



Office of the Mayor
City of Edmonton

Amarjeet Sohi
Mayor

2nd Floor, City Hall
1 Sir Winston Churchill Square
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2R7

Phone: 780.496.8100
Fax: 780.496.8292
amarjeet.sohi@edmonton.ca

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Honourable Tyler Shandro, Q.C.
Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
204 Legislature Building
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Shandro:

In response to your letter on May 26, I am sharing Edmonton's Downtown Core and Transit System Safety Plan with you.

First of all, let me assure you that Edmonton City Council takes the concern of Edmontonians' safety and well-being very seriously. Since our Council was elected last fall, we have discussed strategies, projects and budgets related to transit safety, community safety and well-being, anti-racism, downtown vibrancy, economic recovery, and police funding. I have also met with many community leaders to learn how our Council can best support our city's needs.

I also want you to know that our council has been working with Downtown and Chinatown business associations and community members over the last number of months to improve safety and well-being. During a time of incredible grief, they also came to City Council to relay their concerns. We heard their pain, their hopes, and their resilience.

Ongoing programs, recent actions, and new initiatives highlighted in the plan are all focused on making our city safer for all Edmontonians. The Downtown Core and Transit System Safety Plan attached outlines twelve recent actions that the City of Edmonton has taken to support public safety from a perspective that includes enforcement, collaboration, bylaws, cleanliness, and communication. It describes four streams of longer-term work that will improve integrated services, program access, community development and economic development. In addition, it confirms that Edmonton has a strong framework to guide decision-making thanks to other plans supporting community safety and well-being and transit safety and security.

Ever since I was elected, I have been meeting with your colleagues to stress that safety and community well-being is a shared responsibility of all orders of government. Included in the plan are some specific requests regarding the role the Government of Alberta needs to play to improve safety and well-being in Edmonton. These requests are focused on the provincial areas of responsibility in ending houselessness, addressing mental health issues, and the drug poisoning crisis. These societal challenges are compounded by intergenerational trauma, especially for Indigenous peoples. Their suffering has not been adequately addressed for far too long. The ramifications of the lack of provincial investments in tackling these societal issues are being felt on Edmonton streets and on our transit system in the form of social disorder and crime. I assure you that the City will continue to do its part and we ask that the Government of Alberta steps up to do its part.

I also request that our safety plan be assessed by independent public safety experts. An independent analysis is necessary to have an impartial review of our safety plan to determine its effectiveness and whether it meets the needs of our community. The independent analysis may also identify gaps that we would be more than willing to consider. I welcome your feedback on this plan, and I appreciate the province's recent attention to the ongoing issues that our city is facing. Should you require additional details on the tactical and operational elements of this plan, please contact my office.

I am optimistic that this plan addresses the challenges you raise, and I want to stress that our Council is willing to work with anyone who shares the goal of keeping our city safe. We invite your Cabinet colleagues to work with us in addressing the root causes of disorder so that Edmontonians can safely enjoy the city we believe they deserve.

Yours sincerely,

Amarjeet Sohi
Mayor