EDMONTON DOWNTOWN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

June 24, 2026

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

To City Council:

Re: Item 7.1 2027-2030 Capital Renewal Prioritization
Infrastructure Committee, June 24, 2026 – Additional Points on Alley Renewal

In our written submission provided this morning, I missed providing feedback on Alley Renewal. As there is Committee discussion underway about alleys in particular, we would like to provide points to consider when discussing Policy C595A – Neighbourhood Renewal Program, specific to alley renewals in BIAs, from a Downtown perspective.

Alley Renewal Program

While it may make sense in principle to prioritize Arterial Renewals ahead of Alley Renewals, when discussing this item, please be mindful that:

- Policy C595A prioritizes alley renewals in BIAs as they are highly used inventory with additional demands than solely residential alleys, as they serve as critical infrastructure in the movement of goods and people.
- Downtown alleys serve high-density, mixed-use properties, including both commercial and residential uses. Their heavy use requires renewal over time.

- Loading docks/shipping & receiving functions are located in alleys, hence well-maintained alleys are critical to servicing businesses and multi-tenanted properties.
- They also serve as critical infrastructure for the access of emergency vehicles and in the Downtown area, as they are highly used for this purpose for serving employees, residents, and vulnerable community members.
- These alleys are the access points for off-street parking and parking garages. This access is especially important as the City reduces on-street parking availability at times of arterial renewal.
- Policy C595A is not about putting undue pressure on any one budget cycle. Rather, it provides the City with a long-term mechanism to improve the alleys in the worst condition to an acceptable level, from 2019 to 2043.

While we appreciate that alleys in Downtown are on the tentative list for renewal in 2027 to 2030, the following further points might be helpful in relieving some of the budget pressure for this project:

- The sum of all alley renewals Downtown is a large project scope. Seeking to complete most Downtown alley renewals in one budget cycle would add to further construction-fatigue impacting business confidence/morale Downtown.
- Consider prioritizing the alleys for potential implementation over 2 or more budget cycles. This would help support more thoughtful construction planning, when considering the cumulative impact of other planned arterial and bridge renewal work.
- Slowing down the implementation of Downtown alley renewals would allow time for the City and private sector interests to plan and implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) approaches to alley safety.
- Setting the ambition for dumpster-free alleys could be part of the strategy. This requires planning and coordination with privately-owned properties in internalizing their waste within loading docks and ground floor spaces, accessible from alleys.

In discussion alley renewals in BIAs, we would ask that City Council be business-friendly in considering the importance of long-term and sustained investments in commercial and mixed-use alleys.

Sincerely,



James L. Robinson
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