

EXPLORE EDMONTON

2022 ANNUAL REPORT





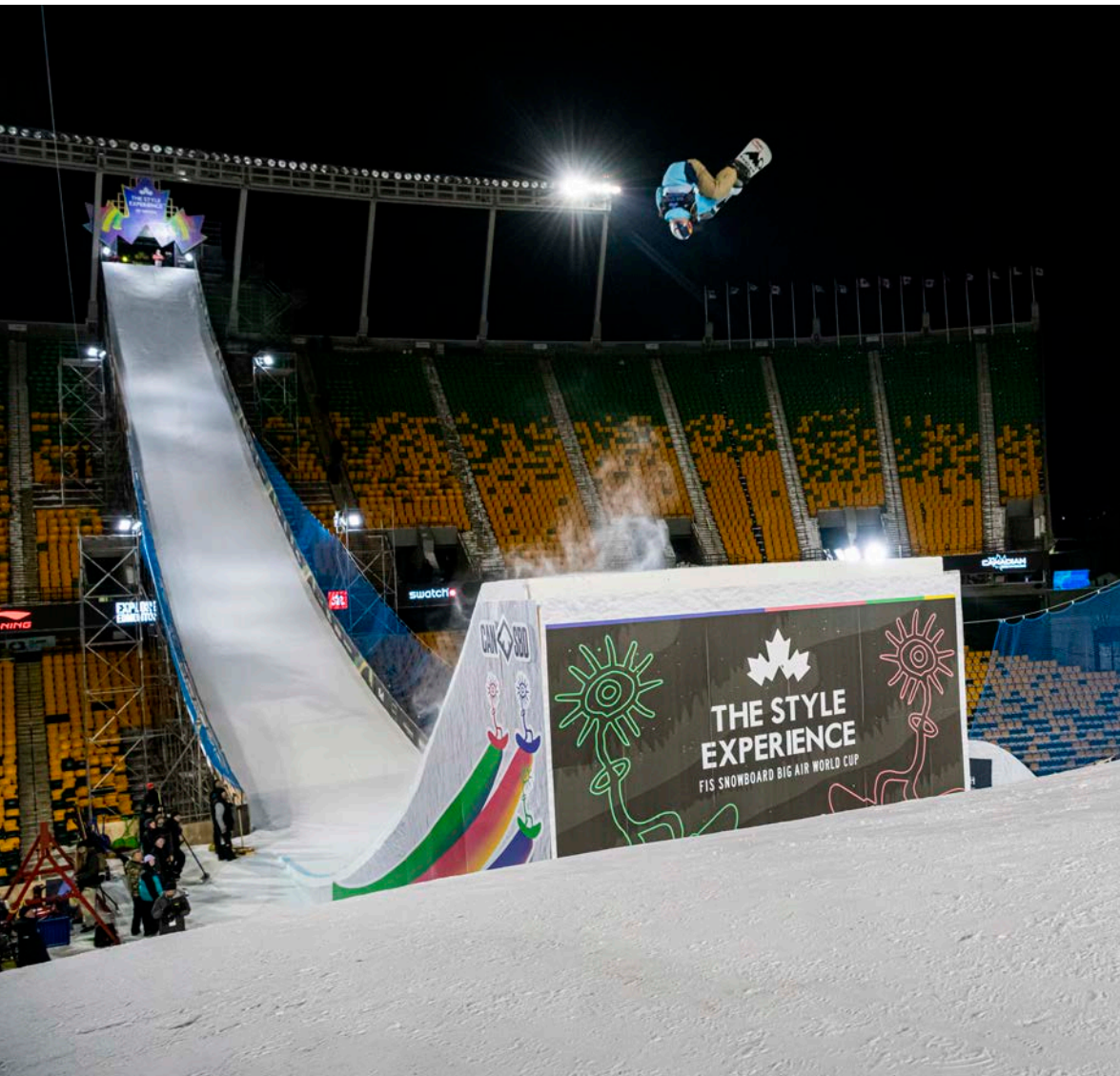
TREATY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Explore Edmonton respectfully acknowledges that we are located within Treaty 6 Territory, and Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4. We acknowledge this land as the traditional home for many Indigenous Peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Dene, Saulteaux, Anishinaabe, Inuit and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR, KAREN OSHRY



2022 was quite the year. Although the first quarter started slowly as a result of COVID-related challenges, our visitor economy recovered quickly in the following months. For the remainder of the year, we had great success in bringing notable and high-profile events to our city.

As the Chair of the Board of Directors of Explore Edmonton Corporation, I have witnessed firsthand the incredible work of our team in promoting our city and its visitor economy. As noted in this report, the direct impact of Explore Edmonton on our city has been substantial, meaningful, and lasting.

The City of Edmonton has so much to offer its citizens and visitors alike. We are a city of artists, sports legends, trailblazers, entrepreneurs and industry leaders. We are also a city of kind, warm, and inviting people. At Explore Edmonton, we have the privilege of showcasing our people, culture, and excellent facilities, all in our beautiful city. In 2022, this included hosting world-class events such as The Style Experience FIS Snowboard Big Air World Cup the Canadian Hydrogen Convention and of course, a very successful K-Days.

It has been a true pleasure to serve as the Chair of the Board of Explore Edmonton Corporation over this past year. On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Explore Edmonton team, thank you for your support. I am looking forward to building upon the successes of 2022 and am excited for all that is in store for 2023.

Karen Oshry

Chair of the Board of Directors
of Explore Edmonton Corporation



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO, TRACI BEDNARD



Where does one even start when they think of the powerhouse year that was 2022? When I joined the Explore Edmonton Corporation as President and CEO in 2021, I joined a unique team that was on a clear mission to help showcase our city globally while focusing on rebuilding our visitor economy.

While we started 2022 out with another dose of uncertainty with COVID-19 numbers going up globally, our team was committed to reactivating our community and its vibrancy. When we were able to welcome visitors back to Edmonton in 2022, the energy that was missing in our city bounced back in full force. From world-class snowboarding competitions like The Style Experience FIS Snowboard Big Air World Cup, to the Canadian Hydrogen Convention, our venues and teams were able to host and promote some amazing one-of-a-kind events that helped generate some much-needed revenue back into Edmonton's economy.

I am also incredibly proud of the sustainability initiatives that we undertook this past year. From innovative programs like the Responsible Events Program (REP), which provides tangible options for event professionals who want to host a sustainable and environmentally conscious event, to being the first western Canadian city to embark on the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index) annual benchmarking process for a second straight year, we are serious about helping make Edmonton a greener place to live and visit.

Without revealing too much, I can say that our teams have worked tirelessly throughout 2022 to help reactivate the event and tourism sector, and it shows. I am so proud to share with you today all the hard work, dedication, and grit that our team has put into reactivating Edmonton.

I want to acknowledge our shareholder, the City of Edmonton, as well as our trusted partners and stakeholders for all that they do to help make Edmonton a destination of choice for travelers around the world. Our team is lucky to have the privilege to work with such talented individuals who pour their hearts and souls into everything they do, who strive to offer one-of-a-kind experiences in our city, and who make Edmonton a great place to visit, live, learn, work, and play. The impact on our visitor economy when we work together has been proven to be massive, and I for one, can't wait to see what we all achieve together in 2023.

The world needs more Edmonton, and when our visitor economy thrives, so do Edmontonians!

Traci Bednard

President and CEO
Explore Edmonton



CONNECTION. IT'S WHAT DRIVES US.

At Explore Edmonton, we're all about connection. Our team has created a unique identity for Edmonton and developed a strong reputation in the eyes of people around the world. Through the relationships we create with our partners and stakeholders, we showcase our city's capabilities, strengthen our global connections, and create diverse opportunities for investment in local industries. And we have a lot of fun doing it!

By bringing in major events, we generate tourism dollars that support local businesses, help businesses attract talent by increasing the vibrancy of the city, and create a more compelling

argument for improving city infrastructure, which benefits everyone. Our signature events—K-Days, FarmFair International, and the Edmonton Pro Rodeo—bring the community together and are enjoyed by people of all ages, year after year.

Our Edmonton Convention Centre was recognized as one of the five best venues in North America, and the Edmonton EXPO Centre is the largest venue of its kind in western Canada. The size and versatility of our venues allows for world-class events, unlimited opportunity, and more profitability for our partners.

2022 PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT **\$182,279,554**

ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED

217,172

JOBS SUPPORTED

68,995

TOTAL MEDIA COVERAGE

551.8M IMPRESSIONS

SUPPORTED DEVELOPMENT OF

15

NEW AND ENHANCED EXPERIENCES



235
268
94%

YEG EXPERTS CERTIFIED
CERTIFICATIONS IN PROGRESS
SATISFACTION RATE

PILLARS OF EXCELLENCE

To measure the impact of our efforts throughout 2022, we turn to our four pillars of excellence and the implementation of the Explore Edmonton Tourism Master Plan. Our pillars give us a direction to rally around, and they offer a set of shared goals that highlight what we must do extremely well to achieve our aspirations for the future. Together with the Tourism Master Plan we are guided at the highest level on what is most important to our shareholder, Indigenous partners, stakeholders, and clients.

Throughout this report we will refer to these pillars as we showcase our achievements from 2022 and the strides we have taken to reignite the visitor economy in Edmonton.



TOURISM MASTER PLAN

When solidifying our identity as a destination management and marketing organization, it was clear we needed to establish guidance around future tourism development. In 2021, in collaboration with industry and community, we created our 10-year Tourism Master Plan.

MARKETING & SALES

Our sales and marketing decisions drive demand for Edmonton experiences, support stakeholders' business performance, and build ambassadors for Edmonton across local, domestic, and international markets.

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

We operate with a continuous improvement mindset, leaning into our creative strengths in all aspects of our operations. Scalability is key in all operations and flexibility in our support services is essential to serving our Shareholder needs.

SOCIAL PROSPERITY

We contribute to the social prosperity of Edmonton by supporting local producers, partners and community groups as well as providing a workplace of choice for our own employees.

SUSTAINABILITY

We invest in environmental and social sustainability as it benefits us all today and into the future.



WE SECURED FUNDING TO HELP US BUILD OUT THESE PLANS.

Indigenous tourism is a growing area of interest for travelers across Canada and around the globe, and a natural platform for reconciliation. For Indigenous tourism operators, it is about more than enriching travelers' experiences – Indigenous tourism is a tool for reconciliation. It's an opportunity to share culture, history, and traditions with the world. The Indigenous Tourism Strategy will help develop a foundation for growing Indigenous tourism in our city in a way that is meaningful, authentic, and rooted in reconciliation.

Regenerative tourism addresses impacts holistically, from destination and community perspectives, as well as environmentally – we want our tourists and locals to leave the destination in a better condition than they find it. The Regenerative Tourism Strategy aims to encourage tourism policies and business practices that protect our unique sense of place and not only sustain, but benefit, both our natural and cultural assets.

The nighttime economy refers to the social, cultural, and economic activities that occur in the evening and throughout the night, including entertainment, sports and recreation, the arts, bars, food service, hospitality, and more. Working in complete collaboration with the City, we are investing in our nighttime culture with the goal of nurturing creative industries, developing a sense of uniqueness, and attracting a variety of visitors. Outcomes will include a strategic overview that will help inform and impact social advocacy, safety, policing, licensing, public sentiment, and vibrancy. Our strategic partner assisting with this initiative will undertake a week-long nighttime audit, assessing all the above.

Public and industry engagement is underway for each of these strategies and the plans will be delivered by April 2023.

TOURISM MASTER PLAN

Explore Edmonton's 10-year Tourism Master Plan provides direction, a shared idea of what we want to accomplish and how we can get there. Our goal is to grow the visitor economy in Edmonton to welcome 8.7 million visitors, spending upwards of \$2.7 billion in our economy by 2030. The eight strategic priorities and the whopping 57 recommendations outlined in the Tourism Master Plan will help us get there. But we've got to start small to ensure all recommendations are implemented properly.

In 2022, we prioritized three initiatives:

- Indigenous Tourism Strategy
- Regenerative Tourism Strategy
- Nighttime Economy Strategy



MARKETING & SALES



SHINING A SPOTLIGHT ON EDMONTON



From attracting coveted sporting, cultural, and business events, to promoting local attractions with a uniquely Edmonton flavour, our teams at Explore Edmonton help elevate Edmonton's experiences and tourism products through strategic marketing platforms and campaigns, driving year-round visitation and generating significant economic impact for the visitor economy.

Through an always-on marketing strategy and dedicated marketing campaigns, the team delivers emotionally engaging content. In 2022, ExploreEdmonton.com surpassed its goal of 2 million site visits by 65 per cent, ending at almost 3 million site visits. In terms of traffic, paid digital advertising generated 46 per cent more traffic to ExploreEdmonton.com when compared to 2021 along with 877 thousand organic sessions highlighted by the success of our overarching SEO strategy.

Our 2022 Festival City consumer campaign was the highest revenue generating campaign of 2022 with 1,998 room nights representing \$368,275.35 in Edmonton's hotel revenue. Our analytics show more than 69 million impressions, 115 thousand organic engagements on social media, and 286.6 thousand clicks through Google search, display, CBC Native Tiles, and post media banner ads. In addition, the campaign landing page had 222 thousand pageviews and generated more than 15 thousand referrals to festival partner websites.

In addition to our many successful marketing campaigns, our Travel Trade and Travel Media teams also helped to share Edmonton's tourism experiences and products with different places around the world. With over 60 pieces of travel media coverage in 2022, our team was able to secure 184.8 million total media impressions in 2022, putting Edmonton on a global stage.



2022 MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS

SOCIAL MEDIA
 IMPRESSIONS
161,890,099
 ENGAGEMENTS
3,026,309

WEBSITE
 TOTAL WEB SESSIONS
2,978,499
 PAGEVIEWS
4,420,659
 USERS
2,307,209

Our Travel Media team pitched (and hosted) freelance writer Jessica Wynne Lockhart on a story about Indigenous experiences in Edmonton and area with the Globe & Mail as the target outlet. Indigenous tourism's role in reconciliation in Northern Alberta was published on globeandmail.com on February 9, 2022. The article includes Métis Crossing, Talking Rock Tours, and Fort Edmonton Park's Indigenous Peoples Experience. The globeandmail.com sees 8.812 million impressions, and this article received a Media Quality Score of 10/10.

As a result of presenting to National Geographic Traveler editors, 5 top spots for slow travel in 2023 was published on October 26, 2022. The article highlights Alberta as a leader in Indigenous tourism and mentions Elk Island National Park as a place to learn about cultural history through guided interpretive programs and Cree workshops. The online publication sees 6.478 million impressions.

Explore Edmonton's Travel Trade team hosted six familiarization (FAM) trips in Edmonton, targeted at key international markets such as the Netherlands, Denmark, the United Kingdom, France, China, Japan, and the United States of America. In addition, the team also hosted 45 tour operators in Edmonton, and attended four in-person marketplaces with the intention of showcasing all that Edmonton has to offer. Additionally, with the big news of a direct flight from Frankfurt to Edmonton that is launching in May 2023, our team embarked on their first post-pandemic international sales mission to the Netherlands and Belgium with the goal of training 50 tour operators on all things Edmonton tourism.

BRINGING EVENTS TO EDMONTON

In 2022, our teams were able to secure several major events and conferences that helped Edmonton to shine on a global stage. Here are some notables:



THE STYLE EXPERIENCE FIS BIG AIR WORLD CUP

On December 10th, Edmonton hosted The Style Experience – Canada's first ever stadium Snowboard FIS Big Air World Cup, featuring the largest jump built inside a stadium and Canada's first in-stadium event. This event was four years in the making and required a tremendous number of resources, support, and dedication from Explore Edmonton's Sport & Culture, Event Development, and Marketing teams. Despite Edmonton's cold temperatures, Commonwealth

Stadium was filled with over 15,000 fans and brought in \$5 million in direct economic impact.

Explore Edmonton's Event Development team helped to facilitate a partnership that resulted in Canada Snowboard and the Mark McMorris Foundation donating a total of \$30,000 towards the Alberta Indigenous Snowboard Program which will be managed by the Indigenous Sport Council of Alberta.

SPORTS EVENTS CONGRESS

In November, Explore Edmonton's Sport and Culture team – alongside Sport Tourism Canada and the City of Edmonton – hosted the 2022 Sport Events Congress (SEC22). This congress is the largest annual gathering of the sport industry in Canada and resulted in an economic impact reaching just over \$540,000 and close to 400 attendees. We were proud to bring attendees to The Common, Fu's Repair Shop, and 9910 for food, drinks, and live music one night, and out to Rogers Place for an Oilers game on another night.

Another win during SEC22 was the incredible work the Event Development team did for the Sport & (Re)creation Plenary Session during the conference. Program planning was a collaboration between Explore Edmonton, Hunter Cardinal at Naheyawin, and former Sport Tourism Canada President, Grant MacDonald. We're grateful for the wisdom and openness that was shared by Hunter and his colleagues. This was the first time Indigenous athlete perspectives and stories were shared and celebrated at the Sport Events Congress.



Not only were we fortunate enough to see these events through in 2022, but we were also able to secure new business and ensure events will be hosted in our city for the coming years.

In 2022, we also secured the following events:

- 2023 Minto Cup
- 2023 Football Canada Cup
- 2023 Canadian Team Wrestling Trials
- 2023 Men's Final 6 Pan Am Volleyball
- 2023 Canadian Baton Twirling Championships
- 2023 Alberta Indigenous Games
- 2023 CFL Senior Showcase
- 2023 JUNO Awards
- 2024 U SPORTS Women's Basketball Championship
- 2024 IFAF World Junior Championship





In addition to the sport and cultural events that our teams have secured, Explore Edmonton is proud to attract numerous business events, meetings, and conferences. These business events are a vital component of Edmonton’s visitor economy, driving room night opportunities and direct economic impact with one of the highest spending groups of visitors.

Here are some of the business events our team was proud to host in 2022:

- Canadian Hydrogen Convention
- 4th International Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Event
- Canadian Women in Aviation
- NanoCanada from Earth to Space Conference
- 2nd World Diversity in Leadership Conference
- Transportation Association of Canada
- Carbon Capture Canada
- Edmonton Global Forward Slash Summit
- 4th Annual MANA Conference



CANADIAN HYDROGEN CONVENTION

Canada is playing a critical role in the development of the global hydrogen economy with innovators in production processes and pioneers in fuel cell technology. To demonstrate Canada’s leadership in hydrogen, the Canadian Hydrogen Convention launched its inaugural event in April 2022 at the Edmonton Convention Centre.

In addition to funding and resources from Explore Edmonton’s Business Events team, the Edmonton Convention Centre (ECC) rose to the challenge and played host to the event. The CHC presented an opportunity for the venue to establish a new standard operating procedure (SOP) to allow hydrogen vehicles to be featured on the trade floor. As a result, thousands of delegates got an up close and personal view of a hydrogen truck and a hydrogen car. ECC also executed an intensive security detail, keeping the building closed to external events for the duration of the conference.

EDMONTON GLOBAL WORKED CLOSELY WITH EXPLORE EDMONTON AND OTHER PARTNERS DURING THE LEAD UP TO THE EVENT. THE FOCUS AND CREATIVITY THAT EXPLORE EDMONTON BROUGHT TO THE TABLE MADE THIS A TRULY MEMORABLE EVENT.

- BRENT LAKEMAN
DIRECTOR, HYDROGEN INITIATIVE
EDMONTON GLOBAL

Due to the success of the Canadian Hydrogen Convention, DMG Events quickly announced plans for an ancillary event to be hosted at the Edmonton Convention Centre in September of the same year – Carbon Capture Canada. They also announced their intention to host the Canadian Hydrogen Convention in Edmonton for at least the next nine years.

The Canadian Hydrogen Convention delivered a Direct Economic Impact of approximately \$1.8 million and supported nearly 800 jobs in Edmonton.

In addition to attracting world-class events to our own backyard here in Edmonton, our team is proud of the events that have been produced and ran by our powerhouse event teams. Here are some notable events that we are proud to share:



K-DAYS

The return of K-Days, post-pandemic, proved tremendously successful with an eight per cent increase in attendance over 2019. Guests had the opportunity to enjoy the familiar sights, sounds, and smells of the midway and to experience entertainment, attractions, and vendors inside the Edmonton EXPO Centre and across the exhibition grounds.

In 2022, we received funding from PrairiesCan to support reimagining the K-Days event. This is truly a once in a generation opportunity to re-imagine and re-establish our fair as an economic driver and cultural touchstone for our community. When the exhibition started in 1879, our community was a very different place. Today our growing community is diverse, complex and dynamic, and the future of K-Days will reflect that richness.

This funding will also allow us to support our community's economic recovery from COVID by creating more opportunities for local businesses, local artists and performers, and create fundraising opportunities for community non-profits. Strategic Planning is underway, and we are excited to reimagine this event with our community.



2022 K-DAYS HIGHLIGHTS

NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH THE INDIGENOUS EDMONTON ENTERTAINMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION TO PRODUCE THE INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCE

COLLABORATION WITH LA CITÉ FRANCOPHONE TO PRODUCE THE GREAT FRENCH CANADIAN KITCHEN PARTY

CAMARADERIE ACROSS MULTIFUNCTIONAL EXPLORE EDMONTON TEAMS



FARMAIR INTERNATIONAL

For over 45 years, Farmfair International (FFI) has been one of Canada's top agricultural shows and is Alberta's largest beef cattle show. Farmfair sees exhibitors from across western Canada gather to showcase their top livestock genetics to purebred producers, local ranchers and international buyers, and is a critical touchpoint for the beef industry. The 2022 event, produced by our Community Initiatives and Agriculture (CIA) team under Explore Edmonton, saw amazing growth in attendance and exhibitor numbers with over 1,500 livestock entries.



EDMONTON PRO RODEO

The Edmonton Pro Rodeo (EPR) brings the best rodeo athletes from across North America to the Edmonton EXPO Centre for the last stop of the season before the Canadian Finals Rodeo. A partnership between C5 Rodeo and Explore Edmonton, the Edmonton Pro Rodeo is sanctioned by the CPRA, PRCA, and WRPA and is a qualifying stop on the official Canadian rodeo schedule. The inaugural year in 2022 saw attendance and sponsorships out-perform targets.

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE



LEADING THE INDUSTRY FORWARD

At Explore Edmonton, we operate with a continuous improvement mindset, ensuring that our team has the best practices in place for all aspects of our operations.



CULINARY EXCELLENCE

In 2022, Chef Serge Belair and the Edmonton Convention Centre culinary team took home the top prize at Canada's Great Kitchen Party, where the team was tasked to create a signature dish paired with a Canadian wine, beer, or spirit. This victory qualified Chef Serge for the Canadian Culinary Championship in Ottawa in February 2023.

RESEARCH

Over the past year, an online repository of the most current research and market trends was created by our research team to assist in internal decision making. An external-facing research web page on the Explore Edmonton Industry website, that will be launching in early 2023, is being built specifically for our stakeholder audience. Additionally, our team worked with external research groups to explore potential marketing opportunities within Canada, as well as resident sentiment research to identify how Explore Edmonton can support our community and build local stewardship.

TRAINING

In 2022, our team was proud to offer two Naloxone training sessions for staff to take part in. All Explore Edmonton reception desks are now equipped with Naloxone kits, with the awareness that only trained staff can have access to these resources. Full-time building security at both of our venues are required to be trained in how to administer injectable and nasal naloxone.

Over 50 venue employees participated in Workplace Violence and De-escalation training throughout the year. This course was designed to give employees the proper skills needed to effectively respond to and safely manage a full range of behaviors ranging from low-level agitation and verbal abuse, to escalated behaviors. This critical training helps employees gain an understanding of their role in responding to unplanned situations that can arise in our venues.



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

With the principle of continuous improvement and long-term sustainability at the heart of our organization, we adapt our processes, tools, systems, and reporting to ensure we can support our goal to build a strong future that offers economic and social prosperity as well as environmental sustainability. Achievements include:

- Renewal of the Veterans Plaza and the Grierson Hill roadway and loading dock at the Edmonton Convention Centre with new pavers that welcome clients, guests, and the community.
- Our Shared Services team worked to develop and implement a talent strategy with the goal of attracting and retaining quality employees.
- Internally, our Shared Services team began creating an updated compensation philosophy and new pay band structure based on 60th percentile of peer market (P60).
- Edmonton Convention Centre LED lighting upgrades, providing energy reduction and efficiency.
- Edmonton EXPO Centre became an On the Road to Zero Waste Recognized Facility by Zero Waste Canada and the Zero Waste International Alliance.
- Edmonton Convention Centre embraced state-of-the-art Air Quality Monitoring technology – an important step in our facility air quality management plan, Infectious Disease Prevention (GBAC Star) and in achieving BOMA Best facility accreditation. In addition, the Edmonton EXPO Centre received the NAFA Clean Air Award, as well as also achieving GBAC Certification.
- Edmonton EXPO Centre installed ORCA Aerobic Digestion Technology as an in-house solution for food waste and organics.
- Our Shared Services team worked to develop an IT Strategic Roadmap that will help ensure that our internal systems and infrastructure are secure.
- Internally, we launched a new Sustainability Learning and Development Track which includes six customized training courses to build awareness and foster a culture of responsible operations at Explore Edmonton.



SOCIAL PROSPERITY



CREATING A CULTURE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Building a truly inclusive culture doesn't happen by accident. At Explore Edmonton, we expect that everyone should be able to feel safe and included in their interactions with others, whether that is at an event, in their working environment, or in our city. With intention, Explore Edmonton's EDI council is setting out to create meaningful impact and change for our teams and for our city. In the second year of operation, our EDI Council is proud of these achievements:

- National Day for Truth & Reconciliation (NDTR): recognized by Explore Edmonton on our Holiday calendar for all employees. The EDI Council has played a key role in advocating for NDTR and provides education and resources surrounding the history and meaning of the day.
- EDI Flex Days: for those with paid days off, we have included two flex days intended for use throughout the year for special days not provincially observed.
- Pronouns: the EDI Council has encouraged the use of pronouns in our staff email signatures and promoted education regarding the importance of using correct pronouns.
- EDI Learning: the EDI Council organizes training throughout the year for EEC staff.



URBAN FARM

The Edmonton Urban Farm is a two-acre community hub for urban agriculture, education, and sustainability. Established in 2014, the Urban Farm connects people to food and farming within the city limits. Over 300 people from 20 different organizations, such as Multicultural Health Brokers and Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, use the Edmonton Urban Farm. In 2022, Explore Edmonton was thrilled to see the Edmonton Urban Farm awarded the Alberta Emerald Award in the Land Category, an award which recognizes projects that demonstrate excellence in sustainable land use.



FLAIR AIRLINES SECURES NAMING RIGHTS TO THE EDMONTON EXPO CENTRE'S HALL D ARENA

In late November, Flair Airlines, Canada's everyday low fare airline, announced that Hall D at the Edmonton EXPO Centre has officially been named The Flair Airlines Hangar at the Edmonton EXPO Centre.

The Flair Airlines Hangar at the Edmonton EXPO Centre will proudly welcome sports, music, live performances and community events. Notably, The Flair Airlines Hangar at the Edmonton EXPO Centre is the home of the Canadian Elite Basketball League's (CEBL) Edmonton Stingers, who will play home games at the newly named arena starting in May 2023. The arena is in the final stages of a multi-million-dollar revitalization and features, most notably, new seats to increase comfort for spectators.

“ WE ARE PROUD TO CALL YEG HOME AND AS AN EDMONTON-BASED COMPANY, WE ARE THRILLED TO SHOWCASE OUR COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY AND INVEST IN A CHERISHED SPACE THAT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER. - STEPHEN JONES CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER FLAIR AIRLINES ”



VENUE SPOTLIGHT

Our venues are pillars in the community, providing immense value for Edmontonians and visitors. The events that are hosted at both the Edmonton Convention Centre and Edmonton EXPO Centre drive visitation and give our city a brand and reputational boost. They also provide a space for people to come together, to celebrate, to sing and dance, and share in one-of-a-kind experiences. It's those shared experiences, that sense of community, that helps make Edmonton a great place to live, work, and play.



VOLLEYBALL CANADA YOUTH NATIONALS (SUPERNATIONALS)

From May 18 – 24th, the 2022 Volleyball Canada Youth Nationals was hosted at the Edmonton EXPO Centre. 11,218 participants representing almost 800 teams from all over Canada gathered in Alberta’s capital to battle for a chance at the national championship in 15U–18U age categories.

This 7-day athletic competition featured 54 volleyball courts in all eight of the EXPO Centre halls. Additional space was used for parent lounges, live entertainment, local markets, and food trucks – utilizing a total of 472,037 square feet of space. Additionally, this event brought in a tremendous direct economic impact of \$18 million.

Additional achievements in 2022 include:

- The Edmonton Convention Centre acted as the Papal Media Centre during the Papal visit.
- The Edmonton EXPO Centre completed phase one of the Solar Installation project. Around 5,754 solar panels have been installed across 193,735.5 square feet above Halls D through H.
- The Edmonton Convention Centre hosted Animethon with an estimated number of over 14, 000 attendees over the span of three days. This was the largest attendance of the event to date.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Throughout 2022, Explore Edmonton has increased focus on stakeholder engagement and community alignment, because we believe that no community initiative can succeed without the local community sharing the same vision. With that in mind, we created a number of local engagement opportunities for Edmontonians to help get them excited about and invested in tourism in Edmonton.



MENTORSHIP MOMENT

As part of Women's History Month, Explore Edmonton hosted a 'Mentorship Moment' webinar to showcase the incredible female leaders in the tourism and hospitality industry. It offered an opportunity for young women (and men) to learn about the tourism and hospitality industry and be inspired by women who are leading the way. The panel included Explore Edmonton's CEO Traci Bednard, Senior Vice President at Fort Edmonton Management Company Renee Williams, as well as entrepreneur and owner at Fleisch Delikatessen Katy Ingraham, and the event was moderated by CTV news anchor Nahreman Issa.

CORPORATE CLEAN UP CHALLENGE

Explore Edmonton brought together employees, local businesses and organizations, as well as Edmontonians to support the cleanup of our river valley, downtown core, and Old Strathcona with two corporate clean up challenges in 2022. We were thrilled to see over 100 participants at each event. While we have many large initiatives, such as supporting carbon neutral events at our venues, we also know that the small, everyday actions can have a big impact. Our team members are happy to roll up their sleeves, pick up litter, and do their part in supporting the environmental sustainability of our city.



WHY TOURISM MATTERS PANEL

As small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) constitute the backbone of tourism in Canada, accounting for 99.9 per cent of businesses in tourism industries, Explore Edmonton partnered with the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce to offer a tourism-focused event for small businesses in our city. The panel included small business owners in the tourism industry and tourism experts from our city. This expert panel investigated the key elements of tourism's impact on small businesses and how we can use it to grow and aid our small business community.

PARTNERSHIPS

Explore Edmonton is proud to have many amazing partners throughout the city. Each of these partnerships help us in our efforts to grow the visitor economy in Edmonton.

In 2022, Explore Edmonton and Edmonton Destination Marketing Hotels (EDMH) finalized a memorandum of understanding. EDMH has been supporting EEC for nine years, but creating an official partnership aligns the approaches and goals. EDMH provides millions of dollars in support for leveraging and marketing major events that come to our city. Our two organizations working together creates a powerhouse in event attraction and will be drivers in economic recovery following the pandemic.

Explore Edmonton is also proud to have a memorandum of understanding with Indigenous Tourism Alberta. With this partnership, we aim to help build awareness and positive recognition for Indigenous tourism and to act as public stewards to create and inspire change for the betterment of the Indigenous community.

We are grateful for the opportunity to work with many community partners, including the Tourism Industry Association of Alberta, the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, Edmonton Global, Edmonton Unlimited, Oilers Entertainment Group, Edmonton Downtown Business Association, Old Strathcona Business Association, and many other incredible partners.



SUSTAINABILITY



CONTRIBUTING TO A REGENERATIVE VISITOR ECONOMY

Today's travelers are increasingly aware of the impact travel has on the people and the places that they visit. Environmental conscious travel is on the rise and we've gotten in on the ground floor of this shift, encouraging tourism policies and business practices that protect our unique sense of place and not only sustain, but benefit both our natural and cultural assets. We've laid the groundwork to make Edmonton's tourism industry sustainable, and our efforts differentiate Edmonton in a global marketplace.

In 2022, our Sustainability team launched the highly anticipated Responsible Events Program (REP). Amongst other offerings, this program includes Explore Edmonton's Carbon Neutral Event program. An offer, the only of its kind in Canada, that makes it possible for events that choose Edmonton to achieve Carbon Neutral status, essentially balancing out their event emissions footprint. With the Sustainability team's help in 2022, we had seven events that achieved Carbon Neutral status, eliminating 1,285 mtCO₂e from the atmosphere. That's equal to the CO₂ emissions from over 2,900 barrels of oil consumed or 859 homes' electricity use for one year!

Through the work of our sustainability experts, we became the first city in Western Canada to join the Global Destination Sustainability Movement (GDS-Movement). To measure and improve our sustainability strategies, the GDS-Movement holds us accountable as a DMMO. Edmonton completed its second year of the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-I) in October 2022. Explore Edmonton improved ranking on the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-I) by 5 per cent, including a 23 per cent increase in the DMO criteria. This index allows us to see how Edmonton performs compared to other cities worldwide, as a sustainable destination.

Explore Edmonton's Sustainability team conducted 25 educational tours and/or customized consultations for tourism partners, industry groups, academic institutions, and community organizations reaching over 500 individuals with knowledge, awareness, and inspiration for important sustainability related lessons.



IT IS NO HIDDEN FACT THAT SUSTAINABILITY IS A JOURNEY. MAKING AN IMPACT STARTS AT A COMMUNITY LEVEL AND CAN TAKE TIME AND ENGAGEMENT, AND OUR TEAM IS READY TO PUT IN THE LONG-TERM EFFORT FOR ACTIONABLE RESULTS.

- JOSEF LEGASPI
SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR, PROJECT SPECIALIST

In the interests of the community and clients we serve, Explore Edmonton has committed to tracking, monitoring, and reducing our emissions on an annual basis by embedding greenhouse gas emissions into our key performance measures. It is through this work that we can improve the quality of life of Edmonton's residents and ensure the longevity of our operations and the planet. Which is why our team is proud to have published Explore Edmonton's Carbon Reduction Plan 2022; a report detailing our progress towards reducing our corporate emissions by 30 per cent by 2035.

FINANCIALS

EXPLORE EDMONTON CORPORATION ANNUAL REPORT TABLES DECEMBER 31, 2022

Summary Financial Results for the Year ended December 31, 2022			
SUMMARY STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS	2022 Actual	2022 Budget	2021 Actual
City of Edmonton	18,843,000	18,762,000	21,846,157
External Revenues	52,679,661	44,963,697	21,594,817
	71,522,661	63,725,696	43,440,974
Operating & Program Expenses	68,933,611	65,752,965	38,756,479
Operating surplus before amortization & interest	2,589,049	(2,027,268)	4,684,495
Net Amortization	803,263	616,360	706,807
Interest	149,028	308,083	159,357
Assets required from Northlands Edmonton	-	-	(900,487)
	952,292	924,442	(34,323)
Net surplus (deficit) for the year	1,636,758	(2,951,710)	4,718,818

EXPLORE EDMONTON CORPORATION ANNUAL REPORT TABLES DECEMBER 31, 2022

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	2022	2021
ASSETS		
Current Assets	25,252,970	21,748,618
Long-term Assets	5,966,713	6,910,931
Total Assets	31,219,683	28,659,549
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities	20,369,132	19,073,563
Long-term Liabilities	3,705,679	4,077,871
Total Liabilities	24,074,811	23,151,434
Share Capital and Net Assets		
Share Capital	100	100
Net Assets	7,144,772	5,508,015
Total Liabilities, Share Capital and Net Assets	31,219,683	28,659,549

**EXPLORE
EDMONTON**