

Healthy Streets Operation Centre

Chinatown

RECOMMENDATION

That the July 4, 2022, Community Services report CS01345, be received for information.

Report Purpose

Information only

Council is being informed of a business case that could have impact on the upcoming budget cycle for 2023 to 2026, should Council choose to make a motion for an unfunded service package to be brought forward as part of the 2023-2026 budget deliberations.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the June 20/24, 2022, City Council meeting the following motion passed:

That Administration work with the Edmonton Police Commission and return with a Business Plan, including financial requirements, for the operations of a Healthy Streets Operations Centre in Chinatown.

Executive Summary

- The Healthy Streets Operations Centre supports the Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy.
- With a focus on hotspot patrols and problem oriented practices, an evidence-based model will be the foundation for the collaborative work of Administration and the Edmonton Police Service (EPS).
- Combining efforts in community safety work will create efficiencies, minimize potential redundancy and support calls for the right resource responding to calls.
- The Healthy Streets Operation Centre approach would create shared goals, shared data analytics and shared problem identifications and responses. Multidisciplinary community safety teams would use a framework for approaching and addressing community safety

Healthy Streets Operation Centre - Chinatown

issues and would be able to involve the appropriate resources more effectively through shared oversight and governance.

- The total cost of the Healthy Streets Operation Centre from 2023 - 2024 is \$18 million.

REPORT

The commitment made to the Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy (CSWB) in May 2022 includes work from many partners who share a desire for:

- a deliberate and concerted effort to put community at the centre of the model,
- a city-wide perspective that ensures those living in any part of the city have equitable access to resources, and
- funding and resources in order to bring strategy to life.

The CSWB defined community safety and well-being as meaning that “individuals feel safe in our city no matter where they are from or how long they are staying.” The CSWB Strategy will remain relevant by being responsive to the changing needs of Edmonton, Canada and the world.

The City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Police Service share responsibility for Edmontonians’ community safety and well-being. In the CSWB ecosystem, there are ongoing efforts to collaborate on common outcomes to prevent crime and increase safety. In order to leverage different areas of expertise, a number of joint team efforts exist including, but not limited to: the Domestic Violence Intervention Teams, the Neighbourhood Empowerment Teams, the Problem Properties Initiative and the High Risk Encampment Team.

While those specialized teams address specific community safety issues, there is an ongoing opportunity for deeper, consistent collaboration to address general crime and disorder. Addressing crime and disorder without structure and concerted efforts creates a reactive and ad hoc collaboration system. An example of the system reacting is the current increased deployment in Chinatown. Although warranted on a temporary basis, a sustainable intervention model is required to effectively distribute finite resources in the context of the long-term change laid-out in the CSWB Strategy.

Administration and the Edmonton Police Service have identified the need to develop Multidisciplinary Community Safety Teams, shifting the two organizations’ work from reactive responses to proactive collaborative efforts that are integrated and driven by evidence-based research and shared data. When delivered effectively, the model reduces crime and disorder while increasing efficiencies in service delivery. These teams will report to a unified operational command structure to ensure all partners are included in the planning and operationalization of joint efforts. This unified command structure is already operational for the encampment response teams.

Healthy Streets - Multi-Disciplinary Work Approach

Currently, both the Edmonton Police Service and the City of Edmonton have specialized teams working on focused efforts to curb public safety issues. In an effort to maximize collaboration, leadership teams from both agencies have created a standing operational command and

Healthy Streets Operation Centre - Chinatown

governance meeting to discuss shared matters including downtown and transit safety, encampment response, housing and homelessness.

The creation of multidisciplinary community safety teams, would begin to maximize organizational capacity to affect positive public safety outcomes by collectively addressing locations requiring higher than average intervention due to concentrated incidents of crime. Combining efforts in community safety work not only creates efficiencies and minimizes potential redundancy but it also supports the CSWB recommendation of using the right resources at the right time and place. An example of this work is pairing EPS Constables with Transit Peace Officers as part of the 2019 Transit Safety Initiative — high visibility and high engagement protocols that resulted in decreased (35 per cent lower) violent crime as compared to locations without the intervention. Standing up this Operations Centre would take a phased approach, focusing first, at the community's request, on increased enforcement presence and visibility to address safety concerns. As further resources and capacity allows, the approach would be to fold in other community partners to inform the City's collective response to the area and its citizens in the coming months.

There are finite public safety resources to deploy quickly and in proactive ways. The George Mason University Centre for Evidence-Based Crime Policy says that “crime is highly concentrated in very small geographic places, such as street segments, and that focusing criminal justice efforts at such places benefits crime prevention and communities. Furthermore, other social phenomena also cluster at small places, suggesting a role for partnerships between justice agencies, social service providers, and “micro-communities” in helping to prevent crime and increase social cohesion and informal social control.”¹

The creation of multidisciplinary community safety teams would allow constables from the Edmonton Police Service to work with Administration using a consistent framework to collaboratively address hot spots of crime and social disorder. Starting with hot spot patrols, these teams would provide a high visibility presence. As part of those joint deployments, the teams would conduct area scans to identify contributing factors to crime and disorder, and address them using a problem-oriented practice framework (Attachment 1).

While a common belief persists that crime is displaced to surrounding areas, hot spot patrols do not displace crime; studies have consistently found no noticeable displacement and, in some cases, a diffusion effect, meaning that hot spot policing reduces crime in the areas adjacent to the hot spots as well.

Problem-oriented practices are evidence-based approaches to reduce crime and are currently used by various City of Edmonton and Edmonton Police Service teams. Closer collaboration would ensure that all the specialized intervention teams from the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Police Service are engaged in the problem-oriented plans as appropriate. Shared training would ensure that the teams have a shared approach to problem-solving and crime

¹ *Crime and place*. The Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy (CEBCP). (2020, September 7). Retrieved June 29, 2022, from <https://cebcp.org/crime-and-place/>

Healthy Streets Operation Centre - Chinatown

reduction. Additional partners would be included as needed in each problem location, allowing for agile, proactive, multidisciplinary and problem-specific interventions.

Healthy Streets Operation Centre

The Healthy Streets Operations Centre would create a space for joint deployments and provide team building opportunities across diverse teams within the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Police Service and community partners. Options are being considered for the best possible space for this Operations Centre; this work is currently being led by the Edmonton Police Service.

The Healthy Streets Operation Centre approach would create shared goals, shared data analytics and shared problem identifications and responses. Multidisciplinary community safety teams would use a framework for approaching and addressing community safety issues and would be able to involve the appropriate resources more effectively through shared oversight and governance.

As requested, the Edmonton Police Service/Edmonton Police Commission and Administration have compiled parallel business plans to contribute to a staffing and deployment model to support the Healthy Streets Operation Centre. These new resources would be agile and blended to best address public safety issues in a systematic and collaborative manner. The Edmonton Police Service business plan includes a budget for operating a new Healthy Streets Operation Centre which would function as a communal hub to house the joint teams, as well as a resource requirements for proactive teams (Attachment 2). To match the Edmonton Police Services' resources and support 21-hour per day, 7-day a week teams working on collective public safety issues, Administration has provided additional detail on the resources required to support the Multidisciplinary Community Safety Teams in Attachment 3.

Budget/Financial Implications

The table below outlines Administration's resourcing of the Healthy Streets Operations Centre are outlined below. These FTEs would complement the 36 FTEs requested by the Edmonton Police Service in their attached business case. Net new costs for 2023 are \$2 million, rising to annual costs of just over \$2.9 million for 2024 to 2026; total costs over 4 years are \$10.7 million, representing a tax levy increase of 0.11 per cent in 2023 and another 0.05 per cent in 2024. The costs for a physical facility would need to be explored further.

| | Details | Cost |
|----------------------|---|--|
| New Resources | Administration would hire new resources as follows and maintain current deployment and service levels of existing resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4 Peace Officer Sergeants ● 16 Community Peace Officers ● 2 Community Safety Liaisons ● 3 Firefighters/Fire Prevention Officers | 2023: \$2,007,005/yr 2024 to 2026: \$2,899,095/yr 4-Yr Total: \$10,704,340 |

Healthy Streets Operation Centre - Chinatown

Edmonton Police Service would require the following resources for the Healthy Streets Operation Centre.

| Cost (\$000) | 2023 | 2024 | Total |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Ongoing Police Officer Salary, Benefits, and Premiums (4 Sergeants, and 32 Constables) | 18.0 | 18.0 | 36.0 |
| | \$2,514 | \$2,514 | \$5,028 |
| Ongoing Police Officer Equipment Costs (Fleet, support, outfitting, software etc.) | \$382 | \$382 | \$764 |
| Ongoing Non-Personnel Costs (Materials, supplies, training) | \$25 | \$25 | \$50 |
| Total Ongoing Cost | \$2,921 | \$2,921 | \$5,842 |
| One Time Police Officer Equipment Costs (Vehicle, radio, computer, workstation, cell phone, outfitting, software etc.) | \$1,560 | - | \$1,560 |
| Total One Time Cost | \$1,560 | \$0 | \$1,560 |
| Total Edmonton Police Service Costs | \$4,481 | \$2,921 | \$7,402 |

The total cost for the Healthy Streets Operation Centre would be as follows:

| Healthy Streets Operation Centre Total Cost (\$000) | | | | |
|--|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 |
| City of Edmonton | \$2,007 | \$2,899 | \$2,899 | \$2,899 |
| Edmonton Police Service | \$4,481 | \$2,921 | \$ - | \$ - |
| TOTAL | \$6,488 | \$5,820 | \$2,899 | \$2,899 |
| 4 year total | \$18,106 | | | |

Healthy Streets Operation Centre - Chinatown

COMMUNITY INSIGHT

More than 80 community members across over 40 organizations were consulted during the development of the Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy. The learnings from those consultations are reviewed in OCM00991 Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy, presented to Community and Public Services Committee and City Council in May 2022. Concurrent to the Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy discussions at Council, Administration also heard from members of the Chinatown community who discussed the need for comprehensive and sustainable interventions. The approach provided in this report is an example of one of the interventions that can occur, alongside other work with community partners and advocacy to other orders of government.

GBA+

When considering safety and security, it is important to ask “for who?”. There is a larger ecosystem of habits, behaviours and attitudes that extend generation over generation in relation to what is safe, orderly and appropriate and there are different relationships with enforcement from culture to culture.

There is a disproportionate representation of Indigenous and racialized peoples in the justice system. The lack of supportive resources and services creates further marginalization as those released are not given the supports they need and are left unsheltered. In addition, Indigenous peoples continue to be disproportionately represented among people experiencing homelessness, due to various factors including lack of access to safe, affordable, and culturally appropriate housing, and experiences of intergenerational trauma, systemic racism and discrimination. While Administration is working on understanding the impacts, it is a journey of unlearning and undoing over a hundred years of practices and planning, which will take significant effort.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Evidence Base for Proactive Crime Prevention
2. Edmonton Police Service Healthy Streets Operations Center Business Plan
3. Administration Support for Multidisciplinary Community Safety Teams