

Explore Edmonton launches Regenerative Tourism Strategy

Edmonton – Explore Edmonton is thrilled to introduce a bold and innovative tourism strategy that endeavours to rethink and reshape the tourism industry’s future in the greater Edmonton area.

Developed from Explore Edmonton’s Tourism Master Plan, *A Flourishing Future* is the city’s regenerative tourism strategy. This strategy goes beyond sustainability, which aspires to minimize the negative impacts of the visitor economy. A regenerative approach to tourism looks to completely rethink and reshape how we do tourism development.

“Without proper planning, tourism activities can be degenerative,” said Melissa Radu, executive director destination stewardship with Explore Edmonton. “Around the globe we all started to focus on sustainable tourism and doing less harm. Now, instead of simply doing less bad, it’s about starting to do better through tourism.”

The process to develop this strategy started in November 2022 with engagement workshops, one-on-one interviews, online surveys and the development of a taskforce with 18 community members. Our partners in this strategy engaged with more than 148 organizations from non-profit, to public institutions and government.

During the process, it was also important to consult multiple strategies and frameworks, like ConnectEdmonton and the Edmonton City Plan.

“To deliver on this strategy, we’ll need to take a very collective approach,” said Radu. “We’ll have to work with partners both across and outside the industry. Some actions will require new innovations, new technologies and perhaps new ways of thinking altogether.”

The vision is that the visitor economy in Edmonton will be regenerative and resilient by the year 2050. *A Flourishing Future* identifies 15 goals that will help us reach that vision.

“While the 15 goals are really about what we’re all aiming to do, it’s the guiding principles that are how to do it in the right way,” said Radu, during an online presentation of the strategy to partners and the public.

The key pathways to reach the strategies 15 goals are:

- Transforming mobility so visitors and residents have access to safe, reliable and low-carbon travel options.
- Investment in people and communities to celebrate and promote culture, diversity and equity.

- Grow tourism and events in a purposeful and innovative way that enhances business opportunities, drives wealth for the community and stewards' growth of the visitor economy within ecological and social limits.
- Decarbonize the visitor economy and restore nature.
- Integrate sustainable practices and innovations into all events.

The work has already begun and partners in the visitor economy and beyond are keen to be a part of it. Research during the development of the strategy shows that 59 per cent of tourism representatives believe that integrating sustainability into plans is important. Another 51 per cent of tourism representatives have already started their sustainability actions.

Forty per cent of the nearly 100 partners who took part in the online presentation of the strategy on Dec. 12 said they see themselves playing a role to support all five pathways.

To see the full strategy, please visit: [Tourism Master Plan | Explore Edmonton](#)