WHAT DOWNTOWN NEEDS FROM THE CITY OF EDMONTON'S 2027–2030 BUDGET

Recommended motions from the Edmonton Downtown Business Association

Submitted to Mayor Knack and Edmonton City Council • November 22, 2026

EDBA has spent considerable time reflecting on the difficult choices before Council and on what downtown truly needs from the City over the next four years. We have sought to be focused and practical. These recommendations prioritize the services, partnerships and investments that can produce the greatest tangible impact.

Safety and Stewardship

1. Establish a dollar-for-dollar cost-sharing partnership for **Downtown Core Patrol**, to a maximum annual contribution of $600,000 each from EDBA and the City.

2. Retain the **Edmonton Police Service** operating allocation and develop a staged funding plan for priority capital and technology gaps.

3. Fund Funding Model 3 for 24/7 **Crisis Diversion**.

4. Ensure sufficient year-round, low-barrier **Day Space** access while refining the unfunded "Day Spaces – Essential Year-round" and "Day Spaces – Community Service Hub" packages into a sustainable shared funding model.

5. Retain the **Well Maintained City** Service Package and **Centre City Optimization**.

Downtown Investment

6. Retain and approve the proposed **downtown infrastructure** and **Capital City Downtown Community Revitalization Levy** investments.

7. Retain **Edmonton Advantage** and **Downtown Action Plan** implementation funding.

8. Designate one **Nighttime Economy** liaison within an existing City team.

City–BIA Partnership

9. Remove the proposed **BIA administrative cost-recovery charge** and levy-undercollection contingency.

Recommended motions and concise rationale follow.

1. Downtown Core Patrol: Dollar-for-Dollar Cost Sharing

> **That the 2027–2030 Operating Budget be amended to add up to $600,000 annually, beginning in 2027, for a City contribution to Downtown Core Patrol, matched dollar-for-dollar by funding secured by EDBA through its BIA levy, fundraising, business partnerships, sponsorships and other sources.**
> **That Administration work with EDBA to establish a 50/50 cost-sharing agreement, to a maximum annual City contribution of $600,000, addressing eligible expenditures, service levels, hours and geographic coverage, performance measures, reporting requirements, payment terms and an annual review process.**
> **That Administration identify an appropriate funding source, which may include Community Safety and Well-Being funding, Downtown Action Plan implementation funding, expanded eligibility for the BIA Enhanced Services Grant or another appropriate source.**

Downtown businesses regularly encounter situations involving people in distress, fires, overdoses, property damage and other concerns that need a proactive response before they become emergencies. Downtown Core Patrol helps fill that gap.

Core Patrol is delivered by Hiregood, the social enterprise of Boyle Street Community Services. Each shift operates two teams, each with two trained employees and a vehicle. The teams provide wellness and property checks, de-escalation, connections to services and incident reporting. Core Patrol complements police, Crisis Diversion, fire and EMS. It does not replace them.

Downtown businesses invest approximately $413,000 annually through the BIA levy. A one-time $330,000 National Bank sponsorship supported daytime coverage in 2026. Current funding provides overnight coverage seven days a week and daytime coverage six days a week. An evening shift remains a major gap.

A three-shift model would cost approximately $1.2 million annually, funded equally by EDBA and the City. EDBA will work to secure its share through the existing levy, fundraising, sponsorships and business partnerships, with consideration of an approximately $187,000 levy increase for 2028 and future years, subject to Board and member approval.

2. Edmonton Police Service: Operating Support and Priority Capital Gaps

> **That the Edmonton Police Service operating allocation included in the proposed 2027–2030 Operating Budget, consistent with the approved Police Funding Formula, be retained as presented.**
> **That Administration work with EPS to prioritize the $61.66 million in currently unfunded capital requirements, pursue applicable provincial and federal contributions, and return through the 2027 Spring Supplemental Capital Budget Adjustment with a funding plan for the highest-priority facility, fleet, equipment, information-system, cybersecurity and investigative-technology gaps.**

Effective policing protects everyone, including vulnerable people who face violence, exploitation, theft and victimization. EDBA supports a visible police presence downtown while respecting EPS operational independence.

EPS requested approximately $182.97 million in capital funding. The proposed budget funds approximately $121.31 million, leaving $61.66 million, or 33.7%, unfunded. EDBA supports risk-based prioritization, staged municipal funding and contributions from Alberta's Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Services and the federal Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

3. 24/7 Crisis Diversion: Funding Model 3

> **That the 2027–2030 Operating Budget be amended to fund the 24/7 Crisis Diversion Service Package at Funding Model 3: Enhanced Service Delivery, Coordination and Data Reporting, including new funding of $3,131,299 in 2027, $184,966 in 2028, $467,832 in 2029 and $198,022 in 2030.**

24/7 Crisis Diversion is Edmonton's only publicly accessible, community-based, non-emergency crisis response operating around the clock. From 2022 to 2025, calls to 211+3 increased 76% and dispatches increased 97%. The call-answer rate fell from 83% in 2022 to 64% in 2025 and to 53% as of June 30, 2026.

Base funding would reduce service. Funding Model 3 replaces aging vehicles, maintains permanent Winter Response, improves 211+3 capacity, adds specialized response for areas of concentrated need including downtown, provides dedicated dispatch and strengthens data coordination. It complements Core Patrol and effective policing while allowing emergency services to focus on calls requiring their intervention.

4. Sustainable, Low-Barrier, Year-Round Day Spaces

> **That Administration ensure sufficient year-round, low-barrier Day Space access to avoid material service gaps, including during extreme cold, heat and smoke events, while refining the unfunded "Day Spaces – Essential Year-round" and "Day Spaces – Community Service Hub" packages with other orders of government, Indigenous governments and organizations, and community-service providers into a sustainable shared funding and service model connected to housing, health care, treatment and recovery pathways.**

From December 2025 through March 2026, four City-supported sites served 6,634 unique people over 37,663 visits and made 1,757 referrals. Without sufficient access, people seek refuge in libraries, transit stations, recreation facilities, parks, pedways and storefronts that are not designed to provide social services.

Day Spaces are not substitutes for housing, treatment, recovery, health care or emergency shelter. They provide immediate safety and an essential connection into those systems. The City should maintain access now while developing a shared model aligned with the federal 10-year plan to end homelessness and Alberta's housing, health and recovery responsibilities.

5. Well Maintained City and Centre City Optimization

> **That the funded Well Maintained City Service Package and the existing funding and operating capacity for Centre City Optimization be retained in the 2027–2030 Operating Budget.**

Downtown needs both programs. Well Maintained City strengthens the citywide baseline for snow and ice control, litter, graffiti and park maintenance. Centre City Optimization provides an enhanced and responsive service layer through its Clean Team, Green Team and Inspection Services.

Together, the programs improve accessibility and provide an ongoing, visible City presence. Visible stewardship demonstrates that public spaces are actively managed and builds confidence that downtown is welcoming and intended for everyone.

6. Downtown Infrastructure and Community Revitalization Levy Investments

> **That the proposed downtown infrastructure profiles and Capital City Downtown Community Revitalization Levy investments included in the 2027–2030 Capital Budget be retained and approved substantially as presented.**

EDBA supports:

- Completion of Valley Line West LRT construction.
- Downtown Alley Renewal over multiple budget cycles, prioritized by condition and cumulative construction impacts.
- Planning and design for Jasper Avenue from 102 Street to 109 Street.
- The 103A Avenue Streetscape project, beginning in 2027.
- Event Park and Village at ICE District infrastructure, supported through the Downtown CRL and partner funding, beginning in 2027.
- The 107 Street Streetscape from 99 Avenue to Jasper Avenue, with further stakeholder engagement on design and construction beginning in 2028.
- Other Downtown CRL investments supporting infrastructure, public spaces, catalyst projects and strategic partnerships.

EDBA appreciates Infrastructure Services' upcoming work on sequencing, access planning and stakeholder engagement. Downtown needs the investment, delivered carefully. EDBA also looks forward to the Business Friendly Construction Policy and related procedures in 2027.

7. Edmonton Advantage and Downtown Action Plan Implementation

> **That the Edmonton Advantage and Downtown Action Plan implementation funding included in the proposed 2027–2030 Operating Budget be retained.**

Council has approved both strategies. The priority now is implementation. The funding supports business investment, visitation, public-space stewardship, well-paying employment, arts and culture, hospitality, tourism and partnerships that leverage public and private investment. Downtown Action Plan funding may also provide one appropriate source for the proposed Downtown Core Patrol match.

8. Nighttime Economy Liaison

> **That Administration designate one Nighttime Economy liaison within an existing City team for the 2027–2030 budget cycle, using existing resources where possible, to engage nighttime businesses and venues, connect them with City functions, assist with cross-departmental issues, and report on results and future resource requirements.**

EDBA supports action on Edmonton's nighttime economy but recommends a proportionate starting point rather than immediately establishing the proposed four-person office. Businesses need one accountable contact who listens, builds relationships, connects operators with City services and helps resolve issues across licensing, transit, safety, events, permitting, noise/sound, public spaces and economic development.

9. Remove BIA Administrative Cost Recovery and Levy-Collection Contingency

> **That the "Charge for the Administration of BIA Tax Collection" reduction in Addendum Attachment 12 of Financial Services report FS03598 be removed from the 2027–2030 Operating Budget, and that the associated $400,000 annual budget impact beginning in 2028 be addressed through another funding source or budget adjustment.**
> **That the City continue to provide BIA assessment, levy administration, collection, enforcement and transfer as municipal in-kind support that enables BIAs to pool and leverage private-sector investment for public-facing services and economic-development outcomes.**
> **That Administration undertake a partnership-based review with Edmonton's BIAs before bringing forward any future proposal affecting BIA assessment, levy administration, collection risk or amounts transferred to BIA boards, including consideration of whether alternative assessment methods could improve transparency, equity, administrative efficiency and cost-effectiveness.**

The proposal would introduce a 5% administrative charge and transfer levy-undercollection and write-off risk to individual BIAs. The City expects a $400,000 annual budget benefit beginning in 2028. EDBA recognizes that removing it requires Council to address that pressure elsewhere.

For EDBA, the administrative charge alone would be approximately $97,000 annually. That is almost equal to EDBA's entire 2027 sidewalk-cleaning budget for Downtown Shine, delivered by Hiregood. The choice is not abstract: one administrative charge, or one year of cleaner downtown sidewalks.

Until the City provides EDBA's collection history and final methodology, the contingency remains unknown. Illustrative scenarios suggest a possible combined annual impact of approximately $291,000 to $486,000. The result would be higher levies, reduced services or both.

Municipal assessment and levy collection are the City's essential in-kind contribution to a system that mobilizes private-sector funding for Core Patrol, stewardship, activation, economic development and business support. EDBA and Administration are also exploring whether a floor-space method could improve transparency, equity and administrative efficiency in the methodology for assessing BIA member businesses for the BIA tax levy. That work should be completed before a permanent percentage-based charge is established.

All Edmonton BIAs will attend Executive Committee on December 2 for consideration of 2027 budgets and board appointments. That meeting provides an immediate opportunity to examine the details. EDBA nevertheless asks a Councillor to initiate the removal motion during the current budget process.

Conclusion

Across these nine motions, EDBA is asking Council to support a complete downtown safety and stewardship system, stay the course on infrastructure and economic-development investment, and protect the City–BIA partnership that helps turn business-funded dollars into visible results.

That means matching EDBA's investment in Core Patrol, retaining effective policing, Crisis Diversion, Day Spaces and visible City stewardship, advancing the proposed capital and Downtown CRL program, implementing Edmonton Advantage and the Downtown Action Plan, and beginning nighttime-economy work with one accountable liaison. It also means preserving the City's in-kind levy-administration support and removing the proposed BIA charge and undercollection contingency.

EDBA recommends Council support for the nine motions in this submission.
Thank you.