

Permit and Licensing Improvement - Approach

Administration launched the Permit and Licensing Improvement Initiative (edmonton.ca/permitimprovements) in January 2020.

The goal of the initiative is to improve customer experience when interacting with permit and licence services, including:

- service delivery and interactions that align with customer needs,
- appropriate timelines for permit and licence services, and
- increased transparency and predictability of application processes.

Improvements Underway

The Deliver Phase has started by focusing on the following improvements, each to be in place by the end of 2020.

1. Risk-based approach to reduce Permit Clearances (Building Permits) - Complete

Reducing the time required to get a business license by limiting the business license customers required to go through the building permit clearance queue.

2. Setting Service Level Targets

Service level targets will be set and communicated for permit and licensing services. Setting service level targets drives improvement efforts, sets expectations for customers and helps them plan.

3. Pilot an on-going customer satisfaction survey

Having an ongoing customer satisfaction survey allows us to see how we're doing over time in improving customer satisfaction and gives real-time feedback about how we can improve.

4. Remove email submission channel for Business License applications

When customers submit application requests online, it means staff don't have to manually input information received via email. This frees up staff time to focus on value-add activities.

5. Reduce and refine application requirements for decks and garages to support complete applications

Helping customers submit complete applications the first time by removing unnecessary requirements and refining how we communicate requirements to customers will avoid unnecessary rework.

6. Reduce processing where not required by regulation (Commercial Development Permits)

Development Officers will no longer review building permit applications for change of use requirements for certain business types where no longer required by regulations. This frees up staff time to focus on value-add activities.

7. Allow partial construction permission for interior alterations (Commercial Building Permits)

Deconstruction and under-floor service/utility work are examples of construction that could occur while waiting for the Building Permit to be issued. This reduces the impact of processing time on businesses.

8. Review fire safety plan requirements for interior alterations

Working with Fire Rescue Services to review Fire Safety Plans for interior alterations from previous risk assessments. This will provide clarity to our customers and reduce time required to provide the plans.

9. Zoning Bylaw Omnibus for service improvements

While waiting for the Zoning Bylaw Renewal, there are a number of proposed amendments that can be proposed to reduce cost, improve service timelines and simplify requirements or processes for customers.

The remainder of the Deliver phase will focus on improvements under for main focus areas to move towards reliable (ie. consistently good in quality or performance; able to be trusted) service.

1. Improve service delivery (Commercial Permitting / Business Licences)
2. Improve service experience (Commercial Permitting / Business Licences)
3. Improve service delivery (Residential - Home Improvements)
4. Improve service experience (Residential - Home Improvements)

The service delivery applies process improvement tools coupled with risk-based analysis to improve the flow of the service. This includes process changes (ie. eliminate steps or requirements, perform concurrent activities, address backlogs) along with operational and management changes (ie. file assignment, tiering of applications)

The service experience applies a service design approach focused on the customer experience.

Overall Approach

A phased and iterative approach focuses on changes on those most impactful to improving the customer experience. Improvements are focused on the City of

Edmonton's application processes and requirements, Administrative work units involved, how and when applications are reviewed, how resources are allocated, and what, when and how information is provided to customers.

An overview of the initiative's approach and timelines is given below.

Initiative Phase	Timeframe
Phase 1: Discover & Define <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the customer's needs (eg. journey mapping) Homeowners, Business Owners and Contractors (renovations) Understand service delivery Research and data analysis (quantitative and qualitative) Prioritize the key opportunities for improvement 	Q1 to Q2 2020 Completed
Phase 2: Develop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperatively design solutions that modify service to align with customer needs Prioritize and plan the delivery of solutions 	Q2 to Q4 2020 In progress
Phase 3: Deliver <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement changes that enable businesses through a series of coordinated projects Report in Q3 2021 to report on the improvements implemented. 	Q3 2020 to Q4 2021 In progress