



2023 – 2026

Business Plan

Tourism Calgary

tourism
calgary

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Land Acknowledgement

The Calgary area where the Bow and Elbow rivers meet is a place of confluence where the sharing of ideas and opportunities naturally come together. Indigenous peoples have their own names for this area that have been in use long before Scottish settlers named this place Calgary. The Métis call the Calgary area Otos-kwunee. In the Blackfoot language, they call this place, Moh-kins-tsis. The Îlethka Stoney Nakoda Nation refer to the Calgary area as Wîchîspa Oyade and the people of the Tsuut'ina nation call this area Guts-ists-i.

We would like to acknowledge that we welcome all visitors and guests to the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. This includes: the Siksika, Piikani,

and Kainai collectively known as the Blackfoot Confederacy; the Îlethka Nakoda Wîcastabi First Nations, comprised of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations; and the Tsuut'ina First Nation. The city of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3. We acknowledge all Indigenous urban Calgarians, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, who have made Calgary their home.

We thank all the Indigenous people for accommodating and hosting visitors and for continuing to welcome guests and share our history.



01

Executive Summary

Calgary's tourism industry is at a crucial time as we recover from two plus years of challenges brought on by the pandemic and as many new opportunities and priorities within our community and industry begin to evolve and take shape.

As Tourism Calgary transitions away from recovery, we are laying out a rolling three-year Business Plan that will become our guide to not only accelerate recovery and drive demand for our partners in the short-term but will allow us to harness the many opportunities before us to help further grow the visitor economy in the long-term.

Currently, Calgary is forecast to return to 2019 visitation and spend levels by 2024, with the potential to grow tourism revenues from \$2.1 billion (pre-pandemic) to \$2.7 billion by 2026. But it will take the right mix of investment, collaboration, alignment, and strategic focus to get us there.

Over the past several years, though the collective efforts of partners and our community, Calgary has already begun to see tremendous growth across its landscape – from the ongoing

development of our culture and entertainment district, the enhancement of our venues and infrastructure, the continued revitalization of downtown, and work in the industry to promote air access to our destination. A lot has been accomplished that will help promote Calgary as a destination of choice globally.

But there is much work to do. Ensuring we have appropriate products and experiences to enliven our destination year-round, accommodations and transportation links that make it easier for visitors to easily navigate around once in market, and that we are collectively sharing Calgary's diverse culture and heritage to attract more business and visitors is crucial. Working collaboratively with our partners, community, and industry to develop what we offer as a destination will be paramount.

With these considerations, Tourism Calgary has developed four focus areas that form the basis of our three-year plan. The plan was created following a thorough review by our leadership team of the growth opportunities and challenges that exist in our market,

stakeholder insights, third-party research, and input from our advisory committees and Board of Directors. These focus areas are interconnected, each supporting the success of the other, collectively helping to achieve our goals.

Four Focus Areas:

1. **Strengthen Calgary's Reputation through Brand**
2. **Become a Year-Round Eventful City**
3. **Elevate Calgary to a Top Convention City**
4. **Build Community and Collaboration**

To support the work ahead, Tourism Calgary will continue to refine our role as a Destination Management Organization. This will include us refocusing our efforts on how we lead, support, and influence all aspects of destination development and promotion that contributes to the visitor's experience, while also considering the needs and priorities of our local community, industry and civic partners, and the environment. A priority in the first year of our 2023-26 business plan will be to work collectively with our partners, stakeholders, and community to revisit and refresh Calgary's Destination Strategy and refocus our efforts to sustainably grow the visitor economy in the years to come.

As we execute our three-year plan, we will also continue our focus on operational excellence by ensuring we have a strong, engaged team, good governance, a diversified funding model, and effective processes, systems, and tools.



Kensington, Calgary / Kelly Hofer

02

About Tourism Calgary

Vision

To become *Ultimate hosts. Ultimate host city.*

As ultimate hosts, we aim to exemplify Calgary's indelible community spirit by fostering a destination that is welcoming, innovative and offers experiences that showcase our diverse culture and celebrate Calgary's unique heritage. Visitors find it easy to be here and are unencumbered in their pursuit of shareable experiences. Our community feels engaged and that tourism contributes to their quality of life.

We will have world class venues, infrastructure and products that will enable us to host more conferences, high-level sporting events, and cultural experiences.

We'll enable visitors to unlock the best version of Calgary by tailoring their experiences through itineraries that meet – and exceed – their needs and expectations.

We'll collaborate with partners and the community, support Calgarians who are hosting visitors, and enable businesses, community groups and citizens to be the best possible ambassadors for our city and region, ultimately leading to repeat visitation and economic activity for our destination.

Mission

Inspire more people to visit Calgary for memorable experiences that celebrate our community, culture, and people.

Mandate

As the official destination management organization for Calgary, the purpose of Tourism Calgary is to work closely with industry and community partners to drive demand to local member businesses, increasing the economic impact of the visitor economy in Calgary, while also considering the needs of the community and the environment. We:

Promote Calgary as a destination of choice, marketing the city locally, nationally, and internationally

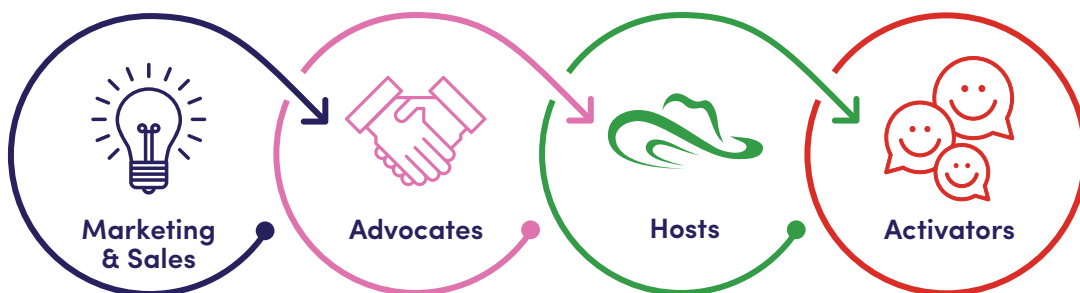
Steward Calgary's destination brand

Attract and host sport, cultural and major events and meetings and conventions

Advocate and support the ongoing development of Calgary as a destination, including its products and experiences

Connect with current and future visitors, providing the information they need the information they need to have a great experience in Calgary

Ultimate hosts. Ultimate host city.



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Our Approach

When Tourism Calgary launched its inaugural Destination Strategy in 2017, it began its transition to a Destination Management Organization. Destination Management is the strategic coordination of almost all aspects of destination development and promotion that contributes to the visitor experience, while also considering the needs of the local community, member businesses, partners, and environment.

Cities that focus on destination development have diversified economies, a powerful network of connected and strategically aligned partners, collaboration with government and engaged citizen advocates. This translates to a robust visitor economy, pride of place for residents and a sought-after destination for travellers.



Calgary Folk Music Festival / Roth and Ramberg

While promotion of our destination remains a key facet of our work, as a destination management organization, Tourism Calgary's role will be to:



Lead

the work we are mandated to do that will support the responsible development of our destination and grow the visitor economy



Support

the goals of our destination through collaboration with the community, industry and civic partners, and stakeholders in a way that moves us collectively forward



Advocate

for what's best for the quality of life of Calgarians and for Calgary's growing tourism industry

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Priority Markets

To grow tourism revenues, we will focus on key audiences that will contribute to the growth of Calgary's visitor economy.

A significant opportunity for growth in our market will be the **convention traveller**. With the expanded capacity of the new convention centre coming in 2024, we will have the ability to attract a greater volume of visitors to Calgary as well as new conventions and delegates from outside of Canada. We also have the opportunity to inspire this captive convention audience to extend their stay while in Calgary.

Due to the high cost of consumer marketing in international markets, Tourism Calgary is continuing to attract **international travellers** through our Travel Trade (business to business) activities while leveraging Travel Alberta and Destination Canada campaigns in international markets. As well, it will be critical to continue to promote Calgary as a destination of choice **regionally and domestically**, where our largest volume of travellers come from.



Heritage Park Historical Village / Brad Bergevin



Convention

High volume
High spend



U.S./International Leisure

Low volume
Highest spend



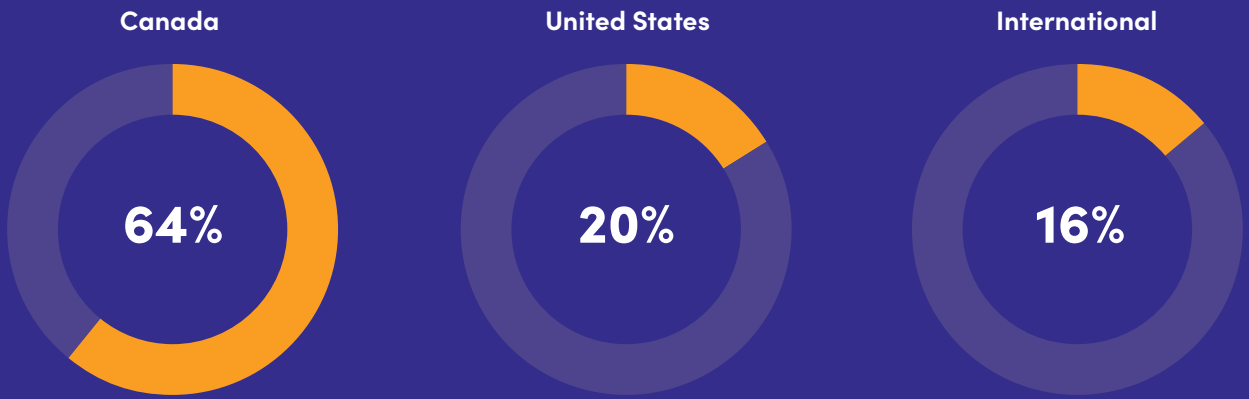
Regional & Domestic Leisure

High volume
Lowest spend



Sales - Meetings & Conventions

In 2022, sales by geographic location were as follows:



2022 represented an initial shift away from our traditional mix of 80 per cent Canadian business as we began to secure larger events for the new BMO Convention Centre in addition to our historical production. With our increased convention capacity, our expected sales mix over the next three years will move toward 50 per cent Canadian and 50 per cent USA and International.



Peace Bridge, Calgary / Tom Day

Travel Trade (International Leisure)

Travel Trade supports the growth of visitation from key markets through industry-aligned business to business initiatives, while supporting partners in developing export-ready products and experiences.

Priority markets for the next three years include:

2023



United States



Germany



Switzerland



Australia



United Kingdom

2023-24



France



Netherlands



Japan

2025



South Korea



China

Travel Trade's priority markets are selected based on:

- Markets likely to provide the greatest ROI based on past visitation
- Tour Operator viability post-pandemic
- Ease of doing business with markets, tour operators and Receptive Tour Operators
- Air Access
- Alignment with Travel Alberta and Destination Canada investments
- Alignment with Calgary product



Consumer Marketing

Tourism Calgary invests in markets that have been historically strong for Calgary and show potential for future visitation. We continually analyze the following factors when choosing our markets:

- Awareness of Calgary and high intentions to visit
- Past market performance (visitation and spend)
- Economic outlook
- Easy access to Calgary
- Strategic priority of our partners (local, Travel Alberta, Destination Canada)

Travel markets continue to be dynamic as we recover from the pandemic. Tourism Calgary will continue to regularly reevaluate our markets and adjust them if needed due to changing global events, traveller behaviour and economic circumstances.



Calgary Stampede / Calin Charles

Tourism Calgary's markets for 2023-26

Regional Markets

Any traveller within an eight-hour drive of Calgary including communities in Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Montana and Washington.

Domestic Market

Traditionally focused on travellers in the Greater Toronto and Lower Mainland / Coastal British Columbia markets and has evolved with less of a focus on geographic qualifiers as opposed to persona and interest-based targeting within Canada.

Regional and domestic segments are:

Curious Adventurer – Domestic travellers, planning to travel in Canada for quick getaways and bucket list Canadian experiences. They are intentional and value unplanned experiences.

Higher Familiarity – Calgary's important regional travellers, who know Calgary and have a strong interest in returning. They are curious, spontaneous, and are more interested in shared experiences.

Local Hosts – Calgarians who love to host their friends and family and showcase their lifestyle and values to those who visit them.

United States

The U.S. Market consists of any long-haul destination in the U.S. with a focus on direct flights to Calgary, namely, California, Texas and Washington. We utilize Travel Alberta and Destination Canada's segments, aligning closely with their US programs. These segments are Curious Adventurers (most aligned to the Calgary brand and tourism offerings) and Hotspot Hunters.

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2023–2026 Strategic Focus Areas

All four of our focus areas are interconnected, each supporting the success of the other, helping to achieve our goal of growing the visitor economy in Calgary.

Grow tourism revenues to \$2.7 billion by 2026



Strengthen Calgary's Reputation through Brand

- Infuse new brand into all Tourism Calgary programs & activities
- Collaborate with strategic partners to create and grow brand awareness and alignment
- Create an ambassador program for Calgarians that enhances civic pride

Become a Year-Round Eventful City

- Attract and support 1-2 large signature events each year that create profile for the city
- Attract/develop larger 'anchor' events in shoulder/winter season
- Build plug and play cultural experiences inventory to enliven events
- Enhance awareness of events amongst locals and visitors
- Explore opportunities for personalized connections with visitors using digital tools and resources

Elevate Calgary to Be a Top Convention City

- Implement an integrated marketing/sales plan to attract more city-wide conferences aligned with future convention capacity
- Develop an enhanced servicing program to make Calgary the easiest place to do business for event planners
- Develop programs and offerings for delegates that enhance visitor experience, attendance, and length of stay
- Work with local partners to prioritize gaps in convention destination competitiveness

Build Community & Collaboration

- Work collaboratively with all levels of government, industry, civic partners, and the community to advance key priorities
- Grow support of the visitor economy



Olympic Plaza during Chinook Blast / Neil Zeller

2023-2026 Strategic Focus Areas

Strengthen Calgary's Reputation through Brand



Objective: Create an emotional connection that inspires travellers and locals to experience Calgary and share their experiences.



Strengthen Calgary's Reputation through Brand

In collaboration with our civic partners, Tourism Calgary recently undertook extensive research and engagement on our city's brand. Findings of this work made clear that for us to be successful attracting more visitors, conventions, and events to Calgary, a bold, new brand was important for our city. An updated Calgary story that is relevant and aspirational for our civic organizations, locals and guests.

Our aim is to bring the Calgary brand to life with our partners by consistently telling genuine Calgary stories that reflect Calgary's diverse culture and heritage. Through our marketing efforts, events, and in-destination experiences, we want to showcase Calgary to the world and turn local Calgarians, visitors, influencers, and others into brand ambassadors. We want to promote Calgary as a global destination of choice by connecting emotionally with our audiences and create excitement and urgency to visit the city.

Key initiatives

1 Infuse new brand into all Tourism Calgary programs & activities		2 Collaborate with strategic partners to create and grow brand awareness and alignment		3 Create an ambassador program for Calgarians that enhances civic pride	
2023-24	Develop brand guidelines, assets, and tools to support brand alignment across organization	2023-24	Rollout brand strategy, tools, and resources with partners to build brand alignment across city	2023-24	Develop brand aligned citizen advocacy program
	Build brand awareness through major meeting & event promotion, servicing, and activations		Share brand photo and video assets with partners through an accessible digital tool		Evolve front-line programs to align with new brand
	Evolve Calgary's White Hat program to reflect and align to new Calgary brand				
2024-25	Refresh all of Tourism Calgary channels with brand aligned content	2024-25	Leverage Special Olympic Winter Games and other major events to build brand awareness for Calgary	2024-25	Develop and grow brand ambassadors
	Update marketing content and brand assets to reflect Calgary's diversity and rich Indigenous history.		Work with civic partners on collaborative brand initiatives to raise awareness for Calgary		Expand front-line training materials with diversity, inclusion and Indigenous heritage content
	Execute awareness marketing campaigns in longer-haul markets				
2025	Continue development of traveller centric photo and video assets.	2025	Leverage large conventions, such as Rotary International to showcase Calgary's brand	2025	Showcase brand ambassadors in promotions and activations
			Continue to build brand alignment with civic partners through enhanced resources and tools		



2023-2026 Strategic Focus Areas

Become a Year-Round Eventful City

Objective: To attract exciting events to Calgary and position the city as a vibrant, diverse destination with lots to do.





Become a Year-Round Eventful City

Summer is typically the busiest time of year for Calgary. With Stampede and many large, well-known local festivals and events, there is much to promote and attract visitors to our market. The challenge Calgary faces is attracting visitors – and business for our partners – during the shoulder and winter seasons. We want to enhance the vibrancy of our city year-round, so that no matter what time of year it is, visitors and locals alike know there is always something fun and exciting to do in Calgary.

To achieve this, not only will we need to attract events that will draw Calgarians and visitors to our market during high-needs periods, but we will also need to work collaboratively with our partners to develop our winter anchor, Chinook Blast, as well as build plug and play cultural experiences that will help to enliven our events and communities and reflect the Calgary brand.

Creating a more vibrant and eventful city year-round provides us with an opportunity to increase the volume of visitors each year, enhance the overall convention visitor experience no matter what time of year they visit, and align with key stakeholder priorities.



Olympic Plaza, Red Bull Outliers / Sherpas Cinema

Event Highlights

Tourism Calgary supports many events annually, including Calgary's many local festivals, major events such as Stampede, and the development of our winter festival, Chinook Blast. Through the work of our integrated Sales, Marketing, and Destination Experience teams, we also welcome and host a variety of sporting and cultural events, meetings, and conventions.

Over the next three years, the following signature events will be hosted in Calgary:

2023

Nitro Rally Cross

February



World Petroleum Congress

September



2024

Special Olympics Canada Winter Games

February



2025

Rotary International

June



Key initiatives

1 Attract and support 1-2 large signature events each year that create profile for the city		2 Attract/develop larger 'anchor' events in shoulder/winter season		3 Build plug and play cultural experiences inventory to enliven events	
2023-24	<p>Develop a lead list for key signature events for 2025-27</p> <p>Rebuild relationships with international sport federations and rights holders following the pandemic</p> <p>Leverage major event channels and assets to build awareness and intention to visit Calgary</p>	2023-24	<p>Build Chinook Blast into Calgary's winter anchor through partner activation and attraction of large and aligned events</p> <p>Host FAM tours with key national partners to grow event portfolio</p>	2023-24	<p>Create an experience development strategy with civic partners and the cultural community to build product that can be activated for major events and conventions</p>
2024-25	<p>Close key events for 2025-2027</p> <p>Host a familiarization tour with key international partners to grow event portfolio</p> <p>Leverage Special Olympic Winter Games channels and assets to build awareness of Calgary</p>	2024-25	<p>Enhance Chinook Blast's reach, offerings, and experiences by leveraging the 2024 Special Olympics and Scotties Tournament of Hearts</p> <p>Further develop our suite of FAM & Site itineraries to showcase cultural experiences</p> <p>Secure base funding with executive partners and increase sponsorship</p>	2024-25	<p>Work with industry partners to create a comprehensive menu of cultural experiences (plug and play) that can be scaled for conventions and events</p> <p>Launch plug and play activation pilots.</p>
2025	<p>Develop a lead list for key signature events for 2028-30</p> <p>Continue to evolve relationships and grow events</p>	2025	<p>Grow Chinook Blast's reputation and experiences</p> <p>Re-evaluate Chinook Blast governance and five-year plan</p>	2025	<p>Roll out plug and play products with Rotary International Convention; refine and leverage for future events</p>
4 Enhance awareness of events amongst locals and visitors		5 Explore opportunities for personalized connections with visitors using digital tools & resources			
2023-24	<p>Together with key stakeholders, explore opportunities around digital promotional tools for events</p> <p>Build event excitement and attendance through focused marketing and communications plan</p>	2023-24	<p>Map visitor and delegate in-destination journey to identify experience and service gaps</p> <p>Grow referrals to industry year-round by offering a refreshed visitor servicing model</p> <p>Enhance current B2C deals and pass programs to encourage exploration</p>		
2024-25	<p>Implement event communications strategy and promotional tools</p> <p>Leverage content to extend stays for group business</p>	2024-25	<p>Launch a customized trip planning tool on visitcalgary.com</p> <p>Research and monitor how visitors/delegates are choosing to be engaged and refine visitor services model</p>		
2025	<p>Refine and evolve event aggregation activities and communication plan</p>	2025	<p>Roll out 3.0 Visitor Services model</p>		



2023–2026 Strategic Focus Areas

Elevate Calgary to Be a Top Convention City

Objective: Showcase Calgary as a top convention destination that provides exceptional services and experiences for meeting planners and their delegates.





Elevate Calgary to Be a Top Convention City

The biggest opportunity for future growth in the visitor economy will be the opening of the expanded BMO Centre in 2024 which will double our capacity to host conventions and meetings in Calgary. Our city will be in a position to compete with Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver to attract large scale national and international conferences to Calgary. Our competition is fierce, not just in Canada but globally.

This represents a tangible opportunity to attract large numbers of high-value visitors to Calgary that would not have visited otherwise and that will have a 67% propensity to become a leisure traveller.

Growing investment and people resources to support this opportunity will be crucial, as will be identifying, prioritizing, and addressing gaps in our destination that will allow us to be a competitive convention city. Ensuring we have an appropriately sized hotel on-site, the right connections to the mountains and other nearby attractions for pre-and-post trips, and are working closely with our local partners to create unique Calgary experiences for event planners and delegates, will be key.





Key initiatives

1 Implement an integrated marketing/sales plan to attract more city-wide conferences aligned with future convention capacity		2 Develop an enhanced servicing program to make Calgary the easiest place to do business for event planners	
2023-24	<p>Build the structure for an expanded sales, service, and marketing team to grow leads and sales</p> <p>Prioritize and add targeted sales resources to support lead growth in 2023</p> <p>Align and coordinate our marketing and sales plans with our key meeting and conventions partners</p> <p>Implement an integrated marketing and content strategy to increase awareness of Calgary with planners and grow connections with meeting planners and decision makers</p>	2023-24	<p>Leverage 2022 event planner research to evaluate current service offering</p> <p>Create awareness amongst industry partners of convention opportunity; work collectively to build on current offerings</p>
2024-25	<p>Review and refine team resources with a focus on the international market, research, servicing, and marketing</p> <p>Refine our marketing strategy to engage our followers and grow marketing leads</p> <p>Evaluate and refine sales tactics to optimize ROI</p>	2024-25	<p>Roll out and test enhanced offerings for event planners</p> <p>Enhance supplier/vendor research tools and resources</p>
2025	<p>Host major international event planner conference to showcase destination</p> <p>Review and refine Champions program to further engage local market</p> <p>Evaluate and refine sales tactics to optimize ROI</p>	2025	<p>Refine and build on service offerings as convention capacity increases</p>
3 Develop programs and offerings for delegates that enhance visitor experience, attendance, and length of stay		4 Work with local partners to prioritize gaps in convention destination competitiveness	
2023-24	<p>Conduct a needs/gap analysis to identify pre and post programs that help extend a delegate's stay</p> <p>Develop a platform to streamline marketing of the destination for convention visitors</p>	2023-24	<p>Create working groups of local stakeholders to prioritize and solution current gaps in the market (connection to the mountains, large on-site hotel, air access, in-market transportation)</p>
2024-25	<p>Implement pre-post program offerings to convention delegates</p>	2024-25	<p>Implement solutions to align with the opening of the new BMO Convention Centre</p>
2025	<p>Roll out plug and play products with Rotary International Convention; refine and leverage for future events</p>	2025	<p>Review progress and continue to refine</p>



2023–2026 Strategic Focus Areas

Build Community & Collaboration

Objective: Lead Calgary's visitor economy by building inclusive relationships to improve the destination through alignment, collaboration and sharing.





Build Community & Collaboration

In short, we can't do this work alone. As a destination, we are always better working together - creating alignment brings more value to our destination partners, the industry, and the community.

Over the past two years, much has changed globally, within the industry, and locally. Focusing our attention on building relationships within our community, the industry, and with our civic partners will be paramount to our success as an organization and a destination.

Key initiatives

1

Work collaboratively with all levels of government, industry, civic partners, and the community to advance key priorities

2023-24

Together with industry and community partners, refresh Calgary's Destination Strategy

Build and implement a communications and advocacy strategy to enhance engagement with key audiences around key priorities

Review and refresh Tourism Calgary's Partnership Program to best reflect current needs of industry

Create and foster relationships with the Indigenous community

Support our tourism partners in becoming 'convention-ready' by mid-2024

2024-25

Work together to implement key findings of Destination Strategy and report back to the community on progress

Refine Partnership Program based on feedback and needs of industry

Continue work with Indigenous communities and industry partners to share Indigenous stories and experiences

Expand our partner database enabling us to highlight year-round experiences

2025

Continue to advance key priorities and report on progress

Continue to refine and adapt offerings to partners

Refine partner engagement plan based on results

2

Grow support of the visitor economy

2023-24

Gather and share research, data and insights that supports our contribution to the visitor economy

Develop and implement a communications strategy to inform key audiences of the impact of the visitor economy

2024-25

Continue to refine and share data and intelligence based on key priorities

Review and adjust strategy based on results

2025

Operational Excellence

Foundational to our plan will be ensuring we have a strong, engaged team, good governance, and a diversified, sustainable funding model to support the work ahead. Evaluating and updating our processes, systems, and tools to allow us to be efficient and agile will also be a key component of our work.



Key Focus Areas

A Diversified Funding Model

To fully support the growth and opportunities outlined in our business plan, additional revenue will be required.

Exploring opportunities to enhance our current funding while diversifying sources of funding will be key in our ability to execute our plan.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Tourism Calgary is committed to ensuring members of our community feel welcome and represented in our work and the stories we share about Calgary.

Building an inclusive culture where all team members feel like they belong, are engaged and valued will be a key component of this work.

Digital Transformation

To strengthen Tourism Calgary's work, as part of our three-year plan, we are implementing a digital transformation strategy. The strategy incorporates our digital vision, aligns to organizational needs, and defines a list of specific initiatives and project goals.

This work will allow us to adapt and respond to changing technology, incorporate audience feedback, while helping to elevate the four focus areas of our business plan.

Data & Research Strategy

The ability to understand what's happening in the market, including traveller and local sentiment, will be vital to informing our work and how we share the value of the visitor economy with our audiences.

In 2023, we will be implementing a new data & research strategy aligned with our business plan that will help to identify gaps in current data and intelligence, and what we will need to gather and generate to better tell the story of tourism's contribution to the visitor economy.

The background is a solid blue color with several large, overlapping, semi-transparent circles and one square in the top-left corner, creating a layered, organic effect.

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