

# Better Every Day



**THE CITY MANAGER'S QUARTERLY REPORT ISSUE 6**

**THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE ISSUE**



**Better Every Day** is a publication of The City of Calgary—we're Calgarians serving the city we live in, the city we love, making life better every day.

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Located on the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, and home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3, we are situated on land where the Bow and Elbow Rivers meet. The traditional names for this place we know as Calgary are *Moh-kins-tsis* (Blackfoot), *Wicispa Oyade* (Stoney Nakoda) and *Guts-ists-i* (Tsuut'ina).

CALGARY INCORPORATED  
AS A TOWN IN **1884**

POPULATION ESTIMATE 2022:  
**1,343,500**

**Third most liveable  
city in the world.**

THE ECONOMIST INTELLIGENCE UNIT, 2022

**Second lowest  
cost of living of  
Canadian cities.**

MERCER, 2021

## MESSAGE FROM THE CITY MANAGER

At The City of Calgary, we are continuously looking for efficiencies and improvements, and we understand the importance of transforming our organization to help solve some of our city's biggest challenges. The way we deliver our services is no exception, recognizing that customer experience is a driver of change. Whether it's having conversations and listening to the needs of citizens and industry, helping businesses start faster, grow easier, or realigning our internal structure, we aim to serve Calgarians even better. This includes providing the services needed to bring about success and prosperity, supporting a diverse economy that is inclusive of everyone.

As a large organization, we know we will always have work to do, and it is our priority to improve our services and bring even greater value to citizens. To do this we are mindful of new demands on our infrastructure, the changing expectations of Calgarians, and implementing ways we can provide citizens better experiences with us. These insights provide us the path to evolve our organization.

This edition of *Better Every Day* offers a few stories and examples of how we are focused on the success of Calgarians through a more customer-centric approach to our services. Transforming customer experience isn't about just one program or initiative – it's a way of doing business and critical to growing our organizational culture of innovation. Our collaboration with civic partners and local agencies serves to make us more innovative, flexible, and resilient so challenges can be converted into opportunities, and we can continue making life better every day.

David Duckworth, P. Eng, MBA







# FROM PEI TO CALGARY:

Why one entrepreneur thinks Calgary is the place to grow



From across the country, Jonah Chininga heard about the momentum building around tech in Calgary. As the founder of a fintech (financial technology) startup, he saw the opportunity to grow here after attending a session hosted by Calgary Economic Development and made the move from Prince Edward Island just a few months ago.



**3 REASONS WHY  
CALGARY IS THE BEST  
PLACE TO START A  
TECH COMPANY**

[Play video](#)



"Hearing about success stories like Neo Financial, the talent pool, the availability of investments and investors, as well as organizations such as Platform Calgary, really was a huge highlight in terms of what the Calgary ecosystem was offering and what we were looking for as a business," explains Jonah.

Jonah is the co-founder and CEO of [Miq](#) (Money IQ), a community banking platform that enables newcomers to get access to affordable credit. The platform is designed for the nine million credit-invisible people in Canada who are often shut out of traditional banking and lending systems.

The idea for the startup came from his own experience navigating financial challenges after moving to Canada from Zimbabwe in 2014. It's a long process to build credit history in a new country, and new immigrants are often considered high risk within the financial services sector because they aren't permanent residents.

Because of this reality, Miq has been working primarily on small business financing with immigrant communities.

"Whether they want to cover emergency expenses, or if they're interested in business, they have limited options," Jonah says. "Providing that alternative and a way for people to economically empower themselves has been huge for us."

In addition to securing partnerships with Visa and Equifax, another highlight for Miq came on October 14 when Jonah pitched his business at the inaugural Digital Commerce Bank [Calgary Fintech Award](#) showcase – and took home second place with a \$60,000 non-dilutive cash prize. Led by [Platform Calgary](#), the award was a culmination of three months of programming, fintech-specific workshops, mentoring sessions with world-class advisors, pitch coaching, and business evaluation.


It was a couple of months into this program that Jonah came to Calgary in a move he calls a "no-brainer".

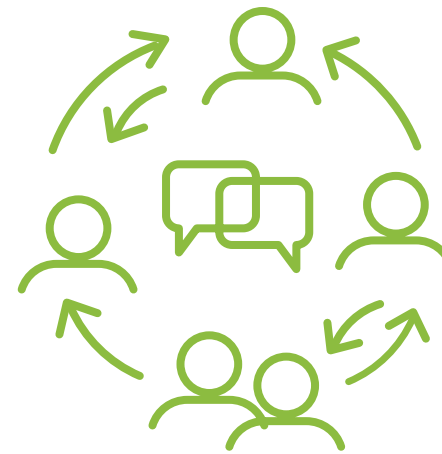
As part of the program, Jonah was welcomed into Calgary's tech and innovation community, and has been working out of the [Platform Innovation Centre](#) most days. The building is designed to facilitate collisions, with chances to learn from and collaborate with other entrepreneurs, investors, and tech-curious people every day.

With contribution from [Platform Innovation Centre](#)

**PLATFORM**  
calgary

"Being able to communicate and share experiences with other founders who've had similar experiences gives a kind of encouragement to keep going," he says.

Most importantly, Jonah's gained the one thing every entrepreneur needs most: community. Being able to navigate the highs and lows of entrepreneurship is easier with people who are going through – or have already gone through – a similar journey. 



**"If you're going into the ecosystem, you need to have a community, whether it's mentorship, resources, or other companies," Jonah says. "I think that's a huge need for any startup company. For us, that was an enabler to take us to the next stage."**



#### **SINCE JANUARY 1, 2022, THE PLATFORM CALGARY TEAM HAS:**

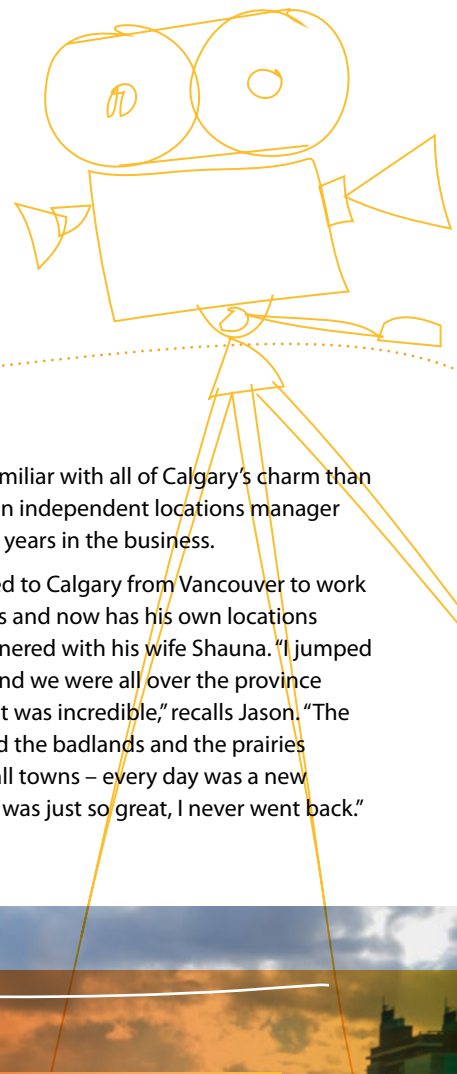
- held **935 coaching calls, 260 workshop hours, and 40 office hours** with partners through the Catalyzer program for early-stage startups.
- supported **1,031 entrepreneurs** and their early-stage companies.

#### **SINCE OPENING THE PLATFORM INNOVATION CENTRE ON JUNE 1, 2022 THERE HAVE BEEN:**

- **1,050 external bookings** of Platform Innovation Centre spaces and facilities (including meeting rooms, classrooms, event space and the KPMG Pitch Stage).
- Over **15,000 people** have attended a meeting, program or event at the Innovation Centre.



# CALGARY FITS THE SCRIPT



Is that Seattle, New York City, or small town America you see on the screen? Or is it Stephen Avenue, Inglewood, the airport tunnel, or Nose Hill?

Calgary has been acting as a stand in for many locations over the decades, ever since American production companies discovered the little gem to the north. The filming and production of movies, television series, and commercials is becoming a more common sight on our streetscapes. And no

one is more familiar with all of Calgary's charm than Jason Nolan, an independent locations manager with nearly 30 years in the business.

Jason was lured to Calgary from Vancouver to work on a miniseries and now has his own locations company partnered with his wife Shauna. "I jumped on the show and we were all over the province that summer, it was incredible," recalls Jason. "The mountains and the badlands and the prairies and these small towns – every day was a new exploration. It was just so great, I never went back."

Jason Nolan



## RECENT PRODUCTIONS IN CALGARY:

- HBO's *The Last of Us*,
- Ghostbusters: Afterlife*
- Prey*
- Fraggle Rock*
- Under the Banner of Heaven*
- Wynonna Earp*
- Guilty Party*
- Joe Pickett*
- Tribal*
- Billy the Kid*
- Heartland*
- Jann*
- Hallmark's *Ride*
- Birds Who Fear Death*
- Tales from the Rez*



"The majority of my work has been outside of the city until the last few years as a lot of shows will come here for the landscapes and the environment," continues Jason. "But that's changing quite a bit because Calgary is very generic in a way that it could play for multiple places and almost 'Anywhere USA'. With that flexibility, directors are definitely looking at what the city of Calgary has to offer."

Calgary has been positioning itself as film-friendly since the early 2000s, and The City is piloting a film-friendly strategy to streamline processes, systems, and internal structure to enable more responsive, cross-corporate service delivery to the film industry. Part of the initiative is a dedicated team helping expedite permitting (locations, tents, and more), reducing red tape, and simplifying the fee structures and payment options for those companies accessing City-owned assets, locations, or resources.

"It is positive that The City of Calgary starts with yes and wants to be there to have a conversation and figure it out together, instead of filling out paperwork and waiting," says Jason. "Progressively over the last 10 years, we're getting busier and busier, there's more incentives and a lot more public awareness of the movies and TV shows that are made here. It is nice to know there is a dedicated resource at The City that reaches out and asks which processes can be improved and makes the effort to implement them."

Filming takes place year-round all over the city in buildings and parks, on roads and sidewalks, and occasionally Calgarians may experience temporary disruptions such as road closures and parking restrictions while filming takes place. The City and production companies do their best to minimize disruptions, scheduling them for off-peak times and allowing for advance notice to neighbours and commuters.

"There's been a lot of really positive feedback about Calgary, our locations, our people," explains Jason who most recently worked on HBO's *The Last of Us* due to be released in 2023. "Especially on this film I heard from the producers, the director, 'we couldn't do this anywhere else'. The film industry, even in LA, is a small community and word spreads fast."

**"With the thousands and thousands of permit requests we put in on *The Last of Us*, we got every single one of them in time, we were never delayed, and all City departments pulled through," he continues.**

Film productions shot in Calgary enhance the city's reputation as a world-class destination and add to the vibrant arts and culture scene. [Calgary Economic Development](#) estimates that creative industries are one of the fastest growing segments of Calgary's economy, igniting many opportunities while strengthening our city's economic diversification and creating thousands of jobs for Calgarians.

Wendy Lumby, a ski racing Olympian and local talent agent agrees.

"It's a wonderful industry to be involved in and it's certainly booming for Alberta. But, you really notice it in recent years. Kevin Costner was in town, we had the *Ghostbusters* family here, *Jumanji* did a unit shoot here," says Wendy. "*The Last of Us* is the biggest production we've had here ever. And we had it for a full year, which is amazing that a production comes for that length of time, putting people to work and production companies spending money. As we see more and more productions coming here, it is only improving our economy."



## CALGARY FILM INDUSTRY BY THE NUMBERS (2021)\*

**140** Film and TV productions in Calgary

**771** Filming permits processed

**\$522M** in film and TV production spent in Calgary

**28 Companies** attracted and retained in film, TV, and interactive digital media

The Calgary Region is the location for over **80%** of Alberta's film, TV and commercial production spend

Calgary placed **10th** among the top 25 cities for moviemakers to live and work in North America by [MovieMaker magazine](#) for two years running

**451,735 sq. ft** of commercial industrial space absorbed by film and TV

**5,147 jobs** created, retained, or expanded in film and TV

More than **24,000 people** are employed by 4,400 businesses in the creative industries sector

The Calgary Film Commission won a prestigious **Alex Metcalfe Award** for their Environmental, Social and Governance Strategy for Film and TV in 2021

\*source Calgary Economic Development



Wendy Lumby

**“While the rest of the world was kind of shut down, we came up with these incredible ways to keep our actors and our crew safe on all productions with very, very strict protocols in order to keep shooting,” says Wendy.**

Calgary is Canada’s fourth-largest film and TV production jurisdiction (behind Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal). Canada competes with Great Britain for the second largest film and TV production spend in the world, behind the U.S.

Even throughout the height of the Covid pandemic, Wendy estimates that through her talent agency, Faces of Wendy, she was able to find work for literally thousands of people.


In addition to the myriad of landscapes and locations found in Calgary and area, Wendy says companies looking to feature authentic characters are impressed by the diversity of the local talent.

“I’m very proud of being the only Indigenous Olympic alpine ski racer ever, and equally as proud to be the only Indigenous talent agent,” says Wendy. “With my agency, I’ve tried to focus on different ethnicities, and it’s known for its strong diversity. When a company comes in search of Indigenous People, they’ll usually come knocking on my door, and I appreciate that. It’s an industry open to all ethnicities, opportunities for many, many people, and with all the different productions happening, we’re a lot busier than people think.”

What could the future hold for the film industry in Calgary?

“The feedback I consistently hear is always what a great group of people here in Alberta, very accommodating, very nice, but very professionally run,” says Wendy. “That’s a huge bow to everybody here because we are working very hard to have an appeal to a bigger audience and bring more attention to what we offer. When we’re accommodating and if we give them what they want, they’ll come back. If we shut down downtown Calgary for a few days, you may be inconvenienced. However, when that show comes out, it’s a massive nod to filming in Calgary, Alberta. I think that’s an important selling point as we all work to really grow this industry.”

Jason shares similar feedback, proud to be a part of Calgary’s hotbed of creative talent that has helped attract more shows in recent years.

“We can all take pride in seeing Calgary’s beautiful landscapes and recognizable landmarks on the big screen,” says Jason. “I hear it all the time how lucky we are and what a great place to live. They’re very jealous.” 

## HELP CALGARY BE A FILM-FRIENDLY CITY.

**Be cool:** As a Calgarian, you’re part of the inner circle - don’t share secret film locations on social media!

**Stay cool:** Sometimes road closures are required for filming. Stay tuned to City traffic reports, and allow a few extra minutes to get to your destination.

**Share your love** and support for Calgary’s film and TV industry #yycFilmTV.

**Learn more** about Calgary’s Film and TV sector, and re-share film friendly messages from @CalgaryEconomicDevelopment social channels on #FilmFridays.





# CALGARY FILM CENTRE

Calgary's story on the big screen



When The City of Calgary invested in building the [Calgary Film Centre](#), it was a calculated risk. Industry experts were certain if a facility was built, productions would come. Fast forward to 2021 when the city broke the annual film and TV production spend record at \$522 million. This record-breaking trend is expected to continue with a fully booked Calgary Film Centre through 2022 and 2023.

Tom Cox, an executive producer and managing partner of Calgary-based SEVEN24 Films, is among the renowned industry leaders who championed the Centre.

**“The Calgary Film Centre has a special place in my heart,” says Tom. “It was the first purpose-built facility in the city and helped us prove it was possible for Calgary to attract productions and investment from the private sector in the film and TV industry in our city and province.”**

Tom sees Calgary stepping more and more into the spotlight as a location that offers cutting edge infrastructure, world-class crews, and a breadth of backdrops.

“I love the access to different environments Calgary offers – from mountains, foothills, prairies and the Badlands, to slick office towers and gritty urban streets – we have incredible natural resources offering a broad palette to paint with,” says Tom.

The Calgary Film Centre, alongside William F. White Studios and Rocky Mountain Film Studios, form an arsenal of world-class infrastructure for Calgary’s rapidly growing film and TV industry, and contribute to over half a million sq. ft. of purpose-built and retrofit studio space.



Tom Cox

Tom believes that a key contributor to the film industry transformation in Calgary is the sense of community within the city.

“Calgary has an entrepreneurial blue-sky spirit that I see not just in the film and TV industry, but in every aspect of Calgary life. I think this is what sets Calgary apart from other film jurisdictions. If you have a strong creative idea, you can make it happen here,” shares Tom.

With a career boasting an impressive highlight reel of accolades, including *Heartland* and Academy Award-winning *Brokeback Mountain*, filming Season 4 of *Wynonna Earp* in the Calgary Film Centre during the pandemic remains a cherished memory.

“The Calgary crew and cast took so much pride and ownership in the production. The last day of filming felt like a miracle,” smiles Tom as he remembers the team’s celebration. “But there was more to it than that – there was a sense of community spirit, family spirit.” 🍷



# AT YOUR SERVICE

Students help businesses get online

As Calgary's oldest main street, Inglewood has seen its share of independent small businesses throughout the decades and is the original "shop local" experience. Shades of Sleep has been a fixture on Ninth Avenue for nearly 15 years offering specialized sleepwear, exclusive bedding, and luxurious bath accessories.

As the integration of digital technology becomes more fundamental to all areas and sizes of business, even established businesses may need assistance creating a presence on digital platforms to stay competitive and on top of how value is delivered to customers.

"This is a totally new world to me. I was learning as I go," laughs Sheila, a former paralegal turned entrepreneur and owner of [Shades of Sleep](#). "It takes time to learn a new skill, all while running and operating my business. That's the hard part as an entrepreneur is trying to fit all those pieces of the puzzle together. Social media is always evolving, and it is tough to stay on top of it, so I needed a bit of help."

Enter the [Digital Service Squad \(DSS\)](#). The DSS is a pilot initiative from The City of Calgary made up of a team of post-secondary students who help small businesses get online, digitize, and monetize, all for free. The DSS offers one-on-one assistance to eligible small businesses across Calgary to help adopt new technologies and embrace digital marketing.

"I didn't have the tools before, and Paul with the Squad helped me get those in place," explains Sheila. "This was a huge learning curve for me. It's a pretty phenomenal service The City is providing. I can't emphasize enough the importance of the support of small business and the shop local movement. I have seen customers make a shift to think about their shopping habits."

Lisa, founder of [Sownsmith](#), also took advantage of the free services offered through DSS. Sownsmith is a new online business offering ethically made clothing designed by Lisa and manufactured in Canada from sustainable fabrics. Lisa also contributes seven per cent of her sales to fight human trafficking.



Lisa Kwong

**"Just after I opened my online store, one of my local Calgary suppliers recommended that I check out the Digital Service Squad after I was sharing my struggles about researching SEO (search engine optimization) and all this technical stuff I found so confusing," explains Lisa.**

"I'm just so grateful to have Paul from the Squad. He was so approachable and patient, and really helped me understand. I really appreciate this program; I don't know how else I could have learned it."

Lisa says she feels set up for success and is excited about the future of her online business.

"I feel so confident now in having the right pieces in the back end of my website, which you need to have if you want to grow," says Lisa. "Paul explained how Google works, how people find me, how I get indexed and all these pieces that needed to be there. He also recommended tons of resources. How could I have figured that out on my own?"







Sheila and Paul



The DSS isn't just great for businesses, it's great for students too. Paul, a newcomer to Canada from the Philippines, is studying Business Administration as an international student at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) and was one of the first students hired by the program.

"This is my first job in Canada, and I feel so lucky that I found this contract opportunity at The City," says Paul. "As an international student, I wasn't able to find jobs at banks, but this offers me the chance to get some Canadian experience and meet so many business owners who may be interested in hiring me after my contract is completed."

As mature student with experience at JPMorgan Chase & Co. and working in social media management with startups in the Philippines,

Paul has a wealth of knowledge to share with local small businesses.

"Part of the challenge is to make sure that your clients will be comfortable with the topic they need you to help them with," he says. "It's very technical for sure but you can change the verbiage and provide examples to ensure that they completely understand what we're doing. There is some responsibility for the business owner to book regular appointments, check ins and do a bit of homework. Just because you have a website doesn't mean people are going to know who you are. You have to market it and that's the difference from what you're seeing and from what I'll teach you and what you will see in the future."



### DID YOU KNOW THE DIGITAL SERVICE SQUAD:

- is in touch with over 4,000 local businesses
- employs 14 post-secondary students
- is part of the Digital Economy Program, delivered by [Business Link](#) in collaboration with [Digital Main Street](#). It is funded by the [Government of Alberta](#) and [Prairies Economic Development Canada](#)



# MINDING YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Starting a small business is both exciting and intimidating. In addition to assuming several roles as an entrepreneur, there's a lot to consider when taking a great idea and turning it into a profit - a business plan, financing, the perfect location, and the permits and licensing that may be required.



While all new business owners will encounter challenges, new Canadians face additional challenges when starting and sustaining a business. Language, culture, and access to resources can quickly become barriers when trying to establish a small business in a new country.

When Anastasia and her husband immigrated to Calgary from Russia in early 2020, they were both seeking employment in the energy sector. Three months after their arrival, the pandemic forced the closure of most workplaces and many companies reduced staff; it was not an ideal time

to job hunt, let alone in a new city or country. Anastasia used that time in lock down to really understand her passion and committed to making a career change. Prior to immigrating, she enrolled in courses to become a nail technician, and it soon became her dream to open her own business offering her specialized skills.

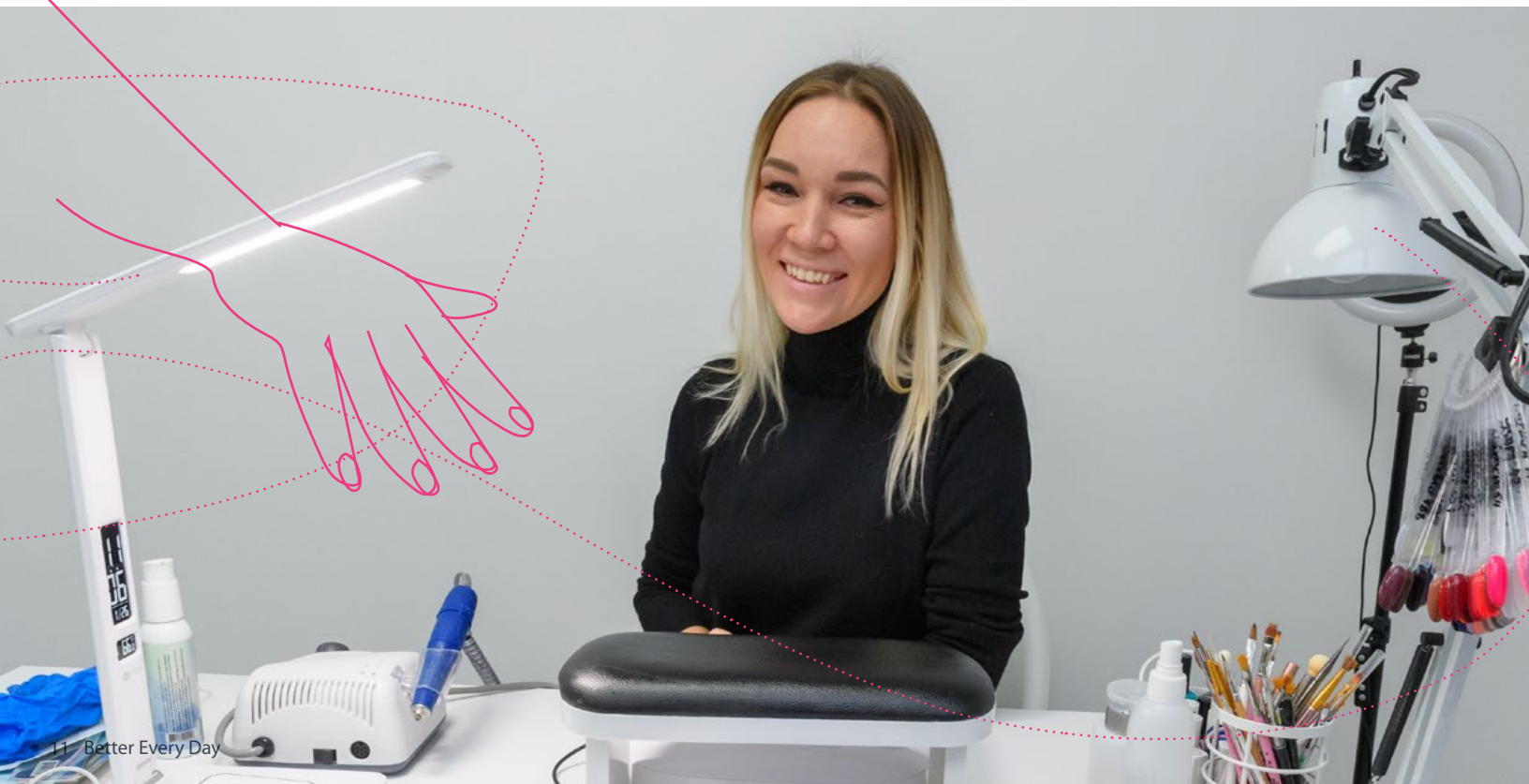
"I finished up my courses just as we were accepted to move to Canada, and during Covid, I took even more courses to get my diploma," explains Anastasia. "But I wasn't confident yet in my skills and needed to understand

what services were needed in Calgary. I was surprised to discover that my training was of much higher quality and after a few bad experiences working in other salons, I knew I was ready to open my own business."

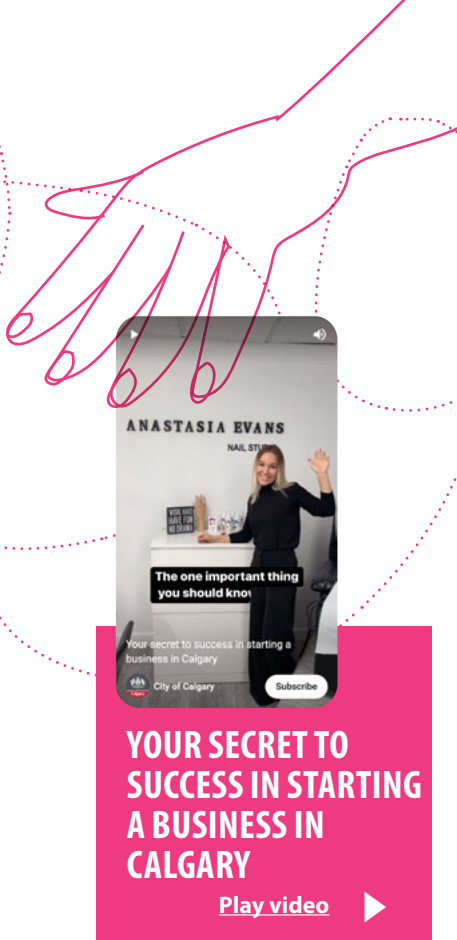
Anastasia registered in the 300-hour, 10-week intensive Build Your Business – Newcomers Entrepreneur Program through the [Calgary Catholic Immigration Society \(CCIS\)](#). The CCIS provides settlement and integration services to all immigrants and refugees in southern Alberta and the Build Your Business program offers knowledge, tools, and support to help newcomers successfully launch a small business.

"After Covid, and then having a baby, I knew I just needed to do something," says Anastasia. "And then, the answer was in my email.

Information about opening a business can be found at [calgary.ca/opensooner](https://calgary.ca/opensooner).







**YOUR SECRET TO SUCCESS IN STARTING A BUSINESS IN CALGARY**

I got an email from the CCIS about the Build Your Business program and I registered for the very first cohort. I know a lot about my craft, but because I wanted to open a business in Calgary where I know nobody, I know nothing about the local rules, regulations and laws, I was super confused and intimidated. I would have never been able to open anything without this course."

As part of CCIS's Build Your Business program, The City of Calgary, through the Business Experience Representative Team, participated in a session to share valuable information about business licensing in Calgary. A specialized Business Experience Representative Team launched in May 2022 as a one-stop shop for business applicants. The team works with local entrepreneurs who are interested in opening a restaurant, brewery, or urban agriculture business, but representatives are also available to provide information and outreach to groups like CCIS. Business Experience Reps guide

applicants through the entire licensing process, creating faster and more predictable outcomes.


"When people from The City came to our class, I was so, so surprised to see three people there to help us and willing to answer all of our questions," says Anastasia. "Where I am from, the government is not working with the people. They feel they are above that, and it is all so difficult and complicated with nobody willing to help. Though The City was able to answer all my questions, I think the most valuable thing for me was to know that I am not alone, that the government is not against me, but working with me, and that they are really there to help."

Business licences are required depending on your business activity and promote individual and public safety. Once registered, many businesses need a business licence and may also need additional permits or inspections.

In just under a month, Anastasia launched her beauty business

Anastasia Evans Nail Studio and set up a location on Calgary's popular 17 Avenue SW.

"I was so motivated, I started to look for a place during the CCIS course," she laughs. "And I received my business licence very quickly; it took a bit more time for the Alberta Health inspection as they have very strict rules for my type of business, but now I am open for business."

"So far, during my time in Calgary and through the course, I have met some very good people – the instructors and my classmates, and now my friends," she continues. 

**"I would say to those looking to start a business to take a course, be passionate and don't panic. You'll face challenges but if you're ready with a strong idea and plan, everyone is on your side – everybody is wanting to help you succeed. It is still just really unbelievable to me."**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The City is currently waiving fees for new and renewed business licences for companies located in Calgary. Fees will be waived until March 16, 2023.

All businesses operating in Calgary are required to register their business with The City of Calgary.





# LOOK AHEAD



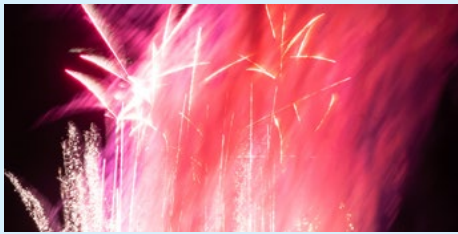
## DECEMBER

### [Zoolights](#)

To Jan 8

### [New Year's Eve](#)

Dec 31



Enjoy the outdoors

[Winter fire pits](#)

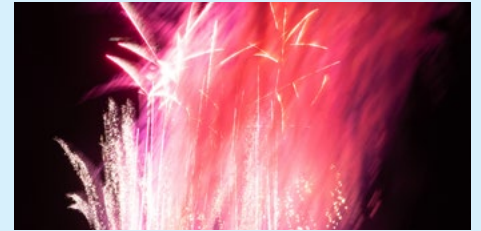
[Outdoor skating rinks](#)

[Toboggan hills](#)

[Cross country ski and snowshoe tracks](#)

Take a winter walk in our [parks](#) and [pathways](#)

Heritage Park [New Year's Eve Dinner](#)



## MARCH

### [International Women's Day](#)

Mar 8

### [Earth Hour](#)

Mar 25

## JANUARY

### [High Performance Rodeo](#)

Jan 16 – Feb 5

### [Chinook Blast](#)

Jan 21-27

### [Chinese Lunar New Year Festival](#)

Jan 22

### [BIG Winter Classic](#)

Jan 26-29

### [International Holocaust](#)

### [Remembrance Day](#)

Jan 27

## FEBRUARY

### [Black History Month](#)

February

### [YYC Hot Chocolate Fest](#)

Feb 1- Feb 28

### [Midwinter Bluesfest](#)

last week Feb

### [Block Heater](#)

Feb 17 -20

### [Pink Shirt Day](#)

Feb 22

## ANYTIME

### [Calgary AfterSchool programs](#)

Calgary AfterSchool is offering several free programs. The programs are offered two to three days a week at various recreation facilities, community centres and community-based partner agencies.

### [Mobile Adventure Playground](#)

Join us for a self-directed, drop-in program that use loose parts and natural materials to inspire active and creative outdoor play, and connect people, young and old, to nature.

### [Snow Bans Restricted Parking](#)

### [Online Map](#)

Know which streets have parking restrictions by using The City of Calgary's online map that shows banned parking locations.

### [City of Calgary map gallery](#)

### [Development Map](#)

Stay informed about the developments in your neighbourhood and across The City.

### [Volunteer with The City of Calgary](#)

Experiences include Off-Leash Ambassadors, Animal Wellness Support, Adopt-A-Park, Tour Guides and more!



*This list is not exhaustive. Dates are subject to change.*



# RESILIENT ROOFING REBATE RECEIVES ACCOLADES

Alberta sees more hailstorms than any other province according to data gathered by Environment and Climate Change Canada. Meteorologists say the Rocky Mountains and elevation create the perfect storm for the development of hail, with Calgary situated in “hail alley”.

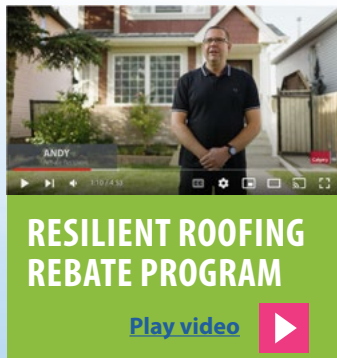
When a storm rolled in and hail started to fall in the Calgary region in June 2020, it could have been just a regular hailstorm, as the city sees an average of five hailstorms per year. But according to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, that storm created an estimated \$1.3 billion in insured damages, and became the fourth costliest natural disaster in Canada’s history.

The hailstorm damaged approximately 70,000 homes and vehicles. The hailstones were large and fell as fast as 100 km/h, according to The Weather Network data.

“I was down south in Calgary at the time, and my daughter called me saying there was large hail coming down,” recalls homeowner Andy. “It was hitting the house, hitting the windows... Arriving at the house, you could see the damage - there were holes in the siding and large hail on the ground about the size of a tennis ball.”

As a result of this intense storm and reported damage, The City launched the Resilient Roofing Rebate Program to incentivize Calgarians to consider impact-resistant roofing products to help protect homes from future damage and contribute to building a more resilient city. The program provided information about the options available in impact-resistant roofing materials and offered a \$3,000 rebate when those materials were used to replace damaged roofs.

“I learned about the impact resistant roofing material through contractors,” says Andy. “We had the upgrade done and watching the news it mentioned the Roofing Rebate program offered by The City of Calgary. When I heard we would get a rebate for using the resilient roofing product, I was happy as initial costs were pretty expensive, and this helped offset the payments that had been made.”



Recently, The City was awarded the first-ever Resilience and Recovery Award from The Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, Canada’s leading disaster research institute, for rolling out the rebate program specifically creating awareness, incentives, and regulation. The City estimates it was able to provide support to 1600 homeowners.

