October 20, 2026

Edmonton City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
City of Edmonton
1 Sir Winston Churchill Square
Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 2R7

To Mayor Knack and City Council:

Re: 8.1 Nighttime Economy – Executive Committee meeting on October 21, 2026

The Edmonton Downtown Business Association (EDBA) thanks Councillor Morgan for bringing forward this discussion. The nighttime economy is an important topic. It affects restaurants, hospitality businesses, arts and cultural organizations, entertainment venues, hotels, event operators, and many other businesses that contribute to Edmonton's economy. It also affects the employees whose livelihoods depend on those businesses, along with the visitors and residents who make use of them.

Downtown Edmonton is at the heart of much of this activity. As a destination, downtown has a large concentration of employment, post-secondary education, hospitality, arts and culture, sports and entertainment, tourism, and major events - we have a strong interest in this conversation.

At the same time, we believe there is an opportunity to broaden the discussion.

One question we have been reflecting on is:

How do we grow and better connect Edmonton's daytime and nighttime economies so that each reinforces the other?

A thriving nighttime economy depends on more than activity after dark. It is supported by a thriving daytime economy.

People who work downtown during the day become customers of restaurants, patios, events, and entertainment venues in the evening. Students attending our post-secondary institutions contribute to activity throughout the day and into the evening. Visitors attending conferences, festivals, sporting events, and cultural attractions create demand for hotels, restaurants, and hospitality businesses. Well-paying jobs create the disposable income that allows people to participate in Edmonton's nighttime economy. A vibrant nighttime economy makes Edmonton a more attractive place to work, invest, study, live, and visit.

We recognize that the report identifies how elements of the nighttime economy are being advanced through existing initiatives, including Edmonton Advantage: Edmonton's Economic Development Strategy 2026-2030, the Downtown Action Plan, and the work of Explore Edmonton.

While we have a strong interest in this topic, we would also acknowledge that EDBA has not yet had an opportunity to engage our members specifically on their nighttime economy needs, aspirations, and priorities.

As the BIA focused on downtown vitality, economic development, safety, and strengthening public confidence in downtown Edmonton, we look forward to being part of future conversations on this topic and contributing the perspectives of our members as this work evolves.

The Committee's discussion should mark the beginning of the next phase of this conversation.

We would encourage the Executive Committee to consider how the objectives of Edmonton's nighttime economy can continue to be advanced through the implementation of Edmonton Advantage and upcoming budget discussions.

Whether the solution is a dedicated function, enhanced coordination, or another approach is ultimately a matter for Council to determine. From our perspective, the most important thing is that this conversation continues and that opportunities to strengthen the connection between Edmonton's daytime and nighttime economies remain visible within the City's economic development work.

We believe stronger connections between jobs, investment, education, tourism, hospitality, arts and culture, sports and entertainment will benefit both downtown and Edmonton as a whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



James L. Robinson
Executive Director
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