

Proactive Enforcement Opportunities

The following information details opportunities and required resources for proactive enforcement opportunities in the following areas:

- Development Permit Inspections Team
- Landscaping Inspections Team
- Lot Grading Inspection Team
- Safety Codes, Permit and Inspections Section
- Animal Care and Control Services
- Snow and Ice Control
- Park Ranger Team
- Transit Peace Officer Team
- Community Safety Teams
- Vehicle Noise Enforcement
- Unmet Needs

Development Services Branch

Development Permit Inspections Team

The Development Permit Inspections (DPI) Team was created in 2017 following the creation of the Infill Compliance Team - which responds to complaints relating to infill construction. The DPI team currently allocated two permanent FTEs and three temporary FTEs, although not all are currently filled and is funded by the Planning and Development Business Model.

A recent analysis of the outcomes of the DPI identified the following opportunities:

- Increase staffing to maintain service levels while also reducing some areas of inspection (due to the data demonstrating high compliance being achieved).
- Allocate inspection resources to small-scale landscaping development. Any increase in department expenses would be offset by fees collected.

Work is currently being undertaken to determine the right size of this team and identify opportunities for staffing. Depending on the outcomes of this review, there may be requests for new FTEs to support this work.

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Landscaping Inspections Team

The Landscaping Inspection Team (Zoning) focuses on ensuring that the required landscaping for private non-residential and larger residential sites (not including low-density residential) has been undertaken and is maintained in a healthy condition for a period of time post-inspection. This work typically begins two to five years after a Development Permit has been issued - as landscaping typically is installed at the end of the development process. The team employs a number of compliance tactics including:

- Collecting securities.
- Undertaking inspections.
- Issuing enforcement orders.
- Proactively installing landscaping on sites which have not achieved compliance.

The team is undertaking a review of its services to help determine optimal resourcing and to seek out more stable funding allocations. It is anticipated that this work will be completed in 2024. Currently, there are four permanent FTEs assigned funded by the Planning and Development Business Model.

Lot Grading Inspection Team

The Lot Grading Inspections Team proactively inspects sites to ensure compliance with the Drainage Bylaw 18093, using a fee model. Due to COVID-19 and resource constraints, the team's resources are down substantially from 2019.

A growing number of permits issued and the City's expanding geographic boundary has meant that the team has had to prioritize proactive, fee-based work, resulting in complaint-based work being delayed. Further, with infill development growing, there is a need for a minimum of one permanent FTE to lead on plans review. Since 2015, initial data analysis identifies a 150 per cent increase in total plans reviewed. The team's resourcing needs are currently being reviewed and it is anticipated that there will be a need for additional FTEs. There are currently eight permanent FTEs and one temporary FTE assigned to this work - eight funded by Planning Development Business Model, one by the tax levy.

Safety Codes, Permit and Inspections Section

The Safety Codes, Permit and Inspections Section permits and inspects construction and focuses on Building Code and Safety Codes Act non-compliant files. The dedicated compliance team does not conduct proactive inspections in the way that other law enforcement teams do.

Though reasonably staffed for current workloads, the team could benefit from additional resources to prioritize non-life safety Safety Codes non-compliance files.

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There are currently 10 permanent FTEs assigned to this work, all funded out of the Planning Development Business Model.

Community Standards and Neighbourhoods Branch

Animal Care and Control Services

Administration is building a proactive response model for the animal control team which will include proactive enforcement presence in dog parks and for animal licensing enforcement. The new growth in capacity for this team will allow for Administration to keep up with the demand associated with the city's domesticated animals, as well as for an expanded proactive enforcement portfolio.

Snow and Ice Control

One of the highest call volume types for Municipal Enforcement Officers (MEOs) is snow and ice enforcement in the winter months. With more than 10,000 complaints submitted each winter season, the ability to conduct proactive enforcement is unachievable. Currently, officers attend each complaint, address that concern and attempt to proactively investigate the surrounding properties as time allows. With current resourcing, proactively addressing any additional locations would impact service timelines for resident complaints.

For the 2022/2023 snow season, an additional 15 temporary municipal enforcement officers were hired as part of the joint snow and ice program with City Operations. Those officers focused solely on proactive enforcement in high-traffic and problematic locations. An additional 13,000 locations were checked by these additional officers to support the safe mobility and use of sidewalks across Edmonton. Creating 15 permanent FTE would allow for ongoing proactive enforcement for snow and ice control.

Park Ranger Team

There are 160 kilometres of maintained pathways and 434 designated parkland spaces in the City of Edmonton, including 21 major river valley parks. Currently, 13 park rangers provide seven days a week, 18 hours per day services to City parkland spaces, with a primary focus on the river valley parkland system. There is no growth formula to expand resourcing to accommodate residential developments that are adding new parkland or naturalized spaces.

Administration anticipates up to 200 new parkland spaces of varying size could be created or developed in the next 10 years as the City hits milestones on its path to two million people.

Prior to the pandemic, the park ranger team was able to dedicate significantly more time to proactive enforcement, with proactive time accounting for

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between 55 and 70 per cent of their time in 2017, 2018, and 2019. Between 2018 and 2022, citizen complaints for the park ranger team (not including encampment complaints) grew by over 36 per cent, reducing the proactive capacity of the park rangers. Not including increasing encampment complaints, the park ranger team workload has been driven by the significant increase in river use over the last five years, wildlife management complaints and parking issues in parks. Work is largely complaints-driven, with the exception of an intentional increase in proactive deployments of the marine safety unit (approximately 50 per cent increase for 2023 over 2022). As a result, park rangers are limited in their ability to provide a public safety and environmental stewardship presence in the river valley system and do not have the capacity to proactively manage parkland-related issues, which includes the city's coyote population. There are no other layers of law enforcement dedicated to the parkland system.

In 2023, temporary resourcing on the park ranger team offset the peace officers who had been redeployed to manage encampments. This allowed the park ranger team to dedicate 38 per cent of its time (year to date) to proactive enforcement presence in the city's parkland and river valley, up from approximately 30 per cent from 2020-2022. For the park ranger team, proactive enforcement includes providing a public safety presence, wayfinding services and deterrence of unwanted activities on multi-use trails and in parkland spaces.

Administration's optimal staffing levels would add 25-30 peace officer positions to provide a robust and proactive presence in the parks and the river valley network, as well as proactive management of coyotes and other problematic or dangerous wildlife. Complaint and investigation response times would be reduced and annual strategic and operational plans would include greater emphasis on public education and engagement, including expansion of existing relationships with Indigenous youth through organizations such as the amiskwacyi Academy.

Transit Peace Officer Team

In 2017, 59 per cent of the transit peace officer team's workload was proactive enforcement activities. This decreased to 55 per cent in 2018. This work included visible presence in transit facilities (including pedways and tunnel access points), fare compliance checks, and engagement with people in transit locations. Complaints and calls for service in the transit system have increased significantly, showing a 45 per cent increase by 2022 (up nearly 11,000 over 2018). As a result, transit peace officers were only able to dedicate 28 per cent of their time to proactive work in 2022. Because of the continued increase in complaints generating calls for service (on track for 2023 to see a

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35 per cent increase over 2022), and despite the creation of the Transit Community Action Team, year-to-date proactive time in 2023 has still only been able to maintain proactive service allocation at 27 per cent.

Administration's optimal staffing levels for the transit peace officer team would create four additional Transit Community Action Teams to provide a consistent presence in the current hotspot locations, more presence on LRT vehicles and provide dedicated TPO resources on the transit network's buses. Routine proactive presence on buses would target routes which see the majority of safety, security and fare refusal issues. Optimal staffing levels would also ensure more robust resourcing for the overall TPO team and ancillary support services, including data analysis, training, dispatch and administrative services. To add four new Transit Community Action Team teams, Administration would require 40 peace officers, four sergeants, and the appropriate administrative, managerial and ancillary resources, including the equipment and vehicles to support such work.

Community Safety Teams

As part of the Healthy Streets Operation Centre project, City of Edmonton peace officers collaborate with community safety liaisons, fire safety and prevention resources, Emergency Medical Services and Edmonton Police Service resources. Operating in Chinatown, Downtown and the Kingsway Business District, these teams maximize their impact on the community and use new methods of data analysis to determine deployment strategies and problem-oriented community projects. The teams launched in January 2023 and initial data analysis suggests this approach is proving effective in community safety outcomes. It should be noted that the peace officer, community safety liaisons and fire prevention resources of the Healthy Streets Operation Centre project are only funded until the end of 2024 as a pilot project. The Edmonton Police Service has advised Administration that they committed to this program as part of their ongoing base budget past 2024.

Vehicle Noise Enforcement

Edmonton Police Service (EPS) remains the lead law enforcement agency responsible for overall traffic safety and traffic enforcement. Currently, the City of Edmonton participates in the EPS-led project TENSOR which targets hotspot locations for noise and speed offence reduction. An unfunded service package for a peace officer traffic enforcement team was submitted for the Fall 2023 Supplemental Operating Budget Adjustment deliberations, following direction from Council. Part of the team's role would be to increase the vehicle noise enforcement efforts in the city, however, motorcycle noise enforcement and related-speed enforcement would require additional training, vehicles and equipment to conduct this work. Approximately 1,000

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complaints for vehicle noise are directed to the EPS each year. Although this complaint number is lower than some of the other issues discussed in this report, it continues to be an issue for many Edmontonians. Increased proactive efforts in identified hotspots would likely serve to decrease those complaints.

Unmet requests

Administration has received requests to provide proactive peace officer presence in some City of Edmonton recreation centres, some Edmonton Public Libraries (EPL) facilities and in some Business Improvement Areas (BIAs). Additionally, requests have been made for proactive peace officer presence to support festivals and community events. While these requests have been considered, Administration does not have the resources to provide sustainable and regular services in this capacity. This remains an unmet request for proactive presence. A full assessment of the needs of City of Edmonton Recreation Centres, EPL locations, BIAs, and festivals and events has not been conducted and would be needed to recommend appropriate staffing levels for proactive enforcement support of those locations.