

Problem Properties Initiative - Action Plan Update 2022

Action		Timeline Update	COE	EPS	AHS	Update
Strategic action						
1.	Development of a long-term strategy for problem properties	2022 In Progress	✓	✓	✓	Strategy research conducted and prototypes tested.
Enforcement / Compliance Strategies <i>action plans propose reviewing safety codes applicability, development compliance, public health, and property maintenance standards</i>						
2.	Review of Safety Codes Permit Bylaw 15894 for relevancy and opportunity for updates within the safety codes	2022 In Progress	✓			Any amendments required to the bylaw will be presented to City Council in 2022.
3.	Amend or create new bylaws where gaps are identified within the legislation	Completed	✓			New options, amendments and pilot project inspection teams identified and created to address service gaps.
4.	Continued use of the Safety Codes Act where applicable to issue orders with respect to structural safety and life safety	Completed	✓			Orders under the Act have been issued and are any appeals being tested.
5.	Continued exploration and utilization of available regulatory mechanisms, including using data analysis and reporting	Completed	✓			Data collection system built to support analysis and reporting, alterations to the current system are underway to make it more user friendly and adaptable.
6.	Obtain legal opinion on the use of Criminal Code Sec. 430(1)(c) Mischief as a top tier level of escalation	Completed		✓		This option exists as a tool for the Edmonton Police Service if the appropriate criteria is present.

Action		Timeline Update	COE	EPS	AHS	Update
7.	Review bylaws related to penalties for bylaw infractions and the opportunity for increasing fines to repeat offences or non-compliance	Completed	✓			A review of bylaws associated with the problem properties initiative was conducted and amendments prepared where necessary.
8.	Implement additional orders or actions subsequent to declaring a housing premise as unfit for human habitation or having a repair order issued	Completed			✓	Alberta Health Services issues orders or Actions when required under the <i>Public Health Act</i> and does so by utilizing a dedicated resource to the problem properties initiative.
9.	Increase support to the city on various matters related to derelict housing and buildings and the impact on neighbours and neighbourhoods, including investigations of burned-out houses, boarded and secured properties	Completed	✓		✓	Members of the problem properties initiative work together to ensure vacant properties are secured and development of the Community Property Safety Team pilot project is completed.
10.	Amend Bylaw 14600 - Community Standards Bylaw to enhance securement and maintenance procedures regarding unoccupied homes and buildings left unsecured	2022 In Progress	✓			Amendments to the bylaw are underway and will proceed in 2022.
11.	Quick elevation of enforcement (apply the fire code directly) for repeat problem property infractions including safe housing	Completed	✓			Escalated enforcement action is taken when necessary for repeat problem property infractions.

Action		Timeline Update	COE	EPS	AHS	Update
12.	Analyzing enforcement data sets to identify the impacts and outcomes of business licence requirements and amend the bylaw if required	Completed	✓			Bylaw 20002 - Business Licence Bylaw was amended in January 2022 and provides more options to address problematic properties in Edmonton that possess a business licence.
Administrative / process improvements <i>creating a centralized point of contact for problem property complaints, enhancing internal information sharing and communication, and prioritizing Safe Housing Committee properties for inspection</i>						
13.	Create one centralized contact within the City of Edmonton for problem properties	Completed	✓			An informal group of dedicated staff that have supported this work currently exists and act as main points of contact for the initiative. Formalizing this group was key to long term strategic success.
14.	Work with existing providers to connect tenants with Housing First programs and support the update of existing Housing First programs	Completed	✓			Tenants communicate with the inspection and referrals for supports are made. A tenant toolkit is also being created as a resource
15.	Prioritize Safe Housing Committee properties, reduce inspections where possible and charge fees for second reinspections	Completed	✓			This work is prioritized and fire reinspection service fees are enacted (on every fire report to the homeowner).
16.	Determine whether there should be an inspection by revisiting the safe housing list and other agency concerns	Completed	✓			Centralized administration supports the scheduling of inspections. Inspections are coordinated between all attendees required via referral.

Action		Timeline Update	COE	EPS	AHS	Update
17.	Creating a governance structure that includes a Citizen Advisory component to allow for collaboration and input from communities and groups	Q3 2022 In progress	✓			Problem properties report research included engagement with a citizen advisory group from the original report. A continued citizen advisory group prototype was identified and developed in 2022.
18.	Creating standards for business license review submissions which will result in decreased processing times	Completed	✓			Bylaw 20002 - Business Licence Bylaw was approved in January 2022 and includes an efficient business licence review process.
19.	Establish inspection date and information sharing protocols with regulatory agencies	Completed	✓			Memorandum of understanding signed by partner agencies allows information sharing.
Data analytics <i>improve data sharing agreements between partners to generate richer datasets for predictive analytics and risk modelling to better understand conditions that contribute to the creation and resolution of problem properties</i>						
20.	Utilize existing data-sharing agreements to formulate a historical place-based Big Data set	Q4 2022 In progress	✓	✓	✓	Administration has aggregated its own relevant demand calls for service in a single database and created an app for analysis and visualization. Data availability from external agencies is a challenge the City is working through in 2022.
21.	Utilize Big Data, risk terrain modelling, and analytics to determine which environmental, regulatory, and behavioural factors are correlated to the creation of a problem property; design and deliver interventions upstream	Q4 2022 In progress	✓	✓	✓	Administration has developed an application of demand data that may support the identification or correlated factors but it is limited to City of Edmonton data for now. Without external agencies' data availability, the confidence level of the model's output is limited.
		Timeline	COE	EPS	AHS	Update

Action	Update					
<p>Enhanced communication <i>improve internal and external communication, enhance education and awareness for the community through the development of an online dashboard, a community reporting app, and a public website reporting actions taken</i></p>						
22.	<p>Improve communication, education and awareness for the public and for City Council through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an online dashboard • an app for reporting and updating complainants • links on the AHS website to city resources • a public education campaign on how to identify problem properties • promotion of “good housing” information • promotion of safe and healthy neighbourhoods • providing regular updates to City Council • education on submitting quality applications and good construction practices 	2022 In progress	✓	✓	✓	<p>The City's 311 system can take inquiries, track their status and provide updates to the public. A confidential reporting tool was designed and complaints and updates are provided by email but these complaints use a non-app-based system to remain anonymous. Administration is committed to ongoing work with community partners such as REACH to spread the word that the problem properties initiative is here to help.</p> <p>Dashboard reporting is still in progress as teams attempt to gather the appropriate data and complete the system. Toolkits are being created to educate and guide relationships between tenants and landlords plus offer support.</p> <p>Regular updates to City Council are occurring.</p>
<p>Resource Allocation <i>reassigning existing resources (i.e. Municipal Enforcement Officers, Safety Codes Officers and Development Compliance resources) to support additional Edmonton Police Service and Alberta Health Services staff efforts to increase inspection capacity, reduce repeat calls for service and improve response times</i></p>						
23.	Assign additional Safety Code Officers	Completed	✓			Dedicated resource has been assigned.
Action		Timeline Update	COE	EPS	AHS	Update

24.	Build internal capacity to assist with policing functions including data acquisition, risk assessment, and inspection support	Completed		✓		Dedicated resource has been assigned.
25.	Assign additional Development Compliance resources as required	Completed	✓			Dedicated resource has been assigned.
26.	Assign one health inspector resource (as one dedicated FTE)	Completed			✓	Dedicated resource has been assigned.
<p>Housing development, redevelopment and improvement <i>preserving and improving existing single-room occupancies, lodging houses, and rentals geared to low-income tenants, and pursuing funding opportunities and other supports to incentivize the construction of new rentals geared to low-income tenants, as well as the redevelopment of problem properties</i></p>						
27.	Preserve and improve existing single room occupancy, lodging houses, and rentals geared to low-income tenants	Completed	✓			The Housing Redevelopment Grant pilot project was launched with grants awarded to support redevelopment.
28.	Pursue funding opportunities to incentivize the construction of new rentals geared to low-income tenants currently served by problem properties	Completed	✓			The Housing Redevelopment Grant pilot project was launched with grants awarded to support redevelopment.
29.	Provide expedited permit application processing in support of the redevelopment of problem properties (under consideration are demolition, development, and building permits)	Completed	✓			Processes are in place to align notifications and support expedited permit processing for complete and full applications.