



October 5, 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: Proposed motion to suspend Section 37 of Public Spaces Bylaw during extreme weather activations
Item 8.2, Bylaw 21502 – One Year Review of Bylaw 20700 – Public Spaces Bylaw, City Council Meeting on October 6, 2026**

On behalf of the Edmonton Downtown Business Association and our business members, we are writing regarding the proposed motion to develop operating procedures to suspend Section 37 of the Public Spaces Bylaw during extreme winter weather activations.

Extreme cold weather is a recurring reality in Edmonton. People experiencing homelessness, poverty, addiction, mental health challenges, and other forms of vulnerability deserve warmth, safety, dignity, and access to support.

For this reason, we do not support the proposed motion.

Transit stations are critical public infrastructure. Transit is essential to the movement of people throughout the city and the Capital Region. Every day, workers, students, patients, visitors, and residents rely on it to connect with employment, education, health care, and shops & services. **The response to extreme vulnerability should be dedicated warming, shelter, and support spaces rather than relying on transit infrastructure to serve that function.**

The City has already made meaningful progress through investments in winter shelter shuttles, temporary shelter capacity, respite spaces, outreach, and community partnerships. These efforts have helped vulnerable Edmontonians while steadily building a more coordinated response system. The focus now should be on strengthening and expanding those efforts.

We encourage Council to focus on:

- Day spaces and warming spaces
- Shelter and transportation capacity
- Outreach and service navigation
- Access to washrooms, water, hygiene, and basic supports
- Pathways to treatment, recovery, housing, and stability

Most importantly, Edmonton should move toward a predictable and coordinated winter response strategy.

Winter is not a surprise. Yet each year governments, service providers, community organizations, and frontline agencies are required to rapidly adapt to growing needs. Edmonton should work toward a model that is planned, coordinated, and adequately resourced before winter arrives.

This responsibility cannot rest solely with the City of Edmonton. It requires continued partnership among the Government of Alberta, Government of Canada, Indigenous partners, community organizations, health and recovery providers, and other stakeholders. A successful response depends on shared responsibility and coordinated action.



For these reasons, we encourage Council to reject the proposed motion and instead focus its attention on strengthening Edmonton's immediate and long-term winter response systems through facilities, services, transportation supports, and partnerships specifically designed for that purpose.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James L. Robinson".

James L. Robinson
Executive Director
JR@edmontondowntown.com

cc Braede Harris, Director of Operations