

2025

ANNUAL
REPORT

EXPLORE
EDMONTON



EXPLORE EDMONTON CORPORATION





We respectfully acknowledge that we are located within Treaty 6 territory, and the Métis homeland and ancestral territory of the people of the Otipemisiwak Métis Nation and all Métis communities who call this land home. This land is the traditional home for many Indigenous Peoples, including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Dene, Saulteaux, Anishinaabe, Inuit and many others. Explore Edmonton honours the memory of all Indigenous peoples who have gathered on this land for millennia and whose histories, languages and living cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.

EXPLORE EDMONTON

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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PREFACE

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Tourism shapes Edmonton's perception and reputation. It is the front door to economic development, and our future prosperity depends on keeping it wide open.

City Council's investment in Explore Edmonton reflects our shared awareness that the visitor economy delivers real returns for Edmontonians. For every dollar spent, approximately \$17 flows back into the local economy, supporting the small businesses, arts organizations, hotels, and restaurants that depend on a thriving visitor economy to grow.

We are committed to growing Edmonton's visitor economy responsibly and with intention. Success isn't measured in revenue alone, but rather in the health, well-being, and vibrancy of our communities. Our approach will protect our city's sense of place, honour Indigenous values and knowledge, and ensure every decision strengthens the natural and cultural assets that define who we are.

On behalf of City Council and the people of Edmonton, I thank Explore Edmonton's board, staff and the countless partners who make this work possible every day. We look forward to building a thriving and resilient visitor economy with you.



—
His Worship Andrew Knack
Mayor, City of Edmonton

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



Looking back at 2025, it was a year defined by milestone moments and well-earned recognition. Lonely Planet named Edmonton a Top 10 City to visit worldwide. We ranked #1 in Canada and #22 globally on the Burson Global Sports Cities Index. A full calendar of festivals, sport and cultural events drew visitors from around the world while giving Edmontonians reason after reason to celebrate the city they call home. By any measure, this was a landmark year.

This year, Explore Edmonton's Board of Directors reached an important milestone: the approval of our 2026–2028 Strategic Plan. It unites our diverse organization around one clear purpose: attracting visitors by delivering and showcasing Edmonton experiences that contribute to prosperity and quality of life through the visitor economy.

This clarity matters. It focuses our energy, aligns our partnerships, and ensures every part of what we do connects back to building a city that people want to visit, live, work, and invest.

Explore Edmonton is committed to shaping and elevating how visitors experience Edmonton and how residents take pride in their city. Looking ahead, we will continue to prioritize a thoughtful, regenerative approach to growing and curating visitor experiences, while meaningfully supporting local businesses, Indigenous entrepreneurs, artists, makers, and experience and attraction operators while focusing on tourism as an economic driver in and for our city. The achievements of 2025 have given us a strong foundation, and we move forward with momentum in shaping Edmonton into a year-round destination of choice.

On behalf of the Board, I offer my deepest thanks to the entire Explore Edmonton team, Edmonton City Council, Edmonton Destination Marketing Hotels, Travel Alberta, the Government of Alberta, Prairies Economic Development Canada, and the partners who continue to invest in Edmonton. To the frontline service providers, marketers, experience operators, and artists – you are the heart of the visitor economy, and the reason people fall in love with Edmonton. None of this is possible without you, and we are proud to do this work alongside you.

–

Karen Oshry
Chair, Board of Directors
Explore Edmonton

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

The visitor economy is a living ecosystem – dynamic, interconnected, and powered by many industries working together to support every part of the visitor journey.

Tourism is what visitors do in Edmonton. The visitor economy is what their visit does for Edmonton. Visitors bring in new dollars that flow through local businesses and services, supporting jobs and community investment from the moment a trip is booked to the journey home.

Visitor spending in the Edmonton region reached \$2.6 billion in 2025. That economic impact accumulates across thousands of visitor touchpoints: a hotel stay, a concert or game, a meal, and an afternoon at an attraction, festival, or special event. When it all comes together, the benefits ripple outward - creating jobs, strengthening small businesses, and building momentum in our local economy.

Few things move the local economy like a major event. Hosting events in Edmonton creates opportunities for local businesses and communities to engage and grow.

Picture an event as a disco ball at the centre of the city: it draws people in, builds energy, and throws light in every direction. It invites everyone to the party – connecting businesses with new audiences and new reasons to get involved.

Behind every event, every campaign, and every visitor experience is a network of people who make it possible. We are proud to work alongside a diverse, highly skilled network of tourism partners, experience operators, artists and entrepreneurs, community builders, and civic leaders.

None of this work reaches as far without the belief and support of the people of Edmonton behind it. When Edmontonians champion what makes this city special, it carries further than any campaign we could deliver on our own. A healthy visitor economy makes Edmonton a better place to live, and residents who believe in their city make it a more compelling place to visit.



This is an exciting time to be in Edmonton. Sharing the best of this city with the world and playing a meaningful role in shaping the experiences that bring people here is work we are deeply proud of. To our shareholder, board, team, and partners, thank you for being true ambassadors for Edmonton and fuelling our visitor economy.

—

Traci Bednard
President and CEO
Explore Edmonton

01

POWERING EDMONTON'S VISITOR ECONOMY

POWERING EDMONTON'S VISITOR ECONOMY

EXPLORE EDMONTON CORPORATION IS EDMONTON'S DESTINATION MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION.

We work on behalf of the city and region to grow the visitor economy by building demand, strengthening Edmonton's destination offering, and supporting year-round visitor and guest experiences.



Our mandate is unique. Many destination organizations focus primarily on promotion: shaping perceptions, telling a destination's story, and inspiring travel. Explore Edmonton's role extends beyond marketing. Explore Edmonton's responsibilities span the full visitor economy – and together, they are how we power it:

- Developing Edmonton as a year-round destination of choice
- Advancing industry leadership and long-term growth through initiatives like Edmonton's Tourism Master Plan, building toward a stronger, more connected destination
- Elevating Edmonton's story to attract visitors and build civic pride
- Advancing business and sports hosting leadership through inclusive, high-performing events
- Stewarding the Edmonton Convention Centre and Edmonton EXPO Centre
- Producing iconic events such as KDays, the Canadian Finals Rodeo, and Farmfair International
- Cultivating and strengthening partnerships that support the visitor ecosystem
- Enhancing operational excellence and a strong employee experience, ensuring we deliver consistent value for the city and region

Our work delivers measurable economic impact through visitor spending that supports local businesses, jobs, and public revenues, while also helping make Edmonton more vibrant for residents. The experiences we help elevate, the events we attract and deliver, and the stories we share nationally and internationally all strengthen Edmonton's quality of life and reinforce civic pride.

Residents are our most credible ambassadors; when Edmontonians feel proud of their city and engaged in what it offers, that confidence carries far beyond our borders.



WHAT IS THE VISITOR ECONOMY?

A visitor's trip might start with a flight, a hotel, or a festival ticket – but the ripple reaches far beyond one itinerary. The visitor economy is the interconnected ecosystem of industries that attracts, produces, and delivers the experiences that bring people to Edmonton and keep our city thriving year-round. It spans experience operators and entrepreneurs, venues and events, restaurants and hotels, transportation and technology, and the many public and private partners who help the system run. When it's healthy, Edmonton feels more alive, and the benefits are shared through the reinvestment in our community.

Tourism is the experience: what visitors do, where they go, and the stories they take home. The visitor economy is the impact of those choices: new dollars visitors bring into our city and region, flowing through businesses and services that support a trip from start to finish.

As the Tourism Industry Association of Alberta (TIAA) puts it, the visitor economy is an "industry of industries" - literally everyone's business. It includes the public and private organizations that serve visitors at every step, and it works best when the whole ecosystem moves together.

Sources: STR CoStar, Explore Edmonton Industry Measures Dashboard: (2025 preliminary estimate), Tourism Industry Association of Alberta (TIAA), Travel Alberta.

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

\$2.6 BILLION

in visitor spending in Edmonton & Region

\$508 MILLION

in total economic impact generated by Explore Edmonton attracted and produced events, and event venues

\$15.2 BILLION

in visitor spending in Alberta

86,000 FULL TIME JOBS

within the tourism industry, accounting for approximately 10% of employment in Alberta

8.14 MILLION

total passengers travelled through Edmonton International Airport (YEG) in 2025.

6.2% INCREASE

in domestic passengers, the primary driver behind YEG's expanding traveller numbers

60%

hotel occupancy rate, Edmonton & Region, 2025

\$153

average daily rate (ADR) for hotel rooms, Edmonton & Region, 2025

2026-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2025, Explore Edmonton approved a new 2026–2028 Strategic Plan, a major milestone that sets a clear direction. Built on the momentum of recent progress and grounded in what we’ve learned, this plan focuses our diverse mandate around simplified shared purpose:

WE ATTRACT VISITORS BY DELIVERING AND SHOWCASING EDMONTON EXPERIENCES CONTRIBUTING TO PROSPERITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH THE VISITOR ECONOMY.

To bring this plan to life, we are guided by three main strategic objectives:

**WE PROMOTE
EDMONTON'S
VISITOR ECONOMY**

**WE ATTRACT, DEVELOP,
DELIVER, ENRICH &
CONNECT REMARKABLE
EVENTS & EXPERIENCES**

**WE ENHANCE
OUR TEAM &
ORGANIZATION**

This three-year plan is a working framework that aligns our resources, strengthens collaboration across teams, and directs our effort where it will deliver the greatest impact for Edmonton. We enter 2026 with renewed energy and clear purpose, ready for new opportunities while keeping our focus on long-term results. We're proud of this direction and excited for what comes next.

02

DEVELOPING A YEAR-ROUND DESTINATION OF CHOICE

DEVELOPING A YEAR-ROUND DESTINATION OF CHOICE



Building Edmonton into a year-round destination takes a city-wide effort; powered by partners across the visitor ecosystem and felt at every step of the journey, from first discovery to the experiences and stories visitors take home.

Through collaboration with local businesses, Indigenous leaders, and community organizations, we grow authentic, four-season experiences that benefit visitors and residents alike.

Our destination development portfolio spans the full visitor ecosystem. We provide hands-on coaching to help new operators move from concept to market, champion local, small, and equity-deserving businesses and creators, and bring Edmonton's perspective to global conversations shaping tourism's future. Grounded in ethical, inclusive, and sustainable practices, this work grows a resilient visitor economy that attracts visitors and improves quality of life for Edmontonians.





SOCIAL PROCUREMENT JOURNEY: PURCHASING FOR COMMUNITY IMPACT

Explore Edmonton launched a new social procurement policy to ensure goods and services are purchased in an open and competitive way, delivering the best value for the organization.

Sourcing with Purpose: Choosing Local & Sustainable

At the Edmonton EXPO Centre and the Edmonton Convention Centre, local sourcing and responsible purchasing go hand in hand. Across catering and operations, both venues prioritize Edmonton and Alberta-based producers wherever possible, guided by sustainability standards that shape how products are selected, used, and maintained.

In 2025, this commitment resulted in:

- **\$1.18 million** spent with Alberta-based businesses and farms
- **\$745,000** of the \$1.18 million total directed to Edmonton-based suppliers
- **BOMA BEST certification:** Both venues meet BOMA Green Cleaning Standards, requiring 50%+ of cleaning products to be third-party sustainability certified



2025 Social Procurement Highlights

10% INCREASE

in purchasing from priority businesses

\$20.7 MILLION

invested with priority businesses

\$10.74 MILLION

of that total directed to Edmonton-based businesses

KDays & Farmfair: Elevating Local and Indigenous Entrepreneurs

Supporting local businesses goes beyond procurement. Both KDays and Farmfair International served as platforms to elevate local entrepreneurship, cultural expression, and inclusive economic participation.

- **117 local vendors** supported across curated programs at KDays.
- **58 Indigenous vendors** participated at KDays, expanding access to new markets and building longer-term commercial relationships in support of reconciliation and Indigenous economic inclusion.
- **67 local market vendors** engaged at Farmfair International, prioritizing Alberta-based producers, farmers, and makers to strengthen regional agriculture and small businesses.



Keeping it Local: How Business Events Support Local Supply Chains

Explore Edmonton used the social procurement policy to keep the economic impact of conferences and major events in the city, circulating value through diverse communities and local supply chains.

- **120+ Edmonton-based vendors** supported through Explore Edmonton Business Events.
- **10+ sectors represented**, including hospitality, creative services, transportation, arts and culture, retail, and event production.
- **Meaningful partnerships** with Indigenous-owned and Indigenous-led businesses; integrating cultural experiences, artists, and products into delegate programming, gifting, and event design with a focus on long-term relationships rather than one-time transactions.
- **30+ local food and beverage businesses** were engaged through catering, off-site events, delegate gifting, and curated recommendations, supporting independent hospitality and enhancing a sense of place for delegates.



WILD MINT NIPIY

Explore Edmonton supported the early development of Wild Mint Nipiy, an Indigenous-led beverage created by Dragonfly Spirit CreeAtions and Rig Hand Distillery. By creating space to test, refine, and integrate the concept within live event environments, the idea moved from vision to launch, resulting in the successful release of its first Nipiy flavour, with additional flavours now in development.

This story reflects how Explore Edmonton's approach to procurement and programming can serve as a catalyst for emerging Indigenous entrepreneurs, helping transform ideas into market-ready products that contribute to a more inclusive and experience-led visitor economy.



TOURISM MASTER PLAN: REACHING THE 5-YEAR MILESTONE

Explore Edmonton exists to grow a thriving visitor economy and improve the quality of life for residents by developing experiences and partnerships that make Edmonton a destination of choice. Introduced in 2020, the Tourism Master Plan (TMP) is the Edmonton region's 10-year roadmap to guide investment and cultivate the city's tourism ecosystem.

Created during a period of global uncertainty, the TMP focuses on strengthening local tourism to create jobs, raise awareness of Edmonton's unique offerings, and drive shared prosperity across the city and region.

In 2025, the TMP hit its five-year milestone marking a time to reflect on progress, assess the mid-term outcomes, and renew shared accountability. The plan continues to guide year-round experience development, and a community-informed update will be shared with tourism partners and the City of Edmonton in early 2026.

THE NORTHERN SKY CORRIDOR

Extending more than 1,500 kilometres, the Northern Sky Corridor invites visitors on an interconnected journey of Canada's majestic northern communities. Developed and funded in partnership with Destination Canada, the strategy positions Edmonton as a gateway to Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories while highlighting Indigenous heritage, art, and cultural experiences across Northern Canada.

The corridor is focused on developing export-ready tourism products and itineraries that attract international travellers and strengthen the visitor experience across the North. It reflects the Tourism Master Plan's emphasis on regional collaboration, long-term investment, and sustainable growth.

The Northern Sky Corridor strategy and implementation plan were shaped through research and engagement with more than 200 tourism partners within the corridor area. Guided by Indigenous leadership, community well-being, and environmental stewardship, the plan outlines five strategic priorities and 55 targeted initiatives for the next decade. An overview was shared with stakeholders through an online webinar, and in 2026 a Destination Stewardship Council will begin setting near-term actions to guide implementation, supported by a complementary investment plan developed alongside the strategy.

SCANDINAVE SPA ANNOUNCES NEW LOCATION IN EDMONTON

Canadian wellness brand Scandinave Spa announced its first Alberta location in Edmonton, set to open in 2028. The city was selected for its blend of natural beauty and urban accessibility. Thoughtfully positioned along the North Saskatchewan River Valley, the spa will preserve and enhance the surrounding landscape while introducing a landmark, year-round wellness experience for visitors and residents.

Over its first 10 years of operation, the development is projected to generate about **\$121 million in total economic impact**, support **330 temporary jobs** and **52 permanent full-time positions**, and contribute more than **\$18 million in federal, provincial, and municipal tax revenue** to support public services and infrastructure.

Scandinave Spa's arrival in Edmonton marks a major milestone for Alberta's wellness tourism sector, a signature attraction supporting long-term growth and international visibility in the region's visitor economy.

This investment signals to the global marketplace that Edmonton is a destination for world-class attractions. Supported by Travel Alberta, the Government of Alberta, Edmonton Global, and Explore Edmonton, the project reflects the strength of partnership-driven destination development.



"Bringing Scandinave Spa to Edmonton is a natural fit with our vision to create unforgettable wellness experiences in iconic destinations. We're proud to be part of Alberta's tourism future and to offer Edmontonians a unique way to unwind, year-round."

— Steve Arsenault, President and CEO, Scandinave Group

"Having played for the Oilers in the 90s, Edmonton holds a special place in my heart. I'm thrilled to see Scandinave Spa become part of the City's vibrant future. For me, this project is more than just a development. It's a way to give back to the community and help position Edmonton as a premier wellness destination."

— Vincent Damphousse, Co-founder and Executive Chairman of the Board, Scandinave Group



INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT: SHARING EXPERTISE & SHAPING EXPERIENCES

Explore Edmonton plays a leading role in developing the tourism industry by cultivating new products, strengthening business capacity, and shaping the conditions for long-term sector growth. By sharing industry expertise, facilitating meaningful connections and network growth opportunities, and offering hands-on coaching, we help local experience operators transform ideas into market-ready offerings tailored for their businesses and audiences.

In 2025, we supported **27 local businesses** to create market-ready experiences. Highlights include:

- Toonie Tours – walking or biking tours of Edmonton
- Dragon Food Tours – guided culinary and culture tours of Chinatown in Edmonton
- Edmonton Valley Zoo's North to North: From the Taiga to the Boreal immersive summer experience
- Chef Shane Chartrand's Paperbirch Dinner Series – after-hours Indigenous-led fine dining at the Old Strathcona Farmers Market
- ClimbYEG's "Try It" experience – ice climbing for beginners programming
- The Olfactory Garden – natural beauty and perfumery workshop at the University of Alberta's Botanic Garden
- The Elevated Moonbike Experience at Rural Rivers - ultra-light, electric snow bike adventures enhanced with new equipment and site upgrades, with accommodations expansion to follow

"We would like to thank you and your team for taking time out of a very busy week to trial a few of the Garden's experiences, especially our new Olfactory Garden + High Tea and Wild Mushroom Walks. Your participation and feedback are (as always) so valuable to us as we work towards becoming an export-ready and invaluable part of the Edmonton and regional tourism ecosystem. We want our experiences to be unique and memory-making, and your insights and support are indispensable to us. We couldn't do it without you."

– Kerry at the University of Alberta's Botanic Garden

We launched the second cohort of the READI Agritourism and Culinary Experience Coaching program through the Culinary Tourism Alliance of Canada, and Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC), in partnership with Strathcona County. The program supported eight finalists in refining their visitor experiences, strengthening business readiness, and positioning their products for long-term success. All eight participants successfully graduated in December 2025, contributing to a stronger, more diverse and competitive tourism ecosystem for the Edmonton region.

READI Agritourism and Culinary Experience Graduates

- Prairie Gardens
- Old Red Barn
- Rosy Farms
- Old Strathcona Farmers Market
- Hawke Prohibition Distilleries
- Super Amigos
- Lamberry Ranch
- Chinatown Transformation Collaborative Society





"It is great when a vision and plan can start to have life and come alive. The Rosy Farm team believes in our tiny home project extensively, and we appreciate the support and affirmation that the Explore Edmonton team has provided. It has been a positive experience where we feel the support of the community. I want to extend a huge and heartfelt thank you to the Explore Edmonton team: for your letter of support but also for the chance to share our vision and dream, and for you to see it the way we do. In addition, your thoughtful edits to our business plan have added incredible value to our overall submission."

Your positivity, expertise, and the time you dedicated to helping us truly mean so much. This collaboration strengthens our vision and brings us closer to showcasing the unique experiences Rosy Farms offers to visitors. I know we will create something great and have you both as our guests in the future at our accommodations."

We deeply appreciate your partnership and look forward to continuing to work together to promote authentic, local tourism."

— Rosy Farms



At home and on the world stage, we extended our impact beyond one-on-one coaching by bringing the Edmonton perspective into the spaces where the future of tourism is shaped.

Industry Development Highlights

- **Eric Remagni, Destination Development Specialist**, presented on elevating culinary tourism at the **Strathcona County Tourism Summit**, alongside local artisan **Antoine Lavoie** of **Delavoye Chocolate Maker**.
- **Shannon McEwen, Indigenous Tourism Development Specialist**, co-hosted an Indigenous Entrepreneur Workshop and supported **Cando's Indigenous Tourism Panel**.
- **James Leppan, Director, Destination Strategy**, co-instructed a **Certified Destination Management Executive (CDME)** elective with **Ottawa Tourism** and **Clarity of Place** while in Chicago for **Destinations International's Annual Conference**.
- We hosted a panel at the **Destinations International Annual Conference in Chicago** with **Meet Minneapolis**, featuring **Melissa Radu, Executive Director, Destination Stewardship**, and **Dusty LeGrande** on *"Centering Indigenous Voices: Building Authentic and Inclusive Tourism Strategies."*
- We launched two new in-person workshops: **Destination Canada's "Traveller Segmentation Workshop"** at the **Edmonton Convention Centre**, and **"Designing Transformative Tourism Experiences"** at the **Northern Alberta Tourism Summit (Grande Prairie)**.
- We supported the **City of Edmonton's Winter Solstice Gathering** and showcased partners **Nathan Rainychief**, **Chef Shane Chartrand**, and **Dusty LeGrande** with **Mobilize Waskawewin**.
- We surpassed our industry development training goal, reaching **380 participants** against a **target of 175**.



WALKING OUR INDIGENOUS TOURISM STRATEGY FORWARD, TOGETHER

Created as a partnership initiative flowing directly from Walking Forward Together, Edmonton's Indigenous tourism development strategy, Explore Edmonton's Indigenous Advisory Circle provides trusted guidance on advancing economic reconciliation and cultural learning, ensuring tourism growth is authentic and Indigenous-led.

Now two years into the strategy's implementation, the Advisory Circle continues to advance its core principles: relationships, storytelling, empowerment, shared leadership, and gathering. The Advisory Circle helps create resources, builds networks among Indigenous businesses, and integrates Indigenous perspectives across Edmonton's tourism offerings.

Over the past year, the Advisory Circle supported Explore Edmonton in engaging the University of Alberta's Botanic Garden on its Indigenous Gardens, partnering with the Edmonton Elks for their Indigenous Feature Day, and collaborating with Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, Indigenous Tourism Alberta, and Travel Alberta in preparing for the International Indigenous Tourism Conference, held in Edmonton from February 17–19, 2026.

Through this partnership, Indigenous-led experiences are being brought to the forefront of Edmonton's visitor economy, recognizing Indigenous tourism businesses not only as vital economic drivers but as meaningful expressions of culture, history, and storytelling that strengthen both the local economy and our shared understanding of Indigenous cultures.

BUILDING AN UNFORGETTABLE VISITOR EXPERIENCE IN EDMONTON

The visitor experience is shaped by thousands of small moments across the full journey. In 2025, we focused on creating moments of welcome and discovery that turn first impressions into lasting connections.



At **Edmonton International Airport**, we brought Edmonton's playful spirit to life with activations tied to the Oilers Playoffs and the launch of KDays. From life-sized air hockey to more than 500 pancakes served at arrivals, we set the tone for a city that delights in the unexpected and invites people to be part of the experience.



During KDays, that energy continued through piloting a free digital **Check-In Pass**, encouraging attendees to explore more of the event and connect in new ways. Guests could use the pass at 50 activations and booths across the grounds, including the CFR Booth, Indigenous Experience, Sensory Room, Volunteer Centre, and Pride Market. The program drew 1,433 sign-ups and generated 21,565 onsite check-ins, with attendees redeeming 377 prizes through their participation.



We also refreshed the **YEG Expert program**, free online and in-person training that equips visitor-facing staff across tourism, hospitality, and civic services to confidently share Edmonton's story. By year end, 71 new YEG Experts joined a growing network of ambassadors supporting visitors at every step of their Edmonton experience.



Building an unforgettable visitor experience is a shared effort across the visitor economy. In 2025, Explore Edmonton introduced the **Visitor Experience Roadmap**, a multi-year strategy to grow awareness, deepen engagement, and strengthen partnerships in support of exceptional, year-round experiences. We plan to share this roadmap with partners and the community in early 2026.

INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN TRAVEL TRADE

Bringing the world to Edmonton requires long-term relationships with international partners, and in 2025, those partnerships delivered impactful results while elevating Edmonton's profile on the international stage.



10 Years with KLM

We celebrated 10 years of KLM's non-stop Amsterdam to Edmonton service, connecting Edmonton to over 150 global destinations through KLM's hub. In peak summer 2025, service increased from five to six flights per week, and route capacity rose by more than 20 percent. This route has successfully demonstrated continuous growth in load factor and capacity.



All Aboard Rocky Mountaineer

At Rendez-Vous Canada 2024, the Explore Edmonton team strengthened key industry relationships while showcasing our vibrant city. The effort paid off, with Rocky Mountaineer, a train service celebrated for its daylight journeys through Western Canada's most spectacular scenery, re-introduced Edmonton into its core itineraries. The partnership has since inspired new multi-night tour packages featuring Edmonton for the 2026 season.



Global Spotlight on Stewardship

Explore Edmonton's destination development leadership also gained international visibility through a Tourism Japan feature and interview with Melissa Radu, Executive Director, Destination Stewardship, Destination Development & Marketing, spotlighting our place-stewardship approach grounded in community engagement, Indigenous partnership, equity-focused procurement, and a broader definition of success that includes resident, social, and environmental impact.

"For more than 35 years, Rocky Mountaineer has welcomed over two million guests to our journeys through the Canadian Rockies. Our experience at Rendez-Vous Canada 2024 in Edmonton inspired us to develop new multi-night touring packages that showcase the city before and after our rail journeys—confident they will delight our global guests. We are excited to feature Edmonton as a destination in our 2026 season, highlighted through our showcase route, Passage to the Peaks."

— Ashley Wright, Vice President, Product and Revenue Management, Rocky Mountaineer

03

**ELEVATING
EDMONTON'S STORY**

ELEVATING EDMONTON'S STORY



As Edmonton's destination management and marketing organization, one of our greatest privileges is sharing the best of Edmonton – building pride, sparking curiosity, and driving real business to the tourism partners who bring Edmonton to life. We tell Edmonton's story in many ways: through strategic campaigns that connect our signature events and experiences to clear reasons to visit; through newsletters that keep visitors and industry informed and involved; and through media relations that create the conditions for travel storytellers to experience Edmonton firsthand. We also use our platform to equip local tourism operators with tools, training, and resources that help strengthen their businesses and grow year-round.

The stories and data in this chapter reflect what strategic storytelling can do; immersing visitors, residents, event organizers, and travel media in the moments that define Edmonton and create a distinctive sense of place. Through digital campaigns and online discovery, we connect audiences to real Edmonton experiences that lead to longer stays, stronger bookings, and shared momentum for the visitor economy.



LONELY PLANET NAMES EDMONTON A 'BEST IN TRAVEL' TOP 10 CITY

At the end of 2024, Lonely Planet named Edmonton a Top 10 City and a Top 30 must-visit destination worldwide on its 2025 'Best in Travel' list, placing our city alongside some of the most compelling places on earth. The recognition elevated Edmonton's global profile and sparked pride at home, as residents saw their city celebrated on the world stage.



Explore Edmonton brought this moment to life, running a multi-channel campaign from May to October, aligned with major city moments – from the surge of energy during the Stanley Cup Playoffs in June to the excitement of iconic events like the Canadian Finals Rodeo in October – connecting global acclaim with real-time reasons to visit.

Creative advertising reached audiences across Canada and the United States through digital and out-of-home placements, social media, and creator-led storytelling. During the Stanley Cup Playoffs, sequential billboards thanked fans across Canada for cheering on the Oilers, then shifted to Lonely Planet creative reinforcing Edmonton's 'Best in Travel' Top 10 City ranking. The campaign then expanded into key U.S. markets, including Houston, with fall activations that paired Edmonton's 'Best in Travel' recognition with timely reasons to visit, like the Canadian Finals Rodeo.

Explore Edmonton's partners helped amplify the Lonely Planet recognition worldwide. Travel creators The Lost Two and Houston Hot Spots, along with partners including CFR, YEG Edmonton International Airport, and Edmonton's Best Hotels, extended the campaign through authentic, experience-led content and directed audiences to the "10 Reasons We're a Top 10 City" landing page.

Lonely Planet's recognition, and the campaign that followed, delivered more than visibility. It strengthened Edmonton's reputation in the global travel marketplace, generated meaningful attention for local experiences and businesses, and contributed to growing the city as a year-round destination. Equally, it reinforced civic pride, giving residents and industry partners a shared moment of validation as their city was celebrated by one of the world's most trusted travel authorities.

LONELY PLANET KEY STATS

43+ MILLION

people reached

1.83 MILLION

sessions on the "10 Reasons We're a Top 10 City" landing page

1.11 MILLION

views on the Lost Two + Houston Hot Spots Instagram Reels

Earned global travel media coverage through Lonely Planet

101

media mentions

473.5 MILLION

impressions

\$18 MILLION

in advertising value

As a defining achievement of 2025, this recognition sets the stage for what comes next. It signals Edmonton's continued rise as a destination of choice, supports long-term growth in the visitor economy, and affirms the city's place on the world stage for years to come.

OUR TIME: HARNESSING PLAYOFF ENERGY INTO GLOBAL RECOGNITION

As the world turned its attention to Edmonton during the NHL Playoffs, Explore Edmonton seized the moment to tell a bigger story about who we are and what it feels like to experience the city at its most electric. The *Our Time* campaign channelled playoff energy to showcase Edmonton globally, turning a major sporting event into a powerful expression of place.

Building on the success of the 2024 Believe campaign, refreshed creative rallied community pride and gave local businesses Oilers-themed giveaway materials, while extending the hype outside the city, including posters shipped to Ottawa and Florida for Oilers fans across the continent. Paid Meta and Google advertising ran May-June across Canada and key U.S. markets, with Florida billboards linking playoff excitement to Edmonton's Lonely Planet's 'Best in Travel' Top 10 City recognition.

Partnerships helped power the campaign on the ground and online. Local businesses, Edmonton recreation centres, and Edmonton public libraries became "Hype Hubs," and facilitated the distribution of more than 8,000 posters across the city. Co-branded campaign creative and social content with the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Oilers, featuring Oilers mascot Hunter and community partners, amplified the energy citywide.

The campaign quickly travelled. A partnership with @Canada shared an Edmonton itinerary to millions, while social content sparked engagement across the country and around the world. One social post from Explore Edmonton's Facebook page highlighting billboard placements across Canada drove nearly 25,000 clicks and led to CTV coverage, featuring Michele Fowler, Interim Marketing Accounts Director at Explore Edmonton.



OUR TIME DEMONSTRATED HOW A SHARED CULTURAL MOMENT CAN SPARK CONNECTION AND SHINE A SPOTLIGHT ON EDMONTON'S VIBRANT SPORTS COMMUNITY.

Fast Facts

- **8000+ posters distributed** to Edmonton recreation centres, public libraries, and local businesses
- **196,512 video plays** on Meta
- **420K views, 25K+ interactions, 2.7K+ shares** on a partner-led reel featuring Oilers mascot Hunter
- **86,891 Instagram Story** views
- **24,896 clicks** on "Thanks for cheering us on" billboard-themed social post
- **98,353 engagements** and **2,180,596 impressions** overall
- Edmonton itinerary shared with **@Canada's 2.4M followers**
- **4 Florida billboards** placed near playoff venues
- **1,074,114** estimated out-of-home views
- **89,675 impressions** on CTV Morning Live Edmonton
- **10,455,313 impressions** on CTV National





WELCOME TO CANADA'S FESTIVAL CITY!

Edmonton earns its nickname as “Canada’s Festival City” with over 60 festivals that keep the calendar buzzing year-round, giving residents and visitors something to look forward to in every season.

Across the city, festivals put Edmonton’s talented arts and culture community centerstage, drawing international attention. There’s something for everyone from opera and theatre, circus and comedy, visual and immersive arts, filmmakers to literary legends, multi-genre music festivals to multicultural celebrations, and exquisite culinary experiences that leave you wanting more. Pride festivities enliven the city with vibrant performances and art that celebrate the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, while winter festivals turn cold nights into spirited journeys through ice castles and illuminated art installations in the river valley.

Behind it all are the producers, artists, cultural leaders, volunteers, and venue partners who transform everyday spaces into stages and galleries, creating moments that bring people together and define Edmonton as a place where art, culture, and community belong and thrive.

In 2025, we showcased Edmonton’s year-round festival lineup through our Best in Fests campaign, inviting travellers to explore what was on, by season, through our Festival City landing page. The campaign was promoted through digital and social advertising, supported by seasonal out-of-home billboards in neighbouring provinces.

Paired with Edmonton’s Lonely Planet ‘Best in Travel’ 2025 recognition, Best in Fests helped position Edmonton as a must-visit destination for festival lovers.

Best in Fests Results

- Generated **2+ million** paid visits to **exploreedmonton.com** and drove **100K+** clicks to partner websites
- Delivered **1.6 million** paid social impressions featuring Edmonton festivals
- Added **1+ million** impressions through seasonal out-of-home billboards



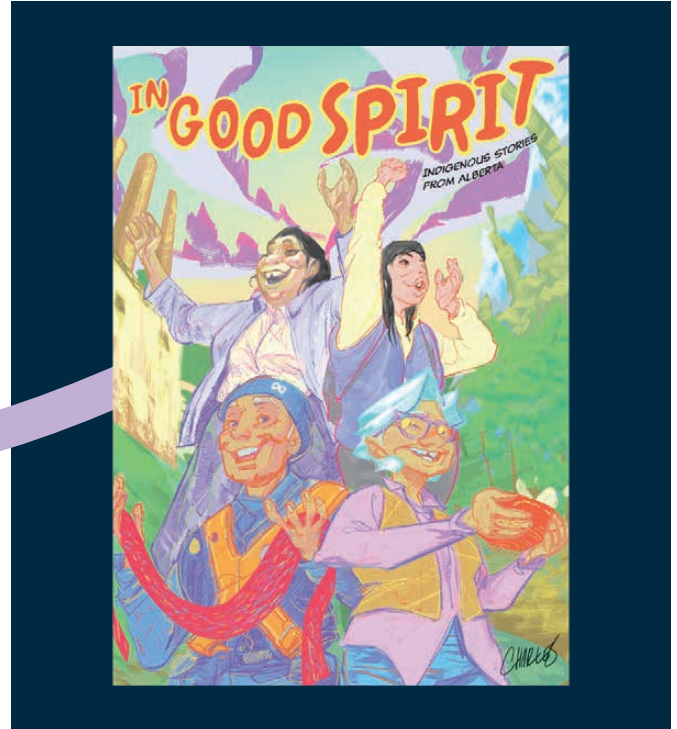
IN GOOD SPIRIT: ILLUSTRATING THE HUMOUR & WARMTH OF INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES

The In Good Spirit campaign captured nationwide attention, reaching millions of Canadians while earning Explore Edmonton and partners Indigenous Tourism Alberta, Tourism Calgary, and Globe Content Studio an Online Media Marketing Advertising (OMMA) Award for Content Marketing: Single Execution.

The campaign brought a fresh, collaborative spirit to sharing Edmonton and Alberta based Indigenous tourism experiences. At the heart of the campaign is a comic and audio series illustrated by Edmonton-based Indigenous artist Kyle Charles, whose work spans comics, film and television to animation, video games, and 3D immersive media. The series tells the stories of four Alberta-based Indigenous tourism operators, each voicing their own experiences in the audio companion. It highlights the humour, warmth, and authenticity of the operators as they share their cultures, traditions, and lands with locals and visitors alike.

Distributed digitally and through cafés, comic shops, newspapers, and Toronto Fan Expo wild postings, the campaign generated more than 10.2 million impressions, 37,000 engagements, and over 200 hours of reading.

At its core are the people behind these experiences – whose passion, creativity, and knowledge make each encounter memorable and invite audiences to connect more deeply with Indigenous cultures and communities.



Fast Facts

- **10.29M** Canadians reached
- **3,500** printed comic books distributed across Toronto's comic community
- **200+ hours** spent on-site exploring full comics
- **688** audio story listens
- Local and national media coverage through interviews with CBC and Global Edmonton, resulting in:
 - **27,214,261** total impressions
 - **\$1,115,853** total advertising value equivalency

"Alberta's Indigenous tourism experiences get the superhero treatment"

– Campaign Canada

"Comic series features stories of Indigenous travel in Alberta"

– Media in Canada

HER GAME, YOUR BREAKAWAY

Explore Edmonton turned two headline women's hockey events into a winter getaway invitation, pairing tickets with trip ideas that encouraged visitors to stay longer and experience the city at its most festive. The campaign played up the momentum of the Canada–U.S. Rivalry Series on December 10 and 13 and a PWHL Takeover Tour stop on December 27, featuring the Vancouver Goldeneyes and Minnesota Frost.

A dedicated landing page encouraged visitors to plan a trip around the games, book stays with *Edmonton's Best Hotels*, and take advantage of their 1-2-3 Deals, while spotlighting seasonal attractions and events like Glow, the Edmonton Christmas Market, and the Edmonton Ice Castles. To enhance trip planning, we also launched a custom GPT experience to help visitors build an itinerary around the games. Amplified across TikTok, Meta, YouTube, Reddit, and Netflix Pause Ads, the campaign targeted markets across Alberta (80 km+ outside Edmonton) and Greater Vancouver.

Major sporting events act as catalysts for expanded travel, drawing visitors to Edmonton where they can build a full winter adventure around the games.



Fast Facts

- **6,000,000+** impressions
- **30,868** sessions to the campaign landing page
- **29,456** unique users
- **1,418** outbound ticket-purchase clicks
- **5+** platforms leveraged (TikTok, Meta, YouTube, Reddit, Netflix Pause Ads)
- **2** target regions: Alberta (80 km+ outside Edmonton) and Greater Vancouver



ZIYAH THE EXPLORER (ZTE)

To build civic pride and spark traveller excitement, Explore Edmonton launched Ziyah The Explorer (ZTE), a new video series featuring Ziyah Karmali, Manager, Media Relations & Storytelling, as the city's adventure ambassador. Ziyah takes audiences on an epic journey through Edmonton's hidden gems, signature attractions, and vibrant culture and events.

Across more than 23 episodes and over 100,000 views and shares, ZTE has captured the sights, sounds, and flavours that make Edmonton a distinctive, must-visit destination. From the electric atmosphere during the Oilers Playoffs to unforgettable culinary moments at MIMI and Atrium at Sabor; from thrill-seeking rides at KDays to the grit and heart-pounding action of the Canadian Finals Rodeo, ZTE showcases the best of Edmonton.

Each episode spotlights the changemakers, entrepreneurs, and artists whose work shapes one-of-a-kind, locally rooted experiences, helping to put Edmonton on the map.



Ziyah The Explorer can be found on LinkedIn and Instagram using #ZiyahTheExplorer or @ZiyahKarmali, as well as on Explore Edmonton's YouTube channel and the monthly feature at [ExploreEdmonton.com/ziyah-the-explorer](https://exploreedmonton.com/ziyah-the-explorer).

EDMONTON WELCOMES: EVERGREEN CAMPAIGN CREATION

In partnership with the City of Edmonton, Explore Edmonton created Edmonton Welcomes, an evergreen campaign that gives major events a clear, consistent public-facing identity while elevating brand visibility for Explore Edmonton, the City, and the events themselves.

Designed with bold, vibrant creative to stand out across platforms, the campaign helps residents connect the dots between the events they're excited to attend, and the collective work behind bringing them here. Edmonton Welcomes has been successfully activated across high-profile sporting events including Rugby Test Matches, FIBA 3x3, the Canadian Finals Rodeo, Volleyball Nationals, the PWHL Takeover Tour, and the Hockey Canada Rivalry Series.



EDMONTON EARNS THE WORLD'S ATTENTION

Explore Edmonton creates the conditions for international visibility, but the most meaningful stories are authored by locals, visitors, and journalists experiencing Edmonton firsthand.

In 2025, we strengthened Edmonton's presence on the local, national, and global stage. Through thoughtful itineraries and targeted relationship-building, we connected travel writers and content creators with experiences that define the city and surrounding region – from signature hotels and cultural venues to unforgettable culinary moments and Indigenous-led experiences. The result was reputation-building storytelling that resonated beyond a single trip, elevating Edmonton as a must-visit destination.



2025 EARNED MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

101 TOTAL MENTIONS

473.5 MILLION IMPRESSIONS

\$18 MILLION IN AD VALUE

Lonely Planet coverage delivered significant international visibility for Edmonton and the region

National Geographic: Indigenous tourism is thriving in Canada—here's why

The story highlighted distinctive Indigenous experiences across the country, including in Edmonton and across Alberta, and featured insight from Explore Edmonton's Indigenous Tourism Development Specialist, Shannon McEwen. "Globally, what sets us apart is our [diversity]. Depending on what province you're in, what territory, the Indigenous tourism experience is going to be completely different" and emphasized Indigenous tourism as "self-determination and empowerment," a way for communities to control how their culture and land are presented, serving as a platform for capacity building and skills development.

AFAR: The Perfect 4-Day Travel Itinerary in Alberta, Canada

A Tier 1 U.S. experiential travel publication featured Edmonton culinary and cultural attraction highlights within an Alberta itinerary, reaching 694,315 unique monthly online visitors.

GO Media

Explore Edmonton hosted 60 journalists in Edmonton with a reception at Fairmont Hotel Macdonald and curated dine-arounds at five signature restaurants, showcasing the city's hospitality, culinary talent, and culture. During core programming, Explore Edmonton held 12 targeted one-on-one media meetings and joined the "Resilience through Vision" panel, reinforcing Edmonton's leadership and relevance within Alberta's tourism narrative.



"Our Alberta press tour has come to an end, and I wanted to thank you for providing such wonderful experiences to us. Juliane Reichert thoroughly enjoyed it, and so did I. There are so many things worth writing about, and I cannot wait to see what will come out of this trip regarding media coverage.

The experiences we had with Monique and at Metis Crossing will stay with us forever, and Jo Anne from SPILT was such a delight. I'm still dreaming of her alcohol-free cocktail creations. It was so inspiring to meet Shane Chartrand at Paperbirch and talk to him about his story before taking a relaxed stroll through Strathcona Market. Reconnecting with chef Winnie at Fu's Repair shop, who I met last year in Calgary for the first time, was great not to mention what a wonderful space Fu's is. And the raw elk and Bannock at Bernadette's was absolutely delicious.

I can clearly say we have fallen in love with Edmonton, its surrounding area and people, and I can't wait to come back (my husband, son and I will actually visit again next week. I will keep you updated on any future articles that will be published). Again, thank you so much on behalf of Juliane, as well! Let me know if you need anything else from me, and let's keep in touch."

— Julia Kleininger, Mesmarketing

Local & National Coverage

Through local earned media, we elevate Edmonton's story at home, driving awareness and excitement for Edmonton's year-round events and experiences.

2025 Earned Local Media Coverage Stats

- **931M+** estimated total impressions/value delivered through local and national earned media in 2025
- **\$258.2M+** estimated total Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE) generated
- **1,129** total earned media coverage hits tied to Edmonton moments and experiences
- **Major coverage drivers:**
 - **KDays:** 530 coverage hits
 - **Canadian Finals Rodeo:** 290 coverage hits
 - **Farmfair International:** 135 coverage hits
 - **The Amazing Race Canada:** 174 coverage hits
- **Recurring broadcast presence:** segments on **CHED** and **Global News** (e.g., Ice Wall, PWHL, Volleyball Canada, Hydrogen Convention, KDays, CFR)
- **Top placements included:** Global News, CTV News Channel, CBC Sports, CBC Radio-Canada, Edmonton Journal, CityNews 660 (CFFR), Daily Hive Edmonton

STORIES BEHIND THE NUMBERS

676,670 REFERRALS

ExploreEdmonton.com content drove audiences to tourism partner websites

56% INCREASE

in social media engagement year-over-year across all social channels

63.4 MILLION

potential visitors reached through organic Google search

534,753+ FOLLOWERS

reached through social media content across all channels

6.3 MILLION SESSIONS

hosted across all Explore Edmonton website properties

8.8K+ NEW FOLLOWERS

were gained across all social channels

29.2 MILLION+ VIDEO VIEWS

generated by Explore Edmonton video content across all brands

04

A TOP-TIER SPORTS CITY

A TOP-TIER SPORTS CITY



IN EDMONTON, GAME CHANGERS LIVE HERE, AND THEY COME HERE TO PLAY.

Our sports story is built on legends, beginning with the Edmonton Grads, who set a global standard in women's basketball with 18 Canadian titles and 10 unofficial world championships between 1915 and 1940. That legacy continues through the Oilers dynasty years and the Edmonton Elks' record five straight Grey Cup wins in the 70s and 80s, and as elite athletes like Connor McDavid and Alphonso Davies keep Edmonton in the national and global spotlight.

Backed by premier venues like Rogers Place and Commonwealth Stadium, and a hosting resume that spans the World Athletics Championships, FIFA Women's World Cup, and the NHL Playoffs, Edmonton is made for major sport. It's with this platform that we champion a more inclusive future for sport, welcoming and supporting all athletes.

INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED SPORTS HOSTING CITY

In 2025, Edmonton ranked #22 in the world and #1 in Canada on the Burson Global Sports Cities Index, placing our city among the world's leading sport destinations. During the year, Explore Edmonton supported and hosted 52 sport and cultural events, generating over \$215 million in total economic impact. Earning the Burson ranking reinforces what fans, partners, and event organizers already know: Edmonton delivers world-class events and keeps raising the standard.

At the core of this work is a one-stop, full-service approach delivered by Explore Edmonton in partnership with the City of Edmonton. By working as an integrated partner, we simplify production and support event delivery from start to finish, making it easier for rights holders and organizers to succeed. Using our in-house marketing and creative services, we build awareness, generate excitement, and help get the word out. We also activate the city, connecting organizers with local businesses and partners to create bold, citywide moments that elevate the event experience and rally visitors and residents around the occasion.



**IN COLLABORATION WITH OUR INDUSTRY
PARTNERS, WE HELP EDMONTON EARN ITS
PLACE AMONG THE WORLD'S TOP SPORT
CITIES AND BUILD A LEGACY THAT LASTS
FOR GENERATIONS.**





2025 VOLLEYBALL CANADA YOUTH NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Edmonton's ability to host major sport was on full display during the 2025 Volleyball Canada National Championships at the Edmonton EXPO Centre, delivering the largest volleyball tournament in Canadian history.

Over 16 consecutive days, Edmonton welcomed 1,414 teams and 19,883 athletes from across Canada, drew 31,813 spectators, drove demand for an estimated 49,182 hotel room nights, and generated \$59.8 million in total economic impact.

Beyond the competition, the Championships celebrated excellence and inclusion through a U18 Farewell Party and a Medal Celebration honouring Canada's women's beach volleyball Olympic silver medalists and women's Paralympic volleyball bronze medalists.

Fast Facts

- **\$59.8 million** in total economic impact generated
- **49,182** hotel room nights supported
- **31,813** spectators welcomed
- **19,883** athletes hosted from across Canada

THESE MOMENTS REINFORCE EDMONTON'S REPUTATION AS A PREMIER HOST CITY WHERE HIGH-PERFORMANCE SPORT, ATHLETE RECOGNITION, AND COMMUNITY CELEBRATION COME TOGETHER AT SCALE.

2025 FIBA 3X3 WORLD TOUR & WOMEN'S SERIES

From July 31 to August 3, the Ice Palace at West Edmonton Mall was transformed into a one-of-a-kind basketball court, hosting a stop on the global 2025 FIBA 3x3 World Tour & Women's Series.

Locals and visitors alike watched the world's best 3x3 basketball players in the heart of one of North America's largest malls. Explore Edmonton helped bring the international series to our city, welcoming 21 teams from around the world, including 12 women's teams. The event captured the attention of more than 350,000 broadcast viewers worldwide, generated over 2,500 hotel room nights, and delivered \$6.5 million in total economic impact.

On the court, crowds were thrilled by Canada's top-ranked women's 3x3 basketball team and their undefeated championship run, led by tournament MVP Paige Crozon. The weekend also celebrated Edmonton basketball star sisters, Katherine and Michelle Plouffe, who have been central to the Canadian Women's National Team's success. A special hometown honour paid tribute to three-time Olympian Michelle Plouffe and her lasting legacy as one of the city's own.



Off the court, FIBA 3x3 organizer Hoop City engaged the local community through a 3x3 Festival and distributed more than 600 basketballs to local youth. The event was another reminder of why the Edmonton Welcomes campaign continues to resonate, reinforcing the city's reputation as a vibrant, connected host where sport, culture, and community come together.



WOMEN IN SPORTS

A Proud Stage for Women's Professional Hockey: PWHL Takeover Tour

2025 was a breakout year for women's hockey in Edmonton, and the PWHL Takeover Tour proved it. Edmonton was thrilled to host one of nine neutral-site regular-season games on the PWHL Takeover Tour™ at Rogers Place on February 16, 2025.

As the Toronto Sceptres and Ottawa Charge took the ice, a sold-out crowd showed their support for women's hockey. Over 17,500 fans filled Rogers Place, generating 6,100 room nights, with more than half of attendees travelling from outside the region.

Explore Edmonton helped deliver a true host-city welcome. Through our "YEG <3 Hockey" campaign, we celebrated the future generation of female athletes and fostered community connection by distributing more than 1,000 friendship bracelets crafted by artists within the Indigenous Artist Market Collective (I.A.M.), giving fans an Edmonton-made keepsake to mark this milestone moment.

To build on the excitement of the PWHL's Edmonton takeover, Explore Edmonton, alongside Sport Edmonton and partners across the city and province, hosted a sold-out Women in Sport Breakfast Panel that brought 160 stakeholders and young athletes together to inspire one another and champion the growth of women's hockey.

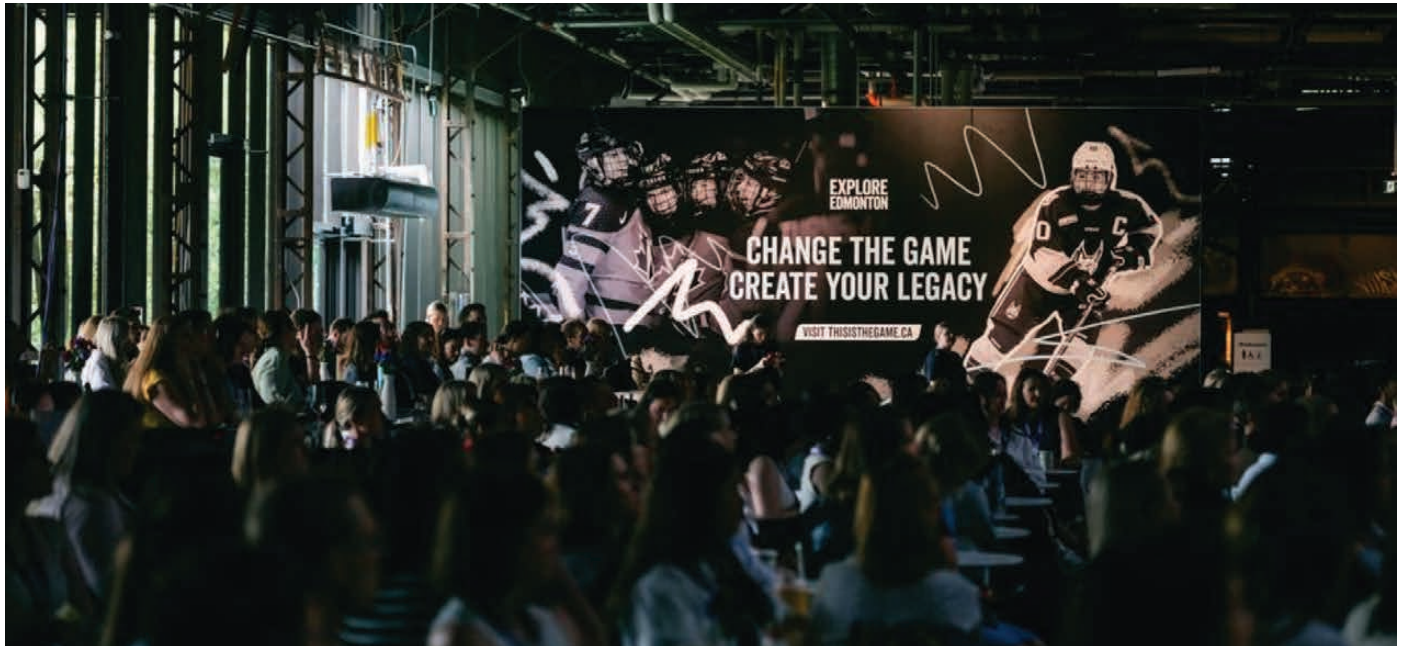
The Takeover Tour's return on December 27 brought PWHL's total economic impact to approximately \$16 million, reinforcing our readiness to support a future PWHL series.

That momentum carried into the Hockey Canada Rivalry Series, which brought women's hockey back to Rogers Place on December 10 and 13 and delivered a combined total economic impact of \$7.8 million. Coordinated city-wide activations, integrated marketing and media, and a consistent presence across digital and community touchpoints helped create a cohesive fan experience that celebrated elite women's hockey, while demonstrating Edmonton's ability to deliver nationally significant events through strong partnership and a shared commitment to women in sport.



Fast Facts

- **\$16 million** combined total economic impact from the PWHL Takeover Tour in Edmonton (Feb 16 & Dec 27, 2025)
- **17,500+** fans attended the PWHL Takeover Tour at Rogers Place (Feb 16, 2025)
- **6,100+** room nights generated from PWHL Takeover Tour, with 50%+ of attendees travelling from outside the region
- **\$7.8 million** combined total economic impact from the Hockey Canada Rivalry Series (Dec 10 & 13, 2025)
- **1,000+** "YEG <3 Hockey" friendship bracelets distributed (crafted by Indigenous Artist Market Collective, I.A.M.)



WOMEN IN SPORTS

espnW Summit Canada

Explore Edmonton's sports hosting goes beyond game night. We show up in the conversations shaping the future of women's sport in Canada.

At the espnW Summit Canada, we partnered with Knix on a purpose-driven activation that turned support into action. Instead of business cards, we handed out sports bras, an intentional reminder that equity in sport requires more than words. Edmonton Paralympian and bronze medalist Allison Lang added a vital perspective on a national panel, spotlighting how venues can better serve female fans and how sport spaces can be designed with women in mind.



These efforts built on Edmonton's 2025 momentum in women's hockey and other marquee events. Explore Edmonton doesn't just support elite events – we rally with partners to push the industry forward.

WORLD-CLASS SPORT VENUES

Edmonton's ability to host major sporting events starts with elite venues built for professional competition and the capacity to welcome thousands of fans.

Rogers Place, in the heart of ICE District, is a broadcast-ready arena that can host up to 20,000 guests, while Commonwealth Stadium is Canada's largest stadium, with seating for 56,400. Coronation Park Sports & Recreation Centre adds year-round advantage at home to North America's first indoor triathlon training centre, bringing a 50-metre pool, indoor track, and Category A UCI-certified velodrome under one roof. These state-of-the-art facilities deliver a premium game-day experience for fans and athletes.



Explore Edmonton 2025 Major Sports Events

- 2025 PWHL Takeover Tour Edmonton
- 2025 UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup
- 2025 World Junior Mixed Doubles Curling Championship
- 2025 Volleyball Canada National Championships (Super Nationals)
- 2025 North American Cup Series Sport Climbing
- 2025 Rugby Canada International Test Match - Canada vs. Belgium
- 2025 Edmonton Athletics Invitational
- 2025 Rugby Canada International Test Match - Canada vs. Spain
- 2025 FIBA 3X3 World Tour and Women's Series
- 2025 Hockey Canada Rivalry Series

Explore Edmonton Secured Sports Events 2026–2027

- 2026 Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL) Takeover Tour
- 2026 National Lacrosse League (NLL) UnBOXed Series
- 2026 Canadian Football League Combine
- 2026 Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) Women's Open
- 2026 Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) Men's Volleyball Championships
- 2026 Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) Men's Soccer Championships
- 2026 Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) Cross Country National Championships
- 2026 Canada Soccer Men's National Team Match
- 2026 Junior Karate National Championships
- 2026 Youth Boulder Western Regionals
- 2026 President's Cup
- 2027 International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) World Junior Championship
- 2027 Great Northern Concrete Toboggan Race
- 2027 Volleyball Canada National Championships (Super Nationals)

05

STEWARDING EDMONTON'S EVENT VENUES

STEWARDED EDMONTON'S EVENT VENUES



EXPLORE EDMONTON STEWARDS EDMONTON'S TWO LANDMARK EVENT VENUES, THE EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE AND EDMONTON EXPO CENTRE, ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF EDMONTON.

These award-winning facilities bring people together year-round for trade shows, conferences, live entertainment, sporting events, and community celebrations. In 2025, the Edmonton Convention Centre and the Edmonton EXPO Centre hosted more than 700 events, welcomed over 1.6 million guests, and generated \$110 million in total economic impact.

We continue to elevate the guest experience through engaging event environments and standout culinary programming, while advancing sustainable operations that keep Edmonton competitive as a leading meetings and conventions destination.

Through Edmonton's premier convening venues, we help shape how the city welcomes and delivers unforgettable experiences. These gathering places spark celebration, connection, and ideas that move industries forward. We're proud to attract and deliver events for Edmonton, and to build the relationships and reputation that keep bookings coming year after year.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF BUSINESS EVENTS

Explore Edmonton's role in stewarding the city's event venues and curating the full guest experience is a competitive advantage in attracting high-value business events.

"Thank you so much for all of the work you and your team does to offer (Event Development services) to conferences like ours. I wish every city offered this. You do amazing work."

– Lisa Sheehan, 2025 Canadian Association of Occupational Therapy (CAOT) Conference.

In 2025, that advantage delivered measurable results for the visitor economy.

- **Strong Year for Business Events:** Explore Edmonton attracted 84 business events, resulting in an estimated 68,000 room nights, and generated \$84 million in total economic impact.
- **Business Events Drive Spending:** Business events represent 40% of tourism spending, supporting hotels, convention centres, venues, event planners, transportation providers, and more.
- **Diverse Mix of Business Events:** Highlights ranged from the National Gathering of Elders and National Indigenous Cultural Expo to a peak convention period hosting the North American Society for Bat Research and The Wildlife Society at the same time.
- **Competing on the World Stage:** Our team represented Edmonton at key industry events such as Meet Week, (IMEX) Frankfurt and America, GO WEST® Live, and the Canadian Meetings & Events Expo (CMEE), building relationships that bring events to Edmonton.

Edmonton Ambassador Network Launch

Launched in June 2025, the Edmonton Ambassador Network (EAN) brings together local leaders, researchers, and innovators to champion Edmonton as a destination for national and international business events. The network supports Ambassadors in attracting conferences aligned with Edmonton's areas of excellence and showcasing the city's strengths in innovation and collaboration. More than 50 leaders from academia, business, and government joined the launch at Edmonton Convention Centre, and EAN has since grown to **35+ confirmed Ambassadors** across sectors such as health sciences, artificial intelligence, clean technology, and engineering.

Ambassadors are already helping identify and advance international conference opportunities, and EAN has been featured in presentations, familiarization tours, and local showcases. Next steps include a quarterly newsletter, an annual recognition program, targeted recruitment, and an Ambassador Toolkit with consistent messaging and practical resources to expand the network's reach and strengthen Edmonton's reputation for hosting exceptional large-scale events.



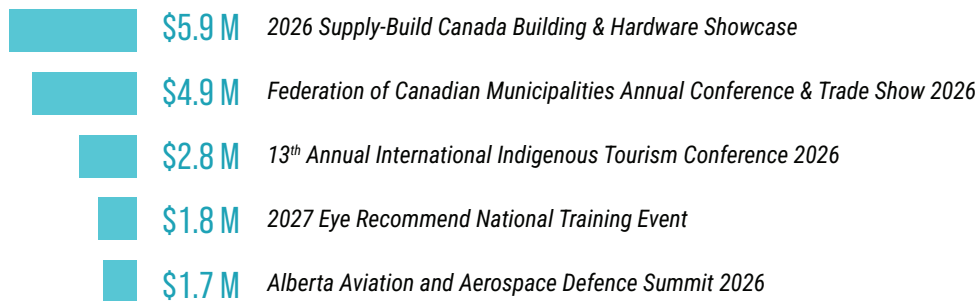
TOP 10 2025 BUSINESS EVENTS BY ECONOMIC IMPACT

(\$ Millions)



2026-2027 BUSINESS EVENTS BY ECONOMIC IMPACT

(\$ Millions)



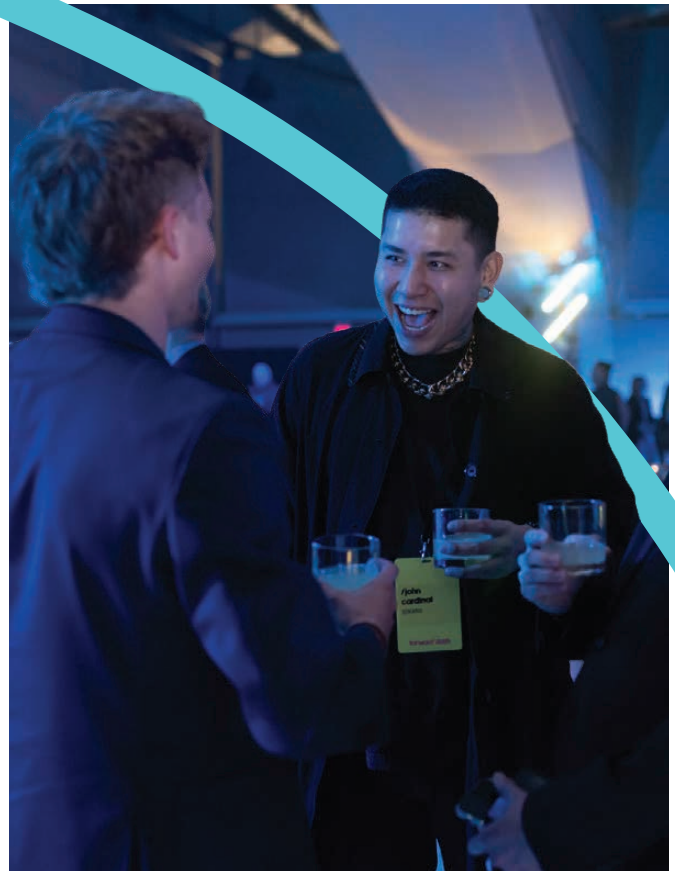


EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE

The Edmonton Convention Centre is an iconic downtown gathering place and community asset that reflects Edmonton at its best.

Through culinary excellence and inspiring, sustainable experiences, ECC elevates the city's profile as a conference and convention destination. In 2025, ECC's impact included:

- **High volume hosting:** 345 events and 302,020 guests.
- **Strong Economic Return:** \$58 million in total economic impact for Edmonton.
- **High satisfaction:** Client NPS 81 and Guest NPS 58.
- **Impact beyond ECC:** Supported the Art Gallery of Alberta by catering 107 events, serving 3,383 meals to 11,876 attendees, extending ECC's culinary and service excellence into a signature cultural venue.





Global Culinary Recognition

When you attend an event at Explore Edmonton's convening venues, culinary excellence is part of the experience.

In 2025, Edmonton Convention Centre Executive Pastry Chef Jason Wang represented Team Canada as the Artistic Bread Showpiece Candidate at the Americas Selection of the prestigious Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie (Bakery World Cup). Competing against teams from the United States, Brazil, Ecuador, and Mexico, Team Canada earned first place, securing a spot at the World Finals in Paris in 2026.

ECC's culinary leadership also extended into industry engagement and community impact. Sous Chef Francis Flores and Pastry Sous Chef Alexander Maryniak represented the Edmonton Convention Centre at the 2025 Hot Chefs & Cool Jazz Gala, an annual fundraiser supporting Culinary Team Canada on the road to the World Culinary Olympics, cooking alongside some of British Columbia's top chefs. Edmonton Convention Centre also participated in the BC Hospitality Foundation Collaboration Dinner, raising funds for mental health supports in the hospitality industry.

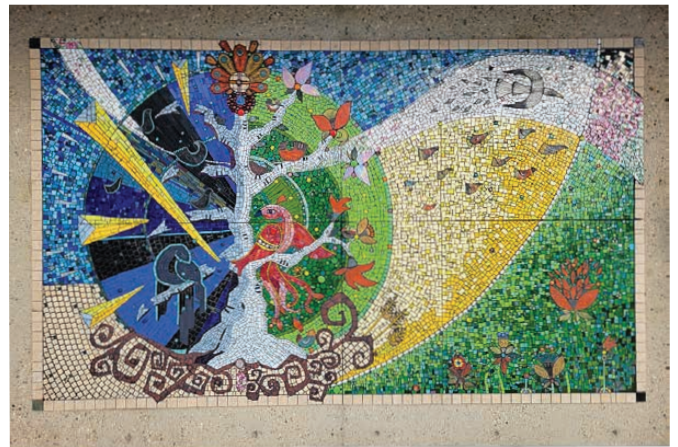
Landmark Venue for Local Arts

The Edmonton Convention Centre offers a space where Edmonton's arts and culture is part of the meetings and conventions experience. In 2025, ECC deepened that role by bringing landmark works and local voices into the guest journey, reinforcing the Centre as a civic space that reflects the city it serves.

A major highlight was the reinstallation of *Paskwamostos*, renowned artist Joe Fafard's 12-foot stainless steel bison sculpture. A striking presence at ECC, the work stands as a symbol of resilience and cultural legacy, connecting guests to the land, the city's history, and the wild spirit of the prairies.



ECC also introduced a new mosaic installation at the pedway level near the escalators and elevator: *Tree of Life* by Theodora Harasymiw. This piece emerges from the process of grief and honour of heritage, mourning cultural works destroyed by war while affirming the power of making as a way to rebuild.



Extending this commitment to local creative talent, ECC partnered with the Art Gallery of Alberta's Art Sales & Rental program to feature quarterly rotating works by Edmonton artists near the ECC Administration Office, creating an ongoing platform for local art and ensuring the Centre continues to feel distinctly, proudly Edmonton.

Mother Earth Essentials: Activating Jasper Avenue with Indigenous-Owned Retail

ECC's Welcome Centre storefront was revitalized in 2025 with Mother Earth Essentials, a Canadian, Indigenous-owned business offering natural body and beauty products rooted in traditional plant knowledge. Founded by Cree entrepreneur Carrie Armstrong of Hinton, Alberta, and guided by Elders and knowledge keepers, the brand brings an authentic local experience to delegates, residents, and downtown visitors.



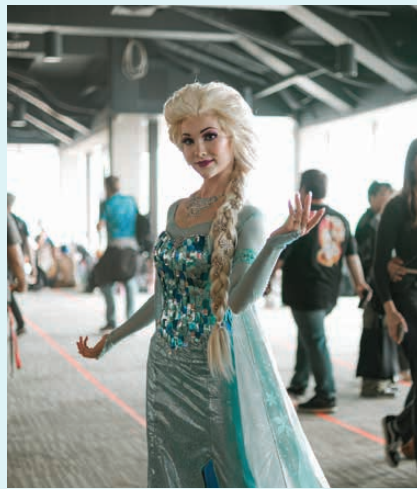
MEMORABLE AND IMPACTFUL EVENTS AT THE EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE

In 2025, the Edmonton Convention Centre welcomed a diverse calendar of events that showcased the venue's versatility, from fandom-fuelled festivals to high-value industry conventions and international conferences.



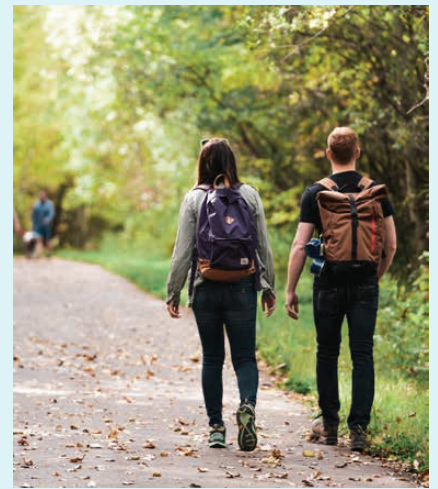
FYiEye Care Annual Convention June 20–22

A high-value partner event, FYiEye Care's annual convention brought attendees from across its network to Edmonton for three days of programming, connection, and innovation. Highlights included the launch of a first-of-its-kind mobile optometry unit designed to help underserved communities across Canada and the United States, paired with an iconic concert night in Hall D featuring The Trews and Shawn Desman.



Animethon August 8–10

Canada's longest-running anime convention delivered a record-breaking year, welcoming more than 15,000 attendees per day. Over three days, ECC transformed into a full-scale celebration of fandom, complete with cosplay, concerts, and an expanded, multi-headliner music festival. International performances by May'n, ClariS, JUNNA, and Asaka elevated Animethon's global profile, positioning both the event and Edmonton alongside major conventions worldwide.



The Wildlife Society Annual Conference October 5–8

Welcoming international delegates and leading wildlife professionals, The Wildlife Society's annual conference blended industry exchange with a nature-focused Edmonton experience. Delegates explored the river valley, capturing the city's natural beauty and local wildlife, an added layer of discovery that made the conference memorable for attendees and planners.

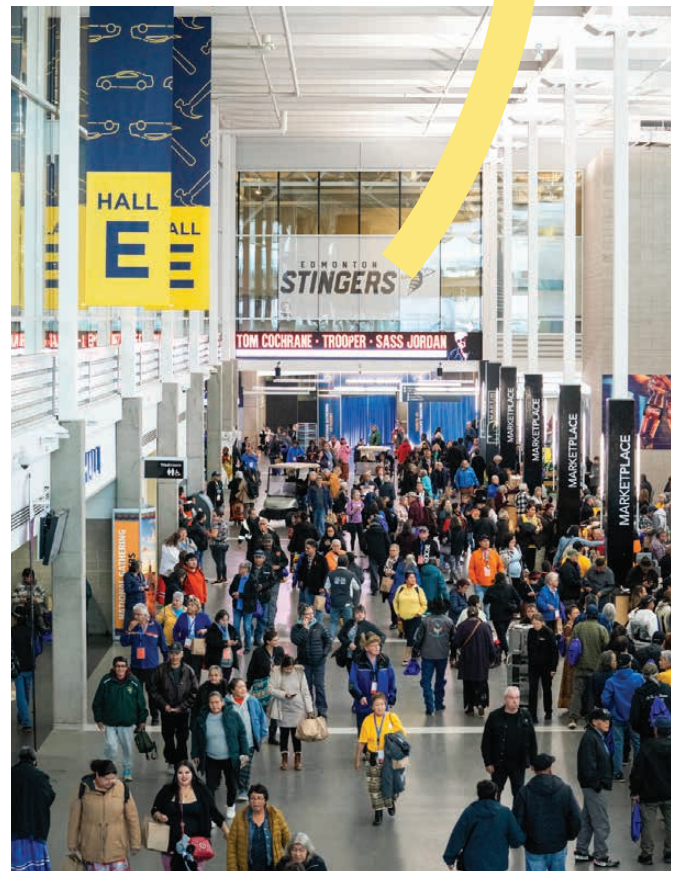


EDMONTON EXPO CENTRE

Edmonton EXPO Centre is Western Canada's largest exhibition venue at 522,000 square feet, purpose-built for major shows, conferences, live entertainment, sport, and community celebrations. The EXPO is also home to the Edmonton Stingers, Edmonton's professional basketball team.

In 2025, EXPO delivered a record-setting year:

- Welcomed **1.3 million** visitors.
- Achieved the **highest event revenue** in EXPO Centre history.
- Set all-time records in **food and beverage output, parking volume, and major event attendance**.
- Successfully hosted **316 events**, from national tournaments and sold-out festivals to the **National Gathering of Elders** and **National Indigenous Cultural Expo** and the **2025 Volleyball Canada Youth National Championships**.
- In addition to its regular graduation ceremonies throughout the year, EXPO delivered **four** emergency high school graduations for **29,000+ guests** on one week's notice.



Growing Entertainment & Programming

In 2025, EXPO welcomed 25 new concerts and family shows, contributing to over 190 event days and 52% utilization, a meaningful expansion in year-round activity.

The venue also launched the inaugural Rockin' Thunder Music Festival, drawing over 10,000 guests over two days, and delivered two sold-out SCREAM nights, Canada's largest indoor Halloween dance music festival, that welcomed 15,000 attendees per day.



WITH MORE VARIETY ON THE CALENDAR AND BIGGER NIGHTS IN THE ARENA, EXPO IS DRAWING FRESH AUDIENCES, BUILDING REPEAT VISITATION, AND GIVING VISITORS REASONS TO TIME THEIR TRIPS AROUND EDMONTON'S EVENT SEASON.

Coming Home: Voices of Elders

Edmonton EXPO Centre continued to serve as a platform for gatherings with lasting community significance. EXPO hosted seven days of Indigenous programming through the National Gathering of Elders and the National Indigenous Cultural Expo.

One of the longest meeting events EXPO has hosted, the venue became a connected space for Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, to be celebrated, heard, and honoured for their teachings, lived histories, and cultural traditions.



MEMORABLE AND IMPACTFUL EVENTS AT THE EDMONTON EXPO CENTRE

In 2025, the Edmonton EXPO Centre lived up to its reputation as Canada's largest exhibition venue, powering a variety of events spanning championship sport, immersive festivals, business and consumers conferences, holiday celebrations, and the country's largest gaming expo.



Volleyball Canada Youth National Championships May 8–25

The largest volleyball tournament in Canadian history came to Edmonton, and the Edmonton EXPO Centre delivered on every front. Across 16 days, the venue achieved an extraordinary operational lift: hosting 1,356 national-level teams, managing over 50,000 parked vehicles, and serving upwards of 20,000 coffees and smoothies to athletes, families, and fans from coast to coast. Pulling off an event of this scale is a championship win in its own right for the Explore Edmonton team and partners!



Game Con Canada June 13–15

Canada's largest gaming expo made its home at the Edmonton EXPO Centre for three days of interactive, large-scale fun. Spanning over 430,000 square feet, the event immersed tens of thousands of visitors in everything gaming culture has to offer, from exclusive product reveals and hands-on tech demos to video game tournaments, board game discoveries, and a buzzing vendor market. Celebrity panels and gaming sessions rounded out a weekend full of fandom fun.



Glow Christmas Festival December 4–31

Edmonton's beloved indoor holiday tradition returned with a brand-new theme: The Enchanted Forest. Visitors were transported into a luminous landscape of light sculptures, shimmering tunnels, and immersive installations spanning 100,000 square feet of the Edmonton EXPO Centre. Full of delights for all ages, the festival featured live entertainment, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, a Merry Makers Market with 30-plus local vendors, and specialty events including a sensory-friendly evening and an adults-only Glow After Dark.

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PRODUCING ICONIC EVENTS IN EDMONTON

PRODUCING ICONIC EVENTS IN EDMONTON

WE DELIVER EDMONTON'S ICONIC, DEEPLY ROOTED EVENTS — KDays, CANADIAN FINALS RODEO, AND FARMFAIR INTERNATIONAL — THAT CELEBRATE LOCAL CULTURE, BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER, AND CREATE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT.

Producing iconic events in Edmonton is like hanging a disco ball at the centre of the city: the headline attraction draws people in, but the real magic is how it throws light in every direction. Explore Edmonton helps set that energy in motion by attracting, producing, and amplifying events such as KDays, the Canadian Finals Rodeo, and Farmfair International. These events create opportunities for partners and sponsors to activate the visitor economy, connecting with Edmonton's businesses, artists, and attractions and plugging into a shared moment in ways that create lasting memories and meaningful community impact.

Edmonton becomes a network of micro-destinations, inviting visitors to explore beyond the event and giving residents more reasons to step out and celebrate the culture that makes their city distinct. The impact shows up not only in economic return, but in pride of place, connection, and a stronger quality of life year-round.





PEOPLE POWER: EXPLORE EDMONTON'S VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Our iconic events are made possible by our dedicated team of volunteers. In 2025, 583 active volunteers contributed 8,779 hours of their time across KDays, the Canadian Finals Rodeo, and Farmfair International.

What makes our volunteer program truly special is the diversity of the people who show up. Ranging in age from 9 to 88, our volunteers represent families and individuals each bringing their own skills, perspectives, and reasons for giving back. Some volunteers have dedicated decades of service to these events, reflecting their commitment to community and the legacy of incredible festivals and events that define Edmonton.

Our volunteer program also extends beyond the events Explore Edmonton produces. We collaborated with 7 partner organizations to offer group volunteer experiences, while our volunteers collectively supported 15 external organizations.

VOLUNTEER FACTS

8,779 HOURS

Total volunteer hours in 2025

583

Active volunteers as of
December 31, 2025

15

Number of external
organizations supported
by our volunteers

9 TO 88

The age range of our
volunteer community

37 YEARS

Service from our
longest-serving volunteer

73%

Volunteers ranging
from first-timers to
10-year supporters

27%

Volunteers with 11 to
37 years of dedicated
service to our events

IF IT'S FUN, IT'S AT KDays

Fuelled by North Central Co-op, KDays brings Edmonton together for 10 days of midway thrills, big-stage concerts, local flavours, and family-friendly fun. Rooted in a legacy that stretches back to 1879, KDays is a place to indulge in every fried food imaginable, chase one exhilarating ride after the next, discover locally made art and innovations, and watch fireworks light up the night sky. From the Discovery Zone and the Piyâw Kiyânaw Indigenous Experience to shopping local at the Market Hall, and live shows on the Main Stage Lights Stage, KDays truly offers something for everyone.



As the producer of KDays, Explore Edmonton is proud to bring this iconic fair to life with North Central Co-op and a wide network of sponsors, artists, vendors, and community partners.

"Community is at the heart of everything we do at North Central Co-op, and we're so thrilled to partner with Explore Edmonton as the title sponsor of one of the city's most beloved summer festivals – KDays."

— Dean McKim, North Central Co-op Chief Executive Officer

In 2025, KDays delivered strong results and broader community access:

- **Return to pre-pandemic strength:** Welcomed **760,000+ guests** and generated **\$25 million+** in total economic impact.
- **Community-powered:** Supported by **225 community partners**, **450+ vendors**, and **4,690 volunteer hours**.
- **Expanded student access:** Distributed **100,000 free student tickets** across **351 schools**.
- **Library partnership reach:** Opened gates to **7,400 Edmonton Public Library** cardholders and distributed **25,000** more free tickets through the **Summer Read and Win** program.

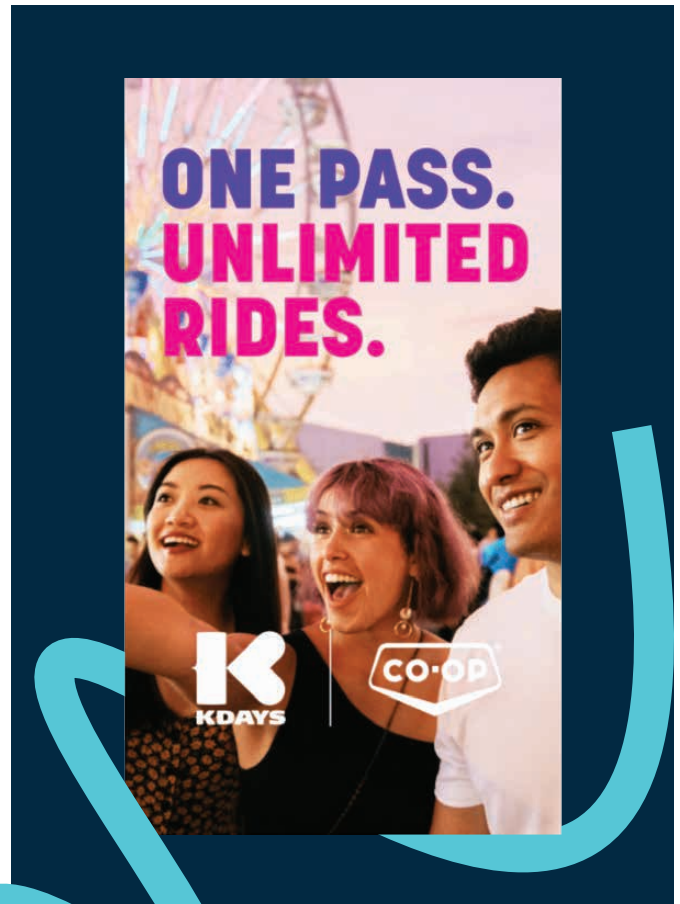


A Fair Winner

Explore Edmonton's role in producing iconic events is built on more than logistics - it's about elevating the experience, growing attendance, and ensuring the magic of KDays is shared with the world.

In 2025, that commitment was recognized internationally when the KDays marketing campaign earned 3rd Place for Best Overall Marketing Campaign in its division at the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) Hall of Honor Communications Contest.

One of the fair industry's most respected competitions, the Hall of Honor is judged by communications experts who evaluate creativity, resourcefulness, and innovation. With more than 700 entries submitted across 12 categories and five attendance-based divisions, KDays stood out among a deep international field, and was one of only two Canadian fairs recognized. The award is a meaningful proof of the excellence behind KDays: a team-wide standard of storytelling and delivery that helps bring Edmonton's biggest cultural events to life and sets the bar for exceptional guest experiences.



Eat Play Laugh Pass

Explore Edmonton partnered with Taste of Edmonton and the Great Outdoors Comedy Festival to bring a trifecta of July festival experiences together under one pass. The Eat, Play, Laugh Pass united Taste of Edmonton, KDays, and the Great Outdoors Comedy Festival into a single offer that made it easier for residents and visitors to experience more of Edmonton's festivities in one week. Priced at \$59, the bundle included 15 Taste of Edmonton tickets, a KDays 10-Day Pass, and general admission to an afternoon at the Great Outdoors comedy show.



This pass partnership reflected a guest-first, collaborative approach across Edmonton's visitor economy, creating shared momentum between iconic summer festivals while adding more ways to make unforgettable summer memories.

The Sound of Summer: KDays Music Fest & CKUA Radio Stage

Explore Edmonton continued to elevate KDays as a platform for Edmonton's creative community by partnering with CKUA, Alberta's public radio station.

As the official partner of the North Stage, rebranded as the CKUA Radio Stage, CKUA brought a distinctly Edmonton soundtrack to KDays, delivering 10 days of programming that celebrated local talent across Americana and blues, Indigenous feature performances, drag, tribute rock, wrestling, and Francophone showcases.



On the Main Stage, the KDays Music Fest delivered four sold-out nights, with fans turning out for G-Eazy, Bad Religion, Marianas Trench, and Jazzy B with Chani Nattan and Inderpal Moga – a lineup that proved KDays is firmly on the map as one of Edmonton's premier live music destinations.



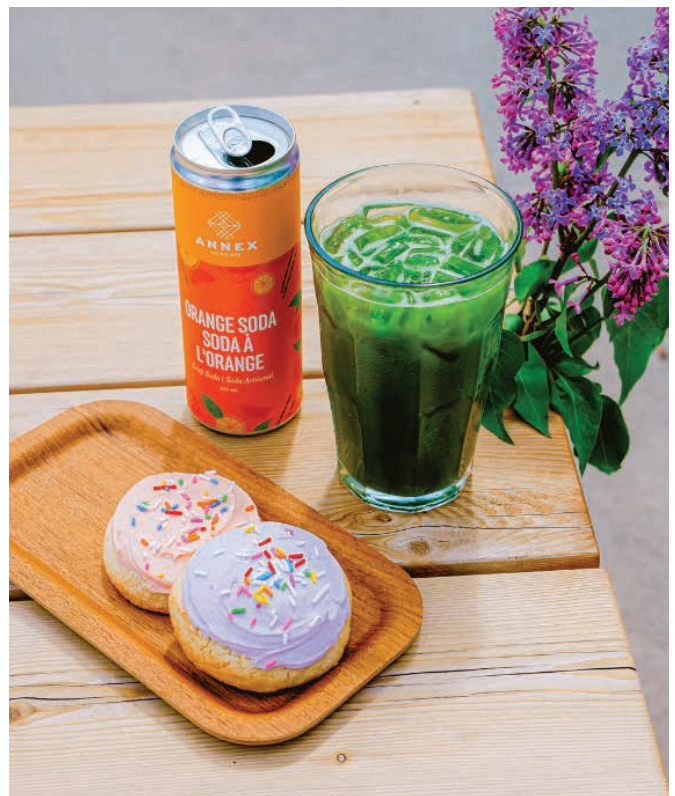
Expanded Feature Product Program

Explore Edmonton expanded KDays' Feature Product Program, partnering with 24 local businesses across 47+ locations to take the fair beyond the gates and spotlight the best of Edmonton.

Each participating business featured a limited-edition KDays product created just for the festival, with a built-in guest perk: two free KDays general admission tickets with the purchase of the feature product. From Jacek Chocolate's Golden Nuggets and Bloom Cookie Co.'s Strawberry Lemonade & Apple Cider Donut Dunkers, to Seoul Fried Chicken's Gochujang Caramel Wings Box and Three Vikings' Grilled Salmon Sandwich with Whisky Bacon Succotash — the program showcased the full, flavourful range of Edmonton's food scene.

The program invited guests to start their next KDays adventure right in their own neighbourhood while driving visibility and meaningful sales for local entrepreneurs.

THE RESULT WAS A WIN FOR BOTH GUESTS AND ENTREPRENEURS WITH 35,772 COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS DISTRIBUTED AND MORE THAN \$330,000 IN FEATURED PRODUCT SALES GENERATED AT THE 24 LOCAL BUSINESSES





More than a Midway: FIRST Robotics Competition & Ninja Warrior Experience

KDays is more than the midway, the live concerts, and the mouth-watering treats – it's a fair big enough to hold every kind of thrill. In 2025, KDays became a site of electrifying robot matchups and a world-class obstacle course where athletes of all ages could jump in, compete, and test their limits.

In partnership with FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Alberta, KDays hosted the Alberta Rocky Mountain Classic, Canada's only premier-level international FIRST robotics tournament, welcoming over 600 participants from around the world. With FIRST LEGO League, FIRST Tech Challenge, and the FIRST Robotics Competition on site, the fairgrounds became a high-energy showcase of youth ingenuity, mentorship, and hands-on learning. The momentum continued on July 19–20 as Fitset Ninja delivered both an all-ages Ninja experience and a sanctioned Fitset Ninja Canadian 100M World Series, featuring \$10,000 in cash prizes and elite competitors from across Canada and beyond.



Wheel of Alberta Dreams

At KDays, dreams come true. In partnership with Golden Spike Lumber and Alberta Dreams and North American Midway Entertainment Group, Edmonton radio personality, Chris Scheetz, took on the Wheel of Alberta Dreams Challenge. Chris rode the iconic KDays ferris wheel for 54 hours and raised \$70,886 for Alberta Dreams, a charity fulfilling dreams to Alberta children with severe chronic or life-threatening medical conditions. From July 21–23, 2025, this fun and impactful event brought the community together, inviting guests to donate, share this story, and volunteer to support this important cause.

More than a spectacle, the Wheel of Alberta Dreams showed what's possible when one of Edmonton's signature summer fairs becomes a platform for generosity – proving that the family-friendly setting of KDays is the perfect scene for an outrageous fundraiser to benefit children.



CANADIAN FINALS RODEO: DESTINATION OF THE YEAR

As Edmonton settles into autumn, Rogers Place heats up with the heart-pounding action of the Canadian Finals Rodeo powered by ATB – Canada’s premier rodeo championship. The 51st Canadian Finals Rodeo welcomed the country’s top athletes for a high-stakes showdown in events like bull riding, barrel racing, and steer wrestling.

Well before the rodeo athletes kicked up dirt in the arena, the Canadian Finals Rodeo was already off to a winning start – named Destination of the Year at the Edmonton Tourism Awards.

From October 1–4, CFR delivered a record-setting run, drawing more than 43,000 fans to Rogers Place for four days of elite competition across eight events, with athletes competing for approximately \$1.48 million in prize money. CFR events generated \$32.4 million in total economic impact, supported 6,000+ jobs, and earned a Net Promoter Score of 50.9, cementing CFR’s place as one of Edmonton’s largest sporting and cultural highlights of the year.

“ATB Financial is proud to invest as the title sponsor of the Canadian Finals Rodeo in Edmonton, one of the country’s most prestigious rodeo events. Through this partnership, we will help ensure this large-scale event is set up for success and will serve as a catalyst for revitalizing the city’s downtown core.”

– Curtis Stange, President & CEO, ATB Financial

**WITH CFR SECURED IN EDMONTON
THROUGH 2026, THE FOUNDATION FOR
CONTINUED GROWTH AND PARTNERSHIP
SUCCESS IS STRONGER THAN EVER.**

Making CFR History

The 51st CFR was one for the record books, one that athletes and fans worldwide will be talking about for years.

In steer wrestling, Provost Alberta's Scott Guenthner swept all five go-rounds under the new five-round format, stopping the clock at 3.7, 4.2, 3.6, 3.7, and 3.6 seconds to earn \$57,000 in go-round money. With an additional \$17,100 in aggregate earnings, his season total climbed to a record \$113,449, capped by a final-round 3.6 timing that brought the Rogers Place audience to its feet.

Zeke Thurston took the spotlight in saddle bronc, claiming a record-extending sixth consecutive Canadian championship and posting the highest-marked ride of this year's CFR at 91.75 points, a signature finish that underscored just how high the bar was set in Edmonton.

In the bull riding ring, Jared Parsonage delivered the ultimate full-circle turnaround: one year after watching CFR from a hospital bed following an injury, he returned to ride all five bulls, place in all five rounds, and clinch his third title, sealing it with an 84 on the final night.

Fans also witnessed a true end-of-an-era moment as Virgil, a multi-time World Champion bucking horse across saddle bronc and bareback, bucked for the final time at CFR, solidifying his legacy among the greatest bucking horses of all time.



THESE HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENTS CAPTURED WHAT CFR DOES BEST, PAIRING ELITE COMPETITION WITH UNFORGETTABLE MOMENTS THAT KEEP EDMONTON AT THE HEART OF CANADIAN RODEO.

CFR Northern Outlaws: Sports Club Atelier x CFR Collaboration

CFR took rodeo style citywide through a collaboration with Sport Club Atelier, led by designer and owner Lauren Kyle McDavid. The CFR Northern Outlaws collection fused streetwear polish with western edge, the perfect way to show CFR spirit both inside and outside the arena. From versatile everyday pieces to bold statement looks, this limited-edition collection offered fans a stylish way to celebrate the rodeo.

The collaboration quickly generated buzz and visibility, with the collection spotted on celebrities like Lainey Wilson and Connor McDavid, helping elevate CFR's presence locally and nationally.

During CFR Week, fans had the chance to shop the Sport Club Atelier x CFR Pop-Ups in person and online, creating an exciting entry point into the CFR world through fashion. The result was a high-impact blend of brand storytelling and cultural reach, underscoring the collaboration as a key driver of awareness and audience growth for CFR.





CFR Week: City-Wide Rodeo Celebrations

Edmonton revved up the rodeo spirit for CFR 51, celebrating the city's western heritage with a citywide lineup of activations from September 25 to October 6, 2025. From the CINCH Canadian Country Expo and Black Tie Bingo in support of the Rodeo Cowboys Benevolent Fund to the Chili Cook-Off, the CFR Backroads live-music takeover, and rodeo-themed menus and pop-ups across 24 local businesses, the city buzzed with country-western charm.

Downtown Block Party: CFR x Edmonton Downtown Business Association Summer Block Party transformed Rice Howard Way into a free, family-friendly celebration with live music, food and drink, caricatures, live painting, and interactive activations, and pop-ups like Sports Club Atelier's Northern Outlaw Collection.

Local Business Activations: Across Edmonton, 24 partner businesses leaned into CFR Week with rodeo-themed menus and limited-time features such as Rig Hand Distillery's full week of country-western concerts and Indigenous teachings with Monique Collins of Dragonfly Spirit CreeAtions. Restaurants, bars, and cafés added their own flair like Super Amigos' YEGHAW Taco Ranchero to multi-course dinners at Woodwork and Hart's Table and Bar, Crave's root beer cupcakes and Twice Cream's limited-edition Cowboy Coffee Crunch and Rodeo S'mores.

CFR Backroads Series: Presented by the Canadian Finals Rodeo, supported by the City of Edmonton and Explore Edmonton, and produced by Bird Creatives, the Backroads series builds excitement for CFR through 16 free live music shows across 13 venues, featuring more than 35 country, roots, and Americana artists at Dolly's Cocktail Bar, The Common, and River City Revival House.

Retail and Nightlife Programming: Retail and community partners added ticket promotions, discounts, and western-themed photo moments while venues across the city kept the energy going with country nights, karaoke, and DJ events.



CINCH Canadian Country Expo: Premier Destination for Western Lifestyle

The CINCH Canadian Country Expo (CCE) transformed the Edmonton EXPO Centre into a hub for western lifestyle, with six days of local shopping, western programming, youth competition, and arts and culture showcases, all supported by free admission and shuttle service between the Edmonton EXPO Centre and Rogers Place. Demonstrating how CFR extends beyond the arena into a citywide celebration, CCE generated \$6.2 million in economic impact while elevating local entrepreneurs, rodeo athletes, agriculture partners, and artists who helped define the week's western spirit.

At the heart of CCE was the Canadian Youth Rodeo Championship (CYRC), presented by Saskatchewan Mining and Minerals, which brought together Canada's top rodeo athletes aged 19 and under for a multi-day competition. CYRC serves as a national stage for emerging talent and a launchpad for the next generation of rodeo stars.

In 2025, 170 contestants from five provinces competed in events including barrel racing, team roping, bull riding, and pole bending, vying for nearly \$50,000 in prize money, championship buckles, and \$5,000 in scholarships. Ten competitors earned buys into the American Regionals West, and 500 contestants and their families received complimentary tickets to Thursday night's CFR performance. The calibre of talent was on full display throughout the week, including a standing-room-only Back Number Ceremony and the notable achievement of breakaway ropers Aubrie Ross and Keely Pugh competing on the CFR stage.



Canadian Country Expo by The Numbers

- **165,000** square feet of exhibitors across three halls
- **100+** hand-picked premium vendors
- **845+** clinic and competition participants
- **18,000+** attendee visits over five days

Honourable Mention

After a decade of service on the Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions (CAFE) Board, including three years as President and five years as VP, Finance, Amanda Frigon concluded her term in 2025. Building on that legacy, Kalyn van Horne was elected at CAFE's November AGM to a three-year term, helping advance the national work that strengthens the organizations behind community-enriching events across Canada.



FARMFAIR INTERNATIONAL: 51 YEARS STRONG

For 51 years, Farmfair International has been one of Canada's leading agriculture and livestock showcases, and a proud Edmonton tradition that brings top livestock genetics, industry expertise, and community spirit to the Edmonton EXPO Centre each November.

Farmfair's global reach was on full display in 2025, welcoming over 90 international delegates from 12 countries. Explore Edmonton hosted two separate tours for delegates, one day dedicated to showcasing attractions across Edmonton, and a second tour focused on visiting local ranches. With new international ambassadors recruited across Australia, Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom, Argentina, and Mexico, Farmfair continued to expand its reach while strengthening Edmonton's visitor economy and reputation as a welcoming host for world-class agricultural events.



IN 2025, FARMFAIR WELCOMED 40,299 VISITORS AND GENERATED \$20.4 MILLION IN TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT, REAFFIRMING EDMONTON AS A GLOBAL GATHERING PLACE FOR AGRICULTURAL EXCELLENCE.



FARMFAIR BY THE NUMBERS

40,299 TOTAL VISITORS		\$20.4 MILLION TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT	
158 VOLUNTEERS & 1,617 VOLUNTEER HOURS		17,551 Estimated Room Demand	1,154 Cattle Entries
27 Partners/Sponsors	22:1 ROI	90 INTERNATIONAL DELEGATES FROM 12 COUNTRIES with Mexico representing 46% of delegates Delegate Experience: Explore Edmonton hosted city and local ranch tours for international delegates	
Feature Country UNITED KINGDOM with ambassadors from England and Northern Ireland attending		NEW PROGRAMING Art of Farming, Highland Cattle Show, Micro & Mini Highland display, and B.E.E.F. International with 25 young-adult participants from four countries.	
		181 VENDORS at the Country Christmas Marketplace with a 64% revenue increase over 2024	

07

**STRENGTHENING
PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY
CONNECTIONS**

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

A HEALTHY VISITOR ECONOMY IS LIKE A LIVING ECOSYSTEM: DIVERSE, INTERCONNECTED, AND STRENGTHENED BY WHAT EACH PART CONTRIBUTES.

In Edmonton, that ecosystem includes tourism operators and experience providers, festivals and attractions, Indigenous partners, small to medium businesses, corporate leaders, venue teams, and governments, each playing a role in shaping how people experience the city. Explore Edmonton helps those connections thrive by bringing partners together to collaborate, celebrate, and invest in shared success, turning ideas into citywide moments and long-term momentum.



SPONSORSHIP

**WE'RE GRATEFUL FOR THE SPONSORS AND PARTNERS WHO
HELP BRING EDMONTON'S ICONIC EVENTS TO LIFE.**

Your investment helps us enhance the guest experience, strengthen on-site delivery, and sustain these events year after year. These relationships amplify Edmonton's visitor economy, generating significant economic impact, elevating the city as a year-round destination of choice, and supporting world-class events that attract visitors from around the globe while making Edmonton an even better place to live for residents.

2025 SPONSOR NUMBERS BY EVENT

27 SPONSORS

Farmfair International

41 SPONSORS

**Canadian Finals Rodeo
& Rodeo Week**

25 SPONSORS

KDays

Special thanks to our key funding partners – the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta, the City of Edmonton, and Edmonton Destination Marketing Hotels for their continued leadership, collaboration, and investment in our visitor economy.

TOURISM WEEK: APRIL 7-11, 2025

Tourism Week is led nationally by the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) and supported provincially by the Tourism Industry Association of Alberta (TIAA) and is a time to recognize how tourism strengthens our communities and enhances quality of life. Travel brings people together through shared stories, cultures, and experiences, and it helps sustain the places and moments that make our city feel vibrant year-round.



In Edmonton, the visitor economy is a major economic driver that supports jobs, investment, and diversification, while creating meaningful pathways for Indigenous Peoples to share their heritage, stories, and wisdom. There's so much to celebrate in our visitor economy: four-season festivals powered by a nationally and globally recognized arts and culture scene; award-winning culinary adventures; Indigenous-led experiences rooted in the original stories and living traditions of this land; major sport moments that electrify the city; and natural and cultural attractions that turn a single visit into a lifetime of memories.

To bring Tourism Week to life, Explore Edmonton collaborated with civic leaders, tourism operators, small businesses, and industry partners across the region. Our visible leadership strengthened relationships across municipal, provincial, and business sectors, and reinforced a clear message: tourism is economic development; it supports small businesses, drives investment, and builds thriving communities.

Tourism Week Proclamation

Explore Edmonton officially launched Tourism Week 2025 with a proclamation event at Edmonton City Hall. The event showcased strong cross-sector alignment, bringing together elected officials, provincial leadership, and local entrepreneurs to reinforce tourism's role as a key economic driver. It also marked a major partnership win with the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, which launched a support-local campaign alongside Tourism Week, strengthening the connection between tourism, small business growth, and investment.

Fast Facts

- **Attendance:** ~50
- **Partners:** City of Edmonton; Government of Alberta; Edmonton Chamber of Commerce; Culina Catering, and Delavoye Chocolate Maker
- **Media coverage:** CTV, Global, Postmedia



Tourism Week Open House

Explore Edmonton hosted its first Tourism Week Open House at the World Trade Centre, creating a hands-on experience that strengthened partner relationships and built internal pride. With interactive booths and participation across the organization, the event deepened connections between staff and partners and earned overwhelmingly positive feedback.

Fast Facts

- **Attendance:** 180 total
- **Satisfaction:** 96%



Tourism Industry Association of Alberta (TIAA) Tourism Week Town Hall

The Tourism Week Town Hall wrapped up the week by bringing provincial leaders, operators, and community stakeholders together in Edmonton to align priorities and reinforce the value of Alberta's visitor economy. It positioned Edmonton as a hub for tourism leadership and gave Explore Edmonton a high-visibility platform to lead conversations on destination development, experience growth, and long-term stewardship.

President & CEO Traci Bednard moderated a panel on sector opportunities, spotlighting City Council's recent support for major tourism developments, including the spa rezoning. James Leppan, Director, Destination Strategy, led the experience and product development panel, featuring diverse perspectives and a standout contribution from Scott Iserhoff on the power of Indigenous storytelling. Melissa Radu, Executive Director, Destination Stewardship, delivered a compelling presentation that drew strong attention and reinforced Explore Edmonton's leadership. The event also strengthened key relationships, with Councillor Keren Tang recognizing Edmonton's Lonely Planet 'Best in Travel' 2025 designation and Travel Alberta CEO David Goldstein emphasizing the impact of strong municipal partnerships.

Tourism Week Video Premiere

Explore Edmonton produced an original Tourism Week video built on personal perspectives of why tourism matters in Edmonton. At our Tourism Week Open House, staff and partners answered one simple question: *"Why does tourism matter to you?"* In one afternoon, we captured 21 interviews that became an inspiring, emotionally resonant short film.

The video quickly gained traction, with partners and stakeholders resharing it on LinkedIn and boosting visibility through strong engagement. We premiered the final cut at the TIAA Tourism Week Town Hall, marking the achievement of turning Tuesday's shoot into a polished video by Friday morning.

WE ARE YEG METRO

The Edmonton Metropolitan Region is one of Canada's fastest-growing economies, home to more than 1.5 million residents and a \$110 billion GDP – driven by passionate, ambitious, and hardworking people helping lead the region's growth. We Are YEG Metro is a regional partnership that unites leaders across the visitor economy, education, business, and community to champion Edmonton with one connected voice; showcasing the region's strengths and momentum to attract investment and talent, and positioning it as one of Canada's most dynamic places to live, work, study, visit, build, and invest in. Explore Edmonton is thrilled to be a part of and work alongside the 15 leading organizations within the We Are YEG Metro group.



CONNECTING THE VISITOR ECOSYSTEM

Just as we connect visitors and residents to unforgettable experiences, we connect the people and partners who make those experiences possible; creating space to share what's working, name what needs to change, and strengthen the relationships shaping Edmonton's tourism future.

In 2025, we hosted a year-round mix of receptions, open houses, webinars, and roundtables, celebrating milestones and major events while bringing industry together around a shared purpose: elevating Edmonton's visitor experience and growing a visitor economy that benefits everyone.

These gatherings convened tourism operators, festival and attraction leaders, corporate and community partners, Indigenous and municipal stakeholders, and elected officials from all levels. Some events spotlighted partner offerings and recognized leadership while other events featured hands-on working sessions focused on shared challenges and emerging opportunities.

Each event deepened partnerships across the visitor economy, reinforced the value of aligned action, and expanded understanding of Explore Edmonton's role – growing a broader network of champions for tourism.

LEADING WITH IMPACT: PARTNERING WITH GOVERNMENT

We work with all levels of government to position Explore Edmonton not only as a destination marketing and management organization, but as an essential economic development partner, one that delivers strong return on investment and enhances quality of life for visitors and residents alike.

By nurturing relationships with key officials and providing clear, timely information, we help keep the visitor economy visible, supported, and aligned with public priorities. Through ongoing outreach, briefings, and advocacy-ready materials, decision-makers have a direct line of sight into the value of our storytelling, events and venue stewardship, and destination work we deliver for Edmonton.



INDUSTRY RECEPTION & ROUNDTABLE ROUND-UP

Festivals Roundtable

Festival organizers gathered at the Fringe Art Barns, featuring The Fringe Theatre as partner for a collaborative session to connect with peers, gain practical insights, and engage directly with Explore Edmonton staff.

48 attendees (30 partners and
18 Explore Edmonton team members)
& 80% satisfaction score

Attractions Roundtable

This event gathered attraction operators to learn about Explore Edmonton's various teams and engage in meaningful roundtable discussions that deepened understanding of industry needs and organizational support.

45 attendees (20 partners and
15 Explore Edmonton team members)
& 88% satisfaction

Explore Edmonton Riverboat Industry Cruise

An informal networking event on the North Saskatchewan River. Supporting the Edmonton Riverboat, this event convened guests and showcased the Riverboat's space and offerings. It also provided a casual setting for our partners to connect and build relationships.

~90–100 partners and stakeholders

Legally Blonde Event

Explore Edmonton partnered with the Citadel Theatre, Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, and Edmonton Downtown Business Association to support a panel event celebrating women in leadership, held alongside the Citadel's "Legally Blonde" production.

KDays Premier's Breakfast Presented by North Central Co-op

A community-focused kickoff featured the Premier and Cabinet Ministers serving breakfast, reinforcing strong relationships between government and the community while creating a welcoming start to KDays.

3,300+ attendees & 20+ elected officials

We Are YEG Metro KDays VIP Reception Presented by EPCOR

This immersive reception celebrated KDays as a cultural and economic driver while bringing We Are YEG Metro partners together for cross-sector networking. Guests experienced The Magic of KDays theme through live entertainment, interactive elements, and whimsical EXPO-crafted food displays, alongside a mini tradeshow featuring Feature Product vendors.

650+ attendees & 90% satisfaction

INDUSTRY RECEPTION & ROUNDTABLE ROUND-UP

Innovation After Dark with Edmonton Unlimited

The event spotlighted Alberta's inclusive and diverse innovation ecosystem while strengthening the value KDays provides to local businesses and creators.

**120+ attendees
& 80% satisfaction**

Emerging Operators & Experience Providers Roundtable (with Strathcona County)

This session connected new tourism operators with established experience providers, strengthening regional relationships through open discussion and meaningful networking. Participants shared challenges, left with new ideas and connections, and learned more about Explore Edmonton's support.

80 attendees & 95% satisfaction

Farmfair International Reception

Delivered in partnership with the Alberta Food Processors Association and Made in Alberta, this standout strategic event brought Farmfair's vendor stories to life for elected leaders, deepening understanding of the visitor economy and building momentum for stronger government engagement.

225 attendees, 20+ government officials; included the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation, RG Sigurdson, and 93% satisfaction

Tourism & Sport Minister Roundtable with TIAA

A focused discussion with Minister of Tourism and Sport, Andrew Boitchenko strengthened provincial alignment and gave partners rare, direct access to share priorities and success stories.

We Are YEG Metro CFR Reception

Designed as a relaxed, western-themed networking event, the reception highlighted the cultural and economic impact of CFR while rallying support from Edmonton's corporate, civic, and business communities to help secure the event beyond 2026.

**220+ attendees, 10 government officials,
& 88% satisfaction**

CFR Partner Engagement

We expanded CFR's partnership footprint through special events, practical tools, and citywide activations that made it easy and fun for partners to participate and promote.

Rodeo Week Activations: Coordinated **24 partner activations** during Rodeo Week, more than double from last year, including local restaurants offering specialty menu items, supported by added photography and media coverage to amplify participation.

CFR Toolkit: Created and distributed a CFR Toolkit to the Edmonton City Council, the Explore Edmonton Board of Directors, partners, and LinkedIn audiences to help them promote CFR through their networks and the wider community.

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**ENHANCING OUR
ORGANIZATION & TEAM**

ENHANCING OUR ORGANIZATION & TEAM

Explore Edmonton strengthens the foundations that make exceptional Edmonton experiences possible, raising the standard in how we work and committing continuous improvement across our people, places, and processes.

From embedding sustainability into day-to-day standards and advancing Edmonton's Regenerative Tourism Strategy, to reinforcing venue stewardship with measurable outcomes and industry recognition.

At the same time, we elevated the employee experience across a 1,200+ person workforce through engagement, inclusion, and learning at scale, ensuring the teams behind Edmonton's defining moments felt supported, connected, and equipped to deliver greater value for the city and region.



OPERATING WITH SUSTAINABILITY

In 2025, we strengthened climate resiliency and advanced responsible consumption and production across our organization and with partners, guided by four focus areas: climate resiliency, responsible consumption and production, procurement, and leadership and advocacy.

We also pushed destination sustainability forward by leading Edmonton's Regenerative Tourism Strategy and advancing its next steps. Co-created with hundreds of community voices, the strategy is a roadmap for a flourishing visitor economy, supporting local jobs and revenues while moving toward a carbon-neutral and waste-free future. Grounded in reconciliation and stewardship, it's designed to help communities regenerate Edmonton, strengthen health, inclusivity, and prosperity, and make the region an even better place to visit and live.



SUSTAINABILITY IS ONE OF EXPLORE EDMONTON'S CORE PRIORITIES, BUILT INTO THE DECISIONS, SYSTEMS, AND STANDARDS THAT SHAPE HOW WE OPERATE EVERY DAY.

Destination Sustainability Performance

64.22%

overall score on the
Global Destination
Sustainability Index (GDSI)

#4

on the GDSI among
participating North
American regions

Industry Recognition

EARNED IMPACT AWARD

from the Recycling Council of Alberta (Rs of Excellence)
recognizing improved waste diversion at KDays and
implementation of Zero Waste practices at the Edmonton
EXPO Centre and Edmonton Convention Centre

KDays Waste Diversion Progress

58% OF 151,827 KG

of waste diverted from landfill in 2025
(up from 19% in 2022), driven by strong on-site
waste management and smarter planning

EPCOR's Glass of the Sask

7 EVENTS supported across **44 DAYS**

of usage for Volleyball Nationals, UFest, The Works,
Athletics Alberta Event, KDays, Heritage Festival,
Strathearn Art Walk

Venue Sustainability Standards

GREEN KEY GLOBAL LEVEL 5

certification maintained by both EXPO & ECC

Carbon Neutral Events Program

2,310 TONNES OF CO₂E

offset by event organizers through the program

Organization-wide Waste Reduction

76% OF 1,659,364 KG

of waste diverted from landfill in 2025

Food Recovery

5,100 KG

of excess food donated
by EXPO and ECC in 2025

Reuse & Community Donation

1,440 KG

of post-event goods donated (equipment,
signage, clothing, water bottles, furniture) to
charitable causes and social partners

Emissions Reduction Progress

40.13% emissions reduction at Edmonton Convention
Centre from the 2018 baseline (as of end of 2024),
supporting Explore Edmonton's targets of:

50% REDUCTION BY 2035

and net-zero by 2050

Environmental Preferable Purchasing

EXPO

100% of paper-based cleaning products
third-party certified (FSC/EcoLogo)
& **50.08%** of procured cleaning chemicals
third-party certified

ECC

55% of cleaning products procured
(chemicals, consumables, & paper) were
third-party certified, meeting BOMA BEST
green cleaning requirements

THE EXPLORE EDMONTON EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Just as we work to deliver exceptional experiences for visitors and residents, we're equally committed to creating a workplace where employees feel supported, engaged, and proud of the work they do.

With more than 1,200 people across Explore Edmonton – increasing to 1,700 people in summer – in roles that span offices, venues, and frontline event delivery, the employee experience can look very different from one team member to the next.

OUR FOCUS IN 2025 WAS TO STRENGTHEN THE SHARED FOUNDATION THAT CONNECTS THOSE EXPERIENCES: CLEAR COMMUNICATION, INCLUSIVE CULTURE, AND THE TOOLS TEAMS NEED TO SUCCEED IN FAST-PACED ENVIRONMENTS.



A key part of that commitment was investing in learning and growth at scale. Over the year, Explore Edmonton delivered leadership, wellness, technology, and EDI training to 435 participants, building organizational capability while reinforcing psychological safety and inclusive leadership.

By creating accessible development opportunities across departments and work sites, we supported employees in doing their best work, improving how we collaborate, lead, and deliver for each other and for our city. Explore Edmonton was also proud to create and launch an improved onboarding program that offers a cohesive experience for all new team members.



Culture & Engagement Committee

The Culture & Engagement Committee is made up of employees from across the organization, creating shared moments that bring people together through fun, celebratory initiatives, meaningful recognition, and opportunities to give back to the community.

In 2025, the Culture & Engagement Committee expanded and created subcommittees to advance employee-informed initiatives across **five focus areas**:

1. **Pride of Place**
2. **Celebrations & Gatherings**
3. **Community Engagement**
4. **Wellness**
5. **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council**



SUBCOMMITTEE

Pride of Place

We improved the employee spaces where our teams reset and connect, making workplaces more welcoming, functional, and reflective of our values.

- Set a goal to update at least one space in each venue.
- Began drafting Pride of Place guidelines to share across the organization.
- Delivered practical staff-space enhancements at ECC that supported comfort and connection (including refreshed break areas and added amenities).

SUBCOMMITTEE

Community Engagement

We created meaningful ways for employees to give back together, strengthening community impact and team connection at the same time.

- Halloween Blood Drive: In partnership with Canadian Blood Services, we hosted a staff blood drive that brought together 19 donors, with the potential to impact up to 57 lives.
- Christmas Toy Drive: Launched a holiday giving initiative supporting children at St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Elementary School, where staff selected a child's letter and purchased a requested gift. All 120 letters were picked up within the first week.

SUBCOMMITTEE

Celebrations & Gatherings

We created more moments for employees to come together across roles and locations; strengthening connection, recognition, and pride in our shared work.

- Delivered a staff BBQ in June with 500+ employees and families attending. Raised \$2,465 for the Edmonton Food Bank through the \$5 entry tickets.

SUBCOMMITTEE

Wellness

We supported employee wellbeing during high-demand periods by building in practical ways to recharge, especially during major events.

- Introduced de-stressing workstations during big events.
- Partnered with the Pride of Place group to begin planning a dedicated wellness room for staff.



SUBCOMMITTEE

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council

A stronger employee experience starts with a workplace where people feel seen, respected, and able to contribute fully. The EDI Council helped turn that commitment into action, creating opportunities for learning, dialogue, and visible solidarity that strengthened how we work together.

- Welcomed eight new EDI Council members.
- Partnered with the Colbourne Institute for Inclusive Leadership (CIIL) to train the EDI Council, with training extended to the Culture & Engagement Committee. The EDI Council delivered a CIIL-facilitated workshop for employees talking about EDI in a Climate of Resistance.
- Continued monthly EDI Moments at The Way Forward (all staff) meetings to create ongoing reflection and dialogue.
- Began developing an Awareness Day Calendar to support inclusive recognition of diverse holidays and observances.
- Provided EDI training for leaders, equipping leaders with tools to foster inclusive practices.
- Invited Jonathan Robb, CEO of the Centre for Autism Services, to share insights and raise awareness about autism.
- Launched an accessibility project across three locations, including a building audit. This initiative aims to identify barriers and deliver actionable recommendations to ensure our spaces are inclusive, welcoming, and accessible to everyone.
- Proudly participated in both the Cariwest Parade, and Edmonton's first Pride Parade since 2018, standing in solidarity with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. At Cariwest, Explore Edmonton's own Ziyah Karmali served as Parade Marshall, boosting our community visibility and creating a moment of pride for the Explore Edmonton Team and their cultures. EDI Council members also attended the Pride Brunch, deepening our connections with this vibrant community.
- EDI Council members attended the exhibition UNCEDED: VOICES OF THE LAND, a groundbreaking showcase of Indigenous architecture, creativity, and resilience. Led by "Contemporary Master of Architecture" and traditional Elder Douglas Cardinal, this exhibit marks a historic milestone as the first Indigenous-led contemporary architecture presentation on the global stage.
- In recognition of National Truth and Reconciliation Day, we welcomed Veronica McRae as a guest speaker at The Way Forward. A proud Cree-Métis woman, Veronica shared her meaningful work with The Good Place, an organization supporting Indigenous communities through healing and cultural reconnection. Staff received curated learning resources and a draw was held for an Every Child Matters Indigenous Box. A thoughtful suggestion from the Culture & Inclusion Taskforce Committee, supported by Lauren Christie, brought orange shirt pins to the Explore Edmonton team. It was a simple yet sincere gesture of acknowledgement and respect.

FINANCIALS

Summary Financial Results for the Year Ended December 2025

Summary Statement of Operations	2025 Actual	2025 Budget	2024 Actual
City of Edmonton	17,743,000	17,743,000	17,754,000
External revenues	77,595,445	73,979,799	72,143,929
	95,338,445	91,722,799	89,897,929
Operating & program expenses	93,624,253	91,722,799	88,244,786
Operating surplus before amortization & interest	1,714,192	-	1,653,143
Net amortization	822,887	713,647	733,009
Interest on long-term debt	114,999	115,000	127,001
Interest expense (recovery)	(943,370)	-	539,940
	(5,484)	828,647	1,399,950
Net surplus (deficit) for the year	1,719,676	(828,647)	253,193

Statement of Financial Position	2025	2024
Assets		
Current Assets	18,252,261	13,929,515
Long-term Assets	6,786,012	8,581,452
Total Assets	25,038,273	22,510,967
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities	16,430,979	14,264,146
Long-term Liabilities	4,906,775	6,265,978
Total Liabilities	21,337,754	20,530,124
Share Capital and Net Assets		
Share Capital	100	100
Net Assets	3,700,419	1,980,743
Total Liabilities, Share Capital and Net Assets	25,038,273	22,510,967

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EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE

As we close the book on 2025, we want to acknowledge the hard work, creativity and time dedicated from our tourism operators and community partners to every team member at Explore Edmonton. It's your work and genuine passion that keeps us powering Edmonton's visitor economy and improving quality of life for residents.

Through the events we attract and deliver, the stories we tell, the venues we steward, and the partnerships we strengthen, we help create and amplify the kind of distinct Edmonton moments people carry with them. The heart-pounding rush of the Canadian Finals Rodeo, the hush-before-the-applause magic of a performance at the Fringe Festival, the electricity of an Oilers playoff crowd, and the shared wonder of winter festivals that transform cold nights into immersive adventures. It's the warmth and delicious taste of bannock while listening to the stories of this land under a dark prairie sky at Métis Crossing or finding a quiet sense of peace overlooking the sweep of the River Valley. These are the moments that make people fall in love with Edmonton, moments that bring visitors back year after year, and remind residents why this city will always feel like home.

Looking ahead to 2026, we're stepping into the year with momentum, and with the steady confidence that comes from stable support, a clear strategic direction, and a team and partner network that shows up for each other. We're proud to welcome the International Indigenous Tourism Conference (IITC) 2026 to Edmonton, and to build on a standout year for women in sport with the return of the PWWHL Takeover Tour and the CPKC Women's Open in August. We're ready for more moments that will fill our venues, energize our city, and inspire the next generation. With more national and international events on the calendar, and our iconic festivals and signature experiences ready to raise the bar again, the year ahead is full of possibility. When we build a city people want to visit, we build a city people are proud to belong to.

Thank you to our partners and community members for everything you do to make Edmonton shine.

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EXPLORE EDMONTON



EDMONTON
CONVENTION
CENTRE

K
KDAYS

EDMONTON PUBLIC
RODEO

FARMFAIR
INTERNATIONAL

Edmonton
EXPO
Centre