

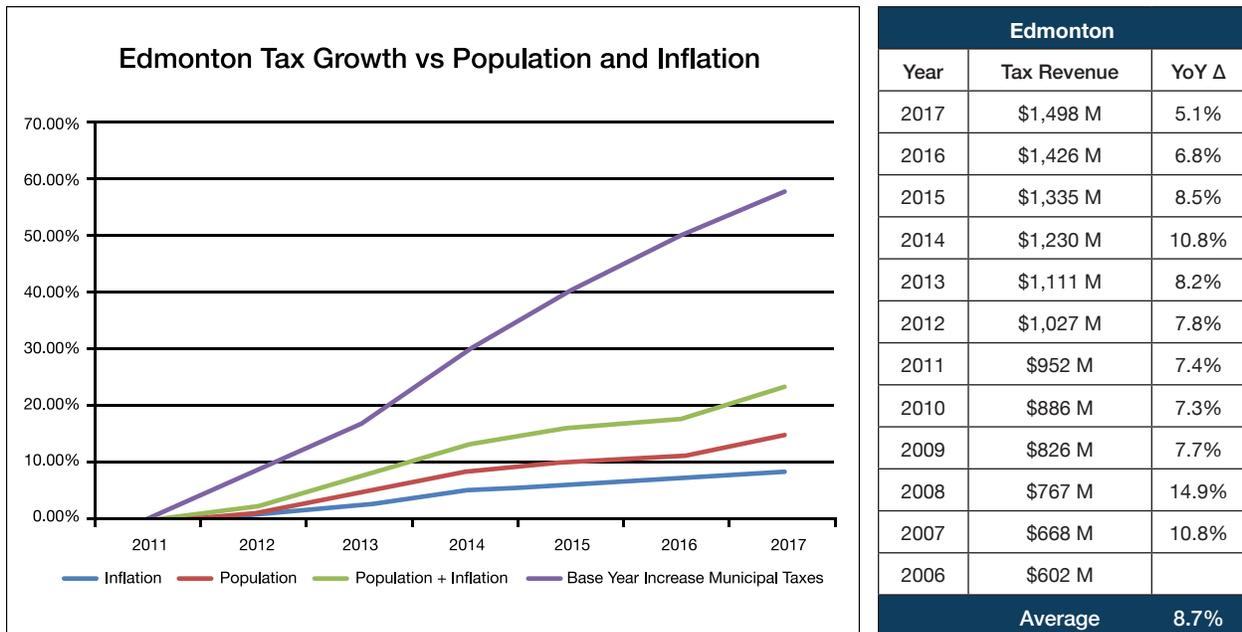
Mayor Don Iveson
 Office of the Mayor
 2nd Floor, City Hall
 1 Sir Winston Churchill Square
 Edmonton, AB. T5J 2R7

Re: Fiscal Restraint is Needed in the Upcoming Budget

Dear Mayor Iveson:

Prosperity Edmonton is a group of associations representing various parts of the business community in Edmonton. Association members include restaurants, retail outlets, construction and manufacturing companies – in other words, the diverse mix of businesses who work every day in Edmonton. We are concerned about the ever-escalating set of costs imposed on the people and businesses of Edmonton, which in combination are making it more and more difficult for households and businesses to thrive, invest, and stay in Edmonton.

The overall growth in requisitioned taxes in the City of Edmonton has far outpaced the combination of inflation and population growth over the past six years. While the municipal tax base increased by over 57% in this time, relatively few new businesses have started operations or moved into our city. Existing businesses have felt this combined tax impact through both higher assessments and ever increasing mill rates.



We acknowledge and commend the City for providing a wide variety of important services, and for the many things it does to enhance the lives of people who live here. However, the scale of increases in the last decade is clearly unsustainable. It is time to take a long hard look at the tax burden the City is putting on the people and businesses of Edmonton, and make this the year that Council changes the trajectory of the ever-increasing tax load.

When continual property tax increases are layered over the many other tax and regulatory increases imposed by all three orders of government, the result is an environment which stifles investment, discourages job creators, and ultimately decreases opportunities and prosperity for the people of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region.

We urge you, our representatives on City Council, to ask Administration in the upcoming budget to hold the line on spending and work harder to find efficiencies to fund new priorities rather than resorting to tax increases.

We see from the documentation released with this week's Council Agenda that the City of Edmonton has drafted Budget Principles outlined in Attachment #1 of the 2019-2022 Operating Budget Outlook.

Just as Edmonton households and businesses have to live within their means, Prosperity Edmonton asks the City to do the same. Right now, as the budget is being developed, City Council has the opportunity to add another principle to Attachment #1 which would provide Administration with direction to stop spending increases and send a strong signal that business can invest and thrive here.

We would like to continue a conversation with you this summer as you refine the upcoming budget in the hopes that we can make the case for Edmontonians hard hit by increased taxes and costs from all orders of government.

Yours truly,

Prosperity Edmonton

CC: Mayor and City Councillors

