



February 26, 2026

Executive Committee
City of Edmonton
1 Sir Winston Churchill Square
Edmonton AB T5J 2R7

RE: Downtown Attainable Housing Incentive Program (Item 7.2, March 4, 2026)

Dear Mayor Knack and Members of Executive 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.

Downtown revitalization is a central focus of our work. We have led and supported an industry-driven Downtown Investment Plan, actively contributed to the City's Downtown Action Plan, advocated for the approval of the Capital City Downtown Community Revitalization Levy (CRL), and supported the incentive program to create more student housing downtown. In partnership with Council and Administration, these efforts reflect our industry's long-term commitment to building a vibrant, resilient, and competitive downtown core.

On behalf of BILD Edmonton Metro, thank you for your continued leadership in advancing downtown investment and for the opportunity to provide input on the draft Downtown Attainable Housing Incentive Program. We appreciated the meaningful engagement with our industry throughout this process. The dialogue has been collaborative and constructive, and we are pleased to see that our feedback has been carefully considered and reflected in the proposed program. We respectfully urge City Council to adopt the program as presented and move forward with implementation to help accelerate much-needed housing development in our downtown.

The Downtown Attainable Housing Incentive Program is a critical step toward realizing City Council's goal of doubling the downtown population, stimulating housing development for a full range of household types, and strengthening the municipal tax base through strategic public-private investment. The program has the potential to deliver thousands of new housing units. Our industry strongly supports this initiative and recognizes the importance of ensuring downtown offers a diverse mix of rental housing options — across a range of unit sizes and scales.



We are encouraged to see Administration incorporate a sliding scale for rental rates that reflect varying unit types, including studios, one-, two-, and three-bedroom (or larger). This approach aligns with the Capital City Downtown CRL Plan and acknowledges the diversity of household compositions seeking to live downtown. At the same time, it provides project proponents with the flexibility required to deliver a balanced and inclusive housing mix that will meet market demand.

The CRL was designed as a financial tool to catalyze private-sector development through targeted investment. The decline in downtown's share of Edmonton's municipal tax base — from 10% in 2009 to 5.2% in 2024 — underscores the urgency of renewed catalytic action. Programs such as the Downtown Attainable Housing Incentive Program represent precisely the type of targeted intervention envisioned when the CRL was established: enabling shovel-ready projects that would otherwise not be financially viable to proceed, unlocking private capital and accelerating downtown revitalization.

The incorporation of a clear first-in, first-served intake structure will provide much-needed certainty to proponents. Prioritizing project readiness ensures that viable developments proceed without delay. Early construction starts generate economic spinoffs, stimulate surrounding investment, and build broader market confidence. Importantly, earlier construction also translates directly into earlier assessment growth and CRL uplift. If the City's objective is long-term revenue growth, reducing financing risk and accelerating development timelines is squarely in its interest.

To meaningfully shift project pro formas and catalyze near-term development, however, the program must remain responsive to current market realities and the scale of financial challenges facing industry. Construction costs, financing conditions, and absorption risks remain significant. Ensuring the rebate structure reflects these pressures over time will be essential to achieving the program's intended outcomes. If the City seeks accelerated housing delivery within the CRL timeline, visible early construction activity is critical to building momentum and restoring market confidence.

We are also encouraged that the Downtown Attainable Housing Incentive Program can be stacked with complementary tools such as the Downtown Infrastructure Fund — another catalyst initiative identified in the CRL Plan — and the longstanding Brownfield Redevelopment Grant program. The ability to layer these incentives strengthens project feasibility, increases the likelihood of near-term starts, architectural creativity, and reinforces the coordinated public-private partnership model that underpins the CRL framework.



We appreciate that, if approved, the program will be implemented immediately, allowing development applications to proceed without delay.

Council's objective — to double the downtown population and stimulate sustained residential growth — is ambitious and achievable. Success will require a program that materially improves project feasibility, accelerates construction timelines, and attracts private capital at scale.

We remain committed to working collaboratively with Council and Administration to refine and strengthen the program so that it delivers visible, measurable results for downtown Edmonton.

Sincerely,

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

Kalen Anderson, RPP, MCIP
Chief Executive Officer, BILD Edmonton Metro

Copy: Eddie Robar, City Manager
Office of the City Clerk
Kim Petrin, Deputy City Manager, Urban Planning & Economy
Alisa Laliberte, Branch Manager, Economic Investment Services
Jason Syvixay, VP, Strategy & Operations, BILD Edmonton Metro
Brian Murray, Chair of BILD's Downtown and Major Redevelopment Committee
Chris Dulaba, Vice-Chair of BILD's Downtown and Major Redevelopment Committee