



THE WAY AHEAD

CITY OF EDMONTON STRATEGIC PLAN
2009-2018



TRANSFORMING | **EDMONTON**
BRINGING OUR CITY VISION TO LIFE





INDEX

CITY OF EDMONTON STRATEGIC PLAN

02. **Message from the Mayor**

03. **Message from the City Manager**

04. **Introduction**

05. **Overview**

05. Process

06. Term and Scope

06. Use

06. Conditions of Success

07. **Vision**

08. **Principles**

10. **Goals and Performance Measures**

11. Preserve and Sustain Edmonton's Environment

12. Improve Edmonton's Livability

13. Transform Edmonton's Urban Form

14. Shift Edmonton's Transportation Modes

15. Ensure Edmonton's Financial Sustainability

16. Diversify Edmonton's Economy

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

On behalf of my colleagues on Council, I am pleased to share The City of Edmonton Strategic Plan (2009-2018). We undertook this planning exercise at a time of accelerated growth that has given rise to abundant opportunity and significant challenges. Given this environment, it is essential that our Plan guide our decisions and set Edmonton on a course for a vibrant, sustainable future. The Plan points the way ahead – and it will help us, and future Councils, make the right decisions to get there.

Created with input from thousands of residents, our Plan captures a diversity of ideas, aspirations and dreams for the future of our city, culminating in the City's Vision of Edmonton in 2040.

This Strategic Plan turns the vision into reality. It sets out our goals to strengthen environmental preservation and sustainability; to transform the city's urban form, making it more compact while maintaining and revitalizing neighbourhoods. It projects the changes we need to make to promote a more integrated transportation system. And it forecasts how we need to build our financial capacity and diversify our economy.

Achieving these goals means we have to balance competing priorities – between the needs of our citizens and the limits of our resources, between incredible opportunities and practical realities.

In all our efforts, we will check-in with this Plan, review our progress and make adjustments along the way. In all our efforts, we will be sure to stay on course for an ever better Edmonton.



Stephen Mandel

Mayor Stephen Mandel
City of Edmonton

MESSAGE FROM THE CITY MANAGER

With input from thousands of citizens, City Council has created a new Strategic Plan that will move our city towards a bold 30-year vision by pursuing 10-year goals and three-year priorities.

The plan will form the foundation for the work of the City and will guide us in our continued commitment to enhance the quality of life for residents. Departments will build their new business plans and budgets based on this Strategic Plan. They will set out the actions we will undertake to achieve our goals and help us establish priorities for the delivery and improvement of services, programs and infrastructure.

The Strategic Plan will align our efforts throughout the organization during a time of abundant opportunity, but also corporate fiscal challenges. I am confident this plan will help us move this city towards the Edmonton envisioned by the citizens we serve.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Al Maurer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Al Maurer
City Manager

INTRODUCTION

Edmonton is booming. A record-setting economy, low unemployment, high personal income and quality of life have made Edmonton a very attractive place to live. Population has grown 10% in five years and, at its peak, the city welcomed 1,600 newcomers a month.

There is no sign of a slowdown. Fueled by oil sands development, the city is anticipating increased economic growth. By 2040, an estimated 51% more people will be in need of municipal programs, services and infrastructure.

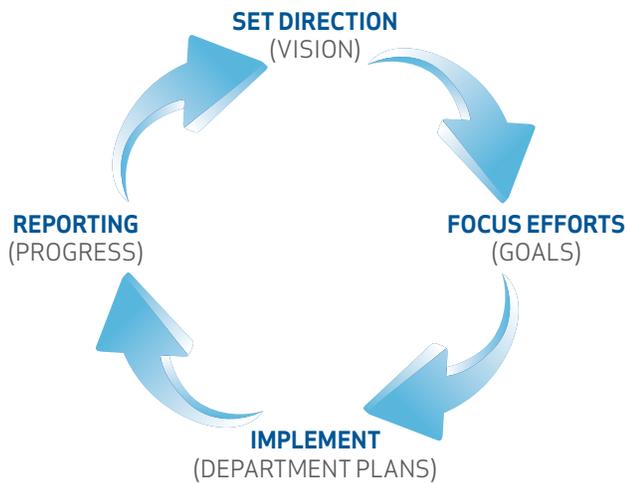
The strategic plan was developed to help the City establish priorities and make informed decisions in this climate of growth. By setting a direction and defining the path to get there, the strategy will focus efforts and position the City to improve the quality of life for citizens now and in the future.



OVERVIEW

PROCESS

The strategic plan was created using a four-step process.



Set Direction (Vision): Council initiated the strategic planning process in the fall of 2007 by calling on citizens to share their vision of Edmonton in 2040. The input received from over 2200 Edmontonians was used to create the City Vision and help set the overall direction of the strategy.

Focus Efforts (Goals): To focus the City's actions towards achieving the vision, Council identified six 10-year strategic goals that will direct long-term planning for the City. Three-year priority goals that contribute to the achievement of the strategic goals provide direction over the course of Council's term.

Implement: The initiatives necessary to implement the strategic plan will be summarized in department business plans. Departments will outline the actions they will undertake to achieve the three-year priority goals and specify the operating budgets necessary to support these activities.

Report: The Strategic Plan includes performance measures for the 10-year strategic goals. These measures will form the basis for an annual reporting of the progress toward (or away) from the 10-year goals and in realizing the vision. Measurements of success of the strategy will undergo a regular review by Council.

As the three-year goals will guide decision-making at the department level, the progress of the City in support of these priority goals will be reflected in department business plans.

TERM AND SCOPE OF STRATEGIC PLAN

This Strategic Plan is intended to guide and inform planning done by the City for a 10-year planning horizon. Three-year goals specify the priorities to focus on within that timeframe and reflect the department planning cycles and Council's term.

However, this is a dynamic and evolving plan – created using an assessment of the operating environment and community input at a specific point in time. New issues, challenges, trends and opportunities will emerge throughout the 10-year life of the strategy. In addition to Council's annual review of the progress of implementation, every three years an extensive review and update of the plan will occur to reflect changes in the operating environment and to ensure Council priorities are addressed.

Although the City Vision could guide agencies and other City building partners, this strategy only covers the businesses of the municipal corporation under the purview of the City Manager.

USE

The Strategic Plan will be used in the following ways:

- *To align all planning decisions.*

All City actions will work toward the achievement of a common goal. To this end, the framework Transforming Edmonton was created to integrate the new Municipal Development Plan, Focus Edmonton, and all other major 10-year strategic planning initiatives with the overarching vision and goals outlined in this document.

- *As direction to the development of department business plans and budgets.*

The strategy is the basis for all city departments in the development of their business plans. The activities and resource allocation of the departments will demonstrate alignment with, and the achievement of, the three-year priority goals of the strategy.

CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS

Because much of the success of this strategy depends on the City's operational environment, the City will work to enhance the following areas:

- organizational capacity (e.g. fiscal and human);
- sound management practices and processes;
- enabling infrastructure. (e.g. information technology); and
- effective communication.

VISION

A creative description of Edmonton's future, the vision guides our decisions, helps us set direction and encourages us to align our priorities as we work to make Edmonton the city we want it to become in 2040.

Take a river boat from one shore of the world's largest urban park to the other, from the university to the legislature. From the water, look up and consider the skyline, the bustling core and the towers and urban villages to the east and west.

The people on the sidewalks and trails, from First Nations to new Canadians, linked by a common purpose — to learn, to prosper, to celebrate. Take the LRT in any direction from here and you'll be in the heart of somewhere special. Welcome to Edmonton, the capital of Alberta, a northern city of art and ideas, research and energy.

- Edmonton is an energy city. Energy drawn from the ground and from above; from the sun and wind. But the true power of Edmonton is the democratic spark in its people.
- Edmonton is a city of design — urban design, architectural design, and environmental design. Walk its safe, leafy neighbourhoods, ride its efficient and accessible transportation system. The city has grown up; now we're building smarter.
- Edmonton links the continent with the north and with Asia. This cooperative regional economy is powerful and diverse, oriented toward the future. Visit the universities and colleges, the humming research parks, the downtown office towers: Edmonton is a destination for advanced technologies, health care, and green energy.
- Edmonton is a recreation city, an arts city. It is a city that embraces all seasons. Run, ride or ski on its trails and fields, cheer in its arenas and stadiums. Enjoy the museums, galleries, clubs, and theatres. Read its novels, watch its films. Spend an hour or a week in the glorious North Saskatchewan River Valley, the world's largest preserved park.
- Edmonton is a city of many cultures, educational opportunities, and all political and social orientations; yet its citizens are inspired by a shared vision and the certainty that this city on a river is one of the most special places on earth.

PRINCIPLES

Four principles underpin the development and implementation of this strategic plan.

INTEGRATION

A holistic view of strategic planning that acknowledges the inter-related and inter-dependent reality of complex urban environments. Goals and priorities set for different elements in urban planning are as interrelated ecosystems and considered in terms of how they impact, support and drive each other.

SUSTAINABILITY

A way of living which meets the needs of the present and does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Urban planning takes an integrated, holistic view of urban environments and defines sustainability in the context of interrelated ecosystems encompassing economic, social, environmental and cultural sustainability.

The principle of sustainability also includes financial sustainability, ensuring urban planning recognizes and addresses resource constraints and capacities.

LIVABILITY

An interrelated set of factors that influences people to choose a place to live and reinforces their sense of well-being there. The concept of livability is based on the knowledge that the economic and social life of the community is intimately linked to its natural and built environment, and together these elements impact social and cultural goals. Livability factors include:

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- **Social capital:** The human capital of the people within a city in all their diversity and potential, together with an urban culture that reflects people's social values and makes them feel included and respected.
 - **Amenities:** A clean and well-designed community that allows many choices of lifestyle and includes open and green spaces, respect for historic features and intangibles such as a sense of place and fostering community character.
 - **Economic prosperity:** Sustainable economic and employment opportunities.
 - **Safety:** A sense of personal and community safety and overall social order.
 - **Access to social services and infrastructure** such as health care, education, recreation and arts and culture.
 - **Environment:** An environment sustained for current and future generations through responsible practices. Clean air and water, access to local food supplies and the healthy co-existence of natural and urban environments.
 - **Affordability:** The ability of people of all incomes to have access to affordable core needs such as housing, food, transit and core social services. The recognition as well that affordability of other amenities affects the overall competitiveness of a city in attracting and retaining residents and impacts the quality of life of those who live there.
 - **Ease of mobility and movement:** Accessible roads and transportation modes that meet the requirements and choices of society, communities and people of all ages and needs.
 - **Participation:** Political and democratic processes that allow people to participate in decisions that affect them.

INNOVATION

A planning approach and operational culture within a municipality which encourages and enables continuous improvement and the exploration and adoption of new techniques, technologies, products and ways of operating in order to improve results and lead progressive change.



GOALS

Six ten-year strategic goals were established to provide a clear focus for the future. Priority goals shape the City's actions in the near term and performance measures will assist in measuring progress towards the vision.

PRESERVE AND SUSTAIN EDMONTON'S ENVIRONMENT:

Ten-year strategic goal:

In partnership with its citizens, businesses and institutions, Edmonton is the nation's leader in setting and achieving the highest standards of environmental preservation and sustainability both in its own practices, and by encouraging and enabling the practices of its partners.

Elaboration: With the goal to preserve and sustain Edmonton's environment, the City intends to leverage existing strengths and new innovations to improve the environment in a sustainable way and minimize the ecological footprint of the City. Striving to preserve natural resources as City building partners and the municipal corporation deliver services to citizens, emphasis will be placed on both preservation and sustainability.

Progress Measures:

- Consumption of non-renewable and non-recyclable resources decreases.

Indicators:

1. City-wide water used (total, per capita, sector)
2. City-wide solid waste generated (total, per capita, sector)
3. City-wide energy used (total, per capita, sector)
4. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
5. Ecological footprint

- Natural environment is protected, enhanced and restored

Indicator:

1. Acres of greenspace (as percentage of total space)

- Environmental health of the city improves (e.g. air and water quality, hazardous waste)

Indicators:

1. Air quality index
2. Water quality index
3. City-wide wastewater generation (total, per-capita, and sector)
4. City purchases of hazardous material

Three-year priority goals:*

- Increase and broaden advancement towards zero waste;
- Reduce water consumption (per capita);
- Increase use of renewable energy (in city operations);
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (in city operations);
- Improve air, water and soil quality (in city operations); and
- Increase access and proximity to ecological (natural and groomed) systems.

*Progress measures for three-year priority goals will be included in department business plans.

IMPROVE EDMONTON'S LIVABILITY:

Ten-year strategic goal:

Edmonton is one of Canada's most livable cities because it is welcoming to all; is safe and clean; fosters its heritage and supports its arts and multicultural communities; encourages active lifestyles through recreational opportunities; and engages its citizen's in the city's vision and directions.

Elaboration: To improve Edmonton's livability, the City intends to focus on the people concerns associated with improved livability by concentrating efforts on prevention and getting to the root causes or barriers that are in the way of achieving a more livable city. This goal is focused specifically on the strategic areas of welcoming, safety perception, cleanliness and aspects important to the notion of urban village creation.

Progress Measures:

- Edmonton is consistently rated as one of Canada's most livable cities in these areas:
 - Community involvement and participation (e.g. participation in Capital City Clean-up);
 - Arts and cultural activities reflect the cultural diversity of the people (e.g. number of cultural festivals);
 - Look and feel of the city (e.g. public spaces are attractive and well maintained);
 - Satisfaction with quality of the built environment (e.g. proximity to transit and services);
 - Emotional health and well-being (e.g. personal safety);
 - Preservation of heritage buildings, sites and objects.

Indicators:

1. Select social indicators (City of Edmonton Genuine Progress Indicators) as compared to Alberta and Canadian average (e.g. crime, volunteerism, free time, commuting)
2. Select indicators from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Quality of Life Reporting System (e.g., personal safety, civic engagement)

- Citizens perceive that Edmonton is a very livable city

Indicator:

1. Residents' perceptions of safety in their neighbourhoods, downtown and on public transit
2. Resident's perceptions of the accessibility and affordability of recreational / leisure activities
3. Residents' perceptions that the city is attractive and well-maintained
4. Residents' perceptions that the city supports arts and multicultural communities
5. Residents' perceptions that the city provides opportunities for and values citizen input

Three-year priority goals:

- Enhance social connectedness for all citizens;
- Reduce and prevent crime in our: transit, downtown and communities;
- Reduce litter, graffiti and vandalism in target areas;
- Preserve, celebrate and support Edmonton's heritage, arts and culture;
- Reduce barriers to participation in recreation activities and local programs;
- Improve community engagement and participation; and
- Increase the supply and range of affordable housing to meet citizens' needs.

TRANSFORM EDMONTON'S URBAN FORM:

Ten-year strategic goal:

Edmonton has increased its density and optimized existing infrastructure while maintaining and revitalizing strong, vibrant neighborhoods; ensuring high standards of urban design; adopting best land use practices; and preserving natural areas and public spaces.

Elaboration: In setting the goal to transform Edmonton's urban form, the City recognizes the realities of the changing economics of urban service delivery. A more balanced use of dwelling densities, mixed-use, and place making which recognizes the strategic importance of building neighborhoods differently is envisioned. This goal implies Edmonton's role should be shifting to more of an urban center within a thriving region and a prioritization of the placement of natural and public spaces.

Progress Measures:

- Average density of Edmonton's housing stock increases
Indicator: Number of dwellings per hectare for new housing projects on buildable land
- Amount of transit-oriented development projects increases
Indicators:
 1. Per cent of population that is within 400 / 800 metres of a transit node / corridor
 2. Per cent of population that is within 400 / 800 metres of a park or open space > 10 hectares
 3. Per cent of population that is within 400 / 800 metres of commercial services
- Spending on infrastructure maintenance optimized
Indicator: Infrastructure condition and life expectancy (e.g. asset grading condition A-F)
- Number of acres of public open space increases
Indicator: Number of acres of public open space as a percentage of total (by community and total)

Three-year priority goals:

- Increase dwelling density¹ with conditions such as:
 - recognizing unique neighbourhood, commercial, industrial characteristics and service needs;
 - transit-oriented development (TOD);
 - adequate and affordable housing and living environments;
 - a mix-use of residential and commercial development;
 - eco-efficient;
 - safe; and
 - aesthetically pleasing.
- Strategically invest in select infrastructure as set by the Long-range Financial Plan and the Strategic Infrastructure Financial Strategy;
- Refocus spending on renewing existing infrastructure relative to investment in new infrastructure; and
- Improve city's urban architecture and urban form to ensure it meets environmental standards and exemplifies excellence in urban, architectural and landscape design.

¹ per capita excluding river valley in calculation.

SHIFT EDMONTON'S TRANSPORTATION MODE: Ten-year strategic goal:

Modes of transportation shift to “fit” Edmonton’s urban form and enhanced density while supporting the city’s planning, financial and environmental sustainability goals.

Elaboration: In shifting Edmonton’s transportation modes the City recognizes the importance of mobility shifts to contribute to the achievement of other related goals. To do so suggests the need to transform the mix of transport modes, with emphasis on road use for goods movement and transiting people, and transit use for moving people. This goal reflects the need for a more integrated transportation network comprising of heavy rail, light rail, air and ground transport, and recognizes the important contribution that transportation makes to environmental goals.

Progress Measures:

- Residents use of sustainable modes of transportation (e.g., bus, bike, pedestrian, LRT) increases

Indicators:

1. Transit ridership per capita
2. Vehicle ownership per capita and by household location
3. Length and quality of cycling network
4. Mode split into central areas (through cordon count surveys)
5. Residents perceptions of the accessibility and affordability of sustainable transportation options

- The ability to move goods through and around the city is optimized.

Indicators:

1. Travel time / congestion on inner/outer ring road or highway connector
2. Per cent of intermodal and warehouse facilities within 1,600 metres of inner/outer ring road or highway connector

Three-year priority goals:

- Increase transit ridership;
- Ensure transit sustainability through appropriate cost recovery ratio;
- Reduce barriers to the use of different modes of transportation;
- Increase traffic safety;
- Select and remedy high congestion areas to better facilitate travel through and around the city.

ENSURE EDMONTON'S FINANCIAL STABILITY:

Ten-year strategic goal:

Edmonton is financially sustainable, with the revenue resources required to support its plans and provide the infrastructure performance and services citizens need.

Elaboration: In ensuring Edmonton's financial sustainability, the City recognizes the tie between demands on the City and the limited means to address these demands. The City will work to diversify revenue sources while maintaining the obligations the City has to its citizens. This goal relies on the revenue benefits that could be realized from the other goals, such as Economic Diversity and Urban Form transformation

Progress Measures:

- Revenue resources increase and diversify

Indicator: Total and per cent of city revenue from all sources

Three-year priority goal:

- Increase revenue sources and reduce reliance on residential property tax to meet strategic infrastructure and service needs

DIVERSIFY EDMONTON'S ECONOMY:

Ten-year strategic goal:

Edmonton is recognized as an economic powerhouse, maximizing the diversity of its economic advantages, including its location as Port Alberta and as a portal to the north; as the urban centre of regional industrial development; as a knowledge and innovation centre for value-added and green technologies and products; and as a place that attracts and supports entrepreneurs.

Elaboration: To diversify Edmonton's economy, the City recognizes the economic advantages are those existing strengths. Leverage points include Edmonton's physical locale, centres of excellence and industrial/entrepreneurial comparative advantage with local, northern and Asian opportunities. Specific target areas are logistics, eco-industrial and environmental technology knowledge transfer. In establishing this goal, the City recognizes the separate roles of Edmonton Economic Development Corporation and the Municipal Corporation and envisions the City's role to be that of an enabler.

Progress Measures:

- Economic diversity increases in targeted business areas (clusters).

Indicators:

1. Select economic indicators (Edmonton's Genuine Progress Indicators) as compared to Alberta and Canadian average
2. Percentage of jobs in defined sectors (e.g. "green-collar" jobs)

Three-year priority goals:

- Work with both public and private sector partners, to improve the favourable business and investment climate for:
 - Eco-industrial based economy;
 - Logistics and servicing for the needs of the North and Asia;
 - Green technology development and commercialization; and
 - Entrepreneurs.
- Invest in transportation network to support Port Alberta.
- Improve, continuously, the capacity and capability of the organization in the delivery of services to business and citizens.



THE BRAND AND THE VISION

The pyramid shaped logo mirrors the pyramid landmark at City Hall. Just as the pyramid sits atop City Hall, Transforming Edmonton sits atop the City of Edmonton's strategic planning initiatives. The pyramid represents the apex, the culmination of all of the other plans; the pyramid structure represents stability and cohesiveness, with a clear upward focus.

The spectrum of coloured streams that originate on the right side of the pyramid represent the spectrum of the City of Edmonton's planning initiatives. The blue stream at the top represents the City Vision, while the rest of the colour spectrum represents the full complement of the City's plans. The blending of colours in the right corner of the pyramid represents the integration of the plans in their development. As the colour streams move outward they take on their own identities with no end point in sight.

The grey streams that originate on the left side of the pyramid represent the public. As each grey stream intersects with each coloured stream, so does each citizen of Edmonton interact with the City's planning initiatives.

Both the grey streams and the coloured streams extend past their natural boundaries to show progression beyond the 10 year planning cycle and the ongoing and infinite outcomes that they'll produce. As strategic plans, their effects will be felt beyond any fixed period of time.

Overall, the design is meant to reflect the integration of the City of Edmonton's planning initiative, and invoke feelings of purpose and possibility.

Information on the City of Edmonton is available through the internet www.edmonton.ca

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