

The Honourable Mike Ellis
Deputy Premier
Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services
130 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

March 6, 2025

via mail and email: PSES.minister@gov.ab.ca

Dear Deputy Premier Ellis,

In follow up to our letter dated April 19, 2024 and meeting on May 28, 2024 with yourself and your team; we are reaching out as a collective of shopping centres represented by the Northern Alberta Shopping Centre Association (NASCA) regarding the continued increase in crime and violence being experienced in our respective properties and communities.

Edmonton-area enclosed shopping centres represent

- Nearly 10 million square feet of commercial retail real estate,
- Each centre housing more than 100 stores,
- Collectively providing tens of thousands of local jobs,
- Hosts over 56 million in annual foot traffic (excl. WEM),
- Contribute \$24 million (excl. WEM) in tax dollars, and
- Represent some of the largest real estate investors in Canada.

Although privately owned, shopping centres are one of the largest attractions for the general public to gather and conduct business outside of education or entertainment venues. Our customer profiles are inclusive of all demographics including youth, young families, working professionals, senior citizens and more.

We are reaching out to you for help. The public and our tenants require a safe and inclusive environment that attracts business and community. It is also expected, and essential for all stakeholders, that we do this in a financially sustainable way. However, it has become exceedingly more difficult to maintain our operating expenses due to our current situation. It also affects our ability to attract new national and international tenants and even retain our current tenant mix. To which, we have unfortunately experienced loss in occupancy due to increased theft, violence towards staff, and rising security costs.

In our 2024 letter to you we outlined 2023 data that indicated security interactions had increased 134%, security costs increased 100% and the cost of security-related repairs increased 186%; those areas have risen further throughout 2024. Updated security statistics are enclosed for your review.

However, this is not isolated to costs concerns. Our frontline teams are observing an alarming level of violence, use of weapons, and severely traumatic events including witnessing life altering injuries and fatalities. The weight of these occurrences is affecting the attending first responders, customers, tenants, site security teams and mall administration.

As real-estate professionals managing private property, we are restricted in our options to address the issues we are experiencing. The utilization of private security groups limits our response as they do not possess the authority or training that is afforded to law enforcement. We can only operate with a behavior and empathy-based approach that works to encompass mental health considerations alongside that of and criminal or organized crime.

We maintain our original observation; crime and social disorder are no longer confined to the downtown core. With public transit, and more specifically the LRT, these issues are further permeating the suburban communities.

Recent events include:

- Narcan being deployed 34+ times at Kingsway, noting there has been a noticeable number of patrons in 2024 who have been deploying their own personal Naloxone on those who are overdosing prior to mall security arrival.
- Kingsway's JD Sports has been targeted multiple times by an organized retail crime network with approximately \$20,000 in product being stolen, noting that \$6,000 was recovered through security efforts. Similarly, Southgate's Arc'tyxx has been targeted multiple times with approximately \$18,000 being stolen and retrieved by security in one instance.
- Of note, Kingsway experienced 3 opioid-related deaths on property, 1 incident of self-ignition, 5 instances of arson and 2 stabbings.
- Of note, Southgate has experienced 4 fatalities, near monthly bear spray incidents, an attempted armed robbery, multiple assaults and assaults with weapons.
- Edmonton City Centre has experienced substantial increases in arrests, assaults, overdoses and weapon related incidents in 2024 compared to 2023. OD's continue to be an issue, as we have a recorded a staggering 50 OD incidents in a single month in February 2025.
- Christmas 2024 observed a large fight in WEM's food court with over 100+ ppl being involved.

With all of this in mind, we haven't stood still and since meeting in May 2024, we are pleased to share the following areas of pursuit:

- We enrolled in the National Retail Crime Council as referred by Executive Director of Law Enforcement & Oversight, Jon Coughlan. This has included exposure and collaboration at a strategic level that involves various law enforcement agencies and retailer representation. We continue to leverage this platform for collaboration opportunities and the active pursuit of retail blitz opportunities with loss prevention education.
- We have connected with the Edmonton Police Service on various levels including two meetings with Deputy Police Chief, Darren Derko, in June and September 2024 respectively.
- We have established a working relationship with City of Edmonton Transit Safety representatives, including participation in weekly meetings.
- We have updated our respective City Councillors of our concerns and initiatives in seek of their support.
- Many of us have enrolled in the City of Edmonton's Unison reporting system to provide real-time statistics as it relates to deployment to high-crime areas.

While these discussions were positive and provided agreeance to many of the concerns noted, actioning the results and identified next steps is to be desired. We need results. So, we come to you with a renewed request for consideration on the following fronts:

1. Increased, if not dedicated, law enforcement presence similar to that of resource officers provided to high schools.
2. Grant opportunities, qualifications and processes to offset growing expenses.
3. An understanding of existing and upcoming resources, including the backfill of required day shelters and areas for idle time.
4. Support and focus on retail crime (incl. organized retail crime) and enhancing success of the prosecution process.
5. Free supply of NARCAN and/or Naloxone supplies.

At your earliest convenience, we kindly request a follow up meeting to discuss the enclosed statistics, experiences and economic impacts. We are encouraged by the Provincial governments established mandate and dedication towards safety and security. We look forward to furthering our discussions and partnering to improve the reality for our communities.

Sincerely,

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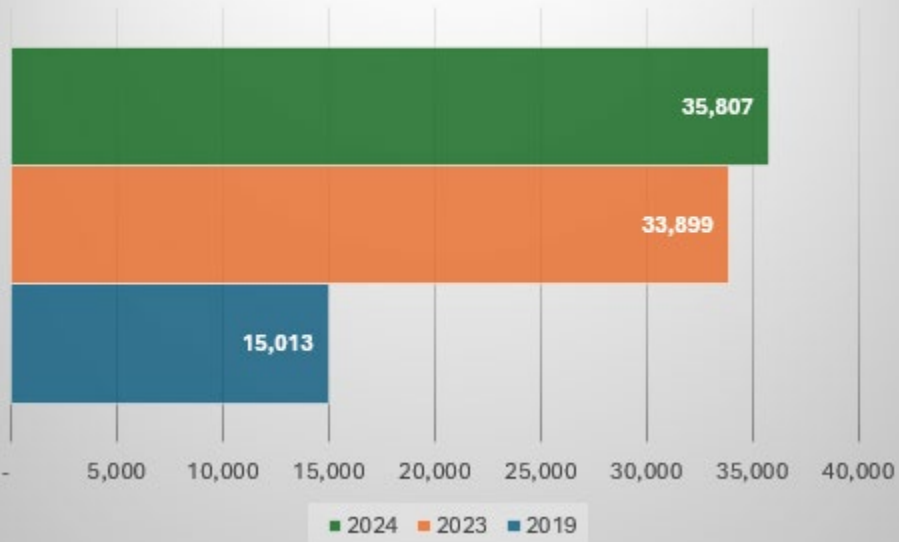
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Encl. Aggregated Security Statistics

cc: The Honourable Matt Jones, Minister of Jobs, Economy and Trade
The Honourable Ric McIver, Minister of Municipal Affairs
The Honourable Joseph Schow, Minister of Tourism and Sport
The Honourable Nate Horner, Minister of Treasury Board and Finance
The Honourable Mickey Amery, Minister of Justice and Deputy House Leader
His Worship, Amarjeet Sohi, Mayor, City of Edmonton
Eddie Robar, Interim City Manager
City of Edmonton Councillor, Michael Janz, Ward Papastew
City of Edmonton Councillor, Anne Stevenson, Ward O-Day'min
City of Edmonton Councillor, Tim Cartmell, Ward pihêsiwin



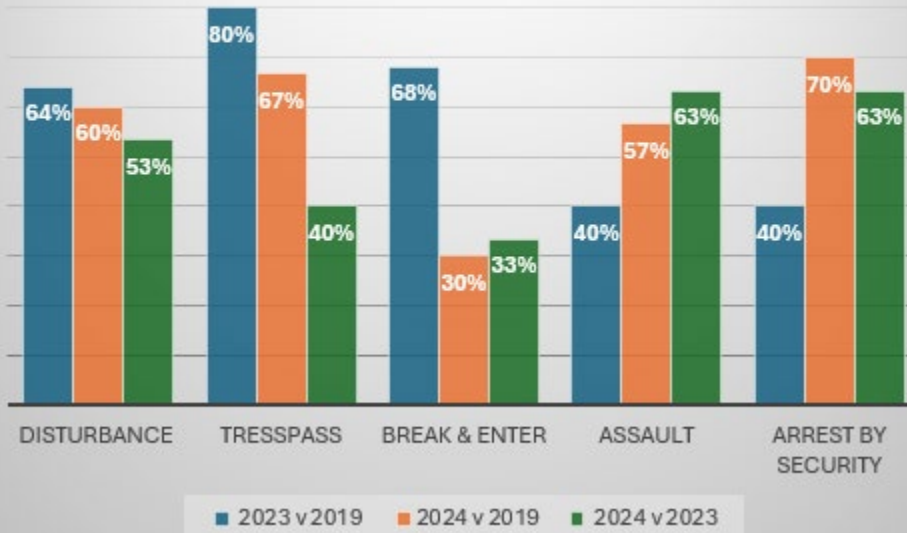
Annual Security Reports



Annual Security Related Repair Costs



Increases in types of incidents



Increases in types of incidents

