



Edmonton
Place Brand



Edmonton

Strategy
2021 - 2023

March 2021
City of Edmonton Brand Team
brandteam@edmonton.ca

Land Acknowledgement

The lands on which Edmonton sits, and the North Saskatchewan River that runs through it, have been the sites of natural abundance, ceremony and culture, travel and rest, relationship building, making and trading for Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial. Edmonton is located within Treaty Six Territory and within the Métis homelands, and is home to one of the largest communities of Inuit south of the 60th parallel. We acknowledge this land as the traditional territories of many First Nations such as the nêhiyaw (Cree), Dené, Nakota Isga (Nakota Sioux), Anishinaabe (Saulteaux) and Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) peoples.

Edmonton owes its strength and vibrancy to these lands and the diverse Indigenous Peoples whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory, as well as settlers from around the world who continue to be welcomed here and call Edmonton home.

The people who will deliver this place brand strategy will always strive to follow the four Guiding Principles of the Indigenous Framework: *Relationships, Agreements, Celebrations* and *Renewal*. When working with First Peoples we will seek kinship with them by being Listeners, Connectors, Advocates and Partners.

Table of Contents

Review & Approval	4
Purpose	4
History, Background & Related Efforts	5
Opportunities	6
Awareness	6
Economic Recovery, Growth and Diversification	7
The City Plan and ConnectEdmonton	7
Diversity	8
Pandemic Recovery	9
Goals & Objectives	9
Stakeholders	10
Primary Partners	10
Secondary Relationships	11
Strategies	11
Profile Edmonton people, businesses, innovations and organizations	11
Develop library of brand assets	12
Provide place brand support, resources and advice	12
Support Edmonton's pandemic recovery	13
Develop and deliver place brand media relations, advocacy and marketing communications campaigns	13
Develop Indigenous strategies and actions	13
Seek out city awards, rankings and recognition	14
Review Edmonton's place brand-related physical assets	14
Implementation	14
Priorities and Timelines	15
Measures of Success	15
Appendix A - Timeline of Recent and Related Place Brand Efforts	17

Review & Approval

The people named below have had an opportunity to review this strategy. Approvers commit to providing support to reach the objectives and goals of the Edmonton Place Brand Strategy.

Version #	Approver Name and Title
Final 1.0	Catrin Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
	Stephanie McCabe, Deputy City Manager, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
	Mary Sturgeon, Branch Manager, Reputation and Brand
	Jeff Chase, Branch Manager, Economic & Environmental Sustainability
	Reviewer Name and Title
	Chris McLeod, VP, Global Marketing & Communications - Edmonton Global
	Catherine Warren, CEO, Innovate Edmonton
	Maggie Davison, CEO, Explore Edmonton
	Traci Bednard, VP Digital & Corporate Communications, EIA
	Elan Macdonald, VP External Relations, UAlberta
	Myrna Khan, VP University Relations - MacEwan University
	Sandra Marocco, VP Industry Partnerships & CMO, NAIT

1. Purpose

A place brand strategy for Edmonton is an essential complement to an economic development strategy. It supports the goals of economic development by raising awareness and underscoring the evidence and reasons why Edmonton is a place where people and/or businesses can:

- expand and grow their operations here;
- move here to attend a post-secondary institution; gain credentials for skills learned internationally;
- stay here after graduating to pursue their entrepreneurial ambitions;
- move here to build a business or career and have a fulfilling life; and
- invest here with confidence of a solid return on investment.

A place brand strategy is also a companion to tourism marketing and events attraction that support a strong visitor economy, but it does not replace those efforts. With a focus largely

on targets outside of Edmonton, it works alongside marketing communications (marcom) efforts that focus on local markets and businesses. Those local marcom campaigns and engagement can in fact uncover the success stories that will underpin place branding.

This document describes the strategies that the City will employ to deliver on the ambitions, goals and objectives of Edmonton's place brand. It outlines the opportunities ahead and the stakeholders who have committed to help bring it to life. It describes the timelines for delivery and the risks that must be considered and mitigated. With a commitment to show value to Edmontonians, this plan also describes the measures of success.

2. History, Background & Related Efforts

Over the past decade or so, the City of Edmonton has approached place branding on a number of fronts. Its work has been underpinned by national perception studies delivered by Longwoods International (in 2008 and 2013) and Leger Marketing in 2019. Activities to strengthen Edmonton's brand and reputation had varying results and were not specifically designed to support economic growth and development.

In 2012, Mayor Stephen Mandel invited community members from across Edmonton to develop and implement a place brand strategy. This citizen-driven initiative evolved into Make Something Edmonton, a community effort led by a group of volunteers in 2012/2013. The City Council of the day directed that the initiative be transferred to Edmonton Economic Development Corporation as of 2014. Recognized internationally in 2016 by CityNationPlace as [Best Place Brand Identity](#), Make Something Edmonton invited Edmontonians to participate in connecting with like-minded others and activate their communities around their ideas. It was also grounded in Edmontonians' descriptions of their city's personality rather than an imposed brand from a marketing entity. This aided in the uptake of the Make Something Edmonton narrative and in its authentic resonance.

It also confirmed initial research that Edmonton and Edmontonians were open, collaborative, inventive and courageous. 2019 [Place Branding Research](#) completed by Leger, particularly shown in feedback from business owners, confirmed those attributes still are a mark of this city today. Please refer to Appendix A for a more detailed recap of recent place brand efforts and initiatives.

As the City builds from this work, the brand team in the Reputation and Brand branch will be guided by several important strategic plans and their respective goals, objectives and vision. ConnectEdmonton's goals of healthy city, urban spaces, climate resilience, regional prosperity help us imagine the kind of city we want to be. The City Plan values and big city moves map out how Edmontonians want their city to evolve and grow. Many of the City of Edmonton's Economic Action Plan principles and goals align with and can be supported by

Edmonton's place brand strategy. Place brand efforts will also support and complement the *Edmonton Events Sport and Cultural Attraction Plan*.

Looking at efforts and initiatives being undertaken by external partners, Edmonton Global's strategic plan and marketing positioning (Young, Educated, Growing) complement the work of the Edmonton place brand. A strong regional brand and effective and collaborative partnerships are two of four "core priorities" of Edmonton Global; Edmonton's place brand can help advance those priorities. Edmonton Global has also been tasked with aligning and harmonizing the narrative and the many voices of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region, particularly for international audiences. While Edmonton's place brand strategy will play a lead role, it should seek to find harmony with others in the region.

Explore Edmonton's purpose is to increase the economic impact of the visitor based economy by showcasing and inspiring more people to visit Edmonton for exceptional experience. Explore Edmonton's work also elevates the importance of the visitor economy as a key economic driver. This visitor focused work complements the more business- and lifestyle-focused work of the place brand strategy.

Innovate Edmonton, while still in its early stages of development, is considering positioning that describes Edmonton as a hub and welcoming home for innovators who are solving the world's most pressing problems; and as a city that showcases innovation as part of the urban fabric, making "hidden innovations" visible, accessible and relevant to Edmontonians, to Canadians and the world.

It is the work of the place brand strategy -- and the City team who is delivering it -- to align with, leverage and connect to all of these initiatives and help drive them forward. In return, the Edmonton place brand strategy will benefit from the positive momentum those efforts create.

3. Opportunities

Edmonton has many opportunities before it that support the pursuit of a place brand strategy. The most prevailing of those are listed below.

3.1. Awareness

Independent research has shown that people's awareness of Edmonton and its reputation both have room for improvement. Research completed by Leger Marketing in 2019 showed that only 26 per cent of urban Canadians say they are familiar with Edmonton. Only nine per cent would be interested in moving to Edmonton. Not knowing enough about Edmonton was the top reason among urban Canadians (excluding Edmontonians) who neither agreed nor disagreed that they would enjoy living in or visiting Edmonton.

Edmontonians, on the other hand, showed more consistency in their perceptions of their city, with many newer Edmontonians who participated in focus groups expressing surprise at the many positives of this place immediately after they moved here. Simply put: Edmonton remains a well-kept secret outside of its borders.

In 2019, Edmonton Global conducted a study with international site selectors that included questions on awareness of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region. The vast majority, 82 per cent, had never considered the region for an investment, largely because they had little to no awareness of it. Those who had heard of the Edmonton region associated it with being a remote region. This is why Edmonton Global has incorporated key messages around connectedness to the regional narrative in order to demonstrate significant ties to the broader international market.

Building awareness of Edmonton and its opportunities -- not just as a place to launch a career or grow a business, but also to build a life -- is critical to convincing people to move here or stay here after they graduate.

3.2. Economic Recovery, Growth and Diversification

It's clear that to ensure Edmonton remains relevant and to keep the City's tax base strong people must view Edmonton as a place where they and their families can build a life that is supported by different opportunities. The place brand strategy will be a companion effort to the City Plan's City Move of Catalyze and Converge, the City's Edmonton Economic Action Plan, the respective objectives and goals of Innovate Edmonton and Explore Edmonton, and the region's economic growth efforts. It will highlight the people, ideas, and entrepreneurship that are diversifying the economy, creating jobs and attracting investment.

3.3. The City Plan and ConnectEdmonton

The recently approved City Plan has an ambitious goal: to attract one million more people to Edmonton over the next few decades. As a strategy whose intention is to draw people here, place branding supports the vision of the City Plan and many of its policy objectives. The place brand brings the City Plan to life by starting to make the intangible tangible through evidence, examples and anecdotes.

From the perspective of economic and community prosperity, the opportunity to help us achieve the employment targets outlined within the City Plan -- where 70 per cent of the region's jobs are found in Edmonton -- must be supported by a place brand strategy. This strategy can also help Edmonton envision *how* there will be half a million new jobs created, as defined by the City Plan. Done well, the place brand strategy will describe how Edmonton

is and is becoming a healthy, urban and climate-resilient city that supports a prosperous region and is growing to two million people.

The six values of the City Plan -- Live, Thrive, Preserve, Belong, Access and Create -- are excellent ways to frame the many stories the place brand strategy will tell about Edmonton and Edmontonians. It will also show how Edmonton is reaching the tangible milestone of creating 145,000 jobs over the next ten years.

Similarly, the place brand strategy can show how the city is following the vision of ConnectEdmonton. Place branding can show the transformational changes that are making Edmonton a healthy city with vibrant urban spaces, shared prosperity and that is increasingly resilient to climate-related effects.

3.4. Diversity

Canada will rely on immigration to grow its population base and accordingly, Edmonton will need to attract new people from all over the world here -- to seek higher education, launch new businesses, create more jobs, replenish and grow the tax base, and ensure a diverse and welcoming community of communities that the City Plan envisions.

The challenge related to immigration and work visas in the United States may increase the attractiveness of Canada as a destination to live, work, and build diverse companies. Although this is likely to fluctuate somewhat over the next few years, many economists and [population researchers](#) expect this trend to continue in the longer term.

At the same time, Edmonton's urban Indigenous population will grow over the coming years. Economically, discussions about creating an urban reserve have begun. We therefore must ensure Indigenous people, businesses and culture are reflected and celebrated in the place brand strategy. As well, Edmonton has an opportunity to more intentionally reflect Indigenous history in how we describe this place. We can learn from the work of Ward renaming and align closely with the City's Indigenous Framework.

All of this demonstrates an opportunity to appeal to Indigenous people from across Canada, the immigrant communities that already call Edmonton home in order to grow their numbers and to new immigrant groups that may have initially arrived in other Canadian cities from different foreign countries. For people new to Canada, highlighting Edmonton's affordability, liveability and employment and social opportunities is one option that may resonate with these audiences. And it may be possible to unite diverse groups around an "innovation identity" that inspires a sense of civic pride and shared promise of prosperity.

Before we build out Indigenous strategies and elements to the place brand strategy, more research will be completed and engagement with elders and other leaders will be undertaken as needed.

3.5. Pandemic Recovery

Every city across the globe will be making a concerted effort to recover once the majority of the COVID-19 pandemic is behind them. Edmonton could see opportunities from the social and workplace changes that are emerging from the pandemic. With more knowledge-based workplaces looking to allow their employees to work remotely, Edmonton has an opportunity to showcase its affordability, especially to people living in cities with increasing unaffordability and who may be looking to relocate.

This potential change in workplaces presents an opportunity to further explore with partners how the Edmonton place brand strategy can be executed in a virtual context, in concert with a digital approach and position us on a map of aspiring global innovation capitals.

Additionally, remote work trends will have an impact on Edmonton's vibrancy as we recover from the pandemic, especially in the downtown core and other normally busy retail and nightlife areas. Once it is safe to gather again, the place brand strategy aims to reignite civic pride and drive people into those denser urban areas to enjoy what the city has to offer. Capturing Edmontonians enjoying their city, celebrating home-grown innovations that advance quality of life and sharing these stories with target markets outside of Edmonton is one component of the place brand strategy.

Longer term, Edmonton may see an opportunity to attract people, families and businesses that are relocating to cities that have been less impacted by weather-related events due to climate change. Climate refugees from around the world will surely look to Canada as a place to relocate, so we must make the case that Edmonton is a viable option.

4. Goals & Objectives

The Edmonton place brand strategy will work in harmony with the objectives of our partners and with the regional brand strategy. It will:

- be research-based and use a review of best practices and local and national perception studies from 2013 and 2019;
- convene stakeholders around a central strategy and brand;
- include short (current budget cycle) and medium (2023-26) term actions based on input of stakeholders as well as previous work;
- be clear and straightforward, with shareable brand assets that are easy to access by anyone who can benefit from them;
- be dynamic; reviewed and adjusted as needs and opportunities evolve; and
- recognize the current fiscal constraints the City and partners are facing and look for synergies and efficiency with related stakeholder efforts.

Broadly, the goals of the strategy are to:

- embed the Edmonton “personality” in all brand related communications;
- raise awareness of and build brand affinity to Edmonton;
- build trust among key business audiences so they consider Edmonton as a viable place to grow and invest;
- support attracting and retaining talent; and
- partner with key stakeholders for brand alignment and consistency and so they are a source for and amplify local voices and stories

5. Stakeholders

The place brand strategy will need to support the relevant business goals and objectives of a number of different primary partners and organizations with which we have secondary relationships. These organizations will be engaged on an ongoing basis throughout the life of the place brand strategy. The City has many existing ways it engages with all of these organizations, so rather than striking a separate and formal advisory committee made up of these stakeholders, the place brand team will regularly meet with key stakeholders individually and in small groups to review the strategy, assess its effectiveness and refine actions as needed to ensure it is providing value.

5.1. Primary Partners

Internal

- Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development (UFCSD) - Economic Investment Services branch
- Integrated Marketing Communications staff supporting UFCSD
- External and Intergovernmental Relations
- Indigenous Relations Office
- The Mayor and Council (as representatives of Edmonton)

External

- Edmonton Global
- Explore Edmonton Corporation
- Innovate Edmonton and related entities: Edmonton Screen Industries Office, Edmonton Health City, TEC Edmonton
- Edmonton International Airport
- Post-secondary institutions, especially the University of Alberta, MacEwan University and NAIT
- Indigenous groups and organizations
- Edmonton Arts Council (leveraging the ambitions of its strategic plan Connections and Exchanges as complementary positioning and a brand asset)

5.2. Secondary Relationships

External

- local large and small companies, which may be represented by Business Improvement Areas and/or Edmonton Chamber of Commerce and/or local industry associations
- immigrants and newcomer-centric organizations, which may be represented by Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers and/or Edmonton Multicultural Coalition
- non-profit organizations

These stakeholders use the brand to promote, build and improve our city but it is owned by all by Edmontonians.

6. Strategies

Edmonton's place brand strategy is informed by research and builds on current and historical programs and assets from the City, EEDC and other partners. It includes short, medium and long term strategies and actions to primarily support economic development but also to showcase Edmonton's multifaceted connectedness, community vibrancy, diverse social fabric, innovation, and compelling arts and culture, and other benefits.

The delivery of the strategy will be mainly online and through digital channels, relying on audio, photo, video (and related digital technologies if feasible) and online campaigns. Administration will build out a web presence on edmonton.ca that will house brand assets, and refresh and focus select City social channels in preparation for strategic service delivery.

6.1. Profile Edmonton people, businesses, innovations and organizations

Working with internal and external stakeholders, Administration will identify people, organizations and institutions to profile that capture the best of Edmonton. The City will:

- Ensure stories reflect the city's brand attributes of openness, collaboration, inventiveness and courage.
- Develop stories that advance the goals and priorities of key stakeholders and their strategic plans.
- Develop a testimonial series that showcases business leaders who have expanded and diversified their operations in Edmonton; subjects should articulate challenges faced and overcome, lessons learned, innovations sparked, supports gained (from community, other businesses, associations, post-secondaries, government) Include profiles of businesses that demonstrate the global connectivity of the region including those that have expanded globally and/or are exporting goods to a global market.
- Show diversity in those we profile; i.e. businesses and initiatives that reflect cultural and ethnic diversity and people new to Canada.

- Explain what it means to be an Edmontonian, profiling students, young adults, seniors, Black, Indigenous and other cultural and ethnic diversity, people with disabilities, people new to the city, and people who have lived here all their lives.
- Seek out activities of Edmontonians (current and past) whose work has achieved acclaim as examples of Edmonton's place in global conversation and culture.
- Actively pursue Indigenous perspectives and narratives, particularly Indigenous students and business owners.
- Place an emphasis on stories that show economic diversification and businesses at different stages of maturity. Emphasize the growing sectors of Ag Tech, artificial intelligence & machine learning, nanotechnology, transportation & supply chain, and health sciences. Showcase stand-out innovations and global impact.
- Be open to the stories of quiriness, kindness and classically "Edmonton" traits that distinguish our city.

6.2. Develop library of brand assets

How Edmonton is collectively and individually described by different organizations must be aligned and consistent. Several internal City operational units and many external organizations require assets that describe Edmonton and what it has to offer. This online library will be continually updated to ensure assets are current and not over exposed or overused. It will include a variety of photos, raw and fully produced videos, written narratives and "Did you know?" style facts that show and describe Edmonton through four seasons. It will be set up such that stakeholders noted in section 5.1 can, if they choose, also upload their assets for other organizations to use.

Administration will develop and secure educational, business-focused and lifestyle assets. Those that focus on businesses and entrepreneurship will showcase Edmonton's brand characteristics of openness, collaboration, inventiveness and courage. Those that focus on innovation, will feature innovation of all stripes, including tech, social, cultural, sustainable and economic innovations, as well as innovation in the public realm.

Educational and lifestyle assets will align with the City Plan guiding values of live, create, preserve, thrive, belong and access. Educational assets will focus on the strong ideas, research and innovation that comes from our post-secondary institutions, and lifestyle assets will demonstrate Edmonton's family-oriented offerings, welcoming community, recreation opportunities, music and arts scene, diversity and culture, and education system.

6.3. Provide place brand support, resources and advice

The City will be a resource for its employees and external businesses and organizations seeking advice and assets that support their own Edmonton marketing efforts. It will also work with these clients to promote consistency in how we position and describe Edmonton. Administration will provide support to these groups and organizations when they are

attracting or retaining talent, attracting events, seeking investment, or expanding their operations.

6.4. Support Edmonton's pandemic recovery

Assuming vaccines roll out as planned, Edmonton will begin to recover from the effects of the pandemic later in 2021. After staying home for more than a year, many Edmontonians may willingly begin to engage with their city and all it has to offer. Others may be reluctant to stray too far from home -- for health or financial reasons.

- A pandemic recovery campaign will support the goals of the Edmonton Economic Action Plan and ConnectEdmonton and help to entice Edmontonians to reconnect with their city and spark renewed civic pride and engagement.
- Multifaceted campaigns that include local placemaking and community-driven activities should drive renewed connections and vibrancy within neighbourhoods and in key Edmonton business improvement areas.
- Activities will provide an excellent opportunity for the place brand team to add to its library of video and photo assets.

6.5. Develop and deliver place brand media relations, advocacy and marketing communications campaigns

In support of the City's Edmonton Economic Action Plan, and in collaboration with our partners noted in section 5, the City will engage in media relations activities, where stories about Edmonton and Edmonton business leaders, innovators and organizations are pitched to national and international mainstream, business and trade media.

The City will also build advocacy networks among community, cultural and business leaders, and pursue targeted marketing communications (marcom) campaigns, which could include digital and print advertising buys, and will explore opportunities to work with partners on these where possible.

These activities will target particular audiences/sectors and support specific outcomes of the Edmonton Economic Action Plan; e.g. talent attraction, business retention and expansion, and investment.

6.6. Develop Indigenous strategies and actions

Aligned with the City's Indigenous Framework, research and engagement will be undertaken with a goal to develop specific strategies and actions that reflect the Indigenous experience in Treaty 6 territory. This work aims to authentically capture and reflect Indigenous voices and experiences in the place brand strategy overall. In pursuing this work, City staff will follow the guiding principles of the Indigenous Framework and ensure they are Listeners, Connectors, Advocates and Partners to the Indigenous people and organizations they work with.

6.7. Seek out city awards, rankings and recognition

The place brand team will develop a set of criteria that will guide decision making around applying for national and international awards, recognition and city rankings. The City will look for well-known and well-respected awards and rankings, and avoid those that have a direct or indirect cost associated with them.

6.8. Review Edmonton's place brand-related physical assets

The physical spaces people occupy in a city are important. Iconic buildings and bridges, green space, transportation corridors and landscapes -- and the wayfinding tools to get to them -- all contribute to a positive place brand experience. Administration will begin to inventory impermanent assets in particular (cityscape flags, signage in public spaces, naturalization and seasonal beautification efforts). It will complete this work by envisioning these assets through the eyes of someone who may be experiencing Edmonton for the first time. By investigating options to update particularly the impermanent assets and putting a recommendation together, the City will be ready when it is in a position to replace or update those assets.

7. Implementation

Administration will implement these place brand strategies in collaboration with the City's partners and stakeholders. The City of Edmonton, Edmonton Global, Explore Edmonton, Innovate Edmonton, the Edmonton International Airport and Edmonton's post-secondary institutions will all receive the reciprocal benefits gained by our individual and collective efforts to market Edmonton.

Stakeholder collaboration, engagement and idea sharing will be critical to the success of Edmonton's place brand strategy. For example, new content will be shared with all stakeholders. That way, not only are they aware of it and can make use of it for their own needs; but where possible, they can help to communicate it to their networks. The City will regularly check in with stakeholders, and together discuss their needs and what could be adjusted.

Edmonton's brand is interconnected and must be harmonized with the Edmonton Metropolitan Region's brand. Edmonton Global is leading efforts to increase awareness of the region in conjunction with Invest Alberta, Invest in Canada, the Consider Canada Cities Alliance, Destination Canada, and Canada's Trade Commissioner Service, all of whom are promoting a unified message on the Edmonton Metropolitan Region as a whole abroad.

There may be occasions when an Alberta-focused approach is warranted or when a joint opportunity arises that means collaboration with Calgary or other cities is an option. There

may be an opportunity to collaborate with the federal government in featuring and positioning Edmonton in a context that showcases any of our unique strengths. Administration will continue to keep the lines of communication open and ensure understanding of our willingness to work together.

8. Priorities and Timelines

The Edmonton Place Brand Strategy is designed to be nimble so that it can best meet stakeholder needs and be adjusted as opportunities warrant. We must structure our approach to this work in a way that reflects the resources available. The recovery from the pandemic may affect the exact timing of the activities below.

In Q2 in 2021, the City will:

- Develop library of brand assets
- Begin development of place brand media relations and marketing communications strategic campaigns
- Develop Indigenous strategies and actions

In Q3 and Q4 of 2021, the City will focus on the above strategies, plus:

- Support Edmonton's pandemic recovery
- Profile Edmonton people, businesses, innovations and organizations
- Provide place brand support, resources and advice to Edmonton organizations
- Begin delivery of place brand media relations and marketing communications campaigns

In 2022 and beyond, the above strategies will continue, and the City will also:

- Seek out awards, rankings and recognition
- Review Edmonton's place brand-related physical assets

9. Measures of Success

As different strategies are being developed and deployed, measurement tools and baselines will be put in place so that progress can be tracked. The following are some measurements that could be used to better define success and indicate the need for adjustments:

- Number of downloads of brand assets and how each asset is being used
- Place brand web page engagement (avg time on page, bounce rate, session duration, scroll depth, returning visitors, etc.)
- Social media engagement, particularly from users outside of Edmonton
- Number, range and type of profiles/stories/testimonials produced
- Stakeholder satisfaction surveys relating to brand team's service provision
- Number and type of inquiries for support

- Third party measures through stakeholders: change (increase) in sales leads; growth of foreign student enrolment;
- Achievement of individual and annual campaign goals and strategies
- Changes in national perception survey responses; specifically improvements to public perception and attitudes toward Edmonton
- Number of awards sought and won

Appendix A - Timeline of Recent and Related Place Brand Efforts

Pre-2012: 'Edmonton Stories' is a City-driven platform for gathering and sharing citizen-generated information and anecdotes about Edmonton.

2012: Mayor Stephen Mandel initiates a citizen task force on image and reputation. The task force completed research with locals to learn what is key to Edmonton. Themes and stories emerged that Edmonton is a good place where community can support you and help take an idea to reality; it's a good place to "make something."

2013: Make Something Edmonton (MSE) platform is launched as a gathering place for community stories, ideas, connections and collaborations.

2013: Completed Longwoods Awareness and Perception Research, where the key finding was that there is a large difference (30-40 per cent) in perception and reality of living in Edmonton, which seems to indicate a lack of awareness of Edmonton's offerings amongst non-residents.

Early 2014: City Council of the day directs Edmonton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC) to take over MSE platforms and programs.

2014: As a division of EEDC, Edmonton Tourism launches the ExploreEdmonton.com website and platform (a consumer marketing platform focused on an audience beyond Edmonton to drive visitation and event promotion).

2014-19: MSE evolved through grassroots community engagement to shared pride and ownership to external campaigns.

2019: City contracts Leger Marketing to conduct local and national place branding research on perceptions of Edmonton.

Fall 2019: Discussions within the City and with Edmonton Global, EEDC, TEC Edmonton, Edmonton Screen Industries Office, Health City to clarify, accountability and governance of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), business attraction and expansion, economic development, and the innovation ecosystem.

Late 2019: MSE web platform (i.e. the back end technology) transfers to Edmonton's NextGen.

Early 2020: Responsibility transitions include:

- EEDC becomes Explore Edmonton Corporation, which is the lead organization for the visitor economy and venue management
- City takes lead on place brand and economic development
- Edmonton Global leads on foreign direct investment and trade

Late 2020: The City Plan is approved by City Council.