

## TOURISM CALGARY- CALGARY CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

**Mandate:** As the official destination management organization for Calgary, Tourism Calgary works with industry and community to drive demand to local member businesses, increasing the economic impact of the visitor economy in Calgary, while considering the needs of the community and the environment.

**Service Line:** *Economic Development and Tourism*

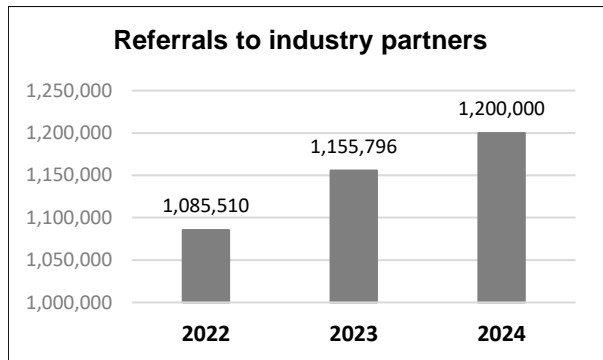
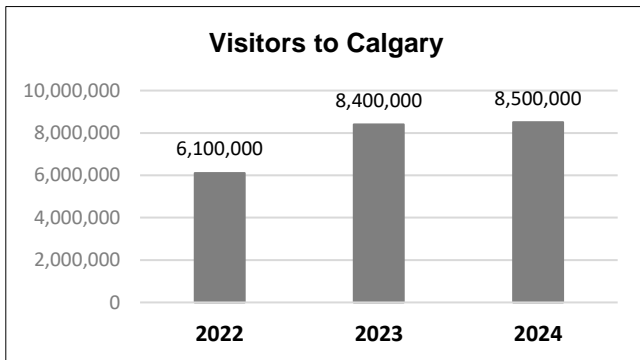
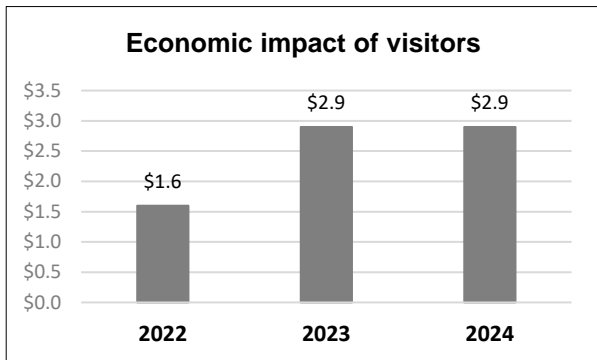
## 2024 City Investment

**Operating Grant:** \$3,071,433

**Operating Grant:** \$1,000,000 (one time)

**Special Events Fund:** \$3,966,000

## 2024 Results



### The story behind the numbers

- Tourism Calgary hosted 186 events (Sport/Major Events & Meetings/Conventions) in 2024 generating opportunities for business leaders and community engagement through attendance, volunteer opportunities and investment that drove economic outcomes.
- Visitors to Calgary rose by 100,000 from 2024 to 2025. Tourism Calgary makes strategic sales efforts to drive year-round opportunities to support local businesses and partners.
- An increase in Tourism Calgary's membership of local businesses means more businesses receive referrals and marketing support. Tourism Calgary generated 1.2 million referrals for local businesses, generating revenue for the local market and helping businesses and partners.

### Benchmarks

- Tourism Calgary's business plan, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and targets are reviewed and updated annually. As a Destination Management Organization, Tourism Calgary applies a market-research approach to benchmark the city's position as a destination with international, national, regional markets and Calgarians.
- KPIs assess overall and year-over-year performance, evaluating metrics such as visitor numbers, tourism industry jobs and event counts. These measures inform Key Strategic Focus Areas: Strengthen Calgary's Reputation through Brand, Become a Year-Round Eventful City, Elevate Calgary to Be a Top Convention City, and Building Community & Collaboration.

### Looking ahead: 2025 highlights

- The hosting of the Rotary International Convention will be held in 2025 and will spur further growth in the visitor economy.



## TOURISM CALGARY - CALGARY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU 2024 Civic Partner Annual Report

**Civic Partner Name:** Tourism Calgary - Calgary Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Legal Structure:** Independent External organization (Societies Act)

**Fiscal Year End:** December 31

**Manage/operate a City-owned asset:** No

**Mission/Mandate:** As the official **Destination Management Organization (DMO)** 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 information, wayfinding, and a warm welcome to ensure everyone has a great experience in Calgary.

### 1. What 3-5 key results did your organization achieve in 2024 that contributed to:

- a) One or more [Council Strategic Directions](#)- economic resilience, social resilience, climate resilience?

Tourism Calgary's partnership with the City of Calgary plays a vital role in enhancing the city's economy, cultural vibrancy, and overall quality of life for Calgarians.

Our organization's mandate is to support the community by driving visitation to Calgary, resulting in positive cultural, social, and economic impact. Our work supports the vibrancy, diversity, and growth of Calgary, and our membership includes more than 1,150 Calgary-based businesses, who rely on us driving visitor activity to help them thrive. By attracting visitors from around the world through leisure and business travel, meetings and conventions, and sports, culture and major events, our organization and collective industry helps to create new connections and opportunities for economic development, talent attraction and enhanced global reputation, positioning, and influence.

We deliver strong ROI on every funding dollar received through our partnership with the City of Calgary, particularly, by leveraging other funding sources to support our work. With our unique funding model, combining public and private-sector dollars (in partnership with the Calgary Hotel Association), we support Calgary's tourism ecosystem while making tax dollars stretch for the benefit of all Calgarians.

### **Economic Resilience**

Tourism brings money to our city, creating jobs and boosting local businesses like hotels, restaurants, shops, attractions, and event venues. In 2024, Calgary's visitor economy generated nearly \$3B in visitor spend. Tourism Calgary has significant plans to double this economic impact to \$6B within the next 10 years, creating an even bigger impact for our local community. One of our key contributions is the creation of approximately 84,000 jobs in hospitality, retail, and service industries, which supports the livelihood of many residents and helps to raise the overall standard of living in the city. One in 10

Albertans are employed in the tourism industry, many of whom are new Calgarians and Canadians who's first experience in our city is with our industry.

In 2024, Tourism Calgary generated \$265M in economic impact for Calgary from 186 events and conventions, supporting our 1,150+ member businesses, while enhancing vibrancy in our community. This equates to a 36:1 return on investment for Sports & Major Events and a 46:1 return on investment for Meetings & Conventions secured and hosted by Tourism Calgary. Additionally in 2024, our team secured 213 events and conventions for future years, which will generate another \$328M of economic activity for Calgary's local economy in the years ahead.

Through our work to attract events to the city, Tourism Calgary also plays a significant role in optimizing the return on investment that's been made in city infrastructure – driving business to and creating revenue for convention facilities, hotels, attractions, the city's transportation network, and city sport and event facilities throughout the city. In 2024, Tourism Calgary invested \$1.3M in opportunity funding to secure 34 events for the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre with those funds coming from the Calgary Hotel Association – this is a direct example of Tourism Calgary leveraging external resources to support the City's financial performance and invest back into City-owned assets.

Additionally, \$160,000 was invested in a number of City of Calgary facilities to secure 10 events on the Sport and Major Event side funded through the Special Event Fund. Tourism Calgary events also generated more than \$20,000 in direct revenue for Calgary Transit in 2024 and our organizations are working on an agreement that would grow that amount in future years.

With 40% of visitation occurring between the months of June and September, Tourism Calgary has implemented a year-round eventful city strategy to work towards boosting our local economy and helping local businesses thrive during winter and shoulder seasons. Through our collaborative work to grow events like Chinook Blast with the City of Calgary and its partners, and Tourism Calgary's strategy to secure more major events during the winter months, we've already seen significant success, with a 6% YOY hotel occupancy increase in 2024 and further economic opportunity for event facilities and local businesses, all while further enhancing vibrancy for Calgarians during the winter months.

The growth of Meetings & Conventions in Calgary with the addition of the expanded BMO Centre, together with the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre, offers one of the greatest opportunities for our city and the local visitor economy, which will further add to the economic contribution tourism will provide in the years ahead. With most meetings and conventions coming to our city in the spring and fall, and an opportunity to market our city to a captive audience to extend their stay in the city, it will also contribute to a more balanced year-round eventful city, supporting local businesses when they need it most.

Through our marketing and visitor services teams, in 2024, Tourism Calgary generated 1.2 million referrals for local businesses, generating revenue for our local market and helping local businesses and partners to thrive. We love to support our community, and everything we do is rooted in partnerships.

### **Making Every Dollar Go Further**

Tourism Calgary's multi-partner funding model makes every dollar from The City of Calgary go further, saving taxpayer dollars and enhancing quality of life for Calgarians. With approximately 34% of Tourism Calgary's funding coming from The City of Calgary (including an approximately \$3.1M operating grant, the \$3.96M Special Event Fund (SEF), and one time Brand and Chinook Blast funding), Tourism Calgary

is able to leverage The City's funding to support Calgary's tourism ecosystem making tax dollars stretch for the benefit of Calgarians.

By leveraging other partnerships and funding sources, including the Destination Marketing Fund (DMF) through the Calgary Hotel Association (CHA), funding from Travel Alberta and federal grants, the overall funding contribution required by The City to drive the visitor economy and support the thousands of businesses who rely on our output is significantly reduced.

Related to the Special Event Fund (SEF) alone, if the City were to move this internally, the City would take on a heightened administrative burden, which Tourism Calgary carries mostly through DMF dollars. In order to compete in this market, a city requires a dedicated team of professionals that build relationships with National Sport Organizations, Provincial Sport Organizations, International Sport Organizations, rights holders, and venues as well as local organizers and clubs that all need to come together to be able to bid on events for Calgary. Additionally, Tourism Calgary has marketers and event servicing professionals that support the events to ensure they are a success, which are supported through other funding sources.

As a result of this model, Tourism Calgary passes through 100% of the SEF directly to events being hosted in Calgary. Our comprehensive bid fund includes the SEF, DMF, and other sources of funding, to create the highest possible impact for our community. In 2024, our ROI was 39:1; for every dollar invested through the collaborative bid fund, we saw a \$39 impact on Calgary's business community.

In alignment with the Resilient Calgary Strategy, we are actively supporting outcomes regarding economic resilience and the Future of Calgary's Economy in the following ways:

- ***OUTCOME 1A Calgary's workforce is ready for emerging economies; Calgary welcomes emerging economies***
  - Tourism Calgary supports business development through our sales programs. As part of our business development opportunities, our Champions Program works with emerging leaders across a number of sectors in Calgary to grow Calgary's profile and expertise. These individuals are the best of Calgary representing entrepreneurial thinking, bold research, and leadership that makes Calgary shine on the national and international stage.
  - Having a growing and thriving Meetings and Conventions sector means that Calgarians and our local businesses will be able to engage and participate in global events connected to emerging industry right here in our city.
  - Tourism Calgary also works closely with programs at post-secondary institution's hospitality and tourism programs. Our engagement with these institutions helps provide an industry lens to the changing conditions of tourism and hospitality.
  - According to Tourism HR Canada, 1 in 4 new jobs globally will be related to tourism. We stand ready and with excitement to welcome many new Calgarians and new Canadians to join the growing tourism industry in Calgary.
- ***OUTCOME 1D Calgary is able to coordinate efficiencies, levers and incentives to grow and attract business***
  - Through partnerships, such as **RiseUp** and **Indigenous Tourism Alberta**, Tourism Calgary is actively investing in growth opportunities for artists and tourism entrepreneurs. Building on our work in 2024, Tourism Calgary is launching a new Experience Development Program for 2025 and 2026 that will see the **development of**

**approximately a dozen new experiences** that will lift many tourism partners and entrepreneurs.

- As a core piece of our destination management and advocacy for the tourism industry overall, Tourism Calgary works alongside its over 1,150 partners to build the industry and create opportunities to come together, collaborate and share information.
- Our organization actively seeks opportunities to increase the collective ROI of marketing our city. An example is through our partnership campaigns where, in 2024, we engaged 37 partners across the sector to make a collective investment that will market Calgary. This gives more visibility opportunity to these individual businesses, while facilitating a more effective campaign for Calgary.
- Through our meetings and conventions and sport and major event sales, Tourism Calgary stewards funds from the City of Calgary and the Calgary Hotel Association in order to invest in initiatives that return a high ROI in business to the city. These dollars are reinvested into the community and are used to activate businesses and to bring the event to life.

## **Social Resilience**

### **Creating Social & Cultural Opportunities:**

Tourism fosters a sense of community and belonging. Cultural events, sporting events and meetings and conventions provide opportunities for residents to connect, share experiences, and build social networks, enhancing overall well-being. This sense of community contributes to people's comfort, security, and satisfaction with life in Calgary. Hosting international and domestic visitors encourages a cosmopolitan atmosphere that enriches local culture through the exchange of ideas and experiences. This can lead to the development of new cultural events, festivals, and entertainment options that benefit both residents and visitors alike.

- A great example of this impact came at the 2024 CPKC Women's Open. This was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event and Calgary hosted at Earl Grey Golf Club. While the event delivered record ticket sales, record sponsorship and global profile as one of the best on the LPGA Tour, it delivered much more for the community. More than 1,000 Calgarians volunteered to support the delivery of the event, a clinic was held for young, female, Indigenous golfers at Red Wood Meadows, money was raised for First Tee Alberta to support access to the sport, and a donation of \$3.8M was made to the Alberta Children's Hospital from the fund-raising activities of the week. This is an incredible example of the deeper impact that these events can have on our community.
- In 2024, Tourism Calgary's work with Chinook Blast focused on collaboration and diversity by providing opportunities for over 1,700 creative makers, businesses, and partners, with 200+ of those businesses supporting programming and logistics, and 20+ non-profit groups.
- Tourism Calgary also led important work to evaluate our sustainability through Destination Canada's global sustainability index. From this work, key measures have been identified to contribute to The City's social resilience strategy. Tourism Calgary's Sustainable Tourism + Events Strategy outlines social investments to increase engagement and dialogue around Calgary's IDEA movement as it relates to the tourism economy. We lead, support, and participate in committees, speaker series, and marketing and communication activities that contribute to a diverse and welcoming destination. Our KPIs are as follows:
  - Increase the number of IDEA organizations, charities and events Tourism Calgary staff attend and directly donate their time and expertise to.
  - Increase the number of businesses profiled who offer sustainable or diversity-oriented experiences in tourism.Build and maintain industry-focused engagement program delivering sessions regarding sustainability and IDEA.

Additionally, in alignment with the Resilient Calgary Strategy, we are actively supporting outcomes of social resilience (including inclusive futures) in the following ways:

- ***OUTCOME 2B Calgary institutions have trusted and informed relationships with Indigenous communities in a “good way”: Ways of Knowing, Engaging, Building Relationships and Toward Equitable Environments***
  - Tourism Calgary has signed a partnership MOU with Indigenous Tourism Alberta to ensure development opportunities for Indigenous tourism. This includes supporting resources for authentic product and business development, partnering on marketing efforts to share our culture and history, and working alongside each other to support Tourism Calgary’s journey in reconciliation.
  - Tourism Calgary is also working with CADA to facilitate discussions with the Indigenous community around an Indigenous Music Festival. This festival will be Indigenous led.
  - We recognize we are on our own path of Truth and Reconciliation. As part of this we have made investments in Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training for our staff and are building relationships with the Indigenous community to support the development of our pathway forward in a good way.
  - Tourism Calgary actively pursues and partners with Indigenous planners to host national and international Indigenous gatherings in Calgary as well as Indigenous sporting events. These events build resilience for Indigenous communities and we purposefully proactively attract these events to the city.,
- ***OUTCOME 2D Calgary institutions invest in equitable economic development***
  - In marketing Calgary, we look for unique stories and create assets that share our culture and city with the world. This results in leveraging our social channels with over 400,000 followers for reach as we tell stories of local businesses, festivals, events, restaurants, and attractions that are both large and small.
    - Tourism Calgary has partnered with Indigenous Tourism Alberta to do a joint marketing campaign featuring Indigenous owned businesses and operators.
    - Tourism Calgary’s website, visitcalgary.com, features our more than 1,150 partners providing equal opportunities to gain exposure with potential travellers. Visitcalgary.com frequently features diversity-based content that showcases Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+, BIPOC and other cultural partners.
    - Our pass program, which includes our attractions pass, explore more pass, and frontline pass offer discounted rates to experience Calgary. The frontline pass is especially impactful as it provides tourism industry frontline employees the opportunity to experience many “Calgary musts” at a more affordable rate or with free admission. Last year, the front-line pass had more than 1,300 activations.
  - Through our sport and event program, Tourism Calgary supports the legacy impact on the community. This often includes elements like access to sporting events for marginalized communities, engagement opportunities for youth, Indigenous, and new Canadian community members and infrastructure development to increase the accessibility to sport.
    - Tourism Calgary hosted 186 events (Sport / Major Events & Meetings/Conventions) in 2024 providing profile for our city, industries, business leaders and generating opportunities for community engagement through attendance, volunteer opportunities, and connections and activations with the local community. A couple of examples include:
      - In 2024, Tourism Calgary partnered with The Wilder Institute, Calgary Zoo to host one of the first large conferences at the new BMO Centre. The Associations of Zoos and Aquariums met in Calgary in September. This event not only delivered significant economic impact but through partnership, Calgary was able to profile the incredible conservation work

taking place in Calgary to the global leaders in the industry. Our meetings and conventions team works collaboratively with business leaders across all industries to attract major events that profile Calgary, encourage investment, attract talent and provide global education for our industries

- On the Sport and Major Event side, Calgary hosted the Para World Hockey Championships in 2024. This event engaged the community by providing volunteer opportunities but also profiled an event in our city that celebrates the power of inclusive sport.
- All 186 events hosted last year engaged with our community with a variety of positive impactful outcomes and the majority of them work with our indigenous or cultural communities. Tourism Calgary is a conduit between our community and the events that want to experience the essence of Calgary.
- Through Tourism Calgary's people strategy, we value a diverse group of voices contributing to our organization. Our hiring approach articulates our commitment to equitable opportunity as follows:

*Tourism Calgary values diversity of expertise, talent and opinion which creates an innovative and collaborative environment. We are committed to a respectful and inclusive workplace and welcome applications from all qualified individuals.*

### **Climate Resilience**

*Climate Resilience - Natural infrastructure assets are identified, protected, tracked, managed, and used to inform investment and planning decisions.*

Tourism Calgary also led important work to evaluate our sustainability through Destination Canada's global sustainability index. From this work, key measures have been identified to contribute to The City's climate resilience strategy. Additionally, in alignment with the Resilient Calgary Strategy, we are actively supporting outcomes of the natural infrastructure in the following ways:

- **OUTCOME 3A: Calgarians are aware of our key natural infrastructure and its role in providing community benefits.**
  - Tourism is a critical way in which we preserve and celebrate our natural infrastructure. Our mix of beautiful landscapes and urban experiences are an area that Calgarians have the most awareness in (88%).
  - Through our many things to do campaigns and broad social reach of over 400,000 followers, we share Calgary's natural landscapes with both visitors and locals touting it as a top attraction that anyone can enjoy free of cost.
  - Tourism also supports operators who are offering storytelling using our natural assets through guided walks and hikes, medicine walks, and biking tours. This is a way to preserve the natural infrastructure so that it can be shared while supporting economic opportunity.
- **Outcome 3C Calgarians are supported through strategic investment in natural infrastructure.**
  - Tourism Calgary's Sustainable Tourism + Events Strategy identifies our efforts towards positive environmental stewardship by launching programs and initiatives that reduces measurable environmental impact through events and encourages and celebrates businesses who are implementing change at the local level.

We measure these activities through the following KPIs:

1. Increasing the number of businesses who source local, ethical, or sustainable products as noted by the LEAF Certification

2. Enhancing event sustainability by increasing the number of businesses and events who participate in Tourism Calgary's RED Events Program

Advocating and increasing the number of events who have advanced or promoted public transportation. Tourism Calgary is actively working with Calgary Transit to finalize a partnership that will greatly enhance the offer to all major groups to work with Calgary Transit for sustainable transit solutions for their event while also driving incremental revenue for Calgary Transit to support public transportation.

## b) Your own organization's strategy?

### 2024 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.



- **Strengthen Calgary's Reputation through Brand**
  - Increase intentions to visit by 2% over 2024. **(2024 – 65%)**
  - Increase brand recall and awareness with Calgarians. **(Baseline created in 2025)**
- **Become a year-round eventful city**
  - Increase perceptions of visitors and locals by 2% over 2024 levels that believe Calgary is a vibrant city. **(2024- 82% +10 YOY)**
  - Increase hotel occupancy through future contracting of 322,000 room nights in 2025. **(2024 – 67%)**
- **Elevate Calgary to be a top convention city**
  - Leverage Calgary's increased hosting capacity and contract 12 city-wide conventions in 2025 for future years. **(2024-8 city wide conventions hosted in 2024; 11 contracted for future years)**
  - Maintain a minimum score of 90% satisfaction with Tourism Calgary efforts to support meeting planner or event organizers. **(2024 – 90%)**
- **Build Community and Collaboration**
  - Maintain a minimum score of 90% where stakeholders believe Tourism Calgary is an effective champion for industry. **(2024-94%)**
  - Increase proportions of Calgarians who believe tourism is an important contributor to Calgary's economy and quality of life **(2024 - 85%)**.



**2. Performance measures help demonstrate the return on The City's investment in a partner's operations, and support continuous improvement. What performance measures reflect your organization's impact in 2024?**

|                                | Performance Measure Name  | 2022 results | 2023 results | 2024 results       | How does this measure reflect your organization's impact?   |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---|
| How much did you do?           | Total visitation  | 6.1M         | 8.4M         | 8.5M               | This metric indicates our success in driving visitation to our city and business for our more than 1,150 local business partners. We can dissect this further to understand the effectiveness of our efforts by type of visitor/markets they come from.   |
|                                | Referrals to industry partners  | 1,08M        | 1,15M        | 1.2M               | This metric helps us to understand the health of the industry and, as the largest service industry, its overall contributions to Alberta's labour market  |
|                                | Tourism Calgary Membership  | 970          | 1,030        | 1,150              | This metric shows our growing tourism ecosystem.  |
|                                | Sports, Culture & Major Events Hosted   | 61           | 62           | 56                 | This metric shows the number of events Tourism Calgary hosted in our city in 2024. Each year, Calgary may see more or less events depending on the size of the events hosted in market, and the budget required to host those events. Larger events have significantly more impact and require more resources to support than smaller events. |
|                                | Meetings & Convention Events Hosted*  | 58           | 108          | 130                |   |
| How well did you do it?        | Number of Canadians who plan to visit Calgary in the next two years.  | 49%          | 65%          | 65%                | This metric shows the intentions of national visitors to visit Calgary based based upon awareness of our market achieved through the marketing and promotion of our city in the current year.   |
|                                | Hotel Occupancy   |              | 65%          | 67%                | This metric provides an indicator on destination demand and seasonality. We can also use this data to assess the visitation split between group bookings – usually driven by events and meetings – and individual travel.   |
|                                | Number of stakeholders who agree that Tourism Calgary is an effective champion for the tourism industry in our community. | 95%          | 95%          | 96%                | This represents industry stakeholder feedback on the work of Tourism Calgary to represent the industry.   |
| How are Calgarians better off? | Visitor spend   | \$1.6B       | \$2.9B       | \$2.9B (not final) | This metric helps us understand the value of different markets and ensures a diversified strategy for economic resilience. For example, we know the international visitors are likely to stay longer and visitors travelling during the winter months are likely to spend more than those travelling in the summer.                           |
|                                | Economic Impact from Meetings, Conventions and Sports & Major Events Secured and Hosted                                   | \$156M       | \$227M       | \$265M             | This metric shows the direct economic value generated from visitor spending   |

|  |  |                                 |                                 |                                 |  |
|--|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
|  |  |                                 |                                 |                                 | contributing to the city from events and conventions.  |
|  | <b>Creation of jobs/support for local business</b>   | <b>84k tourism related jobs</b> | <b>84k tourism related jobs</b> | <b>84k tourism related jobs</b> | This metric shows the number of jobs created in the tourism and hospitality sectors as a result of the industry's activity *numbers updated every 2-3 years. |
|  | <b>Perceptions of Vibrancy - people believe there is lots of things to see and do in Calgary</b> | n/a                             | 72%                             | 82%                             | This metric helps to show the vibrancy of a city and the feeling of Calgarians that there is lots to see and do in our community and area.                   |

**3. Are there any additional stories or information you wanted to share beyond performance measures that demonstrate the impact of your organization's programs or services?**

Tourism Calgary uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative metrics to keep a pulse on our performance. We track sentiment and create feedback loops at many points of our organization, such as:

- Requesting all meeting planners to complete post-event surveys to offer feedback on our city's hosting. **We have consistently received an average of 90% with some meeting planners reporting Calgary as hosting "the best experience ever."**
- Working closely with many major convention organizations that share feedback on our destination. We also work hard to build relationships with our business clients that allow for transparent feedback on Calgary's bid position and the experience with our city. By taking a Team Calgary approach, we can use this feedback to evaluate market opportunities for seamless and elevated experiences and strengthen relationships with our industry partners.
- Utilizing a quality scorecard for earned media coverage. Our strategy focuses on high quality articles and the results has paid off with over 9.7M reach supporting our efforts to tell the Blue Sky City story nationally and internationally.
- Annual market research measures partner satisfaction with Tourism Calgary's value proposition and leadership of the industry and includes opportunities to collect quantitative and qualitative data.
- Sophisticated marketing analytics, including social media, earned and paid media, and web traffic, allows us to understand interest, intention, and action in making their plans. We are also able to evaluate perceptions of partners, locals, and travellers of Calgary through social listening. One example of this is our recent Arts & Culture Campaign where we were able to gauge the sentiment of Calgarians around Calgary as an arts city.
- Partnership buy-in to our various initiatives, from paid ad campaigns to international convention attendance as Team Calgary, allows us to gauge the effectiveness of our support for the tourism eco-system. These opportunities also allow for real-time feedback from partners that inform how we move forward to be an even stronger partner.
- Feedback from visitors at interactions with our Visitor Experience Team, who are on the ground in Calgary's downtown and major conventions and events, is tracked and assessed for key themes or areas that need more attention.

## **Awards and Testimonials**

Tourism Calgary received significant awards and many positive testimonials from clients and partners in 2024 for our work to attract and host events in our city:

### **Awards**

#### **Canadian Event of the Year (budget up to \$10 Million) - Special Olympics Canada Winter Games 2024**

This event was held in venues across the city and saw more than 1,500 volunteers from the community take part. Hosting the Games taught us more about welcoming neurodiverse groups and ensuring that our city remains adaptable for individuals of all abilities to participate. We are proud to be an inclusive city!

#### **International Event of the Year (budget \$2 -10 Million) CPKC Women's Open**

This event was held at Calgary's beautiful Earl Grey Golf Club and saw a record-breaking \$4.2 million raised in community donations, with most going to the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation. Additionally, over 200 women participated in the Golf Canada Women's Leadership Summit, and the pros spent time with young, aspiring golfers from Tsuu'tina Nation, fostering community connections and a love of sport.

#### **International Event of the Year (budget less than \$2 Million) ISU World Speed Skating Championships**

Held at the iconic Olympic Oval, the event brought the world's fastest long track speed skaters to compete on the world's fastest ice for the first ISU World Championships since 1998. The event welcomed participants from over 30 countries!

## Testimonials

### Partner Testimonial

"As President & CEO of WinSport, I can confidently say that the partnership we've developed with Tourism Calgary has been exceptional.

Their dedication and collaborative spirit have been instrumental in securing major events hosted at our facilities.

The sport, culture and major event bid fund, managed by Tourism Calgary, plays a pivotal role in attracting world-class events to Calgary, fueling our city's growth as a premier destination for sports and entertainment.

I look forward to continuing this successful collaboration."

**Barry Heck – CEO WinSport**



### Partner Testimonial

"I wanted to take a moment to personally thank you and your incredible team at Tourism Calgary for your unwavering support in attracting and successfully executing the recent annual conference for the Association of Zoos and Aquariums in our city.

The feedback we've received from attendees has been overwhelmingly positive, with many remarking that this was the best convention they've attended yet. It was clear that the meticulous planning, seamless coordination, and the warm hospitality provided by your team played a pivotal role in making this event such a standout success. Please pass on my sincere gratitude to your entire team. We couldn't have done it without them. Their commitment to showcasing our city's best, combined with a true partnership spirit, was felt by everyone involved.

We deeply value this collaboration and look forward to working together on future opportunities to contribute to our city's visitor economy.

**Jamie Dorgan– Interim President & CEO at the Calgary Zoo/Wilder Institute**



Partner Testimonial

"Tourism Calgary is a partner, ally, and friend of the MNP Community & Sport Centre.

Throughout the years we have strategically partnered to secure high profile and high impact events that contribute to the Centre's mandate and to the overall economy of Calgary. If not for the pro active, can-do attitude of the Tourism Calgary team, many of these opportunities would go unrealized."

**Jeff B** – C



Partner Testimonial

"Tourism Calgary's financial and collaborative support was instrumental in Golf Canada's decision to host the 2024 CPKC Women's Open in Calgary.

We're proud that our partnership resulted in a \$4.7M donation to local children's hospitals."

– C



Partner Testimonial

"Special Olympics Canada is incredibly grateful to Calgary Tourism for their leadership in hosting the highly successful 2024 Calgary Special Olympics Canada Winter Games. This event raised the bar in all respects and created a lasting legacy in the community, furthering our vision of changing the hearts and minds of Canadians towards individuals with intellectual disabilities.

The impact of the 2024 Calgary Special Olympics Canada Winter Games can be felt in so many ways – from the economic impact, to the inclusive employment program, the education program and the legacies provided to support sport for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Tourism Calgary's leadership and vision for the Games resulted in our best ever Games – raising the bar for all events to follow."

– C



Partner Testimonial

"Hosting world-class sporting, cultural, and entertainment events is vital to elevating a city's global profile, driving economic growth, and enriching the lives of the people who call Calgary and area home.

These marquee events inspire community pride, spur infrastructure investment, and cement our reputation as a dynamic, vibrant destination. Our partnership with Tourism Calgary was seamless and contributed to increasing employee engagement inside our company as well as the entire community."

– P



Partner Testimonial

"Curling Canada has had a flourishing partnership with Tourism Calgary since we delivered seven events a bubble during the pandemic.

As an amateur sport, the access to the funding support provided by Tourism Calgary has been critical to the partnership in order to decrease the risk of putting on world class events for curling fans and all Calgarians."

- C



Partner Testimonial

"Tourism Calgary are without doubt, the best host city and major event destination that we have had the pleasure of working with across our portfolio. The professionalism, event promotion and hospitality provided by Tourism Calgary to our organisation, our athletes, and our fans is world class and truly second to none.

I have no hesitation in publicly endorsing Tourism Calgary as a best-in-class host city body and could would recommend the city and the Tourism Calgary team to any event organiser."

- C



Partner Testimonial

"I can candidly say Visit Calgary has been the most hospitality and business-forward CVB that I have encountered – you guys do it right."

– V



**4. Does your organization use benchmarks to evaluate and improve performance and operations, and increase your organization's impact?**

**a) Examples of benchmarks:**

**b) What is your current and targeted performance in comparison to these benchmarks?**

Our performance as a Destination Management Organization is measured by our organizational KPIs under our key strategic pillars. We track our performance on a monthly and quarterly basis, reporting our performance in regular cadence to our funding partners, including the City of Calgary. We forecast and track changes over time using a market-research approach to benchmark our overall position as an attractive destination with international, national, and regional markets as well as the sentiments of Calgarians toward key drivers of tourism success. Our KPIs can be found in more detail in our business plan (attached):

- Fuel excitement for our Blue Sky City
  - Increase intentions to visit by 2% over 2024. **(2024 – 65%)**
  - Increase brand recall and awareness with Calgarians. **(Baseline created in 2025)**
- Be a year-round eventful city
  - Increase perceptions of visitors and locals by 2% over 2024 levels that believe Calgary is a vibrant city. **(2024- 78%)**
  - Increase hotel occupancy through future contracting of 322,000 room nights in 2025. **(2024 – 67%)**
- Be Canada's leading convention destination
  - Leverage Calgary's increased hosting capacity and contract 12 city-wide conventions in 2025 for future years. **(2024-8 city wide conventions hosted in 2024; 11 contracted for future years)**
  - Maintain a minimum score of 90% satisfaction with Tourism Calgary efforts to support meeting planner or event organizers. **(2024 – 90%)**
- Bold leadership and transformative collaboration
  - Maintain a minimum score of 90% where stakeholders believe Tourism Calgary is an effective champion for industry. **(2024-94%)**



- Increase proportions of Calgarians who believe tourism is an important contributor to Calgary's economy and quality of life **(2024 - 85%)**.

Tourism Calgary uses these KPIs as benchmarks to guide our organization's progress overtime. In addition, our teams regularly use industry data to benchmark and track performance for the market in a number of areas, which informs our strategy and any necessary evolutions to our approach. Many of the data tool that Tourism Calgary uses allow our organization to measure against other cities in Canada and around the world. Some of the key data tools we are currently utilizing include:

- **Destination Canada's Canadian Tourism Data Collective** – This tool combines data from Statistics Canada, credit card spending, hotel data and other sources to model the visitor spend for all destinations in Canada. This tool allows Tourism Calgary to monitor Calgary's tourism spend data monthly and compare against other Canadian cities or understand Calgary's contribution to Alberta's tourism economy.
- **Conference Board of Canada Tourism Forecasting** – Tourism Calgary invests in Conference Board of Canada's Travel Markets Outlook reports which are released twice a year. These reports provide annual estimates on Calgary's visitation and revenues every year. The reports also provides data for all the provinces and major cities in Canada allowing our organization to compare our tourism performance with other Canadian Markets.
- **Smith Travel Reports (STR)** – This city-wide hotel data provides monthly hotel statistics for Calgary on hotel occupancy, average daily rate, rooms sold, room supply and RevPar. In the last year, STR has provided the ability to view and dynamically compare Calgary's data with other markets across North America through an on-line dashboard.
- **AirDNA** – Similar to STR, Tourism Calgary has city-wide monthly data on the performance of short-term rentals in Calgary which also includes information on occupancy, average daily rate, rooms sold, room supply and RevPar. Through their online system, we can compare Calgary's short-term rental performance with other cities in North America.

In addition to KPIs that measure our overall performance, we also track our year-over-year performance in the following ways:

### 1. Generating tourism economic opportunity for Calgary

- Numbers of visitors
- Economic impact generated
- Hotel occupancy levels
- Sales growth for meetings, conventions, sports, major events and international markets

### 2. Creating economic diversity and resilience with a single Team Calgary approach for Calgary

- Month-to-month and season changes to visitation
- Number of tourism industry jobs
- Number of business referrals generated for partners
- Customer satisfaction scores on business hosted
- ROI on SEF-funded events

### 3. Supporting community vibrancy, social belonging and sense of pride for Calgarians

- Perceptions of Calgary
- Number of events and participation
- Number of partnerships with community groups/businesses
- Global Destination Sustainability index

- Tourism partners representing BIPOC, Indigenous, and female-owned businesses

#### **4. Growing the industry for Calgary**

- Ongoing tracking of business/meetings and convention leads
- Number of hosted familiarization participants (FAMS)
- Quantity of Joint Marketing agreements signed with international travel operators
- Number of Tourism Calgary Partners

Number of partner opportunities (events, joint marketing and sales opportunities etc.)

#### **c) How this information is being used to support continuous improvement?**

Tracking results helps Tourism Calgary to make stronger decisions in several areas. For example:

- Visitation data allows us to understand visitor trends and soft spots of the market to determine performance and seasonality. We make strategic sales efforts to level out the market for year-round opportunity.
- Using hotel data, we identify seasonality in the market that we use to advance further initiatives within our anchor strategy to encourage year-round visitation and support the city's vibrancy.
- We regularly optimize our marketing efforts based on campaign performance, social sentiment and market trends and signals.
- Our relationship with partners allows us to take what we learn from meeting planners and sport organizations and share it with the industry. This feedback loop is imperative in maintaining our market competitiveness.

#### **5. How does your organization address equity, diversity or inclusion, or support racial equity?**

Advancing and supporting, inclusion, diversity, equity, belonging, and accessibility are core values of Tourism Calgary and are reflected deeply throughout our organization.

#### **Building internal competencies around IDEA values**

- Tourism Calgary has invested in diversity training for all employees, partnering with Goodwill Canada.
- Tourism Calgary has invested in Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training in partnership with Indigenous Tourism Alberta for staff and partners.
- We undertook accessibility and diversity and inclusion training for volunteers involved in the Special Olympic Winter Games.
- We practice inclusive hiring practices. Currently Tourism Calgary employs more than 50% females on the Executive Team.
- While Tourism Calgary evaluates each event opportunity it undertakes independently, we also monitor to ensure that we are promoting equitable opportunity in competition and bringing a diverse range of business and events to the city.
  - For example, this past year we partnered on a variety of events that highlighted neurodiversity, including Special Olympics Calgary Winter Games and Mecca Mayhem, a home-grown robotics competition; women and girls in sport, including events like the CPKC Women's Open – a women's golf event, which also held a clinic for young, female, Indigenous golfers, helping to raise money for First Tee Alberta to support access to women and girls in sport; and started work to explore an Indigenous music festival together with CADA and Indigenous partners.

### **Inclusive business development opportunities**

- Tourism Calgary promotes diversity in our partnerships and shares those with our clients. Meeting organizers ask for our recommendations on how they can support local, elevate female-owned businesses, or ensure inclusivity in their partnerships.
  - Tourism Calgary works with and promotes 70 local businesses that are female-owned
  - Tourism Calgary works with and promotes 125 local businesses that are BIPOC-owned
  - Tourism Calgary directly promotes 20 local Indigenous-owned businesses, and indirectly promotes many others through our partnership with Indigenous Tourism Alberta

### **6. How is your organization advancing Indigenous Truth and Reconciliation? (For example addressing specific calls to action in the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#) report or [The City's White Goose Flying Report](#))**

Advancing and supporting Truth and Reconciliation is a key priority for our organization.

- Tourism Calgary has invested in Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training in partnership with Indigenous Tourism Alberta for staff and partners.
- In 2024, we hired an Indigenous relations consultant to guide us in a good way, bringing an Indigenous perspective and community relations skillset to the work we do.

### **Inclusive business development opportunities**

- Tourism Calgary promotes diversity in our partnerships and shares those with our clients. Meeting organizers ask for our recommendations on how they can work with local Indigenous communities, and we support requests to connect events with local Indigenous businesses, elders, entertainment, and protocol awareness.
  - Tourism Calgary directly promotes 20 local Indigenous-owned businesses, and indirectly promotes many others through our partnership with Indigenous Tourism Alberta
  - Tourism Calgary has invested \$1M over four years in support of Indigenous tourism development through Indigenous Tourism Alberta to support economic reconciliation.

### **Supporting Call to Action #22 and #91**

Tourism Calgary continues to work with communities, organizations, and experts to advance equity, anti-racism, Truth and Reconciliation and accessibility plans across its organization and in how we work in the industry and community.

We are actively working on:

- A Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Enhancing Indigenous engagement and involvement in board governance.
- Enhancing Indigenous engagement and involvement in events and local activations.
- Forming an Elders circle to provide advice and guidance to our organization.
- Continued community engagement with Treaty 7 Indigenous communities and the Otipemsiwak Metis Government.
- Supporting Indigenous economic reconciliation through an MOU and financial support of local Indigenous tourism businesses.
- Active incorporation of Indigenous land acknowledgements, blessings and involvement of Indigenous components into the majority of events we attract and host in Calgary.

- Supporting the gathering of Indigenous community members to explore the development of an Indigenous-led music festival for Calgary.

Tourism Calgary acknowledges we are in the early stages of our path to Truth and Reconciliation, and we are actively building relationships with the Indigenous community to ensure that this path forward includes strong Indigenous voices.

## RESOURCES

### 7. Please estimate how The City's operating funding was allocated in 2024.

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>24%</b> | Advertising and promotion                    |
| <b>20%</b> | Programs or services                         |
| <b>10%</b> | Office supplies and expenses                 |
| <b>5%</b>  | Professional and consulting fees             |
| <b>41%</b> | Staff compensation, development and training |
| <b>%</b>   | Fund development                             |
| <b>%</b>   | Purchased supplies and assets                |
| <b>%</b>   | Facility maintenance                         |
| <b>%</b>   | Evaluation or Research                       |
| <b>%</b>   | <i>Other, please name:</i>                   |

### 8. Did volunteers support your operations in 2024? (including board and committee members)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| How many volunteers?                          | Approximately 2500-3000 volunteers annually, including board, committees, and community volunteers with programs and events. |
| Estimated total hours provided by volunteers: | Approximately 16,000 volunteer hours   |

### 9. Did your organization receive any awards or recognition in 2024, or have any client or participant feedback that you want to highlight?

Tourism Calgary received significant awards and many positive testimonials from clients and partners in 2024 for our work to attract and host events in our city. Awards are listed below; a sample of client testimonials are outlined in Question #6. Awards include:

#### Canadian Event of the Year (budget up to \$10 Million) - Special Olympics Canada Winter Games 2024

This event was held in venues across the city and saw more than 1,500 volunteers from the community take part. Hosting the Games taught us more about welcoming neurodiverse groups and ensuring that our city remains adaptable for individuals of all abilities to participate. We are proud to be an inclusive city!

#### International Event of the Year (budget \$2 -10 Million) CPKC Women's Open

This event was held at Calgary's beautiful Earl Grey Golf Club and saw a record-breaking \$4.2 million raised in community donations, with most going to the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation. Additionally, over 200 women participated in the Golf Canada Women's Leadership Summit, and the

pros spent time with young, aspiring golfers from Tsuu'tina Nation, fostering community connections and a love of sport. **International Event of the Year (budget less than \$2 Million) ISU World Speed Skating Championships**

Held at the iconic Olympic Oval, the event brought the world's fastest long track speed skaters to compete on the world's fastest ice for the first ISU World Championships since 1998. The event welcomed participants from over 30 countries!

**10. How did your organization address climate change in 2024, for example, operational or program changes that reduced greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), air/water pollution, or waste that aligned with [The City's Climate Change Program](#) including Council's Climate Emergency Declaration?**

*Climate Resilience - Natural infrastructure assets are identified, protected, tracked, managed and used to inform investment and planning decisions.*

Tourism Calgary led important work on behalf of The City to evaluate our sustainability index. From this work, key measures have been identified to contribute to The City's climate resilience strategy. Additionally, in alignment with the Resilient Calgary Strategy, we are actively supporting outcomes of the natural infrastructure in the following ways:

- **OUTCOME 3A: Calgarians are aware of our key natural infrastructure and its role in providing community benefits.**
  - o Tourism is a critical way in which we preserve and celebrate our natural infrastructure. Our mix of beautiful landscapes and urban experiences are an area that Calgarians have the most awareness in (88%).
  - o Through our many things to do campaigns and broad social reach of over 400,000 followers, we share Calgary's natural landscapes with both visitors and locals touting it as a top attraction that anyone can enjoy free of cost.
  - o Tourism also supports operators who are offering storytelling using our natural assets through guided walks and hikes, medicine walks, and biking tours. This is a way to preserve the natural infrastructure so that it can be shared while supporting economic opportunity.
- **Outcome 3C Calgarians are supported through strategic investment in natural infrastructure.**
  - o Tourism Calgary's Sustainable Tourism + Events Strategy identifies our efforts towards positive environmental stewardship by launching programs and initiatives that reduces measurable environmental impact through events and encourages and celebrates businesses who are implementing change at the local level.

We measure these activities through the following KPIs:

- Increasing the number of businesses who source local, ethical, or sustainable products as noted by the LEAF Certification
- Enhancing event sustainability by increasing the number of businesses and events who participate in Tourism Calgary's RED Events Program

Advocating and increasing the number of events who have advanced or promoted public transportation. Tourism Calgary is actively working with Calgary Transit to finalize a partnership that will greatly enhance the offer to all major groups to work with Calgary Transit for sustainable transit solutions for their event while also driving incremental revenue for Calgary Transit to support public transportation.

**11. Are there any projects, initiatives or plans for 2025 that you want to briefly highlight?**

Tourism Calgary has significant plans to grow the visitor economy in 2025 including:

- Enhancing efforts around destination development – assessing our city’s tourism offerings and experiences and looking at ways we can make Calgary even better for locals and visitors alike;
- Advancing our work in Indigenous relations and Truth & Reconciliation, including the creation of a Reconciliation Action plan; and
- Further work around sustainability and accessibility of our destination.

**See our *Business Plan* for further details about initiatives and programs:**

<https://www.visitcalgary.com/industry-partners/destination-development/business-plan-2025>

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**THE FOLLOWING SECTION IS FOR CIVIC PARTNERS MANAGING CITY-OWNED ASSETS**

**12. CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

***Not Applicable***