

# Property Maintenance and Nuisance Abatement Bylaw – Follow-up

## ISSUE

A backlog of property maintenance complaints has been partially addressed through the establishment of a pilot program in spring 2018. A Bylaw Inspector provided approximately 50% of their time to address Priority 3 property maintenance complaints. What resources would be required on a temporary basis to address the remaining backlog?

## BACKGROUND

The Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services, at its meeting held on November 5, 2019, considered the report of the Fire Chief entitled Property Maintenance and Nuisance Abatement Bylaw Update [File No. CK 116-2, 4400-1 and CP 0116-04], and resolved as noted:

- 1) That the Administration report to the 2020/2021 Preliminary Business Plan and Budget Deliberations with options to close the gap in capacity in order to address reported Property Maintenance and Nuisance Abatement Bylaw complaints and move toward a more proactive enforcement process, starting with areas where this is deemed most needed; and
- 2) That Administration track and submit a report on the response times for dealing with property maintenance bylaw complaints.

## CURRENT STATUS

Fire Inspectors are responsible for addressing contraventions under the Property and Nuisance Abatement Bylaw 8175 (the Bylaw). This work is completed primarily on a complaint-driven basis. A priority system is followed when conducting all inspections.

Complaints are prioritized and categorized as:

- Priority 1: presenting a direct risk exposing the public to an unacceptable risk of injury
- Priority 2: presenting a limited risk to an unacceptable risk of injury to persons, or related to a building exposed to an unacceptable risk to cause damage
- Priority 3: presenting a negligible risk to injury to persons or causing damage to a building, but otherwise create a nuisance

A pilot program, operational since the spring 2018, has assigned approximately 50% of time, from a Bylaw Inspector, to help address Priority 3 complaints related to overgrown grass and weeds, junked vehicles and junk and garbage on a property. This has been beneficial in reducing the backlog by approximately 1/3.

**DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS**

Review of 2019 data suggests that the average time for staff to address and gain compliance on property maintenance and nuisance complaints exceeds the desired service levels; as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 - Timelines to Address Complaints (based on 2019 data)**

<b>Complaint Priority</b>	<b>Intended Timelines to Address Complaint</b>	<b>Actual Timelines to Address Complaints (average)</b>	<b>Actual Timeline to Achieve Compliance (average)*</b>
Priority 1	24 hours	10 days	53 days
Priority 2	48 hours	46 days	78 days
Priority 3	within 7 days	48 days	72 days

\*The timelines to achieve compliance may be impacted by a number of factors such as legislated requirements for entry on to a property, appeals, court scheduling, and weather conditions for graffiti complaints which are out of the control of the fire inspector.

Data gathered through 2019 suggests that one full-time Inspector can address approximately 1,200 Priority 3 complaints per year. A backlog remains, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2 - 2020 Projected Complaints**

<b>Complaint Priority</b>	<b>Current Backlog</b>	<b>Projected Complaints 2020</b>	<b>Projected Complaints and Backlog 2020</b>
Priority 1	18	226	244
Priority 2	133	410	543
Priority 3	1,288	1,903	3,191
Total	1,439	2,539	3,978

In order to address the backlog, considering that inspection requests continue to come in, an additional 1.5 temporary FTEs could be hired for 2020 to address Priority 3 complaints. The current .5 FTE provided through the Community Standards Division, would continue. The Administration will provide an update report in Q3 of 2020 in order that Council could consider this matter in future budget debates.

**IMPLICATIONS**

Financial implications for the temporary program would include salary, payroll, and related expenses (e.g. car allowance, cell phone, training) to support the proposed additional staff. This is estimated at approximately \$80,000 per year for each FTE, for a total budget impact of \$120,000 in 2020 for 1.5 FTEs.

**NEXT STEPS**

Administration will report back in Q3 of 2020 on the program, whether or not Council chooses to add temporary resources in 2021.

In order to identify the long-term resourcing needs, a service level review, specific to the enforcement of the Bylaw, is proposed to be undertaken with budget options to be brought forward for consideration for the 2022 budget.

Report Approval

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