

# EXPLORE EDMONTON'S CARBON REDUCTION PLAN

THE PATH TO REDUCING OUR CARBON  
EMISSIONS BY 30% BY 2035

# 2021





# FOREWORD

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all of us over the last nearly two years. It's caused many of us to be hyper aware of how our individual and collective actions may impact the people and environment around us. We have spent more time closely at home with our families and relations that might have us considering, more than ever before, what type of planet are we really leaving behind for future generations?

In 2019, Explore Edmonton set an ambitious target: to reduce our corporate emissions by 30% by 2035. We answered the call from our city, country, and those in the global tourism industry to combat the climate emergency - together. We know that progress requires not just a bold goal, but a thorough plan. We have since established and resourced a growing team of sustainability and emissions experts, dedicated to making emissions reduction activities a priority in our day-to-day decisions. Our objective is to make every business decision with our emissions targets in mind.

In 2021, we became proud recipients of the Corporate Climate Leader of the Year Award - a recognition of the progress we have realized towards our emissions reduction goals since our baseline year of 2018. This award is not only a testament to the hard work underway at Explore Edmonton, but also underlines our purpose: to work resolutely and urgently towards leadership as a sustainable destination management organization.

Today, travel and tourism behaviours fundamentally are producers of emissions. But when we embrace a lower carbon future, and take action towards that future, we set out to create a more sustainable tourism industry - one where our travel and tourism emissions are just a fraction of what they are today. A future where tourism can be regenerative - giving back to our planet and our communities in positively impactful ways. A future where tourism supports a climate resilient Edmonton, Alberta, and planet.



Maggie Davison  
CEO

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the interests of the community and clients we serve, Explore Edmonton is committed to generating positive social, economic, and environmental impact through our operations. We uphold a strong culture of sustainability that supports the City of Edmonton's greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions goals. Environmental sustainability is one of our organizational performance measures and the actions identified in this plan ensure we are delivering on these results.

In previous years, we have released GHG reduction plans for both the Edmonton Convention Centre and the Edmonton EXPO Centre separately, but in line with our One Management Model, we will henceforward be releasing one company-wide GHG emissions reduction plan.

This document represents an update to the 2018 plan and provides the results of Explore Edmonton's 2020 emissions data. We organize our operations into three distinct managed locations: the Edmonton Convention Centre (ECC), the Edmonton EXPO Centre (EXPO) and the World Trade Centre (WTC). This year we included the WTC - 27,569 sq ft of rental office space - as part of our greenhouse gas inventory to accommodate all our company's operations and updated our 2019 and 2018 emissions to reflect this new change. Our total emission is now 20,265.35 tCO<sub>2</sub>e and 19,357.96 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, respectively.

Our 2020 total emission is 12,593.03 tCO<sub>2</sub>e which is a 37.82% reduction from the previous year.

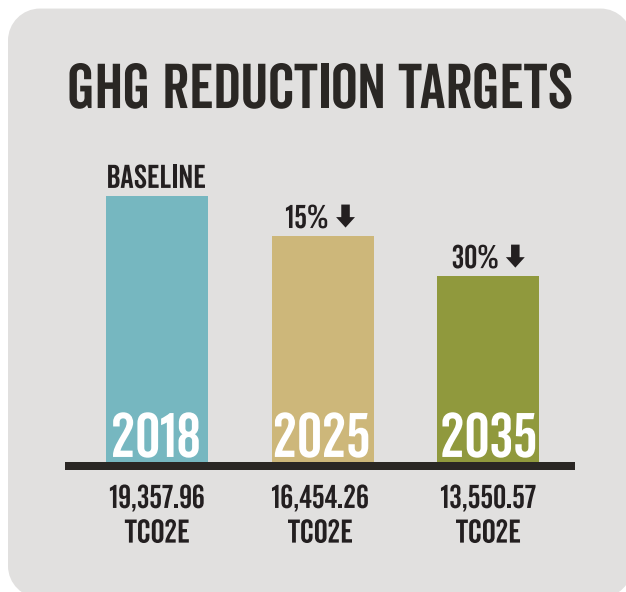
- The Edmonton Convention Centre generated 4,415 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, a 42.33% reduction from the previous year.
- Edmonton EXPO Centre generated 7,736.93 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, a 17.97% reduction from the previous year.
- Our offices in the World Trade Centre generated 440.79 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, an 86% reduction from the previous year.

We acknowledge that the big reduction in emission is due to COVID-19, having a 77% reduction in events hosted at our venues and a 93% reduction in event attendance, and may not be an accurate representation of how we are performing as a result of our GHG reduction initiatives alone.



# BACKGROUND

Explore Edmonton is a participant of the Corporate Climate Leadership Program (CCLP). An initiative by the city of Edmonton to encourage and empower Edmonton corporations to achieve greenhouse gas reduction targets. Through this program Explore Edmonton had the opportunity to set GHG reduction targets that align with the Paris Agreement, the Pan Canadian Framework, and the Edmonton Declaration.



Our accelerated bottom-up approach considers the emission savings from 2010-2018 and in combination with our current goals, once achieved, will surpass the goals of the Edmonton Declaration, achieving a reduction of over 50% by 2035 from 2010 levels.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF GHG REDUCTION FOR EXPLORE EDMONTON

Climate change, resource scarcity and environmental degradation are issues affecting businesses throughout the world. As operators of award-winning venues in western Canada, Explore Edmonton recognizes that our operations contribute to resource demand and thus have a responsibility to mitigate the impacts of our business. Our GHG reduction work aligns with our five organization values: public stewardship, selfless approach, leading the way, making an impact, and caring for one another. It is through this work that we can improve the quality of life of Edmonton's residents and to ensure the longevity of our operations and the planet.

Explore Edmonton shows commitment to tracking, monitoring, and reducing our emissions on an annual basis by embedding greenhouse gas emissions into our key performance measures. Those measures show what we must do extremely well in order to achieve our aspirations for the future as a visitor economy and venue management leader. Outlined in our Strategic Road Map, reducing GHG emissions will improve our operational excellence, and improve employee, guest/visitor, and stakeholder satisfaction. This will result in a healthy workplace, an improved organizational image, the ability to implement best practices in our operations, and allow us to become an employer of choice.

## CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Explore Edmonton is taking meaningful action towards the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our GHG reduction initiatives contribute directly to SDG # 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production and SDG # 13 – Climate Action. Senior management is committed to investing in programs and campaigns that aid in energy conservation, waste reduction, water conservation, local procurement, and awareness in sustainable development.



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As a DMMO, it is integral that we take actionable steps motivated and guided by an earnest drive and purpose. Aligning our GHG reduction plan with the UN SDGs allow us to embody goals and targets that are utilized around the world, helping us standardize and promote opportunities to learn and exchange best practices across different industries. As a leading sustainable destination, I am proud to see Explore Edmonton expand our sustainable operations to be transparent and recognized by both internal and external parties.

**Josef Legaspi**, Sustainability Coordinator, Project Specialist

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# PROJECT SCOPE

In collaboration with Climate Smart, an organization that provides training and support to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for businesses, Explore Edmonton collected and recorded emissions data for the energy and resources used in the operations of our two venues and office space.

Our Sustainability Team analyses the emissions created by our operations, what the impacts of those emissions are, and how to reduce these emissions over time. Implementation began in 2020 with reduction strategies continuing to be implemented year-after-year to reach our GHG reduction targets.

**For the purpose of this report, all data entered is in accordance with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol.**



## THE GREENHOUSE GAS PROTOCOL

The Greenhouse Gas Protocol is the most widely used international accounting tool for government and business leaders to understand, quantify and manage greenhouse gas emissions. It provides the accounting framework for nearly every GHG standard and program in the world, including the Climate Smart data entry tool. Emissions are recorded as one of three scopes depending on the level of control the organization has over the energy use or emission sources.

### SCOPE 1

**Direct GHG emissions -**

Sources controlled by the company

### SCOPE 2

**Indirect GHG emissions -**

Generation of purchased electricity consumed by a company

### SCOPE 3

**Other indirect GHG emissions -**

An optional reporting category that allows for the treatment of all other indirect emissions that exist either upstream or downstream in the supply chain.



# PROJECT SCOPE

## REPORTING METHODOLOGY

This year's reporting period is from January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020. The following categories and assumptions were considered within our operational control to develop the Explore Edmonton's 2020 emissions inventory. The Edmonton Convention Centre, the Edmonton EXPO Centre and the offices at the World Trade Centre all have slightly different operations and scopes. A breakdown of the scopes included in our calculations is outlined below and a breakdown of the scopes in relation to each venue is followed subsequently.



### SCOPE 1

**Heat Generation** – utility bills were collected for direct consumption of natural gas.

**Equipment** – petrol and diesel consumed in the operation of light and heavy onsite equipment.

**Transportation** – petrol consumed from fleet vehicles.

**Refrigeration** – coolant top-up purchased for building chiller systems, freezers, refrigerators, and other cooling equipment.

### SCOPE 2























**Electricity Procured** - utility bills were collected for consumption of both interior and exterior metres.

**Transportation** - emissions include GHG from business air travel and business ground travel.

### SCOPE 3

**Solid Waste** - waste collection for the property is tracked for both solid waste-to-landfill and paper consumption.

# 2020 INVENTORY BREAKDOWN

	EXPO	ECC	WTC
<b>SCOPE 1</b>			
Electricity Generated	0	1.8874	0
Heat	2792.4505 	1487.74 	174.609 
Equipment	14.4471 	0.5217 	0
Fleet	16.138 	0	0
Refrigeration	43.0101 	13.3665 	0
<b>SCOPE 2</b>			
Electricity Procured	4770.7989 	2831.2464 	0
<b>SCOPE 3</b>			
Electricity Unmetered/Unbilled	0	0	190.5622 
Ground Travel	0.2249 	0.0998 	2.5516 
Air Travel	24.5641 	0.2818 	66.0448 
Ground Shipping	0	0	0.0201 
Air Shipping	0	0	3.0344 
Staff Commuting	0	49.0046 	0
Garbage	38.9168 	22.2279 	3.0017 
Paper Consumption	36.3838 	8.9318 	0.8158 

\*0 REPRESENTS UNAVAILABLE DATA OR NOT RELEVANT TO THE LOCATION



# IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS



## ELECTRICITY

Electricity use is identified as the emission source with the highest potential for GHG emissions reductions.

- The Edmonton Convention Centre has successfully completed its installation of the building-integrated solar photovoltaic system. This upgrade will provide an estimated 227,000 kWh of solar energy annually - enough energy to power 31 Albertan homes' energy use for one year.
- The Edmonton EXPO Centre is expected to begin its initial project phase for the solar panel installation as soon as 2022.
- ECC has also completed replacements of three of its chillers providing an 82,000 kWh of savings. It has also completed the installation of triple-pane windows to provide further insulation.
- Investments to deep retrofit both venues remain ongoing. The Edmonton Convention Centre continues to replace lightbulbs with compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFL) and light emitting diodes (LED). The Edmonton EXPO Centre continues to replace fluorescent tube lighting with LED tubes, and replacements of variable frequency drives (VFDs) in mechanical systems have been completed.

**Due to budget constraints from COVID-19, some initiatives were delayed or postponed until operations resumed.**

# IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

## HEAT

Heat is identified as the second-largest source of GHG emissions across the business.

- The Edmonton EXPO Centre is currently undergoing work to improve insulation in roofing systems, mechanical system replacements and utilizing central plant heating and cooling as opposed to individually fired equipment.
- The Edmonton Convention Centre is undergoing work to improve insulation within the windows and roof that will significantly reduce heat loss by 2022. The storefront windows, atrium curtain walls and the west entrance roof are current projects being prioritized.
- Both venues do ongoing assessments of weather stripping to replace as necessary.

### Future Considerations

Due to COVID-19, our offices at the World Trade Centre have been undergoing numerous changes. As we work through our Flexible Work Policy to welcome employees back, we are considering ways in which we can remove permanent work offices and reduce our office rental space. We believe that by taking these actions, we can reduce our electricity and heat emissions by 60% in the near future.

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I'm thrilled to see the immediate benefits and energy savings from our solar panel installation project. We'd like to thank the City of Edmonton for providing us with the resources to collaborate with Western Canada's leading experts in the solar industry. I hope that our move towards sustainable infrastructure encourages other facilities, public or private, to consider similar initiatives to reduce GHG emissions. We continue to explore new opportunities in technology to support our commitment of a sustainable workplace.

Jan Szabat, Director, Engineering Services

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# IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS



## TRANSPORTATION

Business travel for the World Trade Centre is identified as its largest source of GHG emissions.

- We foresee drastic changes to our flight emissions moving forward. As part of an organizational restructuring, long-haul air travel across the organization has been scaled back. We implemented in-market sellers within Europe to reduce long haul air travel from Canada, invested in a virtual site tour for our clients to ensure they can view our venues online, and are currently reevaluating our Travel Policy to reduce unnecessary travel whenever possible.
- Electric vehicle charging ports have been installed at the World Trade Centre and the Edmonton EXPO Centre. Plans are in place for charging ports at the Edmonton Convention Centre.
- Explore Edmonton continues to promote the Employee Public Transit Program, which offers employees a reduced rate on public transportation passes, as well as free transit passes for local business travel.
- Collection of staff commuting data will be extended to all locations to better understand the largest emissions within Scope 3. Our Flexible Work Policy to allow employees to telecommute as a permanent post COVID-19 solution will significantly reduce the emissions associated with employee commuting.
- An Idle-Reduction Policy has been implemented and is regularly enforced by security at the Edmonton Convention Centre.



I am proud of the steps we have taken to reduce our flight emissions while providing enhanced experiences to clients. Our team is energized and committed to innovative sustainability actions that further our transportation reductions, create meaningful community impact and benefit employees.

**Danea Jodoin**, Director, Administration



### Future Considerations

- Business travel policies will be updated, and educational campaigns will be provided to reduce emissions from business travel at the World Trade Centre.
- A communication toolkit will be developed to encourage the use of LRT for all event attendees and event planners.
- Additional bicycle parking will be implemented at the Edmonton EXPO Centre.
- We will be conducting further research to understand the emissions associated with employee telecommuting to continue to improve our dataset.

# IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS



## WASTE

- Explore Edmonton continues to track waste diversion efforts at both venues, and further plans to improve the Recycling, Compost, and Reuse Program will begin after the 2022 waste audit is conducted. Our long-term waste diversion target is 80%. The Edmonton Convention Centre and the Edmonton EXPO Centre have successfully implemented the recycling of lightbulbs and electronics.
- The “Go Paperless” campaign will continue to educate all staff members at each location to reduce paper consumption, and an internal paper audit will continue to inform better decisions around more sustainable alternatives.
- Our Environmentally Preferred Purchasing Policy is refined on an annual basis and will include a greater focus on minimization of packaging and single-use items. A single-use plastics working group was created to aid in the elimination of single-use plastics.

### Future Considerations

Plans to minimize our waste and improve our waste management systems will be prioritized in 2022 at all locations.

- Exhibitor waste guides will be developed to help reduce waste from show set-up and tear-down, and extend waste management responsibilities to stakeholders and show managers.
- The Edmonton EXPO Centre will be undergoing a restructuring of front-of-house waste infrastructure to allow for more accurate waste sorting.
- An onsite composter/digester for organic waste is being considered at all locations.



Being a chef and practicing Farm to Fork is not a trend it's a responsibility and respect to our industry. To know where your food come from and building a relationship with the person that nurture it is priceless. Support Local!

**Serge Belair**, Executive Chef





# IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS



I'm proud to work for a company that puts a focus on sustainability. Not only is developing more sustainable practices within our organization important to ensure a clean future Earth, it also ensures a healthy and happy workforce and an organization people want to join. Our Human Resources team is excited to help foster a positive working environment and positive human and social outcomes by embracing sustainability throughout the employee the lifecycle.

**Charlette Nodrick**, Director,  
Human Resources



## COMMUNICATION

- The Sustainability Committee set up several initiatives within the Sustainability Action Campaigns each quarter to educate and engage employees in areas related to sustainability throughout the year. Successful initiatives included a Lights Out Program, a farm tour of one of our local suppliers, Capital City Clean Up of the river valley, and a Waste-Free Holiday Wrapping Program.
- The Sustainability Committee continues to solicit ideas from employees on how to be more sustainable in our operations. It also shares monthly education about the importance of sustainability as a brand pillar and most important operational updates in relation to sustainability work.
- The Responsible Events Program established at the Edmonton Convention Centre continues to serve as a tool to provide low-carbon options to clients who are hosting their events. This year it includes the option for event planners to make their event carbon neutral through Explore Edmonton and partner company, Offsetters.

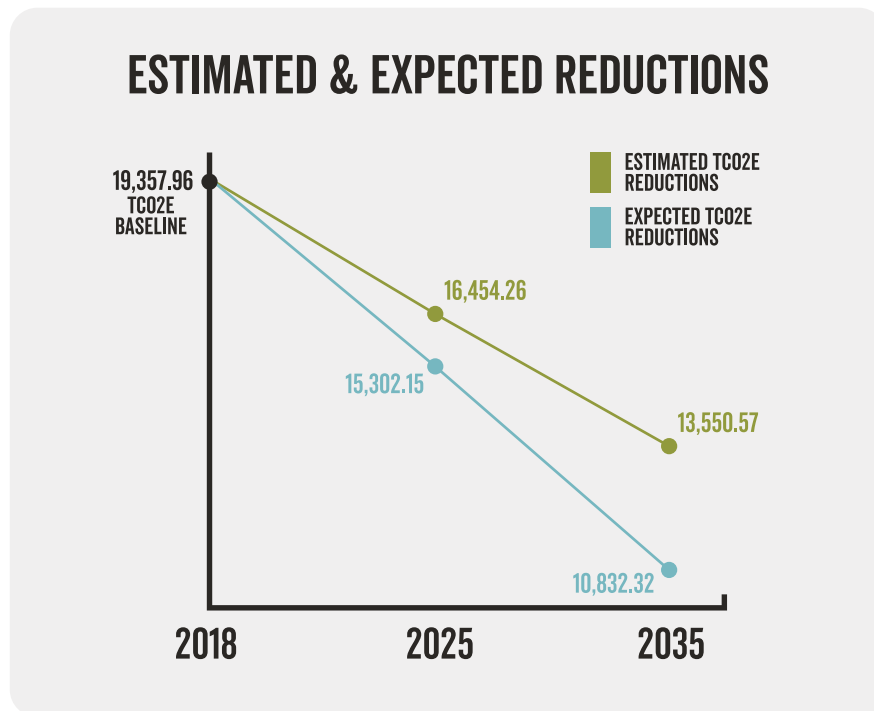
## Future Considerations

Explore Edmonton is taking significant leaps to improve sustainability awareness and communication amongst staff to ensure that all staff understand their role in achieving our company's GHG reduction targets. Sustainability has been embedded in all onboarding training to educate new staff members on the various sustainability initiatives and the importance of our GHG reduction targets.

- Internal training is being developed on sustainability - related topics and continual updates on the company's progress toward its GHG reduction goals.
- Sustainability - related questions will be included in the Annual Employee Survey to solicit ideas and understand challenges.

# MOVING FORWARD

With all the expected work at the Edmonton Convention Centre, the Edmonton EXPO Centre and the offices at World Trade Centre, Explore Edmonton is expected to surpass our reduction targets by 2025. We will be continuously evaluating our efforts to ensure we remain on track.



Explore Edmonton is committed to going above and beyond our GHG targets which is why we were awarded the Corporate Climate Leader of the Year Award by the City of Edmonton and Green Economy Canada. We know that through our operations, our emissions will continue to grow - that's why we must take significant action now to ensure that we can continue to support economic growth throughout the region while reducing our emissions. Moving forward we will be pursuing BOMA BEST, North America's most widely used Environmental Assessment and Certification Program for both the Edmonton Convention Centre and the Edmonton EXPO Centre. We will be pursuing the ISO 20121 as a Destination Management Marketing Organization to ensure we are operating as efficiently as possible and to extend support to our tourism partners across the city. Explore Edmonton is proud to help shape a brighter, lower-carbon future – and together, we can create the transformative change this great city needs to see.

# EXPLORE EDMONTON

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