

Destination Canada Announces Northern Sky as a New Corridor to Attract Investment and Create Legendary Journeys for Travellers

From Edmonton to Yellowknife, this corridor will celebrate the region's heritage and natural beauty through Indigenous tourism, cultural experiences, and skywatching opportunities.

Edmonton, Alberta – September 26, 2024: Destination Canada has announced the launch of the Northern Sky Corridor for 2024, building on the success of last year's pilot [Tourism Corridor Strategy Program](#).

The Tourism Corridor Strategy Program aims to contribute to a more resilient tourism industry through accelerated destination development of multiple corridors across Canada. This program is a key initiative of [Destination Canada's 2030 Tourism Strategy](#) with its bold goal to propel Canada back into the Top 7 global tourism destinations.

The corridor program will invigorate the tourism landscape of Alberta and the Northwest Territories, enticing visitors to discover the area's diverse regions and contributing to a more dynamic and competitive tourism industry.

Northern Sky connects Edmonton as the gateway to the Northwest Territories, celebrating the region's rich cultural heritage, art, and experiences set amongst expansive natural beauty. The development of this corridor will identify product gaps, explore transportation partnerships, and identify infrastructure needs to support the creation of new itineraries.

In Canada's North, the demand for experiences exceeds supply:

- Northern Lights tourism is valued at approximately \$119 million CAD and is expected to grow to approximately \$166.9 million CAD in five years.
- 67.7 per cent of international travelers to Canada are very interested in experiencing an Indigenous cultural experience or tourism activity in Canada, according to Destination Canada's 2023 Global Traveller Research Program.

The Northern Sky Corridor is a key component of the expanded Tourism Corridor Strategy Program, representing one of four strategic corridors being developed nationwide to enhance the tourism experience in Canada. Other corridors include:

- Cycle Ontario and Quebec
- Field to Fork: Saskatchewan Manitoba Agritourism
- Juan de Fuca Corridor (BC, Washington State, USA)

The Tourism Corridor Strategy Program will enhance Canada's appeal by providing visitors with compelling reasons to explore new regions, thereby strengthening Canada's tourism sector.

The selected corridors are defined as high-potential and align with criteria such as:

- Identifying potential job opportunities
- Highlighting Indigenous tourism businesses and communities
- Employing a regenerative approach

- Engaging local communities
- Supporting economic growth
- Catalyzing investment attraction

Strategies for last year's pilot corridors, UNESCO Atlantic Canada Corridor, Sustainable Journeys from Prairies to Pacific, and the Northern Indigenous Lodge Network, are complete and are starting to come to life through implementation. Positive outcomes are already beginning to emerge.

Note to Editors: Quotes from partner organizations involved in the Northern Sky Corridor are outlined below.

“Northwest Territories Tourism is excited to partner with Explore Edmonton on the development of the Northern Sky Corridor, a valuable and unique project designed to allow both Canadian and international visitors to embark on a spectacular and culturally enriching journey across Alberta and the Northwest Territories. Not only will this corridor offer visitors an insight on the many vibrant and diverse Indigenous cultures that are distinctive of northern Canada, but it will also support the development of export ready products and unique itineraries, contributing to the wellbeing of the visitor economy in the NWT and Alberta. The partnership between NWT Tourism and Explore Edmonton, as well as the support from Destination Canada, will ensure the success of the Northern Sky Corridor as an innovative, insightful, and unparalleled journey for visitors, and will also support the growth of the tourism industry across northern Canada” **Donna Lee Demarcke, CEO NWT Tourism**

“Edmonton has always had a special connection to the Northwest Territories, and we are delighted to work with Northwest Territories Tourism, Destination Canada and partners throughout the region to build the Northern Sky Corridor,” said **Paul Hawes, Explore Edmonton VP of Destination Development and Marketing**. “The corridor is rich with Indigenous culture and heritage, natural beauty and expansive opportunities to provide international and domestic travellers with unique, meaningful travel experiences.”

“Edmonton is known as the Gateway to the North. This project builds on our city's deep connections to Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories, and celebrates the vibrant culture, deep history, and expansive natural beauty of our region. The Northern Sky Corridor will also help foster our local economy through tourism and support Indigenous businesses and communities along the corridor.” **Mayor Amarjeet Sohi, City of Edmonton**

“As the President and CEO of Fort Edmonton Park, I am proud to endorse the Northern Sky Corridor project. Collaborative tourism efforts like this are essential for advancing our region as a premier destination choice, fostering both economic growth and an increase in visitor numbers. This corridor will provide a seamless connection between Alberta and the Northwest Territories, showcasing the diverse cultural heritage and stunning landscapes unique to these areas. Moreover, it will open new avenues for Indigenous tourism, creating enriched experiences for travellers while supporting local communities. This initiative represents a significant step forward in shaping a vibrant and sustainable tourism future, appealing to both



Canadian and global audiences.” **Darren Dalglish, CEO of Fort Edmonton Management Company**

“Fraserway RV proudly supports the Northern Sky Corridor project, a transformative initiative that will open new doors for RV Travel in Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories. Our local and international Adventurers have exploring at their core, and we see this as an opportunity that will intrigue, inspire and enable a deeper connection with the region's rich Indigenous cultures that shape Canada and its people.” **Lineke Kereluk, VP Rental, Fraserway RV**

“Access to the North and strong northern partnerships are essential for all Canadians, sustaining economic growth, fostering cultural exchange and creating tourism opportunities. YEG has always been and will continue to be an important hub for the movement of passengers and cargo to and from Canada's North, and we are committed to enhancing the visitor sector and ensuring that every part of the country thrives by sharing in the strength and opportunities this corridor provides.” **James Jackson, Vice President, Air Service & Business Development, YEG**

To book interviews or for more information, please contact: Tya Waterman, Manager, Strategic Partnerships, Explore Edmonton by email Twaterman@exploreedmonton.com or by phone 780-616-2858.

Photos of the Northern Sky Corridor regions available [here](#).

About Destination Canada

At Destination Canada, we believe that tourism enhances the wealth and wellbeing of Canadians and enriches the lives of visitors. Our mission is to influence supply and build demand for the benefit of locals, communities and visitors through leading research, alignment with public and private sectors, and marketing Canada nationally and abroad.

Knowing that diversity is our greatest asset, we promote Canada as a premier four-season leisure and business tourism destination around the country and world in Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, United Kingdom and the United States. In addition, our Business Events team leverage in-depth global market analysis to target international clusters aligned with Canada's priority economic sectors.

Destination Canada is a Crown corporation wholly owned by the Government of Canada.

www.destinationcanada.com

Media Centre for ideas, assets and contacts. Visit: <https://media.canada.travel/en-CA>

To book interviews regarding Destination Canada or for more information, please contact: Nicole Clark or Anita Berthier mediarelations@DestinationCanada.com