



The Honourable
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Mayor of Edmonton

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The Honourable [Chrystia Freeland](#)
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A3

Dear Deputy Prime Minister Freeland,

On behalf of Edmonton City Council, I am pleased to provide our submission for the 2024 federal budget. I appreciate the Government of Canada's ongoing partnership with the City of Edmonton and our shared commitment to building a safe, vibrant, dynamic and thriving community for all Edmontonians.

Now is a critical time for the City of Edmonton and the Government of Canada to show action. We are dealing with an ongoing drug poisoning epidemic and homelessness crisis. We are addressing the legacy of residential schools and the ongoing injustice of racism and discrimination. We are also responding to the impacts of climate change and building climate resilience and we are strengthening our economy and investing in housing and infrastructure.

Our City wants to work with the Government of Canada to take action on our shared priorities, which I hope will be reflected in Budget 2024. Together we can increase the supply and affordability of housing, support our most vulnerable residents, reduce the impacts of climate change, advance reconciliation and anti-racism, promote innovation and productivity and build a strong, sustainable community. We want to work with you to build an inclusive, prosperous Edmonton for everyone. A detailed submission has been attached to this letter, but I would like to share some highlights.

Housing, Safety and Community Well-Being

Edmonton is the fifth largest city in Canada, and it performs a critical role as a service hub for northern Alberta and the capital region, including Indigenous communities. In this capacity, the city attracts people who are struggling with the interconnected issues of homelessness, poverty, addiction, mental health and intergenerational trauma. When the appropriate support services, including affordable housing, are available to vulnerable residents, we can make real progress on community safety and well-being. To support this work the City is requesting:

- \$300 million in capital investment and \$25 million in annual operating funding to support Indigenous-led housing. The City has developed a strong business case to support the

development and operation of 1,200 Indigenous led housing units, which has previously been shared with the federal government.

- The continuation of the Rapid Housing Initiative on a consistent, annual basis, as it has proven to be an effective mechanism to quickly deliver new housing units.
- An immediate investment of \$54 million in federal funding to develop 207 new shovel-ready and urgently needed affordable housing units, most of which would support individuals with complex mental health and addiction challenges, and those that are the hardest to house.
- The scaling up of the Reaching Home program, with additional resources to address homeless encampments.

Anti-Racism, Inclusion and Reconciliation

Edmonton is one of the fastest growing regions in Canada, and we are preparing to become a community of two million people, with most of this growth anticipated to come from immigration. Edmonton is also home to Canada's second largest urban Indigenous population; 30.8 per cent of Indigenous people in Alberta live in Edmonton, compared to 15.3 per cent who live on reserve. As Edmonton continues to grow, we want to create an equitable, opportunity-rich city, where people of all backgrounds feel safe, included and at home. To support this work, the City is requesting:

- \$250,000 (ongoing operating) for the Indigenous Knowledge and Wisdom Centre (for kihcihkaw askī) and AKSIS, Edmonton's Indigenous Business and Professional Association.
- \$150,000 (ongoing operating) to support the National Gathering of Elders event that revitalizes and restores Indigenous cultures, languages and access to culture and identity for local Elders.
- \$125,000 (ongoing operating) to co-sponsor Alberta Indigenous Games, supporting youth cultural and multi-sport events and serving over 2,000 youth and families from rural and urban communities across Alberta.
- \$500,000 to promote participation and reduce barriers in community sport, art and culture.
- Funding to support the City's newly created independent body for anti-racism initiatives:
 - \$250,000 - capacity building and promoting dialogue,
 - \$500,000 - race-based data collection.

Energy Transition and Climate Resilience

Growing climate risks have clear implications for city resources, local economies and the financial well-being of municipal governments. The City of Edmonton is committed to transitioning to a low-carbon future and protecting people and infrastructure from the impacts of climate change. Climate resilience is embedded into the City's work. We have developed ambitious, achievable climate goals and we were one of the first cities in North America to present a carbon budget. However, we need the support of the federal government in order to advance our collective efforts, meet our net-zero targets and reduce the impacts of climate change. To support this work, the City is requesting:

- \$100 million in one-time capital funding to accelerate the energy transition of City buildings and the community.
- \$992 million to support the full build-out of the City of Edmonton's zero emissions bus fleet, including 620 hydrogen-electric buses.

Economic Growth and Diversification

Edmonton has a strong economic foundation - a highly skilled workforce, excellent post-secondary institutions, a young, growing population, and a dynamic entrepreneurial community. However, as businesses and residents continue to feel the impacts of inflation and the affordability crisis, it is incumbent on both of our governments to continue to intensify efforts to diversify, modernize and expand our economy. To support this work, the City is requesting:

- \$200 million over four years to leverage private investment in residential development and conversions of under-utilized office space in downtown Edmonton. This would include attainable, mixed market or student housing.
- \$358.4 million in capital funding to support redevelopment plans for key downtown assets.

Infrastructure Renewal

Infrastructure is essential to all residents and businesses in Edmonton, and it is critical to economic competitiveness, quality of life and public service delivery. The City's existing infrastructure is aging and maintenance and rehabilitation is required to ensure it is able to support our growing community. Although the City is making meaningful infrastructure investments in the 2023-2026 Capital budget, we are still facing a significant infrastructure deficit. To support our infrastructure renewal efforts, we are requesting:

- \$1.6 billion in capital funding to support major infrastructure renewal projects.

On behalf of the more than one million Edmontonians who make this a city a fantastic place to live, work and play, we look forward to seeing Edmonton's needs reflected in Budget 2024. As we collaborate together, our governments can make progress on our shared priorities. I welcome the opportunity to discuss these items further at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Honourable Amarjeet Sohi
Mayor, City of Edmonton

Cc: [Members of Government of Canada Cabinet](#)
[Michel Tremblay](#), Interim CEO of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
[Edmonton City Council](#)
[Andre Corbould](#), City Manager

Attachment: 2023 City of Edmonton Federal Pre-Budget Submission

City of Edmonton 2024 Budget Priorities for the Government of Canada

PRIORITY: HOUSING, SAFETY & COMMUNITY WELL-BEING	
RATIONALE	EDMONTON'S REQUEST
<p>There is an urgent need in Edmonton for culturally appropriate, and affordable and supportive housing for Indigenous people who are living in unaffordable housing, at risk of losing their homes or experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Edmonton is home to Canada's second-largest urban Indigenous population and has long been a gathering place for trade, commerce, ceremonies and social connections among Indigenous peoples. Currently, 30.8 per cent of Indigenous people in Alberta live in Edmonton, compared to 15.3 per cent who live on reserve.</p> <p>In the spirit of reconciliation, the City of Edmonton proposes a path forward based on mutual collaboration. On August 22, 2023, the City of Edmonton and the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations co-drafted a Letter of Intent to increase Indigenous-led affordable housing. The City proposes a partnership between the City, the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta and Otipemisiwak Métis Government to enable the development of over 1,200 new homes for Indigenous people in Edmonton in the next four years.</p> <p>When the appropriate support services and the full spectrum of affordable housing are available for residents facing various challenges, we can make progress on community safety and well-being for all Edmontonians.</p> <p>The City is pleased to see the recent Request for Proposals for a National Indigenous Housing Centre; however, the need for Indigenous-led affordable housing in Edmonton is too urgent to wait. Our business case highlights the Indigenous-led shovel-ready projects – including the City's committed contribution – that are ready to go with federal funding. Edmonton looks forward to piloting this For Indigenous By Indigenous approach to improve the housing outcomes of Indigenous people living in Edmonton and working with the future National Indigenous Housing Centre to share our learnings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$300 million in capital investment and \$25 million in annual operating funding to support Indigenous-led housing. The City has developed a strong business case to support the development and operation of 1,200 Indigenous led housing units, which has previously been shared with the federal government. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ If funding was provided to support this business case, Edmonton could become a pilot that could be replicated across other cities in Canada. <p><i>Lead Departments: Indigenous Services Canada / Housing, Infrastructure and Communities</i></p>

<p>As indicated by the City's Housing Need Assessment, there is a critical need for supportive and affordable housing to support marginalized and vulnerable individuals. More than 46,000, or 1 in 8, Edmonton households are living in core housing need. By 2031, an additional 10,000 households are projected to be in core housing need unless action is taken to address a widening gap between supply and demand. CIVIDA, one of Edmonton's largest affordable housing providers, has a waitlist of over 7,260 households (as of March 2023). Edmonton has more than 394,000 homes, but fewer than 15,000 social and affordable housing units.</p> <p>According to Homeward Trust's By Name List, as of November 2023, there are 3,080 people experiencing homelessness in Edmonton, of which approximately 1,360 are either currently staying in a shelter or sleeping outdoors. Encampments are the most visible symptom of a lack of housing and appropriate support services. From 2016 to 2022, encampment-related public concerns and calls for service to the City grew 1,075 per cent from 790 to 9,300.</p> <p>The City of Edmonton and the Government of Canada are committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing to address core housing needs and assisting individuals with complex needs, including those experiencing homelessness. Additional funding would better enable the City to meet these shared goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the Rapid Housing Initiative on a consistent, annual basis, as it has proven to be an effective mechanism to quickly deliver new units. • An immediate investment of \$54 million in federal funding to develop 207 new shovel-ready and urgently needed affordable housing units, most of which would support individuals with complex mental health and addiction challenges, and those that are the hardest to house. • Scale up the Reaching Home program with additional resources to address homeless encampments. <p><i>Lead Department: Housing, Infrastructure and Communities</i></p>
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PRIORITY: ANTI-RACISM, INCLUSION AND RECONCILIATION	
RATIONALE	EDMONTON'S REQUEST
<p>The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action and the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice call on everyone to advocate for reconciliation. The City of Edmonton's Indigenous Framework, also calls upon City employees to be advocates, to use the power and privilege we possess, the learning and growth we obtain and our relationships to advocate to other governments, organizations, businesses and education institutions for the necessary changes that will create an inclusive city.</p> <p>All orders of government have a shared interest in responding to the Calls to Action and Calls for Justice and advancing reconciliation. Through the City of Edmonton's Truth and Reconciliation Commission Municipal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$250,000 (ongoing operating) the Indigenous Knowledge and Wisdom Centre for kihcihkaw askî and AKSIS, Edmonton's Indigenous Business & Professional Association. • \$150,000 (ongoing operating) to support the National Gathering of Elders event that revitalizes and restores Indigenous cultures, languages and access to culture and identity for local Elders.

<p>Response Plan and our Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQOIA (MMIWG2S+) Action Plan, the City is demonstrating its commitment to reconciliation by taking actions under four pillars: awareness, addressing, resurgence and advocacy.</p> <p>The City of Edmonton is engaged in ongoing collaborative work with Indigenous peoples and organizations. These actions are grounded in meaningful discussions about policy development, funding and partnership-building, and the City is invested in working with our Indigenous partners to support Edmonton’s growing Indigenous population and building strong, mutually-beneficial relationships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$125,000 (ongoing operating) to co-sponsor Alberta Indigenous Games, supporting youth cultural and multi-sport events and serving over 2,000 youth and families from rural and urban communities across Alberta. <p><i>Lead Departments: Canadian Heritage / Crown-Indigenous Relations</i></p>
<p>As Edmonton continues to grow, we are creating an equitable and opportunity-rich city. To achieve this, we must identify and eliminate racism by changing systems, institutions, policies and attitudes that perpetuate racism.</p> <p>Anti-racism is both a stand-alone priority and part of the City’s Community Safety and Well-being Strategy. The City’s approach is rooted in reconciliation, anti-racism and equity, and is broad and holistic in nature, recognizing that dimensions of safety and well-being are interconnected and intersectional. We are taking a whole-system approach to ensure all people in our city feel safe and included.</p> <p>Creating communities that foster feelings of safety, belonging and well-being requires ongoing collaboration among different orders of governments and community agencies to address the many underlying and interconnected issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$500,000 to promote social participation and reduce barriers in community sport, art and culture. • Funding to support the City’s newly created independent body for anti-racism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$250,000 - Capacity building and promoting dialogue ○ \$500,000 - Race-based data collection <p><i>Lead Department: Canadian Heritage</i></p>

PRIORITY: ENERGY TRANSITION AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE	
RATIONALE	EDMONTON’S REQUEST
<p>The City of Edmonton is committed to transitioning to a low-carbon future and protecting people and infrastructure from the impacts of climate change. Climate resiliency is embedded in many of the plans and reports that drive the City’s daily operations and our long-term strategies, including City Plan and ConnectEdmonton.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100 million in one-time capital funding to accelerate the energy transition of City buildings and the community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This would help enable the implementation of our District Energy Strategy, expand Edmonton’s District

<p>The costs associated with climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience are significant. The City has made significant investments in this area, but additional support will be required to achieve our ambitious climate goals. The City of Edmonton is seeking to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce community-based net greenhouse gas emissions by 50 per cent (as compared to 2005 levels) by 2030; • Become an emissions-neutral corporation by 2040 and • Achieve net-zero community-based emissions by 2050. <p>With this capital funding, Edmonton would be able to accelerate the energy transition of City buildings and the community as a whole, which would help ensure that both our governments are better able to meet our net-zero goals.</p>	<p>Energy Nodes and incorporate the ability to leverage hydrogen.</p> <p><i>Lead Departments: Natural Resources Canada / Housing, Infrastructure and Communities</i></p>
<p>New technologies and operating models are presenting innovative ways to move people, goods and services through cities. As part of this shift, the City of Edmonton has been transitioning the City fleet (including buses) to low carbon fuels, such as electric and hydrogen energy sources.</p> <p>The City intends to further expand our zero emissions bus fleet, which will be made possible through the construction of a new transit garage. We are appreciative of the Government of Canada's recent commitment to help fund the construction of this garage through the Zero Emissions Transit Fund.</p> <p>Shifting to hydrogen electric buses supports the City's - and the Government of Canada's - climate resilience goals. It would also improve rider experience and lower the community's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$992 million to support the full build-out of the City of Edmonton's zero emissions bus fleet, including 620 hydrogen-electric buses. <p><i>Lead Departments: Transport Canada / Housing, Infrastructure and Communities</i></p>

PRIORITY: ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION	
RATIONALE	EDMONTON'S REQUEST
<p>Edmonton's downtown office vacancy rate of 21 to 24 per cent is the third highest among major centres in Canada (behind London and Calgary). A balanced office market is expected to have a vacancy rate of between five and 10 per cent. To reach 10 per cent vacancy in downtown Edmonton, 1.8 to 2.3 million square feet of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$200 million over four years to leverage private investment in residential development and conversions of under-utilized office space in downtown Edmonton.

<p>office space would need to be occupied, demolished or converted to other uses.</p> <p>Converting office space to residential has the potential to reduce the amount of vacant office space, increase the number of people living downtown and provide an opportunity to upgrade energy efficiency measures. More people living downtown will result in increased demand for retail and food services. More activity and vibrancy will also improve perceptions of safety.</p> <p>This funding would increase the overall housing supply, the availability of affordable housing, promote downtown vibrancy and economic development and encourage the sustainable re-use of functionally obsolete office buildings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This would include attainable, mixed market or student housing. <p><i>Lead Departments: Prairies Economic Development Canada / Housing, Infrastructure and Communities</i></p>
<p>Public places are essential for downtown residents. They provide respite, relief and room to socialize, celebrate and recharge. Public places support public life. They host amenities that support various wellness, celebration and ecological functions. Public places support business attraction and economic diversification. They help lead to a revitalized and safer downtown.</p> <p>Despite recent investment and development downtown, the provision of public places in the core has not increased significantly. This funding would support the City-owned infrastructure required to support new and revitalized public spaces, including Warehouse Park. This would benefit residents, workers and visitors and boost the entire City's economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● \$358.4 million in capital funding to support redevelopment plans for key downtown assets. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This funding would go towards City-owned infrastructure (e.g. public realm improvements, utility upgrades, etc.). <p><i>Lead Department: Housing, Infrastructure and Communities</i></p>

PRIORITY: INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL	
RATIONALE	EDMONTON'S REQUEST
<p>Infrastructure is essential to all residents and businesses in Edmonton, and it is critical to economic competitiveness, quality of life and public service delivery. As the City's infrastructure ages, more maintenance and rehabilitation are required to ensure it is able to support the community's social and economic activities.</p> <p>Additional federal funding will better enable the City to ensure timely, intentional infrastructure renewal. This</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● \$1.6 billion in capital funding to support infrastructure renewal projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bus and LRT system improvements ○ Arterials, bridges and neighbourhoods ○ Recreation centres, safety and security facilities,

is essential to providing good services to the citizens of Edmonton - ensuring infrastructure is safe and sustainable while maximizing the value these assets provide.

- service support facilities and affordable housing
- Green infrastructure, park and open spaces, active pathways, play areas, outdoor recreation and cemeteries

Lead Department: Housing, Infrastructure and Communities