

FirstService Corp  
Form 40-F  
February 20, 2019

**UNITED STATES Securities and Exchange Commission**

**Washington, D.C. 20549**

**Form 40-F**

Registration Statement Pursuant to Section 12 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

or

Annual Report Pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

For the fiscal year ended **December 31, 2018**

Commission file number **001-36897**

**FirstService Corporation**

*(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)*

N/A

*(Translation of Registrant's name into English (if applicable))*

Ontario, Canada

*(Province or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)*

**6500**

*(Primary Standard Industrial Classification Code Number (if applicable))*

N/A

*(I.R.S. Employer Identification Number (if applicable))*

**1140 Bay Street, Suite 4000**

**Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 2B4**

**416-960-9500**

*(Address and telephone number of Registrant's principal executive offices)*

**Mr. Santino Ferrante, Ferrante & Associates**

**126 Prospect Street, Cambridge, MA 02139**

**617-868-5000**

*(Name, address (including zip code) and telephone number (including area code) of agent for service in the United States)*

Securities registered or to be registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

| Title of each class | Name of each exchange on which registered |
|---------------------|---|
|---------------------|---|

|                                  |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Subordinate Voting Shares</b> | <b>NASDAQ Stock Market</b> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|

|  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
|  | <b>Toronto Stock Exchange</b> |
|--|-------------------------------|

Securities registered or to be registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: **None**

Securities for which there is a reporting obligation pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Act: **None**

For annual reports, indicate by check mark the information filed with this Form:

Annual information form  Audited annual financial statements

Indicate the number of outstanding shares of each of the issuer's classes of capital or common stock as of the close of the period covered by the annual report:

**34,654,353 Subordinate Voting Shares and 1,325,694 Multiple Voting Shares**

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the Registrant was required to file such reports) and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.

Yes  No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically every Interactive Data File required to be submitted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the Registrant was required to submit such files).

Yes  No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is an emerging growth company as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Emerging growth company

If an emerging growth company that prepares its financial statements in accordance with U.S. GAAP, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act.

## PRINCIPAL DOCUMENTS

The following documents have been filed as part of this Annual Report on Form 40-F:

### **A. Annual Information Form**

For the Registrant's Annual Information Form for the year ended December 31, 2018, see Exhibit 1 of this Annual Report on Form 40-F.

### **B. Audited Annual Financial Statements**

For the Registrant's audited consolidated financial statements as at December 31, 2018 and 2017 and for the years ended December 31, 2018 and 2017, see Exhibit 2 of this Annual Report on Form 40-F.

### **C. Management's Discussion and Analysis**

For the Registrant's management's discussion and analysis for the year ended December 31, 2018, see Exhibit 3 of this Annual Report on Form 40-F.

## DISCLOSURE CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES

The Registrant's Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer have evaluated the effectiveness of the Registrant's disclosure controls and procedures (as defined in Rules 13a-15(e) and 15d-15(e) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act")) as of the end of the period covered by this annual report (the "Evaluation Date"). Based on that evaluation, the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer have concluded that, as of the Evaluation Date, the Registrant's disclosure controls and procedures were effective to ensure that information required to be disclosed by the Registrant in reports that it files or submits under the Exchange Act is (i)

recorded, processed, summarized and reported within the time periods specified in the rules and forms of the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”) and (ii) accumulated and communicated to the Registrant’s management, including its Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer, as appropriate, to allow timely decisions regarding required disclosure.

## **MANAGEMENT’S ANNUAL REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING**

Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining adequate internal control over financial reporting for the Registrant. Internal control over financial reporting is a process designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting and the preparation of financial statements for external purposes in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Due to its inherent limitations, internal control over financial reporting may not prevent or detect misstatements. Also, projections of any evaluation of its effectiveness to future periods are subject to the risk that controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions, or that the degree of compliance with the policies or procedures may deteriorate.

Management has excluded twelve individually insignificant entities acquired by the Registrant during the last fiscal period from its assessment of internal control over financial reporting as at December 31, 2018. The total assets and total revenues of the twelve majority-owned entities represent 3.2% and 5.3%, respectively, of the related consolidated financial statement amounts as at and for the year ended December 31, 2018.

Management has assessed the effectiveness of the Registrant’s internal control over financial reporting as at December 31, 2018, based on the criteria set forth in *Internal Control – Integrated Framework (2013)* issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission. Based on this assessment, management has concluded that, as at December 31, 2018, the Registrant’s internal control over financial reporting was effective.

The effectiveness of the Registrant’s internal control over financial reporting as at December 31, 2018 has been audited by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, the Registrant’s independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their report filed in Exhibit 2 of this Annual Report on Form 40-F.

## **CHANGES IN INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING**

During the year ended December 31, 2018, there were no changes in the Registrant's internal control over financial reporting that have materially affected, or are reasonably likely to materially affect, the Registrant's internal control over financial reporting.

## **NOTICES PURSUANT TO REGULATION BTR**

There were no notices required by Rule 104 of Regulation BTR that the Registrant sent during the year ended December 31, 2018 concerning any equity security subject to a blackout period under Rule 101 of Regulation BTR.

## **AUDIT COMMITTEE FINANCIAL EXPERT**

The Registrant's board of directors (the "Board of Directors") has determined that it has at least one audit committee financial expert (as such term is defined in item 8(a) of General Instruction B to Form 40-F) serving on its audit committee (the "Audit Committee"). Mr. Bernard I. Ghert has been determined by the Board of Directors to be such audit committee financial expert and is independent (as such term is defined by the NASDAQ Stock Market's corporate governance standards applicable to the Registrant).

Mr. Ghert was previously President and Chief Executive Officer of the Cadillac Fairview Corporation Limited from 1981 to 1987 and President of Stelworth Investments Inc. from 1987 to 1992. Mr. Ghert has been a director of many organizations in the private and public sectors, including Cadillac Fairview, Stelworth, CT Financial and Canada Trust, Wellington Insurance and the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation. Mr. Ghert has served as Director of the Managers of several Middlefield Funds, President of the Canadian Institute of Public Real Estate Companies and was a former member of the Advisory Board of the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions. Mr. Ghert currently is the Lead Director of the Board of the Registrant, Chairman of the Independent Review Committee of Middlefield Fund Management Limited, President of the B.I. Ghert Family Foundation, President of Coppi Holdings Ltd., a Director on Sinai Health System's Board and Past Chair of the Mount Sinai Hospital Board of Directors.

The SEC has indicated that the designation of Mr. Bernard I. Ghert as an audit committee financial expert does not make him an "expert" for any purpose, impose on him any duties, obligations or liability that are greater than the duties, obligations or liability imposed on him as a member of the Audit Committee and the Board of Directors in absence of such designation, or affect the duties, obligations or liability of any other member of the Audit Committee or Board of

Directors.

## CODE OF ETHICS

The Registrant has adopted a Code of Ethics and Conduct that applies to all directors, officers and employees of the Registrant and its subsidiaries, and a Financial Management Code of Ethics, which applies to senior management and senior financial and accounting personnel of the Registrant and its subsidiaries. A copy of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and the Financial Management Code of Ethics can be obtained, free of charge, on the Registrant's website ([www.firstservice.com](http://www.firstservice.com)) or by contacting the Registrant at (416) 960-9500.



**PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTANT FEES AND SERVICES**

The following table sets out the fees billed to the Registrant by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP for professional services rendered for the fiscal period ended December 31, 2018 and 2017. During this period, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP was the Registrant's only external auditor.

| (in thousands of US\$)      | Year ended December 31, 2018 | Year ended December 31, 2017 |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Audit fees (note 1)         | \$726                        | \$783                        |
| Audit-related fees (note 2) | 45                           | 50                           |
| Tax fees (note 3)           | 50                           | 220                          |
| All other fees (note 4)     | 118                          | 127                          |
|                             | \$939                        | \$1,180                      |

**Notes:**

1. Refers to the aggregate fees billed by the Registrant's external auditor for audit services relating to the audit of the Registrant and statutory audits required by subsidiaries.
2. Refers to the aggregate fees billed for assurance and related services by the Registrant's external auditor that are reasonably related to the performance of the audit or review of the Registrant's financial statements and are not reported under (1) above, including professional services rendered by the Registrant's external auditor for accounting consultations on proposed transactions and consultations related to accounting and reporting standards. Such fees included amounts incurred in respect of: due diligence and other work related to the disposition and acquisition of businesses, such work being unrelated to the audit of the Registrant's financial statements; accounting consultations with respect to proposed transactions, as well as other audit-related services.
3. Refers to the aggregate fees billed for professional services rendered by the Registrant's external auditor for tax compliance, tax advice and tax planning.
4. Refers to fees for licensing and subscriptions to accounting and tax research tools, as well as administration and out-of-pocket expenses.

The Registrant's Audit Committee pre-approves all audit services and permitted non-audit services provided to the Registrant by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP. The Audit Committee has delegated to the Chair of the Audit Committee, who is independent, the authority to act on behalf of the Audit Committee with respect to the pre-approval of all audit and permitted non-audit services provided by its external auditors from time to time. Any approvals by the Chair are reported to the full Audit Committee at its next meeting. All of the services described in footnotes 2, 3 and 4 under "Principal Accountant Fees and Services" above were approved by the Audit Committee pursuant to paragraph (c)(7)(i)(C) of Rule 2-01 of Regulation S-X.

**OFF-BALANCE SHEET ARRANGEMENTS**

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The Registrant does not have any off-balance sheet arrangements that have, or are reasonably likely to have, a current or future material effect on the Registrant's financial performance or financial condition other than the payments which may be required to be made under the sale of control arrangement contained in the restated management services agreement with the Registrant, Jayset Management FSV Inc. and Jay S. Hennick. A description of the sale of control arrangement is set out in Note 10 to the consolidated financial statements included as Exhibit 2 to this Annual Report on Form 40-F, and is incorporated herein by reference.

### TABULAR DISCLOSURE OF CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

The information provided in the table entitled "Contractual Obligations" under the section entitled "Liquidity and Capital Resources" in the management's discussion and analysis included as Exhibit 3 to this Annual Report on Form 40-F, is incorporated herein by reference.

### IDENTIFICATION OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Registrant has a separately designated standing Audit Committee established in accordance with section 3(a)(58)(A) of the Exchange Act. The members of the Audit Committee are Messrs. Bernard I. Ghert (Chair), Michael Stein, and Joan Sproul.

## **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

The Registrant is a “foreign private issuer” as defined in Rule 3b-4 under the Exchange Act and its Subordinate Voting Shares are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange and The NASDAQ Global Select Market (“NASDAQ”). NASDAQ Marketplace Rule 5615(a)(3) permits a foreign private issuer to follow its home country practices in lieu of certain requirements in the NASDAQ Listing Rules. A foreign private issuer that follows home country practices in lieu of certain corporate governance provisions of the NASDAQ Listing Rules must disclose each NASDAQ corporate governance requirement that it does not follow and include a brief statement of the home country practice the issuer follows in lieu of the NASDAQ corporate governance requirement(s), either on its website or in its annual filings with the Commission. A description of the significant ways in which the Registrant’s corporate governance practices differ from those followed by domestic companies pursuant to the applicable NASDAQ Listing Rules is disclosed on the Registrant’s website at:

[http://www.firstservice.ca/social\\_purpose/nasdaq\\_canadian\\_corporate\\_governance.html](http://www.firstservice.ca/social_purpose/nasdaq_canadian_corporate_governance.html) ..

## **UNDERTAKING AND CONSENT TO SERVICE OF PROCESS**

### **A. Undertaking**

The Registrant undertakes to make available, in person or by telephone, representatives to respond to inquiries made by the staff of the SEC, and to furnish promptly, when requested to do so by the SEC staff, information relating to: the securities registered pursuant to Form 40-F, the securities in relation to which the obligation to file an Annual Report on Form 40-F arises, or transactions in said securities.

### **B. Consent to Service of Process**

The Registrant has previously filed with the SEC an Appointment of Agent for Service of Process and Undertaking on Form F-X in connection with its Subordinate Voting Shares.

## **SIGNATURE**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Exchange Act, the Registrant certifies that it meets all of the requirements for filing on Form 40-F and has duly caused this annual report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereto duly authorized.

**FirstService Corporation**

Date: February 20, 2019      By: */s/ Jeremy*  
*Rakusin*  
Name: Jeremy Rakusin  
Title: Chief Financial Officer

EXHIBIT INDEX

**No. Document**

1. Annual Information Form of the Registrant for the year ended December 31, 2018.

Audited consolidated financial statements of the Registrant as at December 31, 2018 and 2017 and for the years ended December 31, 2018 and 2017, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States.

3. Management's discussion and analysis of the Registrant for the year ended December 31, 2018.

23. Consent of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP.

31. Certifications of Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer pursuant to Rule 13(a)-14(a) or 15(d)-14 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

32. Certifications of Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer pursuant to 18 U.S.C. Section 1350, as adopted pursuant to Section 906 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.

101.

Interactive Data File.