



Calgary

Jyoti Gondek, Mayor

May 11, 2022

Honourable Doug Schweitzer
Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation
Office of the Minister
425 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Delivered via email: jei.ministeroffice@gov.ab.ca

Dear Minister Schweitzer,

I was pleased to see Budget 2022's explicit recognition of the importance of downtown revitalization, as well as an initial commitment of \$4M to The City of Calgary. On April 12, 2022, Calgary City Council directed these funds toward initiatives and partnerships that promote public safety and enhance the activation of spaces downtown. I am confident this direction will deliver on shared priorities and make a strong case for further Government of Alberta investment in Calgary's Greater Downtown Strategy. As the Calgary Office Revitalization and Expansion (CORE) working group recognized in its report this week, the safety and security of Calgary's downtown is a critical factor in growth and revitalization.

As you know, Calgary's Greater Downtown Strategy is a comprehensive response to prolonged structural changes in our economy to reflect how and where people live and work. It recognizes that Calgary's downtown will not return to an earlier state, and instead promotes bold and immediate action to transform and reinvent the downtown for decades to come. While driven by The City's investment of \$255M, the Strategy aims to leverage collective efforts of public, private, and non-profit sector partners.

On the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic, Calgarians are being asked to return to downtown to work, recreate and consider it as a possible community to live. With that in mind, it is essential that we create an environment in which everyone feels safe. Recent, tragic events, along with complex challenges related to mental health, the opioid crisis, poverty, and homelessness, mean that public safety is top of mind for Calgarians. While we have solutions, they require not only an enduring commitment from community agencies, enforcement partners and the private sector, but funding from all orders of government.

Council's decision to direct the Government of Alberta's initial downtown revitalization investment towards the activation and reanimation of downtown spaces as well as to community partnerships designed to address the needs of people experiencing vulnerabilities are important objectives on their

own. I want to stress the relationship to broader, economic objectives shared by our two governments.

This investment in public and community safety is essential to Calgary and Alberta's economic recovery and diversification. A downtown that is among the best places in the world to live, work, play and raise a family is good for Calgarians today, and will attract future investment and job creators. Now more than ever, it's critical that all levels of government and broad ranging stakeholder groups collaborate to address the complex challenges that stand in the way of a better, brighter future for everyone.

I would be pleased to speak with you further, to discuss this investment, and other opportunities for the Government of Alberta to deliver on its commitment to downtown revitalization. I would also be interested to in any information on the timing and substance of the outcomes of the Calgary Office Revitalization and Expansion Working Group, and how they can leverage The City's own investment and expertise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jyoti Gondek', written over a horizontal line.

Jyoti Gondek
Mayor
City of Calgary

Cc Jason Luan, Minister Community and Social Services
Mike Ellis, Associate Minister Mental Health and Addictions