentary procedures and rules**

The practices and procedures of the House of Commons have helped define Canada's democratic process; it is important that they serve to sustain that democracy for generations to come. The House Administration has an ongoing commitment to support the evolution of parliamentary practices. As historical rules and procedures are adapted to better meet the needs of Members in today's parliamentary context, the House Administration will initiate planning of a third edition of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*. Originally published in 2000, with a second edition released in 2009, this book is the authoritative source on parliamentary forms, customs and procedures, and is frequently referred to by Members and their staff.

One of the roles of the Speaker of the House of Commons is to interpret and explain parliamentary practices.

At the dissolution of the 40th Parliament, the Honourable Peter Milliken ended his tenure as the 34th Speaker—the longest-serving Speaker in the history of the House. The House Administration will compile and publish a selection of his decisions—the eighth in a series of volumes that brings together significant rulings by Speakers.

### Opening up and reaching out

#### **Enhance Members' and Canadians' access to parliamentary information**

In collaboration with the Senate and the Library of Parliament, the House Administration will continue to identify opportunities to enhance the collection, management and accessibility of information. The tripartite Parliamentary Information Management Committee has committed to providing a more coordinated approach to information services in the coming years, including information about Members of Parliament.

The 40th Parliament's renewal of the Speaker's Permission—which outlines how Chamber and committee proceedings can be reproduced—allowed the House of Commons Administration to adopt new standards for publishing legislative information in open, accessible and easily searchable formats available to all Canadians. Information related to parliamentary proceedings, bills and the voting records of elected Members has gradually been made available in open data format on the Parliament of Canada Web site ([www.parl.gc.ca](http://www.parl.gc.ca)); this information may be freely reused by governments, citizens, not-for-profit organizations and the private sector.

During the 41st Parliament, the House Administration will continue to expand Canadians' access to information related to the business of Parliament and will facilitate its reuse through Web and social media technologies. For example, several new services will be enabled on ParlVU, the self-serve media portal that allows viewers to watch and listen to Chamber and committee proceedings live and on demand.

## Strategic Objective 2

### To enhance ongoing services to Members and sustain the institution

The House Administration must continually improve the services it delivers to Members and their staff—in the Chamber, committees, caucuses and their constituencies—while developing a strong foundation to support the future needs of the House of Commons. It must also assist with the modernization of the buildings within the Parliamentary Precinct to ensure they continue to serve Canada’s democratic tradition well into the 21st century.

#### **Preserving the past, building for tomorrow**

##### **Advance the Long Term Vision and Plan to rehabilitate heritage buildings and grounds, and provide additional parliamentary accommodations**

Parliament Hill is home to some of the most impressive and iconic buildings in Canada. But the Parliament buildings are more than just a majestic backdrop for visitors to the nation’s capital—the work that goes on inside them ultimately has an impact on all Canadians. As such, the purpose of the Long Term Vision and Plan (LTVP) is twofold: to restore and preserve these important symbolic spaces while upgrading them to support the needs of a modern Parliament as it carries out Canada’s democratic traditions.

The House Administration will continue to provide strategic direction and input at all stages of the the LTVP implementation, working closely with partners from Public Works and Government Services Canada to manage all maintenance, repair and construction projects, and to ensure these projects respect and reflect the heritage of Canada’s parliamentary institution. This includes readying parliamentary accommodations for the additional 30 Members of the House in the next Parliament.

As the LTVP progresses, one of the House Administration’s top priorities will be to see that the rehabilitation projects already underway remain on track. As these projects advance, the House Administration will play a lead role in overseeing the planning, design and implementation of technology services and network and other telecommunication infrastructures, including the modernization of the integrated security system and the radio communication system. As well, work will begin on master plans for other projects throughout the Parliamentary Precinct.

The LTVP pertains to more than just architecture. The Parliament buildings are also home to a number of artifacts and works of art that chronicle the history of the House of Commons and help shape an understanding of the role the institution plays as the focal point in Canadian democracy. The House Administration will develop a set of common guidelines and standards to manage this collection and ensure it will be available for the appreciation of generations to come.

#### **Keeping the House connected**

##### **Maintain the flexibility of our technology infrastructure**

The modernization of the Parliament buildings parallels the ongoing modernization of Parliament itself. In our technology-driven world, the House Administration recognizes its responsibility to maintain and renew an information technology infrastructure and services that are essential to Members and their work. Technology-related initiatives in the coming years will include the ongoing lifecycle management and modernization of information technology systems and applications architecture in accordance with established enterprise-wide IM/IT standards and strategies.

## Our House, safe and sound

### Strengthen the guardianship of the institution

Through its membership in the Master Security Planning Office—a partnership between the Senate, the House of Commons and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police—the House Administration will continue to strengthen its approach to security by centralizing the planning, development and delivery of security services.

One of the core elements of the Master Security Plan is intelligence-led security—a concept that involves using the collection and analysis of information to guide both strategic and operational decisions. During the 41st Parliament, the House Administration will place particular emphasis on further improving its intelligence-led approaches to be able to better assess risks and establish an appropriate security posture to match them.

An additional focus will also be placed on prevention: developing and implementing security initiatives and mitigation measures to ensure the continued safety, accessibility, and continuity of the operations of Parliament. Moving forward, the prevention-planning process will encompass a number of initiatives intended to strike the right balance between respecting Members' access to their places of work and the security deployments necessary to create a safe environment for all. These will include the development of business continuity plans for Members' offices and committee rooms, and the finalization of an in-city alternate site plan for the Chamber. The Incident Command System will also be expanded to improve the response to major crisis at the House of Commons.



# Strategic Objective 3

## To promote understanding and support the advancement of legislative institutions

To ensure a broader understanding and appreciation of the role the parliamentary system plays in Canadian society, and to increase participation in our country's democratic institutions, the House Administration must coordinate communications initiatives that inform and inspire Canadian citizens as well as parliamentary counterparts around the world.

### **Enriching Canada's parliamentary tradition...**

#### **Enhance learning opportunities for parliamentarians and legislative officials from jurisdictions in Canada and abroad**

Regularly approached by international parliamentarians interested in learning more about Canada's parliamentary system, the House of Commons will continue to welcome delegations from other parliaments and host meetings and conferences for parliamentary associations to which Canada belongs. The House Administration will play a key role in organizing the 127th General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in October 2012 in Quebec City. The IPU is the focal point for worldwide parliamentary dialogue; with a total of 1,500 delegates expected, representing almost every national parliament in the world, it will be the largest parliamentary conference ever held in Canada.

Conferences are not the only way the House of Commons shares its knowledge and practices with other legislatures. The Parliamentary Officers' Study Program—a collaboration between the Senate, the House of Commons and the Library of Parliament—gives senior staff from other countries the opportunity to learn about Canada's procedural and administrative practices. Due to the waiting list of eager participants, the House Administration will permanently expand the program, which grew from two to three sessions per year in 2010–2011.

### **...and sharing that tradition with Canadians**

#### **Increase public awareness and sustain the independence and traditions of the House of Commons**

Working with both internal and external partners, the House Administration will continue its development of a

comprehensive strategy to facilitate a more coordinated approach to outreach and communications. Part of this process will involve clarifying the governance of communication functions so that roles are clearly defined and decision-making processes are streamlined and improved.

A number of marketing initiatives will be implemented to promote the 2012 IPU conference and, at the same time, raise the profile of the House among Canadians. Public relations, social media and other marketing mechanisms will be used as well to support annual recruitment for the House of Commons Page Program and, again, increase awareness of the significance of the institution among Canadian students.

# Strategic Objective 4

## To apply the highest standards of public sector governance in a parliamentary context

With a focus on accountability and transparency, the House Administration must maintain a range of management processes and best practices that promote the responsible stewardship of public resources and of the institution itself. These ongoing efforts will be complemented by the recommendations and observations made in the Auditor General's performance audit of the House Administration. During this Parliament, the House Administration is committed to its strategic review of expenditures by identifying operational efficiencies to implement, and transforming its approach to service delivery.

### Efficiency on all fronts

#### Strengthen stewardship to ensure optimal use of public resources

To ensure the House's fiduciary responsibilities are being met, an integrated approach will be taken to develop, maintain and improve the policies, guidelines and internal controls related to finance, materiel management

and procurement. Underpinning this framework will be enhanced systems that improve the House's reporting functions to ensure effective strategic and resource planning, compliance and transparency. For example, a more centralized approach to procurement will be implemented to standardize and improve the quality of information while offering users across the House

Administration easy, one-stop access to monitor and plan contracting activities.

Also in support of this objective will be the launch of the new Financial Portal — a single automated system to replace the numerous manual processes currently used to find, complete and submit financial forms. This electronic system will simplify the process for both Members and the House Administration



and reduce the time needed to process payments. Building on work already completed, the House Administration will continue to modernize its financial management approach to enable the progression from a primarily manual, transactional service delivery model to a more tool-based, client-focused strategic service model.

The House Administration will continue to streamline its systems by integrating business plans and other planning processes, ensuring strategic alignment between those plans and processes, and achieving greater integration with existing financial plans.

## Developing our talent

### **Improve talent recruitment, engagement, succession and retention**

Like many organizations in Canada, the House Administration will face recruitment challenges in the coming years. A new human resources planning framework will be developed to address these challenges — one that is better aligned with the House’s corporate planning cycle and the business plans of the six service areas. To engage and retain top talent in a competitive labour market, a Leadership Development Program for mid-level managers will be launched to complement the existing Clerk’s Leadership Program for senior managers.

## Going green

### **Strengthen environmental management practices**

The House Administration will continue to conduct its business with an eye on the environment, demonstrating its commitment to sound stewardship in part by implementing the Green Cleaning Program, which will ensure that all cleaning products used at the House are “green-certified”, meaning they have been third-party tested to validate any claims of reduced impact on human health or on the environment. The expansion of the organic composting program will also be explored, including the possibility of providing compostable take-out containers and utensils.

As the rehabilitation projects related to the LTVP work to restore and sustain the historic buildings that comprise the Parliamentary Precinct, a number of best practices will be adopted to also ensure an increased level of environmental sustainability. These will include the use of durable and sustainable materials for upgrades to the Parliamentary Precinct landscape, using indigenous vegetation for the stabilization and reforestation of the Parliamentary Precinct escarpment, and incorporating environmental sustainability standards into the West Sector Area Master Plan.

## Bringing all the pieces together

### **Advance an integrated approach to information management**

The House Administration will continue to lay the foundation for enhanced information management and sharing practices, including the development of an information management program toolkit that will improve the communication of standards and best practices for the management of House information and records.

The House Administration will also work to standardize, consolidate and document procedural research methodologies to strengthen its research efforts and tools.

# Delivering on Our Commitments



Service delivery is a core component of many of the initiatives laid out in this *Strategic Outlook*—ensuring that the House of Commons Administration has the tools and means to support parliamentary process, raise awareness of the House among Canadians and throughout the world, leverage technology and environmental best practices, and maintain good governance and sound stewardship of public resources.

All of this is done with two primary goals in mind: sustaining the history and heritage of the institution of Parliament; and finding new and innovative ways to support elected Members of the House of Commons—in the Chamber, committees, caucuses and constituencies—so they can continue to serve the people of this country responsibly and effectively in the years to come.

# Staying Informed

All Canadians are invited to learn more about—and become involved in—the activities of the House of Commons. They can do so by viewing sittings in the Chamber and many committee meetings live on the Internet at [www.parlvu.parl.gc.ca](http://www.parlvu.parl.gc.ca), or by visiting in person and taking a seat in the Visitors' Gallery or one of the public galleries in the House. Sitting days are posted on [www.parl.gc.ca](http://www.parl.gc.ca) and Visitors' Gallery passes are available through the offices of elected Members. Every committee has its own Web page at [www.parl.gc.ca](http://www.parl.gc.ca), a site that also includes information on each individual Member of Parliament.

