

PLACE BRAND
JOURNEY

BEEN
EVEN
WHERE

WHY.EDMONTON.CA

Edmonton



**I LOVE EDMONTON
BECAUSE ... OF ITS ART
AND CULTURE, ITS RIVER
VALLEY AND ITS 'JE NE
SAIS QUOI.' WE ARE
YOUNG, INNOVATIVE AND
COURAGEOUS. A NEWER
CITY FULL OF IDEAS AND
POTENTIAL.**

DANIEL COURNOYER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LA CITÉ
FRANCOPHONE AND CREATOR OF FLYING CANOE VOLANT

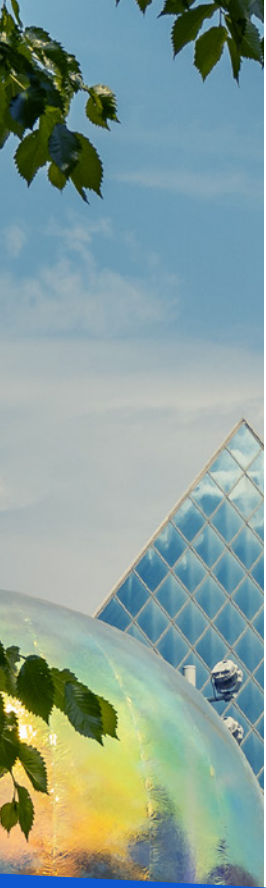






THE MURAL BY
CRAIG SAN MIGUEL
WITH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF





**CAPTURING EDMONTON'S
“JE NE SAIS QUOI” AND
TELLING OUR UNIQUE
STORY IS AT THE HEART
OF OUR PLACE BRAND'S
RAISON D'ETRE AND
DIGITAL PLATFORM, WHY
EDMONTON.**

We do this by showcasing the people who make Edmonton the vibrant city that it is – from video game developers to renewable energy experts to Indigenous artists to retired newcomers. We create videos, blog profiles and social media posts to share their stories of innovation, resilience and community. We produce news items to highlight some of Edmonton's most notable achievements. We offer a digital library of photographs, videos, b-roll and descriptive messages for use by partners and other organizations to help with their content needs.

As Edmonton grows to a population of two million, our work reflects an ongoing conversation about who we are and why we matter. It isn't just a marketing effort but a deliberate storytelling approach that emphasizes the authentic narrative of our city, answering the question 'Why Edmonton?' through the voices of its residents.

Place brand strives to build pride among those who live here and puts us on the global stage for potential new businesses, visitors or new residents. Our work is an essential complement to an economic development strategy, tourism master plan and events attraction strategies.

BUILT TO BUILD ON

For generations, Indigenous Peoples have used storytelling to connect, honour what came before and share knowledge: this tradition continues to influence how we approach the work before us. Foundational efforts from Make Something Edmonton to the research that deepened our understanding of audience perceptions to the City's 2021-23 Place Brand Strategy that guided the work you see here, has laid meaningful groundwork.

As we move forward, we're channeling that legacy into something more ambitious, supported by clear governance, a shared methodology and a bold vision for what's next.

But before we look ahead, let's take a moment to reflect on what we've accomplished so far.

OK SOME TIMES

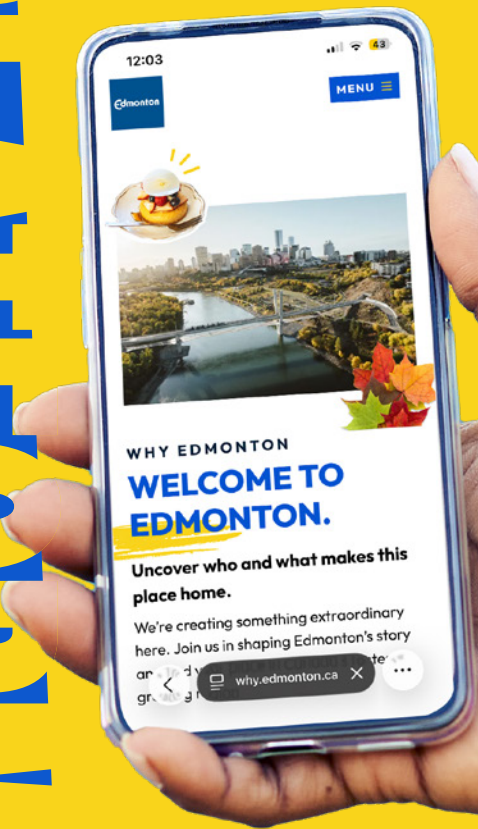




**IN DESIGN AND
EDUCATION, SCAFFOLDING
IS A CONCEPT THAT
SUPPORTS GROWTH BY
BUILDING IN LAYERS, NOT
BY STARTING OVER BUT BY
EVOLVING FROM WHAT'S
ALREADY STRONG.**

DIGITAL PLATFORM

NOTABLE INSIGHT
**THE PHILIPPINES REMAINS
IN THE TOP 10 COUNTRIES
FOR SITE TRAFFIC, A RIPPLE
EFFECT FROM THE 2022
PAPAL VISIT**



WHY EDMONTON DIGITAL PLATFORM

One of our main bodies of work is the Why Edmonton digital platform. The platform is a direct outcome of the [City's 2021–2023 Place Brand Strategy](#) and aligns with the [Edmonton Economic Action Plan](#), supporting goals to attract talent and investment, highlight local innovation and provide partners with consistent tools to promote Edmonton.

WHO IT SERVES

The platform was designed with two main audiences in mind:

For people outside looking in: potential visitors, students, investors or future residents.

It offers credible stories and insights that show what life in Edmonton is really like.

For those already connected to the city: place brand partners, City staff, organizations and anyone a vested interest in promoting Edmonton.

It provides them with the tools, stories and compelling data narratives they need to proudly champion the city

WHY IT MATTERS

Why Edmonton is more than a website – it's a tool for telling Edmonton's story in a way that feels authentic and holistic. By putting people and their experiences at the centre, the platform shows what makes this city distinct and ensures Edmonton is represented consistently. It supports broader City goals while giving partners and ambassadors the confidence to share Edmonton's story widely and proudly.

I LOVE THE VIBE HERE, I LOVE THE PEOPLE, I LOVE THAT WE HAVE AN INTEREST, SPARK AND REVERENCE FOR INDIGENOUS CULTURE AND I'VE SEEN THAT GROW SINCE 2006. PEOPLE ARE SUPER SUPPORTIVE OF BUYING LOCAL AND NOW BUYING INDIGENOUS. THEY'RE JUST REALLY OPEN HERE. IT CERTAINLY WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE TO GROW MY BUSINESS WITHOUT BEING IN A MAJOR CENTRE.

CARRIE ARMSTRONG
MOTHER EARTH ESSENTIALS

WHY EDMONTON KEY STATS

83
STORIES PUBLISHED

650+
ASSETS AVAILABLE
IN THE LIBRARY

75K
ACTIVE USERS
IN THE FIRST YEAR

2+
MINUTES AVERAGE
TIME SPENT PER VISIT

1.8
ASSETS DOWNLOADED
PER VISIT

GROWTH

32K active users
(Apr 2022 to Aug 2024, original site)

74K active users
(Aug 2024 to Sept 2025, reimagined site)

More than 2x the users in less than half the time

GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

Top Canadian Cities: Edmonton, Toronto, Hamilton, Calgary, Vancouver

Top International Growth: Germany – traffic spikes directly linked to Oilers playoffs games

LANGUAGE ACCESSED

English

Spanish

Vietnamese

French

Arabic

Chinese



**I FEEL AT
PEACE HERE.
I FEEL LIKE AS
LONG AS I'M IN
EDMONTON,
THE SKY'S THE
LIMIT. I CAN TAKE
ADVANTAGE
OF EVERY
OPPORTUNITY.**

JEAN-PAUL GASIGWA



THE POWER OF GOOD STORIES

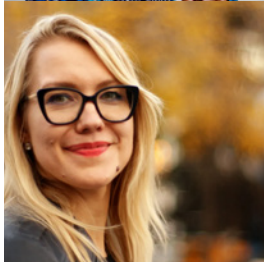
Marketing tells people how to feel. Storytelling lets people share how they feel. It's a much more authentic approach when it comes to place brand, helping to bring Edmontonians together and attract newcomers, businesses and visitors alike.

Storytelling is the foundation of Why Edmonton, which includes video profiles of newcomers and entrepreneurs, blog posts about horror authors and craft brewers, as well as photo essays about public art and urban wildlife.



Donna Coombs-Montrose

From Cariwest to Edmonton's first Black Historian Laureate, her background is ...



Meet Olya

Olya first came to Edmonton in 2011 to pursue a Master's ...



Revving up Edmonton's hydrogen hub

More than \$30 billion in new hydrogen products are anticipated in ..



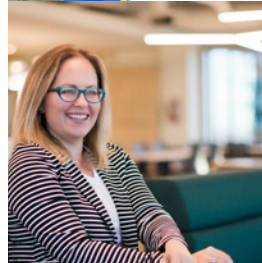
Newcomers Edition: Meet Jean-Paul

Every year, thousands of newcomers make and call Edmonton home. Here's ...



YEGPEDIA Flora and Fauna

From the forests to the fields, our city's urban landscape is ...



Nicole Janssen and AltaML are leaders in artificial intelligence

Nicole Janssen is revolutionizing artificial intelligence. Learn about her journey from ...



The Writers' Block: Premee Mohamed

The scientist and rising author explores contrasts in her writing and ...

THE POWER OF GOOD STORIES



Cree entrepreneur creates new trade routes for Indigenous businesses

"I think that we're starting to see that Indigenous people are ...



Transit tales: behind the wheel of history

Ernie Bastide knows how to move people. As an Edmonton Transit Service ...



At the intersection of art and reconciliation

Artist Lance Cardinal hopes his work encourages Edmontonians to stop, reflect ...



Three cheers for Edmonton's Happy Beer Street

Brewing up community, innovation and award-winning beverages along 99 Street.



Blatchford invests in sustainability and the future

In the heart of Edmonton, nestled between the downtown core and ...

EDMONTON IS A BEAUTIFUL CITY. IT'S GIVEN ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE THINGS, MEET PEOPLE AND JUST GROW AS AN AUTHOR. THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE IMMENSE. I LOVE EDMONTON. IT'S AMAZING FOR MY KIDS, TOO. THEY'RE SETTLED, THEY HAVE MORE FRIENDS, THEY'RE LEARNING. ANY CITY HAS ITS CHALLENGES, BUT SO FAR, IT'S BEEN AMAZING. I GET INSPIRATION FROM EVERYWHERE – WE GO TO THE LIBRARY A LOT, WE GO TO CHURCH, WE MEET FRIENDS. I LOVE BEING DOWNTOWN, JUST WALKING THROUGH THE STREETS. THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT IT THAT MAKES YOU WANT TO BELIEVE.

ONAOLAPO DAGUNDURO

SPOTLIGHT SEEING IS BELIEVING

Research and anecdotal evidence have shown that Edmonton can be perceived as desolate, cold and boring. This perception can create barriers to attracting interest and establishing recognition. However, the power of visuals in place branding offers an opportunity to reshape this narrative, especially when we have so much to work with at our fingertips.

A thoughtfully curated visual story inspires pride and invites exploration. It can also challenge outdated perceptions and even delight and surprise. All of this helps us reshape the story of our city.

SINCE THE LAUNCH OF OUR SITE, OUR TEAM HAS CAREFULLY CREATED A ROBUST PHOTO LIBRARY, ENSURING REPRESENTATION ACROSS ALL WARDS AND CAPTURING A WIDE RANGE OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EXPERIENCES. THESE IMAGES ARE NOT ONLY USED IN OUR OWN MATERIALS BUT SHARED ACROSS PARTNER COMMUNICATIONS AND CAMPAIGNS





YOUR CITY AT WORK

The City's Brand Team plays a key role in bringing Edmonton's story to life across City initiatives. We collaborate with departments to amplify important moments and elevate announcements. By applying a place brand lens into key projects and milestones, we ensure Edmonton's narrative is authentic, cohesive and consistent.

UNESCO LEARNING CITY DESIGNATION

We supported Edmonton's successful bid as Canada's first UNESCO Learning City by shaping the Community Action Plan, advising on application materials and contributing to announcement content. Our work included news releases, social media and a media kit to amplify the milestone locally and globally.

COMMONWEALTH SUMMER 2025 CONCERTS

To build excitement for two major concerts, we created a feature story highlighting Commonwealth Stadium's legacy as Canada's largest open-air venue. The piece celebrated its iconic concert history and ongoing impact on Edmonton's economy and reputation as a premier destination for live music.



YOUR CITY AT WORK

PAPAL VISIT SUPPORT

During Pope Francis' visit in 2022, we developed a media kit featured on Why Edmonton, which was shared globally as part of the international news release about his apology to residential school survivors.

CANADIAN URBAN TRANSIT ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

For the 2023 CUTA Annual Conference, we produced videos highlighting Edmonton Transit, a Mayor's welcome message, and a youth-focused piece. These assets emphasized Edmonton's leadership in sustainable transit and celebrated local voices.

In addition, our team develops customized tools to support organizational needs. We've supported councillor delegations with fact sheets, contributed to national and international pitch packages and provided tailored messaging through a place brand lens. These resources ensure Edmonton's story is told with clarity and confidence, whether on the global stage or in local context.



SPOTLIGHT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

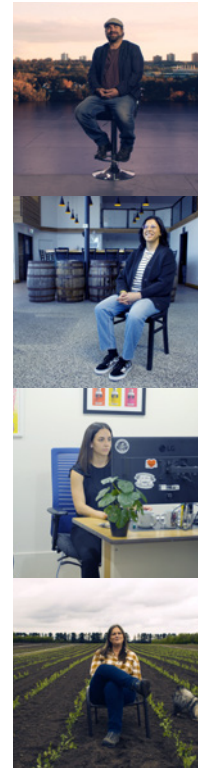
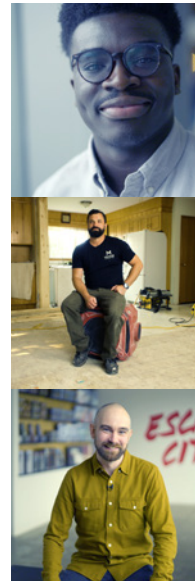
Economic development is a cornerstone of Edmonton's place brand. How we present the city to investors, businesses and talent plays a vital role in defining Edmonton's future as a vibrant center of opportunity and growth. We support this by creating tailored messaging, profiles and data-driven narratives that bring Edmonton's economic potential to life.

Our team has produced over 30 business and innovation-focused stories that highlight Edmonton's local economy. Through a video series profiling entrepreneurs across various industries, including film, urban agriculture and sustainability, we showcase how economic diversification and labour attraction are driving growth.

One standout [story](#) highlights the City's Small Business Team and its One-on-One Support Program, demonstrating how targeted City services help entrepreneurs navigate challenges and grow, reinforcing the vital role small businesses play in Edmonton's economy and community.

WHERE TALENT THRIVES
TOP 5
IN NORTH AMERICA FOR
AFFORDABLE TALENT

A city where world-class talent meets a cost of living that supports success, for businesses and individuals alike.



Beyond storytelling, we actively contribute to broader economic development initiatives, including:

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND CONTENT CREATION

Support for key announcements such as the Canadian Home Builders Association affordability achievements and the Federation for Canadian Municipalities Conference Host City announcement

INVESTOR RELATIONS

Development of pitch packages to attract and engage potential investors

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGNS

Initiatives like *Meet Me Downtown* and *Shop Local* that boost downtown vibrancy and local business support

EVENT PROMOTION

Promotional support for major events including the *Canadian Country Music Awards* and the *Junos*

BIG IDEAS, BIG GROWTH
EDMONTON'S INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM GREW

96% TO \$1.3B

\$188M IN TECH INVESTMENTS
AND A **40% INCREASE IN TECH JOBS**

cement Edmonton as one of North America's fastest growing tech ecosystems

SPOTLIGHT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

WE LOOKED AT VANCOUVER, EDMONTON, AND EVEN NOVA SCOTIA, BUT EDMONTON WAS THE BEST OPTION. IT HAS THE BEST ACCESS TO PEOPLE, A STRONG NETWORK, AND AN INCREDIBLE BUSINESS COMMUNITY. HERE, IT'S NEVER ABOUT COMPETING—IT'S ABOUT SUPPORTING EACH OTHER.

KEENAN PASCAL
OWNER OF TOKEN BITTERS
AND SPILT ZERO PROOF

WE WOULD NOT BE IN BUSINESS TODAY IF IT WASN'T FOR THE CITY'S SMALL BUSINESS TEAM.

RYAN P

SPREADING THE GOOD WORD



WHERE WE'VE BEEN

PG 20

City of Edmonton

Place Brand Journey

To extend the impact of the Why Edmonton platform and connect the city's story with target audiences, we invested in a mix of marketing and advertising approaches. These efforts helped build awareness at launch and continue to amplify Edmonton's strengths by reaching people where they are.

Our strategy included three key streams: organic, paid and in-kind advertising. Together, these channels provided broad visibility, consistent messaging and measurable value, ensuring Why Edmonton remained top of mind for both local and external audiences.

We use our channels to share creative, engaging content that highlights Edmonton in fresh and timely ways. From scenic photography series to cultural moments, like Edmonton's skyline featured in NASA's *Astronomy Picture of the Day*, HBO's *The Last of Us* filming downtown and the Oilers' recent playoff runs, our content sparks attention and builds civic pride.

We also lean into playful, shareable content that reflects our brand voice: witty, relatable and community-minded. Campaigns like our Edmonton-coded Valentine's cards and a Wordle-inspired tweet to Calgary gained traction across platforms and were picked up by national and regional media and we participated in a CBC podcast to talk about our success.

MARKETING ORGANIC

Videos have emerged as a key storytelling tool, with high-performing pieces featuring **Cariwest, Folk Fest, cherry blossoms** and **seasonal cityscapes**. A 2024 video of Oilers fans at the Moss Pit earned 4.6 million views, boosting the City's social media presence and showcasing Edmonton's unmatched community spirit.



MARKETING PAID ADVERTISING

We invested in targeted paid campaigns to extend the visibility of the Why Edmonton platform and align with national conversations. These placements allowed us to connect with audiences beyond our own channels and reinforce key messages about Edmonton's strengths. The 2024 and 2025 campaigns exceeded benchmarks across platforms and expanded national visibility, setting a strong foundation for future campaigns.

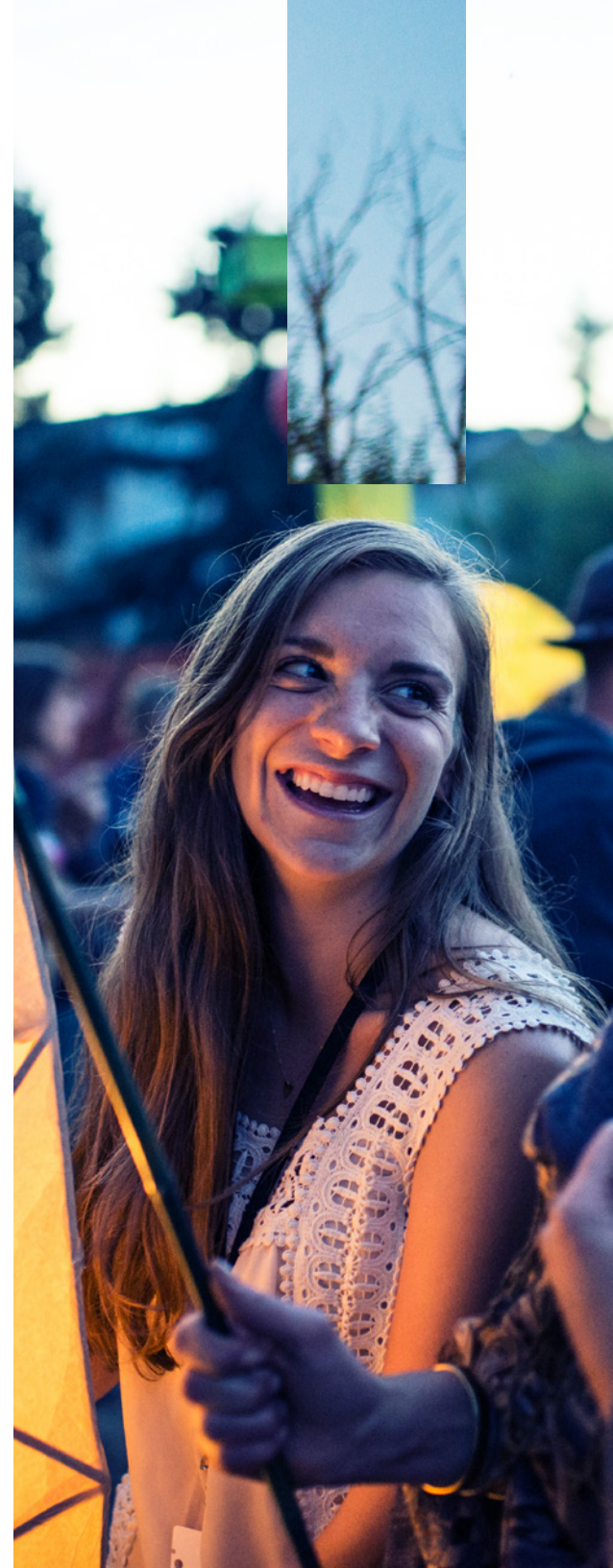
Airport Placements – Targeted video placements in London, Hamilton and Edmonton airports showcased Why Edmonton with dynamic visuals and a clear call to action to capture travellers' attention.

Digital and Social Advertising – Ads across Meta, YouTube and Cluep (a mobile ad platform) amplified Why Edmonton content, driving strong engagement and reinforcing positive sentiment.

Maclean's Affordability Feature – Digital ads ran alongside the Canada's Best Affordable Places to Live feature, positioning Why Edmonton in a national conversation about affordability.

Edmonton Advertorial – Digital advertising aligned with an article featuring City Manager Eddie Robar, which was also distributed through Maclean's national mailing list.

Municipal World Article – Promoted Edmonton as host of FCM 2026, strategically building visibility ahead of the event.





MARKETING IN-KIND OPPORTUNITIES

Through in-kind agreements, we maintained a consistent presence in high-traffic spaces and at major events, without direct costs. These partnerships give Why Edmonton year round visibility, like permanent exterior blades at Rogers Place, while also amplifying our story during key moments. Together, they ensured the platform stayed visible and recognizable for both residents and visitors.

Here are a few key placements that increased our reach and elevated our profile:

A standing agreement with Oilers Entertainment Group, giving Why Edmonton permanent visibility on exterior digital billboards in the Ice District.

Playoffs-specific placements with Oilers Entertainment Group, including in-arena digital advertising and rinkboards during the 2024 and 2025 Stanley Cup Playoff run.

Digital LRT trackside and station signage across the city.

A full-page ad in the Canadian Country Music Association Awards Pocket Guide (distributed at the awards show).

In-arena and program ads during the 2024 and 2025 Canadian Finals Rodeo.

OUR GOAL ISN'T TO
MONOPOLIZE THE
EDMONTON STORY;
IT'S TO AMPLIFY IT.

BETTER EDMONTON



STAND CLEAR
AUTOMATIC SLIDING DOOR

THE MOST AWESOME MILL CREEK POOL MORE THAN ANYTHING. MAX (GRADE 2)



Multiple organizations sharing their perspectives will help tell the more complete and authentic Edmonton story. Our team supports this by building relationships, aligning strategies and creating tools that partners can use to tell Edmonton's story. Through co-developed campaigns, shared content and joint marketing efforts, we extend our reach and amplify impact together.

2024 AND 2025 PLAYOFFS

We worked closely with Explore Edmonton to align our content and avoid duplication. By planning together and using the collaborative post function of Instagram, we increased reach and engagement of playoff content, extending beyond local fans and sparking international engagement.

CANADIAN FINALS RODEO (CFR) + WESTERN EVENTS

Our support for CFR is part of an ongoing collaboration between City departments, Explore Edmonton and the Edmonton Arts Council through a joint marketing and communications team. We've dedicated space on our channels and continue to amplify content to promote CFR and other Western events throughout the fall season.



PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S HOCKEY LEAGUE (PWHL) PROMOTION

Our team supported the arrival of the *PWHL Takeover Tour* in Edmonton by highlighting both the players' achievements and the broader impact of women's professional hockey. Alongside sharing the league's success on social media we produced a feature story showcasing how the team is inspiring the next generation and shaping the future of sport in our city.

EDMONTON ARTS COUNCIL (EAC) COLLABORATIONS

EAC plays a vital role in shaping the cultural identity of our city, and we're proud to help amplify their work. From sharing the story behind the remarkable public art along the new Valley Line Southeast LRT to celebrating the creative voices that define Edmonton, our role is to shine a light on the impact of their efforts.

As they approach their 30th anniversary and the milestone of 300 public art installations, we look forward to continuing this strong partnership, supporting their celebration and helping share the story of Edmonton's vibrant arts scene with a wider audience.

Place branding is a long game; it's a dedicated effort built on consistent storytelling, engagement and connection. These subtle shifts in awareness, adoption and resonance are signs of the steady progress we're making in elevating the Edmonton brand.

Here are a few of the highlights that demonstrate this long-term traction:

MEDIA COVERAGE

[CBC](#) reached out to learn more about our work, dedicating a segment to Why Edmonton on their evening newscast. This was completely unsolicited, reflecting growing recognition of our brand. Taproot also provided coverage, further amplifying our message.

SHARED LANGUAGE

Our messaging is being adopted in meaningful ways, such as being included in an [Edmonton Journal](#) opinion article about the City's budget, with a direct link to the Why Edmonton platform.

ASSET USE

Our assets are being shared widely by partners. For example, BILD has featured our photos in their content, and the Chamber of Commerce has integrated our assets into their revamped website and newsletters.

ADOPTION BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Our assets and stories are also being used by our City Council further cementing the city's endorsement of our place brand.

GROWING AMBASSADOR NETWORK

We're also seeing an increase in informal brand ambassadors – people who are proud to be featured and go on to share and amplify our content in meaningful ways. One standout example is Jean-Paul's story, our first fully French-language video with English subtitles. We proactively engaged with Edmonton's francophone community and the response was fantastic. The post received strong engagement and both Jean-Paul and Campus Saint-Jean helped spread the word, even featuring it on their website and newsletter.

IN OUR DMS

Beyond analytics, we're seeing a deeper emotional connection to our work. Our content is resonating. It's fostering engagement, sparking conversations and helping people see themselves reflected in our city. Here's a small selection of the feedback we've received through direct messages comments and emails that show the connections we're making.

MOMENTUM TO EDMONTON



“WHOEVER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE SHOULD BE IN CHARGE OF EDMONTON’S NEXT REBRAND. “YOU FILL THE POTHOLE OF MY HEART” POSSESSES JUST THE RIGHT BALANCE OF LOVE/HATE EDMONTON STRUGGLE WITH ABOUT OUR HOMETOWN.

“WHOEVER PRODUCED THE LAURA JONES STORY...THANK YOU! IT SPEAKS SO POSITIVELY OF EDMONTON AND ALSO ABOUT US “OLDER PEOPLE” WHO ENJOY LIVING HERE. MY HUSBAND AND I WERE TRANSFERRED HERE FROM ONTARIO; HE WENT BACK AND I STAYED AND MADE A LIFE FOR MYSELF. EDMONTON IS HOME AND I WILL NEVER GIVE UP ON IT.

“VERY THANKFUL TO THE <CITY OF EDMONTON> FOR INTERVIEWING/ FILMING MY FAM. THESE ARE STORIES ARE SO IMPACTFUL AND TRULY REFLECT THE RICH CULTURE THAT THRIVES IN #YEG.



WHERE WE'VE BEEN

PG 28

City of Edmonton

Place Brand Journey



**HUMBLE BRAG:
WE'RE PROUD TO SHARE
THAT OUR REDESIGNED
PLACE BRAND DIGITAL
PLATFORM, WHY EDMONTON,
WON AN AVA DIGITAL GOLD
AWARD IN FEBRUARY 2025.**

ACCOLADES + ACHIEVEMENTS

Edmonton is getting noticed! Here are a few of the recent awards, recognition and good news that put our city in the spotlight:

RANKINGS AND AWARDS

#65 on [Resonance World's Best Cities 2025](#)

#22 top city in Canada on
[Burson Lists of Sports Cities 2025](#)

Only Canadian city on [Lonely Planet's
Best in Travel 2025](#)

Ranked as 3rd most livable city in Canada
[Global Citizen Solutions 2025](#)

Included in Maclean's list of
[Canada's Best Affordable Places to Live](#)

Named a [top-trending winter travel
destination by Expedia 2024](#)

Ranked number one in affordability in the
[Canadian Home Builders' Association
Municipal Benchmarking Study 2024](#)



WHAT'S NEXT?

As we take on the exciting challenge of building out the next evolution of Edmonton's Place Brand Strategy, we can look back proudly at the steady, thoughtful steps that brought us here. These steps have been creative, meaningful and always rooted in the authenticity of this place and its people.

We believe in this city's potential and the momentum we're building gives us a strong foundation to launch what's next.

We're just getting started.



“ THERE’S
SOMETHING
ABOUT THIS CITY
THAT ALLOWS
US TO CREATE
SOMETHING OUT
OF NOTHING.

ARLO MAVERICK
RAPPER

WHERE WE'VE BEEN

PG 31

City of Edmonton

Place Brand Journey



WHY.EDMONTON.CA

