

Subject: Bylaw No. 17/023 - Safety Codes Permitting Bylaw**APPROVALS:****Annette Antoniak**_____
Director_____
Chief Administrative Officer**Recommended Motion:**

1. THAT Bylaw No. 17/023, being the Safety Codes Permitting Bylaw, be read a second time.
2. THAT Bylaw No. 17/023 be read a third and final time.

Summary:

Safety Codes Bylaw No. 96/016 has not been updated since the Municipality became accredited by the Safety Codes Council of Alberta in 1996. In 2015 the Municipality transitioned the Safety Codes service delivery in-house; therefore, the bylaw requires updating to reflect appropriate business practices and service delivery to the region. Bylaw No. 17/023 has been drafted to establish parameters and to administer an effective compliance monitoring program and to ensure the residents are adequately protected during the occupancy, construction or alteration of a structure and the installation of any mechanical or electrical system.

Background:

The Safety Codes Bylaw was established to identify additional administrative requirements for the Safety Codes permitting that were not identified in the Safety Codes Act, the Alberta Permitting Regulations or the Quality Management Plan. Bylaw No. 96/016 was very rarely used after the privatization of the Safety Codes System in 1995. Once the Safety Codes System was privatized, the Safety Codes compliance monitoring was outsourced to an accredited agency. The contract that was drafted between the Municipality and the agency took precedence and identified services to be provided, permitting fees and revenue sharing.

Once the agency commenced services, attention to permit issuance and permit closure was the priority and very little support was provided with respect to enforcement or follow up with non-compliance complaints. Furthermore, there was a minimal presence in the region to monitor non-permitted construction. As a result, a substantial amount of construction was completed without permits or inspections and there were minimal consequences to these actions. This has resulted in non-compliant structures, safety concerns and frustrated residents.

In 2015, the Planning and Development department transitioned all Safety Codes Services in-house to streamline services and to adequately manage the administration of the Safety Codes Act. In 2016 the Safety Codes Council awarded the Regional Municipality based on the following criteria:

- Exhibits integrity and excellence in safety codes administration.
- Exhibits innovation in the methodology of safety codes administration.
- Exhibits innovation in the use of technology in safety codes administration.
- Supports its staff and encourages professional development.
- Promotes the safety codes system to the public or educates the public about the safety codes system.

The selection panel awarded the Municipality's Safety Codes Branch Accreditation of the Year as the changes made by the organization in administering the Safety Codes Act has identified the dedication the Municipality has to the Alberta Safety Codes System.

With the branch maturing, many services have been revised and some processes have been added to adapt to the evolving business of construction and compliance monitoring. With business changes and lessons learned, Bylaw No. 17/023 was drafted to accurately reflect standardized industry business practices and provide added protection to residents and provide tools to enhance enforcement to achieve code compliance.

Budget/Financial Implications:

The fee structure has been modified to align with the Alberta Safety Codes Authority (ASCA) and other major centers. Permitting fees have not been reviewed or updated since 2013.

Permitting fees have been increased slightly and the fee structure has been aligned to assist with cost recovery for the services provided. Additionally, fees for new services and penalties have been established for all services and for additional inspections that are incurred by non-compliant permit holders.

Rationale for Recommendation:

Bylaw No.17/023 will enable the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo to responsibly administer the Alberta Safety Codes Act and to maintain our Municipal Accreditation. Through the compliance monitoring process, the proposed update ensures permit holders will be accountable to adhere to the applicable codes and regulations that will improve and ensure the safety of the residents and improve building lifecycle.

Strategic Plan Linkages:

Pillar 1 - Building Responsible Government

Attachments:

1. Bylaw No. 17/023