

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 4, 2019

City targets to address rising business property taxes insufficient

CALGARY – Businesses in Calgary will continue to suffer without stronger targets and quicker timelines to relieve a growing non-residential property tax burden, says the President and CEO of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce.

Sandip Lalli says that while city administration has done well engaging the business community to help resolve the property tax issue, stated actions in a [report](#) to a city committee are not nearly as aggressive as the business community has been asking for in discussions.

“We know this isn’t easy, however the targets suggested by administration will in fact further impact competitiveness, see more businesses close and impact the ability to attract new businesses to the city,” said Lalli.

Calgary has led the country in spikes to non-residential property taxes for the past two years and already had one of the highest non-residential to residential tax ratios in the country at 3.93:1 in 2018.

While the Chamber appreciates that the City is looking for ways to address the ratio, a new report considered by the city’s Priority and Finance Committee on March 5 suggests targets that would actually see the ratio increase from last year’s numbers to 4.07:1 by 2022. This would mean Calgary would have the highest non-residential to residential ratio in Canada based on current numbers.

“That’s not acceptable,” said Lalli. “Calgary businesses have carried the lion’s share of the property tax load for years now and headed into 2019 this is projected to increase even further. What we are asking is simply to bring the property tax ratio to a place that is competitive with other cities like Edmonton and Toronto.”

Based on feedback from the business community, the Chamber has asked for the ratio to be reduced to 3:1 by the end of the council term, with an eventual locked in rate of 2.8:1, comparable to Edmonton and Toronto.

“We would encourage council to make the bold decisions needed to demonstrate their stated desire to improve Calgary’s business environment.”

Lalli did commend the City for doing what it can to minimize the 2019 tax increase through the use of the Phased Tax Program (rebate) and further operating efficiencies, but indicated that rate should be capped at no more than five per cent. The Chamber’s full recommendations can be found [here](#).

To schedule an interview, please contact Mark Cooper, at media@calgarychamber.com or at (403) 750 0400.

ABOUT THE CALGARY CHAMBER

The Calgary Chamber is an independent non-profit, non-partisan business organization. For 128 years the Chamber has worked to build a business community that nourishes, powers and inspires the world.