

URBAN PLANNING AND ECONOMY
ECONOMIC INVESTMENT SERVICES

Edmonton

INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT ACTION PLAN

Progress Report
June 2025

UPE02544 Attachment 1

Regional Development
[edmonton.ca/business_economy/economic_investment/
industrial-investment-action-plan](https://edmonton.ca/business_economy/economic_investment/industrial-investment-action-plan)

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides an update on the progress made in implementing the Industrial Investment Action Plan¹ (IIAP) since June 2024.

The actions under the IIAP are designed to enhance Edmonton's ecosystem to better attract, retain and support the growth of industrial businesses in Edmonton, in order to grow the City's industrial tax base. This will benefit investors and developers by making it easier to establish and expand their businesses in Edmonton.

This report includes an overview of progress completed to date, items considered complete and the status of each sub-action. It will be produced annually and made publicly available on edmonton.ca to provide additional information on investment attraction and industrial growth efforts.

PROGRESS SUMMARY

Of the 28 IIAP sub-actions:

- two are complete
- eight are in progress
- three sub-actions will commence later in 2025
- fifteen sub-actions will commence in 2026 or later

¹ <https://www.edmonton.ca/sites/default/files/public-files/Industrial-Investment-Action-Plan.pdf?cb=1744056009>. City of Edmonton. Cited April 15, 2025.

ACTIONS IMPLEMENTATION STATUS UPDATE

Action 1

Action 1 aims to increase awareness of Edmonton's characteristics and advantages to attract businesses and encourage them to invest and grow within the city. By emphasizing Edmonton's key offerings and competitive advantages, the City can refine efforts and messaging to attract more industrial investment.

This initial step in Action 1 is to ensure that both current and prospective industrial businesses can easily access the information they need to establish and expand their operations within the city. These resources will strategically highlight Edmonton's unique competitive advantages, its compelling value proposition for businesses and will provide key contacts within the City's Industrial Growth Hub to facilitate a smooth and successful business journey.

ACTION 1: MARKET AND PROMOTE THE INDUSTRIAL ADVANTAGES OF EDMONTON	
SUB-ACTIONS	COMPLETED ITEMS
<p>1.1 Conduct gap analysis of Edmonton target sectors to identify target sector needs. Update relevant websites with key information to inform investment or expansion decisions (including available programs and incentives).</p> <p>Status In progress ▾</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To better understand the needs of the city's industrial target sectors and how corporate site selectors choose locations, an analysis was completed on the location drivers and criteria that influenced their decisions. A market analysis was developed to support this analysis and to gain a deeper understanding of current market trends for each sector, using FDI markets data, local interviews and literature reviews from a variety of sources. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An inventory and analysis of incentives and programs offered by different levels of government and other agencies within Edmonton's target sectors was created. This inventory will be used to determine how Edmonton compares to other jurisdictions and will help to develop an understanding of why final investment decisions were made. The preliminary inventory will be updated and improved as part of Action 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Communications and Market Research Report has been completed with the following recommendations to improve the City's web presence and make it more useful for potential investors and businesses. These recommendations are based on feedback from business owners and analysis of competitor's websites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That a strong communications and marketing strategy is needed to attract and retain businesses in Edmonton. • The City should do a better job showcasing its strengths when attracting businesses. • The City should determine and target specific audiences more effectively.
<p>1.2 Develop and implement a sector-specific marketing strategy to attract industrial investment.</p> <p>Status In progress ▾</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Senior Marketing Advisor has been hired. Their first task will be to develop a sector-specific communications and marketing strategy.

Action 2

Prioritizing the development of shovel-ready² industrial land is a strategic imperative for the City to attract and retain major industrial and industrial-enabling investments. This Action is well underway, with significant progress in sub-actions 2.1 and 2.2.

A key deliverable in sub-action 2.1 was the identification of target sector specific growth areas, highlighting suitable industrial lands within Edmonton. Target sector growth areas identified include: advanced manufacturing, food processing, health and life sciences, transportation and logistics and the energy sector (with Cleantech and AI technology coming in mid 2025). These growth areas were identified based on planning readiness, workforce availability and proximity to markets and infrastructure. They will help long range planning of industrial areas and ensure that the city's prime lands in each sector are brought online in time to land investment. Findings from this work have demonstrated that the City has limited parcels for medium and heavy industrial uses, but that there is an abundance of land for light industrial uses.

A review has commenced of Industrial Area Structure Plans (ASP) and District Plans to identify outdated information and better encourage land development. Plans were reviewed with industrial implementation partners in April to seek input on development barriers and identify needed changes. Administration has also commenced a review of climate and environmental considerations in support of the industrial Area Structure Plan and District Plan review. Ongoing work on the statutory plans and climate and environmental considerations review will continue under sub-action 2.3.

Action 2: Establish and maintain an industrial Infrastructure prioritization tool	
Sub-actions	Completed Items
<p>2.1 Review Area Structure Plans, climate considerations and identify growth areas for each target sector.</p> <p>Status Complete</p>	<div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div><div>To gain a foundational understanding of Edmonton's vacant industrial land, an Inventory of Vacant Industrial Land was conducted. The analysis utilized the City's existing reports, data from the 2024 IIAP and parcel-by-parcel analysis. Sites were further analyzed to determine their current development status: shovel-ready, fully serviced, partially serviced and unserviced. The analysis determined there are 230 ha shovel-ready, 45 ha fully serviced, 1,150 ha partially serviced and 7,000 ha of gross developable unserviced vacant/planned industrial land in the city.</div></div> <div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div><div>Target Sector Specific Growth Areas are complete for Advanced Manufacturing, Food Processing, Health & Life Science and Transportation and Logistics sectors. The remaining two growth areas for Artificial Intelligence and Clean Energy are underway with anticipated completion in mid 2025. To develop the Target Sector Specific Growth Areas:<ul style="list-style-type: none">A Review of Edmonton's Zoning Bylaw, District Policy and Area Structure Plan (ASP) land use concepts was undertaken. The results of this review provided sector specific industrial growth opportunities and revealed the readiness of lands in the city.A Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) was used to evaluate industrial areas' suitability to attract investment within each target sector and identify preferred areas for future industrial development and investment within the city. Sector-specific criteria were defined to assess each growth area. Criteria</div></div>

² Shovel-ready land refers to sites that are ready to be developed. All the front-end infrastructure is in place and planning and zoning processes have been completed. In other words, the site is compliant with local, provincial and federal regulations and prepared for the quick start of construction.

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	<p>were developed through analysis of fDi Markets³ data and site selection publications to identify key motivators for foreign and domestic investment in the target sectors, followed by stakeholder interviews. Key criteria considered for each industrial sector include factors such as planning readiness (zoning and permits), skilled workforce availability, proximity to markets and customers, transport infrastructure (airport, highway, rail), capacity of existing infrastructure (water, sanitation, stormwater, gas, power), industry clusters and proximity to universities and research hubs. The relative importance of each desirable criterion was also weighted to reflect their significance in investment decision-making for each specific sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ To advance the further review of Industrial ASPs and District Plans in consideration of potential future amendments, Administration established: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Criteria for each of the policies under each statutory plan. This criteria will enable an initial assessment of policies across the relevant plans to determine if they should be kept as-is, modified or deleted. • Refined Geographic Scope to identify statutory plans that are top priority as well as identification of policies from each plan that could be affected to help expedite the review. • A What We Heard Report was prepared to summarize the feedback and key findings. ☑ A review of the Edmonton Zoning Bylaw and relevant ASPs to identify Environment and Climate linkages related to industrial lands has commenced. This includes a review of how different industries could support the City's carbon budget and identification of opportunity areas for eco-industrial parks. It also includes the creation of recommendations on land use policies to better conserve higher value natural areas in industrial areas and a review of the availability of water for target industries to better plan for long term water management. Early findings highlight potential gaps within industrial ASPs and District Plans related to the City's environmental and climate action plans, policies, studies and initiatives.
<p>2.2 Create a shovel-ready land supply forecast (3, 5, 10, 15+ years) by establishing a vacant land inventory data set and determine development timelines with the development community.</p> <p>Status In progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ In advance of creating a 3, 5, 10 and 15+ year land supply forecast, a review was conducted on all vacant sites within each of the City's growth areas. 747 vacant industrial sites were identified and then filtered based on their infrastructure servicing level. Sites with major constraints (environmental or land use) were removed and the remaining sites were then sorted by proximity to infrastructure. ☑ A Financial Return on Investment Calculator was developed by Administration in collaboration with regional partners as part of the delivery of the Collaborative Economic Development Framework. This tool calculates the expected tax revenue generated once land has been improved to a shovel ready state and the level of investment needed to realize a positive return. Administration will utilize this tool to create a shortlist of positive return on investment sites that are suitable for public or private investment to enhance to a shovel-ready state. Once complete, Administration will bring forward funding requests to City Council for consideration.

³ fDi Markets platform tracks and analyses international cross-border investment projects across all markets and sectors since 2003. fDi (Foreign Direct Investment)

Action 3

Action 3 aims to increase the city's attractiveness by reducing the time and costs required for a business to become operational. As a first step, Administration has completed a **Guaranteed Timeline Program** for new industrial buildings. Once publicly available, the program will offer a guaranteed timeline of 40 days for development and partial building permits. Increased efficiency and improved business processes will reduce processing time and make the city more competitive in attracting industrial investment.

Action 3: Increase efficiency and improve business processes for industrial development	
Sub-actions	Completed Items
<p>3.1 Streamline approval processes to provide predictable, transparent, competitive timelines for non-residential investment.</p> <p>Status In progress</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administration has created a Guaranteed Timeline Program which will offer a guaranteed timeline of 40 days for development and partial building permits for new industrial buildings. To qualify, projects must meet a series of conditions including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-application meeting • Limited to new industrial projects • The application must be deemed complete and all fees paid • Located on a fully serviced site⁴ • Permitted use • Projects are limited to building shells (tenant improvements not included) • Compliance with the zoning bylaw and City regulations • Supported by the Client Liaison Unit. <p>The City holds sole discretion on enrollment. If a project is accepted, this program will streamline the permitting process and reduce red tape for targeted industrial permits. If the applicant would like to submit a revised application, revision submissions will have a strict deadline of one (1) week or five (5) business days from the date of the request. A maximum of two (2) revision requests from each internal circulation partner are permitted. Regional Development will monitor the program after launch to identify what is working well and any areas for future improvement.</p>

Action 5

Action 5 focuses on building strong partnerships with Indigenous communities, organizations and businesses to foster collaboration and shared benefits from industrial investment. By working together respectfully, in a way that reflects the values and business practices of all participants, everyone can have equal access to economic opportunities and advantages from industrial growth. Engagement with Indigenous, ethnocultural and all equity-deserving communities will follow a timeline and process that respects different ways of being and doing, with further discussion and engagement taking place as IIAP implementation advances.

Action 5: Work with Indigenous Communities, organizations and businesses to identify barriers and advance Indigenous industrial economic development in Edmonton.	
Sub-actions	Completed Items

⁴ Fully serviced is defined as a property with access to utilities, next to a road.

5.2 Work with Aksis and other agencies to support Indigenous industrial startups, new industrial investors and Indigenous land developers.

Status **In progress** ▾

- ☒ Work has commenced on creating an inventory of **programs and services** related to existing Indigenous support programs for industrial development and investment.

Action 7

Action 7 aims to work collaboratively with regional partners to reduce the costs of competition. On April 9, 2025, Council approved the City's continued participation in Collaborative Economic Development (CED). CED enables the City to work alongside regional municipalities to implement a model of shared-investment-for-shared-benefit and facilitate non-residential investment projects outside of jurisdictional boundaries.

CED is a tool that can be leveraged under the IIAP. It is a regional economic development collaboration model that empowers municipalities in the Edmonton Region, through the use of data-driven tools, to jointly invest in non-residential sites outside of their jurisdictional boundaries. Through CED, collaborators can share in the costs of making a site shovel-ready as well as the resulting revenue, proportional to their initial investment. This new revenue source could help address the fiscal gaps in a collaborative and regional manner and increase the overall supply of non-residential land.

Action 7: Continue to collaborate with regional partners, Indigenous Communities and investment groups and regional economic development agencies on economic development activities

Sub-actions	Completed Items
<p>7.2 Participate in and advance new projects through Collaborative Economic Development to enhance sites to a shovel-ready state and share in generated tax revenues.</p> <p>Status Complete ▾</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In collaboration with twelve regional partners, Administration completed the CED Framework. The Framework serves as a user guide for CED partners and provides the mechanisms (through the CED tools and processes) to enable interjurisdictional shared investment for shared benefit. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On April 9, 2025, City Council approved the City's continued participation in CED by authorizing the signing of the CED Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Completion of the CED Framework and the signing of the MOU allows for the advancement of new projects to be advanced through CED.

Action 8

Action 8 will identify and tailor programs and incentives to attract investment, stimulate job creation and foster innovation in target sectors. Deliverables under this action have begun under Action 1 by compiling a list of existing economic, tax and development incentive programs from all levels of government and other agencies that focus specifically on Edmonton’s industrial sectors. An Incentive Framework under Collaborative Economic Development (CED) was also finalized, which includes incentives offered in Edmonton’s competing regions across North America. This provides the City with a better understanding of its direct competitors in each sector and what their incentive offerings are. To grow industrial development, the City will need to be strategic by identifying and tailoring financial and non-financial incentives that are attractive to target sector investors.

Action 8: Identify and tailor programs and incentives for target sectors that will provide a strong return to the City’s tax base and advance.	
Sub-actions	Completed Items
<p>8.1 Perform a sector needs assessment, explore options to support climate initiatives, the green economy, Indigenous Communities and organizations and leverage incentives from within the City of Edmonton and other orders of government and investment funds to create tailored programs and incentives for target sectors.</p> <p>Status In progress</p>	<div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inventory and analysis of incentives and programs (See 1.1)</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The CED Incentive Framework offers a review of market trends and site selection drivers for Edmonton’s target sectors. It contains a list of incentives offered by competing regions and recommends how to leverage existing federal and provincial programs to enhance the region’s competitiveness. This information can help identify opportunities for the City to create new incentives and advocate for government support.</div>

Action 9

As the IIAP advances, it is important to monitor the progress and results. As part of the implementation of Action 9, Administration has completed a draft of Key Performance Indicators which will help monitor the success through the implementation of the IIAP Actions. By creating meaningful measures, the City will be able to evaluate both the cost and the outputs of the IIAP to guide future change.

Action 9: Monitor progress and results of the Industrial Investment Action Plan.	
Sub-actions	Completed Items

<p>9.1 Define key metrics, establish targets, conduct an assessment and monitor success of the action plan.</p> <p>Status In progress</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and targets were developed for the IIAP actions to monitor the successes and outcomes of the IIAP. These KPIs were developed and vetted by Industrial implementation partners through various engagement events, with the most recent engagement taking place on April 8, 2025. A What We Heard Report (Attachment 2) was prepared to summarize the feedback and findings of these engagement sessions.</p>
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CONCLUSION

The IIAP is progressing with several key initiatives underway or completed. Notably, efforts to market Edmonton's advantages and streamline permitting processes are advancing, alongside strategies to develop shovel-ready industrial land and explore opportunities for Indigenous businesses to participate in and benefit from industrial growth.

Under the IIAP, the City will also continue to work with regional municipalities to develop non-residential land and generate new sources of tax revenue. Key performance indicators have been established to monitor the plan's success, indicating a comprehensive approach to attracting and retaining industrial businesses. Progress toward the actions outlined in this report takes Edmonton one step closer to having a larger supply of non-residential land available for investment and continuing to grow the industrial tax base.