



# EDMONTON ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

Publication Date: April 2021

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The lands on which Edmonton sits and the North Saskatchewan River that runs through it have been the sites of natural abundance, ceremony and culture, travel and rest, relationship building, making and trading for Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. Edmonton is located within Treaty 6 Territory and within the Métis homelands and Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4. We acknowledge this land as the traditional territories of many First Nations such as the Nehiyaw (Cree), Dene, Nakota Sioux (Stoney), Anishinaabe (Saulteaux) and Niitsitapi (Blackfoot).

Edmonton owes its strength and vibrancy to these lands and the diverse Indigenous peoples whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory as well as settlers from around the world who continue to be welcomed here and call Edmonton home.



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### MESSAGE FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Edmonton is a city of hardworking, generous, creative and courageous people. We take pride in our small businesses, our made-in-Edmonton success stories, and our leadership in regional collaboration. And when tested, we rise to the occasion.

And this is one of those moments. We are in a new economy, one in which innovation is the norm and equity is an imperative. In this new economy, resiliency is less about 'bouncing back', and more about creating the opportunities and culture that will enable a strong and stable economy for years to come.

The Edmonton Economic Action Plan is the roadmap for building that resilient economy. The Action Plan sets the path for creating more jobs and more businesses. It will steer us towards opportunities in the green economic sectors, and lead to the reduction of unnecessary regulation. By taking a focused approach to inclusion and equity, we will spread the benefits and participation in economic growth.

It will be hard work, and it can't be done by just the City of Edmonton. We need our partners, stakeholders, and Edmonton business owners and entrepreneurs to work together to build the vibrant and sustainable economy we all want to see. I thank our partners for their support on this work to date, and am heartened by the shared commitment to move in collaboration.

**The Edmonton Economic Action Plan is the roadmap for building that resilient economy. The Action Plan sets the path for creating more jobs and more businesses. It will steer us towards opportunities in the green economic sectors, and lead to the reduction of unnecessary regulation.**

In the shadow of COVID-19 and an economic recession, this Action Plan is not merely a suggestion, it's essential for us. And together, we will move forward with focus.

**Andre Corbould**  
City Manager



## PURPOSE

We are a city of entrepreneurs and change agents, innovators and students, employers and dreamers, newcomers and life-long residents. Collectively, we have and continue to work to build our community and our economy in this place we call Edmonton.

# PURPOSE

## INTRODUCTION

Edmonton is one of Canada's big cities, a provincial capital, a leader in environmental stewardship, a destination of choice for people, and home to over 34,000 businesses and nearly one million residents.

We are proud of where we are today but it hasn't always been easy. The economic growth and success we have seen is a testament to the hard work, creativity and passion of so many Edmontonians. We have faced and will continue to face challenges – some we can see coming and others that we would have never imagined.

Today, we have an economy shaken by COVID-19 and a volatile oil and gas sector. We feel the collective worry of Edmontonians who are out of work, of small business owners writing paycheques for their staff but not themselves, and of industry leaders looking for a path forward.

We may not know all that the future holds but we know that we need a plan. We need to ensure our economy is resilient and has room for everyone. We must continuously focus on being a business friendly city. The Edmonton Economic Action Plan (the Action Plan) offers a roadmap to build a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable economy. The Action Plan consists of tangible, specific actions that advance the direction provided in The City Plan and ConnectEdmonton. The Action Plan details priority actions to be carried out by the City and identifies how the City coordinates its efforts to leverage the strengths of our economic development and community partners. Through these actions we will support job creation, diversify our industries, and support emerging markets. Partnership is key to the Action Plan, and actions contained within it require collaboration. We are stronger when we work together.

A plan is only as good as those who see it through, and we know Edmontonians are up to this challenge. Let's get to work.



## PURPOSE



The city's economy accounts for almost 70 per cent of the Edmonton regional economy, which ranks relatively high in terms of its economic diversity.

### OUR ECONOMY TODAY

Edmonton has experienced considerable growth over the past decade with a city population that has grown faster than Alberta and Canada. The city's economy accounts for almost 70 per cent of the Edmonton regional economy, which ranks relatively high in terms of its economic diversity. Edmonton's largest sectors include: mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction, trade, manufacturing, finance, insurance and real estate and construction. These five sectors combined accounted for more than half of Edmonton's economic output in 2019. The public administration sector also plays a key role in Edmonton's economy. Edmonton has historically been a prosperous city, with real gross domestic product per capita that was 23 per cent higher than the country as a whole in 2019. Our regional labour force has among the highest participation rates across Canadian census metropolitan areas, indicating our population's strong attachment to the labour market.

In 2020, Edmonton's economy experienced an economic shock like no other with the COVID-19 pandemic and the collapse of oil prices. The toll of this shock is estimated to have contracted regional economic output by 5.9 per cent with 62,200 fewer individuals employed. A full recovery to 2019 levels of output is not expected until about 2022, though the pace and direction of the economic recovery will depend heavily on the course of the pandemic. The latest economic data indicate that Edmonton's businesses continue to adapt to the changing environment with the help of government support that has, in turn, helped employment to recover.



## DIRECTION FROM THE CITY PLAN

The City Plan charts how we will get to a future city, a city that has the benefits we enjoy today with new opportunities for the future. The City Plan is about our spaces and places and how we move around the city. It is about our community and what we need to do together to grow, adapt and succeed. The City Plan provides strategic direction on economic development through multiple policies. The Action Plan cascades from The City Plan by identifying specific actions aimed to help the City and its partners achieve the policies related to supporting our economy.

The City Plan asks, “what choices do we need to make to be a healthy, urban and climate resilient city of two million people that supports a prosperous region?”. The City Plan sets strategic direction for the way Edmonton grows, including how to accommodate projected employment numbers that are informed by historical trends and assumptions for future growth across sectors. It anticipates 520,000<sup>1</sup> new jobs in Edmonton when the population reaches an expected two million. To take into consideration the negative impacts of COVID-19, projections have since been updated and indicate growth in Edmonton of up to 121,000<sup>2</sup> additional employed persons by 2030. The changes over the last year remind us that job creation is not always linear, and there will be hills and valleys. With this in mind, the Action Plan needs to be nimble and agile, and will be updated as warranted to ensure it reflects the ongoing and emerging changes around us.

The City Plan sets strategic direction in two different but complementary ways: Essential

City and Future City. Essential City recognizes that not everything is about making something new and much of our work is about keeping things the same. A critical part of The City Plan is rooted in stewardship and building on the attributes most valued by Edmontonians today that were handed down to us from previous generations to ensure inclusion for all. Future City identifies that cities are constantly evolving and responding to a changing world. Expressing and igniting transformative change is necessary to allow the city to respond to emerging opportunities and deliberately shape the place we want to live in. We have an opportunity to proactively alter Edmonton’s course.

In alignment with both Essential City and Future City, the overarching question that guides the Action Plan is: “How do we support another 121,000 jobs in Edmonton over the coming decade?”<sup>3</sup>

While job creation is one key tenet of the Action Plan, the other is a strengthened economic development ecosystem that facilitates job creation, economic diversification, and equity. Municipalities and their partners can play a key role in this ecosystem by developing policies, providing support, easing restrictions, and making strategic investments into the community. The Action Plan provides a made-in-Edmonton map that coordinates economic strategy and activities across a range of initiatives and between partners. This coordination takes a holistic approach to strengthening an ecosystem that will ultimately result in more jobs, businesses and growth.

<sup>1</sup> Based on the City of Edmonton's fall 2018 forecast.

<sup>2</sup> Based on the City of Edmonton's fall 2020 forecast, calculated as the annual change in projected employment between 2021 and 2030.

<sup>3</sup> Refers to projected net employment growth between 2021 and 2030, including employment recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic taking place over that time frame.

## ENGAGEMENT

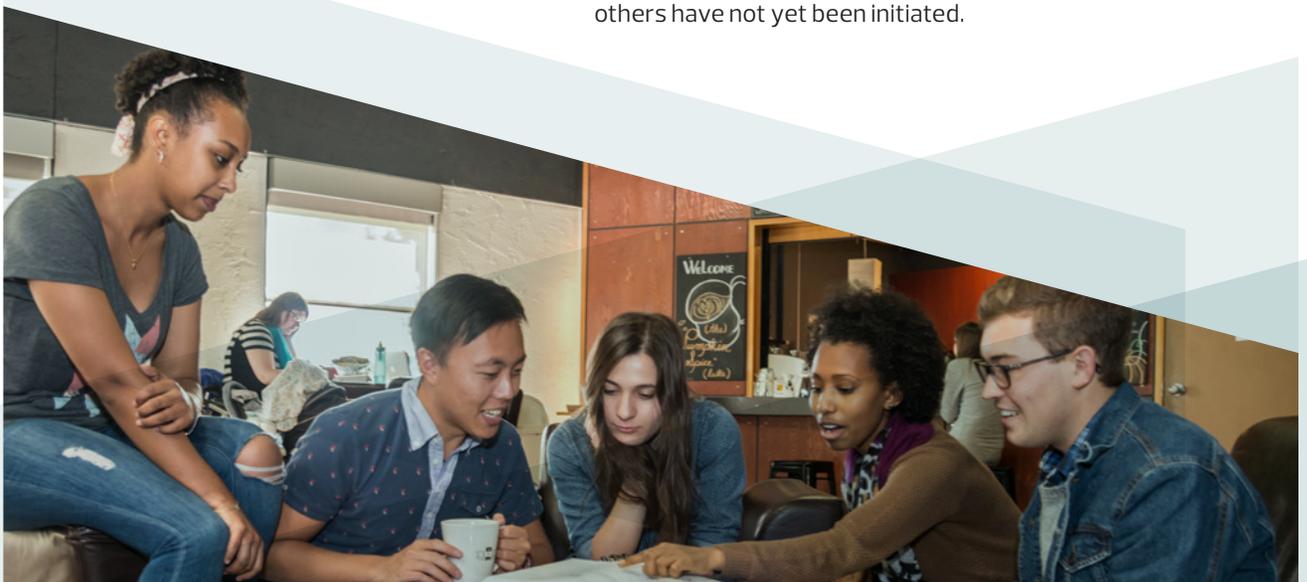
The Action Plan incorporates public, partner and stakeholder feedback gathered during the development of The City Plan, ConnectEdmonton, and the draft Building Local: Edmonton's Economic Growth Plan in 2019 by Edmonton Economic Development Corporation. Insight was gathered from approximately 2000 written comments, a review of workshop material, and What We are Hearing Reports from the engagement undertaken for The City Plan and the Community Energy Transition Strategy. The Art of Inclusion: Our Diversity & Inclusion Framework provided guidance on how to develop, support and foster equitable services and programs. Additionally, in-person and written feedback gathered from a range of economic development partners has supported the development of the Action Plan.

## PRIORITY ACTIONS

Those actions marked with a  represent priority actions. These are actions identified as key priorities through engagement, emerging opportunities and partnerships. Though this is not a COVID-19 recovery plan, the priority actions identified in the Action Plan are those that offer the most immediate and/or significant impact within our current economic realities.

## TIMELINE

The Action Plan contains actions to be taken over the next ten years, in alignment with City budget cycles (short = current budget cycle 2021-2022, medium = 2023-2026 budget cycle, long = 2027-2030 budget cycle). While this Action Plan does not contain any specific budget requests, it is tied to the City budget cycle in order to allow us to holistically review progress in alignment with these major touchpoints. It should be noted the timeline attributed to each action refers to the budget cycle in which the desired outcomes are expected to be achieved. As such, actions identified as medium or long term may be initiated in the short term. Several actions build on existing work whereas others have not yet been initiated.



“Some Edmontonians, due to their income, age, gender, immigration status, religion, disability, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, etc., have not had the same opportunities for growth and prosperity.”

### RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

The actions contained in the Action Plan include estimated resource requirements (\$ = under \$100K, \$\$ = \$100K-\$1M, \$\$\$ = \$1M-\$10M). Given the City's current fiscal constraints, implementation of the actions contained in this Action Plan will focus on reallocating and utilizing existing resources. This work will be integrated into the City's prioritized budgeting process.



### AN INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

Building the strongest and most resilient economy possible requires careful attention to who is *included* and who is *being left behind* in our considerations and policies. An equity lens (Gender-Based Analysis Plus GBA+) was used in the development of the principles and actions of this plan, and will be used in supplemental implementation actions, to account for the disproportionate and systemic barriers and challenges some Edmontonians continue to face. Some Edmontonians, due to their income, age, gender, immigration status, religion, disability, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, etc., have not had the same opportunities for growth and prosperity. Incorporating equity measures in the planning and implementation of economic actions for some segments of the population in the city to address racial, gender and other systemic social inequalities, ensures more equitable and inclusive economic opportunities for all Edmontonians to prosper. Though some specific actions address inclusivity in tangible ways, it is important to note that an equity lens will be applied to all actions and associated implementation.

“Building the strongest economy possible requires careful attention to who is included and who is being left behind.”

Cascading from the five principles are 24 actions that will support the creation of thousands of jobs and the growth of Edmonton's economy. To answer the question of how do we support another 121,000 jobs in Edmonton over the coming decade, the Action Plan sets five guiding principles:

## PRINCIPLES & ACTIONS



### **PRINCIPLE 1 WE WILL SUPPORT NEW AND ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS TO THRIVE IN THE NEW ECONOMY**

This principle focuses on actions that advance the local economy and entrepreneur support through integrated projects, policy, programs, and analytics.



### **PRINCIPLE 2 WE WILL SEIZE THE POTENTIAL OF OUR EXISTING LAND, ASSETS, AND PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES**

This principle focuses on actions that can leverage our competitive advantages including our geographical location, existing transportation network, infrastructure and housing affordability.



### **PRINCIPLE 3 WE WILL SUPPORT GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION OF OUR ECONOMY IN A SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE WAY**

This principle builds on existing work underway to grow and diversify our economy, while ensuring that we do so equitably and in a sustainable manner. of the corporation.



### **PRINCIPLE 4 WE WILL REMAIN AND BECOME A DESTINATION OF CHOICE FOR TALENT AND CAPITAL**

This principle area focuses on ensuring Edmonton is a preferred destination for people to live and work, as well as entrepreneurs and investors looking to invest in businesses.



### **PRINCIPLE 5 WE WILL EMBRACE AND GROW OUR RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

This principle recognizes that a key to success will be working collaboratively with multiple organizations in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region.

# PRINCIPLES



## Principle 1

# We will support new and established businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive in the new economy.

This principle focuses on actions that advance the local economy and entrepreneur support through integrated projects, policy, programs, and analytics.



### ACTION 1

**Leverage projects designed to improve Edmonton's regulatory processes and reduce red tape so that we are agile.**

This action includes performing continuous improvement activities through a user-experience lens to refine the City's internal processes and further streamline regulatory requirements across the corporation. Permit and Licensing Improvement, Zoning Bylaw Renewal and Business License Bylaw Renewal are examples of projects currently underway. Providing solutions to allow innovative business models—including short-term and temporary—will occur through this action. Streamlining processes and intentionally identifying and reducing barriers improves accessibility for many people, such as those for whom English is a second language, newcomers to Canada, and members of marginalized communities.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.1.3.5 Develop regulations and processes that are efficient, streamlined and easily understood in order to enhance Edmonton's competitiveness for investors and entrepreneurs. 3.2.1.1 Adapt the planning and regulatory environment to support innovative business models and operations.

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**Timeline:** Short

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**Resource Requirements:** \$

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**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Development Services, Economic Investment Services, Planning and Environment Services, Branches, Department Strategy Urban Planning & Economy Section)

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**Performance Measures:**

- Number of initiatives completed to support red tape reduction
- Estimated dollar value savings (time) associated with regulatory improvements



**This action includes coordinating the relevant data, activities and reporting of the City and external partners who support local businesses and entrepreneurs.**





## ACTION 2

**Align relevant economic development activities, reporting metrics, funding agreements, and grants to ensure we're working together as effectively as possible.**

This action includes coordinating the relevant data, activities and reporting of the City and external partners who support local businesses and entrepreneurs. Developing a shared understanding of roles, performance measures, and consistent reporting will help identify service gaps, eliminate redundancy, and improve collaboration. This will create opportunities to amplify the impact of economic development activities and maximize the return on our collective investments.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.1.3 Support access to employment and a broad range of economic opportunities for all of Edmonton's diverse communities. 3.3.1 Support opportunity for local economic and community resilience through development, revitalization and renewal

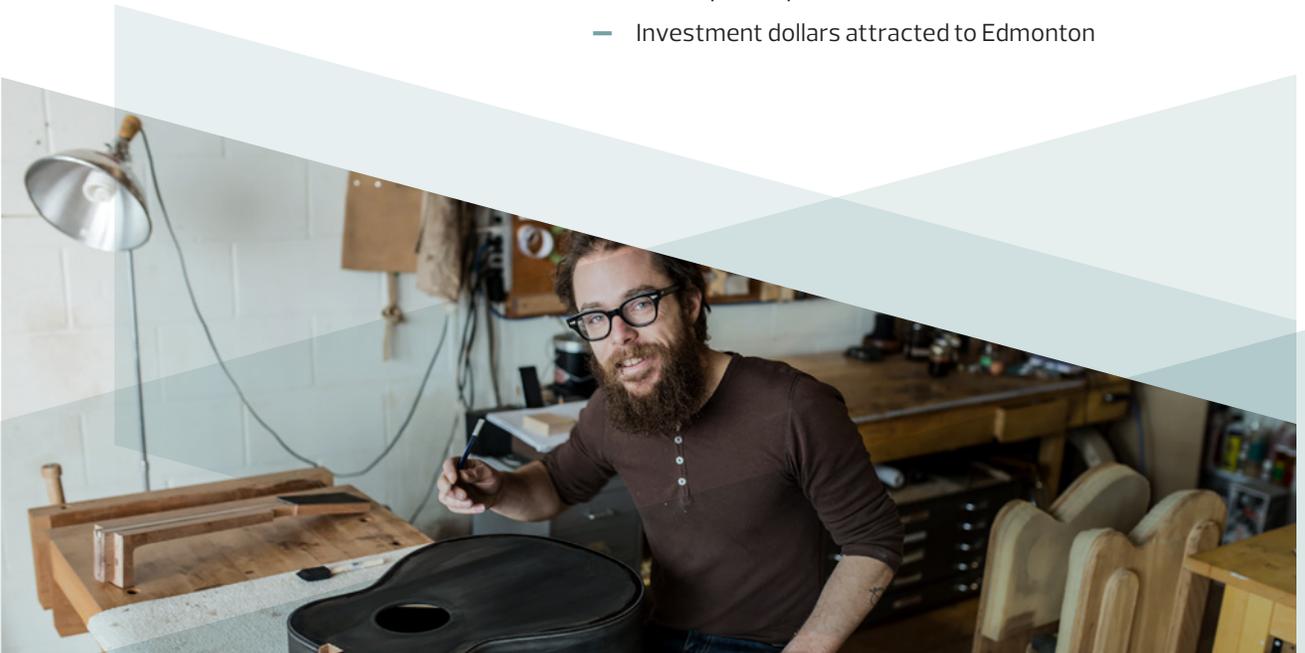
**Timeline:** Short

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services Branch) in partnership with Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association, Business Improvement Areas, Edmonton Global, Edmonton Screen Industries Office, Explore Edmonton, Health City, Innovate Edmonton, Applied Pharmaceutical Innovation and others

**Performance Measures:**

- Jobs created through economic grants
- Jobs created by each economic development partner
- Investment dollars attracted to Edmonton





## ACTION 3 ☆

### Support building capacity and access to resources for entrepreneurs from marginalized communities, such as racialized entrepreneurs, and newcomers.

This action includes further supporting and strengthening partnerships and programming with organizations that support marginalized communities who have faced institutional, historical and social barriers and challenges, including Black and Indigenous entrepreneurs. It involves collecting and analyzing data to identify opportunities for support and working with our post-secondary partners to increase access to education and training for members of underrepresented groups. It also includes developing training specific to those working in economic development to support culturally sensitive customer service and building inclusive workplace cultures in ways that encourage access, participation and partnership.



**The City Plan Policies:** 3.1.3.3 Partner to reduce barriers to education, employment and business opportunities for Indigenous people and newcomers.

**Timeline:** Short

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services, Social Development Branches, Respect in the Workplace Section) in partnership with Health City, Innovate Edmonton, a range of other community and business partners (i.e. Alberta Women Entrepreneurs, Black Canadian Women in Action, Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers)

#### Performance Measures:

- Number of entrepreneurs who identify with a marginalized group supported (ConnectEdmonton)
- Budget dollars allocated to programs that include support for entrepreneurs from marginalized groups

This action includes further supporting and strengthening partnerships and programming with organizations that support marginalized communities.



**This action includes revising the City's procurement policies to ensure priority is given to local businesses wherever possible.**



## ACTION 4

### Prioritize local and equitable procurement through a local procurement policy.

This action includes revising the City's procurement policies to ensure priority is given to local businesses wherever possible. The updated policy will create new, equitable opportunities for small and emerging businesses for procurements under \$75,000. Particular attention will be given to businesses owned by groups who have faced institutional, historical and social barriers and challenges. The work on the Indigenous Procurement Framework and the Sustainable Procurement Policy will be included in the revised procurement policies.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.1.3.1 Reduce barriers for local businesses and producers to provide goods and services to the City.

**Timeline:** Short

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Corporate Procurement and Supply Services Branch)

**Performance Measures:**

- Number of contracts under \$75,000 awarded to local businesses
- Dollars awarded to local businesses through the City's procurement processes
- Local employment created through the City's procurement processes

## ACTION 5

### Support projects aimed to strengthen or eliminate gaps within existing local supply chain networks.

This action includes providing integrated support to projects that strengthen or eliminate gaps in local supply chains. Potential projects may include research of, and support for, development or adoption of technology solutions such as platforms and databases that support online transitions and matchmaking programs to connect businesses and entrepreneurs. This includes working in partnership with local organizations, businesses and entrepreneurs when appropriate as well as exploring private-public sector solutions.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.3.1.1 Partner with local organizations to develop community economic development opportunities.

**Timeline:** Medium

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services Branch), Edmonton International Airport, Edmonton Screen Industries Office, Innovate Edmonton in partnership with community and business partners

**Performance Measures:**

- Number of businesses reporting improved distribution of their goods / services (The City Plan)



# Principle 2 We will seize the potential of our existing land, assets, and physical attributes.

This principle focuses on actions that can leverage our competitive advantages including our geographical location, existing transportation network, infrastructure and housing affordability.



## ACTION 6 ☆

**Leverage Edmonton's digital infrastructure, including Open Data, fibre optic network and the innovation corridor, to link research, educational and technology organizations**

This action will solidify and amplify Edmonton as an innovation hub. This will be achieved through place branding, talent attraction and strategic investment in programs that support innovation. Identifying potential infrastructure and support requirements and continued collaboration with innovation and post-secondary partners will incentivize growth of the innovation economy.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.3.2.2 Facilitate the intensification of non-residential areas including commercial and mixed uses along their edges to efficiently use existing infrastructure. 6.3.1.3 Collaborate with diverse public and private sector partners to advance the innovation corridor.

**Timeline:** Medium

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** Innovate Edmonton, City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services, Open City and Technology, Reputation and Brand Branches), Edmonton Global in partnership with post-secondary institutions and industry organizations

### Performance Measures:

- Number of projects that leverage open data
- Number of research, educational and tech organizations leveraging Edmonton's digital infrastructure
- Number of technology startups (ConnectEdmonton)
- Value of Startups (as identified by Innovate Edmonton)



## ACTION 7

### **Align outstanding City of Edmonton Industrial Action Plan actions to other work currently occurring, and prioritize key outstanding activities related to funding tools.**

This action will update and incorporate outstanding actions in the Industrial Action Plan to the Economic Action Plan. This action will involve advancing an industrial focus including financing, policy, programs, advocacy and education that will align to other work happening. This action will explore ways to encourage industrial infill and improve industrial competitiveness through emerging financial tools provided by the Municipal Government (Property Tax Incentives) Amendment Act, 2019 (i.e. Bill 7).

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.2.1 Ensure that development and public infrastructure is designed to support a vibrant local economy and competitive business environment. 3.3.1 Support opportunity for local economic and community resilience through development, revitalization and renewal. 3.3.2 Promote the continuous improvement, evolution and intensification of Edmonton's non-residential lands, 3.4.2 Support innovation and private investment in climate-resilient industries and businesses

**Timeline:** Short

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Assessment and Taxation, Economic Investment Services, Financial Services Branches) in partnership with Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association, Edmonton Global and others

**Performance Measures:**

- Value and number of Industrial Building Permits (The City Plan)
- Employment in Edmonton's industrial areas
- Investment dollars attracted to Edmonton





## ACTION 8

### Clearly identify economic development outcomes in City Capital Budget requests.

This action identifies the importance of allocating City budget resources to build and maintain City-owned infrastructure that supports economic development outcomes that grow our economy and contribute to job creation. This includes highlighting opportunities to leverage resources in a way that incentivizes additional investment from other sources. Entrenching an economic development lens to the Capital Budget will illuminate economic opportunity. This importance will be reflected as part of prioritized budget process.

**The City Plan Policies:** 2.3.3.5 Collaborate with private developers, utility providers and communities on innovative and creative solutions for temporary and permanent infrastructure and amenities that support the public realm. 3.2.1 Ensure that development and public infrastructure is designed to support a vibrant local economy and competitive business environment.

**Timeline:** Short

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services, Financial Services, Planning and Environment Services Branches)

**Performance Measures:**

- Number of initiatives (and dollar value) identified through economic development lens
- Employment created through capital investments

## ACTION 9

### Create a development strategy for the new non-residential lands adjacent to the Edmonton International Airport.

This action is in alignment with The City Plan land use concept and activation approach. City efforts to provide attractive investment-ready land will occur in collaboration with the private sector, the Edmonton International Airport and adjacent municipalities.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.2.2 Promote the continuous improvement, evolution and intensification of Edmonton's non-residential lands.

**Timeline:** Long

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services, Planning and Environment Services Branches), Edmonton International Airport in partnership with various industry and regional partners

**Performance Measures:**

- Value of building permits in the new non-residential lands adjacent to EIA (The City Plan)
- Employment created in the new non-residential lands adjacent to EIA



**Promote the continuous improvement, evolution and intensification of Edmonton's non-residential lands.**



## ACTION 10

### Develop tools and strategies to attract commercial, residential and mixed-use development in nodes and corridors.

This action includes repositioning existing or new grants to incentivize redevelopment, increase commercial activity and increase densification in existing employment areas within nodes, corridors and the Centre City. It includes exploring further investments in public places that provide enhanced economic and social connection. It also involves exploring creative ways to incentivize property owners to attract tenants to vacant properties and to encourage development of vacant or underutilized land such as surface parking lots in order to increase commercial activity in nodes and corridors. It considers utilizing both private and public assets and partnerships that will spur economic, cultural and community growth.



**The City Plan Policies:** 2.2.1 Promote compact, mixed use development within districts that supports equitable access to employment, education and amenities. 2.2.3 Ensure that walkable and attractive mixed use development occurs at nodes and along corridors in a manner that is integrated with accessible mass transit. 2.2.3.2 Preserve and strengthen the role of Centre City as Edmonton's principal employment and residential node, regional economic and mobility hub, urban and traditional meeting place and celebration space.

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**Timeline:** Long

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**Resource Requirements:** \$

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**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Building Great Neighbourhoods, Development Services, Economic Investment Services, Infrastructure Planning and Design, Planning and Environment Services, Real Estate Branches) in partnership with Business Improvement Areas and various industry partners

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**Performance Measures:**

- Number of businesses within nodes and corridors (The City Plan)
- Value of commercial, residential and mixed-use investment in nodes and corridors (or value of building permits) (The City Plan)
- Employment created through development grants in nodes and corridors (The City Plan)



**This action will include supporting new and existing businesses, either on a permanent or temporary basis, that complement current activities.**



## ACTION 11

**Support enhanced experiences by encouraging opportunities for low impact businesses to operate in parks and public space.**

This action includes honouring environmental protection while allowing for a thoughtful amount of sensitive development in the parks system, as well as other public spaces. These opportunities will increase social and recreational benefits while supporting the local and visitor economy. This action will include supporting new and existing businesses, either on a permanent or temporary basis, that complement current activities.

**The City Plan Policies:** 5.1.1 Ensure protection, enhancement and opportunities for access to open space and the river valley and ravine system.

**Timeline:** Short

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Community and Recreation Facilities, Development Services, Economic Investment Services, Planning and Environment Services, Real Estate, Reputation and Brand Branches) in partnership with Explore Edmonton and others

### Performance Measures:

- Number of businesses operating in public spaces
- Employment associated with businesses in parks and public spaces

## PRINCIPLES & ACTIONS

This action includes honouring environmental protection while allowing for a thoughtful amount of sensitive development in the parks system, as well as other public spaces.





### Principle 3

# We will support growth and diversification of our economy in a sustainable and equitable way.

This principle builds on existing work underway to grow and diversify our economy, while ensuring that we do so equitably and in a sustainable manner.



#### ACTION 12

### Develop tools to facilitate growth in green economic sectors.

This action recognizes that a green economy built on entrepreneurship, research and innovation as its key drivers will attract investment. This may include the City partnering with the private sector, public institutions and the community to develop solutions that support Edmonton's energy transition. Edmonton is well-positioned to take advantage of emerging external opportunities because of an accelerated Community Energy Transition Strategy and Action Plan that facilitates the growth of local green economic sectors that include renewable energy, green transit and construction, carbon capture and storage, and smart technology.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.4.2 Support innovation and private investment in climate resilient industries and businesses. 6.4.1 Promote economic development opportunities to support energy transition.

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**Timeline:** Long

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**Resource Requirements:** \$

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**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services, Financial Services, Planning and Environment Services Branches) in partnership with Edmonton Global, Innovate Edmonton and other industry partners

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**Performance Measures:**

- Employment created in green economic sectors
- Number of new businesses that have adopted sustainable development goals
- Investment dollars attracted to green economic sectors



## ACTION 13

### Work together to support emerging made-in-Edmonton technology solutions.

This action includes enabling opportunities to test and pilot locally, while gaining the required experience to export globally. This includes using the City and other partners as a beta testing ground to support the innovation ecosystem. This will assist the growth and development of several industries including artificial intelligence, health, biotech, renewables and software development.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.4.2 Support innovation and private investment in climate resilient industries and businesses. 6.1.1 Promote city building solutions with communities through prototyping, partnerships and piloting

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**Timeline:** Short

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**Resource Requirements:** \$

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**Potential Implementation Lead:** Innovate Edmonton, Health City, City of Edmonton (Investment Services, Open City and Technology Branches) in partnership with Edmonton Global and others

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**Performance Measures:**

- Number of patents assigned in Edmonton region
- Employment in Innovation Corridor (The City Plan)
- Employment in Edmonton's Information and Communication Technology sector
- Number of businesses in the Information and Communication Technology sector (ConnectEdmonton)
- Estimated number of startups in Edmonton region
- Other metrics on sectors (i.e. life sciences) to be determined

## ACTION 14

### Support emerging off-shoots of the energy sector.

This action capitalizes on Edmonton's proximity to heavy industrial areas including the Alberta Industrial Heartland and Alberta's oil sands to support emerging energy sector development, including the hydrogen sector. There are opportunities to leverage our geographical competitive advantage and capitalize on emerging innovation within the traditional energy sector. This can be accomplished in collaboration with other orders of government, industry, post-secondary institutions, through programs and support for emerging technologies related to this sector.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.4.2 Support innovation and private investment in climate resilient industries and businesses.

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**Timeline:** Medium

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**Resource Requirements:** \$

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**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services, Planning and Environment Services Branches), Edmonton Global in partnership with Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association and Innovate Edmonton

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**Performance Measures:**

- Employment in off-shoots of the energy sector
- Contribution of energy sector off-shoots to Edmonton CMA Gross Domestic Product (ConnectEdmonton)



## ACTION 15

### Advance a coordinated approach to growing the local food economy.

This action aims to support the growth of the local food economy in a coordinated way to complement work currently being undertaken by the City and its partners. It will incorporate outstanding recommendations from *fresh: Edmonton's Food and Urban Agriculture Strategy*. This includes recalibrating existing funding and activities to best support the food economy.

**The City Plan Policies:** 2.2.2.4 Encourage an integrated local food economy through a range of activities and amenities including investment in value-added food processing, local distribution, consumption and disposal.

**Timeline:** Short

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services Branch), Edmonton Global in partnership with Edmonton Food Council, Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board, Explore Edmonton, NAIT and others

#### Performance Measures:

- Number of businesses considered part of the food sector (ConnectEdmonton)
- Employment in the food sector including: agriculture, food manufacturing, beverage manufacturing, food retail and food services

## ACTION 16

### Develop Edmonton's competitive advantage as an international logistics hub and hub to Northern Alberta, the North West Territories and beyond.

This action recognizes the opportunity presented by Edmonton's location at the confluence of a number of key road, air and rail connections including: the Trans Canada and CanaMex Highways, Edmonton International Airport's location as the first airport in Canada on transpolar routes from Asia and its critical services in e-commerce across Canada, and the presence in our city of both CN and CP rail lines. These connections have given rise to a significant and growing global logistics sector in Edmonton that can be further nurtured and championed.

**The City Plan Policies:** 6.3.3 Promote partnerships that develop regional opportunities for growth and investment.

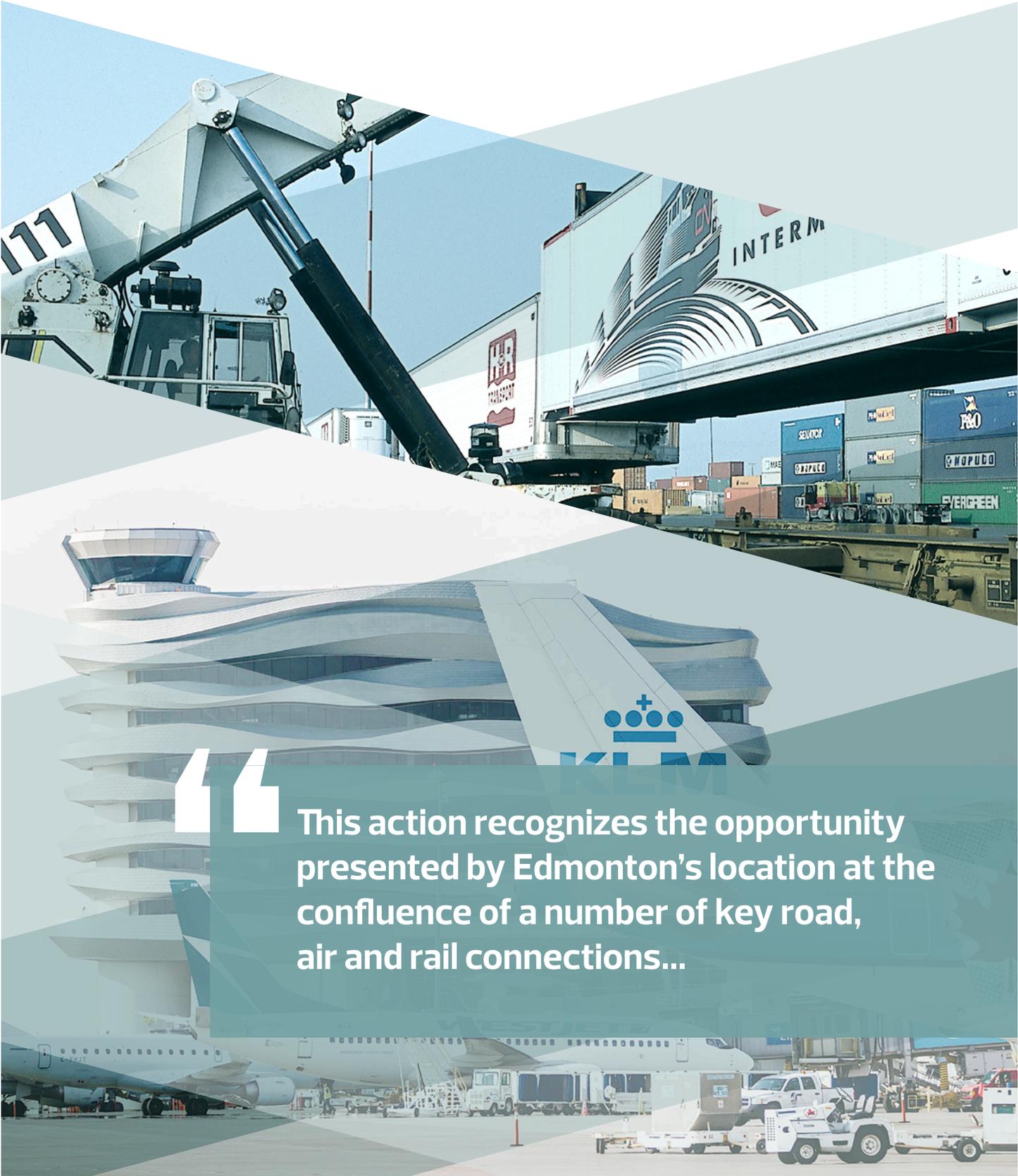
**Timeline:** Short

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services Branch), Edmonton International Airport in partnership with Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board and others

#### Performance Measures:

- Employment in the Transportation and Warehousing industry (The City Plan)
- Number of inbound and outbound flights at EIA
- Railway carloadings/freight loadings
- Volume of trucks on main Edmonton connector roadways



This action recognizes the opportunity presented by Edmonton's location at the confluence of a number of key road, air and rail connections...



## ACTION 17

### Promote affordable, accessible, high-quality, and inclusive early learning and child care.

This action includes exploring ways to support and advocate for options that improve workers' access to childcare. Accessible and affordable child care is one of the key ways to remove barriers to employment and labour force participation, especially for single-parents and women who tend to be the most significantly impacted. Systemic, coordinated, and equity-based solutions are required to meet the needs of the city's diverse and expanding population.

**The City Plan Policies:** 1.1.3 Promote opportunity, equality and personal safety for women, girls and gender minorities in Edmonton. 1.2.2.3 Enable accessible child care facilities in a variety of locations throughout the city.

**Timeline:** Short

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** Edmonton Council on Early Learning and Care, City of Edmonton (Department Strategy Urban Planning & Economy Section) in partnership with other community and business partners

#### Performance Measures:

- Number of women participating in the workforce
- Number of licensed full-day early learning and care spaces
- Cost of child care (cost per child)





**This action includes exploring ways to support and advocate for options that improve workers' access to childcare.**



# Principle 4

## We will remain and become a destination of choice for talent and capital.

This principle focuses on ensuring Edmonton is a preferred destination for people to live and work, as well as entrepreneurs and investors looking to invest in businesses.

### ACTION 18

**Develop an integrated Investment Intake, Business Retention & Expansion and Aftercare Program that supports the efforts of Edmonton Global and others to attract foreign direct investment as well as existing and new Edmonton businesses.**

This action focuses on the City delivering improved customer experiences by integrating existing economic development services along with an increased emphasis on building relationships that are sustained throughout the business life cycle. Improvements guided by industry best practices will increase customer satisfaction, positively impact City reputation and maximize the economic impact of existing and new businesses in the city. This includes a review and improvements to the City's Business Retention and Expansion, and One-on-One Business Support programs as well as 'last mile network' execution.

**The City Plan Policies:** 6.3.3 Promote partnerships that develop regional opportunities for growth and investment.

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**Timeline:** Short

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**Resource Requirements:** \$

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**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Development Services, Economic Investment Services, Service Innovation and Performance Branches) in partnership with Edmonton Global, Innovate Edmonton and other industry partners

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**Performance Measures:**

- Number of clients using the program
- Satisfaction survey results of clients using programs
- Percentage of respondents across Canada that identify Edmonton as a place to live, visit and invest in (ConnectEdmonton)
- Total construction value generated by Final Investment Decisions resulting from investment leads
- Employment created by Final Investment Decisions resulting from investment leads



## ACTION 19

### Develop and implement an integrated place brand strategy.

This action supports economic development by articulating the reason why Edmonton is a place where people, entrepreneurs and businesses can prosper. This strategy uncovers and shares examples of Edmonton economic development and talent attraction success stories. It will help tell Edmonton's story of being a diverse and inclusive city. It focuses on the reasons why people relocate here, and why businesses and entrepreneurs invest and grow here. To acknowledge that our post-secondary institutions nurture new entrepreneurial talent, discoveries, and ideas, the place brand strategy uncovers and illuminates those examples as well. This complements tourism marketing efforts and includes exploring opportunities to become a host city of choice for Indigenous cultural, business, political, and sporting events. This identifies an opportunity to promote Indigenous tourism operators and activities in, and for, Edmonton.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.2.2 Promote the attraction and retention of a highly skilled and talented workforce in support of ongoing innovation, investment, entrepreneurship and quality of life.

**Timeline:** Short

**Resource Requirements:** \$\$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Reputation and Brand Branch) in partnership with Edmonton Global, Explore Edmonton, Innovate Edmonton, post-secondary institutions and others

#### Performance Measures:

- Percentage of respondents across Canada that identify Edmonton as a place to live, visit and invest in (ConnectEdmonton)

## PRINCIPLES & ACTIONS

This strategy uncovers and shares examples of Edmonton economic development and talent attraction success stories. It will help tell Edmonton's story of being a diverse and inclusive city.





**ACTION 20**

**Promote and support academic programs that advance the local economy.**

This action focuses on supporting programs tied to research, innovation, employment equity, and labour market needs in order to retain national and international talent in the region. It involves undertaking activities that encourage recent graduates to remain in the region, particularly the growing international student base. This includes highlighting employment opportunities, supporting entrepreneurship, and developing/ expanding partnerships between post-secondary institutions, economic development entities, and the business community.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.2.2 Promote the attraction and retention of a highly skilled and talented workforce in support of ongoing innovation, investment, entrepreneurship and quality of life.

**Timeline:** Medium

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:** Post-secondary institutions including Concordia University of Edmonton, MacEwan University, NAIT, NorQuest College, The King’s University, University of Alberta and others in partnership with City of Edmonton (External and Intergovernmental Relations, Economic Investment Services Branches), Innovate Edmonton

**Performance Measures:**

- Retention of Edmonton post-secondary institution graduates (ConnectEdmonton)





**This action focuses on supporting programs tied to research, innovation, employment equity, and labour market needs in order to retain national and international talent in the region.**



## Principle 5

# We will embrace and grow our relationships and partnerships.

This principle recognizes that a key to success will be working collaboratively with multiple organizations in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region.



### ACTION 21

**Expand on existing relationships with the City's Indigenous memoranda partners by improving supports for economic development opportunities.**

This action promotes greater cooperation and increased capacity to support economic participation by Indigenous peoples, nations, and businesses in the region. It builds on the City's memoranda agreements by holding ongoing dialogues centred around economic development strategies and initiatives that help achieve the community economic development goals of each partner. It includes providing an integrated, corporate-wide response to requests for the creation of First Nation urban economic zones (also known as urban reserves) within the City in collaboration with Alberta First Nations and the Government of Canada.

**The City Plan Policies:** 3.1.1 Support the ability of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples to celebrate, grow and flourish.

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**Timeline:** Short

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**Resource Requirements:** S

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**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services, External and Intergovernmental Relations, Social Development Branches) in partnership with Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, Enoch Cree Nation, the Metis Nation of Alberta, and First Nations development of urban reserves (or economic zones)

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**Performance Measures:**

- Number of community economic development initiatives collaborated on by partners



## ACTION 22

### Coordinate with our regional partners to ensure seamless integration and reduce barriers for businesses and entrepreneurs that work across multiple jurisdictions.

This action recognizes there are separate regulatory processes throughout the Edmonton Metropolitan Region. The promotion of collaborative relationships across the region, including initiatives that reduce the duplication of service delivery, would be advantageous for business attraction to the region. This includes exploring an aligned approach in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region around business licensing.

**The City Plan Policies:** 6.3.3 Promote partnerships that develop regional opportunities for growth and investment.

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**Timeline:** Medium

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**Resource Requirements:** \$

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**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Development Services, Economic Investment Services, Planning and Environment Services Branches) in partnership with Edmonton Global, Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board and others

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**Performance Measures:**

- Employment within the Edmonton Metro Region (ConnectEdmonton)

## ACTION 23

### Advance collaborative Shared Investment for Shared Benefit initiatives with regional partners.

This action recognizes that by working collaboratively with our regional partners, Edmonton can share in the cost of regional or sub-regional initiatives by applying a Shared Investment for Shared Benefit approach. This approach allows investment partners to determine how to share the financial costs and other contributions towards joint investments; as well as how to equitably distribute the financial benefits arising from the investment. Shared Investment for Shared Benefit can be used to incent regional cooperation and reduce regional competition.

**The City Plan Policies:** 6.3.3 Promote partnerships that develop regional opportunities for growth and investment.

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**Timeline:** Medium

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**Resource Requirements:** \$

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**Potential Implementation Lead:** City of Edmonton (Economic Investment Services, Planning and Environment Services Branches) in partnership with Edmonton Global and Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board

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**Performance Measures:**

- Number of shared investments / Memorandum of Understanding agreements entered into with regional partners
- Dollar value of shared investments
- Number of jobs created through projects with regional partners



**It will leverage events to help retain and attract talent given their positive impact on quality of life.**



## ACTION 24

### Utilize and coordinate the City of Edmonton's event strategy and Explore Edmonton Tourism Master Plan as tools to support investment by creating awareness about local opportunities for businesses and people.

This action recognizes events as strategic investments in our community. It will maximize the opportunities for community benefits by creating better alignment of partner activities. This includes enhancing existing and developing new experiences and events to meet the needs of guests, visitors, and stakeholders. It will leverage events to help retain and attract talent given their positive impact on quality of life. It involves showcasing Edmonton so that the experiences of visitors entice them to come back, to think of Edmonton differently and to become ambassadors.

**The City Plan Policies:** 2.3.3.1 Host major events and a wide range of signature and community festivals in partnership with community organizations. 3.2.2 Promote the attraction and retention of a highly skilled and talented workforce in support of ongoing innovation, investment, entrepreneurship and quality of life.

**Timeline:** Short

**Resource Requirements:** \$

**Potential Implementation Lead:**

Explore Edmonton, City of Edmonton  
(Community and Recreation Facilities Branch)

**Performance Measures:**

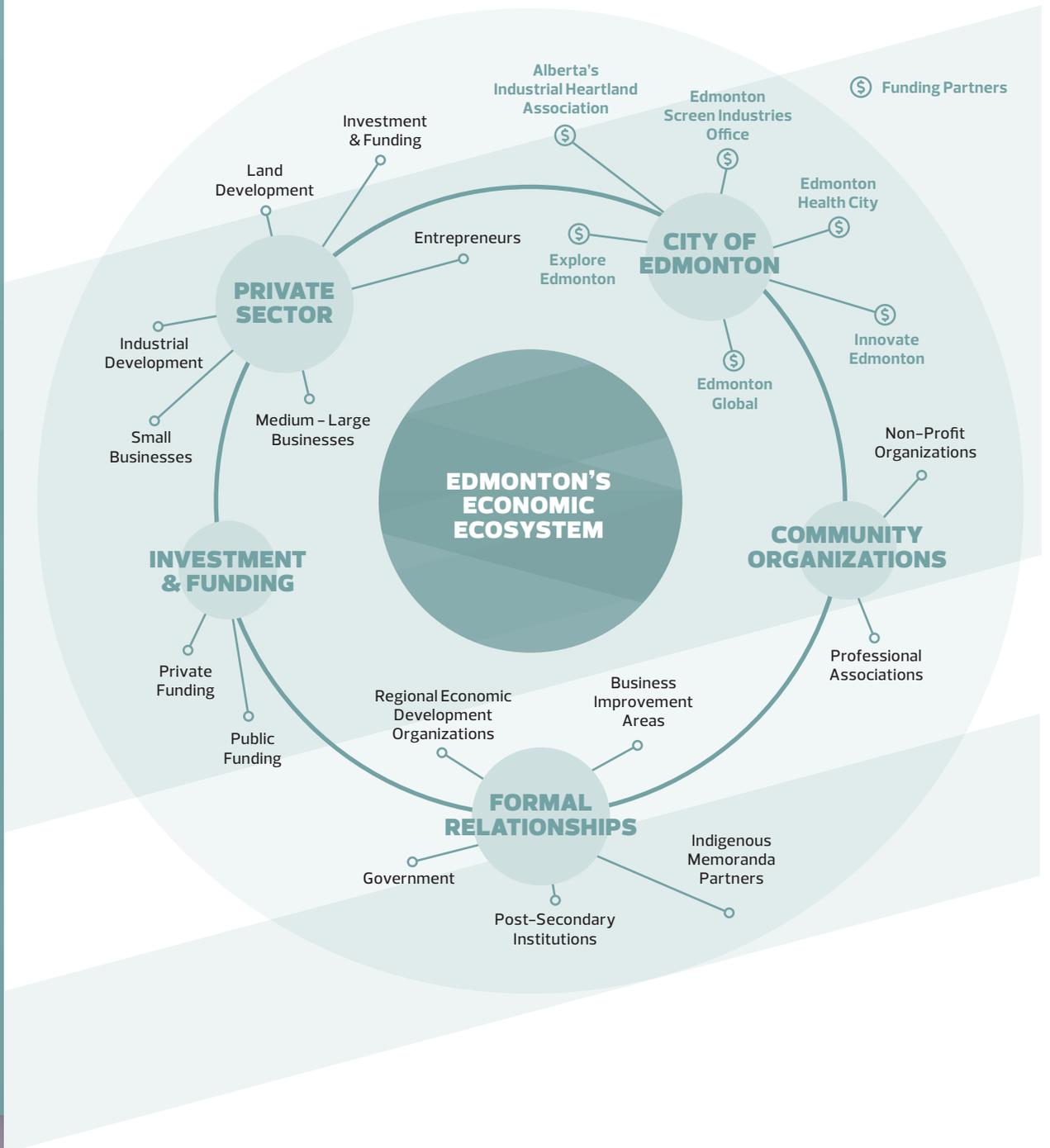
- Economic impact (as measured by Explore Edmonton)
- Employment in tourism sector
- Employment related to events



## MONITORING OUR PROGRESS

While the City plays a key part in creating the conditions for success, it will largely be the private sector and our other partners who will be employing individuals, investing in new innovations and expanding their businesses.

With this in mind, our measures of success reflect both job growth, the holistic indicators of the strength of our economy, and the performance metrics tied to City economic development activities. Taken together, we will be able to chart the progress of job growth and economic strength over time. For each action, performance measures have been identified related to strengthening the capacity of our ecosystem, and where possible, measurements of job growth.





# EDMONTON ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

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