



November 22, 2024

Urban Planning Committee
City of Edmonton
1 Sir Winston Churchill Square
Edmonton, AB T5J 4R7

RE: Urban Planning Committee 7.1 Neighborhood Renewal Funding and Operational Impacts

Dear Mayor Sohi and Members of Edmonton's Urban Planning Committee:

BILD Edmonton Metro is a non-profit organization representing over 500 companies in the building and development industry. Our members are committed to shaping our region to ensure more people and businesses choose to live, invest, and thrive here.

BILD Edmonton Metro contends that ever-increasing standards and an ever-expanding municipal policy landscape have led to situations where infrastructure is overbuilt and design is inefficient. This adds costs to individual households and businesses through the price of homes and real estate, and to the city as a whole, through ever-expanding tax increases required to keep up with this expansion in the scope and scale of infrastructure. The ongoing Complete Streets review, for example, is proceeding with ballooning engineering and design requirements, which will negatively impact the ability for future budgets to absorb the operating and maintenance costs. Longer term, replacement costs for the renewal program will increase well beyond what the current program contemplates.

Other regulatory changes, such as eliminating concrete plants as a conforming land use in existing locations, will have long term impacts of driving more business out of the city boundaries. Such actions will further exacerbate cost inflation since the city, as a significant customer of concrete, will need to pay more to import that product from further away. We recommend amending the Zoning Bylaw to correct this issue at the earliest opportunity.

Increasing design requirements for roadways makes it difficult for Council to meet its climate goals, as well. More concrete through wider cross-sections, wider sidewalks, additional bump-outs, and more required laneways adds to the carbon footprint of the City of Edmonton. Designs that privilege hard infrastructure and utility service at the expense of permeable surfaces and landscaping are at odds with greening new neighborhoods.

We encourage City Council to take control of what is within its own ability and enact changes. There are many cost drivers that are out of the city's control, however standards and requirements that result in higher future costs to maintain and replace contributed assets is something that city administration can direct. Prudent decisions on design will ensure Council can meet its own goals, as set out in its vision documents, while pragmatically weighing how best to deliver services and amenities cost-effectively. Trade-offs need to be made to build the best version of the city that meets a variety of needs, and right-sizing infrastructure, with an eye to maintaining Edmonton's affordability, is an excellent place to start

BILD-EM remains dedicated to working alongside the City of Edmonton to achieve the shared vision of vibrant, sustainable neighbourhoods supported by effective and sustainable renewal initiatives. Thank you for considering our feedback, and we welcome future opportunities to engage in shaping livable, thriving urban spaces across Edmonton.

Sincerely,



Lindsey Butterfield, RPP
Vice- President, Government Relations & Policy
BILD Edmonton Metro

Copy: Office of the City Clerk
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Kalen Anderson, CEO, BILD-EM
Sherry Baik, Chair of Developer Technical Committee, BILD-EM
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