October 27, 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: 9.2.1 Neighbourhood Renewal Program Policy - Alley Renewal - Draft Amendments
City Council meeting on October 28, 2026

The Edmonton Downtown Business Association (EDBA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding the proposed amendments to the Neighbourhood Renewal Program Policy and future alley renewal prioritization.

EDBA supports continued investment in alley renewal and appreciates Administration's work in bringing forward updates to the policy that considers an economic development lens.

Downtown alleys play an important role in supporting business operations, deliveries, waste collection, employee access, building servicing, and investment. They are a critical component of the infrastructure network that supports Downtown Edmonton's economic activity and provides essential emergency response access, particularly in high-density areas.

Proposed Amendment

EDBA respectfully requests that Council amend the draft policy, specifically within the section addressing alley renewal prioritization and implementation, to include the following consideration:

> ***When determining the prioritization, sequencing and implementation of alley renewal projects, consideration shall be given to infrastructure condition, economic activity and development considerations, and cumulative impacts arising from concurrent infrastructure projects. This includes consideration of impacts on access, mobility, visitation, business operations, and areas supporting significant economic activity.***

Rationale

Infrastructure projects are not experienced in isolation. Downtown businesses are currently experiencing the cumulative impacts of multiple public and private construction projects occurring simultaneously. While individual projects may be justified and beneficial, their combined impacts can significantly affect access, mobility, visitation, deliveries, business operations, and customer activity.

For this reason, project sequencing should be recognized as a policy consideration alongside infrastructure condition and economic activity considerations.

Downtown Implementation Considerations

Downtown Edmonton contains approximately 12.77 km of alleys serving hundreds of businesses, institutions, office buildings, multistorey residential properties, hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues, and event destinations.

While the Downtown alley network currently receives an overall condition rating of C, conditions vary across individual alley segments. Some alleys are in worse condition than others, and a phased implementation approach would allow Administration to continue applying condition-based prioritization within the Downtown network itself, addressing the highest-priority D and F condition alleys first while sequencing remaining segments which will come due over time.

Given the scale and complexity of the Downtown alley network, EDBA encourages the City to implement Downtown alley renewal over multiple budget cycles rather than through a single concentrated construction period.

The purpose would not be to delay renewal work. Rather, it would provide flexibility to:

- Better coordinate alley renewal projects with planned arterial, bridge, utility, streetscape, transit, and other construction projects occurring within downtown.
- Reduce cumulative impacts on business operations, customer access, deliveries, servicing activities, employees, residents, and visitors.
- Maintain mobility, accessibility, and visitation during periods of significant infrastructure investment.

Additional Opportunities

A phased implementation approach also creates opportunities to work collaboratively with property owners and stakeholders on broader improvements to the downtown alley network, including:

- Incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) recommendations into project design where appropriate.
- Exploring waste internalization opportunities and reducing reliance on dumpsters where feasible.
- Evaluating alley lighting opportunities, including whether lighting should form part of project scope or whether implementation could be supported through Local Improvement funding mechanisms.

Conclusion

EDBA supports continued investment in alley renewal. In addition to infrastructure condition and economic activity considerations, we ask Council to recognize the importance of cumulative construction impacts and implementation sequencing when planning alley renewal projects in areas supporting significant economic activity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



James L. Robinson
Executive Director
JR@edmontondowntown.com