



Photo credit: Kelly Hofer

2024 annual progress report

Summary

2023: A year in review

In 2023, our community made notable progress amidst unprecedented growth.

Calgary welcomed record numbers of newcomers, invested in public spaces and events, received vital infrastructure upgrades and deepened its commitment to a thriving downtown and safe, inclusive, livable communities. All this while navigating inflation, affordability, housing shortages and climate change.

Looking ahead to 2024 and beyond

Housing, affordability and climate change will continue to remain areas of interest.

With a strong foundation established, the city is positioned to confront emerging economic, social and environmental challenges while embracing new possibilities. To become a place where bright minds and big ideas converge to solve the world's greatest challenges takes the entire community focused on the same ambitious goal.

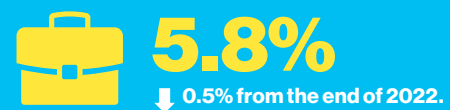
Data sources are available in the Uplook 2024 progress report. Access the [full report here](#).
ISC: Unrestricted

Progress on Key Drivers

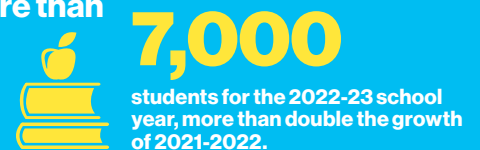
Talent

Home to bright minds

At the end of 2023, Calgary's unemployment rate was



Secondary school enrollment grew by more than



The wage gap in Calgary has shrunk, with immigrants now earning only



Community stories

- TalentED YYC was launched with all seven post-secondary institutions to provide new opportunities for students to combine their studies with real workplace experience.
- The Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund (OCIF) announced a \$5.5 million investment into Bow Valley College to establish the Calgary Entertainment Arts Production Hub.
- Education institutions across Calgary introduced new programs to meet the current and future needs of employers in areas of new technology skills, aviation management, upskilling, re-skilling and agriculture technology.

Livability

The best place to build a life

Calgary was named the **7th** most livable city in the world in 2023 by the Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Livability Index.

Per capita greenhouse gas emissions have decreased by **26.7%** from benchmark 2005 levels.

The Calgary Foundation's Quality of Life report found **87%** of Calgarians think Calgary is a good place for young people to live.

Community stories

- Calgary's *Climate Strategy: Pathways to 2050*, earned a rare "A list" ranking on the CDP's global climate leadership survey through excellence in reporting and transparency.
- Home is Here, The City of Calgary's Housing Strategy 2024-2030*, bolstered by a \$228-million investment from the federal Housing Accelerator Fund, aims to improve housing affordability for Calgarians through a range of measures.
- Major revitalization projects into downtown Calgary are underway, including:
 - expansion of Arts Commons,
 - redevelopment of Stephen Avenue,
 - redesign of Olympic Plaza; and
 - extension of the popular RiverWalk pathway.



Photo credit: Brookfield



Photo credit: Colin Way

Business Environment

Top location for business

Calgary International Airport welcomed

18.5 M passengers for this year.

Downtown office space averaged

31.2% vacancy rate, with the central core standing out, specifically AA buildings, at 13.5 per cent.

42% of business leaders surveyed in external markets have considered expanding to Calgary.

52% of top talent surveyed in external markets have considered relocating to the city.

Community stories

- The City of Calgary's Living Labs project's demand increased to 181 days of use in 2023 from 83 days in 2020.
- The Canadian Pacific Railway merged with the Kansas City Southern Railway Co. and maintained its headquarters in Calgary, solidifying the city as a transportation and logistics hub.
- Calgary's transportation network was upgraded with the completion of the ring road, a major infrastructure project for the city, while collaborative municipal and provincial government investments advanced conversations on both a rail link from Calgary's airport to downtown and Banff as well as a broader regional rail network.

Innovation

A creative hub

Calgary attracted 74 per cent of Alberta's venture capital deals, securing **\$501 M** across 64 deals.

Ranked **1st** for the third year in a row for startup creation by the Association of University Technology Managers.

Calgary ranked **6 out of 41** cities on HelloSafe's list of best cities in Canada to start a small business.

Community stories

- OCIF celebrated its five-year anniversary with \$82 million of its initial funding committed, backing 26 projects and spurring \$870 million in new economic activity.
- Platform Calgary revamped its international programs into the Global Startup Visa Program, aiding entrepreneurs who want to move their families and businesses to Calgary.
- A study by the Transition Accelerator identified a \$4.6 billion annual market potential for fuel hydrogen production in the Calgary region.



Photo credit: Roth & Bamberg



Brand

An iconic city

#1 Calgary was voted the **friendliest city in the world** by Conde Nast Traveller magazine.

 The Calgary Stampede attracted a total of **1,384,632** visitors. Only 25,000 less than its all-time record.

52%

 of Canadian workers

63%

 of American workers

surveyed consider Calgary the top Canadian city they would consider for a move.

Community stories

- Calgary Economic Development, Tourism Calgary and the City of Calgary evolved Calgary's brand through significant community engagement to ensure it remains an authentic reflection of the city's current identity and aspirations for the future.
- Calgary's film and television industry attracted productions with a combined total budget of \$246 million and received international recognition, including Location of the Year and an eighth-place ranking on MovieMaker's global list of Best Cities for Filmmakers.
- Chinook Blast welcomed over 200,000 attendees for events with partners such as High Performance Rodeo, BIG Winter Classic, Block Heater, Bird Creative and Ethnik Festivals.

“

Calgary is a place where innovators, dreamers and blue-sky thinkers converge to solve some of the biggest global challenges. Despite facing headwinds last year, Calgarians came together to keep building momentum for our city. Looking ahead to the future, we see limitless opportunities as we set out to achieve economic prosperity for all Calgarians.”

Brad Parry

President & CEO, Calgary Economic Development and CEO, Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund