



Positioning Edmonton to Win

**2027-2030 BUDGET
RECOMMENDATIONS**

FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT

INDUSTRY IS READY.

Is the City of Edmonton?

EDMONTON REGION
CREDA
COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Edmonton has significant advantages:
population growth, transportation
connectivity, available land, skilled labour
and a diverse regional economy.

Yet growth does not automatically translate into private investment. Capital is mobile, and Edmonton competes with other municipalities in the Capital Region and beyond for businesses, development, employment and investment.

The 2027-2030 budget is an opportunity to embed economic development into municipal operations, capital planning and regulation.

The City must remain laser-focused on prioritizing budget allocations that deliver essential core services and advance its four strategic pillars of Safety, Economic Development, Growth Management, and Quality Services. Every investment should support a safe, competitive, well managed, and financially sustainable Edmonton.



FUNDAMENTALS OF COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT

Commercial real estate investment decisions are driven by several critical factors that directly influence Edmonton's ability to attract and retain private sector capital. To remain competitive, the City must recognize and prioritize the following fundamentals:

FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

Construction costs, property taxes, development fees, achievable rents and investment returns.

SPEED TO MARKET

Timely permits, efficient approvals and construction readiness.

REGULATORY CERTAINTY

Clear standards, consistent interpretation and predictable decision making.

INFRASTRUCTURE READINESS

Reliable roads, water, wastewater, drainage, utilities and emergency services.

MARKET FUNDAMENTALS

Population growth, pedestrian traffic, tenant demand, access to labour and business activity.

LONG-TERM CONFIDENCE

Public safety, fiscal stability and a clear, credible municipal vision.

KEY BUDGET CONSIDERATION:

Significant municipal policy and budget decision should be evaluated through the lens of whether it strengthens Edmonton's investment competitiveness, improves development feasibility, and encourages private sector investment.

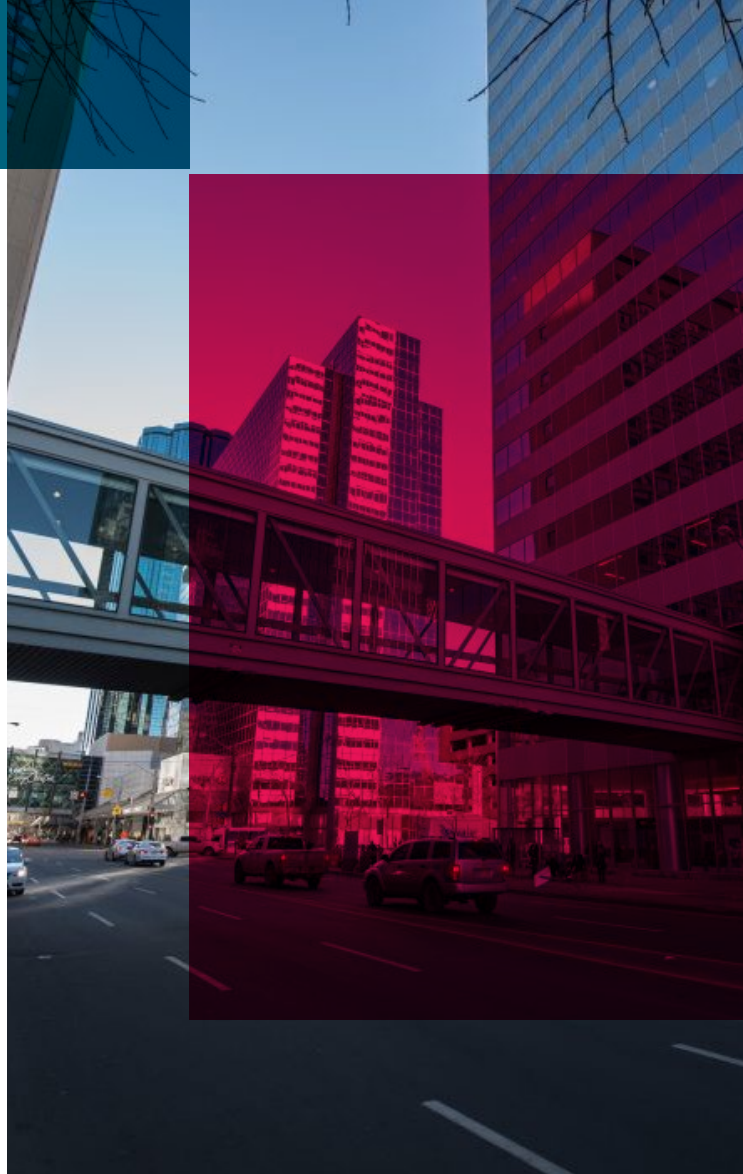
With these investment fundamentals in mind, CREDA's Edmonton Region Budget Recommendations outline practical, actionable priorities to strengthen Edmonton's competitiveness, remove barriers to development, attract private sector investment and position the City for sustainable long-term growth.

1 DOWNTOWN EDMONTON: RESTORE CONFIDENCE

Downtown is an employment centre, a cultural destination and a signal of the city's economic health.

- Improve access to the core by minimizing construction impediments to traffic flow.
- Commit to a full City of Edmonton employee return to office.
- Revisit the zoning approach to mandatory ground floor commercial spaces for residential towers.
- Fully fund existing City of Edmonton plans that prioritize projects that increase land values and tax assessments.
- Improve downtown safety and cleanliness.
- Implement incentives encouraging mixed use development that attracts investment, increase building assessment value and support downtown residential goals.

➤ SEE WHAT'S POSSIBLE: EXPLORE OUR BUDGET RECOMMENDATION AND LOCAL CASE STUDY TO UNLOCK DOWNTOWN INVESTMENT.



2 PUBLIC SAFETY IS ESSENTIAL TO INVESTOR CONFIDENCE

Employee safety, customer experience, vandalism and security costs influence business location and reinvestment.

- Prioritize and Fund Public Safety. Commit dedicated resources to a coordinated, visible and sustained public safety presence in downtown Edmonton and key commercial districts to restore confidence, protect businesses and support economic investment.
- Prioritize funding for a transit fare-gate pilot.
- Adequately fund crisis-diversion to reduce 211 call wait times
- Address repeat property crime and disruptive behaviour while coordinating enforcement with outreach, housing and health services.
- Prioritize funding for a transit fare-gate pilot.
- Adequately fund crisis-diversion to reduce 211 call wait times
- Move Transit and Community Peace Officers under EPS.

➤ READ CREDA'S PROVINCIAL ADVOCACY LETTER





3

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: INCREASE NON-RESIDENTIAL INVESTMENT

Industrial projects are highly sensitive to land servicing, truck access, development costs, taxes and timelines.

- Fully fund the Industrial Investment Action Plan
- Prioritize substantial completion and arterial road projects that complete neighborhood build outs & access.
- Review Industrial Development Standards. Partner with industry to assess current processes and design requirements, identifying opportunities to reduce infrastructure construction and long term maintenance costs without compromising essential standards.
- Establish predictable pathways for compliant industrial projects and tenant improvements.
- Benchmark taxes, levies, servicing costs and approval times against regional alternatives.
- Prioritize retention and expansion of existing industrial employers.
- Coordinate road, water, wastewater, drainage and utility investment to deliver development ready employment land.

4

COMMERCIAL SERVICES: MAKE BUSINESS EASIER

Retail, hospitality, professional services, medical facilities and local businesses support jobs and complete communities.

- Streamline tenant improvements, change of use approvals and business expansion permits.
- Review parking, loading and access requirements against actual operating needs.
- Coordinate and accelerate planning, transportation, building, utility and inspection reviews.
- Improve communication and access during municipal construction.



5

MULTI FAMILY HOUSING: SUPPORT FEASIBLE PROJECTS

Permitted density is not the same as financially feasible housing. Housing starts depend on financing, construction costs, rents and municipal obligations.

- Improve approval certainty and coordination with utility providers. Establish a streamlined, coordinated review process between City departments and utility providers to align development approvals, servicing requirements, infrastructure capacity and timelines.
- Prioritize attainable and market driven housing. Focus on increasing the supply and diversity of attainable housing options that respond to market demand for a sustainable housing market.
- Review permits that are not approved to identify policy pressure points.
- Focus on growing investment in Edmonton through ongoing analysis of our investment competitiveness. In particular, maintain a pulse on regional tax competitiveness to ensure investment remains within the City of Edmonton boundaries.

➤ **SEE HOW EDMONTON COMPETES:** EXPLORE CREDA'S LATEST CAPITAL REGION MULTI-FAMILY PROPERTY TAX COMPETITIVENESS REVIEW.

6 RED TAPE REDUCTION: THE POLICY PREMIUM

Edmonton's growing number of municipal policies, design standards, sustainability requirements, and procurement conditions have a compounding effect on construction costs and limits the City's ability to maximize infrastructure investments.

- Review of the cumulative costs of municipal building policies, design standards, and procurement requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary red tape.
- Develop balanced standards between quality and cost efficiency.
- Require a financial impact assessment of all new or amended policies, bylaws and development requirements to understand their cumulative impact on project costs, financial feasibility and investment decisions.
- Review landscaping requirements and processes. Evaluate the effectiveness of landscaping securities, collection and release processes, inspection requirements and flexibility for alternative designs to reduce unnecessary costs and administrative burdens.
- Review bicycle parking requirements (commercial & residential). Align parking quantities, design standards and configurations with building use, location and demonstrated demand to reduce unnecessary development costs.
- Protect the integrity of the Planning and Development Business Model (PDBM). Review the model's governance and re-investment accountability to ensure transparency, appropriate allocation of industry-funded resources and continued industry trust.
- Development Permits: Strengthen staff training to ensure consistent interpretation and application of development requirements across all approvals.

7 EDMONTON PROUD: GROW EDMONTON WITH COMMUNITY BUILDERS

Civic pride and reputation matter to employers, residents, visitors and investors.

- Approach the development sector as a strategic partner.
- Align planning with market demand. Collaborate with industry to identify areas of market demand, emerging trends and future investment opportunities across Edmonton.
- Prioritize industry partnership and a willingness to think differently. Industry should help shape solutions before policies and infrastructure decisions are finalized.
 - ➔ Establish a City–Industry Economic Development and Investment Council with senior municipal leaders and representatives from industrial, commercial, residential and institutional real estate. Give it defined deliverables, public reporting and responsibility for pilot projects, not merely consultation.
- Put city owned land to work. Modernize the approach to Blatchford buildout including revising development requirements and selling remaining land to experienced developers.
- Conduct a review of surplus city owned land and sell it to industry developers to generate a return through new tax revenue.



Additional City resources should be allocated to rational long term infrastructure planning. Too often, it feels like decisions are being made on an ad hoc basis. This directly impacts both financial certainty and feasibility. Better coordination among developers, municipal capital programs and service providers can reduce duplication and provide investment certainty.



SOUTH OF 41 AVENUE SW: PLAN FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

The area south of 41 Avenue SW warrants a long range, evidence led planning framework. Strategic readiness should not be confused with immediate development authorization. Future growth decisions must reflect applicable City plans, infrastructure requirements and fiscal sustainability.

- Prepare an integrated transportation, water, wastewater, stormwater, utilities and emergency services framework.
- Complete the necessary statutory planning to enable development, establish clear and predictable land use direction that supports investment certainty, and align infrastructure servicing with demonstrated market demand and development phasing.
- Engage landowners, developers, employers, utilities and regional partners early.
- Link phasing to credible absorption forecasts, market demand and infrastructure affordability.
- Protect future industrial and commercial employment opportunities alongside housing.
- Publish clear milestones and evidence requirements for future planning decisions.

SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION INFRASTRUCTURE: INDUSTRY HAS DELIVERED. THE CITY MUST KEEP PACE.

Developers have invested significant private capital and fulfilled their infrastructure obligations to support Edmonton's growth. It is essential that the City continue to prioritize funding and timely delivery of its corresponding infrastructure commitments to ensure complete communities, maintain investor confidence and support future development.

- Prioritize budget allocation and establish clear infrastructure completion timelines. Maintain dedicated, predictable capital funding for outstanding municipal infrastructure commitments, supported by transparent priorities, defined delivery schedules and accountability.
- Prioritize the timely completion of municipal infrastructure obligations in communities where developers have fulfilled their commitments, ensuring the City keeps pace with private-sector investment
- Strengthen City-Industry coordination and accountability by establishing shared responsibilities and timelines to align infrastructure investment and delivery with development milestones.

Additional City resources should be allocated to rational long term infrastructure planning. Too often, it feels like decisions are being made on an ad hoc basis. This directly impacts both financial certainty and feasibility. Better coordination among developers, municipal capital programs and service providers can reduce duplication and provide investment certainty.

FIRE HALL CONSTRUCTION: AN INTEGRATED DELIVERY EXAMPLE

Rather than planning fire halls solely as stand alone municipal projects, the City could coordinate future fire station sites, servicing, road access and construction staging with adjacent community development. Fire response requirements and population forecasts should inform the phasing.

- Identify fire hall locations early in neighbourhood plans and population projections.
- Assess the viability of co-locating city owned facilities with other private and public facilities. In addition, consider coordination of staging and procurement.
- Extend this model to libraries, recreation facilities, transit and other civic infrastructure where coordination offers value.

LONG TERM IMPACTS OF FIRE HALL INFRASTRUCTURE NOT KEEPING PACE WITH DEVELOPMENT

When investment in fire hall infrastructure fails to keep pace with development, gaps in fire service coverage and response time standards can create lasting financial and economic consequences. Developers may be required to incorporate additional fire protection measures and site design constraints to meet safety requirements. While necessary to protect public safety, these measures can permanently impact development feasibility, land-use efficiency and the City's long term economic potential, including:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ INCREASED DEVELOPMENT COSTS:
Higher construction costs resulting from enhanced fire-rated construction, specialized window protection, upgraded building materials and additional fire safety requirements. ■ REDUCED LAND USE EFFICIENCY:
Increased building separations and setbacks that limit building footprints and achievable density. ■ LOST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:
Reduced building capacity, employment potential and economic activity on affected sites. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ REDUCED LONG TERM TAX ASSESSMENT:
Smaller developments and lower achievable density can permanently limit the City's future property tax assessment base. ■ DELAYED OR LOST INVESTMENT:
Increased costs and design constraints can result in project redesigns, delays, reduced investment or cancelled developments. ■ LASTING IMPACTS BEYOND FIRE HALL CONSTRUCTION:
Once projects are constructed at reduced density or with costly design constraints, the lost development potential may not be recovered even after fire service infrastructure is delivered. |
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2027-2030 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & COMMERCIAL
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT



Edmonton's future will be built by businesses creating jobs, developers constructing communities, investors providing capital, institutions anchoring activity and residents choosing to live here. The City's role is to create conditions in which responsible private investment can succeed.

Industry is not asking the City to abandon public objectives. It is asking the City to recognize that economic feasibility matters, time matters, certainty matters and investment decisions have alternatives.

INDUSTRY IS READY.

Is the City of Edmonton?

There's a real opportunity to shift City philosophy from managing growth to partnering with industry. Industry is fully committed to substantial collaboration on our collective future.

Get involved at www.credaedmonton.com.

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