

# Development Permit Expedited Program

(M. Nickel)

## Recommendation:

That the September 28, 2016, Sustainable Development report CR\_3850, be received for information.

## Report Summary

**This report discusses the overall success of the Development Permit Expedited Program and feasibility of extending the Program to other forms of development.**

## Previous Council/Committee Action

At the September 19, 2016, Agenda Review Committee meeting, this report was rerouted to the September 28, 2016, Urban Planning Committee meeting.

At the June 28, 2016, City Council meeting, Councillor M. Nickel made the following inquiry:

1. Can Administration provide a status report regarding the overall success of the development permit expedited Program? Within the report, please provide the following:
  - Total Single Detached Housing permits issued per year through the Expedited Program (since 2012).
  - Percentage of Single Detached Housing permits issued per year through the Expedited Program.
  - Percentage of applications passing development review within two days (for 2015 and 2016 YTD).
  - Performance target for issuance of development and building permit and current timelines.
  - Number of builders that have participated in the Program and the associated training.
  - The number of builders that have entered non-audit status of the Program.
2. Also please provide the feasibility of extending this Program to include:
  - Semi-detached Housing
  - Zero Lot Line
  - Row Housing
  - Other Possible zones
  - Corner lots
3. Could consideration be given to lowering the minimum building requirements based on post-performance for low volume builders so they may participate in the Expedited Program?

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### Report

#### Success of the Development Permit Expedited Program

The Development Permit Expedited Program for Single Detached Housing in the RSL (Residential Small Lot) and RPL (Planned Lot Residential) Zones was introduced on February 1, 2012, as a pilot program and became a permanent program on February 1, 2013. The Program provides 'at a glance' review for Single Detached Housing development permit applications that comply with all regulations in Zoning Bylaw 12800. Qualified participants are guaranteed a development permit decision within two business days. The Expedited Program occurs independent from the building permit review.

Builders who obtained 20 new Single Detached Housing permits in the previous year qualify for participation in the Expedited Program. Participants must take a training class and are required to progress from an audited status to a non-audited status within the first four months. Thirty builders overall have participated in the Program and associated training. Currently, there are 18 builders in the Program, all of which are successfully maintaining non-audit status.

Since the launch of the Program, over 5,000 development permits have been issued and from January 2015 to July 2016, 98 percent of 1,254 expedited applications have been processed within two business days. Prior to the implementation of the Program, development permit decisions for Single Detached Housing historically took an average of 22 days. Attachment 1 describes how the Expedited Program fits in within the overall permitting process and Attachment 2 provides statistics on the number of permits issued and performance levels.

Overall, the Development Permit Expedited Program has been successful in providing quick and consistent outcomes for Single Detached Housing development permit applications that comply with all regulations in Zoning Bylaw 12800.

#### Feasibility of Expanding the Development Permit Expedited Program

Administration is continually seeking improvements to development permitting processes, including the feasibility of expanding the Development Permit Expedited Program. In 2014, Administration refined its processes and established a standardized five day development permit review for Semi-Detached Housing resulting in a reduction of the development and building permit processing time by 47 percent (from 34 to 18 days). Additionally, Administration has committed to reducing development permit processing for fee simple Row Housing applications from 24 to 10 days. Attachment 3 shows the service level improvements for Semi-Detached Housing applications, demonstrating an expedited process without formally expanding the Expedited Development Permit Program.

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In an effort to prioritize improvement projects, while meeting the industry's need for timely and efficient service, Administration is focusing its efforts on various permit types that incorporates both the development and building permitting processes. The current priority project is eServices. eServices is a tool for online applications, payments and service enhancements for various services and permits.

To date, eServices has completed pet licensing and business licensing renewal (2014), land development coordination activities (2014 - 2016), Search of Records (2016) and Compliance Certificates (fourth quarter 2016). The next phase of eServices includes Single Detached Housing, Semi-Detached Housing and Row Housing. Attachment 4 outlines eServices target launch dates.

Over the last few years, Administration has worked in collaboration with the Canadian Home Builders' Association - Edmonton Region and made numerous improvements to the development permitting process. In May 2016, the following priority projects were set for 2016 and 2017:

- Online applications, payment and service enhancements (eServices) for Single Detached Housing, Semi-Detached Housing and Row Housing applications
- Automated approvals for partial footings and foundation permits immediately after the development permit is approved
- Automated email notifications and status updates
- Streamlined development and building permit transition hand-off review process.
- Increased education on submission requirements to stakeholders via training and various tools and resources

Administration targets revisiting the expansion of the Development Permit Expedited Program to other permit types in late 2017 once major components of eServices have been launched and other current initiatives are completed.

### Revising Participation Requirements For Low Volume Builders

In 2012, during its first year as a pilot program, builders were required to have submitted 50 Single Detached Housing development permit applications to qualify for the Development Permit Expedited Program. In 2014, the requirements were lowered to 20 development permit applications, allowing low volume builders to participate in the Program. Administration intends to revisit the training requirements and current audit processes while concurrently reviewing the possibility of expanding the Program to accommodate lower volume builders.

### **Policy**

This report is supported by policies of *The Way We Grow*, Edmonton's Municipal Development Plan, Bylaw 15100:

- 4.4.1 Ensure neighbourhoods have a range of housing choice to meet the needs of all demographic and income groups and create more socially sustainable

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communities.

- 5.1.1.5 Take a leadership role in facilitating the creation of environmentally sustainable neighbourhoods, buildings and public spaces and encourage private sector approaches to environmental sustainability.

### Metrics, Targets and Outcomes

The attachments of this report provide details on the specifics of Expedited Development Permit Program statistics, performance targets, and list of eServices initiatives.

<b>Metrics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 963 Development Permit Expedited Program applications processed in 2015.</li><li>• 3,945 Single Detached Housing development permits processed in 2015.</li><li>• 516 Semi-Detached Housing development permits processed in 2015.</li><li>• 18.2 working days to review a Semi-Detached Housing application (development and building permits) in 2015.</li><li>• 34 working days to review a Semi-Detached Housing application in 2012.</li></ul>
<b>Targets</b>	<p><u>Expedited Development Permit Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintaining two day review process for Development Permit approvals.</li><li>• Re-evaluating components of the expanding the Expedited Program post-launch of eServices (2017-2018).</li></ul> <p><u>eServices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standardize staff assignment to one working day.</li><li>• Estimated 75 percent reduction in paper applications for development and building permit applications.</li><li>• Estimated \$340 reduction in cost per application for reduced administrative efforts involved in intake, paper handling, reviewing and scanning - resulting in yearly savings of \$324,360 reduction in review time.</li></ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<p><u>eServices &amp; Expedited Development Permit Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Elimination of “sitting time” of applications waiting for assignment.</li><li>• Elimination of “travel time” of applications due to physical submission in person.</li><li>• Reduced reliance on mail services to transport drawings and plans</li><li>• Reduce overall number of working days review development and building permit applications.</li></ul>

### Attachments

1. Permitting Process and Performance Targets for the Development Permit Expedited Program
2. Number of Expedited Applications and Percentage of Performance Targets Meeting Two Day Service Levels (2012-2015)
3. Semi-Detached Housing - Development and Building Permit Processing Timelines
4. Phase II eServices target launch dates (2016-2017)

### Others Reviewing this Report

- C. Campbell, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Public Engagement
- D. Jones, Deputy City Manager, City Operations