

**Date**

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance  
Office of Department of Finance Canada  
90 Elgin Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0G5

Dear Minister Freeland,



**RE: The City of Calgary 2024-25 Budget Submission**

As the Government of Canada begins deliberations for its 2024-2025 budget, I'm writing to share my thoughts on how The City of Calgary (The City) and the federal government can work together to ensure that Calgary remains a welcoming, inclusive and affordable place to make a living, and make a life.

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

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

**Economic Resilience**

**Recommendation 1: That the Government of Canada 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 the development of a permanent transit fund.**

**Infrastructure**

**The Blue Line Extension - \$53 million federal 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 federal 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 levels.

**MAX 301 North Central Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - \$166 million federal 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.

**Recommendation 2: That the Government of Canada contribute, through cost sharing with the Government of Alberta and The City, \$127 million towards the Foothills Multisport Fieldhouse.**

**Foothills Multisport Fieldhouse - \$127 million federal contribution**

- The Foothills Multisport Fieldhouse will provide Calgarians with 338,603 square feet of much-needed 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 to bring Calgary in alignment with its counterparts, as it is the only major city in Canada without a fieldhouse.

**Downtown Strategy**

**Recommendation 3: That the Government of Canada match The City's \$160.5 million investment in the Calgary Development Incentive Program and 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.**

**Calgary Development Incentive Program - \$160.5 million federal contribution**

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

**Olympic Plaza - \$33 million federal 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 federal 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**

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**Affordable Housing**

**Recommendation 4: That the Government of Canada fully fund Calgary's \$380 million request through the Housing Accelerator Fund, creating 11,000 new homes.**

**Housing Accelerator Fund - \$380 million federal contribution**

- The City of Calgary has submitted an ambitious plan to the Housing Accelerator Fund that would create 11,000 new homes across the housing spectrum alongside a funding 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.

**Mental Health and Addictions**

***Recommendation 5: That the Government of Canada leverage The City's \$22 million investment in local mental health and addictions investment program with a \$22 million investment of its own.***

***Mental Health and Addictions Investment Framework - \$14 million federal contribution***

- Through the Community Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, investments offer a person-centered approach to addressing mental health and addiction issues impacting Calgarians.

***Community Safety Investment Framework - \$8 million federal 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.

***Canada Task Force 2 - \$516,000 annual federal contribution***

***Recommendation 6: That the Federal government continue its commitment to disaster response by investing \$516,000 annually towards the Canada Task Force 2.***

- 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 year's unprecedented wildfire season.

## **Climate Resilience**

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***Recommendation 7: That the Government of Canada leverage climate-related investments and effort committed by The City through investing \$974 million that will protect communities while creating economic, social, and natural resiliency.***

***Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF) – \$107 million federal contribution***

- The City looks to the federal government through DMAF to invest in the Sunnyside Flood Barrier and Community Drainage Improvement Program with total costs of \$27 million and \$240 million respectively. These programs are instrumental in Calgary's ability to build community resilience in a changing climate.

***Futures Fund - \$860 million federal contribution***

- The City is seeking a \$860 million allocation of the Futures Fund to Calgary to diversify the economy and create an environment of innovation, allowing the city to become a leader for clean technology.

***Canada Nature Fund - \$7 million federal contribution***

- The City is seeking \$7 million in investment to restore critical ecological areas, support research on risks to urban development from river migration and restoring major ecologically biodiverse networks boarding the Tsuut'ina Nation.

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 Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister  
Calgary City Council  
David Duckworth, City Manager, The City of Calgary