OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF EDMONTON

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The Honourable Mike Ellis
Deputy Premier and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services
Email: PSES.minister@gov.ab.ca

The Honourable Mickey Amery
Minister of Justice
Email: ministryofjustice@gov.ab.ca

Dear Minister Ellis and Minister Amery,

I am writing regarding the urgent need to improve release protocols for individuals transitioning from provincial correctional facilities into Edmonton. As Edmonton's Chief of Police and I have noted publicly, discharging individuals from correctional facilities to our urban core without coordinated support creates significant challenges for the individuals released, local businesses, and the surrounding community.

This is a longstanding issue in Edmonton. In August 2026, a recently released repeat offender stabbed two people during morning prayers at the Nanaksar Gurdwara. Community concerns about uncoordinated drop-offs in Chinatown and surrounding areas are persistent, and were recently corroborated by video evidence. The traumatic murders of Hung Trang and Ban Phuc Hoan in Chinatown continue to impact the community today.

I appreciated the opportunity to meet with Minister Ellis following the release of the inmate dropoff videos and also engage with the Minister at the recent Alberta Municipalities convention to discuss these concerns. The Edmonton region is home to the highest concentration of correctional spaces in Canada and also serves as the medical and social services hub for Northern Alberta. With eight nearby correctional facilities holding a combined capacity of approximately 3,405 beds, our municipality bears a disproportionate burden to support those released from correctional facilities. Releasing individuals into communities without warm hand-offs and plans that include appropriate shelter, housing, and program supports, fuels cycles of social disorder and recidivism.

Building on the shared priorities outlined in the City of Edmonton's 2027-28 Provincial Pre-Budget submission, we reinforce the following collaborative actions to establish a safer, more structured release process:

- **Formalize Supported Hand-off Protocols**: We request a formalized provincial reintegration framework backed by targeted provincial funding for release supports that effectively ends uncoordinated street-level drop-offs in vulnerable neighbourhoods. This aligns with our recent provincial 2027 budget submission that requested coordinated discharge practices and targeted interventions to improve safety in our downtown core.

- **Leverage Community Service Hubs as Transition Points**: To help mitigate the broader impacts of uncoordinated releases on our urban core, we urge the Province to fulfill our 2027 provincial budget request of $35 million in annual operating funding for five low-barrier Community Service Hubs. These integrated day spaces can serve as vital complementary resources where vulnerable individuals including those recently released from custody can safely access both basic needs, and wrap around services.

- **Accelerate Housing and Treatment Pathways**: We ask that the Province fast-track the implementation of the 400 committed treatment beds in the Edmonton area to eliminate growing backlogs. We welcome the opportunity to further collaborate on planning and investment in future affordable and supportive housing projects to ensure alignment with the Recovery Oriented System of Care.

I am highly encouraged by the ongoing collaborative efforts between our City staff, provincial correctional partners, and the Edmonton Police Service to better link correctional releases with local service demand. By aligning provincial health and justice resources with local delivery, and backing these efforts with supportive housing and social services investments outlined in our budget submission, we can turn these ongoing challenges into a model for successful reintegration and community safety.

Our City and community partners stand ready to partner with you and your respective ministries to implement these necessary solutions. We look forward to your response and to advancing concrete steps to ensure all individuals safely return to their home communities or transition to appropriately supported destinations.

Sincerely,

Andrew Knack

Mayor Andrew Knack
City of Edmonton

cc: Hon. Rick Wilson, Minister of Mental Health and Addiction
Hon. Nathan Neudorf, Minister of Assisted Living and Social Services
Ben Henderson, Chair Edmonton Police Commission
Warren Driechel, Chief of Police
Edmonton City Council
Eddie Robar, Edmonton City Manager
City of Edmonton Intergovernmental & Regional Affairs