

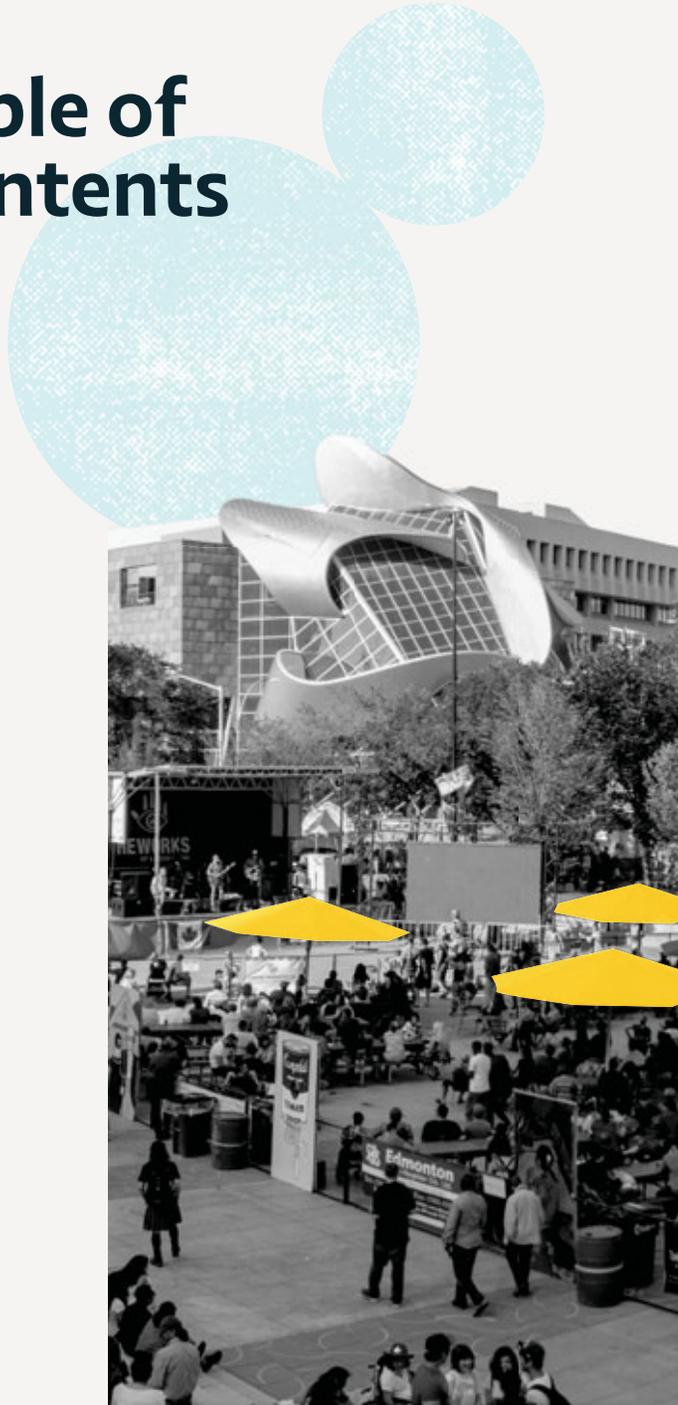


# **DOWNTOWN** Action Plan

Edmonton

© City of Edmonton 2025

# Table of Contents



<b>Land Acknowledgment</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>City Manager Message</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>A Thriving Downtown for a Thriving Edmonton</b>	<b>5</b>
Downtown Edmonton by the Numbers	<b>10</b>
Guiding Documents	<b>12</b>
Other Key Projects	<b>13</b>
Why the Downtown Action Plan?	<b>14</b>
4 Key Goals for Growth	<b>15</b>
<b>Actions</b>	<b>16</b>
1. Leverage the Capital City Downtown Community Revitalization Levy for Catalyst Projects	<b>19</b>
2. Invest in Upgraded Infrastructure	<b>20</b>
3. Enable Increased and Diversified Housing Supply	<b>21</b>
4. Create Safer Public and Private Spaces	<b>22</b>
5. Enhance Cleaning, Maintenance and Beautification of Public Spaces	<b>23</b>
6. Demonstrate the Significance of Downtown's Economy	<b>24</b>
7. Increase Public Amenities, Programming and Activities	<b>25</b>
8. Expand Downtown Districts	<b>26</b>
<b>Implementation</b>	<b>27</b>
Budget	<b>29</b>
Governance and Accountability	<b>29</b>
Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation	<b>30</b>
Community Collaboration	<b>31</b>
Monitoring & Measuring the Return on Investment	<b>32</b>

# Land Acknowledgment

The City of Edmonton acknowledges its location within Treaty Six Territory, recognizing the deep-rooted ancestral connections of diverse Indigenous Peoples to this land. We extend our gratitude to the nêhiyaw (Nay-hee-yow) / Cree, Dené (Deh-neyh), Anishinaabe (Ah-nish-in-ah-bay) / Saulteaux (So-toe), Nakota Isga (Na-koh-tah ee-ska) / Nakota Sioux (Na-koh-tah sue) and Niitsitapi (Nit-si-tahp-ee) / Blackfoot peoples, whose heritage is integral to the history and identity of this region. Furthermore, we recognize this area as the Métis' (May-tee) homeland and acknowledge the presence of a significant Inuit community.

Historically, Edmonton (amiskwaciwâskahikan in the Nehiyawewin (Cree) language, meaning "Beaver Hills House") served as a central gathering place for various Indigenous nations. Today, Downtown Edmonton has been named O'Daymin, which means heart berry, or strawberry, in the Anishinaabe language. The word heart is significant to associate with our downtown in that we say the heart of any successful community is its downtown. With Downtown Edmonton perched along the North Saskatchewan River, we are constantly reminded that this river continues to be a life source that connects all the diverse cultures of Edmontonians, which enrich our city and its centre, the downtown.



In alignment with Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the City of Edmonton's Municipal Response Plans for Truth & Reconciliation and the Murdered & Missing Indigenous Relatives, we strive to uphold Indigenous cultural knowledge and respect the contributions of all cultures that shape our society. While we acknowledge the gap in working with Indigenous rightsholders in developing this action plan, we are committed through action implementation to create a vision together that will support our shared aspirations for a thriving city. We invoke the collective wisdom and spirit of all our communities to guide us in building a prosperous downtown for everyone.



# City Manager Message

Downtown is one of Edmonton's greatest assets — an area rich in **cultural vibrancy, economic potential** and **civic significance**.

As the heart of the city, it connects people, drives innovation and reflects the identity of Edmonton. It is also a key driver of economic prosperity, serving as a major tax base and generating significant revenues that fund vital city services, everything from recreation facilities to snow removal to fire and rescue services.

Downtown is poised for its next chapter. The Downtown Action Plan is a significant opportunity to leverage this moment to harness potential — to build on past progress, accelerate momentum, and guide how we invest in downtown's growth. It ensures downtown thrives as both a vibrant neighbourhood and a powerful economic engine for the city.

This five-year roadmap is about more than revitalization — it is about transformation. It outlines a series of deliberate, catalytic actions that will re-energize Edmonton's downtown, support diverse housing, attract businesses and investment, and help shape a more inclusive, complete community — one that welcomes families, entrepreneurs, artists and workers alike, while preserving downtown's role as Edmonton's economic and cultural hub.

Through recent projects like the Warehouse Park, the expansion of the Valley Line LRT and upgrades to Jasper Avenue New Vision, we've laid the groundwork for transformation. This plan builds on that foundation, focusing on actions that prioritize vibrancy, livability, safety and investment. Continued collaboration with community partners will be key to shaping a stronger, more resilient downtown — delivering greater benefits for all Edmontonians and the region.

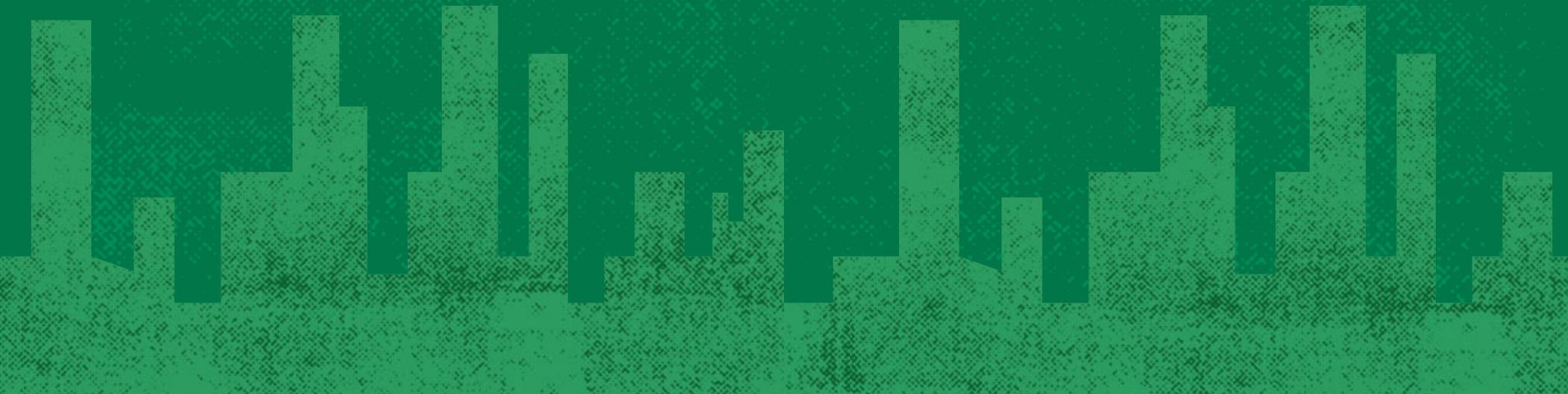
A thriving downtown benefits the entire city and region. It fosters pride, advances environmental goals through smart growth and helps create the kind of inclusive, dynamic urban fabric that attracts people in and encourages them to stay. Through the Downtown Action Plan, we are not only continuing this work — we are positioning downtown as a cornerstone of Edmonton's future.



**Eddie Robar**  
— CITY MANAGER

# A Thriving Downtown for a Thriving Edmonton

---



## Edmonton's downtown is the heart of the city, serving as its economic and cultural engine.

Edmonton's downtown is the heart of the city, serving as its economic and cultural engine, where history, culture, and innovation converge, anchoring Edmonton's identity and civic life. It is the city's largest employment node, home to both the Alberta Legislature and Edmonton City Hall, and serves as a dynamic cultural hub. Each year, downtown welcomes millions of attendees to experience premier attractions such as Edmonton Oilers games, major concerts and special events at Rogers Place, live performances at the Winspear Centre and Citadel Theatre, exhibitions at the Art Gallery of Alberta and Royal Alberta Museum, and the vibrancy of major festivals, signature public spaces, unique local businesses, and renowned restaurants.

While downtown plays a leading role in Edmonton's civic and cultural life, it is also a growing residential neighbourhood. The downtown neighbourhood was home to approximately 12,000 residents<sup>1</sup>. Starting in 2020, 1,202 residential units<sup>2</sup> were approved through building permits, contributing to a

residential rental vacancy rate of 3.3 per cent as of October 2024<sup>3</sup>. This steady growth reflects downtown's increasing appeal as a place to live, work and enjoy city life.

Beyond its cultural and civic roles, downtown is integral to achieving the vision outlined in The City Plan—a healthy, urban, climate-resilient city for two million people. Identified as a Priority Growth Area, downtown supports Smart Growth objectives by concentrating population and employment in areas that maximize existing infrastructure, support sustainable transportation, and generate stronger fiscal returns<sup>4</sup>. Although downtown comprises less than 1.0 per cent of Edmonton's land base, it contributed approximately 5.2 per cent of the City's total tax levy in 2024. Historically, this figure has reached as high as 10.1 per cent and averaged 7.6 per cent since 2010, demonstrating the importance of investing in a thriving downtown core.

# 3,000,000+

**ANNUAL  
DOWNTOWN  
ATTENDEES**



<sup>1</sup>Federal Census, 2021

<sup>2</sup>City of Edmonton Building Permit Data, 2020–2025

<sup>3</sup>Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Rental Market Survey, October 2024

<sup>4</sup>Understanding Smart Growth Savings. Victoria Transport Policy Institute, 2025



This importance is reflected in significant capital investments. Since 2015, approximately \$5 billion in public and private capital investment has driven growth and vibrancy in downtown Edmonton. The City has contributed approximately \$1.9 billion to Downtown-focused projects, including \$406.2 million in operating funding and \$1.5 billion in capital investments. These investments have supported transformational projects such as the Downtown Arena, Warehouse Park, Downtown Stormwater Drainage Servicing, and Jasper Avenue New Vision.

Since 2015, the City has contributed approximately **\$1.9 billion** to Downtown-focused projects.



In addition to this, the City has delivered approximately \$4.6 billion in major transportation infrastructure, including the Valley Line LRT, Metro Line North, and system-wide LRT enhancements and replacements. While these transit investments serve the entire city, they deliver significant connectivity and accessibility benefits to the Downtown core. Together, these city investments represent approximately \$6.5 billion in direct and catalytic investment by the City, reinforcing downtown Edmonton's role as a vital hub for mobility, culture, business, and community life.

Recent trends present complexities that require a proactive and coordinated response. Hybrid work patterns and an oversupplied office market have contributed to a downtown office vacancy rate of 19.6 per cent, while street-level commercial vacancies have reached approximately 33 per cent<sup>5</sup>. Additionally, 93 per cent of recent population growth has occurred outside the downtown core, highlighting the need to realign development patterns with The City Plan's focus on compact, complete communities.

Downtown remains a resilient and diverse economic hub, supporting **69,353 jobs** across **1,632 businesses**.

Downtown remains a resilient and diverse economic hub, supporting 69,353 jobs across 1,632 businesses. MacEwan University and NorQuest College serve as vital institutional anchors, with enrollments of 18,855 and 18,033 students, respectively<sup>6</sup>. Notably, 5 per cent of downtown businesses are Indigenous-owned, reflecting the City's broader commitment to economic reconciliation and inclusive growth<sup>2</sup>. However, challenges persist, particularly due to limited data on retail and commercial vacancies, underscoring the need for further analysis to inform future action.



<sup>5</sup> Colliers Office Market Report, Q4 2024

<sup>6</sup> MacEwan University and NorQuest College, 2024

It is time to invest in downtown to accelerate rebuilding the momentum that led to downtown's extraordinary growth by leveraging approximately **\$5 billion** in private and public sector capital investments since 2015.

The Downtown Action Plan is a strategic set of priority actions developed in collaboration with City departments and downtown partners. It is designed to guide immediate investments and policy decisions, striking a balance between essential services and fiscal responsibility. The Downtown Action Plan supports targeted progress in **Economic Growth, Residential Growth, Vibrancy Growth,** and **Business Growth,** with measurable outcomes that boost confidence for both public and private sector investment.

Although downtown has made significant strides in its post-pandemic recovery, the impacts of COVID-19 have tempered investment and growth since 2020. Moving forward, investment must be purposeful and people-centred, focusing on residents, business owners, workers, and visitors. Strengthening partnerships with industry and community leaders offers the greatest opportunity to accelerate rebuilding the momentum, driving downtown toward its full potential as a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient urban centre.



# Downtown Edmonton by the Numbers

## 1,632



BUSINESSES DOWNTOWN <sup>11</sup>

INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURS/  
BUSINESS OWNERS <sup>11</sup>



## 69,353

JOBS <sup>11</sup>



## 19.6%

OFFICE MARKET VACANCY <sup>12</sup>



## 12,000

DOWNTOWN RESIDENTS (2021) <sup>7</sup>



## 3.3%

RESIDENTIAL VACANCY RATE <sup>8</sup>



## 1,202

NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS (SINCE 2020) <sup>9</sup>



2010 CURRENT

10.1%

5%

7.6%  
AVG.

DOWNTOWN TAX BASE



# \$5 billion

## 18,855

MACEWAN UNIVERSITY STUDENT POPULATION <sup>10</sup>



## 18,033

NORQUEST COLLEGE STUDENT POPULATION <sup>10</sup>



## <1%

of the city's total land area



Combined public and private capital investment in downtown

<sup>7</sup> Federal Census, 2021

<sup>8</sup> Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Rental Market Survey, October 2024

<sup>9</sup> edmonton.ca/growthmonitoring

<sup>10</sup> PSI website

<sup>11</sup> City of Edmonton Business Census, 2024

<sup>12</sup> Colliers Office Market Report, Q4 2024

# \$1.9 billion

CITY INVESTMENT IN DOWNTOWN-FOCUSED PROJECTS <sup>13</sup>

including **\$406.2 million in operating funding** and **\$1.5 billion in capital investments.**



## 911,755

TOTAL DOWNTOWN ATTENDEES TO COE/CIVIC EVENTS

## 195

TOTAL DOWNTOWN CITY OF EDMONTON/CIVIC EVENTS

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL COE/CIVIC EVENT ATTENDANCE OCCURRING DOWNTOWN

## 25%



# 3,000,000+

people attend festivals, exhibitions, events, and live performances in downtown each year. 

<sup>13</sup> UPE02813 - Downtown Action Plan, Attachment 3

# Guiding Documents

The Downtown Action Plan leverages and integrates a variety of existing plans, strategies and guiding frameworks to guarantee a comprehensive and cohesive approach. In addition to the Strategic Goals of The City Plan, the Downtown Action Plan utilizes the existing policy framework and established boundaries of the 2010 Capital City Downtown Plan (CCDP) as it approaches the completion of its 15-year vision. While the CCDP's core policies guide development and land use within the designated downtown area, the Downtown Action Plan offers an adaptive and forward-looking approach. It aims to capitalize on current opportunities and tackle ongoing challenges, ensuring that the CCDP's vision adapts to meet the dynamic needs of Edmonton's downtown. The Downtown Action Plan serves as a refinement, not a replacement, of the CCDP, ensuring continuity while promoting innovation within its established parameters until a comprehensive policy review is complete.

## CAPITAL CITY DOWNTOWN PLAN

Provides the foundational policy framework upon which the Downtown Action Plan is built, adapting to current opportunities and challenges.

## INDIGENOUS FRAMEWORK

Guides reconciliation efforts, emphasizing Indigenous partnerships, equitable procurement and employment pathways.

## BREATHE: EDMONTON'S GREEN NETWORK STRATEGY & DOWNTOWN PUBLIC PLACES PLAN (DPPP):

Shapes public space enhancements, prioritizing ecology, wellness, and social connection, and guiding investments like the 104 Street Grand Staircase.

## EDMONTON'S COMMUNITY ENERGY TRANSITION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Drives the transition to a low-carbon city, focusing on renewable energy, emission-neutral buildings, low-carbon transportation and nature-based solutions, including district energy expansion.

## CONNECT EDMONTON

Edmonton's Strategic Plan for 2019 - 2028. It sets the direction for our future and outlines where we need to change today to realize our vision for Edmonton in 2050.

## DOWNTOWN VIBRANCY STRATEGY

Introduced interim actions in response to the pandemic, providing a bridge to longer-term planning.

## THE CITY PLAN

Defines downtown as a distinct cultural, economic, institutional and mobility hub with the highest density and mix of land uses. As part of the Centre City Node and identified as a Priority Growth Area, downtown is expected to accommodate more intense population and employment growth.

## CLIMATE RESILIENT EDMONTON: ADAPTATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Ensures downtown improvements are resilient to current and future climate impacts.

## GREEN AND WALKABLE DOWNTOWN STREETScape DESIGN MANUAL

Guides the creation of pedestrian-friendly, sustainable and cohesive streetscapes, enhancing downtown's identity and functionality.

## Other Key Projects



### THE ROLE OF THE DOWNTOWN & QUARTERS CRLS IN REVITALIZATION

Since 2015, the CRL has played a central role in funding the transformation of Edmonton's downtown, stemming from the Capital City Downtown Plan direction. By reinvesting tax uplift from new developments, the CRL has funded catalyst projects such as *Rogers Place*, *Warehouse Park*, streetscape improvements and stormwater servicing upgrades, attracting over \$4 billion in private investment and supporting the construction of more than 3,500 new residential units. However, despite this success, significant challenges remain, including rising construction costs, infrastructure barriers and shifting demand due to the pandemic.

To sustain momentum and address these barriers, an extension and amendment of the Capital City Downtown Community Revitalization Levy (CRL) is proposed, enabling the City to fund many of the strategic investments highlighted below, including brownfield remediation, transit infrastructure, public space enhancements, and attainable housing incentives. While the CRL alone cannot resolve all downtown challenges, it remains a critical tool in Edmonton's ongoing approach to downtown revitalization. Consequently, the significant reliance on the CRL underscores the necessity of extending its end date until 2044, a complex process that currently requires both municipal and provincial approvals which is underway.

### ROSSDALE – RIVER CROSSING PLAN

The Downtown Action Plan and River Crossing Plan are closely linked, shaping a more vibrant, connected and culturally rich city core. While Rosedale sits just outside downtown, its transformation through River Crossing will enhance the entire area, bringing new housing, public spaces and economic opportunities while preserving its deep historical and Indigenous significance. With 44 acres of land including parks, heritage buildings and redevelopment space, this project will strengthen downtown's growth, attract investment and improve connectivity through upgraded infrastructure and a redesigned transportation network.

Key projects such as *River Crossing Park*, *Touch the Water Promenade* and the *revitalized Rosedale Power Plant* will enhance Edmonton's riverfront, drawing people between downtown and the North Saskatchewan River. Rooted in reconciliation, sustainability and economic renewal, River Crossing will not only create a vibrant new district but also provide much-needed residential growth close to downtown.

# Why the Downtown Action Plan?

Edmonton's downtown has experienced extraordinary growth and change since the inception of the CCDP in 2010. The CCDP has delivered significant successes, advancing many of its 15-year vision objectives through key initiatives and catalytic projects funded by the CRL.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic marked a pivotal shift for the city, felt most acutely downtown. The scale and impact of the pandemic were unforeseen in the CCDP, and its aftermath has disrupted investment, economic activity, and growth in the core since 2020. To address these impacts, the City introduced the Downtown Vibrancy Strategy in 2021 as a short-term initiative aimed at promoting economic recovery and activating public spaces.

Building upon the successes of previous strategies, there is an opportunity to further elevate downtown's role as a key Priority Growth Area under The City Plan. Downtown is well-positioned to support intensive population and employment growth, strengthened by ongoing investments in infrastructure, transit, the pedestrian network, and housing. With its rich cultural assets, strategic significance, and a strong foundation of public and private investment, downtown has the capacity to grow into an even more dynamic, accessible and resilient core. Realizing this opportunity requires focused and coordinated action to enhance vibrancy, attract new development, and ensure downtown continues to drive Edmonton's long-term success as a healthy, urban, climate-resilient city.

Downtown has the capacity to grow into an even more **dynamic, accessible** and **resilient** core.

The Downtown Action Plan directly responds to this need as a strategic and intentional short-term implementation strategy. It balances essential core services, financial sustainability, economic development, and safety while guiding priority actions for immediate impact. The Downtown Action Plan builds on the foundations laid by previous work and supports Edmonton's long-term goals for downtown as outlined in The City Plan. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all City actions, but a focused framework to drive key investments and decisions in the core.

# 4 Goals for Growth

The Downtown Action Plan is guided by **four goals**, with each action strategically aligned to deliver measurable outcomes in these areas.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are identified below, with targets and additional measures to be developed and refined throughout implementation.

## Economic



### INCREASED PROPERTY VALUES

Supporting a rise in property values driven by increased demand for downtown is a priority, as downtown Edmonton's economy is crucial to the City's financial sustainability and remains the highest contributor to the City's tax base.

#### KPIs

- Assessed Property Values
- Property Tax Revenue
- Substantial Financial Investments

## Residential



### INCREASED RESIDENTIAL POPULATION

Increasing the number of people living downtown is widely accepted as a key to a resilient downtown economy<sup>14</sup>. Previous targets of 24,000 residents by 2030<sup>15</sup> have fallen to closer to 19,000<sup>16</sup> – highlighting the need for additional investment to attract more residents and build resilience.

#### KPIs

- # of New Residential Units
- # of Residents
- Percentage of Residential Vacancy

## Vibrancy



### INCREASED WORKERS, STUDENTS AND VISITORS

Attracting more people downtown has cascading benefits. While contributing to a vibrant downtown, visitors have a major impact on downtown's economy by injecting millions of dollars annually into businesses. Building on the competitive advantage presented by the nearly 40,000 students enrolled at post-secondary institutions and a diverse range of cultural and social experiences is a key to success.

#### KPIs

- # of Visitors
- # of Students
- # of Transit Riders

## Business



### REDUCED COMMERCIAL VACANCY

A thriving downtown boosts Edmonton's ability to attract investment and talent on both national and global scales. The city's well-connected downtown infrastructure, along with a concentration of financial services, technology and post-secondary institutions, positions it as a competitive location for business investment.

#### KPIs

- # of Businesses
- # of Jobs
- Office Vacancy Rate

<sup>14</sup> The Value of Investing in Canadian Downtowns, Canadian Urban Institute, 2013

<sup>15</sup> Capital City Downtown Plan, 2010

<sup>16</sup> City of Edmonton, Edmonton Neighbourhood Population and Housing Units Projection

# Actions

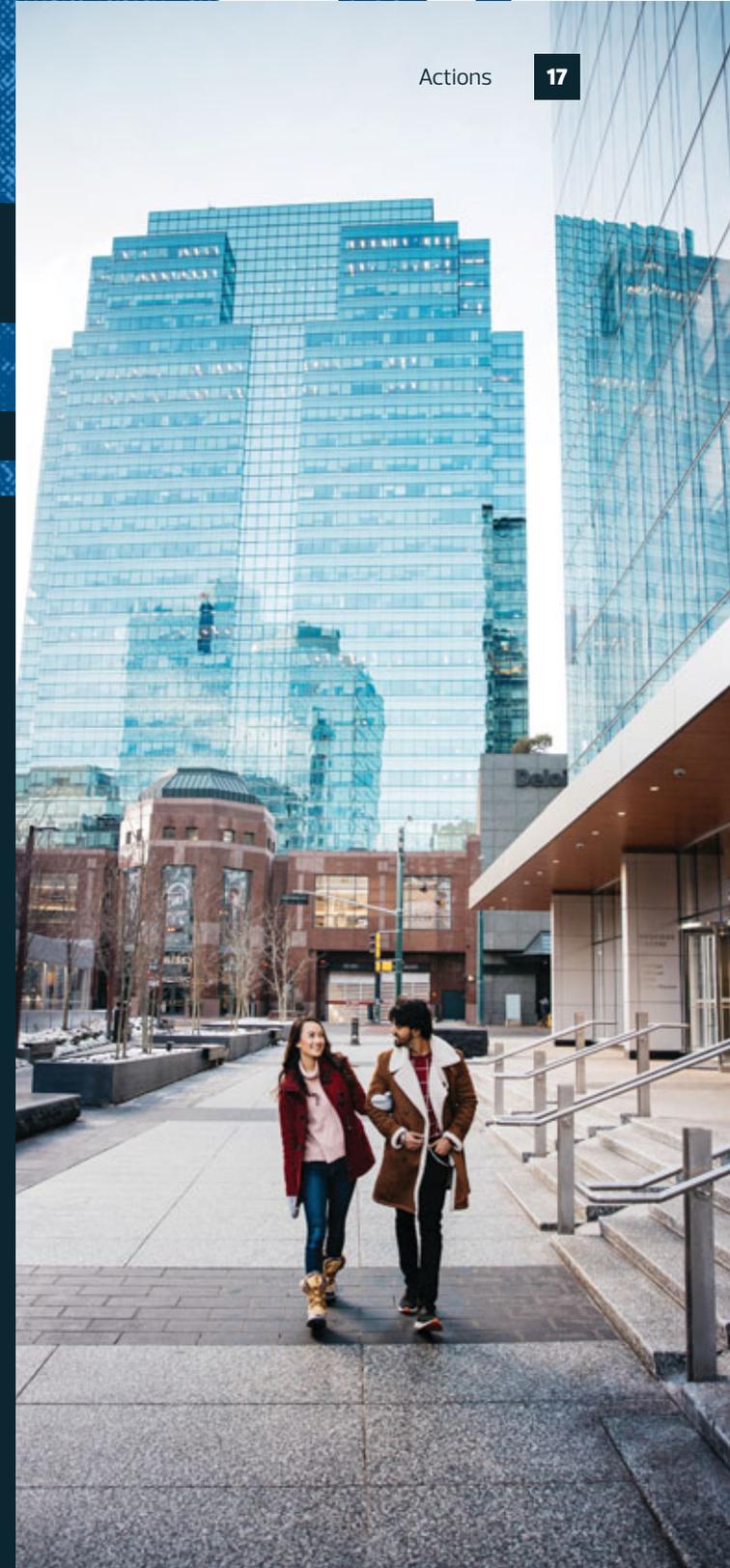


# Actions

The Downtown Action Plan is a focused **1 to 5-year implementation strategy** that balances essential core services, financial sustainability, growth, economic development and safety.

Within this timeframe actions will achieve a range of milestones including initiated, completed and ongoing. The Downtown Action Plan outlines **8 actions** with **45 subactions** designed to foster transformative change in downtown. Each action includes a timeline, budget estimates and funding sources. Each action highlights the direct or indirect benefit relating to the Downtown Action Plan's four goals and the anticipated return on investment.

Following the completion of the recommended economic and market study for downtown, formal KPIs will be established to monitor and report on the health and performance of downtown. These indicators will inform future investment priorities and directions to continue building momentum.



# The Downtown Action Plan proposes a substantial financial commitment of approximately **\$553 million** for the revitalization of Edmonton's core.

## THIS FUNDING IS STRATEGICALLY SOURCED FROM THE FOLLOWING STREAMS:

- **\$511 million** is leveraged through the Downtown CRL, with approximately \$440 million contingent upon the proposed extension
- **\$9.5 million** comes from the recently renamed Downtown Economy Fund, formerly known as the Downtown Vibrancy Fund
- **\$15 million** is dedicated to student housing through the Housing Accelerator Fund
- **\$2.5 million** is allocated from the Funds-in-Lieu reserve for parkland acquisition
- Notably, five subactions remain unfunded at this time, totaling **\$15 million** required for future, to-be-announced initiatives

Importantly, budgets for subactions under *Action 2: Invest in Upgraded Infrastructure* are still under development and will be presented in subsequent reports. These reports will address 'to be determined' budget items, potentially leading to unfunded service packages or capital budget adjustments for Council's consideration during future budget processes, such as the 2027-2030 budget cycle. Further funding may also be secured through grants and incentives from provincial and federal governments, supplementing the existing allocation.



# Legend

## ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

 Economic Growth

 Residential Growth

 Vibrancy Growth

 Business Growth

\$ MINIMAL

\$\$ MODERATE

\$\$\$ SIGNIFICANT

**Note:** Cost estimates provided represent median values within anticipated cost ranges and are intended for planning purposes only. Adjustments to these estimates are likely to occur based on project scope, Council approval, and the potential extension of the potential extension of the Capital City Downtown Community Revitalization Levy.

## Action 1: Leverage the Capital City Downtown Community Revitalization Levy for Catalyst Projects

Catalytic projects funded through the Capital City Downtown Community Revitalization Levy (CRL) are essential to accelerating downtown's economic growth and urban vibrancy. These investments create a multiplier effect, significantly increasing redevelopment, boosting property values and reinforcing downtown as a dynamic hub for business, culture and community life.

### Anticipated Impacts:

Economic Growth		Residential Growth		Vibrancy Growth		Business Growth	
Indirect/ Direct	\$\$\$	Indirect/ Direct	\$\$\$	Indirect/ Direct	\$\$\$	Indirect/ Direct	\$\$\$
Subactions:				ESTIMATE	FUNDING TYPE	SOURCE	TIMELINE
1.1	Recommend City Council approve an extension of the CRL to 2044.			-	One-time Operating	Existing Budget	1 year
1.2	Update the CRL plan to add new catalyst projects and develop prioritization criteria that align with the master plan and statutory documents.			-	One-time Operating	Existing Budget	1 year
1.3	Create a master plan for downtown to align policy, guidelines and regulations that will prioritize catalyst projects and direct infrastructure renewal, growth and maintenance.			\$250K	One-time Operating	CRL Existing Budget	2 years

## Action 2: Invest in Upgraded Infrastructure

Downtown’s infrastructure—roads, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting and street furniture—significantly shapes the user experience. Through the development of a new program, targeted investments will focus on rebuilding and maintaining an elevated state of infrastructure to enhance safety, aesthetics, community pride and living comfort. The city will strengthen its commitment to climate resilience through the expansion of the Downtown District Energy Utility.

### Anticipated Impacts:

Economic Growth		Residential Growth		Vibrancy Growth		Business Growth	
Indirect	\$\$\$	Indirect	\$\$\$	Direct	\$\$\$	Indirect	\$\$\$
Subactions:				ESTIMATE	FUNDING TYPE	SOURCE	TIMELINE
2.1	Explore the development of a dedicated Downtown Capital Infrastructure Program to support the implementation of the master plan, leveraging both existing budgets and proposed required funding sources.			To be developed	Ongoing Capital	Unfunded	2 years
2.2	Explore the development of an Interim Downtown Renewal Program to renew critical downtown street features until the master plan is completed and a long-term Downtown Capital Infrastructure Program has been initiated.			To be developed	Ongoing Capital	Unfunded	1 year
2.3	Leverage CRL funding to continue to advance public realm projects, including Jasper Avenue New Vision and Green and Walkable.			\$170M	Ongoing/ One-time Capital	CRL Existing & Extension	5 years
2.4	Leverage CRL, cost recovery, and other funding sources to grow the Downtown District Energy Utility in collaboration with EPCOR.			To be developed	One-time Capital	CRL/Existing Budget	5 years

### Action 3: Enable Increased and Diversified Housing Supply

Increasing the residential population is essential for building a strong core. The City will enable new housing on surplus sites, review and amend existing policies and regulations, support student housing and fast-track projects on City-owned lands. Leveraging funding opportunities like the CRL and Infill Infrastructure Fund will help drive housing development that strengthens growth and creates a more dynamic and livable urban environment.

#### Anticipated Impacts:

Economic Growth		Residential Growth		Vibrancy Growth		Business Growth	
Direct	\$\$	Direct	\$\$\$	Direct	\$\$	Indirect	\$\$\$
Subactions:				ESTIMATE	FUNDING TYPE	SOURCE	TIMELINE
3.1	Leverage CRL funding to support the development of the proposed mixed-use project, Village at Ice District and surrounding properties.			\$42M	One-time capital	CRL Extension	5 years
3.2	Leverage CRL funding to support remediation.			\$12.5M	Ongoing operating	CRL Extension	3 years
3.3	Leverage CRL funding to develop a Downtown Infill Infrastructure Fund to facilitate new development within the Downtown CRL area, which could include District Energy.			\$88M	Ongoing capital	CRL Extension	2 years
3.4	Leverage CRL funding to develop an Attainable Housing Incentive Program featuring a financial incentive program for creating new attainable housing.			\$40M	Ongoing capital	CRL Extension	3 years
3.5	Develop a student housing incentive program.			\$15M	One-time	Housing Accelerator Fund	1 year
3.6	Offer for sale City-owned surplus LRT sites to incentivize mixed-income housing construction once the properties are available for disposal.			-	One-time operating	Existing Budget	5 years
3.7	Amend policies and regulations to reduce barriers, enabling the development of diverse housing options.			-	One-time operating	Existing Budget	3 years
3.8	Advance the sale of Chancery Hall and Century Place.			-	One-time operating	Unfunded	2 years
3.9	Leverage a future Infill Infrastructure Fund to fund projects outside of the Downtown CRL area.			\$10M	Ongoing	Unfunded	3 years

## Action 4: Create Safer Public and Private Spaces

Creating safer places and spaces downtown is important to changing perceptions of downtown and improving community vibrancy. A proactive approach that strengthens bylaw enforcement, expands the use of predictive deployment tools and implements the City's Blueprint for Violence Prevention in partnership with EPS will drive meaningful change. These initiatives will enhance understanding, improve efficiency and address the root causes of crime, ensuring downtown is seen as a welcoming and secure environment for businesses, residents and visitors.

### Anticipated Impacts:

Economic Growth		Residential Growth		Vibrancy Growth		Business Growth	
Indirect	\$\$\$	Indirect	\$\$\$	Direct	\$\$\$	Indirect	\$\$\$

### Subactions:

Subactions:		ESTIMATE	FUNDING TYPE	SOURCE	TIMELINE
4.1	Leverage CRL funding to upgrade transit infrastructure with improvements to LRT entrances.	\$25M	One-time capital	CRL Extension	3 years
4.2	Leverage the Problem Property Initiative to address problem property issues through enhanced enforcement and escalating consequences.	-	Ongoing operating	Existing Budget	1 year
4.3	Increase the proactive presence of Transit Peace Officers aligned with the Enhanced LRT Safety Plan.	-	Ongoing operating	Existing Budget	2 years
4.4	Increase Unison enrolment by promoting and providing access and training to the City's proprietary predictive deployment tool.	\$100K	Ongoing	Downtown Action Plan	1 year
4.5	Utilize the Blueprint for Violence Prevention to identify joint and/or complementary violence reduction initiatives with EPS Crime Reduction Plan by leveraging the Neighbourhood Empowerment Team (NET) partnership with EPS.	-	Ongoing	Existing Budget	1 year
4.6	Ensure property owners improve the appearance of surface parking lots, active construction projects and future development sites.	\$500K	Ongoing operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year

## Action 5: Enhance Cleaning, Maintenance and Beautification of Public Spaces

A clean, well-maintained and visually appealing downtown is essential for attracting businesses, boosting tourism and promoting a sense of community pride. Well-cared-for public spaces enhance safety, encourage economic activity and improve overall quality of life. By optimizing service levels, accelerating maintenance and repairs and prioritizing beautification efforts, the City will ensure a more welcoming and vibrant environment for everyone.

### Anticipated Impacts:

Economic Growth		Residential Growth		Vibrancy Growth		Business Growth	
Indirect	\$\$	Indirect	\$\$	Direct	\$\$\$	Indirect	\$\$
Subactions:				ESTIMATE	FUNDING TYPE	SOURCE	TIMELINE
5.1	Proactively inspect and address cleaning and greening initiatives in parks and on streets through the Centre City Optimization service.			-	Ongoing operating	Existing Budget	1 year
5.2	Accelerate enhanced maintenance repairs to sidewalks, roads, light standards, street furniture, garbage containers, publicly-accessible bike racks and other public infrastructure.			\$2M	Ongoing operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year
5.3	Amplify beautification efforts, continuing with additional trees, tree protection and grates, flowers, tree lighting and decorative winter lighting.			\$2M	Ongoing operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year
5.4	Trial innovative deterrents to graffiti on public infrastructure assets.			\$50K	Ongoing operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year

## Action 6: Demonstrate the Significance of Downtown's Economy

A strong, coordinated approach is key to positioning downtown's role as a powerful economic engine for the city and Alberta. Aligning leadership, promotion and investment creates sustained momentum, attracting talent, driving business growth and securing long-term prosperity.

### Anticipated Impacts:

Economic Growth		Residential Growth		Vibrancy Growth		Business Growth	
Indirect	\$\$	Indirect	\$\$	Direct	\$\$	Indirect	\$\$
Subactions:				ESTIMATE	FUNDING TYPE	SOURCE	TIMELINE
6.1	Establish a Downtown Leadership Group with business leaders, community organizations, post-secondary institutions and property owners.			\$25K	Ongoing operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year
6.2	Conduct a comprehensive Economic, Demographic and Market Study to inform planning and to direct investments.			\$100K	Ongoing operating	CRL Existing/ Existing Funding	2 years
6.3	Advance Indigenous Economic Reconciliation through a co-led economic strategy in partnership with the City's MOU partners, Indigenous Business Liaison and community, ensuring meaningful integration and economic initiatives.			\$250K	One-time operating	Downtown Action Plan	2 years
6.4	Showcase downtown as a premier hub for business, culture and investment through a promotional campaign, leveraging digital media, strategic place branding and business-friendly initiatives to attract growth and celebrate economic opportunities.			\$1M	Ongoing operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year
6.5	Dedicate an ongoing City budget and team to steward downtown's economy, focused on supporting economic growth and investments.			\$5M	Ongoing	Unfunded	2 years
6.6	Develop a data driven Business Attraction Program with a dedicated City employee to lead business development efforts, including support for the nighttime economy.			\$100K	Ongoing operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year

## Action 7: Increase Public Amenities, Programming and Activities

Lively, well-programmed and accessible open spaces create lasting connections between people and places, giving people of all ages a place to gather, play and connect. These spaces shape downtown's identity, contributing to welcoming and dynamic neighbourhoods. Expanding and enhancing open spaces will strengthen the area's identity, boost local business and make downtown a place where more people want to live, work, visit and learn.

### Anticipated Impacts:

Economic Growth		Residential Growth		Vibrancy Growth		Business Growth	
Indirect	\$\$	Indirect	\$\$	Direct	\$\$	Indirect	\$\$
Subactions:				ESTIMATE	FUNDING TYPE	SOURCE	TIMELINE
7.1	Leverage CRL funding for the Event Park, a City-owned mid-size entertainment venue and outdoor recreation/event space at Ice District.			\$85.5M	One-time capital	CRL Extension	5 years
7.2	Identify opportunities for land acquisition to advance projects in the Downtown Public Places Plan.			\$2.5M	One-time	Funds-in-lieu Reserve	2 years
7.3	Advance The 104 Street Grand Staircase Project.			-	Ongoing operating and capital	Existing Budget	3 years
7.4	Leverage CRL funding for Public Open Space Amenities and Placemaking projects.			\$20M	Ongoing capital	CRL Extension	2 years
7.5	Partner with organizations to support activations in public parks, transit stations and other publicly accessible spaces.			\$1.5M	Ongoing operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year
7.6	Leverage CRL funding dedicated to public art to commission new installations.			\$600K	Ongoing capital	CRL Existing	2 years
7.7	Install high-quality, fully attended public washrooms in conjunction with recreational amenities.			\$425K	One-time capital	Downtown Action Plan	2 years
7.8	Support the expansion of the Downtown Farmer's Market into a multi-day, year-round operation.			\$400K	One-time operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year
7.9	Expand the Downtown Ambassador Program to include volunteers from downtown businesses, associations and organizations.			\$50K	Ongoing operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year

## Action 8: Expand Downtown Districts

Downtown is a collection of diverse districts, each possessing unique characteristics, opportunities and needs. To maximize revitalization efforts, the City will further define these distinct areas, enabling more precise assessments, strategic investments, and cluster-based economic development, and cluster-based economic development. This targeted approach will build upon existing strengths, supporting strategic growth initiatives and ensuring projects generate meaningful, long-term impacts.

### Anticipated Impacts:

Economic Growth		Residential Growth		Vibrancy Growth		Business Growth	
Indirect	\$\$\$	Indirect	\$\$\$	Indirect	\$\$\$	Direct	\$\$

### Subactions:

		ESTIMATE	FUNDING TYPE	SOURCE	TIMELINE
8.1	Establish Innovation and Education Districts and develop investment attraction programs.	\$1M	Ongoing operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year
8.2	Expand the Entertainment District on Rice Howard Way and add 104 Street.	\$100K	Ongoing operating	Downtown Action Plan	1 year
8.3	Create a pedestrian network connecting districts through a series of car-free, shared and pedestrian-enhanced streets.	-	One-time capital	Unfunded	3 years
8.4	Leverage CRL funding for the 100 Street Pedestrian Bridge construction.	\$27M	One-time capital	CRL Extension	5 years

# Implementation



# Implementation



The Downtown Action Plan represents key strategic initiatives and its success will be supported by a coordinated, city-wide approach. The Downtown Action Plan was developed through collaboration with City departments, including **Integrated Infrastructure Services, Financial and Corporate Services, City Operations, Urban Planning and Economy** and **Community Services**.

This cross-departmental collaboration will continue throughout the implementation phase, ensuring work programs, resources and budgets align to achieve intended outcomes. The City is committed to making downtown transformation a core priority. This focus will ensure that the necessary resources and attention are dedicated to the Downtown Action Plan's success, ensuring an effective and aligned approach to shaping downtown's future.



## Budget

Many actions were designed to leverage existing budgets and funding through the CRL, the Downtown Action Plan (\$4.52 million per year in 2025 and 2026) and other City departments. Analysis of the CRL catalyst project list and associated budgets has not yet been completed and will require City Council approval of an extension prior to commencing. If an extension is approved, recommendations about the CRL budget and catalyst project list will be presented to City Council as part of regular budgeting

and reporting associated with the CRL. Additional funding requests are expected through the City's standard four-year budget cycle, along with mid-cycle adjustments that will incorporate the implementation of the Downtown Action Plan into discussions surrounding both operating and capital budgets.

Additional funding opportunities through federal and provincial grants will be explored on an ongoing basis.

## Governance & Accountability

Strong governance and accountability are crucial for successful implementation. The Downtown Economy team will be responsible for facilitating the implementation and monitoring the progress of the Downtown Action Plan; however, it will be a collaborative effort across the City, with multiple teams leading subactions. The Downtown Economy team will ensure consistent reporting, coordination and progress tracking. A formal reporting structure with regular updates to City Council will uphold transparency and accountability. The Downtown Leadership Group will comprise diverse strategic partners from various sectors and organizations, playing a significant role in aligning actions, fostering collaboration, and sustaining momentum throughout the implementation.



# Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation

Indigenous Economic Reconciliation is fundamental to the Downtown Action Plan, requiring a multifaceted approach that extends beyond simple employment opportunities. Through the role of the 'Connector,' the city will bridge Indigenous Peoples with essential programs, services and economic opportunities while facilitating systemic change through partnerships with organizations, governments and educational institutions. Exploring avenues for supporting Indigenous-led institutions, addressing infrastructure needs and facilitating access to capital, procurement and ownership in major projects for Indigenous businesses are important considerations. Such efforts could contribute to reconciliation, economic productivity and climate action while honouring Indigenous leadership and advancing shared economic and environmental goals. Recognizing the significant \$17 billion economic contribution of Indigenous Peoples in Alberta in 2023 and

Indigenous Peoples contributed almost **\$17 billion** in spending and **\$9 billion** of GDP to the Alberta economy in 2023.

their substantial impact on the province's GDP,<sup>17</sup> the City is committed to sustained collaboration and systemic change.

By integrating Indigenous Economic Reconciliation into initiatives like the Downtown Action Plan, we strive to foster a more inclusive and equitable future for all Edmontonians.

<sup>17</sup> Reporting on the Economic Contributions of Indigenous Peoples in Alberta 7, ATB Financial and MNP LLP, 2024



# Community Collaboration

The City acknowledges that **strong partnerships** are key to successful implementation of the Downtown Action Plan.



The City will continue to seek and cultivate collaborations, recognizing the invaluable insights and contributions of diverse strategic partners, particularly through the Downtown Leadership Group. This approach emphasizes the importance of working together to achieve shared objectives, promote downtown, and cultivate opportunities, with the City facilitating partnerships through strategic support and agreements. The expertise and capacity of external groups, including Downtown Revitalization Coalition, Edmonton Downtown Business Association, Edmonton Arts Council, BILD Edmonton Metro, BOMA Edmonton and North, NAIOP Edmonton, Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Edmonton Community League, post-secondary institutions and other businesses, organizations and community groups, are incredibly valuable and offer remarkable opportunities for collaboration that we will continue to capitalize on.

# Monitoring and Measuring the Return on Investment

Strategic investments in downtown Edmonton will yield measurable and impactful benefits. To ensure optimal outcomes, we will implement robust monitoring tools prior to major initiatives, enabling precise tracking of direct and indirect returns on investment.

Key performance indicators will target **residential growth, vibrancy, business growth and retention, and property value appreciation.**

Project implementation will be driven by clear key performance indicators focused on increasing residential growth, vibrancy, business growth and retention and property value appreciation. Regular, data-driven updates will guarantee accurate and current monitoring, while ongoing evaluation of project outcomes will empower informed decision-making, allowing for agile adjustments to priorities and resource allocation to maximize future investments.



The logo for the City of Edmonton, featuring the word "Edmonton" in a white, sans-serif font. The letter "E" is stylized with a white semi-circle on its left side, resembling a partial orbit or a stylized letterform. The logo is centered within a solid blue square.

Edmonton

[edmonton.ca/downtown](https://edmonton.ca/downtown)

