



MEDIA RELEASE

Alleviating the Tax Burden on Businesses and Creating Tax Equity Through Budget Reductions

Calgary, AB, March 14, 2019 – Today, Ward 8 Councillor Evan Woolley is pleased to present his **Notice of Motion: Alleviating the Tax Burden on Businesses and Creating Tax Equity Through Budget Reductions**.

Calgary businesses are owned, operated, and employ Calgarians and form the economic anchor of our past and future success. Over the last 5 years Calgary has experienced a prolonged economic downturn which has had a deep impact on the assessed value of properties in the downtown core. The business community outside of those office towers have borne the brunt of this tax shift.

Relying on largely small and medium-sized businesses to make up the shortfall is unsustainable, even when those increases were offset by approximately \$55 Million from a Phased Tax Program (PTP) over the last two years. In response to the continued assessment shift, Councillor Woolley is tabling a proposal that will significantly alleviate the tax burden on businesses through budget reductions at the City of Calgary and by more evenly sharing the burden of this tax shift. This will create equity in the tax system between non-residential and residential ratepayers.

“Fairness and equity are core principles of mine and over the last number of years the inequity of our system has become a significant challenge for our business community,” said Councillor Woolley. “I believe that action needs to be taken through reductions to our city budget and by sharing more equally in decreases to the property values in the downtown.”

The specifics of the proposal being presented at Council on March 18th are as follows:

1. In 2019, approximately \$250M in municipal tax previously generated by non-residential property tax assessment value in the downtown to be shared as follows:
 - a. City of Calgary Budget Reductions of \$100M;
 - b. A transfer of taxes borne by non-residential property accounts to residential property accounts such that the overall tax responsibility is equally shared between non-residential and residential properties of \$80M; and
 - c. Allow redistribution from downtown non-residential accounts to other non-residential property accounts of \$70M.
2. A reconsideration of the March 5, 2019 decision of Council on Major Projects to remove \$54.1M from the new Council-directed reserve and, in addition to the \$70.9M currently allocated to create the following:
 - a. \$125M Residential Tax Rebate Program over a 4-year period

A media availability and detailed briefing will be held at 11:30am in the Electric Light Boardroom on the fourth floor of the Administration Building, 313 7 Ave SE. A scrum will follow at approximately 12:15pm outside Council chambers.

###

Zev Klymochko
Communications Advisor
Ward 8 Councillor Evan Woolley | The City of Calgary
caward8@calgary.ca T 403-268-2504 | C 403-807-3805