



April 5, 2024

City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station M, Mail Code 8117
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

Attention: Randel Coles, Manager Service Excellence, Planning & Development Services

Dear Randel,

Re: Planning & Development Services Sustainment Reserve

We appreciate the opportunity to meet with you on March 25th to discuss the recent updates to the Planning and Development Services Sustainment Reserve template. Your dedication to ensuring the effectiveness and appropriateness of these changes is commendable, and we are grateful for the chance to provide our feedback.

The revisions to the name and purpose statement, alongside the new guidelines on the utilization of the reserve, as well as the introduction of service funding principles, reflect a proactive approach to addressing the evolving needs of our industry. BILD Calgary Region fully supports initiatives that cost effectively reduce barriers to development and enhance housing supply, recognizing that these funds stem from contributions made by our members within the building and development sector. It is reassuring to see a commitment to leveraging these resources to navigate market fluctuations effectively.

While we acknowledge the importance of these updates, we believe that clarity regarding the expected "service outcomes" of budgeted expenditures is essential. Our members seek a more detailed understanding of how these investments will translate into tangible improvements, such as streamlined development permit processes and enhanced efficiency in townhouse and row housing project approvals.

Specifically, the "working space initiative" allocation of \$17.08 million has garnered attention due to its significant proportion of the budget. We respectfully request further insight into how this aligns with existing available office space within municipal facilities, the potential for remote work arrangements, industry benchmarks concerning space utilization per headcount, and any other initiatives aimed at driving automation and efficiency.

Capital expenditures, like the "working space initiative", should be viewed as investments with enduring benefits rather than one time or lump sum expenses. We recommend reporting and accounting for them in the reporting of the reserve over a defined time period, i.e., their expected life. By adopting this approach, it will better capture their complete time value and enable a more comprehensive, comparable, and meaningful financial analysis and assessment of the reserve.

As stakeholders committed to the broader spectrum of housing needs, we advocate for a balanced distribution of funds that benefits the entire housing continuum. It is imperative that expenditures reflect the proportional contribution of various sectors within the industry, rather than being skewed towards any single area.

Furthermore, amidst the ongoing challenges surrounding housing affordability, we were pleased to hear from our discussion that there are no anticipated increases to Planning and Development Services fees. This assurance underscores a shared commitment to mitigating the financial burdens associated with housing for both the building and development industry and residents alike.

We trust that The City is actively exploring avenues to secure additional Federal funding support aimed at bolstering resources dedicated to expediting regulatory and municipal approval processes essential for enhancing housing supply promptly. We sincerely appreciate any efforts made in this regard and would greatly appreciate regular updates regarding the acquisition of funds and the strategic utilization thereof. Specifically, we are keen to understand how these funds will be utilized to mitigate, leverage, and ultimately minimize withdrawals from the reserve. Your ongoing communication on this matter is invaluable to us, ensuring transparency and alignment with shared objectives.

In conclusion, we extend our gratitude for considering our input on these matters of significant importance to our industry. We remain committed to collaborating with you to ensure that the Planning and Development Services Sustainment Reserve continues to serve its intended purpose effectively.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns, and we look forward to further dialogue and progress. Should you have any questions please contact the undersigned.

Best Regards,



Brian R. Hahn
CEO, BILD Calgary Region