



EXPLORE EDMONTON

2021 BUSINESS PLAN

**EXPLORE
EDMONTON**

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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INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2020, Edmonton's City Council chose to rescope Edmonton Economic Development Corporation by focusing its mandate on the city's economic development ecosystem to the visitor economy and venue management spaces.

Explore Edmonton Corporation (Explore Edmonton) emerges as Edmonton's visitor economy and venue management organization. We tell Edmonton's story, elevate the Edmonton experience, and generate inbound visitation.

Explore Edmonton is an agency of the City of Edmonton, governed by a board of directors.

Managing two award-winning venues – the Edmonton Convention Centre and Edmonton EXPO Centre – the know-how to enhance, execute and support major sport and cultural events, and the commitment to develop products and experiences that are authentic to Edmonton, we strive to make the visitor experience unforgettable.

Edmonton's visitor economy has been growing every year with visitors coming to our city from around the globe. In 2019, visitors to our city and our venues contributed over \$258 million at local businesses.

When the visitor economy grows, so does Edmonton!



A man with a beard and a bun, wearing a dark jacket and a life vest, is paddling a red canoe on a river. In the background, there is a city skyline with several high-rise buildings and a line of trees with yellow autumn foliage.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

The world needs more Edmonton. Visitors and locals alike, need more reasons to explore Edmonton. These principles will drive everything we do in 2021.

Explore Edmonton is positioned to play an integral role in creating a vibrant economic ecosystem for the City of Edmonton and contributing to a high quality of life for our citizens.

Our 2021 Business Plan directly aligns with our multi-year Strategic Road Map and is focused to take on the challenges and opportunities being faced by our partners and businesses that support jobs and economic growth in our city. Our industry has been hit first, hit hard and it will take leadership, collaboration, and creativity to support the people who work within the visitor economy.

This plan is about partnerships and results. It is about public stewardship and respect for our community and those who make it their home.

Continued investment in Edmonton's visitor economy, creative thinking and building on our successes will play an important role in our city's economic recovery and job creation, which will position Edmonton as a city on the rise.

The Explore Edmonton team will continue to create ambassadors and host visitors and guests through all four seasons – making Edmonton a year-round destination of choice.

With responsibility for leading the industry relaunch, recovery, and rebuilding Edmonton's visitor economy, Explore Edmonton has a significant task ahead in 2021 – and we are up to that challenge.

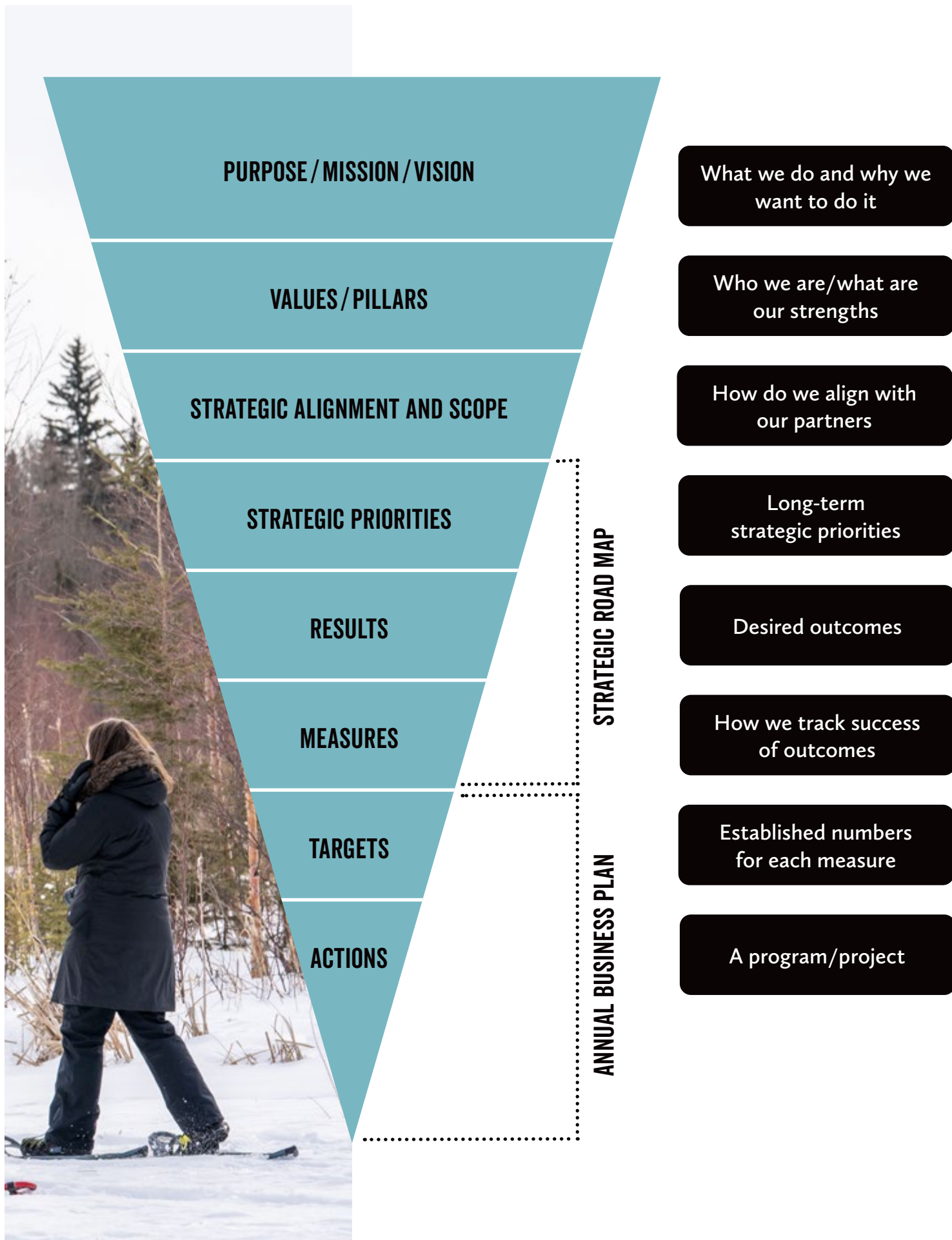
This is our role and this is our commitment to our City and citizens who make Edmonton a great place to live, work, play and visit.

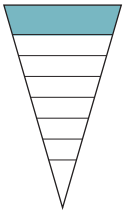
Maggie Davison
Interim CEO
Explore Edmonton

OUR STRATEGIC ROAD MAP

Before creating a business plan, it is essential to review and understand who we are as an organization. Our purpose, mission, and vision shape all our programs, services, and projects. The image on the next page depicts how we plan.







PURPOSE, MISSION, VISION

We are aligned through a unified purpose, mission, and vision to increase the economic impact of the visitor-based economy in Edmonton:

PURPOSE

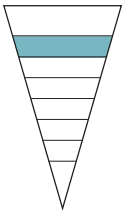
Increase the economic impact of the visitor-based economy in Edmonton.

MISSION

To showcase and inspire more people to visit Edmonton for exceptional experiences, while also enriching the quality of life for residents and creating economic prosperity.

VISION

Edmonton will be a destination of choice, delivering year-round transformational visitor and guest experiences.



VALUES

Our values describe the core ethics and principles that guide and inspire us. They reflect appropriate workplace behaviour and play an important role in building a positive culture.

PUBLIC STEWARDSHIP

We have been given a tremendous responsibility – to be stewards of public trust as well as the architect of bold ideas.

LEAD THE WAY

We step up. Start something. Change something. Connect and support others who are willing to take a risk – on our teams, in our city.

SELFLESS APPROACH

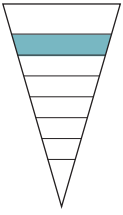
Everything we do is done in collaboration – within our teams, across our organization and with our stakeholders / clients – and when we win, we win together.

MAKE AN IMPACT

When every action, big or small, can make an impact, every action contributes to building a city that matters.

CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER

We have a genuine commitment to the success of each other, our Shareholder, and our community.



PILLARS OF EXCELLENCE

Our four pillars of excellence describe what we must do extremely well to achieve our aspirations for the future as a visitor economy and venue management leader. These are written as if we have achieved the level of excellence we seek and are referred to in the development of our strategy and our priorities. They serve to continually remind us, at the highest level, what is most important to our Shareholder, stakeholders, and clients.

MARKETING & SALES

Our sales and marketing decisions drive demand for Edmonton experiences, support stakeholders' business performance, and builds ambassadors for Edmonton.

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

We operate with a continuous improvement mindset, ensuring that we have best practices in place for all aspects of our operations. Scalability is key in all operations and flexibility in our support services is the key to serving our Shareholder needs.

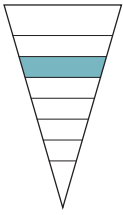
SOCIAL PROSPERITY

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.





STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT AND SCOPE

Explore Edmonton is an agency of the City of Edmonton, governed by a board of directors. Our leadership, partnerships and collaborative approach to shared outcomes are essential for ultimate success in building a prosperous city and region. Our strategy aligns with the City of Edmonton's economic development plans and goals. As a key partner in Edmonton's economic development ecosystem, our work includes strategic collaboration to maximize the collective economic and social impacts to the overall prosperity of our city. Partnership examples include:

- Government (all levels)
- Not-for-profits (e.g. Edmonton Global, Edmonton Destination Marketing Hotels Assoc.)
- Industry partners (e.g. EIA, Travel Alberta, Indigenous Tourism Assoc.)
- Visitor economy sector stakeholders (e.g. hotels, restaurants, attractions)
- Business community (e.g. Chamber of Commerce)





STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Our strategic priorities define our high-level strategic intent for the next three years. Each priority includes a brief description and is what informs our results map.

1 STRENGTHEN EDMONTON EXPERIENCES AND EVENTS

We work in partnerships to enhance existing and develop new experiences and events to meet the needs of guests, visitors, and stakeholders. This includes increasing our investment in event growth as part of the Major Event Growth & Attraction (MEGA) strategy approved by City Council. Additionally, environmental and social sustainability will be key differentiators that can be incorporated in these offerings.

2 INCREASE AWARENESS AND ATTRACTION

We are improving our marketing and sales efforts by acting as one team. This will be accomplished through quality research, enhanced partner relations, and leveraging Edmonton ambassadors, which will help in targeting and prioritizing activities to build awareness and ultimately attract guests/visitors.

We undertake marketing and communication activities that build awareness and positive recognition for Edmonton. With our understanding of various target audiences, we deliver content that is emotionally engaging and inspires guests/visitors to action. This content can also be shared by our partners and ambassadors for Edmonton to drive attendance to events in Edmonton and in the venues.

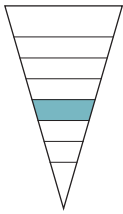
We will improve our sales efforts to secure more opportunities that best match Edmonton's strengths, as well as focus on retaining existing clients. Our roles are clearly defined, and messages are unified within Explore Edmonton and across all stakeholders to put us in the best possible position to attract events.

3 IMPROVE EMPLOYEE, GUEST/VISITOR, AND STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION

We are strengthening our relationship with our employees, guests/visitors, and various stakeholders by delivering exceptional experiences or services. We strive to gain an increased understanding of each of their needs, which provides a foundation for improvement opportunities as well as more effective and constructive partnerships.

4 IMPROVE OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

We will achieve operational excellence across the organization by using best practices to support the delivery of our priorities. With the principle of continuous improvement and long-term sustainability, we will adapt our processes, tools, systems, and reporting to ensure we make sound and timely business decisions that are evidence-based. This will support our goal of building a strong future that offers economic and social prosperity as well as environmental sustainability.



RESULTS MAP

Our results map demonstrates all the desired results we need to achieve. It was developed based on our purpose, vision, and mission as well as our strategic priorities as outlined earlier. On the map below, we have identified four different kinds of results, starting from the centre, and working our way out. The diagram illustrates the inter-connectedness of our actions.



- cause-effect →
- conflict ↔
- companion •—•
- lead-lag —→

- Success/Sustainability Result:** our core results that demonstrate the success we create for the city and our Shareholder.
- Current Strategic Result:** results that we attain through our strategic initiatives.
- Process Result:** results achieved at the operational level, focused primarily on key organizational processes.
- Critical Activity Result:** results of tactical activities undertaken by each team.

2021 BUSINESS PLAN



MEASURES | TARGETS | ACTIONS

Using the results map, we have identified measures that would provide evidence that we are achieving these results. The focus will be on a key set of organizational performance measures; actions identified in this plan are in service to delivering on these performance measures.





1 ECONOMIC IMPACT

MEASURE DESCRIPTION

Economic impact (EI) is a broad term with several accepted definitions. In general, it is the effect on various economic indicators for a region, such as employment, taxes generated or GDP. For the Visitor Economy, this may include a tourist visiting Edmonton, a large sports event occurring, a convention/trade show that we attract to our city, or a new tourism-related business opening or expanding.

PRIORITY LINK

- Increase Awareness and Attraction

RESULTS LINK

- Stakeholders receive a high rate of return from investments in our programs
- Maximized direct economic impact

2021 TARGETS – ECONOMIC IMPACT (DIRECT*)

Venues	\$22M
Visitor Economy	\$83M
TOTAL	\$105M

**Explore Edmonton reports direct EI as it reflects the direct results of our work; although there is also indirect and induced economic impact, it is not included.*

2021 KEY ACTIONS

- Improve targeted sales approach focusing on event retention and adjusting events/ audiences targeted based on ever changing realities of the visitor economy landscape.
 - Participation in a virtual Rendez-vous Canada (RVC) event in 2021
- Implement new tools, programs, and services in support of marketing and sales activities:
 - Implement software tools (e.g. marketing analytics software, 3D venue modelling and tour software, digital “flip-books”)
 - Establish Envision Edmonton, a new lead generating program
 - Improve analysis and return on investment from our marketing activity
- Develop comprehensive marketing and communications plans to build awareness and advocacy of the visitor economy in the Edmonton region, and promote the service and support we provide our stakeholders.
 - Targeted research to attract, increase and extend visitation; working collaboratively across the organization and with partners.

2 NET PROMOTER SCORE | STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION

MEASURE DESCRIPTION

Every action we undertake is to ensure that our guests/visitors, stakeholders/partners, and employees have positive experiences at our venues, in Edmonton, and in our place of work. If we do this right, we expect they will recommend our venues, our city, or our organization to others. The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a single question asked as part of a survey about a respondent's likelihood to recommend based on a scale from 0-10. Based on their rating, they are classified as a promoter, detractor, or neutral.

PRIORITY LINK

- Strengthen Edmonton Experiences and Events
- Increase Awareness and Attraction
- Improve Employee, Guest/Visitor, and Stakeholder Satisfaction
- Improve Operational Excellence

RESULTS LINK

- Edmonton has experiences to market year-round
- Guests, visitors and Edmontonians are inspired to engage with our platforms, programs and services
- Employees, guests and stakeholders are supported by our programs and services
- Improved organizational image
- We are an employer of choice

2021 TARGETS

- NPS

Visitor Economy (stakeholders)	35
Venues (clients)	40
Venues (guests)	40
Employees (proxy)	27

- Employee Engagement – 75%

2021 KEY ACTIONS

- Create 10-year Tourism Master Plan to develop and grow experiences / events in collaboration with stakeholders and with a focus on long-term sustainability (economic, environmental, and social).
- Implement systems and processes to build confidence that our venues/offices/spaces are among the safest places to work and plan/attend events.
- Improve systems and processes to achieve operational efficiencies and drive decision-making, which will benefit employees as well as guests/visitors

3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (GHG) | ENVIRONMENTAL

MEASURE DESCRIPTION

Explore Edmonton is committed to environmental sustainability and are participants in the City of Edmonton's Corporate Climate Leaders Program. Our goal is to achieve a 15% reduction (from 2018 levels) by 2025 and 30% by 2030. Emissions are recorded as Scope 1, 2 or 3 in accordance with the principles outlined in the GHG Protocol (GHGP), which is the accounting and reporting standard for GHG emissions used globally. Emissions are recorded based on the level of control the organization has over the energy use or emission sources:

- **SCOPE 1:** Direct GHG emissions – sources owned or controlled by the company
- **SCOPE 2:** Indirect GHG emissions – generation of purchased electricity consumed by the company
- **SCOPE 3:** Other indirect GHG emissions – includes emissions that occur in the value chain of the company

PRIORITY LINK

- Improve Operational Excellence
- Improve Employee, Guest/Visitor, and Stakeholder Satisfaction

RESULTS LINK

- We have a healthy workplace
- Improved organizational image
- We are an employer of choice
- Reduced organizational carbon footprint
- We use best practices in our operations
- Guests share their positive Edmonton experiences

2021 ESTIMATES¹

Preliminary (unofficial) results are available in Q1; official results validated by a third party are generally not available until Q3/Q4.

GHG EMISSIONS	2018	2019	2020 ¹	2021 ^{1,2}
ECC	7,580	7,656	4,248	5,418
EXPO	10,395	9,429	7,596	3,514
Total metric tonnes	17,975	17,085	11,844	8,932

(1) Numbers presented for 2020 and 2021 are estimates for informational purposes (i.e. GHG reduction is not due to intentional actions as COVID-19 restrictions has an impact on emissions); setting targets that Explore Edmonton can strive for will resume in future years.

(2) Assumption based on venue activities as per 2021 annual business plan.

2021 KEY ACTIONS

- Execute greenhouse gas reduction plan for both venues and develop a plan for all of Explore Edmonton.
- Conduct audits of food & beverage inventories, materials/supplies used for events and at our workplace to determine better sustainability options and waste reduction.
- Initiate development of a business case for solar power generation at the EXPO Centre that supports GHG reduction target.

4 EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (EDI)

MEASURE DESCRIPTION

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. We are committed to doing our part in ensuring we entrench and foster EDI in our organizational culture and by supporting our stakeholders in their EDI efforts.

PRIORITY LINK

- Improve Employee, Guest/Visitor, and Stakeholder Satisfaction

RESULTS LINK

- We have a healthy workplace
- Improved organizational image
- We are an employer of choice
- Employees, guests and stakeholders are supported by our programs and services

2021 TARGETS

- Develop baseline for employee EDI sentiment
- Develop additional baseline measures and targets for EDI

2021 KEY ACTIONS

- Establish an EDI Council and further build out the EDI strategy and implementation plan to embed EDI best practices in all aspects of our operations:
 - Build EDI awareness for employees, in alignment with Respectful Workplace training as well as our Core Values
 - Incorporate EDI in recruitment practices
 - Evolve marketing content with an EDI lens
- Develop an implementation plan to provide EDI training to stakeholders, which will ultimately benefit the guest/visitor experience in Edmonton.

5 SOCIAL BENEFIT

MEASURE DESCRIPTION

Explore Edmonton contributes to the social prosperity of our city, whether it's hosting events such as Homeless Connect, providing shelter during a pandemic, or bringing in events that raise awareness for specific industries, sports, or cultures. How we measure this social return is under review.

PRIORITY LINK

- Improve Employee, Guest/Visitor, and Stakeholder Satisfaction

RESULTS LINK

- Our venues are recognized as community hubs
- Improved organizational image

2021 TARGETS

- Establish baseline social benefit measures and targets

2021 KEY ACTIONS

- Determine measure/methodology for tracking social benefit.
- Align and expand opportunities for Explore Edmonton, our stakeholders/partners, as well as our employees to participate in giving back to the community.
- Re-invigorate Explore Edmonton's Caring in the Community program with executive sponsorship and budget.



KEY ASSUMPTIONS

The following key assumptions have been incorporated into the 2021 business plan:

- Venues are anticipating to re-open to the public in September 2021
- Venue fixed costs are consistent throughout the year; variable costs are a function of revenue
- Given COVID-19 impacts, the focus will be on regional and national visitors
- Additional expenses included for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and health & safety requirements
- Contingency is built into the budget to allow for operational flexibility
- Expenses are included to support Startup transition to Innovate Edmonton



GLOSSARY

Action	A specific task, program or project undertaken by a business unit that works towards improving a priority and attaining a result.
Measure	Tools or processes that can be used to track the success and progress of achieving a result linked to a priority.
Mission	Describes what our organization does currently, for who, and how.
Pillars of Excellence	Describes what we must do extremely well to achieve our priorities with improved results now and for the future.
Priority	A high-level summary of strategic expectations.
Purpose	What our organization was created to accomplish.
Results Map	Reveals our intended outcomes that will help us achieve our aspirations for the future and deliver value to our stakeholders.
Shareholder	City of Edmonton
Stakeholder	A broad range of organizations that include government, not-for-profits, industry partners, visitor economy sector stakeholders, and the business community. It also encompasses visitors, clients/guests, and Edmontonians. Stakeholders may vary based on the nature of the work.
Target	An achievable goal that will let us know we have accomplished a result or portion of a result. Ex. 75% Stakeholder satisfaction.
Values	Describes our organizations desired culture.
Vision	Describes the way we envision our organization. It communicates that dream to our employees and customers in an inspirational manner.
Visitor Economy	Direct, indirect, and induced economic activity resulting from visitors' interactions within a destination.

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