Under the provisions of the Municipal Act, Council's powers are to be exercised by the passage of by-laws. By-Laws allow municipalities to pass and enforce law within their own jurisdiction and within the framework of established provincial and federal legislation. Under the Municipal Act it is the Clerk's duty to keep the by-laws in his office or in the place appointed for that purpose.

By-Laws cover a wide range of issues and concerns, including approval of agreements, appointing of municipal officials, construction of sewer and water systems, parking restrictions on city streets, opening and closing of streets, borrowing of money, collection of taxes and expropriation of lands.

This series consists of bound volumes and post binders. The first volume, titled, Schedule of By-Laws is a post binder containing a numerical listing of the Port Arthur By-Laws from By-Law 1 to By-Law 5952. As well as the by-law number, the date, title, disposition (whether a by-law has been repealed or amended) and any remarks pertinent to the by-law is also included.

The next thirteen volumes, which are a mixture of bound volumes and post binders contain handwritten and typed copies of the original by-laws. The last By-Law contained in these volumes is By-Law Number 5067 from the year 1964.

The last volume in this series is a post binder containing an alphabetical index of the by-laws. The information collected includes the date of the by-law, the by-law number, any amendments or repeals and a description of the by-law. This index appears to only have been kept up to the year 1954.

Handwritten, Typescript

Microfilm copies of the By-Laws are available. An alphabetical subject index available on microfilm provides access to the By-Laws. The use of the microfilm copies is recommended.

Further accruals are not anticipated.

Additional copies of the By-Laws may be found in Series 20 (Original Duplicate By-Laws) and Series 19 (By-Laws).