

## Learnings and Observations

All infractions are not equal and the current systems that help some people feel safe can cause others to feel unsafe and experience harm as a result. This review considers the harm these bylaws have on some people in our community. Administration recognizes that moving forward, more work needs to be done in applying an anti-racism lens, improving communication with communities and outlining the reasons why bylaws are in place and clearly articulating the desired outcomes. Steps will need to be taken to make sure there is a balance between ensuring the intent of the bylaw and explicitly ensuring harm is not caused through subjective enforcement. More attention needs to be placed on gathering relevant and accurate information and race-based data, identifying the needs of communities of diversity, and using that intelligence to inform policy development and enforcement approaches.

Administration has been attempting to tackle challenging issues like systemic racism and unintentional bias through applying a multi-layered approach for over a decade. From addressing root cause social issues to programs targeted on infrastructure, accessibility, and internal programs to improve policy and operations. A few key examples of these efforts are:

- EndPovertyEdmonton
- Edmonton's Plan to End Homelessness
- Providing Accessible Transit Here (PATH) Program
- Public Washroom Strategy
- Urban Isolation and Mental Health
- Diversity and Inclusion training
- GBA+ employee training
- Trauma-informed care training
- Understanding vulnerability interacting with homeless training
- Anti-racism employee training

Robust education, on-going training and awareness of bias are critical mitigation strategies to prevent pretence policing and avoid the misuse of bylaws. This will require the continuous improvement and training of all officers in order to advance changes in this direction. Bringing awareness to unintentional biases and providing alternative options to formal sanctions such as the issuance of violation tickets and the use of trespass bans can help to reduce the involvement of individuals with the criminal justice system and address biased or pretence practices.

The Edmonton Police Service has begun to implement changes in enforcement practices (November 16, 2020, Edmonton Police Commission report CR\_8439,

Progress Report on the City of Edmonton Street Check Report). Additionally, Administration has made changes to approaches and practices like fare evasion enforcement and fines (March 24, 2021, Citizen Services report CR\_8129 Transit Tickets and No Fixed Address / March 24, 2021, City Operations report CR\_7813 Transit Fare Fines).

Tangible steps have been taken by Administration on monitoring activity in city parks and on the transit system, including an updated approach from ticketing individuals to providing referrals or assistance when possible. This change in approach has seen a reduction in the number of violation tickets issued, an increase in the number of warnings and educational/awareness conversations and a marked increase in referrals of individuals to human safety and wellbeing programs or agencies. Using referrals as a diversion option instead of using formal sanctions is believed to have had a positive impact on marginalized or vulnerable individuals and includes things such as medical aid, service referral, supplying personal necessities and/or transport to other locations or shelters.

Officers receive annual refresher training to maintain skills and core competencies along with the addition of new training to evolve how enforcement services are being delivered to the community. Ensuring officers are properly trained is not only a mandate of the province but also part of the important response to complex social issues.

Officers receive technical training refreshers on arrest authorities to ensure that they are aware of their lawful authorities and receive updates on new bylaws and provincial acts. In recent years, officers have also been gaining more exposure and training on social issues, mental health first aid, diversity and inclusion, GBA+, understanding vulnerability, interacting with people experiencing homelessness and trauma-informed care. Potential new anti-racism and scenario-based live training on interacting with vulnerable persons is being developed. Administration is also participating with the Coalition Creating Equity, a province-wide community of practice that supports the advancements of all equity issues and greater awareness of the human rights of Albertans, as well as the Edmonton Police Service's Commitment to Action team.

Additionally, officers have expanded and elevated partnerships with social agencies such as Boyle Street, REACH, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Bissell Centre, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Mosaic Centre, iHuman, Native Counselling Services of Alberta, YESS and increased referrals to 24/7 Crisis Diversion.

These new training and partnerships reinforce the approach that enforcement and ticketing is not always necessary or a desired outcome when dealing with some populations. Interacting with vulnerable or at-risk persons often means

providing support including connecting to social agencies, income assistance and diversion from institutional controls.

Administration has started to explore improvements to the recruitment process for peace officers to address diversity, inclusion and unconscious bias in enforcement. Beginning in 2020, interviews for officers included a question on diversity and bias in enforcement. Currently, Administration is reviewing peace officer postings including qualifications, specifically to add wording and consideration related to experience with marginalized communities through volunteer work which is being considered to ensure that postings recognize and value diverse experiences.

Compassion, compliance and empathy are pillars to creating effective enforcement cultures as is developing a compassionate mindset of our leaders of service and continuing investment in their ongoing training and development.