

Date

The Honourable Nate Horner
President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Finance
Office of the Minister
Treasury Board and Finance
Alberta Legislature Building
10800 97 Ave NW
Edmonton AB, T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Horner,

RE: The City of Calgary 2024-25 Budget Submission

As the Government of Alberta prepares its 2024 budget, I'm writing to share some of the successes, challenges and opportunities for The City of Calgary (The City) and the provincial government to work together and leverage each other's strengths to bolster Alberta's diversifying economy, improve public safety and make life more affordable.

As a vibrant, diverse and highly-livable city, Calgary is poised to lead as an economic driver for Alberta and Canada. However, with growth, we face challenges in keeping pace with the need for affordable housing, investments in infrastructure, social supports and innovations while continuing to provide the services that citizens expect.

I ask you to consider the following investments for The City in the upcoming 2024-2025 provincial budget:

Economic Resilience

Recommendation 1: That the Government of Alberta contribute, through cost sharing with the Government of Alberta and The City, \$444 million to complete the Blue Line Extension, Airport Transit Connector and MAX 301 North Central BRT and \$127 million towards the Foothills Multisport Fieldhouse.

Infrastructure

The Blue Line Extension - \$53 million provincial contribution

- The Blue Line Light Rail Transit (LRT) extension enables the Blue Line to connect to the Calgary International Airport and its surrounding industrial-commercial lands via the Airport Transit Connector. This \$160 million project requires investment from all orders of government.

The Airport Transit Connector - \$225 million provincial contribution

- The Airport Transit Connector facilitates transit access from Calgary International Airport to the wider city. The estimated cost of the eastern branch of the Airport Transit Connector is \$675 million and requires investment commitments at the municipal, provincial, and federal orders

MAX 301 North Central Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - \$166 million provincial contribution

- MAX 301 North Central BRT will target currently underserved North Calgary and link this area to the Calgary International Airport. The total estimated cost is \$500 million and requires investment from all orders of government.

Foothills Multisport Fieldhouse - \$127 million provincial contribution

- The Multisport Fieldhouse will provide Calgarians year-round space to play, train, compete and gather while providing the opportunity to showcase Calgary and Alberta on the national and international stage by hosting major sporting events. The estimated total cost is \$380 million and requires investment partnerships with the Governments of Alberta and Canada.

Downtown Strategy

Recommendation 2: That the Government of Alberta matches The City's \$160.5 million investment in Seniors, Students and Affordable Housing to advance our shared vision of a thriving downtown Calgary, while creating more homes for Albertans.

Seniors, Students, and Affordable Housing - \$160.5 million provincial contribution

- Investment towards this program will further leverage local, private investment, towards converting under-utilized office space to residential uses, including new affordable housing, seniors' housing, and student housing.

Recommendation 3: That the Government of Alberta invest \$103 million towards redeveloping Olympic Plaza and adjacent Stephen Avenue and Arts Commons Phase 2 Resident House as a vibrant cultural hub in our transforming downtown.

Olympic Plaza - \$33 million provincial contribution

- A vibrant downtown requires lively public spaces. This revitalization project will work in conjunction with upgrades to Stephen Avenue and Arts Commons. The total cost of this project is \$100 million and requires one-third partnership from all orders of government.

Arts Commons Phase 2 Resident House - \$70 million provincial contribution

- This project will help position Calgary as a creative and cultural destination, increase equitable access to the arts, and leverage other downtown initiatives. This \$210 million project will need investment at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels.

Social Resilience

Recommendation 4: That the Government of Alberta cost share with the Government of Canada to fully fund the \$380 million ask and create 11,000 new homes through the Housing Accelerator Fund.

Affordable Housing Partnerships Program - \$380 million combined federal and provincial contribution

- The City has submitted an ambitious plan to the Housing Accelerator Fund that would create 11,000 new homes across the housing spectrum with a investment request of \$380 million. We urge the federal and provincial governments to fund this request in full. Calgary is in the midst of a housing crisis and urgently requires this investment to build the housing we need.

Recommendation 5: That the Government of Alberta leverage The City's \$9.5 million investment in Calgary Transit's Community Outreach Teams with an investment of its own.

Community Outreach Team and Mobile Crisis Response Teams - \$9.5 million provincial contribution

- The Community Outreach Team is a partnership providing welfare checks, advocacy for services and resources, as well as connecting individuals to shelter, detox treatment and healthcare. The team's presence in Calgary's downtown, including the transit system also allows emergency services to focus resources on high priority calls.

Recommendation 6: That the Province leverage Calgary's annual \$16 million investment with an \$8 million investment of its own.

Community Safety Investment Framework - \$8 million provincial contribution

- Investing in proven localized solutions will amplify efforts to connect and identify ways to improve support for Calgarians in crisis due to mental or emotional distress, conflict or a threat to their safety.

Recommendation 7: That the Province continue its commitment to disaster response by investing \$400,000 annually towards the Canada Task Force 2.

Canada Task Force 2 - \$400,000 annual provincial contribution

- A national 'all-hazards' disaster response team with diverse capabilities to respond to large-scale events, emergencies, or disasters, and support impacted communities across Canada. Ongoing support of this program ensures municipalities are supported in emergency events such as this years' wildfire season.

Recommendation 8: That the Government of Alberta allocate \$10.5 million to index FCSS investment to inflation and population growth.

Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) – \$10.5 million provincial contribution

- This has provided long-term, sustainable investment to community organizations delivering programs and services aimed at helping Albertans adopt healthy lifestyles, improve their quality of life and build capacity to prevent and deal with crisis situations. The City urges the Government of Alberta index FCSS investment for inflation and population growth.

Recommendation 9: That the Government of Alberta continue to support low income Albertans through a \$16 million investment in the Low Income Transit Pass program.

Low Income Transit Pass - \$16 million provincial contribution

- The Low Income Transit Pass has been an incredibly successful program in Calgary. Continued investment is crucial in ensuring this program continues to be there for those hit hardest by inflationary pressures.

The City submits these projects and investment opportunities forward for your consideration to maximize our ability to achieve our shared economic, social, and environmental objectives.

I look forward to discussing these investments further with you.

Sincerely,

Jyoti Gondek
Mayor
The City of Calgary

cc: The Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier
Calgary City Council
David Duckworth, City Manager, The City of Calgary