



# Keep the Snowball Rolling:

WinterCity Strategy Evaluation & Report

MAY 2018



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## WHAT WE HEARD

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*“It’s fantastic, we’ve had such great uptake. As a community league, we strive for year-round activities that engage communities and promote health and wellness. The Family Ice Trail (FIT) was invaluable to our winter programming. It gave friends and neighbors from across Edmonton an entire season to enjoy skating and fulfill our mission. This year, because of FIT, we hosted the Southeast Winter Fun Fest. More than 500 people turned out. People loved it.”*

**– Meghan Abbot, President, Kenilworth Community League**



## Introduction

The story in Kenilworth is just one of many in Edmonton: a story of outdoor winter events, some drawing hundreds and some drawing thousands; a story of people having fun and playing outside during the coldest time of year.

Edmonton's WinterCity Strategy, and the resulting WinterCity Office (responsible for implementing the Strategy), have played a crucial role in the development and success of many of these events. But more than events, this evaluation demonstrates that the Strategy, right from its start, has impacted the quality of life in our city. Also right from its start, it has enjoyed the status of a City Council initiative and strong political support.

This document is meant to be a combination of two things: first, it is a report, providing information on strategy actions; and second, it is an evaluation, providing information on relevance, effectiveness, impact, and efficiency. Where possible, we have provided quantitative and qualitative data to show trends and changes in how we approach winter.

This document has four key sections:

- Impact, What's Working, and What We've Learned
- Recommendations
- How We Know All This (methodology)
- Data (including information on Relevance, Effectiveness, and Efficiency)



## WHAT WE HEARD

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*“Our work has invited Edmontonians to re-imagine winter and to get back outside. And they are doing that. Citizens are no longer as disconnected from the outside, from our winter weather. They are rediscovering the joy that can come from being outside on a beautiful winter day.”*

**– Ben Henderson, WinterCity Advisory Council Co-Chair;  
Edmonton City Councillor**

*“I do hear bits and pieces about winter being spoken of positively and WinterCity being spoken about as a brand and image. That was nonexistent six years ago.”*

**– Simon O’Byrne, WinterCity Advisory Council Co-Chair;  
Vice President, Stantec**

*“The one thing we’ve noticed, especially through our connections on social media, is that more Edmontonians are proud to talk about and show off the great visuals of winter in the city. People here are still willing to joke about how ‘awful’ winter can be but I think there are fewer people that stick on this line of thinking now than five years ago.”*

**– Doug McLean, Director of Marketing and Events,  
Edmonton Tourism**

*“We challenged people to think about what would make them fall in love with winter and they’ve taken us up on the challenge. Every winter there are more things to do, more opportunities to get outside, be active and have fun connecting with others in our city. ...And the world is noticing. As we’re finalizing this evaluation, Edmonton has been recognized by WestJet as one of Canada’s best winter cities. We’ve come a long way in just a few years.”*

**– Susan Holdsworth, WinterCity Manager, City of Edmonton**





# Have We Made an Impact?

## Story Changer

Edmonton's WinterCity Strategy laid the groundwork for thinking and acting differently in our city in order to minimize winter's negative aspects and create a more livable, vibrant city year-round. Four years after the Strategy's implementation, many Edmontonians interviewed for this evaluation told us that something is changing in our city: the *start*, they said, of a transformation in how people perceive winter; it's no longer just a dark, cold time during which it is probably best to hibernate. Rather, it's a time to embrace, to get outside and to rediscover (if you're over 20...) that childlike sense of delight and playfulness when the snow falls. And as this evaluation and report will show, there are some year-over-year data that demonstrate the start of this change.

## Influencer

The WinterCity Strategy has created significant social license for others to do things that are outside of the old winter "box". Several large winter events and smaller initiatives have been initiated in our city independent of involvement from the WinterCity Office (though anecdotally people told us the City's commitment to celebrating winter was an influence). This is a good thing, as the Strategy's ultimate goal is to embed our 'love of winter' deeply enough that an 'Office' dedicated to doing so isn't needed.

In 2015, the Silver Skate Festival partnered with Ice Castles in Hawrelak Park, enticing thousands of people to wander in a huge ice structure, as well as enjoy other parts of Silver Skate.

## WHAT WE HEARD

*"I am writing regarding a future exhibition named Vinerbyen at the Danish Architecture Centre in Copenhagen.... In our research, we found Edmonton's amazing winter conference and winter strategies. We would love to display the Winter Cities Shake-Up video at the exhibition here in Copenhagen as it illustrates how the months of winter hold potential for great winter experiences... We therefore ask your permission to display the video and also print the WinterCity Strategy and lay out for our people to read."*

– Helen Qvist, Denmark

*"It's so amazing what Edmonton is doing. It's really the only city I can think of making a thoughtful, conscious effort to figure out how can we make this city a better place to live and experience in the winter."*

– Kari Leibowitz, US-Norway Fulbright Foundation Research Scholar



Also in 2015, Red Bull Crashed Ice came to our city's river valley, attracting thousands to watch the Ice Cross Downhill World Championship outside in a park. Both events benefited from the work of the WinterCity initiative. New events and activities like these not only offer Edmontonians more opportunities to get outside and have fun, but they also speak to our city's reputation internationally.

On another front, the model developed for creating the Strategy (authentically local, based on extensive, multi-faceted and robust community consultation) continues to influence the development of several City initiatives. The WinterCity Office has provided input and sometimes guidance to, among others, the City of Edmonton's:

- Council Initiative on Public Engagement
- Live Active Strategy
- BREATHE: Edmonton's Green Network Strategy
- Child Friendly Edmonton
- Edmonton Transit Strategy

## WHAT WE HEARD

*"The WinterCity Office was incredibly supportive and gave me confidence and surety in the work I was doing as we launched our initiative. I can't overstate how helpful that was for us."*

**– Claire Ashton, Project Coordinator, Council Initiative on Public Engagement**

*"The WinterCity Strategy is one of the City strategies that comes up time and time again, both in external meetings and within the City Corporation. It's had tremendous uptake with citizens, and is highly valued by the social, economic and cultural sectors and agencies in our city."*

**– Carolyn Campbell, Deputy City Manager, Chief of Communications and Engagement, City of Edmonton**

*"During the bid process (for the Red Bull Crashed Ice, Ice Cross Downhill World Championship in March 2015), we noted that the WinterCity Strategy was really well-aligned with our overall goals for bringing the event to Edmonton and re-imagining winter in the city."*

**– Russell Reimer, President, Manifesto Sport Management**

On a smaller scale, an increasing number of post-secondary students are contacting the WinterCity Office, asking for information for winter city-related projects or research. As well, community groups are creating their own winter opportunities independent of the WinterCity Office. For example, Edmonton now has a Ski2LRT group that sets over 20 km of cross-country ski trails in southeast neighbourhoods that lead to the Century Park LRT Station. This group also installed a locking ski rack at the station, and organizes special BrewSki community socials.

In addition, the WinterCity Office and Advisory Council members have been asked to present on the Strategy's development and implementation at national and international conferences, including:

- 2015 Canadian Institute of Planners Conference (Saskatoon, Canada)
- 2015 St. Paul Downtown Association event (St. Paul, Minnesota, USA)
- 2016 International Winter Cities Symposium (Erzurum, Turkey)
- 2016 World Winter Cities Conference for Mayors (Sapporo, Japan)
- 2016 Sustainable World Cities Partnership Forum (Ulaanbaatar City, Mongolia)
- 2016 Urban Land Institute Florida event (Tampa, USA)
- 2016 Travel and Tourism Research Association National Conference (Edmonton, Canada)
- 2016 Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (Jasper, Canada)
- 2016 Urban Land Institute Alberta event (Calgary, Canada)
- 2016 Urban Land Institute Minnesota event (Rochester, USA)
- 2017 Heart of the City Conference: Shaping the Future of City Parks in Canada (Calgary, Canada)
- 2017 Canada Green Building Council Conference (Regina, Canada)





## Award Winner

The WinterCity Strategy and Implementation Plan are winners of two national awards:

- Canadian Institute of Planners 2014 Award for Planning Excellence
- 2014 Communities in Bloom Winter Life Award

And two provincial awards:

- Alberta Professional Planning Institute 2013 Award of Merit
- 2014 Minister's Award for Municipal Excellence (Alberta Municipal Affairs)

Edmonton Tourism also won the 2014 Alto Award for Excellence in Marketing for its "Winter in Edmonton" campaign which drew from the Strategy and received guidance from the WinterCity Advisory Council.

## WHO WE ARE

*We are the WinterCity Office. We work on the WinterCity Strategy which enjoys the status of a City Council initiative. We are the former WinterCity Think Tank and the current WinterCity Advisory Council. We convene, catalyze, and connect. We advocate and inform. We work with various project teams. We partner with other City staff, the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC), community leagues, festivals, hospitality establishments, and more.*

*The WinterCity Office began with one staff member, working under the guidance of the Think Tank. The Think Tank was made up of community leaders and two City Councillors, as well as members of four Ideas Hubs. We are now a two-person office, working collaboratively with the WinterCity Advisory Council, its five Working Groups, and occasional ad hoc committees. The Advisory Council is based on a shared leadership model which has us working alongside community and City leaders, and two City Councillors.*

*We are rooted in community. We are cross-corporate. We have strong political champions.*

## WHAT WE HEARD

*"We're getting more calls from different City departments and we're being asked to look at planning documents to review them with a winter lens. The river valley team told me winter used to be their downtime, but now they're busy all year round because there's more demand for winter recreation."*

**– Isla Tanaka, WinterCity Planner, City of Edmonton**





# What's working?

In order to understand what's working, lessons we've learned, and areas for improvement, interviews were conducted with the WinterCity Office team, as well as members of the WinterCity Advisory Council. The themes drawn from those interviews follow.

## A solid foundation

The WinterCity Strategy is based in most part on extensive, multi-faceted consultation with hundreds of Edmontonians, and on what they believe will make a difference in how they perceive and experience winter in our city. Using the Iceberg Systems Model during consultations and while creating the Strategy meant we understood the mental models that underpinned the change required to transform our city.

## The approach

The freedom to think broadly and take risks in the Strategy's creation meant there were no barriers, no 'we don't do things that way' attitude to stop people from suggesting ideas that might otherwise have been considered too risky. This approach was facilitated by the Strategy's political champion, City Councillor Ben Henderson. Having his support, along with Councillor Scott McKeen's, as well as the support of many other City Councillors and both Mayors Stephen Mandel and Don Iveson, was also critical to the Strategy's success to date. The fact that the WinterCity Strategy has been a City Council initiative has been key to its success.

The Strategy's holistic vision means it is beginning to touch numerous aspects of people's lives, whether through recreation, urban design, or well-being. This holistic approach also facilitates intersectionality both within City departments and with external partners, bringing in new ideas and different perspectives. The Strategy has evolved from a City initiative to a strong, sustained community movement becoming increasingly embedded in our city.

Another key aspect of the approach that has contributed to efficiency has been the ability to steer dynamically, to reflect on individual actions, and to respond to the changing context.

## Edmontonians' buy-in

In each of the Strategy's first four years, the WinterCity Office has received numerous inquiries from people 'with an idea': people who want to try something new. For example, the locking ski rack for the Ski2LRT initiative, the outdoor stage at the Flying Canoe Volant festival, or bocce ball in the snow which happened at Clark Stadium in 2015. The WinterCity Strategy has inspired others to act.

### WHAT WE HEARD

*"The Strategy provided a lot of tangible and positive opportunities for all sorts of stakeholders to buy into improving the way Edmonton experiences winter."*

*– Jodi Goebel, NextGen*



## What We've Learned

### Stories Can Be Changed

When the WinterCity Strategy was first launched, it was felt the biggest challenge would be changing the story we tell about ourselves as people who live in a winter city. Surprisingly, this hasn't been the case. Many Edmontonians have begun to feel pride in our winterness. Winter festival attendance is soaring, social media comments are encouraging, and it's not at all uncommon to hear radio and tv hosts talking positively about the coldest season of the year.

### It's Complex

We've also learned, however, that this is a complex initiative. Work on developing winter design guidelines, or facilitating more opportunities for active transportation in winter is not easy. Then comes the challenge of implementing these new approaches. Many we spoke to for this evaluation feel this implementation step is one of the biggest challenges facing us now in reaching our winter city goals.

### Rethinking is Okay

As well, not all actions in the WinterCity Strategy Implementation Plan are meant to be, and sometimes they require rethinking to various degrees. For example, collaborative work was undertaken on developing a winter festival nurturing body as per Action E1.1. It was originally envisioned to be separate from the City of Edmonton; however, much in the winter festival ecosystem had changed, and so the group decided instead to form a Winter Festival Working Group of the WinterCity Advisory Council.

The WinterCity Advisory Council and WinterCity Office see the Strategy's Goals as sacrosanct, but the Implementation Plan's actions as somewhat dynamic. This allows for the accommodation of a learning approach, as well as consideration for the constantly changing context.





## WHAT WE HEARD

*“There are so many of us involved now. Turn it up. We’re winning. Let’s make the change we’ve always wanted to make. This is still an opportunity.”*

**– Todd Babiak, WinterCity Think Tank Member;  
Co-owner, Story Engine**

*“We just can’t lose momentum on this. Anytime you try to do something as fundamental as change the way people see your city, you’ve got to recognize that isn’t going to happen overnight. It will take perseverance and stick-to-it-iveness. This is important. This is a great unharnessed opportunity for the city of Edmonton. If we fail to have the determination to make it real we will sacrifice a serious opportunity.”*

**– Bob Black, WinterCity Think Tank Member;  
Executive Vice President, The Katz Group**

*“The WinterCity Office helps facilitate meetings and connections we need, to get people started thinking about doing things differently. Winter will always need that extra nudge.”*

**– Daniel Cournoyer, French Quarter BIA; Executive Director,  
La Cité Francophone; Producer, Flying Canoë Volant Festival**

*“Continued nurturing is the word I would want emphasized. We need to continue promotion, education, and awareness of what you can do in winter, not what you cannot do.”*

**– Ian O’Donnell, Executive Director,  
Downtown Business Association**

*“It would be easy to think we’ve succeeded because we’ve had such success. We have to be really careful to ensure our work continues to be driven by the community and that it doesn’t just become the responsibility of the City to move forward. It needs that multi-partner approach and community involvement to sustain and grow the momentum and further embed this in the consciousness of Edmontonians.”*

**– Kate Gunn, Director, Community Initiatives, City of Edmonton**

*“I want to see more of those big ideas from the Strategy developed. An actual connecting network of cross-country ski trails, ski carriers on buses, more skating pathways, and a vibrant ribbon of activity in the river valley with cafés, ski rental outfits, etc.”*

**– Katherine Sweet, Director, Communications  
and Engagement, City of Edmonton**





People were asked what they would recommend as our city moves forward with the WinterCity Strategy. Below are the common themes, drawn from the interviews done for this evaluation. The recommendations also derive from lessons learned and from identified challenges.

## 1. Keep the Snowball Rolling

‘Don’t stop now’ was a consistent message heard in interviews for this evaluation. Many voiced concerns that successes the Strategy has experienced might result in City support for this initiative winding down. Indeed, there is still much work to be done to achieve the Strategy’s goals. The WinterCity Office consists of two people who partner with many others, both City of Edmonton employees and, importantly, citizens, to implement the Strategy’s actions. True and lasting success requires ongoing commitment and determination.

This message was repeated by a surprising number of people interviewed for this evaluation. Don’t, they said, allow either initial successes, or the challenges we face in trying to do things differently, to result in stopping work currently underway. Interviewees also said that long-term success will require sustained resources and continued commitment to the current approach of shared City/citizen leadership of the Strategy, namely through the WinterCity Advisory Council and as a City Council initiative.

Also, change takes time. There are still many challenges ahead. The duration of winter is a reality and there will always be people who just don’t like the cold, short days. It takes significant and sustained investment to both improve infrastructure to make it

easier to get around during winter, and increase opportunities for all Edmontonians to get outside and enjoy the season. Hence the Strategy’s Implementation Plan spans a period of 10 years. Importantly, for this evaluation, four years into the Strategy, several people told us they don’t see any significant ‘change’ on our city streets. We must recognize that change, particularly in the urban form, takes time.

### WHAT WE HEARD

*“I don’t feel the day-to-day experience for Edmontonians has changed very much in the winter. We still need improvements like better protection from the wind in outdoor spaces, better pedestrian-oriented winter lighting, and improvements to transit shelters. Changes like these would have greater day-to-day impact than existing winter events being better attended.”*

– Mack Male, Co-founder, Taproot

*“My biggest surprise working is how quickly our ‘winter culture’ is shifting. Conversations have changed since we began this work; so many people tell me they love what we’re doing, even if they don’t totally ‘love’ winter. I thought this was going to be the most difficult aspect of implementing the strategy, but it hasn’t been.”*

– Scott McKeen, Edmonton City Councillor



## 2. Preserve the Shared Vision

### Continue engaging the public

From high-ranking municipal leaders to grassroots Edmontonians, people said to continue raising awareness among all Edmontonians of the vision embedded in the Strategy; a vision that sees improved vibrancy and quality of life in all four seasons, for everyone who lives in, or visits, our city. Interviewees acknowledged that it can be challenging to get the word out about new, and particularly smaller, initiatives, such as the outdoor fire pit at the Dogwood Café in Victoria Park. Some suggested more signage, or even small launch events which might attract media, to help get information out to more Edmontonians.

### Continue with community collaboration

The WinterCity Strategy model, with an Advisory Council made up of both City of Edmonton staff and community representatives guiding the Strategy's implementation, is working. The fact that this Strategy is so deeply rooted in community, that it reflects what Edmontonians want, must be honoured going forward. Interviewees emphasized that we must continue with the same collaborative, community-based approach to sustain and grow momentum.

### Maintain the WinterCity Advisory Council

The multi-partner Advisory Council and all of its working groups, which guide the Strategy's implementation, are key to ensuring the work moving forward is rooted in a shared community/City of Edmonton approach. Having representatives from both the private sector and the City provides balance and new ideas; for example, while some might not feel a proposed initiative is feasible, perhaps because 'we've never done it that way before', others will encourage and help develop innovative approaches.

### But be intentional and manage expectations

Four years into the Strategy's implementation, many new ideas for embracing winter in our city continue to be proposed. Consideration of the ideas must first be based in the Strategy's principles: authentic, attitude-changing and sustainable.

## WHAT WE HEARD

*"Even as everything that goes into being a winter city – all the work – becomes more dispersed, we need to retain strong leadership and continue to commit resources to coordination and incubation. We didn't get this far by chance."*

– Jodi Goebel, NextGen

*"Keep moving forward and gaining momentum."*

– MaryAnn Debrinski, Director, Urban Renewal, City of Edmonton

*"Continue what seems like a strong process already."*

– Ranon Soans, University of Alberta 2017 Sustainability Scholar; City of Edmonton



### 3. Steer Dynamically

#### Maintain a four-season focus

While this Strategy is aimed at winter, the implementation of most of the actions in the Strategy will result in a better quality of life year-round in our city. Many people we spoke to emphasized the importance of maintaining, or even increasing, our four-season approach.

#### Take advantage of every opportunity

Encouraging and facilitating a new way of thinking about and 'doing' winter requires patience and acceptance that every new idea may in fact have potential. Whoever thought, five years ago, that Edmontonians and visitors to our city would squeeze into canoes in February, on the top of Grierson Hill, and fly down an icy track in a race to victory?

New opportunities don't always require new funding or resources. Taking advantage of what already exists and reallocating resources can work in some cases.

#### Be ready to rethink

Not every new idea will work. For example, the initial approach to encouraging a focus on winter fashion by working with the higher-end fashion industry wasn't achieving the desired outcomes. Instead of abandoning a support for winter fashion, efforts are now being reworked and redirected. More broadly, work on goal 7, Become a World Leader in Innovative Winter-Related Business/Industry, has been challenging, even in discovering what questions need to be asked in order to move forward on this goal.

#### Forge new patterns

Change can take time for smaller scale projects as well. In winter 2016/17, the City set up a fire pit for public use outside the Dogwood Café, a new winter restaurant in Victoria Park. Unfortunately, the fire pit wasn't well used; perhaps park users didn't know they could use it, or maybe not enough people knew it was there. Forging new patterns of use for staff and patrons takes some savvy and continuous effort.

#### Develop further expertise

Providing proper infrastructure and changing our activity patterns is a huge undertaking. It takes time to change the way we design and maintain our streets, buildings, and infrastructure. And it takes time for new standards and performance measures to be developed. In some instances, we've found a lack of local expertise to help in these areas. For example, in the summer of 2016, the WinterCity Office and the City's Heritage Unit launched a pilot project to light heritage buildings. Over the course of this project, we've heard that building owners have found it challenging to find local businesses that can develop dark sky-compliant lighting schemes.

Since the publication of the Winter Design Guidelines, it has become apparent that there is a need for a deeper understanding of performance measures and standards related to winter design. Developers are claiming to use a winter lens in their projects, but how well this lens is actually being applied cannot be properly evaluated until we have more in-depth knowledge regarding items such as downdrafts and other winter-specific design details. Gaining this much-needed expertise will enable us to develop with confidence some much needed performance measures, and then we can better evaluate the application of winter design principles.

#### WHAT WE HEARD

*"I think it comes down to education and accessibility. Is there a van/bus that could do pop-up cross-country skiing? Or snow fort building? Or safety in the snow (avalanche training/learning about layers of snow...)?"*

**– Patty Rooker, Community Recreation Coordinator, City of Edmonton**

*"Awareness to the masses. Let the public know the importance of thoughtful buildings and streetscapes."*

**– Patti Swanson, Alberta Association of Architects**

*"I'm concerned we might be missing communities, particularly those outside our city core. Do they feel connected to this?"*

**– Simon O'Byrne, WinterCity Advisory Committee Co-Chair; Vice President, Stantec**





## 4. Document Progress

### Collect data intentionally, on an ongoing basis

Utilize systems set up to collect data annually. Ensure that a process is in place for collecting this data that identifies who should do what, so that the 10-year evaluation is easier to complete.

### Conduct market research every 2 years

The City of Edmonton Insight Community consists of over 6,000 self-selected participants, and is open to all residents of Edmonton. Surveys sent to the community are a valuable tool, but while they provide a snapshot of opinions, they are not statistically valid data. In order to strengthen future evaluation, it would be helpful to hire a firm to conduct statistically valid market research. Conducting this research every two years will provide insight into trends over the last six years of the Strategy's implementation, as well as solid data for the final evaluation.

### Conduct a full evaluation again at 10-year mark

The WinterCity Strategy Implementation Plan recommends evaluations be conducted at the three-, five- and ten-year marks. Given that this evaluation is at the four-year mark, there wouldn't be value in conducting another full evaluation at the five-year mark. Updates and other sorts of reports can and should be provided more frequently, but another large evaluation such as this one with more data on outcomes should be carried out at the ten-year mark.

Great work has been done. Everyone who has played a part should be proud. There is more to do and we heard how we should be doing it.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AT A GLANCE

### 1. Keep the Snowball Rolling

#### 2. Preserve the Shared Vision

- Continue Engaging the Public
- Continue with Community Collaboration
- Maintain the WinterCity Advisory Council
- But be Intentional and Manage Expectations

#### 3. Steer Dynamically

- Maintain a Four-Season Focus
- Take Advantage of Every Opportunity
- Be Ready to Rethink
- Forge New Patterns
- Develop Further Expertise

#### 4. Document Progress

- Collect Data Intentionally, on an Ongoing Basis
- Conduct Market Research Every 2 Years
- Conduct a Full Evaluation Again at 10-year Mark

## WHAT WE HEARD

“Mutual and collaborative conversation is the best way to get extraordinary results.”

– Carolyn Campbell, Deputy City Manager,  
Chief of Communications and Engagement,  
City of Edmonton

“We should continue to work together in the future.”

– Angela Turner, Program Manager, Small Business  
and Local Economy, City of Edmonton

“I would like to see public consultation – how did people receive new programs, commercial interests in river valley, IceWays? I would love to know what public would like more of. Outdoor games on ice? More events? Do they want more places to play shinny? To help drive the next couple of years in determining how people want to use the river valley in wintertime recreationally.”

– Angie Blades, Project Coordinator, River Valley  
and Horticulture, City of Edmonton

“The one challenge I see that still has great potential is leveraging, improving and increasing the quality and stature of community league events and opportunities to be part of this change. More work is needed to help mentor community leagues to up their game and be part of the bigger celebrations of winter we have in our city. The prize is more and higher quality events in communities. And the other prize is increased utilization of the significant physical resources community leagues have as inputs into winter activities: 120 rinks, 120 halls and 120 discrete locations in which to celebrate winter and to become active in winter activities.”

– David Dodge, Board Chair, Energy Efficient Alberta



## How We Know All This

### Evaluation Timeframe

This report and evaluation document was intended to cover the actions and effects of the first three years of the WinterCity Implementation Plan, that is Fall 2013 - Fall 2016. However, as shown throughout the data in the appendix to this document, changes in mindset and culture began in January 2012 with the development of the WinterCity Strategy itself. We heard many times that just by talking about untapped winter assets, Edmontonians began changing the way they thought and spoke about winter. As a result, this document includes remarks from Edmontonians that express changes in attitudes and behaviours that pre-date the 2014 implementation of the WinterCity Strategy. In addition, the interviews for this evaluation were conducted in Spring 2017. For these reasons, the timeframe covered by this document extends from January 2012 - Spring 2017.

### WHAT WE HEARD

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*“The Strategy came at the same time as the city’s confidence in general has grown. We’re more than OK being from Edmonton and our winter experience is part of that.”*

**– Doug McLean, Director of Marketing and Events,  
Edmonton Tourism**

### Evaluation Framework

Action S3.4 of the WinterCity Strategy Implementation Plan calls for the development of a “multi-dimensional evaluation framework for the WinterCity Strategy objectives”. In 2016, the WinterCity Office commissioned graduate student Susan Gulko to develop such an evaluation framework. While working on her thesis about evaluation techniques, Ms. Gulko worked with the WinterCity Advisory Council and all five of its working groups to develop the framework.

The final evaluation framework included a series of questions under each of the four WinterCity Strategy Pillars. The questions were meant to measure the Strategy’s relevance, effectiveness, impact and efficiency. The framework also recommended data collection methods, including potential partners and data sources, which were used to guide the formal evaluation process for this document.

### Data Collection Methods

This evaluation relies somewhat on anecdotes and people’s retrospective thoughts. In conducting this evaluation, many interviews were held with Edmontonians, ranging from those who’d been very active in developing and promoting the Strategy to those who might not have heard of it. The interviews were also an opportunity to collect input to refine the implementation approach, reflecting the REFINE role Edmontonians play in the City’s Public Engagement Spectrum, in which the City involves the public to help adapt and adjust approaches to policies, programs and services.



Five data collection methods were used for this evaluation:

- Questions were included in multi-topic online surveys administered through the Edmonton Insight Community in December 2014, September 2015, and March 2017.
- A series of phone and e-mail interviews were conducted with people directly or indirectly involved with the Strategy's development and implementation, as well as those involved in winter events independent of the WinterCity Office.
- Visitors from out of town who attended the 2017 Winter Cities Shake-Up were asked about their impressions of Edmonton as a winter city.
- Extent of participation at winter events and in outdoor winter courses was collected from relevant City departments, local businesses, and winter festivals.

The following data collection tools were used in this evaluation:

- Online surveys through the City's Insight Community
- Interviews
- Web analytics
- Social media analysis
- Attendance numbers
- Participation rates

## Limitations

Systematic tracking of the WinterCity Strategy's outcomes wasn't carried out during the first few years of implementation. However, some data are available, such as participation rates at some outdoor events and festivals. These data are used in this document as information, but not as a formal evaluation tool, as they haven't been consistently recorded and/or collected. In addition, the City's online panel of Edmontonians, the Insight Community, is not representative of the population of Edmontonians. This means the results from the online survey cannot be generalized to pertain to the experiences and perspectives of all Edmontonians.

Evaluating social change is inherently complex, as many activities and results of community change efforts cannot be quantified. In addition, much of the work done by the WinterCity Office takes a community development approach and evolves with changing needs in the community. Since the WinterCity initiative is largely about shifting Edmonton's culture, it was difficult to determine a definitive causal relationship between the WinterCity Strategy and more Edmontonians feeling more positive about winter. However, we can assume some correlation between facts such as the increase in participation at winter events, or the increase in people talking about the positives of winter on social media, and the WinterCity Strategy's messages and actions. Therefore, both formal evaluation data and supporting information are included in this document.



## HOW WE GOT HERE

### BACKGROUND:

#### What Would Make You Fall in Love with Winter?

In December 2011, 37 community members agreed to become the WinterCity Think Tank. Hosted by the City of Edmonton, the Think Tank came together to figure out what could be done to help people embrace all winter has to offer. This Council Initiative had its start the previous year with Councillor Ben Henderson's Exploration Forum and Executive Research Study to northern Europe on the same topic.

For six months, the Think Tank engaged Edmontonians: in large and small community and private meetings; through social and traditional media; and, with a public forum, contest, and postcard campaign. Thousands of ideas were gathered (fondly dubbed the Blizzard of Ideas) including those from people who were self-admittedly 'winter-haters'. Each idea was analyzed and themed by the Think Tank, and used to develop a holistic, grassroots, and thus unique, WinterCity Strategy, titled For the Love of Winter. This robust process reflects the CREATE role Edmontonians take on in the City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Spectrum, where the public collaborates with the City to develop and build solutions for policies, programs, projects and services.

### FOR THE LOVE OF WINTER:

#### Edmonton's WinterCity Strategy and Implementation Plan

The WinterCity Strategy takes a two-pronged approach. First, it addresses practical barriers that might prevent us from embracing winter, such as development of shady, windy, and unattractive public spaces without winter infrastructure. And second, at its foundation, this Strategy aims for a culture shift; a fundamental, collective and deep change in the story Edmontonians tell about living in our northern city. The mental model that underpins the way we do things (e.g. plan, design, operate, maintain, program) has to change so that winter is no longer a time to shut things down and hibernate, but rather a time to celebrate and embrace, in many different ways. We describe this as changing the base of the iceberg.

To this end, the Strategy has 10 goals which fall under four pillars (the goal numbering does not represent priority), and the Implementation Plan outlines actions to achieve these goals.

## EDMONTON'S WINTERCITY STRATEGY GOALS

### Winter Life

- GOAL 1 | Make It Easier to "Go Play Outside": Provide More Opportunities for Outdoor Activity**
- GOAL 2 | Improve Winter Transportation for Pedestrians, Cyclists and Public Transit Users**

### Winter Design

- GOAL 3 | Design Our Communities for Winter Safety and Comfort**
- GOAL 4 | Incorporate Urban Design Elements for Winter Fun, Activity, Beauty and Interest**

### Winter Economy

- GOAL 5 | Increase the Capacity and Sustainability of Edmonton's Winter Festivals**
- GOAL 6 | Develop a Four-Season Patio Culture**
- GOAL 7 | Become a World Leader in Innovative Winter-Related Business/Industry**

### Our Winter Story

- GOAL 8 | Celebrate the Season and Embrace Daily Living in a Cold Climate**
- GOAL 9 | Promote Edmonton's Great Northern Story Locally, Nationally and Internationally**
- GOAL 10 | Kick Start and Lead Implementation of Edmonton's WinterCity Strategy: Apply a 'Winter Lens' to Our City**



# Data



This section contains the questions and answers for each of the four evaluation measurements: **relevance, effectiveness, impact, and efficiency**. Where appropriate, we've grouped questions and answers under the relevant strategy pillar. The results are presented in a combination of qualitative,

quantitative and anecdotal data. The anecdotal data include the reported relevant activities carried out by the WinterCity Office and its partners in order to give a fuller picture of efforts that could not be formally evaluated.



# Relevance

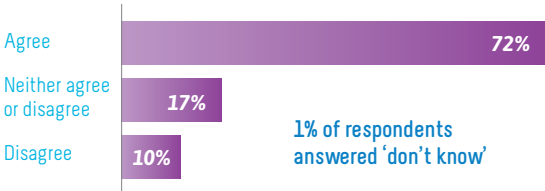
## To what extent do Edmontonians think that the WinterCity Strategy is important?

In the March 2017 online survey of Edmontonians, two questions were asked that related to the Strategy’s relevance. The results show that 61% of participants have heard of the Strategy. Other results demonstrate desire for the Strategy to have an ongoing role in our city.

**It is important to me that the City of Edmonton continue its commitment to improving our quality of life during the wintertime**



**The City of Edmonton should lead an effort to make our outdoor spaces more comfortable and inviting in winter**



### WHAT WE HEARD

*“I’ve noticed a cultural attitude shift where my peers have accepted Edmonton as a winter city and will continue to do things even if the weather is cold, etc. Before we would be chickens but now we’ll ‘tough it out.’”*

– Insight Community survey participant, 2017

*“There’s a difference in the way the media talks about winter and winter events; this is very significant.”*

– David Dodge, Board Chair, Energy Efficient Alberta

*“People are now coming to us (the WinterCity Office) with their own ideas, not necessarily ones we’ve come up with, and asking if we can help make it happen, or at least point them in the right direction.”*

– Isla Tanaka, WinterCity Planner, City of Edmonton





# Effectiveness

## Winter Life Pillar

**GOAL 1 | Make It Easier to “Go Play Outside”:  
Provide More Opportunities for Outdoor Activity**

**GOAL 2 | Improve Winter Transportation for Pedestrians,  
Cyclists and Public Transit Users**

## To what extent have more recreational and outdoor life opportunities been created?

### Growth in Outdoor Winter Recreation

The 2017 online survey asked Edmontonians whether their outdoor activities levels have changed in the past five years since the inception of the WinterCity Strategy. Although 36% of the 1,869 respondents reported that their outdoor activity levels have not changed, an almost equal 37% reported that they are more active outside in winter.

*I do more outside during the wintertime in Edmonton as compared to five years ago*



1% of respondents answered 'don't know'

## DID YOU KNOW?

### How We Like to Play Outside in the Winter

In the 2017 online survey, respondents were also asked to indicate which outdoor activities they participate in. Walking was the most popular, followed by skating and tobogganing. The chart below shows the outdoor activities that respondents reported participating in during the wintertime. Sixteen percent indicated they do not participate in any winter outdoor recreation activities.

Edmonton has also seen an increase in the number of people renting outdoor winter equipment like snowshoes and kick sleds.

Outdoor recreation activities you have taken part in over the last 12 months	Mentions (%)
Winter walking	77%
Skating on an outdoor rink in a major public park	25%
Skating on a community rink	24%
Tobogganing in Edmonton	22%
Cross-country skiing in Edmonton	16%
Winter running	15%
Snowshoeing	12%
Downhill skiing on a local Edmonton-area ski hill	10%
Winter cycling	9%
Other: dog walking; attending winter festivals; playing in the snow	7%

## WHAT WE HEARD

*“To see if I could! To extend my cycling season. To claim the trails and support those who ride more regularly than me. To put actions to my words and demonstrate to the public that there is value in embracing winter.”*

– **Insight Community survey participant, 2017**

*“It’s interesting how your mindset can shift. I never really understood winter cyclists. But two years ago, I realized I didn’t want to put my bike away in fall, so I thought I’d see how long I could keep biking into winter. The first winter I only rode to work six times. Now, in my second year, I ride 3 or 4 days a week and I love it.”*

– **Julie Cournoyer, Program Coordinator, Walk Edmonton, City of Edmonton; Organizer, City of Edmonton Winter Bike to Work Day**

*“I cycle because it’s fast, efficient, free parking downtown and its [sic] way better than walking or taking the bus.”*

– **Insight Community survey participant, 2017**

### Expanded Winter Activities in Edmonton Since 2014

#### Skating

At the 2015 Winter Cities Shake-Up conference, Matt Gibbs presented his Freezeway commuter skating trail concept. With support from the City of Edmonton and specifically the WinterCity Office, the pilot Freezeway skating trail through the woods in Victoria Park opened in Winter 2015/16. The following winter, this recreational skating trail was renamed the IceWay, and as the result of the first year’s success, a second IceWay was built at Rundle Park in the city’s northeast. The City of Edmonton is now developing an Ice Strategy to determine the cost impacts and values of creating skating trails in the river valley.

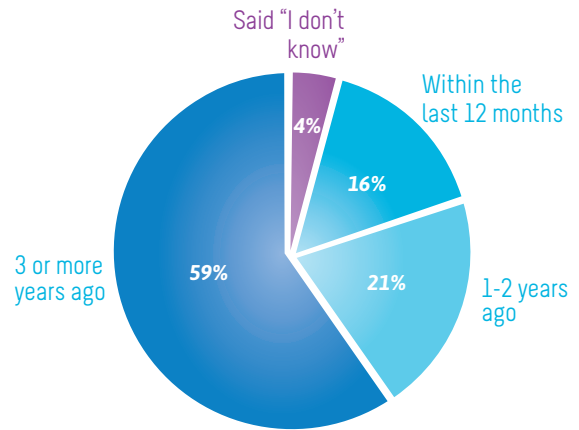
## WHAT WE HEARD

*“The Freezeway pilot project (2015/16) received great public support and feedback. It was a social media success and overall a very successful/busy city attraction.”*

**Source:** City of Edmonton Freezeway Evaluation Meeting 2016

## DID YOU KNOW?

Participants who responded that they cycle in the winter were also asked when they began winter cycling. The results indicate that 37% of them have begun since the introduction of the WinterCity Strategy.



Reason for starting to cycle in the winter	Mentions (%)
<b>Commuting</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Health benefits</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Enjoyment</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Free/cheap transit</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Faster to get around</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Environmentally friendly</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Better/more reliable than public transit</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Wanted to cycle all year round</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Acquiring the ride gear/technology</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Wanted to for the challenge</b>	<b>3%</b>

Other less common reasons given include:

- **Influenced by others who cycle.**
- **Ride when it’s warm enough.**
- **Because of my children.**
- **Winter Bike to Work Day event.**



The Victoria Park Pavilion opened in December 2015, next to the Victoria Park Skating Oval. Its design was influenced by the buzz created by the development of the WinterCity Strategy. It's now a centre for winter outdoor activities and gatherings.

Inspired by the WinterCity Strategy and skating trails in parks in other northern cities, along with financial support from the WinterCity Office and Outdoor Ice Inc., the Kenilworth Community League created its own skating trail. It offered another great way for friends and neighbours to connect, be active, and have fun together outside.

## WHAT WE HEARD

*"The new Victoria Park Pavilion (next to the Victoria Park skating oval) has made an enormous difference. We've seen a 10-15% increase in people interested in speed skating. And I see far more people coming down to skate for fun. That's double or triple the numbers we experienced before we built the pavilion. It's made it easier for everyone to enjoy winter."*

**– Jules Chabot, Edmonton Speed Skating Association**

*"This year (2017) we held our 2nd Annual 'First on the Ice' contest. We were looking for a way to celebrate the biggest outdoor program our community leagues provide. The WinterCity Strategy partly influenced this because it created an awareness that we should do something city-wide to celebrate all the outdoor rinks in our city."*

**– Debra Jakubec, Executive Director, Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues**

*"Parental interest was way up, thanks in large part to your donation as larger sized skates and helmets are now available. There were well over 850 names on daily sign-in sheets."*

**– Brad Brattland and Tara Moore  
Members, Empire Park Community League Board**

*"Now when I'm outside doing winter activities, I hear people saying things like, 'This is a winter city. I should learn to like winter.' I think people are changing their perspectives and realizing getting involved in activities is a good way to do that."*

**– Shauna Rae, Founder, Ski2LRT**



## Downhill Skiing and Snowboarding

The WinterCity Office granted partial funding to two local ski hills, Snow Valley and the Edmonton Ski Club, to provide lessons and equipment rentals to lower income Edmontonians. Youth, new Canadians, and people living with disabilities were specifically targeted for the program. This opportunity showed participants how to have fun outside in the winter, which was especially important for new Canadians before they learned to hibernate. The WinterCity Office also helped to promote both ski hills and their events through its social media channels and in the Winter Excitement Guide.



## WHAT WE HEARD

*“There are so many families that can’t afford a ski pass or rentals; this program gets rid of that barrier. It gives kids who might not otherwise have an opportunity the chance to ski for the first time.”*

**– Boys and Girls Club Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton and Area Report on the Community Initiatives program at Snow Valley Ski Hill, funded in part by the WinterCity Office**

*“These aren’t cheap sports. It’s pretty amazing for people who’ve never seen snow to take their first glide down the hill.”*

**– Ken Saunders, Executive Director, Edmonton Ski Club**

*“140 newcomers of all ages from 15 nationalities had a truly amazing and memorable opportunity to engage in a real Canadian activity, which some of them might not have otherwise experienced.”*

**– Jay Aggarwal, Program Assistant, ASSIST Community Services Centre**

*“The new Edmonton Ski Club’s WinterCity Strategy teamed up with iHuman Youth Society to help deliver iHuman’s Friday Night Challenge (FNC). FNC is a sobriety-based program for youth who want to stay sober at a time that is highly triggering for them. The WinterCity Strategy was a very good fit for FNC as it not only helped our youth fulfill that goal but helped youth physically, and gave them a sense of mastery over the time they were there learning a new skill as well.”*

**– iHuman Youth Society , Email received by The Edmonton Ski Club (2014)**

*“We set out to change the actual experience of living in Edmonton in winter and we achieved just that!”*

**– Snow Valley Ski Club, 2014/15 Season Community Initiatives Program Report**



## Ski2LRT

More than 20 km of tracked trails in Edmonton’s south side lead to the Century Park LRT Station, where a locking ski rack has been installed. This project, which officially began in 2015, is the brainchild of Shauna Rae, and the product of Rae and many community members working for two years to transform a dream to reality. In 2015, they also started the annual Southwest Ski Fest, a collaboration of community leagues offering a day of free cross-country ski lessons to anyone interested. In 2015, about 100 people participated, and by 2017 more than 500 people took part.

## WHAT WE HEARD

*“Our project was independent of the Strategy, but the WinterCity Office supported us in various ways, and the fact Edmonton has a WinterCity Strategy really gave our project some weight.”*

– **Shauna Rae, Founder, Ski2LRT**



## Commercial Gathering Places in the River Valley

In Winter 2014/15, Culina Restaurants and Catering opened Dogwood Café at Victoria Golf Course for the winter months only, serving a Nordic brunch. Success was great enough that Culina expanded to offer Nordic dinners the next year, and opened a second winter café at Riverside Golf Course.

### WHAT WE HEARD

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*“We’re seeing a lot more users in Victoria and Riverside Parks. Skiers, skaters snowshoers, urban polers. The Nordic Brunches at both locations have been a great way for more people to experience the river valley in winter.”*

– Rhonda Norman, Director, River Valley and Horticulture, City of Edmonton

*“Since the WinterCity Strategy inception, we’ve heavily pushed snowshoe and fat bike rentals, and winter segway tours. We’ve seen an overall increase in attendance during winter, and we love that Edmonton has embraced the fact it’s a winter city.”*

– Chris Szydowski, Owner, River Valley Adventure Company

### TRIP ADVISOR REVIEWS OF RIVER VALLEY ADVENTURE COMPANY WINTER SEGWAY TOUR:

*“Best experience in a while!”*

– ben\_mac (25 Feb 2016)

*“Can’t wait to do this again”*

– Rere89 (26 Feb 2016)





## Winter Cycling

In 2016, several City of Edmonton employees decided to partner with Earth's General Store to mark Winter Bike to Work Day. They set up a table at the end of the High Level Bridge one February day, and handed out hot chocolate and cookies from 7 – 9 a.m. About 50 cyclists rode by and stopped for a treat. In 2017, as many as 100 cyclists stopped by. Most were on their daily commute to work.

A group of cycling commuters now meets weekly in Ezio Faraone Park, at the north end of the High Level Bridge. What started as an ad-hoc gathering is now a fairly regular 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Friday morning occurrence. Participants take their own hot drinks and sometimes snacks to share. One of the regular members has converted a cargo bike into a coffee-making station, and now makes coffee for the group on his affectionately-known 'barista bike'. This group calls itself YEG Coffee Outside, and can be found on Twitter at @coffee\_outside.

Fat bikes are bicycles that have wider – or fat – tires, and were originally designed for winter cycling. If more people are buying winter-specific bicycles, we can infer that more people are cycling in winter. In fact, we know that fat bike sales at one Edmonton bike store have soared in the past three years. One of the managers at Revolution Cycle said that they used to have to lay off staff in the winter; now they can sometimes be as busy in winter as they are in summer. Clearly, the culture shift has also been good for some businesses.

### Fat Bike Sales: Revolution Cycle

Year	# of bikes sold
2013	47
2014	114
2015	202
2016	201

## WHAT WE HEARD

*“Portable fire pits are really popular, community groups rent them out. We don't always have enough to go around.”*

**– Community Recreation Coordinator, City of Edmonton**

*“I wanted to start a hot chocolate social in our park but I didn't know if the City would allow us to have a fire in a public space. Our CRC (Community Recreation Coordinator) helped with permits to make this work. Our socials were successful in activating an otherwise dead space, and connecting neighbors that might never otherwise have met.”*

**– Danny Hoyt, Riverdale Neighbourhood Connector, Abundant Community Edmonton**



## Winter Festivals and Events

Edmonton has several large winter festivals and many smaller, community-based winter fests and events. Not only is the number of events growing annually, but attendance is also growing at existing large festivals.

### Winter Events Held in Churchill Square, the River Valley and on Roadways

Year	# of events	Estimated attendance
2011	10	Unknown
2015	40	206,145
2016	42	223,605
2017	107	352,797

Source: City of Edmonton

**Note:** The number of events represents events coordinated by the City's Civic Events Office; smaller community events coordinated by Community Recreation Coordinators are not represented. Estimated attendance numbers are provided to the Civic Events Office by the festivals and events themselves, and are not verified by the City of Edmonton.

## Winter Green Shacks

In Winter 2015/16, the City of Edmonton expanded its popular Green Shack program into the winter. Much like the summer version, supervised activities were provided to children aged 6 – 12 during the after school hours. The City's Neighbourhood Recreation Experiences team, with input from Community Recreation Coordinators, chose ten community leagues throughout the four recreation districts to take part. The activities were moved between the leagues throughout the winter. In order to take part in the program, community leagues could express interest in the program, but they had to meet a number of criteria, including having an indoor warming space.

Year	# of participants
2015/16	6212
2016/17	5849

Source: City of Edmonton

**Note:** Participation numbers may be affected by weekly relocation of the program as well as different community leagues being chosen to participate each winter. Weather may also have had an effect on attendance.

## WHAT WE HEARD

*"We've now added a training session on winter programming for community leagues."*

– Debra Jakubec, Executive Director,  
Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues

*"The WinterCity Office provided our first Winterscape kit we lend out to communities: molds, paint, shovels and other tools to have fun with snow. We've also bought more snowshoes in the last few years because of increased demand."*

– Community Recreation Coordinator, City of Edmonton

## Other Winter Life Initiatives

In the Strategy's first three years, the WinterCity Office has both instituted and become involved with many initiatives, programs and activities aimed at making it easier for people to get around outside in winter and enjoy winter activities. Some of these activities include:

- Provided funding to seven community leagues to enhance their free skate programs. Communities with high numbers of lower income residents and newcomers were targeted for this initiative. As a result of this funding, the community leagues were able to purchase 127 pairs of skates, 45 helmets, 35 hockey sticks, 2 hockey nets, and one each of a skate storage rack, helmet storage rack and snow broom.
- Secured additional funding for a skidoo and cross-country ski trail grooming in the river valley.
- Developed a winter party toolkit meant to both inspire and provide practical advice/resources for Edmontonians to organize everything from a backyard winter BBQ to a winter picnic in the park to a group cross-country ski outing.
- Presented at the EFCL Leagues Alive! Conference to give community leagues ideas for winter programming.
- Sat as members on the City-led steering committee and working group to develop the Cross-Country Skiing Service Delivery Framework. Also provided feedback to other City initiatives such as the Integrated Wayfinding Project and the Downtown Bike Network that consulted with WinterCity staff at various times during project development.
- Purchased the first kicksleds to be added to City inventory for district recreational offices and for the River Valley Program Team.
- Supported construction and placement of three warming huts in Hawrelak and Victoria Parks.
- Supported other City- and community-led programs and activities that were initiated independently of the WinterCity Office. Examples include the previously-mentioned Winter Green Shacks and Ski2LRT programs.



## To what extent are Edmontonians experiencing safer and more convenient use of public transit?

Edmonton Transit System (ETS) has implemented a number of changes to public transport since 2014 (when the WinterCity Strategy was implemented). They include:

- A new heated bus shelter is under construction at West Edmonton Mall Transit Centre, which includes radiant heaters on the exterior of the building in covered waiting areas.
- Leaving Edmonton Transit centres and LRT station open overnight when temperatures are -20 C or lower (with wind chill) for those who need a warm place to spend the night.
- As of September 2016, Smart Bus technology has been installed on all 928 ETS buses, which means transit users can track their bus locations in real time on a mobile or desktop device.

Real time information is especially important in winter as it can help transit users plan their trips accurately and minimize their time outside on especially cold days. ETS has not yet built heated shelters because of costs required to do so, and concerns with public security, safety and maintenance.

In July 2017, City Council approved a new Transit Strategy that reflects the evolving priorities of Edmontonians and will modernize the transit system over the coming years. It is anticipated that implementation of this strategy will also enhance the transit experience in winter.



## To what extent are Edmontonians who walk and cycle having a safer and more convenient experience?

During the winters of 2013/2014 and 2014/2015, the City of Edmonton conducted a snow-clearing pilot project for the 106th Street on-street bike route to determine the required snow-clearing practices to maintain a painted bike route year-round. The main lesson was that it is difficult to clear snow from bicycle lanes that are not separated from other vehicle traffic. In 2017/18, snow will be cleared from the separated bike lanes in the city's downtown using special snow-clearing equipment.

The City of Edmonton is currently updating its Snow and Ice Control Policy, which outlines the operational requirements to make our city streets, sidewalks, shared pathways, and bike routes more accessible in winter. The updated policy is based on learnings from the first ever extensive public consultation undertaken by the City's Operations Department. Importantly, the findings from these consultations mirror the direction in the WinterCity Strategy. As a result, the implementation of the revised Snow and Ice Control Policy will achieve some, if not all, of the snow removal actions outlined in the WinterCity Strategy Implementation Plan.

The City of Edmonton is finalizing a Snow and Ice Control policy, which reflects the WinterCity Strategy Implementation Plan actions related to making it easier to get around our city in winter.

### WHAT WE HEARD

*"There is a strong link between this policy and the WinterCity Strategy. One of the reasons we went back to look at our operations around snow removal was because of what the WinterCity Strategy reflected."*

**– Eduardo Sosa, Director, Roadway Maintenance,  
City of Edmonton**



# Winter Design Pillar

**GOAL 3 | Design Our Communities for Winter Safety and Comfort**

**GOAL 4 | Incorporate Urban Design Elements for Winter Fun, Activity, Beauty and Interest**

The WinterCity Strategy’s intent in terms of winter design is to change how we design and build our urban places to make our streets more friendly and accessible not only in winter but also year-round. Blocking wind, capturing sunshine, and creative use of light are just a few of the necessary approaches.

## Winter Design Guidelines

This change has already begun. Edmonton has new comprehensive Winter Design Guidelines, which continue to garner international attention and accolades. They are the world’s most robust and detailed compilation of guidelines for northern urban design with an emphasis on placemaking. They are both flexible and inspirational, with key outcomes, rationales and guidelines for both private and public realms of our city. The guidelines are the key foundational action in the Design Pillar; all other design actions flow out of them. Work is now underway on a lighting strategy, and the City has also launched a pilot project for lighting heritage buildings.

The guidelines were designed (like the Strategy itself) by a group of Edmontonians from various walks of life, who brought unique and specialized understandings of elements of urban design. If these elements are implemented, they will truly make a difference on our city streets. Much of the work in the Design Pillar relates directly to the Winter Life Pillar; if our outdoor spaces, from parks to busy downtown streets, are welcoming, easily accessible and comfortable year-round, it will be easier and more fun for people to be outside in winter.

## WHAT WE HEARD

*“The Winter Design Guidelines come up when we work with the private sector, because they are a principle embedded in the Edmonton Design Committee principles. But there’s still a lot of work to be done particularly within City departments, so that no matter what is being designed we’re thinking of four-season use.”*

– **Shafraaz Kaba, Partner, Manaasc Isaac Architects**

*“The guidelines help our membership. Awareness always makes for change. The big issue is making Edmonton livable year-round.”*

– **Patti Swanson, President, Alberta Association of Architects**

*“Every outdoor space should have four-season considerations. There have been pilot projects (i.e. warming huts), but they have restricted access and their use is unreliable. If we are serious about winter city design, I should not have to wonder if there will be a warming hut at an ice rink. It will be there as a matter of course.”*

– **Jennifer Jones, Instructor, NAIT Landscape Architectural Technology**



## To what extent are Edmontonians aware of winter design principles?

The scope of the current evaluation did not enquire into understanding, only awareness. Questions about winter design and the Winter Design Guidelines were included in two Insight Community surveys, first in 2015 and again in 2017.

In 2015, 35% of participants reported being aware of the development of the Winter Design Guidelines, and 95% believed it was important that developers consider winter conditions in their designs. Participants were also asked to rate the importance of the five main elements of winter design.

Winter Design Elements	Rating of Importance (%)
<b>Sun - Designing spaces that capture sunlight year-round</b>	<b>96%</b>
<b>Wind - Blocking wind to improve outdoor comfort</b>	<b>96%</b>
<b>Light - Using light creatively during the dark winter months to increase beauty and visual interest</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Infrastructure - Installing infrastructure such as fire pits, indoor running toilets, and warming huts to make outdoor winter activities more enjoyable</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>Colour - Using colour on buildings and in public spaces</b>	<b>70%</b>

In the 2017 Insight Community survey, 23% of the 1,869 participants reported having heard of the Winter Design Guidelines.

## WHAT WE HEARD

*“We’re encouraging partners to consider winter conditions and programming when proposing projects on parkland (park and facility development process). We’re also seeing more support and understanding of the winter design principles with our business partners/project owners (i.e. operations, citizen services).”*

**– Cheryl Clieff, Open Space Planning and Design, City of Edmonton**

*“What I’m most proud of is these guidelines are the first urban design document IN EDMONTON that puts people and the personal experience at the forefront of design. They encourage us to think about designing all types of spaces for year-round use. It’s helpful to finally have an accessible compendium on northern climatic design.”*

**– Nola Kilmartin, Senior Urban Planner, KENNEDY; former City of Edmonton planner and project co-lead of the Winter Design Guidelines**

*“People for the most part want to do the right thing around designing and building great public realms for four seasons, but realities such as cost and conflicting policies can make it challenging.”*

**– Simon O’Byrne, WinterCity Advisory Committee Co-Chair; Vice President, Stantec**

*“I’ve had calls from across the country since the design guidelines have been published, with some people asking me for very specific information. For example, one man who’s done a great deal of research on design and regulation issues related to winter wheelchair accessibility, called to ask how we have amended our regulations. I connected him with our zoning bylaw section to share his research. The fact that he saw our work and called to share his learnings with me speaks of our success.”*

**– Susan Holdsworth, WinterCity Manager, City of Edmonton**

## Other Winter Design Initiatives

Some of the following winter design implementation work has been completed, while other activities are underway and will, in some cases, take several years to complete:

- Completed the Winter Design Guidelines and made them publicly available.
- Reviewed proposed standards, such as for Edmonton's Complete Streets Guidelines, which will be used to implement the City's Transportation Master Plan.
- Provided suggestions to strengthen the winter lens in the Landscape and Design Construction Standards.
- Partnered with the City's Heritage Unit in 2016 to launch a pilot project to light heritage buildings in the city. The project will end when all funding is used.
- Supported creative lighting for the Freezeway pilot and the IceWay skating trails.
- Providing a winter lens on Edmonton's bylaws, plans, procedures, policies, directives, and standards as they come up for revision and updating.
- Encouraging the incorporation of a winter lens into the City's Urban Design Awards as well as into the new Urban Design Framework.
- Providing a winter design lens to all Façade Improvement applications and, since January 2017, providing comments on Zoning Bylaw changes.
- Partnering with biologists, landscape architects and technicians to develop winter landscaping implementation tools.

Since the conversations started shifting in 2012, City and private developers have been thinking more about designing with our winter context in mind, and it has influenced some developments. For example, the Victoria Park Pavilion is oriented to the sun and frames the skating oval beautifully. Its design supports outdoor winter life and has become a popular hub of winter activity.

Large-scale, palpable changes are not yet being seen, but small incremental adjustments are taking place and will have a collective impact over time. One small project that has had a significant local impact is the Arrowhead Trail Lighting Project. The City has Community Building Social Workers who work closely with community leagues and local partners, including the Edmonton Police Service. One of the social workers approached the WinterCity Office to explore lighting a dark pedestrian trail in the City's west end. Funds were pooled to purchase string lights to give to homeowners to hang on the backs of their fences. These lights not only lit the pathway, but created an inviting atmosphere, increased safety, and also had the effect of slowing traffic at a crosswalk across from a school. This small lighting project changed the winter experience in the community for the better.

## WHAT WE HEARD

*"We are beginning to see a return on the investment we've put into our winter season and in adopting a winter lens. Developers, planners and urban designers are using the Winter Design Guidelines to build better spaces and streetscapes for people – year-round. Changing our urban landscape will take time, but we have planted the seeds for a more comfortable and inviting winter city."*

**– Ben Henderson, WinterCity Advisory Council Co-Chair; Edmonton City Councillor**

*"There is some amazing stuff in the Winter Design Guidelines. If some of the guidelines are implemented this city will be a paradise year-round."*

**– Robin Mazumder, Vanier Scholar; Doctoral candidate, cognitive neuroscience, University of Waterloo**

*"I'm frequently working on a number of cities and campuses across Canada, where mitigating (and even celebrating) cold-weather conditions is a recurring theme. I will often pull out Edmonton's Winter Design Guidelines as a good example, where walking and outdoor living is designed to be a positive winter experience. This is exactly what other winter cities need to be thinking about."*

**– Antonio Gomez-Palacio, Founding Partner and Principal, DIALOG**

*"I think Edmonton is ripe for innovation and research related to winter city design. I imagine NAIT could be a partner in the development and innovation of materials that retain and emit heat. There are countless technology and design opportunities in this area that Edmonton could be a leader on."*

**– Jennifer Jones, Instructor, NAIT Landscape Architectural Technology**





# Winter Economy Pillar

- GOAL 5 | Increase the Capacity and Sustainability of Edmonton's Winter Festivals**
- GOAL 6 | Develop a Four-Seasons Patio Culture**
- GOAL 7 | Become a World Leader in Innovative Winter-Related Business/Industry**

In developing the WinterCity Strategy, the WinterCity Think Tank felt that there is untapped potential for Edmonton businesses to take advantage of being located in a winter city. Indeed, since the Strategy's implementation, there is some evidence of this: fat bike sales are increasing; and, more cafés are expanding service by opening outdoor patios in wintertime. However, the Winter Economy goals have proven challenging, and will require more time and input from the city's business people and entrepreneurial thinkers to come to fruition.



Photo credit: Jessica Fern Facette

## To what extent are winter festivals thriving?

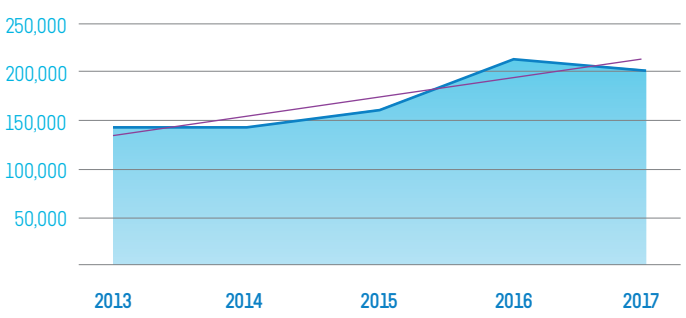
Of the 1,869 participants in the 2017 online survey, 36% reported attending more winter festivals and events than they had five years previously.

**I attend more winter festivals and events than I did five years ago**



1% of respondents answered 'don't know'

This increase is reflected in the attendance numbers for four of the major winter festivals. From 2013 - 2017, most festivals saw a steady increase in visitors.



Source of data: Festivals themselves (Deep Freeze, Ice On Whyte, Flying Canoë Volant and Silver Skate). Please note that it is self-reported and unauditible. Attendance is an extraordinarily difficult thing to estimate for any outdoor, unticketed event.

## WHAT WE HEARD

*“I see how the Winter City Strategy has resulted in more winter activities and positive awareness about winter but I don’t see how it has contributed to our festival’s sustainability and longevity. Our festival fundraising activities take place year-round. The EAC funding for winter festivals is far behind the summer festival funding. I believe our municipality has a very long way to go to create and contribute to the winter festival sustainability and longevity in Edmonton.”*

**– Wanda Bornn, Producer, Ice on Whyte Festival**

*“The WinterCity Strategy and the WinterCity Office bring city resources and departments together. These are the people who can make a difference or make things happen. Having senior City managers at the table has had a huge impact on the cooperation, awareness and troubleshooting needed for winter festivals to thrive. The shared asset inventory is indispensable and vital.”*

**– Christy Morin, Artistic Director, Deep Freeze Festival; Executive Director, Arts on the Ave**

*“The WinterCity Office needs to address whether it’s here to help existing winter events or to become a festival planner. I feel it should promote existing festivals and look for synergies with other winter groups/communities that would be a good fit to work with existing winter festivals and events.”*

**– Erin DiLoreto, Executive Producer, Silver Skate Festival**

*“Something’s being done right. The WinterCity Strategy has done great things for the city in helping change people’s mindsets. Our festival attendance went from 3500 five years ago to 40,000+ this year. The Strategy has played a large role in communicating that winter is a time to go outside and have fun.”*

**– Daniel Cournoyer, French Quarter BIA; Executive Director, La Cité Francophone; Producer, Flying Canoë Volant Festival**

## DID YOU KNOW?

Of those online survey participants who responded that their attendance had increased, family was given as the biggest influencer, followed by more events to choose from and friends going.

Reason for attending more festivals	Mentions (%)
<b>Good activity to do with children</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>More choice</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Friends go</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Have more time</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>It’s located conveniently</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Recently moved to Edmonton</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>To get out/connect with my city</b>	<b>6%</b>

Other less common reasons for attending more winter festivals and events included having more money, warmer winters, better promotion of festivals, started volunteering at the festivals, connection to artists, and not sure why.

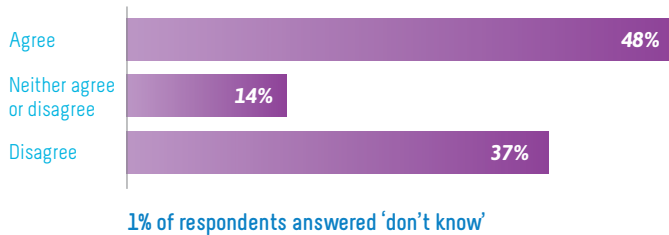


# To what extent have winter patios grown?

## Winter Patio Culture

Prior to the WinterCity Strategy, winter patios were not part of Edmonton’s culture. The Strategy is aiming to shift the culture so that Edmontonians can enjoy being outside on patios year-round. In the 2017 online survey, participants were asked if they would sit on an outdoor patio in winter. 48% responded that they would consider sitting on an outdoor patio in winter; however, 37% also said they would not.

**I would consider sitting on an outdoor patio at a restaurant, bar or café in the winter**



## City-Wide Patio Parties

In March 2014, Edmonton’s first Farewell to Winter Patio Party came to life on Edmonton streets. The WinterCity Office provided 400 blankets as a gift for participating venues, and lent out 100 seat cushions. The following year, 400 additional blankets were given as gifts, and 100 additional cushions were loaned out. In 2016, the party was moved to April, and a new street patio party was added on Rice Howard Way, organized by EEDC. As part of encouraging venues to take part in the event, the WinterCity Office worked with other City departments to organize three-day patio permit exemptions that allowed venues to create temporary outdoor patios without a permit.

## Farewell to Winter Patio Parties

(held at end of March or beginning of April)

Year	# of participating venues
2014	55
2015	76
2016	55+, and the Rice Howard Way Street Party

In 2016, the emphasis was shifted to promoting patios during the winter. At the beginning of December, a Kick-Off to Winter Patio Season weekend was held. Seventeen venues took part, with mixed success. Throughout Winter 2016/17, venues were encouraged to open their patios on nice days. Any tweets that tagged @WinterCityYEG to announce that a patio was open was shared by the WinterCity social media team.

## WHAT WE HEARD

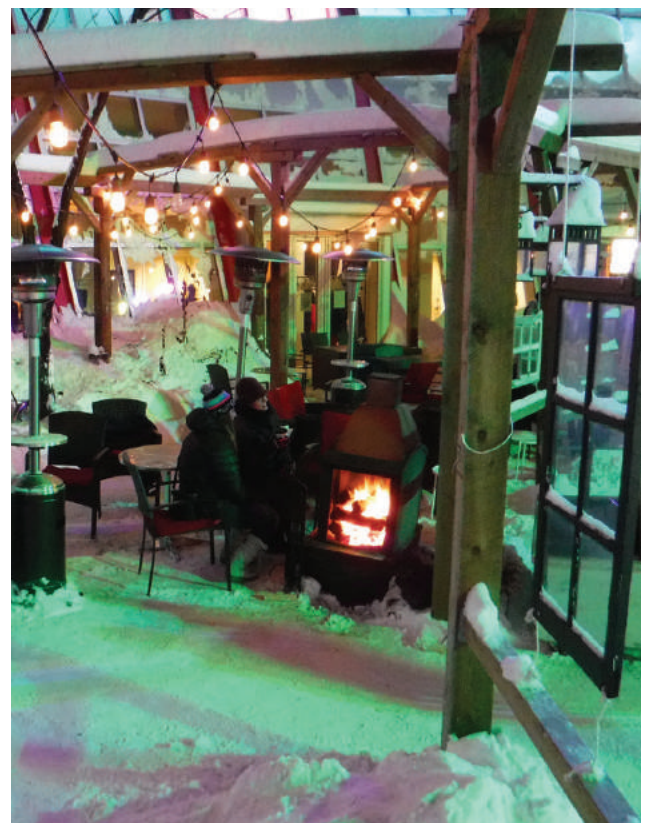
...From Venue Participants of the 2014 Farewell to Winter Patio Party

*“People came specifically to sit out on the patio, so we had more customers that weekend. But most moved inside as they were cold. The manager was pleased with the event and thinks it’s the start of something big.”*

*“The Patio Party was a great idea - my staff and myself saw lots of discussion of it on social media. It worked out great.”*

*“Having the patio set up outside brought more business on the weekend, even though there weren’t many people sitting outside.”*

*“Our property is actually putting a business plan together to implement a full winterized patio into our 5-year capital plan.”*



## To what extent has winter economic activity been developed?

The WinterCity Office has undertaken several economy-related initiatives, as listed below. There is no hard data that proves these have resulted in an increase in winter-related business or industry. However, they have sparked public discussion about the positive side of winter and fostered Edmonton's international reputation as a leading winter city. In that regard, they have contributed to changing our 'winter story'.

### Winter Cities Shake-Up Conferences and Market

Edmonton has hosted two international conferences for winter cities, named the Winter Cities Shake-Up. The first, in 2015, was so successful that delegates asked Edmonton to host a second conference in 2017. Both events offered innovative local, national and international speakers, and the range of topics spanned all four pillars in the WinterCity Strategy.

([wintercitiesconference.com](http://wintercitiesconference.com))

### Winter Cities Shake-Up

Year	# of delegates	# of out-of-province and international delegates	Percentage
2015	420	52	12%
2017	303	81	27%

The 2015 conference also included a one-day public winter festival and market in Churchill Square, with more than 40 market stalls, a beer garden, a snow slide, roving musicians and entertainers, a lighting installation, fat bike demos, and activities for children. Between 2,500-3,000 people attended the festival and market. In 2017, the conference included a public Pecha Kucha sponsored by Edmonton's NextGen initiative, and an innovation showcase for local organizations and businesses. Both public events also aligned with the Strategy's Winter Life and Winter Story outcomes.

### Other Winter Economy Initiatives

- Supported a burgeoning winter market culture by having six market huts constructed which were used at several outdoor events from 2014-2017. In the 2016-2017 school year, worked with the University of Alberta's Industrial Design Students to have two new, more portable hut prototypes designed.
- Hosted an outdoor winter market in 2015 on Churchill Square in conjunction with the 2015 Winter Cities Shake-Up conference at the Shaw Convention Centre.
- Participated in meetings with other City staff and Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission staff to advocate for changes to regulations to support a winter market culture as well as year-round outdoor patios.
- Partnered with Western Canada Fashion Week to host winter fashion design competitions in 2013, 2014 and 2015. The competition challenged local designers to create and showcase warm and fashionable winter outerwear outfits.
- Hosted a Winter Signature Drink Competition in 2014, 2015 and 2016. Individuals and establishments could enter their original drinks in the alcoholic and/or non-alcoholic categories. A panel of community leaders acted as judges, and the competitions drew good media coverage.
- Explored the need for, and developed, a winter festival facilitating and nurturing body. This resulted in the creation of the Winter Festival Working Group, a sub-committee of the WinterCity Advisory Council.
- Partnered with Edmonton Tourism to coordinate shared marketing, and collaborated on some winter-specific campaigns.
- Worked on some pull-marketing for winter festivals and winter patios.
- Provided some mini-grants to winter festivals, as well as to some businesses that have created winter patio spaces.
- Accepted and now provide temporary management of the shared inventory of the winter festival assets (e.g. firepits, fire-rated tents, lights). This includes purchasing new items for the shared inventory.

## WHAT WE HEARD

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...At the 2017 Winter Cities Shake-Up

*“So much happened in our city between the two conferences. We developed Winter Design Guidelines, our winter festivals grew, we’ve incorporated smaller changes like having skates available at some outdoor rinks. It was a great opportunity to welcome people back to our city the second time around, to see how far we’ve come.”*

**– Mayor Don Iveson, Edmonton**

*“Edmonton has been inspiring and delightful on the subject of winter cities for a long time. I’ve been following Edmonton’s work on the Strategy and the Winter Design Guidelines. I’m grateful to the City of Edmonton for your leadership in this realm.”*

**– Hazel Borys, Principal, PlaceMakers LLC; Winnipeg**

*“Being able to learn from the success stories of Edmonton has been an unbelievable experience. There’s not just a WinterCity Strategy here, but a full-fledged implementation plan that’s ongoing. Its surprised me to see how much Edmonton has done.”*

**– David Holder, Syracuse, New York**

**Random delegates were asked if they felt Edmonton has a reputation as an internationally-leading winter city. Here is a sampling of their responses:**

*“Yes, now that I know more about Edmonton. I wouldn’t know if I weren’t at the conference.”*

*“Yes, the Strategy and Implementation plan gives credence to it.”*

*“It could; more implementation is key.”*







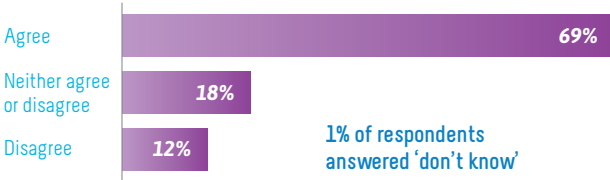
- GOAL 8 | Celebrate the Season and Embrace Daily Living in a Cold Climate**
- GOAL 9 | Promote Edmonton's Great Northern Story Locally, Nationally and Internationally**
- GOAL 10 | Kick Start and Lead Implementation of Edmonton's WinterCity Strategy: Apply a 'Winter Lens' to Our City**

Work in this pillar is the fundamental key to whether the WinterCity Strategy will truly make a difference in our city. The goals speak to how we can start changing our winter narrative from one that was, at best, indifferent to winter, to one that embraces, takes advantage of, and delights in all that winter offers.

## To what extent are Edmontonians more aware of the potential of outdoor winter life?

Of the 1,869 participants in the 2017 online survey, over two-thirds (69%) reported being more aware of what there is to do in Edmonton compared to five years earlier.

***I am more aware of what there is to do in Edmonton during the wintertime as compared to five years ago***



**Winter Excitement Guide**

Edmontonians were contacting the WinterCity Office to ask what they could do in winter. In response, the WinterCity Office produced a Winter 2013/14 guide to Edmonton’s winter festivals and events. In response to demand from the public, the next year the office added winter recreation information such as activity tips and best locations. The guide has become very popular, and is made available throughout the city, including at City facilities and local business and organizations. Online versions include a pdf on the City website, and a searchable list on the [wintercityedmonton.ca](http://wintercityedmonton.ca) website.

Winter Excitement Guide

Year	# of copies printed and distributed	# pages	# events	# activities
2013/14	5,000	32	65	N/A
2014/15	5,000	54	97	6
2015/16	10,000	56	92	11
2016/17	12,500	58	87	16

**WHAT WE HEARD**

*“We promote our programs primarily at the neighbourhood level. The WinterCity Office’s Excitement Guide, Facebook page and Twitter feed are a great help in getting our message out.”*

**– Jane Erdman, Neighbourhood Recreation Programs, City of Edmonton**

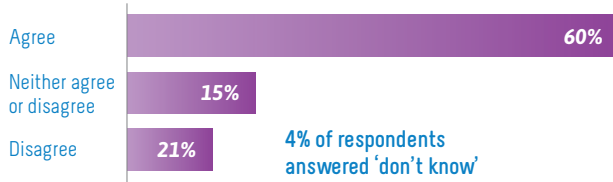




## To what extent do Edmontonians take pride in winter?

In the 2017 online survey, 60% of respondents agreed that they embrace winter, compared with 24% who do not, and 15% who were not sure.

### I embrace winter



### Winter Lights

The online panel participants were also asked about their approach to leaving their Christmas lights up beyond Christmas and New Year. In 2017, 34% reported leaving them up after holidays, while 29% took them down, and 37% did not put up winter lights. In 2014, Edmontonians were also asked whether they leave their winter lights up in January and/or February. Of those who put up lights, 66% said they left them up.

### Winterscapes

The WinterCity Office partnered with the existing Front Yards in Bloom program to create Front Yards in Bloom: Winterscapes. This program invites gardeners to add plants and shrubs that will be interesting to look at in winter; for example, trees with coloured bark, and long grasses. It encourages Edmontonians to celebrate winter by creating whimsical features using ice and snow, such as sculptures, forts, and slides. The program also promotes the use of lights, either by leaving Christmas strings up to become winter lights, or by adding other lights to beautify the darkness.

The City's four recreation districts created Winterscape Kits that can be signed out by community groups. These kits contain molds, paint, shovels and other tools to have fun with snow. One of the City's Community Recreation Coordinators told us that there is increasing demand for the kits from groups. Some of the Green Shack program groups used them to take part in the Front Yards in Bloom: Winterscapes program, and one of the groups was a finalist in Winter 2017.

## WHAT WE HEARD

*"When we launched the WinterCity social media campaign it was a tough sell. We got consistent comments like 'I hate winter', 'I'd move if I could' and 'winter is boring and cold'.*

*But it was remarkable how quickly that changed. The following winter we just didn't see very many negative comments in that second season. There was excitement about the change of season. I think people were anxious to embrace some positivity about the city.*

*In the third season, we got some negativity back, but this time the social media community jumped in to basically say "if you don't like winter, just move!" and every year we get 5000 - 7000 new followers. That's good, steady growth."*

**– Marliis Weber, Social Media Strategist and Community Manager, Parodos Communications**





### Promoting Our 'Winter Story' Through Social Media

The WinterCity Office has its own Facebook and Twitter accounts that are independent of the City of Edmonton's accounts. These have been invaluable ways to engage with Edmontonians and share information about all things winter, including events, festivals, ideas, tips, and stories. In 2015, an external website was also added to share blogs by local writers. This site expanded in December 2016 to include information about being active, social and creative in winter.

Social media analytics demonstrate an increasing number of people joining in public discussions about the positive aspects of winter. The analytics are limited, though, in that they can't measure how many people are changing their feelings about the season and how many were already winter fans. However, we are seeing an increase in reach and engagement through our social media channels. In addition, in all the interviews done for this evaluation, and in many anecdotal examples, there is a feeling that Edmontonians are starting to take pride in and ownership over our winterness. In other words, we've started to cultivate a community that embraces winter.

### WHAT WE HEARD

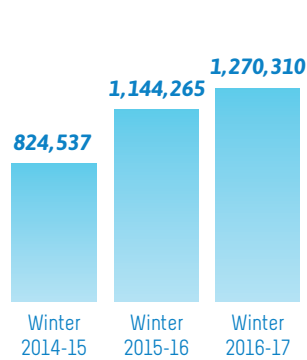
*"As a ratio of spend I would say we have increased activity in winter. Especially the focus on the winter, the "You Think You Know Edmonton" videos and their promotion. We haven't dug into any old numbers to directly prove this point but anecdotally this is certainly where we've made a change in emphasis."*

- **Doug McLean, Director of Marketing and Events, Edmonton Tourism**

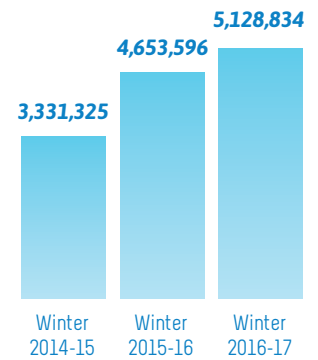
*"The work we've done with Edmonton Tourism and EEDC is a shining example of a great partnership. Together, we've just about completed the Winter Story Pillar actions."*

- **Susan Holdsworth, WinterCity Manager, City of Edmonton**

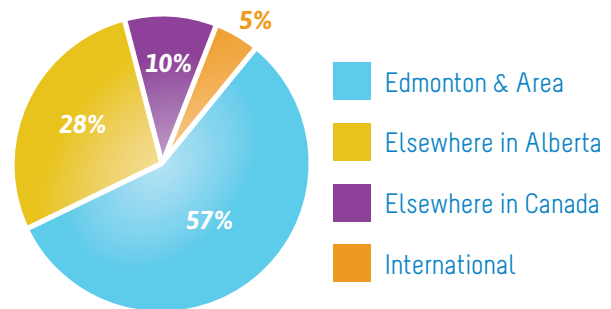
WinterCity Edmonton Facebook Reach



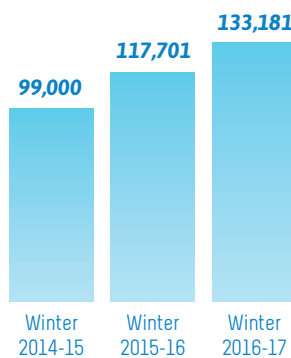
WinterCity Edmonton Twitter Impressions



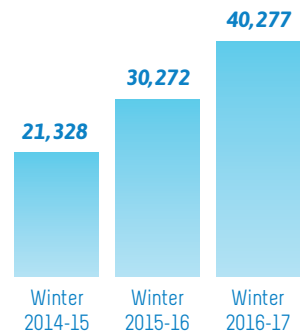
WinterCity Edmonton Twitter Audience Location



WinterCity Edmonton Facebook Engagements



WinterCity Edmonton Total Social Media Audience on Facebook and Twitter



## Promoting Our 'Winter Story' Nationally and Internationally

Edmonton Tourism has been a strong ally and has played a critical role in advancing this WinterCity Strategy goal. Since 2015, Edmonton Tourism has made a deliberate shift to tackling winter head-on. Instead of focusing on what to do indoors, its winter marketing now leads with beautiful outdoor pictures and a cheeky take on cold with headlines like: "Cold? Yes. Dark? Yes. Boring? Never" and "The real fun starts when temperatures drop below zero". Their fun campaign uses humour to focus on Edmontonians' resilience and pride in being a great winter city, just as the WinterCity Strategy directs with Winter Story Action S2.3.

Edmonton Tourism is giving winter a greater focus in national and overseas marketing efforts as well, and now Edmonton has a greater presence on the world stage as a winter tourist destination. Due to their efforts, articles have been written about Edmonton as a great winter destination in blogs such as Hand Luggage Only (a UK-based blog with 1.2 million page views per month), Naver blog (a Korea-based blog), Wonderful Wanderings (a Netherlands-based travel blog), and Mike's Bloggity Blog (a Canadian travel blog with more than 1.0 million unique visitors annually).

Articles featuring great things to do in Edmonton in winter have been written in Die Welt (a German national newspaper), National Geographic Traveler, and in the Toronto Star. It's worth noting that the coverage in Die Welt was part of a larger media campaign which actually saw Edmonton winter coverage in a variety of top tier publications in the Netherlands and Germany including Telegraaf (the most read newspaper in the Netherlands), Volkskrant (Netherlands), NRC and FD (Netherlands), and Die Welt (Germany). The combined reach of winter coverage in these publications was 5,131,000.

Tourism aside, the WinterCity Strategy and innovative aspects of it have received considerable media attention locally, nationally and internationally. Articles have been featured in diverse publications including: Fast Company, Wire Magazine, CITYLAB, The Globe and Mail, Macleans magazine, Building magazine, and Landscapes/Paysages magazine, Canadian Geographic magazine, Project for Public Spaces blog, Torontoist website, Radio Canada Montreal, Winnipeg Free Press, CBC Halifax, and even the BBC and Huffington Post. Together, they have served to improve Edmonton's reputation.

## WHAT WE HEARD

*"Let me say a big CONGRATULATIONS! to the WinterCity team. I was skeptical that you could change the tone of dialog around Edmonton's winter weather. But, it sure looks & feels like you have done just that! I've always tried to put an upbeat spin on ANY kind of weather. But, I've made a conscious effort to present the positives of winter weather in the past few years. It took a little while to get some news anchors to stop complaining about winter weather. But, most seem to be coming around."*

- Josh Classen, Chief Meteorolgist, CTV Edmonton

*"I always try to be positive about winter, but I'm more cognizant about it now than I was before. The public awareness seems that way too. When people get down on winter there's much more of an attitude of 'c'mon - don't be that way'. People are holding each other to account. A lot more people are trying to be influencers."*

- Mark Connolly, Host, Edmonton AM, CBC Radio

REISEN **R 3**

Oh wie schön ist KANADA!

Die Welt 8. Samstag, 11. März 2017

**WINTERSTADT**  
Edmonton ist die Winterhauptstadt Kanadas. Die Stadt ist ein Paradies für Winterliebhaber. Die Stadt ist ein Paradies für Winterliebhaber. Die Stadt ist ein Paradies für Winterliebhaber.

**KANADISCHES LODGE**  
Die Lodge ist ein Paradies für Winterliebhaber. Die Lodge ist ein Paradies für Winterliebhaber. Die Lodge ist ein Paradies für Winterliebhaber.

**WILDLIFE**  
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## WHAT WE HEARD

...From International Travel Publications and Bloggers



*“Skating, cycling or Segway a snowy river valley, wandering through giant ice castles, feasting on the wintry Silver Skate Festival and watching bison at Elk Island. Edmonton changes in winter to a snow paradise.”*

- **Nat Geo Traveler (2017)**

*“But if you’re looking to shake off the winter blues and get out and enjoy some really fun activities, then I bet you’ll be surprised to see just how much there is to do in Edmonton this winter. Like Quebec City, I find that Edmonton has decided over the past couple of years to say, ‘You know what, winter? We got this.’ and really have fun with it!”*

- **Mike’s Bloggity Blog (2017)**

### Other Winter Story Initiatives

- Hosted a Valentine’s Day Disco Skate at City Hall for five years, which aligned with the theme of falling in love with winter.
- Hosted Sip ‘n’ Slide Sundays for five years by sending crews with hot chocolate to toboggan hills in February.
- Hosted a winter signature drink competition for three years to encourage people to focus on what makes our winters distinctive and fun.
- Installed city-wide winter banners encouraging people to Celebrate, Embrace and Enjoy winter.
- Hosted visitors from other cities (including Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia; St. John’s, NL; and Sapporo, Japan) to talk about our work.
- Supported a City staff exchange with Ulaanbaatar City, Mongolia.
- Created, produce and distribute an electronic newsletter to over 800 recipients.
- Entered a WinterCity float in the inaugural Santa’s Parade of Lights, and continue to produce an annual walking entry.
- Host a booth at the All is Bright festival, which includes handing out the Winter Excitement Guides and promoting the Winterscapes program.
- Participate in World Winter Cities Association for Mayors events.
- Send crews to Candy Cane Lane to offer hot chocolate and distribute Winter Excitement Guides.
- Continue to increase the number of images in the winter photo library.
- Support a variety of community engagement initiatives.



## DID YOU KNOW?

### Supporting Local Events

Edmontonians are embracing winter, growing existing events, and creating new ways to celebrate the season. The WinterCity Office has sponsored many local, community-led events and initiatives either financially or with in-kind support. Some of those events include:

- **#yegwords**, winter-themed coffee sleeves produced by Jason Lee Norman.
- **In Your Own Words**, an Edmonton oral history project led by David Rauch.
- **Winterus Maximus**, a fat bike chariot race.
- **Fat Bike Triple Crown** races.
- **Parka Patio Parties** at Latitude 53.
- **Downtown Defrost** outdoor electronic dance music festivals.
- **Winter Makescape** by MADE.
- Video projection mapping installation at **Candy Cane Lane**.
- Sponsorship for MADE's Winter Design Exhibition: **Sheltered and Exposed**
- **Alley of Light**, illuminated art boxes on the historic Armstrong Block building (10125 - 104 St).





# Impact

## What difference has the WinterCity Strategy and/or its actions made to the lives of Edmontonians?

### Changes to Perception of Life in Winter

The 2017 online survey asked 1,869 respondents whether their perception of winter had changed from seeing the season as a time to hibernate, or a time when there's not much to do in the city, to seeing the opportunities winter offers. The evidence from Edmontonians surveyed is compelling:

- 44% agreed their perception of winter in Edmonton has become more positive.
- 8% said their perception of winter has worsened.
- 45% said there has been no change in their perception.
- 3% were not sure.



For those whose perception has changed more positively, the key reasons were:

- There seemed to be more things going on now and/or there is better promotion of events.
- The City is promoting a positive attitude.
- Having children or grandchildren has meant they have engaged more with winter activities.
- Climate change is making the winters milder now than in the past. Many participants also commented that they were more motivated to go outside because of the warmer, milder weather.
- There's more lighting.
- Friends are more amenable to doing things.

For those whose perception of winter has become more negative, or remains negative, the key reasons were:

- Age or physical disability limits their mobility.
- Dissatisfaction with snow clearing on sidewalks, trails and roads from a pedestrian, motorist and cyclist perspective.
- The freeze/thaw conditions create challenges for cyclists, pedestrians and motorists.
- Public transit is unreliable.

The negative attitude reasons are related to infrastructure, maintenance and some operations challenges. The revised Snow and Ice Policy, the new Transit Strategy, and other city initiatives will hopefully alleviate many of these issues.



## Improvements to Quality of Life in Winter

Survey respondents were asked about changes to their quality of life in winter. 653 of the 1,869 participants reported that they had seen an improvement to their quality of life in winter. The results below were quantified from the comments received in the online survey.

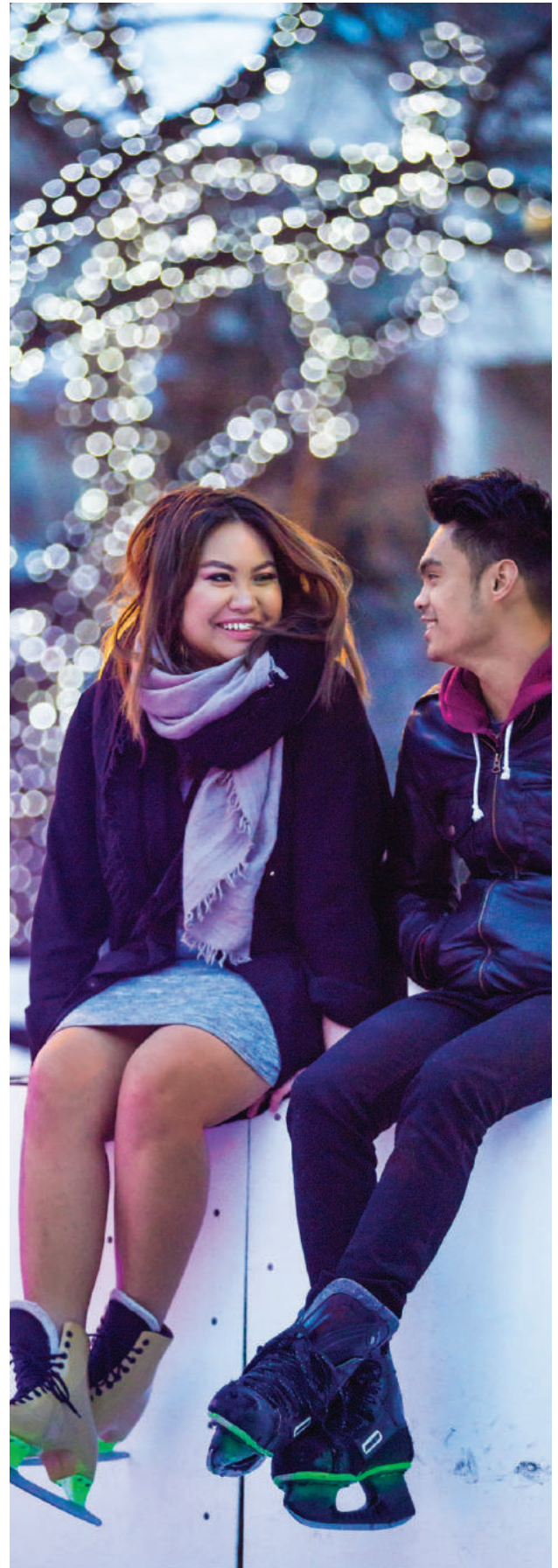
Top 5 ways in which the City has made progress to improve your quality of life in wintertime	Mentions (%)
<b>More of, or support for winter festivals/ events/things to do in general</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Better amenities/maintenance of infrastructure (roads, trails, sidewalks, facilities)</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>More aware of things to do/better promotion</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>More outdoor recreation activities</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Culture shift in public dialogue</b>	<b>8%</b>

Other comments provided about improvement to quality of life in winter included:

- Outdoor heaters and outdoor patios.
- Snowmaking for cross-country ski trails in Gold Bar Park.
- More support for community groups to host winter activities/events.
- More lighting.
- City is doing a good job in general.
- Through winter design.

Less than 10% of the online survey respondents (134 out of 1,869) replied that their quality of life has not improved in the winter. Their comments were also quantified and can be found below.

Top 3 barriers to improved quality of life in the wintertime	Mentions (%)
<b>Amenities for pedestrians/snow clearing of sidewalks, trails</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Road maintenance/snow clearing</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Cold public transit stops/more reliable public transit</b>	<b>6%</b>





Some survey participants provided suggestions for how to improve quality of life in winter:

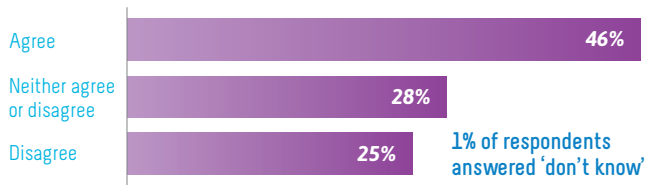
- Make some activities free, affordable.
- Make public spaces and roads cleaner and more attractive.
- Provide more opportunities for indoor-based activities/recreation.
- Use better winter design.
- Shift focus from the downtown and/or the river valley; start looking at other areas of the city.
- Provide more parking.
- Encourage more winter patios.
- Provide better amenities for cyclists.

(**Note:** 291 comments were provided to this section of the online survey; however, almost half (46%) of the comments did not relate to the question, instead raised issues out of scope. The irrelevant comments have been excluded from this analysis, and are not reflected above.)

### Dressing for Winter

The 2017 online survey included a question about dressing for winter. Results certainly indicate a change in how people dress for the winter season since the implementation of the WinterCity Strategy.

*I am more inclined to dress properly to be outside in winter compared to 5 years ago*



## WHAT WE HEARD

...From the Edmonton Insight Community in 2017

*"It feels like there are more fun things to do outside so I'm not as hesitant to go out in the cold."*

*"I take more pleasure in the beauty that I'm able to see, and in the freshness of cold."*

*"More prepared to dress properly and participate in outdoor activities. WinterCity and design guidelines have opened my eyes to the possibilities that will increase the quality of life in Edmonton over the winter months – these initiatives are incredibly important and exciting."*





## Is the WinterCity Strategy being implemented efficiently in terms of effort and cost?

The answer to the question about the efficiency of the implementation of the strategy lies in understanding several key points in terms of the Strategy: what's working, lessons we've learned, and areas for improvement.

### What's Working?

As described in fuller detail on pages 8-9, the aspects that are working particularly well are: the solid foundation based on extensive multi-faceted consultation, the broad and holistic approach, along with Edmontonian's buy-in. Linked to efficiency, is the fact that the investment from the City is also working.

### City Investment

Support from Edmonton's municipal leaders has been critical – both financial resources and ongoing encouragement. It has allowed for the creation of the WinterCity Office and its two team members. It has seen Edmonton host two international winter cities conferences. And it has resulted in successful completion of many of the Strategy's Implementation Plan actions.

The WinterCity Strategy cost approximately \$210,000 to develop, using operational funds from the former Community Strategies and Development Branch. Sponsorship of \$51,000 was also received. Once the strategy was approved and adopted by City Council in 2012, it received annual operating funding beginning in 2013.

The WinterCity Office receives an annual base budget of approximately \$370,000. This funding covers staffing, operational, and programming expenses, as well as occasional community grants. In 2014, an additional \$80,000 was allocated to Community and Recreation Facilities through the WinterCity Strategy for cross-country ski trail grooming. City Council has, from time to time, provided additional one-time funding for special expenses and events, specifically:

- \$15,000 in 2014 for a ski-doo to help with cross-country ski trail grooming;
- \$250,000 in 2015 for the pilot project to light heritage buildings;
- \$475,000 for the 2015 international Winter Cities Shake-Up conference; and,
- \$397,000 for the 2017 international Winter Cities Shake-Up conference.

A large portion of WinterCity funding has gone to support, promote or enhance community endeavours. A number of projects and programs that have received grants are listed in the Effectiveness section above. A few examples include Kenilworth Community League Family Ice Trail, ski and snowboarding lessons at local ski hills, creative lighting at the IceWays, and blankets for winter patios. These are relatively small investments that together create a significant impact.

#### **Partnerships and Allies**

The WinterCity Office works closely with many partners, both within the City of Edmonton and in the broader community. This brings to each initiative access to a depth and breadth of experience and knowledge, new ideas and ways of doing things, and potential for increased effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

## **WHAT WE HEARD**

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*“Three years later we still have what sometimes feels like that blizzard of ideas coming at us. It’s challenging to organize and manage our workload with this because we really want to help everyone with their ideas or initiatives. It’s a good challenge to have.”*

**– Isla Tanaka, WinterCity Planner, City of Edmonton**

*“It felt like Edmontonians were really ready for this Strategy. People were thinking about how we define ourselves as a city, and they wanted to figure out how to make Edmonton a ‘cool’ place to live and visit.”*

**– Kate Gunn, Director, Community Initiatives, City of Edmonton**

*What Winter Means to Me: “I love winter. As a kid, winter was street hockey, tobogganing and that comfy, rosy-cheek feeling of warming up after playing in the cold. My generation lost itself in heated garages, underground parking, pedways and covered rinks. The City’s winter initiative reminds us that snow squeaks underfoot on a crisp, winter day’s walk. It reminds us that skating, skiing, pickup hockey or winter biking creates the same endorphin hit as beach volleyball. Bonus: No sunburn.”*

**– Scott McKeen, Edmonton City Councillor**





# WinterCity Advisory Council Members

We'd like to acknowledge the leadership and passion of the current and former members of the Advisory Council and all of its working groups. Implementing the WinterCity Strategy could not have happened without their passion and commitment.

**Note:** City of Edmonton (COE) staff are identified by their departments.

## WinterCity Advisory Council Co-Chairs

**Ben Henderson** City Councillor  
**Simon O'Byrne** Stantec

## Current Advisory Council and Working Group Members

<b>Allen Jacobson</b>	Canadian Birkie Ski Festival	<b>Dustin Martin</b>	Oliver Community League
<b>Alyson Hodson</b>	Chamber of Commerce; Zag Creative Group	<b>Erin DiLoreto</b>	Silver Skate Festival
<b>Angela Leatherland</b>	COE Financial and Corporate Services	<b>Eryne Sarabin</b>	All is Bright on 124 Festival
<b>Beckie Boutilier</b>	COE Citizen Services	<b>Glen Thoman</b>	Urban Development Institute; Al-Terra Engineering
<b>Bev Zubot</b>	Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues	<b>Gord Shepherd</b>	Ice on Whyte Festival
<b>Bob Black</b>	The Katz Group	<b>Ian O'Donnell</b>	Downtown Business Association
<b>Bob Rasko</b>	Edmonton Arts Council	<b>Jane Erdmann</b>	COE Citizen Services
<b>Braidon Reid</b>	COE Regional and Economic Development	<b>Jenna Turner</b>	Edmonton Arts Council
<b>Cheryl Clieff</b>	COE Communications and Engagement	<b>Jenny Albers</b>	NextGen
<b>Chris Davis</b>	Urban Development Institute; Walton	<b>Jimmy Shewchuk</b>	Edmonton Economic Development Corporation
<b>Chris Round</b>	Responsible Hospitality Industry Association	<b>Jodie Wacko</b>	Urban Development Institute; Beaverbrook Developments Inc
<b>Christine Frederick</b>	Roobaboo Arts Festival	<b>Jon Heisler</b>	Urban Development Institute; WSP (formerly MMM Group)
<b>Christy Morin</b>	Deep Freeze Festival; Arts on the Ave	<b>Kalen Anderson</b>	COE Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
<b>Colin Johnson</b>	Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues	<b>Kate Gunn</b>	COE Citizen Services
<b>Daniel Cournoyer</b>	French Quarter Business Improvement Area; La Cité Francophone; Flying Canoë Volant Festival	<b>Ken Saunders</b>	Community member; Edmonton Ski Club*
<b>Darren Young</b>	Beaverbrook Developments Inc	<b>Kim Petrin</b>	Stantec; COE Sustainable Development*
<b>David Holdsworth</b>	COE Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development	<b>Lauren Farnell</b>	Edmonton Tourism
<b>Dean Cooper</b>	Watt Consulting Group	<b>Lauren Irving</b>	Edmonton Tourism
<b>Debra Jakubec</b>	Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues	<b>Lisa Larson</b>	COE Regional and Economic Development
<b>Dennis Barthel</b>	COE City Operations	<b>Lynn Ferguson</b>	COE Citizen Services
<b>Dick Wong</b>	Chinese Community	<b>Marilyn Lizee</b>	Métis Nation
<b>Don Darnell</b>	Light-Efficient Communities Coalition	<b>Matt Oldham</b>	Candy Cane Lane Festival
<b>Doug McLean</b>	Edmonton Tourism	<b>Matt Vest</b>	Artist
<b>Duane Hunter</b>	Candy Cane Lane Festival	<b>Mei Hung</b>	Chinese Benevolent Association
		<b>Michael Phair</b>	illumiNITE Festival
		<b>Nicole Poirier</b>	COE Citizen Services
		<b>Nola Kilmartin</b>	KENNEDY; COE Sustainable Development*
		<b>Pat Moffat</b>	COE Citizen Services

Percy Woods	Building Owners and Managers (BOMA) Edmonton	Sameer Singh	Media Architecture and Design Edmonton (MADE)
Peter Ohm	COE Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development	Sandeep Agrawal	University of Alberta Urban and Regional Planning Program
Rhonda Norman	COE Citizen Services	Sanjay Shahani	Edmonton Arts Council
Ritchie Velthuis	Silver Skate Festival	Shafraaz Kaba	Manasc Isaac
Rob Smyth	COE Citizen Services	Tammy Wiebe	Zoominescence: A Festival of Light
Robert Summers	University of Alberta Urban and Regional Planning Program	Tammy Pidner	Community member; Edmonton Economic Development Corporation*
Roger Jevne	COE Citizen Services	Wanda Bornn	Ice on Whyte Festival
Ryan Barkway	COE Communications and Engagement		
Sally Kim	Edmonton Arts Council		

\* Organizations formerly represented by the working group members. In the case of City staff, the department name may have changed because of corporate reorganizations that occurred after members moved on to another organization.

## Former Advisory Council and Working Group Members

Adam Homes	COE Transportation Services	James McCurdy	Edmonton Tourism
Adam Kebede	NextGen	Janna Tominuk	Edmonton Tourism
Aileen Giesbrecht	COE Financial Services and Utilities	Jennifer LaForest	COE Sustainable Development
Andrea Mondor	Edmonton Chamber of Commerce	Jessica Lui	COE Sustainable Development
Andrew McLellan	COE Sustainable Development	Jodi Goebel	NextGen; COE Financial and Corporate Services
Anne Jarman	COE Financial and Corporate Services	John Mahon	Edmonton Arts Council
Barry Belcourt	COE Integrated Infrastructure Services	Katherine Sweet	COE Corporate Communications
Brian Latte	COE Financial Services and Utilities	Kelly Oakes	COE Transportation Operations
Brian Van Sickle	COE Sustainable Development	Lara Pinchbeck	COE Sustainable Development
Christine Whalen	COE Financial Services and Utilities	Laura Shewchuk	COE Community Services
Corina Ganton	NextGen	Leo Levasseur	Urban Development Institute; Select Engineering
Craig Fitch	COE Blatchford Redevelopment	Lindsay Dodd	Edmonton Chamber of Commerce
Craig Walbaum	COE City Operations	Maggie Davison	Edmonton Tourism
D'Arcy Ross	Edmonton Speed Skating Association	Mark Torjusen	COE Corporate Communications
Darrin Hagen	Guys in Disguise	Mary Ann McConnell-Boehm	COE Sustainable Development
Dave Onishenko	COE Sustainable Development	Maxine Trennert	Edmonton Chamber of Commerce
David Dodge	Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues; Green Energy Futures	Mike Warkentin	Northlands
David Malenfant	Flying Canoë Volant Festival	Nordahl Flakstad	Canadian Birkie Ski Festival
Don Marshall	COE Corporate Services	Paul Moulton	Edmonton Arts Council
Eduardo Sosa	COE Transportation Operations	Scott McKeen	City Councillor
Elaine Solez	Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues	Stefan Johansson	EIDOS Consultants Incorporated
Eric Stubbs	COE Corporate Services	Trish Webb	COE Corporate Communications
Glenda Hanna	Canadian Birkie Ski Festival	Walter Trocenko	COE Sustainable Development
Habib Fatmi	Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues		
Heather Seutter	COE Community Services		
Ian Smith	NextGen		

**Note:** Some of the past members have moved on from the organizations they represented, and City departments may have changed because of corporate reorganizations that occurred after members stepped down from the Advisory Council.



# Winter Cities Shake-Up Conference Steering Committee Members

2015 & 2017

<b>Alice Leung</b>	COE Communications	<b>Katie Soles</b>	Soles and Company
<b>Ben Henderson</b>	City Councillor	<b>Matthew Berry</b>	Edmonton Chamber of Commerce
<b>Brent Beatty</b>	Edmonton Tourism	<b>Nancy MacDonald</b>	Stantec
<b>Candice Stasynech</b>	COE City Manager's Office	<b>Nola Kilmartin</b>	KENNEDY
<b>Corinne Saad</b>	IBIS Communications	<b>Pascale Daigneault</b>	BUKSA Associates
<b>David Dodge</b>	Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues	<b>Paul Moulton</b>	Edmonton Arts Council
<b>Debby Kronewitt-Martin</b>	COE Office of the Chief Information Officer	<b>Punch Jackson</b>	Community member
<b>Ellen Finn</b>	COE Community Services	<b>Ramya Velmurugiah</b>	COE Communications
<b>Glenn Kubish</b>	ATB Financial	<b>Rebecca Swanson</b>	Committee Chair; BUKSA Associates
<b>Habib Fatmi</b>	Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues	<b>Roger Epp</b>	University of Alberta, UAlberta North
<b>Ian O'Donnell</b>	Manasc Isaac Architects	<b>Sally Kim</b>	Edmonton Arts Council
<b>Isla Tanaka</b>	COE Community Services	<b>Sameer Singh</b>	Media Architecture and Design Edmonton (MADE)
<b>Jackie Foord</b>	YWCA Edmonton	<b>Scott McKeen</b>	City Councillor
<b>Jewel Buksa</b>	BUKSA Associates	<b>Shauna Young</b>	IBIS Communications
<b>Joseph Pedrola</b>	Edmonton Economic Development Corporation	<b>Susan Holdsworth</b>	Conference Chair; COE Community Services
<b>Judy Wry</b>	Wry Consulting	<b>Wendy Andrews</b>	Community member
<b>Kate Gunn</b>	COE Community Services	<b>Wendy Kinsella</b>	Community member

**Note:** City departments are listed as they were named at the time of the conferences; most have changed since then because of corporate reorganizations.

## WinterCity Office

<b>Susan Holdsworth</b>	WinterCity Manager
<b>Isla Tanaka</b>	WinterCity Planner



## Special Acknowledgements

*In reports like this, consultants are generally not named or recognized. However, without them, the WinterCity Strategy would not be what it is. We in the WinterCity Office would first like to acknowledge Soles and Company, along with ibis communications, for creating the foundation on which the entire Strategy is built.*

*Their leadership, along with that of the WinterCity Think Tank, set the vision for our work. For a complete list of Think Tank members, see *For the Love of Winter: Strategy for Transforming Edmonton into a World-Leading Winter City*.*



Photo credit: Marc J Chalfoux

*Over the last four years, we have been fortunate to work with some exceptional people. Marliss Weber and Randy Brososky from Parodos Communications set the cheeky tone of the WinterCity Edmonton online presence, and have built and managed our social media communities. Complementing them, Derek Anton and Lori Pittard from Graphos refined the visual brand of WinterCity Edmonton, giving the Strategy a fun, whimsical look that has appealed to Edmontonians. The combined (and in some cases collaborative) expertise of these two companies has been vital to shifting the dialogue and culture in Edmonton towards a more playful, enjoyable winter season. They are truly part of the public success of the Strategy.*

*Other consultants who have played a key role in the success of the WinterCity Strategy include the teams from ibis communications and BUKSA Strategic Conference Services. Without them, we could not have hosted the two international Winter Cities Shake-Up conferences at the high standard that they set. ibis communications, along with Susan Gulko, were also instrumental in creating this evaluation and report. We must also thank the team at Laughing Dog Photography for their extraordinary images that have allowed us to create a professional brand that we're proud of.*

*We've also had two university students join us for short contracts. Edwin Hendrawan from UBC, and Ranon Soans from UAlberta. Edwin brought a background in business that helped us define some of our marketing strategies. Ranon created a research framework for examining Edmonton's pedways that will guide us in better understanding the social equity challenges around our downtown pedway system.*

*Finally, we must thank the unwavering support we've received from our leadership team: branch and department managers; and, most notably, our director, Kate Gunn. Without them, we would not have been able to base the Strategy so strongly on a community-driven model. We also thank them for the freedom they've given us to approach our work in creative, and sometimes unorthodox, ways.*

**Sue and Isla.**





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