



May 7, 2025

Urban Planning Committee  
City of Edmonton  
1 Sir Winston Churchill Square  
Edmonton, AB T5J 2R7

RE: May 13 Urban Planning Committee Item 7.1 – Downtown Action Plan

Dear Members of Urban Planning Committee and City Council:

BILD Edmonton Metro is a non-profit organization representing over 500 companies in the building and development industry, committed to shaping our region and ensuring more people and businesses choose to live, invest, and thrive here. Our organization is pleased to share feedback on the City of Edmonton’s administrative report titled “Item 7.1 – Downtown Action Plan.”

Over the past year, our organization has worked closely with the City of Edmonton to support the revitalization of Edmonton’s downtown. Through this collaboration, BILD Edmonton Metro has contributed ideas and shared perspectives on several initiatives — including the potential extension of the Community Revitalization Levy (CRL), office-to-residential tower conversions, updated parking lot standards, and now, the Downtown Action Plan. As one of our top five advocacy priorities, downtown revitalization remains a central focus for our industry.

In the fall of 2024, BILD Edmonton Metro, alongside a coalition of public and private sector partners, launched the Downtown Investment Plan. This plan highlighted a critical trend: downtown Edmonton’s contribution to the city’s tax base has declined dramatically — from 10% in 2009 to just 5.2% in 2024. Despite the best of intentions, the lack of sustained investment and targeted programming has contributed to a concerning trajectory. It is clear: current approaches are not moving fast enough.

BILD Edmonton Metro is encouraged to see that many of the Downtown Investment Plan strategies and ideas are reflected in the City’s proposed Downtown Action Plan. This alignment signals a growing unity across sectors and a shared commitment to placing downtown at the forefront of city-building efforts. This plan lays out a comprehensive framework — including capital, operational, and programmatic investments — totaling over \$553 million over five years. This level of investment is in line with efforts seen in other major Canadian cities that are actively prioritizing their downtowns.

One of the most significant proposed actions is the extension of the Community Revitalization Levy. As administration has rightly identified, renewed investment in key infrastructure through this levy — from upgraded LRT entrances and green spaces to an event park and programs



such as the Downtown Infrastructure Fund and Attainable Housing Incentive Program — could generate close to \$1 billion in new revenue over the next decade. These funds would support a growing residential population, projected to reach 24,000, while laying the groundwork for ongoing reinvestment in the area.

As emphasized in the Downtown Action Plan, investment in our downtown is a shared effort, not solely reliant on the public sector. Since 2015, nearly \$5 billion has been invested in the area, combining both public and private sector contributions. The City has invested \$1.9 billion, while the private sector has added the remaining \$3.1 billion. This represents a remarkable Return on Investment (ROI) of over 160% on public funds. These figures highlight the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors in driving transformative growth in our downtown.

Whether through our Downtown Investment Plan or the City's Downtown Action Plan, effective revitalization strategies share common elements: a clear understanding of current realities, an honest appraisal of market dynamics, and the ability to identify and implement the most impactful, evidence-based solutions. BILD Edmonton Metro is particularly supportive of the plan's inclusion of an economic and market study, which will help measure returns on investment and guide future decisions. This kind of analytical approach is essential to ensuring success and learning from both local experience and other cities' outcomes.

The message is clear: Edmonton's downtown is essential to the city's identity and long-term economic health — but it faces serious and immediate challenges. The Downtown Action Plan provides a much-needed strategic roadmap that aligns public investments with private-sector readiness and confidence. BILD Edmonton Metro remains committed to working collaboratively with the City of Edmonton and other partners to fully realize the plan's potential and bring our downtown back to life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kalen Anderson".

Kalen Anderson, RPP, MCIP  
CEO, BILD Edmonton Metro

Copy:	Jason Syvixay	VP, Strategy & Operations, BILD Edmonton Metro
	Lindsey Butterfield	VP, Government Relations & Policy, BILD Edmonton Metro
	Eddie Robar	City Manager
	Kim Petrin	Deputy City Manager, Urban Planning & Economy
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