

# Fire Inspection & Enforcement

Led by: Chief of Calgary Fire Department

## Service Description

Fire Inspection & Enforcement provides fire inspections of commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential occupancies, fire code consultations, and technical services to enhance public safety, ensure compliance with legislation, minimize fire-related risks, and protect lives, property and the environment. All fires are investigated in accordance with the Safety Codes Act to identify trends and advocate for code changes and product recalls to support community risk reduction efforts.

## Service Updates

### Key Service Results

The service conducted nearly 19,000 occupancy inspections with over 99 per cent delivered within the service level targets for Calgarians. A pilot investigator staffing model of three investigators per platoon during each 24-hour shift period has yielded benefits including improved report compliance, mental health and wellbeing of staff, and incident attendance. There is also evidence that cost savings have been realized compared to overtime usage.

The collaboration between Fire Inspection & Enforcement, Bylaw Education & Compliance, Calgary Police Service, Building Safety, and Alberta Health Services on the Coordinated Safety Response Team identified and addressed over 125 vacant and problem properties as part of a strategy to reduce community risk levels.

### Service Challenges

There are occupancy types in Calgary that currently would not be included in the service's inspections database since the service does not currently participate in occupancy inspections and certain business types that are governed by other authorities, like medical clinics and dental clinics, do not require a fire inspection after occupancy. This presents a potentially significant risk to the community in the event of an emergency, like the evacuation of sedated patients, or the storage and use of compressed gases or other potentially hazardous materials. The service is currently working on solutions that would improve its awareness of these types of businesses and developing plans to address the risks.

### Trends & Potential Uncertainties

Short Term Rentals continue to pose a risk to public safety due to unique challenges not reflected in Fire Code requirements and the volume of inspections required to ensure compliance. Solutions to address the ongoing housing crisis have implications for fire and life safety due to the intersection of urban densification and the increasing pressure on the building and development industry to move quickly. The service is also developing strategies to address the risks of new technologies, including lithium batteries and hydrogen fuel, and their widespread adoption.



# Measuring Our Performance

## Legend

— Actuals

■ Expected Future Performance

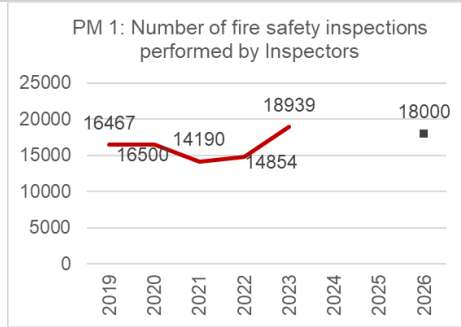
➔ Progressing as planned

⊖ Not progressing as planned

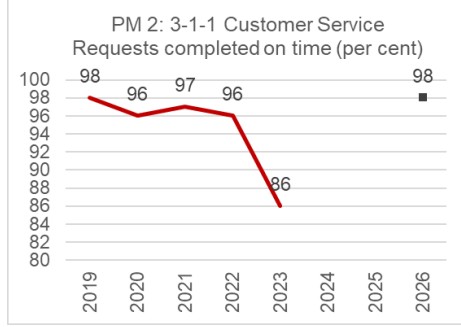
## Performance Measures

## Story behind the numbers

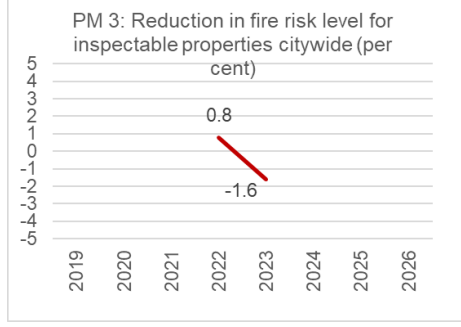
## Status



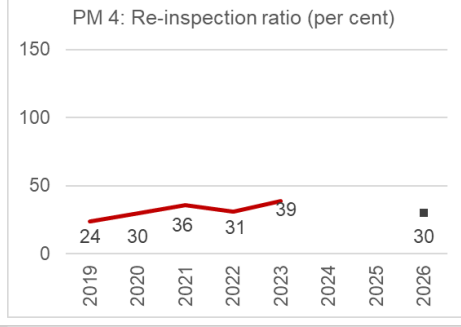
The service increased the volume of inspections in response to significant population growth in Calgary over the past few years. Roughly 50% of that growth has been in demographics that experience high risk factors for fire and life safety emergencies, including new Canadians and people with lower incomes. Social disorder trends in Calgary are also impacting fire safety practices in occupancies which is driving increased need for inspection and enforcement services.



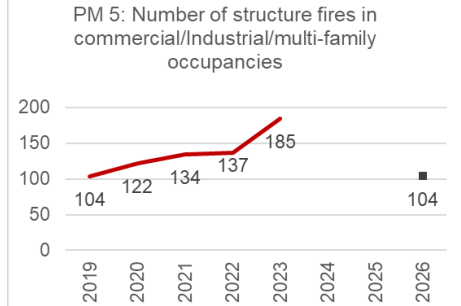
On-time completion rates for 3-1-1 request and complaint inspections were 86% in 2023. This is the result of reporting practices in 3-1-1 which leads to customer service requests remaining open until all re-inspections are complete and violations addressed. In over 99% of service requests, Inspection & Enforcement provides services to the customer within the service level targets. As fire code compliance issues become more complex, the service is finding more violations that are taking longer to be addressed by the responsible parties. This leads to multiple re-inspections over a longer period until compliance is achieved.



Despite completing over 1100 inspections in 2023 under the risk-based inspection model, the overall risk level for inspectable properties increased compared to the 2022 baseline. The Quality Management Plan (QMP) is being rewritten to reflect the risk-based inspection model. With this change, the service will require growth in available resources to have sufficient capacity to deliver both request and complaint services and the risk-based inspections model. Without sufficient resources to manage workloads, the service will face challenges in achieving the 2026 performance projection.

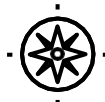


In 2023 the service partnered with Water Services, Alberta Environment, and Waste & Recycling Services to inspect high risk industrial properties. The service continues to observe an increase in the number and complexity of fire code violations which increases the need for multiple inspections to achieve compliance. To offset this, the service is communicating with, and educating, the business community to preempt issues and reduce the need for re-inspections stemming from violations that could be easily corrected or avoided.



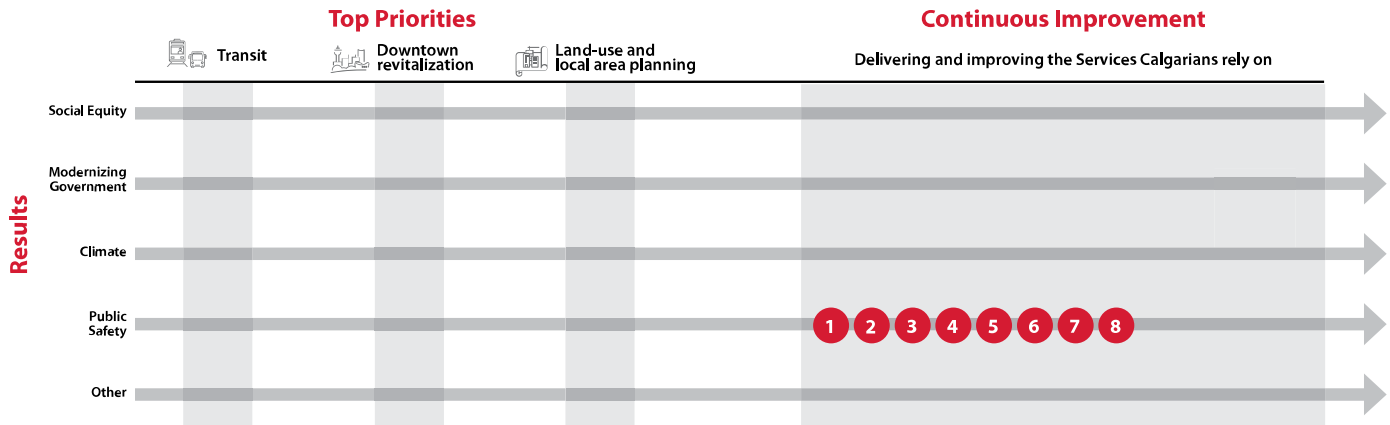
The number of fires in inspectable properties, including commercial, industrial, and multi-family occupancies, increased by over 30 per cent compared to 2022, driven primarily by an increase in industrial and commercial occupancy fires. For the first time in the past five years, the per cent increase in fires in inspectable properties exceeded the average overall increase in fires. The service is exploring delivery models that will enable expansion and enhancement of its risk-based program offerings to reduce the risk of fires in inspectable properties.








# Progress on Service Delivery

## Alignment with Council Refined Priorities and Result Areas



- Legend**
- ✔ Completed
  - ➡ Progressing as planned
  - ⊖ Not progressing as planned
  - ⏻ Not started
  - 1 Initiative number

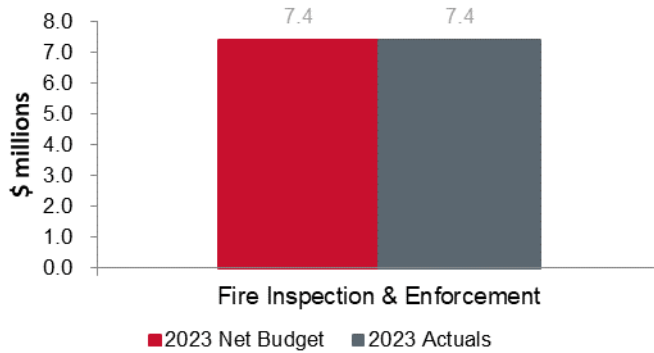
| Initiative                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Initiative Update                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Status                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Support safe public spaces and events through ongoing fire inspections, education and compliance monitoring while implementing a proactive risk-based inspections model to deliver targeted inspections for higher risk occupancies. | The service completed nearly 19,000 inspections in 2023 to ensure the safety of Calgarians as they live, work and play in public spaces. The High-Risk Inspections team collaborated with Water Services, Alberta Environment and Waste & Recycling to inspect high-risk industrial properties in Calgary. An increase in the number, and complexity, of compliance issues in high-risk occupancies required additional resources to address violations. The service is developing and implementing plans to address risks stemming from increasing social disorder, including overdoses, poisonings and rough sleeping. | <span style="color: blue;">➡</span> |
| 2 Ensure that the city continues to grow and develop safely by providing plans review, technical services support and planning for new communities, occupancies and commercial operations.                                             | The service has tripled its capacity for plans review and technical services support to alleviate delays in the building and development process. This reduces risks of compliance issues later in the construction and occupancy process, improving customer experience and overall public safety. Major projects underway involving the service include the BMO Expansion, the Calgary Event Centre, the Stephen Avenue revitalization and the Glenbow Museum renovation. The service is also responding to unique changes, including increasing automation and robotics in warehouses and businesses.                 | <span style="color: blue;">➡</span> |
| 3 Strengthen the sustainability of the service by investigating and recommending a funding model that supports the full breadth of services provided.                                                                                  | The service has identified gaps in the current service delivery models for fire prevention services within The City and is developing alternative proposals to address the challenges and improve service levels for Calgarians. In 2024, the service will engage with key partners to review potential models and incorporate feedback.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <span style="color: blue;">➡</span> |
| 4 Improve service levels for Calgarians by optimizing workforce capacity to align with service demand and workloads.                                                                                                                   | Calgary has experienced exponential growth recently and the service is facing challenges in keeping pace with the resulting demand. A flexible resourcing model was implemented to support decisions to dynamically shift capacity to areas with higher workloads. Investments to increase staffing have been prioritized and allocated to service areas with the greatest need, including fire investigation and plan reviews. Despite these improvements, there are insufficient resources available to deliver core services at the agreed service levels. Work is underway to identify alternative service models.   | <span style="color: blue;">➡</span> |
| 5 Reduce community risks and enhance public safety and socioeconomic resilience by providing investigation services to identify fire trends and drive code changes, education efforts and product recalls.                             | The number of fires requiring investigation has increased by 100 per cent over the past three years. The pilot model of three investigators has expanded capacity and Fire Investigators have been able to investigate fires as required. The service is also participating in a committee providing National Fire Code change recommendations to the National Research Council.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <span style="color: blue;">➡</span> |

| Initiative                                                                                                                                                                                       | Initiative Update                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Status                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6 Enhance fire prevention, loss reduction and safety codes compliance by maintaining staffing levels to support attendance of fire investigators at all fires according to the Safety Codes Act. | The pilot program for three investigators per platoon during each 24-hour shift period has yielded benefits including improved report compliance, mental health and wellbeing of staff and incident attendance. There is evidence that cost savings have been realized compared to OT use, and the next step would be a final decision to determine whether the model will be implemented permanently. |  |
| 7 Fulfill The City's commitment to the Province under the Quality Management Plan (QMP) to ensure compliance of buildings and businesses with the Safety Codes Act for the safety of Calgarians. | A final draft of the revised Quality Management Plan is currently being reviewed by Administration. Final approval by the Chief Administrative Officer and the Mayor is expected in Q1 2024.                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  |
| 8 Support emergency response enhancements, safety education and fire prevention initiatives by improving the collection, quality, and analysis of incident data.                                 | The service has initiated the process for a new Fire Records Management system to replace the existing system. This will improve data collection, reporting compliance, user experience and more. The service is also working with the Fire Commissioners Office to improve data collection across the province.                                                                                       |  |



## Service Updates on Financial Performance

### Net Operating Budget and Actuals as of December 31, 2023



### Operating Budget Updates - 2023 net operating budget vs actuals:

Fire Inspection and Enforcement has no operating budget variance for the reporting period.

In 2023, Fire Inspection and Enforcement saw the end of the City Council approved relief package which waived the business license collection along with fire inspection fees. Fire Inspections and Enforcement was able to draw on the Fiscal Stability Reserve to address the revenue shortfall until March 2023 when the program ended.

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### Capital Budget Updates - 2023 total capital budget vs 2023 spend:

Fire Inspection and Enforcement has no capital budget in 2023.