



Leadership, Innovation and Recognition

Ron Gilbertson, President & CEO, EEDC

Downtown Edmonton's momentum is building. The Alberta government's April announcement to start construction of a new Royal Alberta Museum will add significantly to our city's arts district, already home to some of Edmonton's cultural gems.

With construction scheduled to start this fall, the new museum complements plans for a new entertainment and arena district. Both these facilities, other dynamic activity planned for or already occurring downtown, and high-profile events like the Indy are key to a vibrant urban core and Edmonton.

While the new entertainment and arena district has evoked much excitement and controversy, such a project is instrumental in ensuring downtown's successful growth and continued revitalization. That stakeholders such as the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Business Association, and Building Owners and Managers Association share the same view is no accident. Collectively, we strongly believe that the district would enhance our city as a vibrant, northern business centre and as a focal point for new investment from the city, region and abroad.

Indeed, such community facilities add to the city and region's overall quality of life. They complement efforts to recruit and retain young talent so vital to our success. Our future depends on a young, dynamic and diverse workforce. To achieve that, we must offer compelling reasons for the best and brightest to live, work and play here.

We have been provided with an opportunity to enhance downtown with once-in-a-generation development. It is the anchor and, if planned and built thoughtfully and creatively, can be a catalyst for even more enhancement to our downtown.

Economic Development

- Hosted 15 incoming delegations.
- Exhibited at the **Global Petroleum Show** in Calgary June 7-9.
- Developed and co-presented with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers on June 21 **Oil Sands: What's Really Going On**, a half-day non-technical overview aimed at a non-energy audience, about the oil sands industry and its effect on Greater Edmonton. The program included panel discussions and presentations on topics such as Alberta in the world context, oil sands production, value-added manufacturing, mitigating environmental effects, and a look ahead — attracting over 700 participants.
- Undertook a study to identify opportunities in the environmental services sector.
- Increased awareness of **productivity** issues through Council on Competitiveness head Deborah Wince-Smith's keynote address at EEDC's April 18 annual luncheon.
- Delivered **collaborative innovation workshop** for economic development representatives from the region.
- Hosted **supply chain alliance workshop** created by Productivity Alberta, attended by 8 companies.
- Partnered with CFA Institute, the association for investment professionals, to conduct a half-day workshop.
- Hosted networking and industry mixer for Edmonton's financial services sector.
- Connected Alberta Investment Management Corp. with Edmonton Film Fund on possible future collaboration/investment.
- Hosted Middle Eastern investment management firm interested in opportunities in Edmonton.
- Completed a funding proposal to develop EEDC's labour portfolio.

Shaw Conference Centre

- SCC hosted four major groups: Association of Canadian Community Colleges, Canadian Payroll Association, Financial Management Institute of Canada, and Canadian Dermatology Association.
- In partnership with The Works Art and Design Festival, the second annual **pARTnership Gallery** was launched June 23 to showcase students' artwork.
- Mike Fitzpatrick retired as General Manager June 24 — ending a 27-year career. To celebrate his retirement, the centre established the Mike Fitzpatrick scholarship, awarded annually to an SCC staff member registered full-time at a post-secondary institution, and who demonstrates leadership and community involvement. Cliff Higuchi was appointed Vice President and General Manager as of June 27.

Quality of Life

- EEDC has created a new **Quality of Life** unit to focus on improving Edmonton's quality of life. In support of our vision of having Edmonton recognized as one of the world's top 5 mid-sized cities, and in acknowledgement of the need for Edmonton to be competitive on a global scale, it was felt a more significant and deliberate focus on quality of life would be valuable.
- Participated in **Edmonton Regional Immigrant Employment Council** career mentorship program to provide support to immigrant professionals new to Edmonton, and accepted a seat on the board of directors.
- Created in 2010, the **Downtown Vibrancy Task Force** develops strategies and action plans for accelerating the development of a strong and vibrant urban core. Simon Farbrother (City of Edmonton) and Jim Taylor (Downtown Business Association) joined in Q2. Members agreed to extend their term for 2 years. On April 19 they discussed the City's plans for Jasper Avenue and potential opportunities. On June 3 the group identified its top 3 focus areas. Three sub-committees have been formed: Clean and Safe for making a clean and safe downtown a civic priority; Downtown Awareness for generating understanding and support for the principle that "as goes your downtown, so goes your city"; and Downtown Funding to support City administration's request for downtown funding in the 2012-2014 capital budget submission. All three sub-committees will meet in July to begin developing strategies and action plans.
- **Downtown Business Association Recruitment Committee:** Continued working with developers and property managers to attract and retain businesses downtown.

Industry & Tourism Services

- Hosted **EEDC's 16th Annual Luncheon** on April 18 at the Shaw Conference Centre. This event looked back at EEDC's achievements in 2010 and addressed the focus for 2011. Productivity Alberta sponsored Council on Competitiveness President and CEO Deborah Wince-Smith's keynote address.
- Enthusiastic frontline workers celebrated excellence in the hospitality industry for the 11th annual **You're Welcome Edmonton Awards** at the Shaw Conference Centre May 3.
- The sixth **Homeless Connect Edmonton** held on May 15 at the Shaw Conference Centre was attended by over 1,471 guests, who were able to access over 70 services including free haircuts, foot care, dentistry and information on photo identification.

Business Travel

- A total of 45 conventions and event bids with a potential value of **\$5.5 million** were submitted by the end of Q2.
- Achieved 19 convention and event bookings representing 10,518 room nights for future business and economic expenditure of **\$3.1 million**.
- Conducted **10 site inspections**, one of which was with Steven Clark and Bill Maxwell of the Dominion Command of The Royal Canadian Legion who joined us for formal hotel selection site visits for their 2014 conference. worth 6,000 room nights with \$1.6 million expenditure.
- Attended **Travel Alberta Road Show** with 4 industry partners April 4-8 in Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa. Tourism agencies representing Edmonton, Banff, Calgary and Lethbridge presented, resulting in interest in the 2011 Edmonton Indy familiarization tour.
- Attended **Springtime in the Park** with 3 industry partners April 27-29 in Washington, DC. Events, which provided successful networking opportunities, included luncheon at Canadian Embassy, Professional Convention Management Association Education Foundation dinner at Washington Hilton, American Society of Associate Executives Springtime in the Park 2011 Trade Show and Springtime DC Invitational Golf Tournament.
- Attended **Annual Meeting Professional International Prix Prestige Awards Gala** as gold sponsor in Ottawa May 4-6. This event recognized key suppliers and planners for excellence in the meeting planning industry and saw 400 people in attendance.
- Held **meetings, conventions and incentive travel** visit May 12-13 to enhance Edmonton Tourism team's knowledge of Jasper area as an ideal pre and post destination for conference bids in Edmonton.

Event Attraction

- Submitted **20 bids**, confirmed 7 event bookings worth **7,149 room nights**.
- **Canadian Soccer Association** was awarded 2014 U20 and 2015 Women's World Cup by FIFA. Edmonton is being strongly considered as one of the six host cities. Partnered with City of Edmonton to host Canadian Soccer Association delegates April 28-29.
- Partnered with Athletics Alberta to bid for **2015 Pan-Am Junior Track and Field Championships**. Windsor, ON held this in 2005 and almost 600 athletes and coaches participated from 35 different countries. 4,258 people attended the opening ceremonies. Average daily attendance was 3,969 for the three-day event.
- In partnership with City of Edmonton, met with TSE Consulting on May 2-3 and June 14-15 regarding a more streamlined **event strategy**. Plans are to present to City Council, after which implementation will start.

Leisure Travel, Americas

- For a spring training initiative directed towards Ontario-based travel agents, Edmonton Tourism and Alberta industry partners participated in **Anderson Vacations Agent Appreciation** events in London, Burlington, Toronto, Mississauga, Kingston and Ottawa, May 9-12. Opportunity to promote Edmonton and fully independent itineraries to eastern travel trade because Anderson Vacations is a tour operator that carries an extensive variety of product for the Edmonton region. Edmonton Tourism has participated for last two years and, based on that success, we continued the momentum that was created by other marketing and consumer trade show activities.
- **Rendez-vous Canada** is where international buyers travel to Canada for appointments with attractions, hotels, tourism agencies, etc. At this year's May 15-18 marketplace in Quebec City, Edmonton Tourism had strong representation. This marketplace was probably the best in the last five years with tour operators positive about bookings and open to new tourism product and ideas for future years. Edmonton will be the host city for Rendez-vous 2012.
- Travel Alberta led tourism agencies to partner in advertising buy with **Travel Age West**, a leading weekly magazine for North American travel agents. Travel Alberta secured agent webinar opportunity on May 25 and invited tourism agencies to participate, entitled **Authentic Adventures in Breathtaking Landscapes**, and conducted with Banff Lake Louise Tourism, Tourism Jasper, Edmonton Tourism and Travel Alberta representatives. 261 travel agents listened in on the webinar, many of which submitted questions for us to follow up with.

- Starting June 15, Edmonton Tourism has campaigns live with **Expedia, Travelocity, and Orbitz** – coinciding with a larger Travel Alberta campaign to the same target US markets. Goal is to increase awareness and coordinate messages to persuade consumers to experience Alberta. Edmonton Tourism is pleased with the results and the number of room nights generated for the city in 2010, and looks to increase that for 2011.
- Vacation.com is one of North America's largest and most successful travel agent consortia groups, and holds its annual convention every June. Agents participate in educational and product knowledge seminars as well as a trade show for preferred vendors. The June 19-22 show was held in Las Vegas, where Edmonton Tourism partnered with Anderson Vacations to promote fully independent tour programs to Edmonton.

Leisure Travel, International

- Edmonton Tourism joined Travel Alberta, Tourism Jasper, Banff Lake Louise Tourism and Tourism Calgary in Vancouver and Richmond April 18-21, and in Toronto and Montreal June 20-23 meetings with Approved Destination Status/Tourism Industry Association of Canada-approved China receptive tour operators. Solidified Alberta itineraries and increased Alberta's market share in the China market.
- Met 21 Total Travel Services agents for **Tour Operator Agent Familiarization Tour** April 23-24, who included president and general manager of TTS Beijing. The purpose was to support TTS in its training of Canada's west product.
- Participated in **Rendez-vous Canada** in Quebec City. Over 60 appointments were secured with international buyers to promote Edmonton.
- Presented at the Confucius Institute of Edmonton to the tourism industry partners May 25. Following the presentation, an information session was held on the China cultural training program.

Film Commission

- Built awareness of Edmonton as a filming destination, and actively demonstrated support for indigenous industry professionals by sponsoring and/or presenting at:
 - digital media industry session in Edmonton April 1 in advance of NextMedia, the new media component of Banff World Media Festival, June 12-15.
 - Edmonton Jewish Film Festival, April 3-4, a result of Film Commissioner's work with its festival curator.
 - Alberta Media Production Industry Association as committee participant, industry sponsor and award presenter.
- Represented Alberta as filming destination with Alberta Film Commission and Calgary Film Commission at Locations Expo in Los Angeles June 3-5, which brings commissions from around the world to a trade show attended by producers investigating possible locations for film/TV projects. On the same trip, one-on-one producer meet-and-greet meetings were held with production companies such as RKO and Sony Pictures, and various independent producers.
- Was partner sponsor of Banff World Media Festival for the 2nd year, introducing a session on how to recreate a successful show concept in a different country (eg recreating success of concept like UK's Dragon's Den, in countries like Canada and the US).
- Completed a strategy to retain and preserve our region's most vulnerable infrastructure pieces: the purpose-built film/TV studio/soundstage. Potential tenants are being sought to sustain the studio on a month-to-month basis and in that regard, this office has actively recruited. Tours were set for 3 industry-related tenants: AMPIA, 3Di (which produced computer images for Royal Alberta Museum's relocation announcement) and NAIT, which is looking to expand its space for digital production. All are interested in administrative/office space in the building, allowing the studio/soundstage area to be retained.

Edmonton Festival City

- **Edmonton Festival City in a Box** was represented at 20 events, including You're Welcome Edmonton Awards. The Association of Canadian Community Colleges had over 500 attendees take in road show and Canadian Payroll Association integrated Festival City theme throughout its four-day conference with 600 people taking in Edmonton's finest performing arts representatives.
- **Festival City media relations** program continued with e-newsletter distribution to an 850-person database, including out-of-market media in national and international markets. Monthly e-newsletter showcases upcoming festivals and other related product, provides story ideas, and raises destination awareness. Open rates have continued at over 15% with content postings on select websites, including top 10 search rankings on Google and Yahoo. Additional pick up on most recent issues include Hospitalitynet.org, YahooNews.com, tet.org, boston.com, Digitaljournal.com and featured on PRWeb.com.

Marketing Communications

- Edmonton Tourism launched its annual summer campaign in June, featuring the best of the capital region with ideas on what to see and do, plus plenty of savings. The campaign used a multimedia approach targeting Alberta, northern British Columbia, and select markets in Saskatchewan, and Yukon and Northwest Territories. Pay-per-click component of this campaign began June 15; metrics up to mid-July include 712,049 impressions, 2,611 clicks, and 0.367% click-through rate (average rate is 0.1-0.2%, so this is performing better than average).
- Various **e-marketing** strategies were executed, including optimization and distribution through online distribution channels, paid search advertising, online advertorials and text and banner advertising on various search engines and targeted websites. Recent highlights include:
 - Vacation package e-newsletter to a database of 65,496 subscribers with an open rate of 15.9%.
 - E-direct offer to 72,119 subscribers with open rate of 21.07%.
 - Partnership project with NAIT and Victoria School of the Arts resulted in student-produced videos, which focused on the assets Edmonton offers. We continued in this quarter with the release of another video posted to EEDC YouTube channel. Currently we have 8 videos posted with approximately 3,000 views.

Indy Campaign

- An Edmonton Indy campaign augmented summer programming, using direct mail, e-marketing, promotional offers and an anchoring website. The campaign promoted the Edmonton Indy race, Indy vacation packages, and race week events – all in an effort to raise awareness of Edmonton, fill hotel rooms, and ultimately drive economic impact.
- Further Indy engagement included securing media and community outreach; 9 speaking opportunities were secured for the Octane group. Other stakeholder support included facilitation and collaboration with Octane, City of Edmonton, Destination Marketing Fund hotels and Race Week Edmonton on programming, media and sponsorship.

FRESH

We continue to encourage partners to get involved by sending in what environmental practices they have implemented. We include this information on their industry partner pages on our website as well as feature them in the One Voice publication. A FRESH presentation was given at the International Conference of Responsible Tourism on its benefits and how to get involved in the program. Key pages have been optimized to increase searchability.

Edmonton.com

- Edmonton.com anchors all marketing and communications activity and we continue to invest efforts and identify key areas for enhancements. Ensuring Edmonton.com has up-to-date and relevant content is imperative to its success. We have been developing various sections of our site, including new content and adjustments to menu navigation under the visitors section.
- Edmonton.com had 235,001 unique visitors at the end of June, up from 204,265 during the same period last year. There were 43,635 returning visitors in Q2, up 16.57% over the same period last year.

Media Relations Activity

- In partnership with Travel Alberta, Edmonton Tourism organized 12 media visits for 37 participants representing, among others, UK's *Daily Telegraph*, Out TV, and Taiwan's Borderless World TV program.
- Responded to 54 requests for information, interviews and images from web, print and broadcast media. Coverage included stories on Homeless Connect, Edmonton Indy, Festival City, EEDC's oil sands event, and tourism in Edmonton.
- Earned media value year-to-date was approximately \$7 million.

Strategic Relations

- Nanotechnology sector luncheon was held April 26.
- Government relations activity included meetings with Minister of Service Alberta and Minister of Culture and Community Spirit.
- ONEdmonton Leaders Forum was held May 17, focusing on innovation, supporting start-ups, creating common voices and supporting grassroots initiatives.
- 12 speaking engagements were made, including at International Conference for Responsible Tourism where an evening reception showcased Shaw Conference Centre's eco-efforts and FRESH. EEDC President and CEO presented at Next Gen's Pecha Kucha night focused on a vibrant downtown.

Social Media

- Edmonton Tourism Twitter and Facebook accounts were launched.
- Invited a Toronto technology blogger to attend EEDC's annual luncheon. This resulted in four blogs on three different websites about Greater Edmonton's innovation community, as well as recognition about the local arts scene.
- Attended Travel Bloggers Exchange (TBEX'11) and learned best practices for engaging with bloggers. Spread Edmonton key messages to over 400 international bloggers and industry reps throughout the event in person and online.

Edmonton Research Park

- The first-ever **Edmonton Research Park Open House** was held April 29. Attendees included Mayor Stephen Mandel and MLAs. The event gave ERP tenants an opportunity to meet stakeholders, describe their technologies, and provide feedback directly on the service and support they receive from the ERP staff.
- Frontec Technologies continues to work with Telus in the development of a prototype hardware device to be used in concert with smart phones – an excellent showcase for the collaborative efforts of the **Regional Alliance**, of which EEDC is chair and an active member. Edmonton Catholic School Division has become an Industry Early Adopter, working with Intellimedia Inc. to test grading and student assessment software.

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EEDC is a not-for-profit company owned by the City of Edmonton that is responsible for regional economic development and regional tourism marketing as well as management of the Shaw Conference Centre and Edmonton Research Park. This report is produced quarterly to update Greater Edmonton's business community on EEDC's key initiatives.

