

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY - FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

RECOMMENDATION

That the October 25, 2022, Community Services report CS01283rev, be received for information.

Requested Council Action		Information Only	
ConnectEdmonton's Guiding Principle		ConnectEdmonton Strategic Goals	
CONNECTED This unifies our work to achieve our strategic goals.		Healthy City	
City Plan Values	LIVE		
City Plan Big City Move(s)	Inclusive and compassionate	Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities	Community Safety and Well-being
Corporate Business Plan	Transforming for the future		
Council Policy, Program or Project Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community Safety and Well-being Strategy		
Related Council Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">OCM00991, Community and Public Services Committee, May 16/17, 2022		

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the August 22, 2022, Community and Public Services Committee meeting, the following motion passed:

That the August 22, 2022, Community Services report CS01283 be referred to Administration to return to Committee after consulting further with members of Council

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY - FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

to identify specific points of interest regarding Community Safety and Well-being roles and responsibilities.

Executive Summary

- This report provides additional information on intergovernmental jurisdiction, strategies and division of federal, provincial and municipal responsibilities in relation to the objectives of the City of Edmonton's Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Strategy.
- The overlapping roles and responsibilities of different governments pose challenges to addressing the already difficult issue of community safety and well-being.
- While there are limits to the City of Edmonton's ability to influence other governments' jurisdiction and actions in the community safety and well-being space, there are ways the City can maximize its own effectiveness. This entails careful attention to who holds what policy levers, maximizing alignment of levers, clearly identifying gaps, and fostering systems-level awareness of how programs interact.
- Although the Constitution defines jurisdiction, the intergovernmental environment changes rapidly. As such, systems need to be dynamic, and the path forward is of necessity a principles-based approach.
- This report outlines these factors for the City's work toward promoting community safety and well-being with a view to navigating paths forward in this complex environment.

REPORT

Following the August 12, 2022, Community and Public Services meeting, Administration met with members of Council to gather their feedback on this report topic. During the conversations with members of Council who desired to provide advice and feedback, Administration heard the following high level themes:

- Points of transition between programs are vulnerable points.
- Social issues are often experienced in local ways and reported to local (municipal) government, regardless of whether there is municipal responsibility.
- Municipal governments are often dealing with the "symptoms" of issues originating in fields outside of municipalities' authority and capacity.
- Uncertainty that programs and policies (offered by any level of government) are having their intended effects and will be corrected if they are not.
- Safety and well-being should be supported for all Edmontonians, those who identify as vulnerable, and those who are not.
- Unaddressed social issues have economic consequences.
- Governments need to acknowledge the complex interplay of their respective programs.
- Greater simplicity in systems could make it easier.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY - FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Codifying systems could have unintended effects, especially with regard to limiting future responses to emergent issues.

The themes provided by members of Council are incorporated into the following revised report content and approach.

A collaborative way forward

In a complex and multi-layered environment where multiple actors take independent action, it is challenging to develop programs and approaches to deliver on the diverse needs and expectations of residents. This is especially true in addressing the pressing social issues of community safety and well-being. There are some steps and strategies that can help foster success:

1. Acknowledge the complexity of intergovernmental roles and responsibilities.
2. Recognize the impact of this complexity on residents' lives.
3. Identify intergovernmental levers.
4. Chart a course that maximizes alignment.
5. Measure success against the levers, and identify gaps.
6. Expect change and plan for improvement.

How these steps and strategies are applied by the City of Edmonton to advance community safety and well-being is detailed below:

Strategy #1 - Acknowledge the Complexity

There are multiple factors affecting community safety and wellbeing. Rather than a linear set of causes and effects, the system is more akin to a complex piece of clockwork: when one cog is changed or removed, it has consequences across the remainder of the system. Similarly, maximizing the system for one outcome will likely have consequences for the other intermeshed issues. In this system, different cogs are influenced by different intergovernmental partners. While there is no singular change or alteration that will generate an ideal outcome across all policy fields, simply recognizing the complexity can help promote an approach that is more likely to be successful.

It is important to also recognize that the issue of community safety and well-being is in itself complex. It is a multi-faceted issue touching on a wide range of portfolios. The City's strategy to navigate this internal complexity is laid out in the Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy (outlined in the Office of the City Manager report OCM00991), approved by City Council on May 24, 2022.

The City's strategy for this complex public policy issue is nested within and considers the Canadian governance system. As a federation, Canada has a Constitution that assigns some areas of responsibility to the provinces (including municipalities, education and hospitals) and others to the federal government (including banking, national defense, criminal law and other matters of national interest). As statutory bodies created by provincial governments, municipalities have only those provincial authorities delegated to them by the provinces. Federal, provincial and municipal governments are all involved in advancing community safety and well-being.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY - FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Further complicating this governance environment is that the Constitutional division of legislative powers is not the entire story. Government roles are also influenced by broad spending powers, diffuse resident expectations, multiple government agencies, diverse policy objectives, and electoral politics.

Some of the key factors affecting the complexity of responsibilities for CSWB include:

- **Community safety and well-being” is not itemized in the Constitution**, but rather understood through various contributing areas of jurisdiction (e.g. health care, mental health, corrections, etc.). Broadly speaking, responsibility for health and social support services falls to the provinces; responsibilities relating to criminal justice, control of narcotics and supporting relations with First Nations and Indigenous peoples falls to the federal government; and each government has a specific set of responsibilities related to law enforcement.
 - Note: With respect to Indigenous relations, referring to the Constitution’s section 91 assignment of “Indians and lands reserved for the Indians” to the federal government is only one perspective. Increasing awareness of what it means to be Treaty people and increasing commitment to reconciliation require all Canadians to deepen their understanding of Indigenous relationships in Canada. The City of Edmonton’s Indigenous Framework was developed in partnership with Indigenous peoples to help guide the City in its journey towards reconciliation.
- **The Constitution limits which governments can legislate in particular fields of jurisdiction but it does not limit spending in different fields.** As a result, governments -- particularly the federal government -- can exercise powerful economic influence outside of their constitutional jurisdiction. This can mobilize resources effectively, but can also obscure accountability and risk different levels of government operating at cross-purposes.
- **Municipalities have broad scope but limited funding.** In Alberta, provincial legislation requires municipalities to develop and maintain safe and viable communities, and also gives municipalities natural person powers, except as limited by legislation. However, it does not lay out the details of how the province and municipalities will cooperate on things like capital and operating expenses related to community safety and well-being. This means that municipalities have the scope to support a very wide range of programs and services to address local needs. However, municipal governments have much more limited spending power than do provincial or federal governments, which limits their ability to use the full range of policy options. Historically, municipalities focused on programs such as municipal policing, local economic development, fire services, land use allocation and promotion of cultural vitality. Currently, they are increasingly pressed to address social issues such as housing and homelessness, public health, drug overdose prevention, or remand and probation.
- **Public expectations change over time** -- when the Constitution was written there were different views on a wide range of issues, such as how much government should intervene, who would be able to vote, the relationship with Indigenous peoples, whether health care should be public, relationships with other countries, access to firearms and the need to protect rights. Nonetheless, the basic structure of the Canadian government system remains the same

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY - FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

and some flexibility is at times employed to meet current understanding of social good through these structures. Relationships among governments are essential to ensuring that systems work collaboratively to serve the public.

Further details are provided in Attachment 1, which outlines constitutional responsibilities related to the Community Safety and Well-being pillars.

There has been some progress on clarifying roles and responsibilities in this complex environment, through various agreements and protocols. However, the environment remains complex, and will remain complex for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the challenge becomes managing and scaling the municipal response.

Strategy #2 - Recognize the impact

Ideally, in this complex intergovernmental environment, the City would be able to focus on optimizing its contribution within the interconnected and evolving system. However, any one change to the system can affect the whole system. When such disconnected changes to the system arise, the municipality can be left to put stop gap measures in place to address the immediate needs, but without having the capacity to address the underlying issues.

As complex as the system is from a public policy perspective, it can be even more so from the perspective of residents. Both individual City Council members and Administration have numerous examples of how complexity impedes good outcomes for individuals seeking to advance safety and well-being. Here are just a few examples discussed in the motion-directed interviews that occurred with members of Council:

- Individuals transitioning from correctional institutions to public life are unable to access the programming they need to be successful or, in the worst case, to keep the public safe.
- Businesses reporting concerns that homelessness and disorder are affecting their ability to continue operating.
- Non-profit organization's inability to secure funding to continue delivering basic services, as each level of government requires an action or support from a different government in order to proceed.
- Capacity pressures in the judicial system result in a system that is focused on achieving legal timeliness rather than a contributing and collaborative stakeholder in long-term community well-being.
- Reliance on financial support from other orders of government for winter and year round permanent 24/7 shelter spaces creates gaps and insecurity in the system. Long-term planning is often delayed, resulting in shorter term strategies.
- Finding safe places for women fleeing violence is highly contingent on the provincial government, which funds and regulates women's emergency shelters and transitional accommodation.
- Public understanding of enforcement services is commonly understood through the lens of policing. Administration's enforcement approach is directly impacted by public perceptions, and considerations for the future of enforcement practices underpin how Administration intends to move forward.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY - FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- The province provides the authority for peace officers and police officers to enforce legislation under their respective acts.
- The desire for visibility of police by businesses and Edmontonians is indicative of societal reliance on enforcement services as a first response to safety scenarios. A lack of capacity for preventative and reactive physical and mental health services, as well as community outreach, has historically placed inappropriate responsibility on the policing systems to respond. City Council continues to support advocacy to the Province for improvement to the social serving and non-profit sector to shift tasks that have traditionally been in the policing realm to ensure that the most appropriate resource/response is available in the right place at the right time.
- Problem properties, which are intrinsically linked to community safety and well-being, require collaboration between City Administration, Alberta Health Services, the Edmonton Police Service, community groups and other stakeholders. The City of Edmonton cannot solve the complex factors associated with problem properties unless all other partners contribute.

The themes from these cases very much echo the advice and perspectives provided by Council to Administration in the meetings resulting from the August 22, 2022, motion.

Strategy #3 - Program and Systems Levers

The City of Edmonton holds a number of policy levers to address community safety and well-being. Some stem from specific legislated obligations (e.g. through the *Municipal Government Act*, safety codes, emergency management obligations, municipal police, etc), and others are more connected to ensuring the overall vitality of the City. The City, however, holds limited financial levers.

The City has identified its key levers through the Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy. The CSWB Strategy's seven pillars outline municipal efforts responding to a need for community safety: anti-racism; reconciliation; safe and inclusive spaces; equitable policies, procedures, standards and guidelines; pathways in and out of poverty (including housing, transit and mental health); crime prevention and crisis intervention; and well-being. A list of these strategies and the associated funding allocations can be found in Attachment 2. Of particular note in the City's CSWB Strategy is that it emphasizes the importance of partnership and collaboration. Other bodies -- including federal and provincial governments -- have a key role to play if the objectives of the Strategy are to be met.

In looking at other governments' roles, their potential levers and impacts are broad and complex -- but not necessarily coordinated. Referring back to the list of programs in Attachment 1, there are hundreds of points of interaction, many stemming not from strict constitutional jurisdiction but rather from the use of spending power. This is multi-dimensional, interconnected work that constantly changes as governments change and programs and services evolve. Making sense of this overlapping field is challenging.

- A map of the various federal and provincial ministries and agencies that have established mandates and provide support services across the pillars of CSWB would look like a maze or an electrical panel supplying a large office tower.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY - FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- A map of the relative funding levels and degrees of connection of federal and provincial departments to CSWB would be similarly complex but would highlight that there are a few departments that are both highly funded and highly relevant, but that most departments have only one of those attributes. (Under current budget allocations, the top federal departments are: Employment and Social Development, Indigenous Services, and Infrastructure and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). For the province: Community and Social Services, Infrastructure, Health and Justice and Solicitor General.)

The strength of such conceptual mapping is illustrating where some of the strongest connection points lie and thus highlighting priority areas for relationship development. The weakness of this mapping is that it results in a focus on individual programs, rather than fostering overall system coherence. Recalling the earlier metaphor of CSWB being like a piece of complex clockwork, the goal is not to optimize one cog or wheel but rather to have a robust system that can adapt to environmental changes.

A key conclusion is that jurisdictional influence does not operate in silos and impacts are not direct or linear. A systems perspective is needed to have maximum impact on CSWB.

Strategy #4 - Maximize alignment and system strength

Fostering a robust system is a delicate exercise of balancing the obligations of the City, the objectives and willingness of other governments, and the pressures for action on the ground. However, without a strong system, individual “cogs” will not have their maximum impact. There are multiple tools and strategies that can assist in fostering both alignment of existing programs and overall system strength.

1. **The Art of the Possible.** When there is a shared willingness to collaborate or use respective levers in tandem, there is a much greater likelihood of success in addressing the policy issue. These are the areas where direct programs are most likely to succeed. When there is no common understanding of what policy interventions are likely to be successful, the chances of success of immediate program interventions are reduced; this is why channeling energies on identifying and developing common ground is so important so that there may be space for more effective future collaboration.
2. **Developing common ground.** There is no guarantee that other governments will see policy issues the same way that the City does. However, the City can help develop common points of understanding with their partners, which will in turn lay the foundation for further action. This can include sharing specific local data illustrating need and circumstances with the aim of enabling other governments to respond confidently to concrete challenges. Council plays an important role in fostering common ground, especially in their interaction with members of other governments. Intergovernmental briefings tend to include both advocacy points to foster such space for collaboration and specific asks for particular projects. It is also important to note that the process of developing common ground includes space for respectfully identifying gaps and acknowledging differences.
3. **Maintain awareness.** Through environmental scanning, individual relationships, participation in multilateral associations and monitoring legislative agendas, administration looks for opportunities to collaborate with other governments on areas of mutual interest.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY - FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

4. **Sharing goals.** The City of Edmonton actively shares its priorities with the Government of Alberta and Canada. This takes place through individual conversations among senior executives and elected representatives and through processes such as submitting priorities to the federal and provincial budget processes.
5. **Build credibility.** The City builds credibility not just through one issue but by demonstrating clear and calm success on a broad range of municipal files. This increases partners' willingness to assume the City's perspective toward successful projects. Even day-to-day municipal successes (e.g. new playground, repaved roads, etc.) contribute to a history of credibility and potentially a greater willingness to collaborate.
6. **Wayfinding.** Navigating overlapping programs across different governments is a challenge unto itself, especially to individuals who may not have a sophisticated understanding of governance systems. This is a challenge that is top-of-mind for Administration.
7. **Note points of divergence.** By noting points of divergence, the City can both make strategic decisions about using limited resources, and foster discussion with other governments about the impact of such divergence, why they are occurring and whether any course adjustments should be pursued. Identifying divergence is also key to effective accountability.

Strategy #5 - Success and Gaps

Measuring individual government successes and failures is especially difficult in a complex intermeshed environment, where goals are not entirely within the sphere of influence of any one government. Yet accountability to the public remains an essential role of all governments, as well as vital to effective stewardship of programs and policies. Keys to navigating this environment include the following:

1. **Measure success against levers.** The City alone cannot resolve all the issues related to CSWB, but it can demonstrate effectiveness in moving what levers are within its influence. Such effectiveness builds the foundation to credibly highlight gaps requiring other governments' action. The corollary is that other governments should also be expected to limit their assessment of their effectiveness to their own programs and intentions. The risk in this strategy is that no government is looking at the overall system effectiveness towards the ultimate goals. (Note: The CSWB Strategy outlines the proposed City approach to measuring success and regular progress updates are posted at edmonton.ca/safetyandwellbeing.)
2. **Identify gaps clearly and constructively.** It is important to identify gaps between what the City wants to accomplish, and what it can achieve alone. This creates a space within which to identify what other governments could do (recognizing that they will have their own policy priorities). Identifying how other governments have or have not met their own obligations is more of a political rather than an administrative strategy.
3. **Seek opportunities to review collective impact.** In order to mitigate the risk that neither the system strength nor the ultimate goals of CSWB are monitored, governments can seek opportunities to review their collective impact. This requires effectiveness in earlier stages of building relationships and common ground so that there is sufficient trust to collaborate.
4. **Balance holding to account with building relationships.** To advance CSWB, the City will need to work with other governments, and build relationships that enable this collaboration.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY - FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The City also needs to identify when systemic problems arise due to the actions of other governments. There is natural tension between holding our partners to account and maintaining an open and cooperative relationship. From an administrative perspective, the key to navigating the tension is to have a solid foundation in the facts and evidence.

5. **Address Resident Expectations.** Few Edmontonians are fully aware of the division of powers among governments. When they see an issue in their community, they want it addressed. While this is a challenge for individual program accountability, it is also an incentive for all governmental partners to collaborate. The more residents trust a government and believe that it is making reasonable decisions, the more they will be willing to support calls for other governments to take action.

Strategy #6 - Expect change and plan for improvement

All orders of government have signaled ongoing interest in applying various policy levers and funding tools to address complex social policy topics. This will continue to require collaboration, coordination and partnerships with other stakeholders. It will be an iterative process.

Further clarity on the recommended roles and responsibilities that different orders of government envision in each of these areas can be seen in released strategies and through budget commitments, business plans and Ministers' mandate letters at the federal and provincial governments. It is also an area of ongoing interest across numerous cities, municipal associations and academic institutions across Canada. Two specific examples include:

- A Senate Inquiry launched on December 2, 2021, calling to attention the important roles municipalities perform and the challenges they face, stressing the importance to redefine the relationships between Canada's municipalities and the federal government. No timelines on this Senate Inquiry are publicly available as of October 7, 2022.
- A City Charters Collaboration Agreement (alberta.ca/city-charters) signed on August 10, 2017 by the cities of Edmonton and Calgary and the Government of Alberta. While the agreement creates a formal mechanism for Alberta's two largest cities to better align and optimize future resources across outcomes of shared interest with the province, there has been no formalized political discussions between the three parties in recent years. Renewed efforts may be required to re-activate provincial support for this forum.

Underlying these ongoing efforts is change in the intergovernmental environment: leadership changes, elections, emerging crises, world events and multiple other factors can shift the environment, the relationships and the effectiveness of individual programs. In some respects this means the end goal is constantly moving, but from another perspective it means there are continually new opportunities for creative and effective solutions.

COMMUNITY INSIGHT

The recommendations identified in the Community Safety and Well-being Strategy were informed and guided by more than 80 community members across over 40 organizations. Community conversations will continue to inform the strategy. Insights gathered will be included in a repository of Community Safety and Well Being research and engagement data that will support the City in

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY - FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

taking evidence-based and data-informed action. Further research and engagement will be used when considering future conversations regarding jurisdictional responsibilities.

GBA+

The City of Edmonton uses GBA+ to help make evidence-based decisions, challenge assumptions, and adjust programs, services and spaces in order to offer enhanced life experiences for those experiencing marginalization in Edmonton.

As the function of the strategy is intersectional, so too is the consideration of the people it is intended to serve. Representing different perspectives and experiences are key to the community-led component of the CSWB Strategy. Administration must continue to actively engage people through the different intersectional lenses that may represent them and define their experiences in Edmonton. This engagement will be used when considering future conversations regarding jurisdictional responsibilities.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Jurisdictional Activities - Community Safety and Well Being Pillars
2. Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy - City Actions