



# 2026 Annual Progress Report Summary

## 2025: A year in review

In 2025, Calgary continued to advance the shared vision set out in *Uplook: An Action Plan for Our Economy*. Strong population growth, expanding global connections and sustained investment across talent, innovation and community assets reinforced Calgary’s position as a resilient and competitive city.

At the same time, affordability pressures and labour market challenges highlighted the importance of looking beyond the headlines to understand how people and businesses are actually experiencing the economy.

Across all five drivers, progress reflected the power of collaboration. Community partners, post-secondary institutions, industry leaders and cultural organizations continued working together to strengthen the foundations for inclusive growth, diversification and long-term resilience.

## Looking ahead to 2026 and beyond

In 2026, Calgary faces both pressures and advantages. Affordability, labour market adjustment and global uncertainty will continue to test resilience. At the same time, strong population growth, a skilled talent base, innovation momentum and expanding global connections provide a solid foundation.

**The sections that follow examine impacts on talent, livability, business competitiveness, innovations and scale, and external confidence.**

ISC: Unrestricted



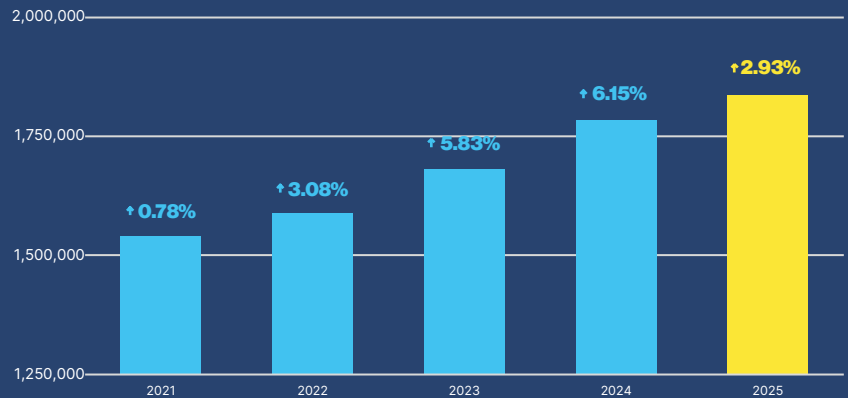
Data sources are available in the Uplook 2026 Annual Progress Report. **Scan or click to access the full report**

## Talent

### Turning growth into opportunity

In 2025, Calgary's population growth expanded the labour pool and reinforced the city's appeal as a place to build a career. Efforts were focused on translating that growth into stronger participation and long-term opportunity.

Population Growth (% Increase From Previous Year)



### What's happening



Calgary continues to attract people at all career stages



Newcomer economic outcomes showed progress, though income gaps remain



Investments focused on future-oriented sectors such as aviation, cybersecurity, digital media and youth innovation



Employer-aligned education and training are strengthening pathways into in-demand fields

Calgary's strong population growth is expanding the talent pool. A continued focus on skills development and inclusive pathways will help translate that growth into participation and long-term economic strength.

## Livability

### Enhancing quality of life

More residents reported feeling connected and positive about life in Calgary in 2025, supported by ongoing investment in public spaces, culture, and downtown revitalization. Calgary remains one of the more affordable major Canadian cities, however, rising housing and living costs continue to shape day-to-day experiences of residents.

### What's happening



More residents report a positive quality of life and sense of belonging



Downtown revitalization continues through office conversions, new public spaces, and cultural investment



Affordability remains a defining pressure for many households



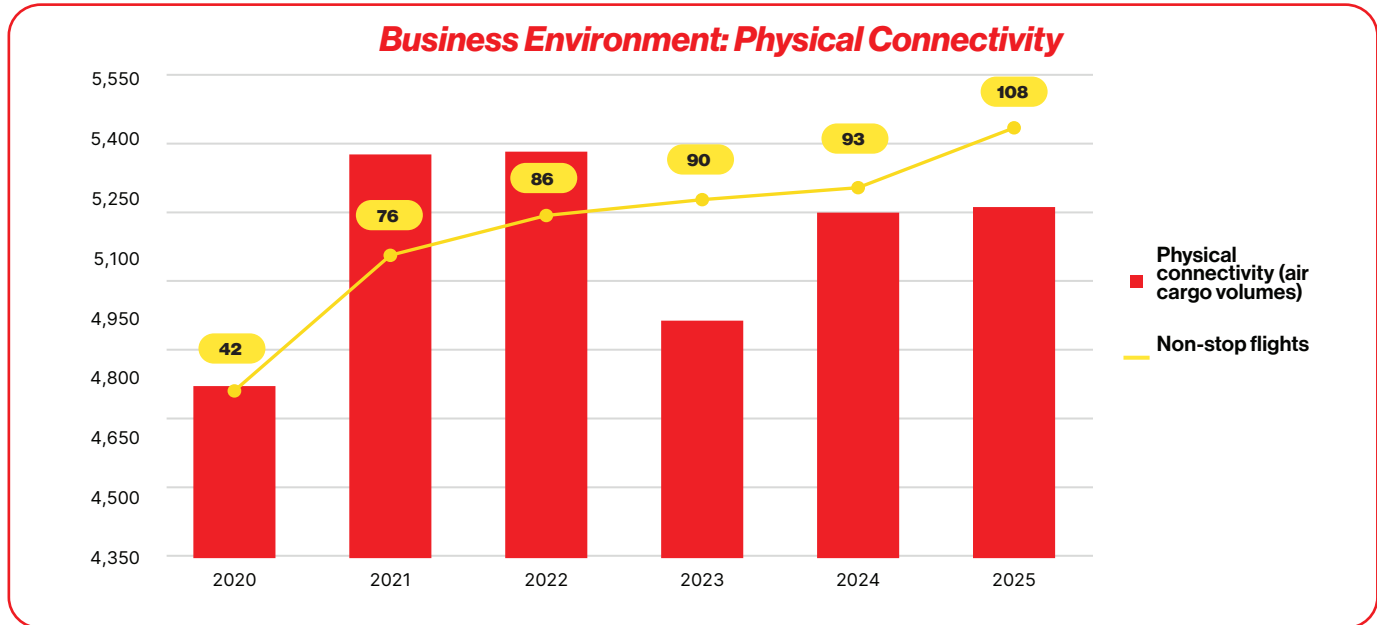
Year-round community spaces and events are strengthening connection across the city

Gains in quality of life and belonging show the value of investments in places and culture, while affordability will shape how widely those benefits are felt as the city grows.

# Business Environment

Competing through access and confidence

Calgary reinforced its position as a top location for business growth in 2025, supported by improved global access, a strong concentration of head offices and rising business confidence.



## What's happening



Business leaders report stronger confidence in ease of doing business and economic diversity



Air service expanded to 108 non-stop destinations



Calgary continues to lead major Canadian cities in head offices per capita



Programs like Living Labs support real-world testing and innovation

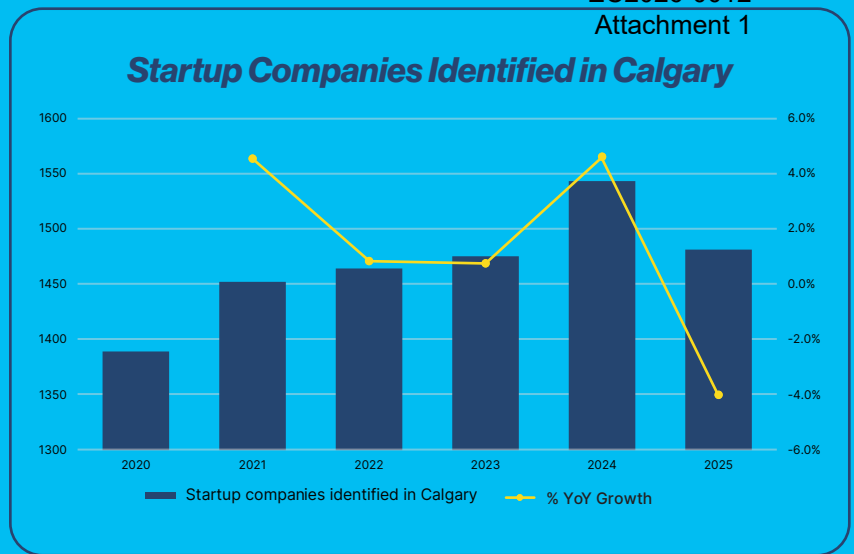
**These advantages help Calgary attract investment, support business growth and remain resilient as companies navigate global uncertainty.**



# Innovation

## From foundation to scale

Calgary's innovation ecosystem continued to mature in 2025, with steady startup activity and strong venture capital performance relative to national trends. A key milestone was the launch of Calgary's Innovation Strategy.



## What's happening



Startup activity remained stable, reflecting a healthy ecosystem



The Innovation Strategy set a shared direction focused on coordination and scale



Calgary ranked among Canada's top cities for venture capital deals



Early work emphasized sector-specific Innovation Nodes and ecosystem mapping

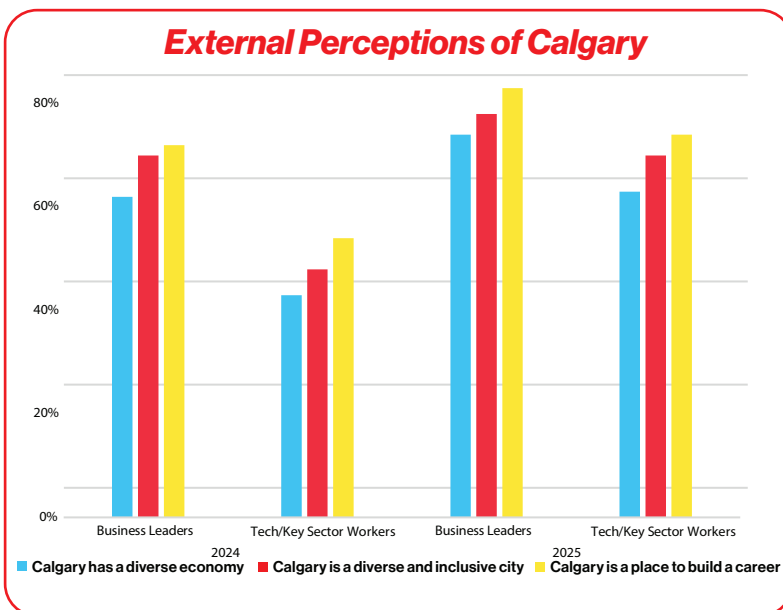
A stable and coordinated innovation ecosystem positions more Calgary companies to move from concept, to market entry, to scale up.

# Brand

## An iconic city

## A shared story of opportunity

Calgary's external reputation strengthened in 2025, supported by more consistent storytelling across arts, culture, tourism, and major events.



## What's happening



External perceptions improved among business leaders and key sector workers



Blue Sky City provides a shared platform for partner storytelling



Major events and activations reached local and global audiences



Coordinated storytelling is helping build awareness and consideration

Stronger external perceptions matter because they influence talent and investment decisions, and coordinated storytelling is increasing Calgary's visibility as a city of opportunity.