



**EXPLORE
EDMONTON**

2024

ANNUAL REPORT

Copyright © 2025 Explore Edmonton Corporation

This publication is for public use and reference. All rights reserved. No parts of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic methods, without the prior permission of Explore Edmonton, except in the cases of brief quotations intended for noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

*Explore Edmonton Corporation
9990 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 1P7*

ExploreEdmonton.com

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that we are located within Treaty 6 territory, and the Métis homeland and ancestral territory of the people of the Otipemisiwak Métis Nation and all Metis communities who call this land home. This land is the traditional home for many Indigenous Peoples, including the Cree, Blackfoot, Metis, Nakota Sioux, Dene, Saukteaux, Anishinaabe, Inuit and many others. Explore Edmonton honours the memory of all Indigenous peoples who have gathered on this land for millennia and whose histories, languages and living cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.





REPORT CONTENTS

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT	3
FORWARD	6
INTRODUCTION	9
DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP	11
MARKETING & SALES	15
SUSTAINABILITY	17
BRINGING EVENTS TO EDMONTON	19
SECURING PREMIER EVENTS	21
BUSINESS EVENTS	24
KDAYS	27
CANADIAN FINALS RODEO	30
FARMFAIR INTERNATIONAL	32
EDMONTON TAKES CENTER STAGE	34
SPONSORSHIP	38
DELIVERING DESTINATION EXPERIENCES	39
EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE	40
EDMONTON EXPO CENTRE	42
OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE	49
FINANCIALS	52

MESSAGE FROM THE SHAREHOLDER MAYOR AMARJEET SOHI

EDMONTON IS A
CITY BUILT ON
COLLABORATION,
COMMUNITY, AND
A SHARED VISION
FOR GROWTH.

”



Edmonton is a city built on collaboration, community, and a shared vision for growth. City Council and I take great pride in Explore Edmonton's role in amplifying our city's reputation as a world-class destination. Edmonton's diverse tourism landscape—spanning arts and culture, Indigenous experiences, outdoor adventure, sports, and dining—has drawn visitors from around the world, strengthening our economy and reinforcing our place on the global stage.

In 2024, tourism played a pivotal role in driving economic growth, with Explore Edmonton contributing to a total economic impact of \$444 million. This success is a testament to the many local businesses, tourism operators, and service providers who work tirelessly to create remarkable experiences for visitors. From accommodations and restaurants to arts and entertainment, the impact of tourism extends across all sectors of our economy, supporting jobs and fostering long-term growth.

On top of that, the Conference Board of Canada has projected Edmonton as the fastest-growing economy in Canada between 2025 and 2028. Once again demonstrating that the visitor economy and economic growth are two sides of the same coin.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to fostering innovation and collaboration within the tourism industry.

My sincere gratitude goes to Explore Edmonton's Board, staff, and partners who work tirelessly to share our city's story with the world. Together, we will continue to elevate Edmonton's global profile, drive sustainable tourism, and create lasting benefits for our community.

His Worship Amarjeet Sohi, Mayor of Edmonton

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

KAREN OSHRY

EDMONTON IS A CITY
WITH A UNIQUE STORY
TO TELL—A PLACE
WHERE RESILIENCE
AND INNOVATION
INTERSECT. ”



Edmonton's story is shaped by its people—their resilience, creativity, and deep sense of belonging. From the energy of a sold-out concert to the shared joy of a festival or the connections made over a locally crafted meal, tourism in Edmonton is about more than just numbers; it's about meaningful experiences. As Chair of the Board of Directors for Explore Edmonton, I have had the privilege of witnessing the incredible collaboration that brings our city to life for visitors and residents alike.

The strength of Edmonton's visitor economy comes from the businesses, artists, tourism operators, and experience providers who create world-class moments. In 2024, this collective effort was recognized on a global stage with Edmonton being named one of Lonely Planet's Top 10 Cities for 2025. Lonely Planet cited our legendary Edmonton Fringe Theatre Festival, bohemian Old Strathcona, and the Royal Alberta Museum (RAM)'s Human History Hall, which shares powerful Indigenous stories, as key highlights that make our city a must-visit destination.

On behalf of the Board, I extend my deepest gratitude to the Explore Edmonton Leadership team and their amazing group of staff members, Edmonton City Council, Edmonton Destination Marketing Hotels, Travel Alberta, Prairies Economic Development Canada and all the partners and collaborators who share our vision. Your commitment has been instrumental in elevating Edmonton as a premier destination and fostering pride in our community.

Karen Oshry, Board Chair

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

TRACI BEDNARD

TOGETHER, WE'RE
BUILDING A CITY
THAT INSPIRES PRIDE
AND LEAVES EVERY
TRAVELER WITH A
STORY TO TELL. ”



Reflecting on 2024, I am incredibly proud of how Edmonton continues to grow as an exciting and welcoming destination. The magic of this city isn't just in its landmarks or attractions—it's in the people who bring Edmonton to life. From chefs creating unforgettable dining experiences to Indigenous knowledge keepers sharing their stories, every visitor experience is shaped by those who call this city home.

Tourism is a powerful economic driver, but its impact goes beyond dollars—it strengthens communities, fosters pride, and creates lasting connections. From the Canadian Finals Rodeo, which generated an impressive \$32.4 million in total economic impact, to hosting 1,528 delegates from 25 countries during Rendezvous Canada, Edmonton demonstrated its ability to create meaningful, memorable experiences for visitors while making a significant impact on our local economy. With a 96.04 per cent buyer satisfaction rate from Rendezvous Canada, Edmonton's ability to deliver exceptional hospitality and unique offerings has never been more evident.

The future of Edmonton's tourism industry is bright. With major events on the horizon, an ever-expanding range of visitor experiences, and a community dedicated to showcasing the best of our city, 2025 promises to be another landmark year. To our partners, staff, and the people of Edmonton—thank you for making this city a place where visitors leave inspired and eager to return.

Traci Bednard, CEO

THIS IS EDMONTON

CONNECTION IS
AT THE HEART OF
EVERYTHING WE DO.
IT'S WHAT DRIVES
US FORWARD,
FUELS OUR GROWTH
AND SHAPES THE
UNIQUE IDENTITY
OF EDMONTON.

• • •

At Explore Edmonton, we are passionate about creating meaningful connections—both within our community and around the world. By building strong relationships with partners and stakeholders, we proudly showcase our city's potential, strengthen global ties and open doors to new opportunities for investment and collaboration.

But it's not just about business—it's about bringing joy and excitement to every project that our team takes on. Our commitment to hosting major events has a far-reaching impact, from driving tourism dollars to supporting local businesses and enhancing our city's vibrancy. These events, including iconic experiences like KDays, FarmFair International and the Canadian Finals Rodeo, do more than entertain—they unite our community and create lasting memories.

We connect global industry leaders, conference planners, and major event organizers with Edmonton's world-class venues, turning ideas into impact. The Edmonton Convention Centre—one of North America's top five venues—and the Edmonton EXPO Centre, the largest of its kind in Western Canada, aren't just spaces; they're hubs for innovation, culture, and business growth. From cutting-edge conferences to major entertainment events, these venues fuel local success, attract global talent, and reinforce Edmonton's place on the world stage.



PILLARS OF EXCELLENCE

AS WE REFLECT ON 2024 AND LOOK TOWARD 2025, EXPLORE EDMONTON REMAINS COMMITTED TO ADVANCING A VISION OF OUR CITY AS A GLOBALLY RECOGNIZED DESTINATION. THE FOUNDATION OF OUR WORK CONTINUES TO FLOW FROM THE EXPLORE EDMONTON TOURISM MASTER PLAN, GUIDING OUR PATH FORWARD WITH A CLEAR, STRATEGIC VISION FOR THE YEARS TO COME.

01 MARKETING & SALES

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.

02 OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Explore Edmonton will continue to refine our operational strategies with a focus on continuous improvement. By embracing creativity and adaptability, we will ensure that our operations remain efficient, flexible and capable of supporting the evolving needs of our city and stakeholders. This is essential as we prepare to scale our initiatives and drive even greater impact in 2025.

03 SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is at the heart of everything we do. As we look toward 2025, we will continue investing in environmental and social sustainability practices. These efforts will not only benefit our city today but will also leave a lasting positive impact on future generations of Edmontonians and visitors.

04 SOCIAL PROSPERITY

Our commitment to social prosperity remains unwavering. We will continue supporting local producers, community groups and our employees, ensuring that Explore Edmonton is a place where talent thrives and opportunities are abundant. By fostering a thriving, diverse economic ecosystem, we aim to make Edmonton an even more vibrant place to live, work and visit.

TOURISM MASTER PLAN

The 10-year Tourism Master Plan continues to be our blueprint for growth and development, guiding our collaborations with partners and stakeholders to elevate Edmonton on the global stage as a city of opportunity, creativity, and resilience. As we build on the successes of 2024, we remain focused on driving innovation and sustainable growth, ensuring Edmonton thrives as a premier destination that reflects the pride and passion of its people.



DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP

AT THE HEART OF EDMONTON'S STORY ARE ITS PEOPLE—THE CREATORS, DREAMERS, AND DOERS WHO INFUSE OUR CITY WITH VIBRANT CHARACTER AND BOUNDLESS ENERGY.

Guided by the Tourism Master Plan, our Destination Stewardship team is shaping a visitor economy that is authentic, sustainable, and future-focused. In 2024, their efforts helped businesses craft Edmonton-first experiences, strengthened partnerships with festivals and attractions, and drove transformative projects that reflect the city's culture and identity. By aligning with a bold, 10-year vision, Edmonton is positioning itself as a global leader in destination stewardship, ensuring long-term benefits for both visitors and the community.

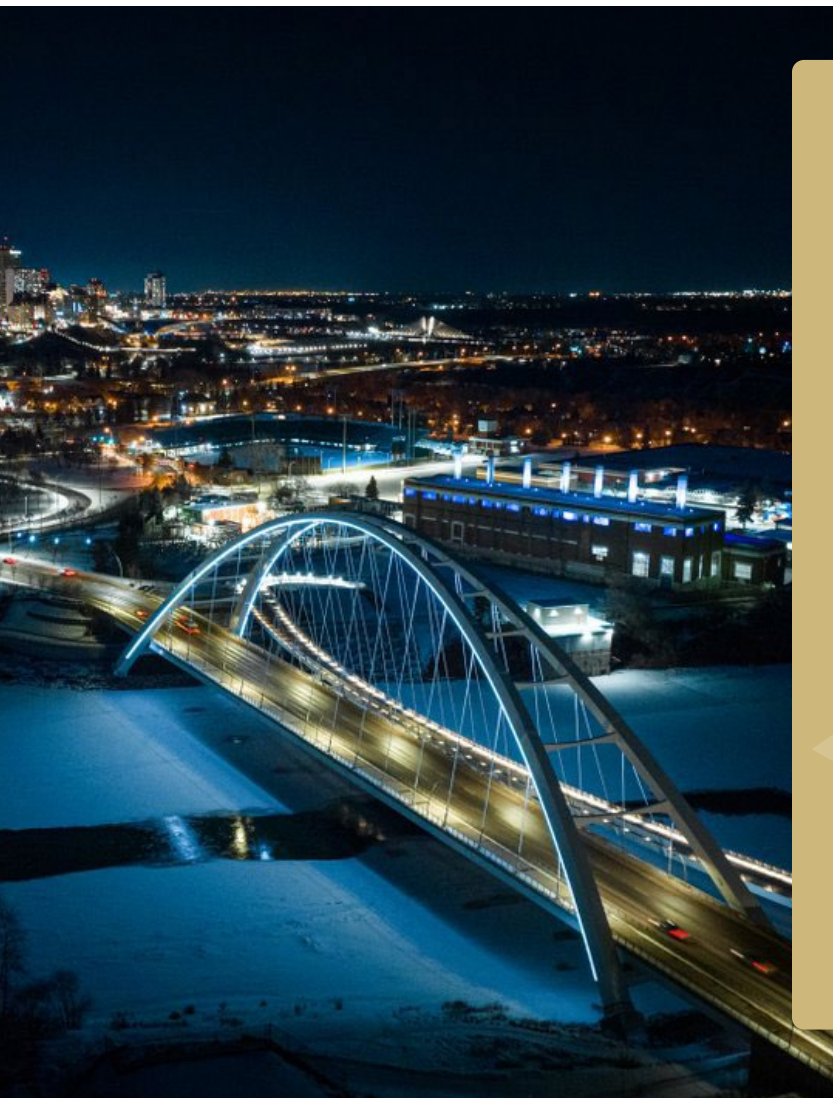
SUPPORTING YEAR-ROUND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

In partnership with the University of Alberta, our team conducted a comprehensive product inventory and gap analysis, identifying and assessing tourism products and experiences across the Edmonton region. By understanding current and future visitor preferences, this initiative aligns Edmonton's offerings with evolving geo-market needs while also empowering local businesses, municipalities and internal stakeholders to make data-driven decisions that fuel sustainable tourism development.



EXPANDING TOURISM INVESTMENT AND COLLABORATION

Regional collaboration and investment are at the heart of our efforts. In 2024, a significant milestone was achieved with the commencement of the **Northern Sky Corridor**, a project in partnership with **Northwest Territories Tourism** and supported by **Destination Canada**. This corridor connects Indigenous cultures, skywatching experiences and nature-based tourism across provincial and territorial boundaries, highlighting the stunning landscapes of northern Canada.



INTERNATIONAL MARKET DEVELOPMENT

A direct business result from Showcase Europe, and in alignment with the Dutch, Belgian, and German markets, a collaborative RV promotional package was developed with CanaDream, Fraserway RV, Tourism Jasper, Explore Edmonton, and Métis Crossing. This initiative aims to capitalize on growing interest in Canadian road trip experiences and further position Edmonton as a key gateway to adventure.

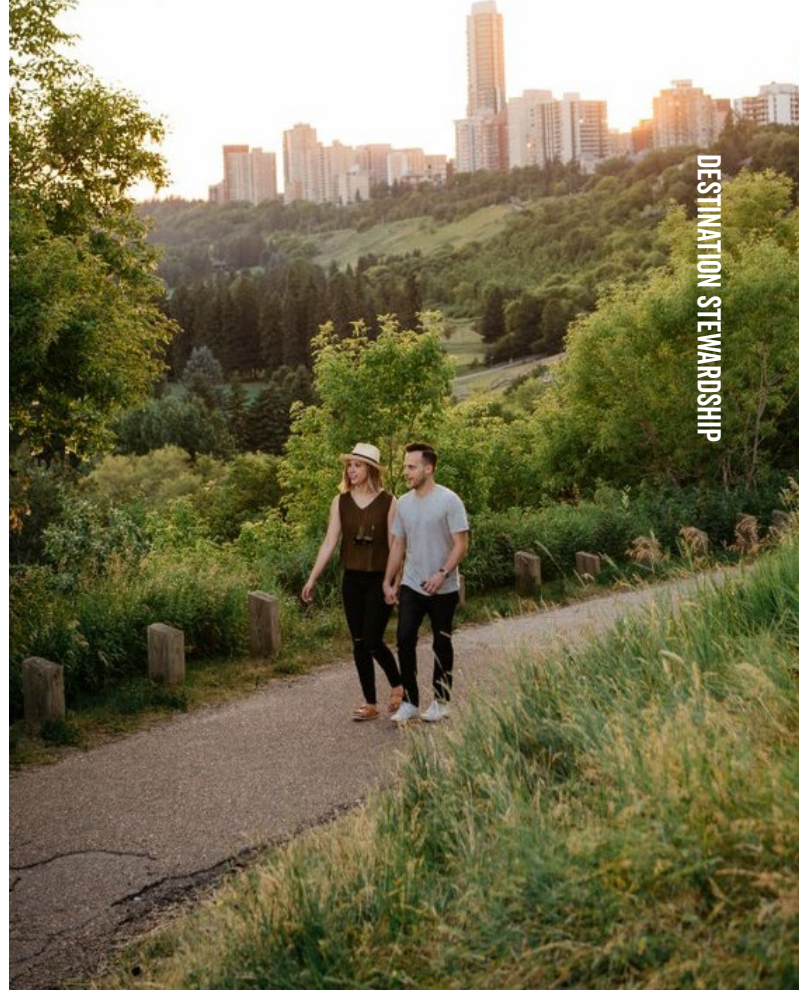
KLM Royal Dutch airlines offers year-round non-stop service from Amsterdam's Schipol airport to Edmonton International Airport. To complement five day a week summer service, KLM increased winter frequency to five days a week on the 787 Dreamliner aircraft. This increased capacity and frequency into YEG is a significant milestone, as Amsterdam is a key hub airport from other international markets like India, the continent of Africa and Europe.

EDMONTON'S REGENERATIVE AND RESILIENT VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY

Explore Edmonton has made significant strides toward a **regenerative and resilient visitor economy**, aligning with the City of Edmonton's goal to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. In 2024, our team calculated baseline carbon emissions for Edmonton's visitor economy, engaging stakeholders to shape the **Climate Action Plan and Reduction Roadmap**, which will be released in early 2025. These efforts are crucial steps toward decarbonizing Edmonton's tourism industry, increasing climate resilience and ensuring long-term sustainability for the city's visitor economy.

As Edmonton continues to evolve as a premier destination, the work being done today is fostering a thriving visitor economy—one that is sustainable, inclusive, and deeply connected to the community.

DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP



THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS, INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES, AND A COMMITMENT TO RESPONSIBLE TOURISM, THE DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP TEAM IS TURNING VISION INTO ACTION, ENSURING EDMONTON REMAINS A PLACE THAT INSPIRES, ENGAGES, AND LEAVES A LASTING IMPACT ON BOTH VISITORS AND THOSE WHO CALL IT HOME.



INDIGENOUS TOURISM STRATEGY: CELEBRATING ONE YEAR OF PROGRESS

In October 2024, Explore Edmonton honoured the one-year anniversary of the **Indigenous Tourism Strategy**, marking a significant milestone in the ongoing development and promotion of Indigenous tourism in the region. This celebration, held at the Bison Lodge, brought together over 40 industry stakeholders, including Advisory Circle members, Indigenous communities, experience providers, chefs, and artisans. Together, they reflected on how the Indigenous Tourism Strategy has shaped their businesses and contributed to the advancement of Indigenous tourism in Edmonton.

The **Advisory Circle** has played a crucial role in this journey, serving as trusted advisors, mentors, and guiding figures for Indigenous tourism development. Over the past year, the Circle has provided invaluable insights and guidance, helping to ensure the strategy remains authentic and effective in supporting Indigenous businesses. The circle has also expanded to include three new members, with a focused effort on recruiting a youth member to continue fostering the growth of Indigenous tourism.

The strategy has not only promoted deeper awareness and appreciation for Indigenous cultures, but has also created a collaborative framework that has enhanced partnerships across the tourism industry. This framework has led to stronger support from both tourism organizations and Explore Edmonton, empowering Indigenous communities and experience providers to showcase their stories, heritage, and unique offerings to visitors.

This milestone is just the beginning, and the positive outcomes of the Indigenous Tourism Strategy continue to unfold, strengthening the city's tourism landscape while celebrating and elevating the Indigenous cultures that make Edmonton unique.

EXPLORE EDMONTON IS PROUD TO BE PART OF THIS ONGOING EFFORT TO ADVANCE INDIGENOUS TOURISM AND IS COMMITTED TO NURTURING THESE RELATIONSHIPS AND INITIATIVES FOR YEARS TO COME.



MARKETING & SALES

AWARD WINNING MARKETING AND OUTSTANDING RESULTS

By attracting premier sports, cultural and business events and showcasing Edmonton's rich array of local offerings, our dedicated teams enhance our city's vibrancy and strengthen its identity. These efforts shine a spotlight on Edmonton across domestic, national and international stages, and also drive significant economic benefits that ripple through our community.

Through strategic marketing campaigns and platforms, we foster meaningful connections with visitors and Edmontonians alike, inspiring year-round exploration and engagement. Our always-on marketing approach delivers emotionally resonant content, celebrating the spirit of Edmonton while inviting the world to experience its unique energy and charm.

The team's achievements were marked by widespread acclaim. The PrairiesCan-funded video series, Explore Edmonton Presents, captivated audiences, earning the **Best Documentary Short** award at the Edmonton Short Film Festival and additional recognition from the Alberta Media Production Industries Association and the Advertising Club of Edmonton. The innovative 2023 Spiegeltent campaign for KDays also received an **ACE Award of Distinction**, showcasing the creativity that defines our marketing efforts.



**AT EXPLORE EDMONTON,
LOCAL PRIDE AND MEANINGFUL
CONNECTIONS SHAPE OUR
VISION AND IMPACT.**



PUTTING EDMONTON ON THE MAP

EDMONTON HAS EARNED A COVETED SPOT AS ONE OF LONELY PLANET'S BEST IN TRAVEL 2025 TOP CITIES, PLACING IT AMONG THE WORLD'S TOP 10 MUST-VISIT DESTINATIONS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD.

This honour celebrates Edmonton as a premier travel destination, highlighting its diverse communities, rich history and vibrant spirit and culture. As the only Canadian destination to make the list, this honour underscores Edmonton's unique charm and growing reputation on the global stage.

To amplify this achievement, our Global Marketing team launched a dedicated digital campaign that delivered impressive results, including over 2 million impressions, 767,000 exploreedmonton.com pageviews and a remarkable 16.9 per cent Instagram engagement rate—far surpassing industry benchmarks. With an estimated reach of over 473 million impressions globally, this recognition not only positioned Edmonton as a must-visit destination but also bolstered its profile as a vibrant, inclusive and welcoming city.



LONELY PLANET CAMPAIGN STATS

2 MILLION DIGITAL IMPRESSIONS

767,000 EXPLOREEDMONTON.COM PAGEVIEWS

16.9% INSTAGRAM ENGAGEMENT RATE

473 MILLION GLOBAL IMPRESSIONS

SUSTAINABILITY

CONTRIBUTING TO A REGENERATIVE VISITOR ECONOMY

This growing trend towards environmentally responsible travel is one that Explore Edmonton proudly supports. We champion tourism policies and practices that not only protect the unique identity of our community but also enhance it. Edmonton is leading the way in sustainable tourism, positioning itself as a distinctive destination on the global stage.

RESPONSIBLE EVENTS PROGRAM

In 2024, Explore Edmonton's Responsible Events Program (REP) was delivered at our venues for **20 events**, promoting sustainability across the city's event landscape. This included **11 carbon-neutral events** and seven events incorporating initiatives such as the Second Helping Program, reforestation activities through Wild & Pine, and supporting the construction of bee hotels to safeguard native pollinators. Through these efforts, a total of **584 kg of food donations** were made, and **1,850 metric tons of CO₂e** (carbon dioxide equivalent) were offset.

AS TOURISM CONTINUES
TO EVOLVE, MORE TRAVELERS
ARE INCREASINGLY AWARE
OF THE IMPACT THEIR VISITS
HAVE ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES
AND ENVIRONMENTS.





EXPLORE EDMONTON IS PROUD TO BE A TRAILBLAZING DESTINATION IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM, REINFORCING OUR POSITION AS A FORWARD-THINKING, RESPONSIBLE DESTINATION.

Our sustainability focus extends beyond events. Explore Edmonton set a corporate waste diversion goal of **60 per cent** for 2024, and through effective waste reduction strategies, including an ongoing commitment to the facility's "On the Road to Zero Waste" status, we achieved **70 per cent** waste diversion from landfills. This equated to **949,937 kg** of solid waste kept out of the landfill through composting, reusing, or recycling. Notably, the KDays youth "green ambassadors" program helped the event achieve a **50 per cent waste diversion rate**—an 11 per cent improvement from 2023.

Explore Edmonton also completed a **9.9 per cent reduction in overall emissions from 2022**, with a 29.4 per cent reduction from 2018, reflecting our ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability. Our venues, including both the Edmonton Convention Centre (ECC) and the Edmonton EXPO Centre, have been recertified under Climate Smart and have earned **Green Key level five certifications**—the highest standard for sustainable venues.

ISO 20121 CERTIFICATION

Furthering our sustainability efforts, the team secured ISO 20121 certification for sustainable event management in 2024. This internationally recognized certification reinforces our commitment to integrating sustainability principles into every aspect of our operations. Additionally, through a partnership with Edmonton Unlimited's Capital City Pilots Program, we identified innovative sustainability technologies, such as the Passive Solar Thermal Project, which will be installed at the Edmonton Convention Centre in February 2025 to support a greenhouse and further reduce energy consumption.



SHAPING THE FUTURE OF SPORTS



EDMONTON'S MAJOR SPORT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Major Sport Event Strategic Framework, developed in partnership with the City of Edmonton, serves as a **forward-thinking, long-term guide for attracting and hosting sports events through to 2030**. Stemming from the Sport and Cultural Attraction Plan, the framework provides a clear and consistent approach to the types of events Edmonton seeks to attract, helping shape a distinctive identity for the city that resonates with both residents and visitors.

The framework focuses on three primary criteria for event selection: economic benefits, reputational enhancement, and social impact. These criteria ensure that events contribute positively to Edmonton's economy, strengthen its global reputation, and foster a sense of community and connection.

A key element of the framework is its focus on inclusivity and innovation, particularly in women's sports and action sports. This emphasis positions Edmonton as a leader in the sports event industry and reinforces our reputation as a dynamic, forward-thinking city. The strategy goes beyond attracting world-class events—it creates lasting opportunities that positively impact the community and advance the values of equity and accessibility in sport.

THE MAJOR SPORT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK IS A PIVOTAL TOOL IN EDMONTON'S ONGOING EFFORTS TO BUILD A VIBRANT SPORTS ECOSYSTEM AND ELEVATE ITS PROFILE AS A TOP DESTINATION FOR MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS.



BUILDING EDMONTON'S LEGACY THROUGH EVENTS

In 2024, the Sport & Culture team made an extraordinary impact, bringing in **\$182 million in total economic impact** and supporting approximately **47,000 jobs**. Through strategic efforts, the team secured or supported 40 events, bringing global attention to Edmonton and showcasing its vibrant energy on the world stage. Among these achievements are several marquee events that highlighted Edmonton as a premier destination for sport, culture and community connection. Here are some notables:



UIAA ICE CLIMBING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

In February 2024, Edmonton made history by hosting the first-ever UIAA Ice Climbing World Championship event held outside of Europe. Taking place at the Fan Park @ ICE District, the prestigious event generated approximately **\$6.1 million in total economic impact** and solidified Edmonton's reputation as a premier destination in the global climbing community. Building on this success, Edmonton is set to host the UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup and an international sport climbing event in 2025.



RED BULL SOAPBOX RACE

Edmonton took its event game to the next level with the 2024 Red Bull Soapbox Race, held for just the third time in Canada. Set against the stunning River Valley backdrop, a custom-built course on Queen Elizabeth Park Road attracted **30,000 excited spectators**. With over 460 participant applications—the highest in the event's history—this unforgettable spectacle demonstrated Edmonton's ability to host world-class events that captivate and inspire.

SECURING PREMIER EVENTS FOR EDMONTON

In 2024, Explore Edmonton played a pivotal role in securing several major events, reinforcing our city's reputation as a leading destination for sports and cultural excellence. Some notable events are listed below. These secured events highlight the strength of Edmonton's collaborative spirit and commitment to delivering exceptional experiences while driving meaningful economic growth.

2024 CBHA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

2024 ISBHF LEGENDS WORLD BALL HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIPS

2024 ALBERTA INDIGENOUS GAMES & MASTERS ALBERTA INDIGENOUS GAMES

2024 CANADA SOCCER PDP NATIONALS

2025 UIAA ICE CLIMBING WORLD CUP

2025–2028 CANADIAN SWIMMING OPEN

2025 CANADIAN WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

2025 CANADIAN HALF MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIPS

2025 NORTH AMERICAN CUP SERIES SPORT CLIMBING

2025 DIVING CANADA JUNIOR ELITE NATIONALS

2025 FIBA 3X3 WORLD TOUR & WOMEN'S SERIES

2025 ALBERTA INDIGENOUS GAMES

2026 CWBL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP





ATTRACTED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

A SLAM DUNK YEAR FOR BASKETBALL IN EDMONTON

Basketball took center stage in Edmonton in 2024, with our Sport and Culture team leading the charge to support unforgettable events and impactful community projects.

For the second consecutive year, Edmonton hosted North America's only **FIBA 3x3 World Tour** stop, alongside the **FIBA 3x3 Women's Series**. The event saw local legends Katherine and Michelle Plouffe lead Team Canada to victory, while hundreds of youth competed in the Hoop City Invitational 3x3 tournament, showcasing talent in the shadow of professional athletes.

The excitement reached new heights on May 4, 2024, when Edmonton hosted a **WNBA Canada Game** at Rogers Place. Basketball fans filled the arena for the highly anticipated pre-season matchup between the Seattle Storm and the Los Angeles Sparks—the second WNBA game ever on Canadian soil. The sold-out event showcased Edmonton's ability to host world-class sports and highlighted the city's growing reputation as a basketball hub, captivating fans and creating an electric atmosphere.

Our community impact shined with the Wihkwêntôwin School court refresh, a collaboration between Explore Edmonton, Sport Edmonton, The City of Edmonton, NBA Canada, and local partners. Featuring a WNBA-inspired mural by Indigenous artist Rashelle Campbell, the court debuted with a vibrant community celebration, creating an inspiring space for young athletes to thrive.

Edmonton also proudly welcomed the **U SPORTS Women's Basketball Championship** to the University of Alberta for the first time since 2001, drawing Canada's top university teams to compete for the national title at the Saville Community Sports Centre.

Rounding out the year, Explore Edmonton celebrated the unveiling of the Grads Court at John A. McDougall School. Designed by local artist Pete Nguyen, the court honours the legendary Edmonton Grads, a team whose 95 per cent victory rate from 1915 to 1940 set a gold standard in basketball. This legacy project, in collaboration with Sport Edmonton, the City of Edmonton, and Edmonton Public Schools, underscores our commitment to fostering community connections and inspiring the next generation of basketball stars.

ATTRACTED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

CANADIAN COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

The 2024 Canadian Country Music Awards (CCMAs) brought a wave of excitement to Edmonton, with Rogers Place hosting a historic sold-out crowd of **13,000 fans** on September 14—setting a record for the highest spectator turnout in CCMA history. This event celebrated the best in Canadian country music and reinforced Edmonton's position as a vibrant, world-class destination for entertainment and culture.

HONOURING ICONS

To commemorate k.d. lang's induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame at the CCMAs, Explore Edmonton partnered with the City of Edmonton, Blanchett Neon, and the Neon Sign Museum to create a one-of-a-kind neon sign in her honour. This historic addition marked the first time a non-historical figure was featured at the museum, celebrating k.d. lang's legacy and connection to Edmonton. An intimate unveiling, supported by Foundry Events at Baijiu, included a special appearance by k.d. lang herself, further amplifying the momentous occasion.

ELEVATING EDMONTON'S DOWNTOWN

In partnership with CBRE, Explore Edmonton activated downtown Edmonton by installing custom decals, elevator wraps, and lobby floor displays in prominent office towers. This increased visibility helped integrate the CCMA festivities into the city's daily rhythm, ensuring locals and visitors alike felt part of the celebration.

Through strategic partnerships, creative activations, and thoughtful storytelling, the 2024 CCMAs showcased Explore Edmonton's commitment to amplifying Edmonton's local talent, fostering community pride, and delivering exceptional visitor experiences that leave a lasting impact.



IMMERSIVE INSTALLATIONS AND ACTIVATIONS

Explore Edmonton collaborated with Vignettes to craft captivating installations that celebrated the western and country music spirit, including denim knolls, a guitar case stage, and a giant Stetson chandelier. These creative assets were strategically displayed at places like the Edmonton International Airport, Edmonton Convention Centre, and CCMA-related events, ensuring the city was alive with a country vibe.

Local artists took center stage with custom western-themed displays, including five denim jackets designed by Kim Der and five intricately decorated guitar cases, showcased at high-profile locations like Gravity Pope, Bamboo Ballroom, Henry Singer, and CFCW at West Edmonton Mall. Influencer partnerships, such as with Ania Boniecka, and the creation of exclusive podcast episodes through "The Cowboy Sh!t," extended the event's reach to audiences deeply connected to country music culture.



POWERING EDMONTON'S VISITOR ECONOMY THROUGH BUSINESS EVENTS

Explore Edmonton takes pride in attracting impactful business events, meetings, and conferences that are essential to our city's visitor economy. The Explore Edmonton Business Events team had the honor of hosting Destination Canada Business Events' signature event, Innovate Canada, spotlighting Edmonton as a global leader in agribusiness and sustainable innovation. This gathering brought influential international delegates to the city, providing a platform to showcase Canada's advancements in sustainable agriculture, food processing, plant-based proteins, and fermentation technologies.

As a key economic driver for Edmonton, agribusiness plays a vital role in the city's growth. By bringing industry leaders here, we not only strengthened Edmonton's position as a hub for innovation but also fueled economic impact beyond the visitor economy—creating new opportunities for local businesses, investment, and long-term growth.



BUSINESS EVENTS TRAVELERS

Representing **40 per cent** of all tourism spending, business travelers are recognized as one of the highest spending visitor groups. Business events are a cornerstone for Edmonton's hotels, convention centers, venues, event planners, and transportation services. They fuel growth and innovation across the city, driving significant room night opportunities and delivering a substantial total economic impact.



2024 BUSINESS EVENTS STATS

70.1 MILLION ECONOMIC
IMPACT

55,652 ROOM
NIGHTS

36 SITE VISITS
HOSTED

94 BUSINESS
EVENTS HOSTED

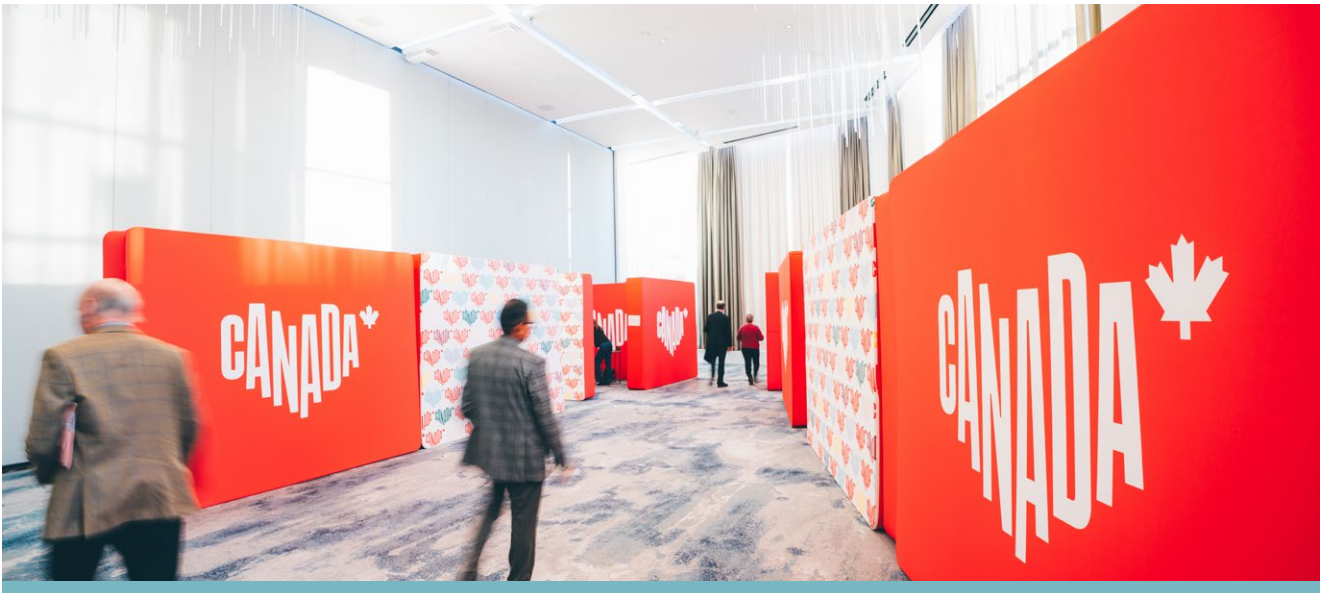
35 FUTURE BUSINESS
EVENTS SECURED

BUSINESS EVENTS HOSTED IN 2024

- Jehovah's Witnesses – National Event
- Canadian Hydrogen Convention
- Carbon Capture Canada
- Upper Bound 2024
- Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Conference on Intelligent Transportation Systems
- First Nations Financial Management Board FNLTW7 Alberta
- International Bear Association Conference
- Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada Annual Clinical & Scientific Conference
- Canadian Society of Safety Engineering Professional Development Conference
- Canadian Institute of Planners 2024 Joint Annual Conference

2025 BUSINESS EVENTS SECURED IN 2024

- Canada Wide Science Fair 2026
- 2025 Western Retail Lumber Association Building & Hardware Showcase
- The Wildlife Society 32nd Annual Conference 2025
- FYi Eye Care 2025 AGM
- Boston Pizza International Leadership Meeting 2025
- Canadian Hydrogen Convention 2025
- National Gathering of EldersInnovate Canada



ATTRACTED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

INNOVATE CANADA

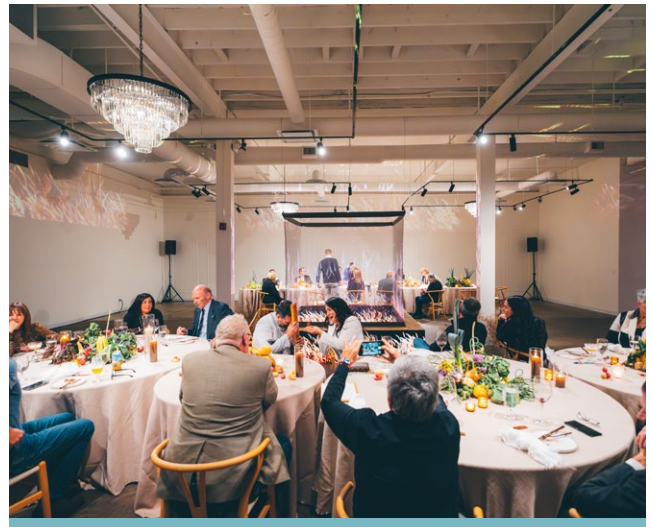
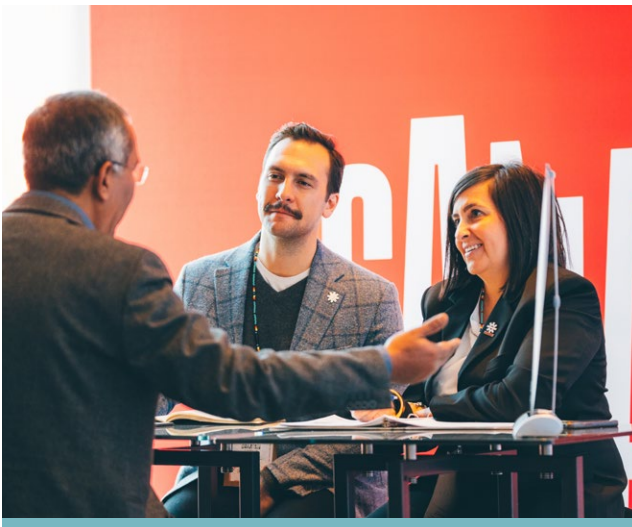
Attendees experienced exclusive, behind-the-scenes tours that emphasized Edmonton's leadership in agribusiness and its robust infrastructure to support transformative advancements. Key highlights included a demonstration from InnoTech Alberta and a showcase from the Alberta Food Centre.

INNOTECH ALBERTA

A demonstration of its role in enabling value creation and accelerating commercial development through access to world-class expertise and industrial-scale facilities. InnoTech's contributions to turning cutting-edge technologies into actionable innovations were a focal point for attendees.

ALBERTA FOOD CENTRE

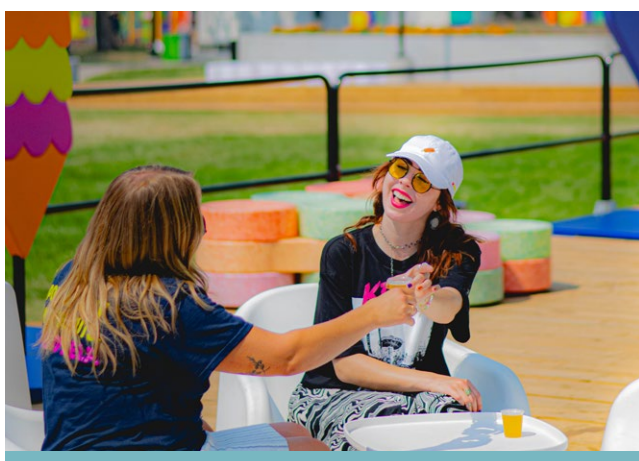
A showcase of its efforts in fostering the growth and commercialization of food, beverage, and ingredient companies, serving both Canadian and global markets.



OWNED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

THE BEST DAYS ARE KDays

KDays is more than just a festival—it's a cornerstone of Edmonton's culture, bringing our community together in celebration year after year.



As a summer staple since 1879, KDays has provided the backdrop for family fun, epic adventures, and unforgettable experiences for generations. As one of Alberta's most iconic events, KDays showcases the best of our city with electrifying entertainment, immersive cultural experiences, and a spotlight on local innovators and creative entrepreneurs. By attracting visitors from across the province and beyond, KDays drives tourism, fosters community pride, and contributes significantly to Edmonton's economy, providing thousands of jobs and generating a total economic impact of **over \$18 million**.

The ten-day event continues to excite and engage with fresh new experiences that honour Edmonton's history and vibrant community. Klondike Mike was brought to life through augmented reality, letting visitors interact with a key piece of our gold rush past in a fun, modern way. New attractions like Slam Fest, —an action-packed wrestling event, and the Happy Beer Garden, created in partnership with local breweries, brought even more energy and community spirit to the festival.

KDays 2024 was a testament to Edmonton's creativity, inclusivity, and community spirit. By bringing together local businesses, unique activations, and exciting new programs, we showcased the very best of what Edmonton has to offer—truly making it a festival to remember.





OWNED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

REVITALIZING TRADITION: THE NEW KLONDIKE PARK EXPERIENCE

The newly renovated Klondike Park made a memorable debut at this year's festivities, hosting its first events in the refreshed space. It set the stage for an exciting craft beer activation and served as the stunning venue for the inaugural Premier's Breakfast, our KDays Reception in partnership with We Are YEG, bringing together partners and collaborators. The park also became a hub of energy with Happy Beer Gardens and the nightly Park After Dark after-parties. As part of KDays' ongoing reimagine strategy, launched in 2021, these enhancements reflect our commitment to evolving the festival in response to our community's vision.



THE K DAYS FEATURE PRODUCT PROGRAM

The KDays team launched an exciting new initiative with the Feature Product Program, connecting local businesses and bringing the festival into the community like never before. This new offering generated over **\$125,000 in sales** for participating businesses and brought nearly **8,000 people to KDays**. The program's success highlighted the power of collaboration, with local businesses contributing innovative and creative products that enriched the overall KDays experience. Notable partners included:

- **DELAVOYE CHOCOLATE MAKER:** Offering a KDays feature menu item, the S'Mores Wonder, and sharing its expertise in the world of cacao through its boutique factory and chocolate café on 124 Street.
- **EVOLUTION WONDERLOUNGE:** A family-owned gay bar that offered KDays feature cocktails and highlighted drag and burlesque performances, celebrating queer joy.
- **SPOTLIGHT CABARET:** This vibrant venue served up churros while promoting diversity and inclusivity through comedy, music, and dance.
- **DARLING RESTAURANT:** Featuring Darling's Sorbet, a blend of local ingredients and global inspiration, and a curated natural wine list.
- **THE QUILTBAG:** A 2SLGBTQ+ retail shop offering custom accessories, art by local artists, and trans gear.
- **TWICE CREAM:** An artisanal ice cream shop known for its unique Gold Rush flavor, serving KDays fans a sweet treat.
- **DOUGHNUT PARTY:** Crafting doughnuts, including the Gold Rush Crunch for KDays.
- **CRAVE CUPCAKES:** Baking up irresistible cupcakes, with options like the KDays Mini Cupcake Pack.

OWNED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

ROBOTICS TECH CHALLENGE INVITATIONAL

In addition to these incredible local collaborations, 2024 introduced a new program at KDays—the first **Robotics Tech Challenge Invitational**. This exciting competition invited first **Robotics Tech Challenge teams** to compete at the centerstage game. The teams showcased their engineering skills by building robots designed to test sensors, movement and accuracy. This innovative event, in partnership with First **Alberta Robotics**, added a thrilling element of STEM and technology to KDays, inspiring the next generation of engineers and innovators.



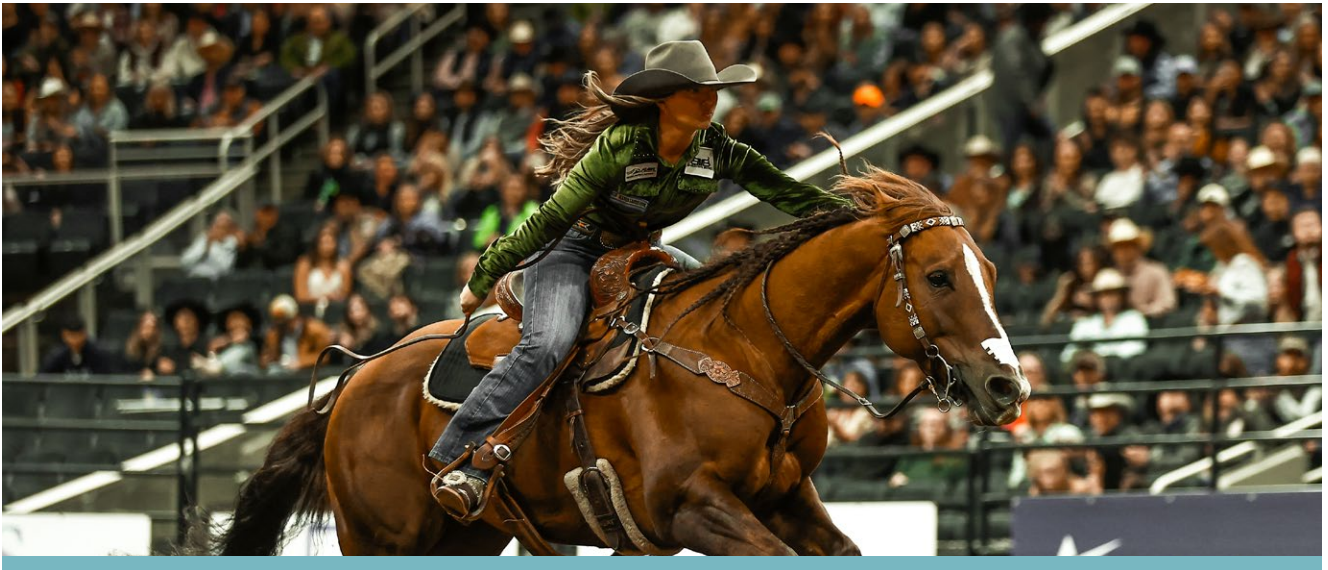
CLICKNPUSH PILOT AT KDays IN COLLABORATION WITH EDMONTON UNLIMITED

In partnership with Edmonton Unlimited, we implemented the ClickNPush technology at KDays to enhance accessibility for all attendees. This cutting-edge tool provided real-time data on accessibility barriers throughout the event, allowing us to promptly address any issues and inform future site planning. The application enabled individuals with diverse range of abilities to report barriers either on-site or during event planning, contributing to a more inclusive and seamless experience.

KDays PREMIER'S BREAKFAST: A SWEET START TO EDMONTON'S ICONIC FESTIVAL

KDays kicked off in style with the return of the much-anticipated KDays Premier's Breakfast, presented by North Central Co-op, on July 19. This beloved tradition welcomed the first **5,000 attendees** to enjoy a free, traditional pancake breakfast and free admission to KDays when the midway opened at noon—both courtesy of **North Central Co-op**.





OWNED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

CANADIAN FINALS RODEO 50

Explore Edmonton and the Edmonton Oilers Entertainment Group joined forces to bring the Canadian Finals Rodeo (CFR) Powered by ATB back to its rightful home for its milestone 50th anniversary. A hallmark of Edmonton's Western heritage, CFR has long been a cornerstone event, blending thrilling rodeo action with deep-rooted tradition. After a six-year absence, its triumphant return not only reignited community pride but also reaffirmed Edmonton's status as a premier rodeo destination on the national stage.

The CFR has long been a significant contributor to Edmonton's economy and community vibrancy, attracting visitors from across Canada and beyond. The event delivered an impressive **\$32 million in total economic impact**, benefiting local businesses, restaurants, hotels, and attractions. Activations like nightly Tailgate Parties, Cattle Drive, Pancake Breakfast, and Chili Cook-Off brought energy and excitement to the downtown core, reinforcing Edmonton's reputation as a premier destination for major events.

To enhance community involvement and expand the Rodeo Week experience, we encouraged local businesses to host ancillary events that captured the spirit of the celebration. Timed alongside the CFR 2024, these activations helped bring the excitement of rodeo beyond the arena and into the heart of Edmonton. Through strategic partnerships and outreach, **11 businesses** hosted Rodeo Week events, while **77 businesses participated** in the pageantry program, drawing visitors into local establishments and adding to the city's vibrant atmosphere.



OWNED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

CANADIAN FINALS RODEO 50



“THIS YEAR WAS A HUGE SUCCESS, AND WE ARE SO GRATEFUL FOR EDMONTON AND RODEO FANS FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY FOR COMING OUT AND HAVING A GRAND OLD TIME WITH US HERE IN ROGERS PLACE. OUR TOTAL ATTENDANCE NUMBER THROUGHOUT THE FOUR DAYS WAS MORE THAN 42,000, WITH A HUGE CROWD ON SATURDAY NIGHT OF OVER 12,000 RODEO FANS, GIVING US FULL CONFIDENCE THAT BRINGING CFR BACK TO EDMONTON WAS A GREAT DECISION FOR OUR CITY.”

Arlindo Gomes, Vice President of Business Development & Venues Management.





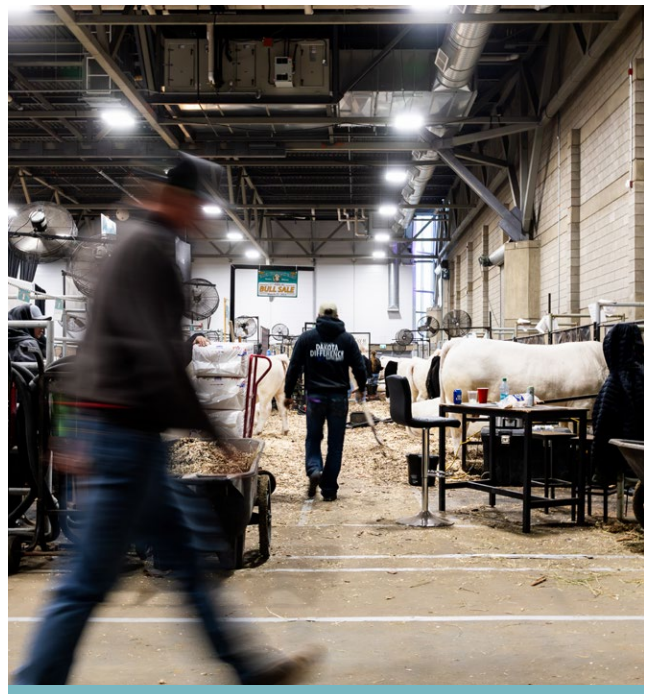
OWNED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

FARMFAIR INTERNATIONAL

A LANDMARK 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Farmfair International celebrated its monumental 50th Anniversary in 2024, marking a year of record-breaking achievements and memorable milestones. The event saw overwhelming interest, with cattle entries reaching the same record high seen two decades ago, exceeding **2,000 entries** and filling the Edmonton EXPO Centre Halls A, B, and C to capacity. The show also hosted nine Canadian national competitions, bringing exhibitors from across the country to showcase the best of Canadian agriculture.

In recognition of this milestone, the event introduced several exciting new initiatives. Innovation Alley debuted as a platform for showcasing cutting-edge agricultural advancements, while the Farm Forward “unconference” sparked dynamic discussions among industry leaders. Education also played a key role, with nearly **2,000 students and families** participating in the Farmfair school classroom learning program—an effort to inspire the next generation of agricultural professionals.



OWNED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

FARMFAIR INTERNATIONAL

Attendance at Farmfair saw remarkable growth, with more than **36,000 guests over four days** of vibrant, family-friendly programming. In a celebration of cultural exchange and business growth, Farmfair launched a **“Feature Country” program**, highlighting Mexico for its longstanding contributions to the event. This initiative culminated in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Farmfair International, Chihuahua Cattle Union, Alberta Beef Producers, and EXPOGan, Mexico’s premier agriculture show, further solidifying international partnerships and expanding the global reach of Farmfair.



FARMFAIR INTERNATIONAL WAS PROUD TO WELCOME AN ESTIMATED 60 INTERNATIONAL DELEGATES





EVENT SPOTLIGHT

NHL PLAYOFFS & THE “BELIEVE” CAMPAIGN

EDMONTON TAKES CENTER STAGE: A VICTORY FOR EDMONTON’S SPIRIT

When the Edmonton Oilers made their historic 2023/2024 playoff run, our team went all in with the inaugural “Believe” Campaign—and the results were nothing short of spectacular! With **5.8 million digital impressions** and some of the most-watched content in Explore Edmonton’s history, our city’s pride and passion were brought to life in ways never seen before. One post even went viral, racking up over **1 million views** with zero paid promotion, showcasing the power of creative approach.

Innovative, bold concepts—including cheeky billboards in Florida—captured attention both locally and beyond, while connecting with locals and visitors alike. Engagement from high-profile figures such as Shania Twain and Brett Kissel helped to elevate the campaign’s visibility, while strategic collaborations with the NHL’s Mark Messier, Oilers Entertainment Group, Spittin’ Chicklets, and Georges Laraque fueled even more excitement.

A highlight of the campaign was the “Believe” hero video, which amassed **160,000 views on YouTube**, achieving an exceptional **72.9 per cent** completion rate—the highest seen for our long-form videos to date. The campaign’s reach extended even further, with “Believe” signs making their way to Florida, reflecting the expansive reach of this initiative.



ATTRACTED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

RENDEZ-VOUS CANADA

EDMONTON HOSTS THE WORLD

The largest tourism marketplace in Canada, RVC 2024 brought the world to Edmonton. The Edmonton Convention Centre welcomed over **1,500 international attendees**, including **390 tourism buyers** from **22 countries**, **21 international media representatives**, and **934 Canadian sellers**. The event, which was held at the Edmonton Convention Centre, facilitated over **47,000 B2B appointments**, driving significant business opportunities and reinforcing Edmonton's position as a premier global destination.

WITH AN IMPRESSIVE 94% OVERALL SATISFACTION SCORE AND A 100% SATISFACTION SCORE ON BUYER FAMILIARIZATION TOURS, RVC 2024 DELIVERED AN EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS.



ATTRACTED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

RENDEZ-VOUS CANADA

RVC HOST CITY NIGHT

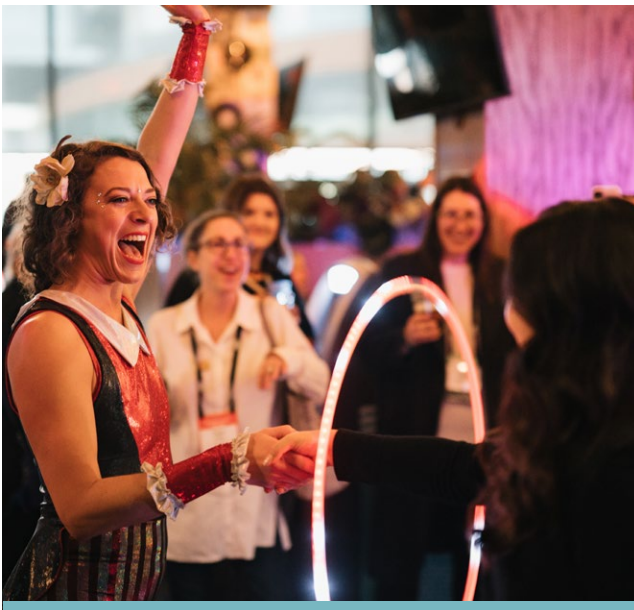
An Ice District venue was completely transformed into Edmonton House, brought to life with Explore Edmonton's Explore the Unordinary branding—playful, bold, and undeniably Edmonton. Each level of the venue highlighted a unique aspect of the city: the first floor embraced Edmonton's winter city identity, the second pulsed with nightlife energy, and the rooftop patio celebrated summer, sports teams, and outdoor fun.

More than **50 local businesses, artisans, and suppliers** contributed to the experience, creating an immersive and authentic showcase of Edmonton's diverse offerings. Through thoughtful branding and engaging storytelling, Host City Night left a lasting impression, capturing the essence of what makes Edmonton extraordinary.

The **total economic impact of RVC 2024** was immediate and far-reaching, generating **over \$6 million**. Edmonton's presence on the global stage was further amplified when a representative from Shincard, a leading Korean credit card company, highlighted the city's standout performance during a CEO mission in Japan and South Korea, strengthening ties with key international markets. According to figures from Destination Canada, the estimated impact of business done during the three days of the marketplace was **\$90 million**.

Sustainability was a core focus of RVC 2024. For the first time in the event's history a dedicated sustainability committee was established, including members from Explore Edmonton. A sustainability commitment statement was shared with attendees, vendors, and staff, and carbon emissions from the event were tracked and measured. A post-event sustainability report was drafted to inform future RVC events, setting a new standard for environmentally responsible hosting.

HOSTING RVC 2024 WAS A DEFINING MOMENT FOR EDMONTON'S TOURISM SECTOR, CREATING IMMEDIATE ECONOMIC BENEFITS WHILE BUILDING LASTING RELATIONSHIPS THAT WILL CONTINUE TO DRIVE VISITATION AND INVESTMENT IN 2025, 2026, AND BEYOND.



ATTRACTED EVENT SPOTLIGHT

DISNEY IMMERSIVE

Co-produced by the Edmonton EXPO Centre, Disney Immersive delivered a truly enchanting experience that captivated audiences of all ages. Running for 10 weeks, the event welcomed **43,887 attendees** and generated a **\$3.6 million** total economic impact, contributing to diversified revenue streams for the venue.

This immersive celebration transported visitors into the heart of Walt Disney Animation Studios' greatest films, spanning from early groundbreaking features to today's beloved animated classics. With seamless integration of cutting-edge technology and storytelling, Disney Immersive exemplified the Edmonton EXPO Centre's ability to host world-class events, offer unforgettable moments for all and boost the local economy.

The event was part of a larger, global tour. In addition to Edmonton, Disney Immersive had stops in Calgary, Toronto, Montreal, Bangkok, Las Vegas, and Puebla, reinforcing our city's growing presence as a hub for major international productions. The Edmonton EXPO Centre successfully purchased and managed the campaign, positioning the venue as a key entertainment buyer and producer and highlighting its role in shaping Edmonton's reputation as an exciting destination for world-class experiences.

The marketing campaign for Disney Immersive, running from December 2023 to May 2024, proved to be a resounding success, achieving the following stats highlighted to the right.



MARKETING CAMPAIGN

15 MILLION IMPRESSIONS

2 MILLION ACCOUNTS REACHED

1 MILLION ENGAGEMENTS

71.6% AVERAGE ENGAGEMENT RATE





SPONSORSHIP:

POWERING UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES

The success of Explore Edmonton's 2024 events was made possible through the generous support of our partners and sponsors. Their commitment has played a pivotal role in the delivery of exceptional experiences for our community and visitors alike.

Our key funding partners, including the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta, the City of Edmonton, and Edmonton Destination Marketing Hotels, have been essential to the continued success and sustainability of our events. Their foundational contributions have allowed us to create unique and memorable experiences in Edmonton, underscoring the importance of these collaborative relationships.

THE SUPPORT OF THESE SPONSORS, ALONG WITH THE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS FORMED THROUGH THESE EVENTS, HAS RESULTED IN IMPACTFUL OUTCOMES FOR THE CITY, INCLUDING INCREASED TOURISM, ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND THE STRENGTHENING OF EDMONTON'S POSITION AS A LEADING DESTINATION FOR WORLD-CLASS EVENTS.

2024 SPONSORS BY EVENT

30 CANADIAN
FINALS RODEO
SPONSORS

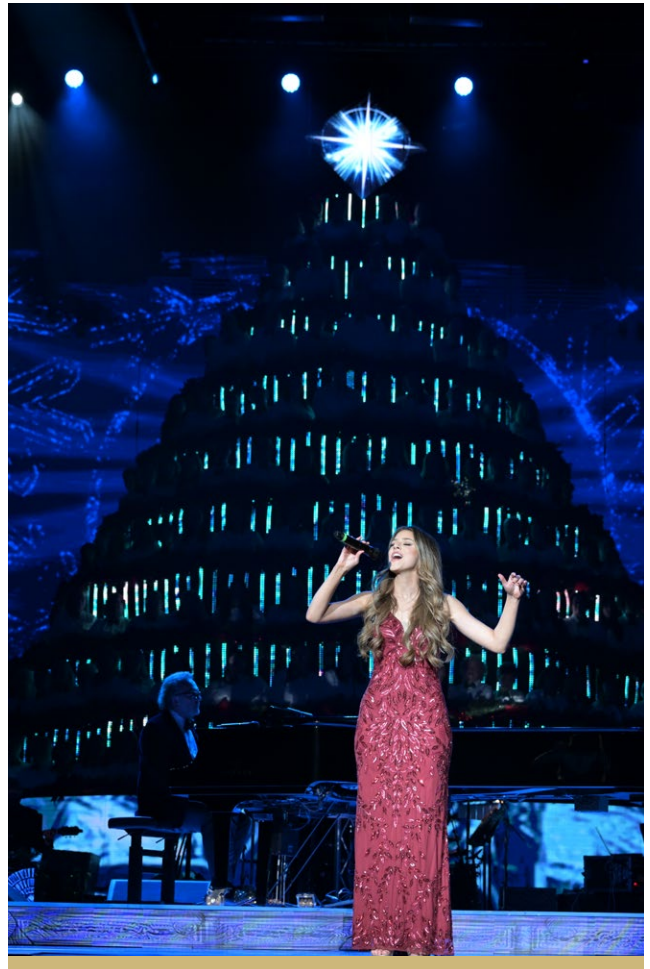
23 FARMFAIR
INTERNATIONAL
SPONSORS

20 KDAY'S
SPONSORS

DELIVERING DESTINATION EXPERIENCES

EXPLORE EDMONTON'S VENUES
ARE MORE THAN JUST BUILDINGS
—THEY ARE DYNAMIC HUBS WHERE
EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES
COME TO LIFE.

Through world-class events, immersive culinary offerings, and seamless operations, these spaces serve as catalysts for connection, creativity, and community. Whether hosting globally recognized conferences, exhilarating sporting events, or unforgettable live entertainment, our venues set the stage for moments that inspire, engage, and leave a lasting impact.



DELIVERING DESTINATION EXPERIENCES

WHILE MANY PLACES
CONTRIBUTE TO EDMONTON'S
VISITOR EXPERIENCE, THESE ARE
OUR SPACES, OUR PLATFORMS,
AND OUR OPPORTUNITY TO
SHOWCASE THE VERY BEST OF
OUR CITY TO THE WORLD.



THE EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE

RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF NORTH AMERICA'S TOP-PERFORMING CONVENTION CENTRES, THE EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE (ECC) CONTINUES TO SERVE AS A PREMIER DESTINATION FOR CONFERENCES, TRADE SHOWS, AND CULTURAL EVENTS.

As a hub for innovation and collaboration, the ECC plays a vital role in fostering connections between industry leaders, community partners, and visitors, contributing to Edmonton's reputation as a world-class event destination.

In addition to its role as a key economic and cultural driver, the ECC is an industry leader in sustainability. It is a certified Climate Smart business, a **BOMA Best certified facility**, and the first venue in Canada to receive Green Key level five certification. The ECC has also achieved Road to Zero Waste recognition, demonstrating its commitment to reducing environmental impact and setting the standard for sustainable event hosting. These achievements reinforce Edmonton's dedication to responsible tourism and ensure that the ECC remains at the forefront of green innovation.



With **330 events** hosted in 2024, ECC welcomed **266,868 guests**, reflecting the venue's continued success in attracting diverse, high-profile events. In addition, the ECC served a total of **238,057 meals** throughout the year, showcasing its commitment to delivering high-quality culinary experiences. In line with its environmental goals, the venue also successfully diverted 6,281 kg of food waste from June to December through the newly installed ORCA anaerobic food processor, reinforcing its dedication to sustainable practices.

The ECC Culinary Team showcased its world-class talent on the global stage in 2024, earning multiple medals at the Culinary Olympics, achieving top international rankings. Strategic partnerships with NAIT and the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN) further reinforced ECC's commitment to developing world-class talent while supporting inclusivity and workforce development.



A NEW ERA FOR EVENTS: EXPLORE EDMONTON AND THE ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA

On September 18, 2023, the Art Gallery of Alberta (AGA) and the Edmonton Convention Centre (ECC) announced a landmark partnership, with the ECC becoming the exclusive provider of events, catering, and facility booking services at one of Canada's most renowned cultural institutions. This collaboration represents a strong civic alliance, blending the artistic prestige of the AGA with Explore Edmonton's expertise in event management and hospitality.

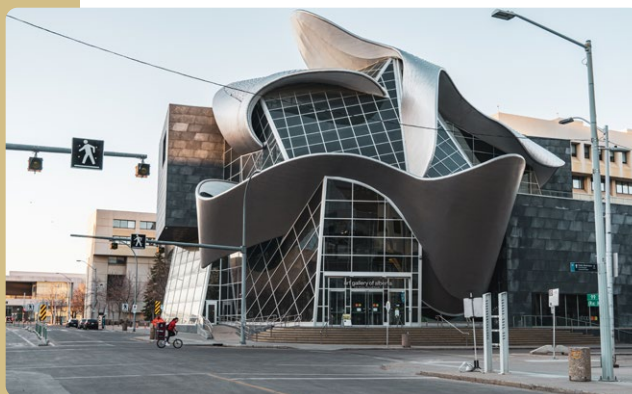
Throughout the year, the ECC's culinary team has been instrumental in delivering over **105 events at the AGA**, serving a total of over **2,000 meals** and **1,575 desserts**. This reflects the ECC's commitment to providing high-quality, tailored dining experiences in a venue that marries art, culture, and hospitality.

Another highlight was Bonjour Québec, an off-site event as part of Rendezvous Canada, which provided an opportunity to showcase Edmonton's hospitality and cultural vibrancy to an international audience. The ECC's culinary team curated a Québec-inspired menu, and the event's design and execution reinforced Edmonton's reputation as a world-class host city.

Through this partnership, the AGA has further solidified its position as a premier venue for high-caliber cultural and corporate events. As Explore Edmonton continues to enhance the event landscape at the AGA, this collaboration underscores a shared commitment to elevating Edmonton's arts, culture, and tourism sectors.

100TH ANNIVERSARY CENTURY BALL

The AGA's 100th Anniversary Century Ball was among the most complex and prestigious events hosted at the venue. This milestone celebration required meticulous planning and coordination, with the culinary team designing a menu inspired by the gallery's exhibits. The event was widely recognized for its impeccable service, attention to detail, and ability to seamlessly integrate art with culinary excellence.





THE EDMONTON EXPO CENTRE

THE EDMONTON EXPO CENTRE CONTINUES TO BE A CORNERSTONE OF EDMONTON'S EVENT SCENE, PLAYING A CRUCIAL ROLE IN DRIVING THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND ENHANCING THE CITY'S REPUTATION AS A TOP DESTINATION FOR TRADE SHOWS, CONVENTIONS, AND ENTERTAINMENT.

In 2024, the venue hosted a total of **304 events**, welcoming **1,504,087 guests** through its doors, reinforcing its status as a leading venue in North America. Notable achievements in 2024 include the Edmonton EXPO Centre being once again named to **EXHIBITOR Magazine's 2025 Centers of Excellence** list, ranking among North America's top 30 venues for trade shows and events. This recognition is a testament to the venue's commitment to delivering exceptional experiences for both event organizers and attendees alike.

A significant milestone in 2024 was the completion of the REHAB Project, a major investment that saw more than **\$100 million** directed toward the rehabilitation of Halls A, B, C, and D over the past three years. These upgrades ensure that the EXPO Centre remains at the forefront of global event venues.

Despite the scale of these renovations, business continuity was maintained through strategic scheduling, ensuring minimal disruption and no major loss of business.

The catering team also exceeded expectations, serving **116,156 banquet meals** and **150,272 concession meals** across a wide variety of events, showcasing the venue's ability to cater to large-scale events with outstanding culinary offerings.

Beyond its role as a key event hub, the Edmonton EXPO Centre is committed to sustainability and environmental stewardship. The venue has implemented a Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan, aiming to reduce emissions by 15 per cent by 2025 and 30 per cent by 2035 (from 2018 levels). Through ongoing waste diversion efforts, the EXPO Centre successfully recycled more than **50,000 kg of materials**, including paper, cardboard, bottles, cans, and glass, while over 30,000 kg of organic material was composted.



The venue's sustainability efforts also include innovative waste management solutions. In 2024, **12,078 kg of food waste** was diverted using the ORCA anaerobic food processor, **reducing 6.1 tonnes of CO₂** and **0.5 tonnes of methane emissions**—demonstrating a strong commitment to environmental responsibility.



VOLLEYBALL YOUTH NATIONALS 2024

The Volleyball Youth Nationals 2024, held at the Edmonton EXPO Centre, set a new benchmark for amateur sporting events in Canada. This year's tournament was the biggest in its history, attracting an impressive 30 per cent increase in participation compared to 2023, and a **61 per cent growth** in teams over the last time Edmonton hosted the event in 2022.

With 12 tournament days, 1,264 teams, and 56 volleyball courts, the event saw over 3,000 matches played, with more than **15,500 participants** competing and **33,000 hotel rooms** occupied during the duration of the event. This success solidified the Edmonton EXPO Centre's reputation as a premier venue for large-scale sporting events.

BUILDING ON THIS MOMENTUM, THE VOLLEYBALL YOUTH NATIONALS WILL RETURN TO THE EXPO CENTRE IN 2025, CONTINUING TO FOSTER GROWTH AND EXCITEMENT IN CANADIAN YOUTH SPORTS WHILE CONTRIBUTING SIGNIFICANTLY TO EDMONTON'S LOCAL ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.



CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY

AMPLIFYING THE EDMONTON EXPERIENCE: DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT IN ACTION

In 2024, Explore Edmonton's Destination Development team achieved remarkable milestones, helping to shape and elevate the city's tourism offerings. This year alone the team completed **28 pilot projects**, conducted over **65 hours** of one-on-one coaching with operators, and introduced **25 new or enhanced products to market**—far exceeding our targets.



From helping to forge **17 new tourism business partnerships** and fostering collaboration, the team's work has created a real, measurable impact. Highlights include the opening of EPIC Market Food Hall and its signature culinary experience, the launch of Pine Creek Retreat's e-bike adventures near Métis Crossing, and the debut of Edmonton's first-ever French-language experience at Delavoie Chocolate Maker. These successes showcase Edmonton as a city of innovation and creativity, offering experiences that are truly one-of-a-kind.





LOCAL EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT: CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN TOURISM

Explore Edmonton's commitment to fostering local experiences continued to thrive in 2024, with our Destination Development team providing vital coaching and support to partners who went on to receive prestigious awards at the Edmonton Tourism Awards. Notable winners included:

- **EDMONTON RADIAL RAILWAY SOCIETY** and **ECOFLOATS BY RIVER WATCH**, who both took home the Sustainable Tourism Award for their eco-conscious efforts.
- **TELUS WORLD OF SCIENCE** earned the Attraction of the Year accolade.
- **PRAIRIE GARDENS** received the Culinary Tourism Award, highlighting their exceptional contribution to the local food scene.
- **OLD STRATHCONA FARMERS' MARKET** was named Tourism Business of the Year for businesses with fewer than 50 employees.
- **MÉTIS CROSSING** was honoured with the Cultural Experience Award, recognizing its dedication to Indigenous tourism and cultural heritage.

In addition to these local awards, Explore Edmonton proudly nominated 15 partners for the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) Tourism Awards in 2024. Out of a competitive pool of 170 nominations, five Indigenous partners were selected as finalists, showcasing the incredible talent and innovation in the region's Indigenous tourism offerings. The following partners stood out nationally:

- **RURAL RIVERS** was a Top Finalist for the Innovator of the Year Award.
- **DRAGONFLY SPIRIT CREEATIONS** and **MÉTIS CROSSING** were Top Finalists for the Indigenous Tourism Award.
- **THE NATIONAL GATHERING OF ELDERS** emerged as the Winner of the Business Event of the Year Award.
- **SIERRA MURRAY, DAUGHTER OF GEOFF STEWART**, earned the Under 30 Tourism Trailblazer Award—a testament to the continued legacy of Rig Hand Distillery.
- **INDIGENOUS BOX** was a Top Finalist for the Employer of the Year Award.

EXPLORE EDMONTON VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

In 1879, community members came together and put on the first exhibition, which grew from an agricultural fair to what we now know as KDays. Since then, every year, the community has joined forces to put on events, have fun and work in tandem to make the city better. Contributing to Edmonton's vibrancy is an amazing feeling, and volunteers play a key role in supporting **KDays**, the **Canadian Finals Rodeo**, **Farmfair International** and at the **Edmonton Urban Farm**.

These events and activities are only possible because of the effort of hundreds of volunteers. Our volunteers are a diverse group of community members with a wide range of dedicated skills and length of service. From ambassadors to assistants, youth tour guides to hosts, and everyone in-between, our team of volunteers gives thousands of hours of their time to create memorable experiences for our community and visitors.

2024 VOLUNTEER STATS

13,211 VOLUNTEER
HOURS

605 ACTIVE
VOLUNTEERS

15 EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS
SUPPORTED WITH OUR POOL
OF VOLUNTEERS





THE EDMONTON URBAN FARM

SETTING A NEW RECORD, THE EDMONTON URBAN FARM PROUDLY WELCOMED 12,375 VISITORS IN 2024, SURPASSING PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS.

With diverse programming for all ages, the farm hosted a weekly kids club, educational sessions on food and farming, and engaging arts and culture activities, reinforcing its role as a vibrant community hub.

10 YEARS OF URBAN FARM

The Edmonton Urban Farm, a two-acre community hub for urban agriculture, education, and sustainability, was established in 2014 to connect people to food and farming within the city. This vibrant space supports over **300 individuals** from **20 organizations**, including the Multicultural Health Brokers and the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers. The Urban Farm serves as an essential resource for fostering community engagement and promoting sustainable practices in Edmonton.





TOURISM WEEK 2024

In recognition of the national initiative led by the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) and the provincial efforts of the Tourism Industry Association of Alberta (TIAA), Explore Edmonton celebrated Tourism Week with enthusiasm. This annual event aims to raise awareness among local businesses, elected officials, and residents about the significant impact of the visitor economy. By fostering a deeper understanding of how tourism contributes to Edmonton, we empower more advocates for our city, ultimately driving increased visitation and supporting greater outcomes for the community.

As part of Tourism Week festivities, the Communications and Connections team hosted a 2023 Annual Report webinar, providing partners and stakeholders with an engaging platform to explore key achievements. Through videos, live chat interaction, Q&A sessions, and team presentations, the webinar highlighted the impact of Explore Edmonton's work while reinforcing transparency, collaboration, and the value of tourism in driving economic growth. In addition to the event, our team also created a Tourism Week toolkit, which included key messages, social media posts, and more for stakeholders, partners and staff to use throughout the week.

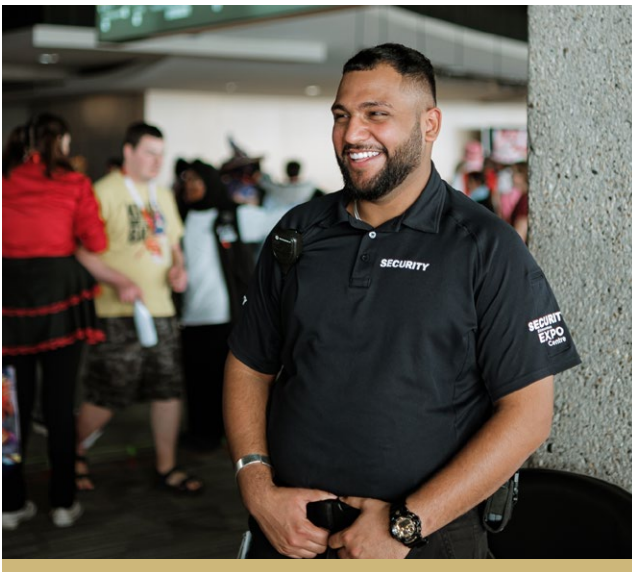
INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLES STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

For the second consecutive year, Explore Edmonton's Communications and Connections team hosted subsection roundtables, fostering meaningful engagement with partners across the tourism industry. These roundtables provided a valuable platform for discussions that strengthen relationships, inform planning efforts, and align strategies with the needs of attractions, experience providers and festivals. By continuing this initiative, Explore Edmonton enhances collaboration and industry cohesion, ensuring Edmonton's tourism sector thrives.



OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

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.



NOTABLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- **ENHANCED NETWORK RELIABILITY:** Upgraded core and border switches at all facilities, ensuring full redundancy and achieving 100% network uptime in 2024, with a projected annual uptime of 99.9999%.
- **CLOUD PLATFORM CONSOLIDATION:** Migrated from AWS to Azure, reducing monthly costs by 30 per cent and enhancing cybersecurity with unified access control and single sign-on (SSO) for infrastructure systems.
- **SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS (SLAS):** Achieved over 85% of SLAs, ensuring timely and efficient service delivery.
- **FIBER OPTIC NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS:** Doubled the available event network bandwidth, enhancing event connectivity and performance.
- **EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE LIGHTING UPGRADES:** Improved energy efficiency and ambiance throughout the venue.
- **EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE JASPER AVENUE CANOPY COMPLETION:** Enhanced guest comfort and exterior aesthetic.
- **EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE K9 PERIMETER PATROLS:** Strengthened security measures for a safer environment.
- **EDMONTON EXPO CENTRE NEW PARKING SYSTEM:** Implemented in April 2024, the system enhanced the guest experience by reducing ingress and egress times, alleviating long lineups and wait times (including during KDays). It also generated higher revenues and reduced operational costs.



EXPLORE EDMONTON'S EDI COUNCIL

At Explore Edmonton, we prioritize ensuring that every individual can experience a sense of safety and inclusion in their interactions, whether at events, in the workplace or within our city. Through purposeful action, Explore Edmonton's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) council is actively working to bring about meaningful impact and positive transformation for both our teams and our city.

As we reflect on its fourth year of operation, our EDI Council takes pride in the following accomplishments:

- Introduced a variety of **diverse training and development opportunities** for staff to partake in including disability awareness training and cultural awareness training in collaboration with Indigenous Tourism Alberta.
- Represented Explore Edmonton via a panel session at the **Destinations International Social Inclusion Summit**, providing attendees with actionable steps to take the leap into the DEI journey.
- Brought in speakers to staff meetings to give presentations and keynote addresses on various EDI topics including disability, the 2SLGBTQI+ community and inclusivity in the workplace.



EXPLORE EDMONTON'S CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

EXPLORE EDMONTON IS COMMITTED TO FOSTERING A CULTURE OF ENGAGEMENT, COLLABORATION, AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT WITHIN OUR TEAM.

The Culture and Engagement Committee plays a vital role in championing these efforts, empowering employees to actively contribute to building a stronger, more dynamic workplace. By offering diverse perspectives and taking strategic action, the committee supports the development of a culture where every Explorer feels connected, valued, and inspired to make an impact. Through this collective work, we aim to enhance engagement, communication, and team cohesion across Explore Edmonton.



As we reflect on the Culture and Engagement Committee's first year of operation, we take pride in the following achievements:

TEAM BUILDING EVENTS

- Organized staff events such as the Staff BBQ and a partnership with Evolution Wonderlounge for a Staff Drag Show and fundraiser
- Empowered teams to plan quarterly engagement activities, strengthening team connections and creating lasting memories

WELLNESS INITIATIVES

- Launched the Walking Club and hosted multiple self-care and professional growth workshops
- Collaborated with the Health & Safety Committee and the EDI Council on wellness initiatives

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Organized toy drives, charitable donations, and partnerships with local organizations to give back to the community

EMPLOYEE PERKS

- Conducted a staff survey to understand the most valued perks
- Relaunched Cineplex vouchers, discounted events, and offered free tickets and coupons to local events

AMPLIFYING EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK

- Provided recommendations on employee engagement surveys
- Collaborated with People & Culture to refine onboarding and training processes
- Initiated quarterly engagement activities to encourage team recognition and celebration

FINANCIALS

EXPLORE EDMONTON CORPORATION ANNUAL REPORT TABLES DECEMBER 31, 2024

SUMMARY FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024

SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS	2024 ACTUAL	2024 BUDGET	2023 ACTUAL
CITY OF EDMONTON	17,754,000	17,754,000	16,743,000
EXTERNAL REVENUES	72,143,929	74,851,688	67,602,773
	89,897,929	92,605,688	84,345,773
OPERATING & PROGRAM EXPENSES	88,244,786	92,605,688	85,750,200
OPERATING SURPLUS BEFORE AMORTIZATION & INTEREST	1,653,143	-	(1,404,427)
NET AMORTIZATION	733,009	667,491	599,525
NON-OPEX : LOSS ON DISPOSAL	-	-	1,712,824
INTEREST ON LONG-TERM DEBT	127,001	127,001	138,081
INTEREST EXPENSE	539,940	-	1,562,365
	1,399,950	794,492	4,012,795
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	253,193	(794,492)	(5,417,222)

EXPLORE EDMONTON CORPORATION

ANNUAL REPORT TABLES

DECEMBER 31, 2024

DIVISIONAL RESULTS

DIVISIONAL RESULTS	EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE	EXPO CENTRE	DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING	COMMUNITY INITIATIVES & AGRICULTURE	SHARED SERVICES	2024 TOTAL
CITY OF EDMONTON	211,942	236,280	7,605,871	(49,808)	9,749,715	17,754,000
EXTERNAL REVENUES	17,349,204	20,793,019	7,053,042	25,620,887	1,327,777	72,143,929
	17,561,146	21,029,299	14,658,913	25,571,079	11,077,492	89,897,929
OPERATING & PROGRAM EXPENSES	17,561,146	21,029,299	14,658,913	25,571,079	9,424,349	88,244,786
OPERATING SURPLUS BEFORE AMORTIZATION & INTEREST	-	-	-	-	1,653,143	1,653,143
NET AMORTIZATION	120,426	520,636	-	28,998	62,948	733,009
INTEREST ON LONG-TERM DEBT	-	-	-	-	127,001	127,001
NON-OPEX : LOSS ON DISPOSAL	-	-	-	-	-	-
INTEREST EXPENSE	-	-	-	-	539,940	539,940
	120,426	520,636	-	28,998	729,889	1,399,950
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR 2024	(120,426)	(520,636)	-	(28,998)	923,254	253,193

EXPLORE EDMONTON CORPORATION

ANNUAL REPORT TABLES

DECEMBER 31, 2024

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	2024	2023
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS	13,929,515	26,619,435
LONG-TERM ASSETS	8,581,452	6,907,218
TOTAL ASSETS	22,510,967	33,526,653
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES	14,264,146	26,004,344
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES	6,265,978	5,794,659
TOTAL LIABILITIES	20,530,124	31,799,003
SHARE CAPITAL AND NET ASSETS		
SHARE CAPITAL	100	100
NET ASSETS	1,980,743	1,727,550
TOTAL LIABILITIES, SHARE CAPITAL AND NET ASSETS	22,510,967	33,526,653

Images within this report are property of Explore Edmonton Corporation, sourced from the public sphere, or used with permission of the individual or organization.



**EXPLORE
EDMONTON**