

CONSTRUCTION ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM STATUS UPDATE

Recommendation

That the March 23, 2026, Urban Planning and Economy report UPE03323, be received for information.

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| Requested Action | Information only |
| ConnectEdmonton's Guiding Principle | ConnectEdmonton Strategic Goals |
| CONNECTED This unifies our work to achieve our strategic goals. | Urban Places |
| City Plan Values | LIVE. THRIVE. PRESERVE. CREATE. |
| Corporate Business Plan | Transforming for the future |
| Council Policy, Program or Project Relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bylaw 15894 - Safety Codes Permit Bylaw • Construction Accountability Program (CAP) • Project Implementation Plan (PIP) |
| Related Council Discussions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 13, 2024, Urban Planning Committee, UPE01993 Construction Site Safety and Accountability - Impact Assessment • August 13, 2024, Urban Planning Committee, UPE02150 Allocation of Enforcement or Compliance Resources • November 26, 2024, Urban Planning Committee, UPE02661, Policy C610 Review to Explore Enforcement Related Resource Supports |

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the December 15, 2025, City Council Public Hearing meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report with an update on the implementation status of the Construction Accountability Program.

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Executive Summary

- The City Plan envisions the City's growth to 2 million residents and 50 per cent of all units be accommodated in the redeveloping area. In alignment with this goal, Administration is prioritizing strategies to support safe construction practices.
- The Project Implementation Plan (PIP) is now in effect. It guides applicants through education and construction planning.
- Administration researched the feasibility of the Construction Accountability Program (CAP). Under the Safety Codes Act, there is no authority for a municipality to refuse a permit based on a builder's history.
- Administration is advancing the implementation of CAP, shifting the focus from permit refusal to a data-driven oversight, utilizing existing authority to enhance accountability, streamline complex complaint management and implement targeted requirements for non-compliant builders.

REPORT

The City Plan envisions a population of 2 million, with the goal of adding 50 per cent of new units within the redeveloping area. With the implementation of Zoning Bylaw 20001 in January 2024, increased infill construction is occurring and has resulted in a rise in complaints, highlighting a critical need for building partners to gain greater familiarity with the requirements of all applicable legislation (see Attachment 1). Acknowledging the complexity of this work, the City has prioritized strategies that support safe construction. While the majority of builders comply with applicable standards, a minority of non-compliant sites can negatively affect adjacent properties. Such instances can introduce safety hazards and necessitate disproportionate use of City resources.

Administration brought the UPE01993, Construction Site Safety and Accountability - Impact Assessment, to the August 13, 2024 Urban Planning Committee meeting. This report discussed the creation of two new compliance tools to ensure safe building activity and to address issues and complaints: the Project Implementation Plan (PIP) and the Construction Accountability Program (CAP).

Project Implementation Plan (PIP)

Builders prepare a PIP as a document package that outlines and records how the project team intends to comply with all applicable legislation, regulations and guidelines throughout the construction process. Project teams must confirm they will create a PIP before construction begins by submitting a letter of commitment with their building permit applications. The City then solidifies the PIP as a condition of the issued permit. This process ensures that applicants have a clear plan for safe project execution and a full understanding of their responsibilities.

The accompanying PIP guide centralizes relevant legislation into one place; it contextualizes and explains requirements for builders to ensure they are easily understood. Implemented in

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December 2024, the PIP is mandatory for all new construction building permits and projects involving substantial exterior modifications.

Construction Accountability Program (CAP)

CAP was initially designed to establish a permit-refusal process to address builders with repeated non-compliant site conditions or consistently poor-quality permit submissions. These compliance challenges necessitate significant City resources for processing complaints, re-reviewing applications and repeated enforcement activities. Addressing these issues is critical to maintaining public trust in the permitting and construction process.

Administration's intent to strengthen the legal framework for CAP by proposing an amended Safety Codes Permit Bylaw led to a final legal review. This review provided the necessary clarity regarding the jurisdictional limits of the *Safety Codes Act*, allowing the Administration to pivot and develop a refined, legally-sound strategy that leverages existing authority to enhance builder accountability.

With regards to CAP, Administration is taking the following steps within its jurisdiction:

- **Establishing a performance-based system:** This helps to objectively identify builders with low compliance rates. This allows Administration to apply a high oversight status to those who repeatedly fail to meet standards. This is scheduled to launch in Q4 2026.
- **Mandatory PIP for high oversight:** Requiring a completed PIP with the permit applications for those in high oversight status in addition to the letter of commitment. Enabled through Section 20(i) of the provincial *Permit Regulation*, this provides an essential layer of information and oversight by ensuring the City reviews critical compliance documentation before construction begins. This is scheduled to launch in Q1 2027.
- **Implementing a training program:** This would be available to applicants and constructors in high oversight status. Successful completion will serve as a pathway to revert to standard oversight status. Program development concludes in Q4 2026, with delivery commencing in Q1 2027.
- **Developing a proactive inspections framework:** During high-risk phases such as demolition, excavation and foundation installation this framework would be used as a means to move from the reactive, request-based model to a proactive approach where dedicated inspectors are dispatched unprompted during critical milestones. This enables proactive oversight of high-risk phases and enables real-time mitigation of critical safety risks. The framework is slated for completion in Q4 2026, with a phased implementation beginning in Q1 2027.
- **Evaluating bylaw amendments to introduce a fee-recovery model for repeated non-compliance:** Administration will structure these additional fees to offset the costs incurred by intensified monitoring and the delivery of the training program. Bylaw amendments planned for Q1 2027 will allow for fees to be levied.

In addition, Administration is taking the following steps to better manage builder non-compliance and to enhance oversight and accountability:

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- **Implementing the Coordinated Construction Accountability Team:** At the August 13, 2024, Urban Planning Committee meeting, Administration was directed to review and propose recommendations to amend Policy C610 - Fiscal Policy for the Planning and Development Business to enable the inclusion of compliance activities related to permitted construction activities through a coordinated compliance team.
 - Based on Administration's review, revisions to the Procedure under Policy C610 were made to enable the funding of new resources to streamline and centralize residential infill complaints and inquiries, and to implement the Coordinated Construction Accountability Team (CCAT).
 - Administration has finalized staffing and the organizational structure for CCAT. This team will lead cross-departmental responses to complex inquiries involving Development Compliance, Safety Codes, Lot Grading, Landscaping, Problem Properties and Community Standards. By ensuring consistent messaging and maintaining active communication with inquirers throughout the process, the team enhances public trust.
- **Launching a coordinated construction complaints initiative:** The CCAT team will use a unified, transparent approach to managing construction complaints. Data and outcomes from the initial project phase will directly inform the team's long-term evolution and operational structure. The initial phase is starting in Q2 2026.
- **Developing data-driven oversight:** Administration is developing an internal dashboard to analyze trends in construction practices, with launch planned for Q1 2027. This tool will allow Administration to determine the root cause of an issue, identify recurring patterns of non-compliance and address them proactively.

Administration remains committed to achieving compliance through collaboration with the building community. To support this objective, Administration has implemented the following measures:

- Restored the public-facing Infill Compliance Dashboard,¹ which provides real-time data for evidence-based decision making. This action reinforces transparency by ensuring that Edmontonians have reliable access to information about compliance with infill regulations.
- Updated the "Infill in Your Neighbourhood" web page,² which offers resources for residents and builders as they navigate the development process.
- Strengthened the partnership with provincial Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) by conducting joint inspections. This has facilitated mutual learning among agencies and heightened the focus on safety compliance while signalling a proactive approach to the building community.

Furthermore, the Safety Codes, Permits and Inspection section, in coordination with Legal Services, is streamlining enforcement and expanding prosecution efforts for high-risk files. Administration has advanced several cases to court, resulting in formal charges and is currently preparing additional prosecutions. Escalating files to the judicial system deters non-compliance.

¹ <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/city.of.edmonton/viz/InfillComplianceDashboard/InfillComplianceDashboard>. City of Edmonton. Cited February 13, 2026.

² https://www.edmonton.ca/residential_neighbourhoods/development-in-your-neighbourhood. City of Edmonton. Cited February 13, 2026.

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In several high-priority cases, this approach promoted compliance before the formal court proceedings were initiated.

Current Focus

Overall, Administration is committed to ensuring compliance and construction safety outcomes. CAP remains a priority for Administration and is one tool within the system to support compliance objectives.

Legal Implications

The *Safety Codes Act* governs safety standards for Alberta's buildings. Alberta Municipal Affairs administers the *Act*, which applies to municipalities like the City of Edmonton as the authority having jurisdiction.

The *Act* sets out the following:

- It expressly limits a municipality's authority through Section 66. This section renders any overlapping or contradictory bylaw inoperative.
- It regulates permit applications and issuance. It states that a municipality may issue a permit to an applicant who complies with the *Act's* requirements. Therefore, it provides no legal authority for a municipality to refuse a permit based on a builder's past performance.

Community Insight

Administration gathered community insights by listening to residents and representatives of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) remarks at City Council public hearings. 311 complaint processing provided further perspective on the disruptive nature of poor construction practices. These perspectives directly shaped the development of the PIP and CAP programs. Following extensive consultation, both BILD Edmonton Metro and the EFCL signalled strong support for these initiatives, reinforcing the collective need for increased builder accountability.

GBA+

The design and implementation of the CAP provides an opportunity to apply a GBA+ to the administration of the *Safety Codes Act*. The *Act* itself does not explicitly consider GBA+, however Administration's proactive equity lens promotes awareness of all regulatory requirements. This ensures all builders – regardless of firm size or background – are incentivized and evaluated under a consistent framework to mitigate systemic biases. CAP is intended to reduce instances of non-compliance by providing appropriate resources and discouraging unsafe building practices.

To promote compliance, CAP follows the "4E" model of enforcement: Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce. By prioritizing the first three stages, Administration is moving beyond financial penalties to foster genuine operational improvements. Enforcement is utilized as a last resort when earlier interventions have proven unsuccessful. This approach allows Administration to tailor compliance efforts effectively.

The development of the CAP program incorporates industry feedback alongside resident testimonies regarding the disproportionate impacts of construction on neighbours with varying age, mobility and socio-economic status. Administration is applying a GBA+ lens while conducting

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data analysis to develop a CAP system that avoids inadvertent discrimination against specific groups. Ongoing iterative reviews and data-driven adjustments will ensure the program is responsive to the diverse needs of industry partners and the public.

Environment and Climate Review

These two programs consider environmental impacts:

- Enhanced oversight extends the building lifespans.
- Preventing damage to public and neighbouring properties preserves homes, thereby reducing demand for new materials and preventing waste generation.
- Safeguarding landscapes and vegetation also helps protect the City's urban forest.
- Compliance with construction rules maintains air quality. For example, mitigating dust on-site lowers air pollution for the public and proper construction site drainage helps prevent flooding during heavy rainfall.

Attachments

1. Legislation Governing Infill Construction