House of Commons
Chambre des communes
Canada

House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance – Pre-budget Consultations 2013

This brief is submitted by:

(•) **an organization** **Organization name:** City of Edmonton

or

( ) **an individual** **Name:** _____

Topic: Infrastructure

*Recommendation 1: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Support full build-out of LRT beginning with the Valley Line Stage 1 (Millwoods to City Centre West) - LRT expansion stimulates redevelopment, improves connectivity, and creates a more mobile, efficient, attractive and livable city. In order to move forward with the investment by PPP Canada, it is essential that Edmonton receive confirmation immediately of an additional $250 million federal investment in the Valley Line (for a total of $500 million) and that the funding flow directly to the City.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$100 million -$499.9 million

Immediately

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

In order to ensure the Valley Line Stage 1 project with PPP Canada can be advanced, Edmonton is seeking an immediate commitment of an additional $250 million to the Valley Line (on top of the existing $250 million PPP Canada commitment). Funding for the Valley Line could be made available from the new Building Canada Fund (which Edmonton applauds the government for introducing in EAP 2013) and should flow directly to the City. Recognizing that the new Fund is still to be rolled out, the City would like to emphasize that the actual delivery of funding is not required immediately.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

LRT expansion benefits not only the citizens of Edmonton, but also the entire Edmonton Capital Region and ultimately the province and the country. LRT is essential to growth of Canada's economy: it creates more efficient movement of people; attracts global citizens; and alleviates pressure on our roads and important heavy-haul corridors. LRT supports the economic and social capacity of recent immigrants and urban Aboriginal peoples. LRT is essential in building and maintaining Edmonton's reputation as a global city that does well to showcase Canada.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

A recent economic impact assessment of the Valley Line Stage 1 estimates that construction would generate $3.2 billion in total economic output, $1.4 billion in GDP, nearly $1 billion in wages and salaries and just over 13,000 full-time equivalent jobs. Moreover, direct stimulus to the non-residential construction sector is estimated to generate total tax impacts of $355 million during construction – $110 million of direct corporate tax revenue, $206 million of indirect income tax revenue, $19.7 million of indirect taxes on production, and $18.9 million of indirect tax on products.

Topic: Poor, poverty and income inequality

Recommendation 2: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Support Affordable Housing in Edmonton - The City is seeking an immediate investment of $50 million to deliver up to 250 units on City-owned land as part of the City's "Cornerstones" Affordable Housing Plan. The plan has already demonstrated remarkable success, thanks in part to the federal government. Further, the City urges the federal government to develop a long-term plan to address homelessness in major urban centres like Edmonton.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$10 million-$99.9 million

Immediately

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

To begin with, the City of Edmonton applauds the Government of Canada for its commitment in EAP 2013 to the Homelessness Partnering Strategy using the “Housing First” approach. Nonetheless, with $1.7 billion annually in federal housing agreements set to expire, Canadians, and Edmontonians, are at risk of losing their homes. The City's ask of $50 million for affordable housing could be made available through the renewed Investment in Affordable Housing program.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Affordable housing programs such as the "Cornerstones" program provide essential housing for workers to support a growing economy. Edmonton maintains 93% of the affordable housing supply in the Edmonton Capital Region-- a region that is one of the fastest growing in Canada and that is critical to the economic success of the country. Affordable housing programs such as "Cornerstones" ensure that groups such as our recent immigrants and urban Aboriginal peoples can achieve full economic and social citizenship and can provide much needed labour in Canada's hottest economic region.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

The gap in new housing starts in Canada has resulted in a loss of 50,000 construction jobs. Each dollar spent on housing in Canada contributes to a $1.4 increase in GDP; and for both new construction and housing renovations, an expenditure of $1 million generates roughly three FTE jobs and 10 indirect ancillary jobs. Edmonton's young and fast-growing population, particularly recent immigrants and urban Aboriginal peoples, rely on an affordable housing supply to ensure they can fully participate in the labour market-- a market that continues to grow in support of Canada's economic engine.

Topic: Military and public safety and security

Recommendation 3: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Reinstate the Police Officer Recruitment Fund – The City of Edmonton urges the Government of Canada to reinstate the Police Officer Recruitment Fund and invest in public safety in Edmonton and Alberta through the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Teams (ALERT). Specifically, the City is seeking an investment of $2.1 million (or 14 officers) to maintain the specialized training, criminal intelligence, and tackle child exploitation, organized and gang crime and undertake other work with respect to serious crime that ALERT is involved in.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$1 million-4.9 million

Immediately

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

ALERT brings together nearly 400 municipal police, RCMP members, and sheriffs to work together in an integrated environment. These highly skilled teams are located in regions throughout the province, investigating issues such as drug trafficking, child exploitation, gang violence and organized crime. Maintaining the Police Officer Recruitment Fund would ensure the necessary funds to maintain 14 critical Edmonton Police Service positions within ALERT, which are essential to the on-going success of ALERT as a whole.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Since 2006, ALERT teams have arrested more than 5,300 people on about 16,000 charges related to drugs, weapons, child exploitation, gangs/organized crime and other violent crimes. Between April 1, 2012 and March 31, 2013, ALERT teams seized over 40,000 grams of cocaine and 267,570 grams of marihuana, and took 124 weapons off Alberta streets as a result of organized crime investigations. As the criminal landscape continues to evolve and grow beyond local and regional boundaries, ALERT is positioned to disrupt and dismantle serious and organized crime in Alberta, Canada, and beyond.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Edmonton, as a major urban centre in Alberta, faces a number of unique challenges that come with economic prosperity. Further, Edmonton is home to the largest remand centres in Canada and is the only major municipality in Western Canada with a high concentration of federal inmate facilities. There are over 400 parolees living in Edmonton and approximately 40% of those on statutory release can be expected to reoffend or breach their parole. In order for Edmonton to continue to be a safe and global city that attracts and retains talent, federal investments in policing must in addressed.

Please use this page if you wish to provide more explanation about your recommendation(s).

Edmonton is a big city, and a strong capital city, one that has made significant strides toward transforming itself into a global city. Edmonton is recognized as a leader in areas such as engineering, waste management, health research and development, manufacturing and logistics . Edmonton is also the employment, cultural, and social hub of Alberta's Capital Region - a city that must remain strong in order for the region, the province, and the country to succeed.

The region's strong growth needs to be managed carefully to ensure an ongoing ability to remain an attractive and viable destination for residents and businesses. Edmonton, on average, receives over 16,000 new residents each year. This is tremendous growth that drives the regional economy, and, as a landing pad for residents and businesses, Edmonton can and must continue to provide the framework for economic prosperity in the region and the country.

In Budget 2013, the Government of Canada acknowledged the need for a stronger relationship between the federal and municipal governments and committed to working with municipalities via the Federation of Canadian Municipalities on the implementation of the new Building Canada Plan and affordable housing. Edmonton applauds this commitment by the Government of Canada and encourages the federal government to continue to look for opportunities to partner with municipalities in Budget 2014. Opportunities to partner with the City of Edmonton are numerous but key opportunities include:
(1) Support full build-out of LRT beginning with the Valley Line Stage 1 (Millwoods to City Centre West);
(2) Support Affordable Housing in Edmonton; and
(3) Reinstate the Police Officer Recruitment Fund.

Thank you for your consideration of our submission. The City of Edmonton would be pleased to appear before the Committee should that be useful to the Committee. For additional information or other inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact Simon Farbrother, City Manager (simon.farbrother@edmonton.ca).

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided