



REQUEST FOR DECISION

MEETING DATE: May 27, 2024

TITLE: C-1312-24 - Community Standards Bylaw - Third Reading

DIVISION: Sustainable Growth and Development Services

SUMMARY:

Presentation of C-1312-24 Community Standards Bylaw (CSB) for third reading. The CSB was presented at the April 22, 2024 Council meeting for first and second readings.

PROPOSED MOTION:

THAT third reading be given to C-1312-24 - Community Standards Bylaw, as amended.

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS:

During the April 22, 2024 Council meeting, Administration presented the proposed CSB, along with the amendments that were requested by the Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) at the March 18 meeting.

Administration had initially proposed a 3-year, \$60 permit fee for a boulevard garden. As per Council's request, the duration of the \$60 fee has been reduced from 3 years to a one-time fee per homeowner. This change has been made in the *Development Fees and Fines Bylaw*, which will be addressed in a separate Request for Decision on bylaw amendments and repeals to effect the CSB. This permit fee will be assessed for each garden, per applicant.

Council also requested that the boulevard garden program guidelines be brought forward for review and discussion during the third reading of the CSB.

Since the April 22 meeting, Administration has made the following change to the CSB:

- Combining four offences under the noise control sections (cause / permit sound above daytime / overnight decibel limits and residential/non-residential setting) into one

offence of “cause / permit sound that disturbs the peace” (see Schedule A in Attachment 1). This change streamlines the enforcement process.

Boulevard Gardens

Administration has developed the Residential Boulevard Garden Guidelines (see Attachment 3) to support the CSB’s inclusion to allow residents to garden within the City right-of-way. Only boulevards separated by a public sidewalk require a permit (described as Type II in the Guidelines). Type I boulevards are viewed as extensions to front / side yards and typically have less or no pedestrian activity or concerns with infrastructure.

A permit for Type II boulevards has a one-time fee of \$60 based on the same homeowner. A new permit would only be required if an Applicant leaves / sells their residence. The new resident can apply and continue to boulevard garden or revert back to more traditional boulevard maintenance. This is to maintain a current contact on file should notice be required for work that may affect the garden.

The Residential Boulevard Garden Guidelines allows for both in-ground gardens as well as garden boxes for areas that may be less ideal for an in-ground garden or where a resident wishes to grow food. Setbacks have been included for both types of gardens to ensure safety of passers-by and to help protect the longevity of City owned infrastructure.

OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES:

Council may direct Administration to make further amendments.

CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT:

Public consultation on the proposed standards of the CSB took place over a nine-week period between May 7 and July 9, 2023. Members of Council and Administration attended several community events, information sessions, and committee meetings to raise awareness of the consultation and encourage residents to complete the survey. In total, 1,204 responses were received.

IMPLEMENTATION / COMMUNICATION:

At the April 22 Council meeting, proposed amendments and repeals to a number of existing City bylaws to effect the CSB passed first and second readings. The third reading of these proposed amendments and repeals is scheduled for discussion at the same Council meeting as the third reading of the CSB. As these are all linked, if the CSB is not approved at this time, these proposed amendments and repeals will not proceed.

Communications Plan

A robust communications plan has been developed to launch after the CSB passes third reading. The primary goal of the communications plan is to communicate the CSB and related topics to the community to support awareness and understanding of the bylaw before and after the implementation date of July 1, 2024.

Messaging will include what is new, what has changed, and how certain topics will impact residents, businesses, developers, property owners, community groups and utility companies in Spruce Grove.

Individual communications plans are being developed for nine specified topics in and related to the CSB:

1. Alcohol consumption in public parks pilot
2. Camping
3. Graffiti abatement
4. Nuisance and unsightly properties
5. Vegetation / weeds / trees and grass including naturalized yards and vegetation overhang
6. Boulevard gardens and driveway extensions
7. Recreational vehicles
8. Construction and building materials
9. Decibel limits

Communication goals also include supporting awareness and understanding of the CSB and related topics for staff so they can answer questions from the public and address any complaints.

More details can be found in the Communications Plan (Attachment 2).

Enforcement Approach and Implementation

When it comes to enforcement of the CSB, the approach for the City will generally remain the same, which will continue to consist of reactive or complaint-based activities with some proactive work as required. The overarching goal with the enforcement of any City Bylaw is to achieve compliance. One of the first and most effective tools officers utilize related to compliance is education and awareness, especially as it relates to new or amended bylaws. At the same time, officers have the ability, at their discretion, to utilize other tools up to and including orders and/or fines as per the specific bylaw, if necessary. For example, there are times when it is immediately clear that an individual will NOT comply, regardless of whether they are aware of the bylaw or not, and enforcement activity is warranted up front. For the most part, officers will always look to achieve compliance through education and awareness first.

IMPACTS:

The CSB will serve to regulate and enable activities related to the safety, health and welfare of residents, businesses, community organizations, building developers, commercial property owners, and utility companies on private and public property. It will provide a “one stop shop” for the community to find information on community standards.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

As discussed during the March 18 GPC and April 22 Council meetings, it is anticipated that to complete the work required in 2024 / 25, the following will be required:

Planning and Development and Engineering Departments:

- A one-time startup cost of \$50,000 to support system enhancements; and
- A temporary FTE for 18 months to support the development of permitting / licence processes for boulevard gardens, driveway extensions, and other related permitting activities that may be addressed as the CSB is implemented. The estimated cost is \$150,000.

These amounts were approved as part of the 2024 Spring Budget Adjustment at the April 8, 2024 Council meeting.

Community and Protective Services Department:

The intent of the CSB regarding enforcement is to maintain the current level of service. Enforcement Services has already reported high levels of compliance with previous bylaws; however, the CSB will only serve to allow for greater tools and clarity on continuing or increasing compliance with the provisions of the bylaw. As such, Enforcement Services is not recommending additional resources as a result of the CSB coming into effect.

Corporate Communications Department:

- \$18,000 for paid communication and awareness marketing tactics including videography, signage, printed materials and online ads. Budget breakdown is included in the attached communications plan.