



# Strategic Plan 2022-2026



Exhibition Place

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## 1.0 Message from the Chair and the CEO

The Exhibition Place Strategic Plan is a narrative that speaks to our priorities over the next four and a half years, creating a road map that effectively aligns resources with priorities towards our Vision of becoming **Canada's Premier Destination for Conventions, Exhibitions, Events, and Entertainment**. This aspiration permeates every goal of this Strategic Plan.

As part of our strategic planning process, the Exhibition Place Board of Governors, stakeholders, and staff have had an opportunity to provide their views and reflect on the Vision, Mission, and guiding Values to ensure these broad directional statements are relevant to the future of Exhibition Place.

Reflecting on the current state, Exhibition Place has been challenged by the recent COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic may represent a transformational moment, fundamentally altering how we work and requiring us to reestablish our services to visitors, clients, and tenants. Our Plan will respond to this changing landscape.

The Strategic Plan was built with a forward-thinking perspective. We recognize that the grounds and the area surrounding Exhibition Place are undergoing complex infrastructure transformation, which will affect the movement, circulation, and utilization of the property.

As a result of these ongoing infrastructure developments, new opportunities that impact Exhibition Place's functionality, from park use, tenant activity, client service delivery, and connectivity, will be appraised with outlined solutions. This Strategic Plan is intended to serve both as a responsive approach that reflects the priorities of our partners and tenants, and as a corporate strategy which informs Exhibition Place's business decisions.

From a workforce perspective, the most notable pursuit is the extent to which the theme of diversity, equity, and inclusion has risen to the forefront. The importance of creating opportunities through an equity lens approach to policy and recruitment design and an inclusive approach to service delivery has been a significant theme among Board members, staff, and stakeholder groups.

The prevalence of sustainability within this Strategic Plan reflects a commitment to environmentally and socially sustainable tenets. The focus on sustainability relates to good governance and recognition that being a responsible City agency requires effective planning for meeting and maintaining infrastructure needs. In the context of the environment, there is a solid commitment to supporting Exhibition Place as a leader and innovator.

The successful execution of this Strategic Plan will require astute leadership and a willingness to embrace the divergent views of all stakeholders. The catalyst that will drive our success will require a realignment of resources to achieve the goals and ensure staff are equipped with the collaborative skills and resources to lead Exhibition Place over the next four and a half years.



Councillor Mark Grimes  
Chair



Don Boyle  
Chief Executive Officer

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## 2.0 Exhibition Place Strategic Framework

**Our Vision:** Canada's premier destination for conventions, exhibitions, events, and entertainment





### 3.0 Introduction: Building for the Future

#### ***Our Foundation as a Hub of Activity and Economic Powerhouse in the City of Toronto***

Exhibition Place is a thriving hub for Canada's largest conventions and exhibitions, entertainment and sporting events, and cultural attractions. Based on the Destinations International Event Impact Calculator, these activities generate over \$500 million in economic benefit for the City, Region, and Province.<sup>1</sup> Over 5.5 million guests visit the 192-acre site located near the shore of Lake Ontario annually. Visitors can enjoy exhibitions and convention centre events; performance, music and entertainment venues; sporting complexes; and monuments, parklands, and historic sites. The opportunities for using the grounds at Exhibition Place and the impact they have on the City and Region are significant because of the many tenants, clients, and events that take place across the grounds. Working together with our tenants, clients, and other partners allows Exhibition Place to deliver world-leading events and experiences to the visitors of our grounds.

In the past, Exhibition Place has hosted premier events across the grounds. These include: World Youth Day, the G8/G20 Summit Media Centre, and the Pan American Games.

Exhibition Place is also the home to a 400-room hotel (Hotel X Toronto), the Toronto FC, the Toronto Argonauts, and the Toronto Marlies!

This mixture of commercial, entertainment, sporting events, and cultural attractions within a single multi-use site is unique in North America. There are no sites in North America able to match the capabilities of Exhibition Place. Our site can deliver both indoor and open-air world-class events; host the City's largest events and international competitions; and drive public enjoyment of music, art, culture, and open space.

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<sup>1</sup> An important activity for Exhibition Place moving forward, and as described within this Strategic Plan, will be to develop a comprehensive understanding of the economic impact and value of the grounds. It is anticipated that this figure will increase as the full impact of Exhibition Place is studied in greater detail.



## ***Our Strategic Plan***

Our Strategic Plan establishes a framework to guide the decision-making of the Exhibition Place Board of Governors, management, and staff toward our long-term Vision. The Strategic Plan outlines our view of the future for Exhibition Place, the areas we must succeed in to achieve success, and the values our organization will promote. Our renewed vision builds on our legacy as a “gathering place” to establish Exhibition Place as Canada’s premier destination for conventions, exhibitions, events, and entertainment. We will continue to be a place where people gather – be they local, regional, or international visitors.

Our Strategic Plan recognizes the value and significance of Exhibition Place as an economic powerhouse in the City of Toronto. We will continue to enhance our capacity to drive investments and economic impact for the City. The Strategic Plan also considers the role of Exhibition Place as a host for major public celebrations and events, and a significant part of the local community and waterfront.

The future of Exhibition Place is also being guided by the Exhibition Place Master Plan. This is a plan that outlines the path forward for the physical development and evolution of the Exhibition Place grounds. The emerging concepts from the Master Plan for improvements and developments include the reinforcement of three overlapping areas at Exhibition Place: The Relax, Entertain, and Exhibit zones.

The Master Plan has been a key input into the creation of the Strategic Plan and has been used to inform and shape the goals and objectives contained within this document. Both documents will work together to guide future developments at Exhibition Place.

### ***The City’s Master Plan for Exhibition Place includes considerations to:***

- Delineate usage zones (e.g., meeting/convention, sport, entertainment, services, parkland, conservation) and identify target future infrastructure needs and/or development opportunities within each zone;
- Identify connectivity between each zone within Exhibition Place, including the nature and type of support services, transportation and parking;
- Identify the linkages to future public transit and road networks;
- Identify opportunities for private sector involvement where appropriate;
- Ensure that the preservation and interpretation of cultural assets has a predominant position in the planning (e.g., heritage buildings and public art);
- Include public input as a vital part of the process;
- Consider the future integration of the western waterfront plan, including a redeveloped Ontario Place.

## 3.1 Building within a Complex Environment

### 3.1.1 Welcoming back visitors to in-person events!

The opportunities and possibilities for Exhibition Place are only matched by the complexity of the environment in which the organization operates. The COVID-19 pandemic had a substantial effect on the convention, exhibition, events, and entertainment industry. Exhibition Place has adapted to new norms within this industry responding and helping to lead the conversation on how conventions, exhibitions, consumer and trade shows will thrive into the future. This includes reinvesting in technology to meet industry needs; identifying amenities and business partners that can offer complementary services to visitors and potentially provide funding towards infrastructure and capital projects which will enhance capacity to attract and grow onsite events. By working with our tenants and other partners that currently operate on the grounds of Exhibition Place, we are uniquely positioned to offer experiences and outcomes to visitors that far surpass what any one individual organization could provide.



### 3.1.2 Protecting and spotlighting our assets!

For many Torontonians and visitors to the city, the iconic buildings, structures, and entrances to and around the grounds define Exhibition Place. Much of the landscape showcases and reminds visitors of the history of the Exhibition Place grounds and the events that have been hosted there. Increasingly, the facilities on the grounds are modernizing. As Exhibition Place continues to ensure the upkeep and maintenance of our historic assets, the need to plan for the future is also paramount.



### 3.1.3 Driving and supporting exciting change in our local area!

The Exhibition Place grounds and surrounding areas are in a time of transition with many current and planned infrastructure projects. Directly to the south of Exhibition Place is Ontario Place, a site that is currently undergoing a comprehensive redevelopment, the details of which continue to emerge. The revitalization of this site will provide opportunities for enhanced connections for pedestrians and cyclists and collaborative planning to promote the adoption of complementary uses across both sites.





The Province of Ontario continues to move forward with its transportation vision for the City of Toronto, which includes the creation of the Ontario Line. The line is planned to begin at the Ontario Science Centre at Eglinton Avenue and Don Mills Road and continue to Exhibition Place and Ontario Place. This new transit line will transform the area adjacent to the Exhibition Go Station and TTC Exhibition Loop into a major transit hub serving as a western entry point to the City. This will present opportunities and complexities in the operations of Exhibition Place as details on the impacts to planned streetcar connections and potential changes to Exhibition GO Station continue to be identified.

### 3.1.4 Improving the movement of people and enjoyment of Exhibition Place grounds!

Our future will involve working closely with our partners to fully plan and prepare for the transformation of the area. Core to this will be supporting the movement of people through the Exhibition Place grounds as we welcome an increasing number of our visitors to our grounds through the northern entry points. Driven not just by new transit developments, but also by the growth of neighbourhoods directly north of Exhibition Place, these northern entry points will continue to be developed and enhanced to ensure visitors are presented with a welcoming, barrier-free, and easy to navigate access to the grounds. This will include a significant focus on the northern access points as the review and redesign of this area is undertaken to accommodate the growing number of visitors and enhance the north-south connections between northern transit hubs and Liberty Village to Ontario Place. Our work will continue over the coming years to also ensure that once at Exhibition Place, visitors can continue to navigate to their final destination with ease; explore the history of the grounds and buildings; and take in new experiences with enhancements to digital wayfinding, illuminated signage, enhanced lighting, and a series of consistent pedestrian linkages which align in look and feel. These initiatives will further support opportunities for community-focused activities such as biking, yoga in the park, jazz at the Bandshell, a farmers' market, outdoor film nights; and new commercial expansions such as restaurants, local vendors, and entertainment venues will provide new sources for community enjoyment of the grounds year-round.

Guiding the many development projects on-site is the Exhibition Place Master Plan<sup>ii</sup> which outlines a concept for how the grounds may be used. Central to this is the idea of Relax, Entertain, and Exhibit zones. This strategic plan is aligned with the concepts included in the Master Plan and provides guidance on how Exhibition Place moves forward.



<sup>ii</sup> City of Toronto. 2020. Next Place Plan: Phase 1 Proposals Report for Exhibition Place. Available via: [https://www.toronto.ca/ext/digital\\_comm/pdfs/city-planning/next-place-plan-exhibition-place-proposals-report-may-2020.pdf](https://www.toronto.ca/ext/digital_comm/pdfs/city-planning/next-place-plan-exhibition-place-proposals-report-may-2020.pdf)

## 4.0 Our Business, Environment, and Economic Impact

Exhibition Place is Canada's largest convention, exhibition, event, and entertainment complex. The site hosts over 1260 events each year attracting 5.5 million visitors from across Ontario, Canada, and international destinations.

Owned by the City of Toronto, Exhibition Place maintains many public assets and heritage buildings and promotes the use of the grounds. Central to this, is the need to maintain a profitable commercial business model to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of Exhibition Place's operations.

Currently, Exhibition Place's core revenue is generated through its conventions and events business. Exhibition Place generates over \$55 million in revenues annually with a broader economic impact of over \$500 million for Toronto. The 192-acre site hosts some of the City's and country's largest events and public celebrations, while the Enercare and Beanfield Centres host world-class conferences, exhibitions, and consumer shows. The Enercare Centre alone is the largest convention centre in Canada, and in the top 20 centres of North America with over 1.1 million square feet of contiguous space.

Exhibition Place also hosts numerous businesses who are tenants occupying Exhibition Place's various historic buildings and assets. The businesses operating on Exhibition Place grounds provide exceptional experiences and visitor opportunities and contribute to Exhibition Place's revenue and the City of Toronto's property tax assessments.

The direct revenues generated by Exhibition Place are significant for the City of Toronto, as is the direct contribution by the businesses operating on the Exhibition Place site. Further, our financial impact on the region goes well beyond our revenue generating activities or the staff we directly employ. Exhibition Place is an economic powerhouse for the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario and fuels the visitor economy. The events, conferences, tradeshow, and other activities that occur at Exhibition Place attract visitors who are critical sources of visitor spending and economic activity for local businesses, airlines, hotels, retail, restaurants and the entire supply chain affected by the goods and services they provide. Domestic and international events, including professional-sporting events also draw visitors from around the world. Vendors and service providers that cater to and support the activities on Exhibition Place grounds are exposed to numerous opportunities and markets to highlight new services, technology, or innovation. Airlines, rail, and other transit operators benefit from the movement of visitors towards Exhibition Place. The visitor economy creates jobs, generates tax revenue, and drives growth in the overall economy for the city, the region, and the province.

### ***Renowned Events on Our Grounds***

Exhibition Place is known for hosting some of Canada's most prominent events that attract local, provincial, and international visitors. Some of these events include: The Canadian National Exhibition, Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, the Honda Indy Toronto, Toronto Caribbean Carnival, Toronto International Boat Show, the National Home Show, and the One of A Kind Shows.

### ***Our Notable Venues and Tenants***

Our grounds are home to several venues welcoming guests across for various activities, events, and gatherings. These venues include: Enercare Centre, Beanfield Centre, Better Living Centre, Queen Elizabeth Building, Bandshell Park, Liberty Grand, Medieval Times, Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Toronto Event Centre, Hotel X Toronto, BMO Field, and the Coca-Cola Coliseum.



**The direct annual economic impact of Exhibition Place is estimated at over \$500 million to Toronto.<sup>iii</sup>** The major outdoor public events hosted at Exhibition Place alone contribute support to over 2,000 jobs in the City on an annual basis.<sup>iv</sup>

The economic impact continues beyond this. Exhibition Place can shine a spotlight on the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario. Attracting and hosting international sporting competitions or industry-leading exhibitions and conferences attracts innovators and investors to the City, and provides an opportunity to showcase the talent, investment opportunities, and possibilities of Toronto. As we continue to contribute to the visitor economy and generate this economic impact, greater emphasis will be placed on fully capturing and understanding the value of both direct and indirect economic activity, so that we can monitor and adjust strategies that maximize positive impacts for the City of Toronto.

As we build for the future, the contributions to the Toronto and Provincial economy will grow. Growing and supporting the activities that generate this economic investment, including our tenants, conventions, and exhibitions, as well as the entertainment and sporting events that occur on the grounds must be a priority for our organization. This will involve us working in a coordinated fashion with our tenants, the local community, transit and transportation agencies, and Ontario Place.

<sup>iii</sup> Exhibition Place. 2021 Operating Budget & 2021-2030 Capital Plan. <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/bu/bgrd/backgroundfile-159987.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup> City of Toronto, Economic Development and Culture. 2013. Use of Exhibition Place Grounds as a Public Event Space.

## 5.0 Exhibition Place Strategic Plan

### ***Our Strategic Plan***

Exhibition Place’s focus will reinforce our position as a leader in our industry with strategic goals that drive us towards our vision to be a premier destination for conventions, exhibitions, events, and entertainment in North America.

### 5.1 Our Vision for Our Future

***Canada’s premier destination for conventions, exhibitions, events, and entertainment.***

We want to be recognized as a leader in the convention and events industry that provides value to our visitors, clients, and tenants at the regional, provincial, national, and international level. We are positioning our organization to be innovative to enhance our service offerings, improve our customer experience, and better meet the needs of our wide array of stakeholders.

### 5.2 Our Mission: How we will move towards our Vision

***Professionally delivering convention, exhibition and event services, sports and entertainment to create exceptional experiences that grow our visitor economy.***

Our Mission summarizes what we do every day as we work towards our Vision. We recognize that this cannot be done without close collaboration and working partnerships with other levels of government and agencies, local businesses, the community, and neighbouring attractions. The community also plays an important role in our activities, and feedback from members of the community helps to inform key decisions made by Exhibition Place. The Toronto community will be a primary beneficiary of our efforts to provide more activity on the grounds 365-days a year, improve the connections and flow of people across the site, and highlight our culturally significant exhibits and buildings.





## 5.4 Strategic Goals

To fulfill our Mission and achieve our Vision, we must focus on key areas for the greatest impact. Over the next four and a half years, our focus will be on six Strategic Goals that will advance our organizational capabilities to be Canada's premier destination for *conventions, exhibitions, events, and entertainment*.



In the pages that follow, more details are provided about each of these Strategic Goals, our anticipated outcomes, and how we will measure our progress and success.



## 5.4.1 Strategic Goal 1: Exceed Client and Visitor Expectations

Guests, visitors, and patrons are central to our business. Whether they are attending a tradeshow or sporting event; spending time at one of the businesses on the grounds; or a member of the community enjoying a concert – Exhibition Place revolves around visitors. The experience of visitors on our grounds, regardless of the reason for their visit, needs to be exceptional. Our capital projects and investments on our grounds need to make it easy to navigate our site; promote green practices and site safety; and provide our staff with the ability to exceed the expectations of our clients, guests, and visitors.

### For Exhibition Place, this means:

- We will invest in infrastructure projects and work with partners, the City, and the Province to provide welcoming consistent entrance points to Exhibition Place, improve pedestrian connections and wayfinding, make it easier to navigate the site during the day and evening with illuminated digital wayfinding and building signage, deliver competitively priced services and utilities to exhibitions and events, and highlight and promote points of cultural and historic value.
- We will ensure visitors have a safe and sustainable experience and demonstrate leadership in green practices and site safety.
- We will continue to engage with the community to inform them of new developments, gather feedback, and promote positive visitor experiences for members of the community.

### Expected Outcomes:

We will know that we are being successful in this area if we can demonstrate:

- Improved guests and visitor experience scores and assessments for people visiting Exhibition Place.
- Improved movement and flow of visitors throughout the Exhibition Place grounds and ability to access sites of interest.
- Successful implementation of capital projects across the grounds.





## 5.4.2 Strategic Goal 2: Promote Site Animation 365-days a Year

Our Vision requires the animation and activation of the Exhibition Place grounds to promote activity 365-days a year. The Master Plan for Exhibition Place includes three overlapping program zones. The Relax Zone will benefit from maximizing the use of our facilities like Bandshell Park and Centennial Square Park, and identifying year-round opportunities for passive and active recreation. The Entertainment Zone hosts major sporting events, but also the potential to allow for more day-to-day programming that would benefit both members of the community and other visitors. Within the Exhibit Zone we have an opportunity to build the visitor economy by attracting conventions and exhibitions in a way that draws visitors to Exhibition Place, generates economic impact, and inspires community pride in the heritage of the grounds. Our Strategic Plan will build on these concepts as each of these zones will benefit from increased activity and allow us to truly transform Exhibition Place into a premier destination that attracts visitors daily.

The grounds of Exhibition Place are full of historic and culturally significant buildings, art, and architecture. In many cases, these assets have been enjoyed by visitors for over a generation. However, we have an opportunity now to bring new life and excitement into these assets and generate activity. We will highlight our historic buildings, art, and architecture, and provide the right opportunities to enjoy the cultural and recreational benefits of the site.

### **For Exhibition Place, this means:**

- We will expand planned and passive programming opportunities to maximize and improve experiences on the grounds. Examples of how we may further animate the Exhibition Place grounds include:
  - Community-focused events – Holiday/winter markets; winter wonderland; spring festival; farmers’ markets; jazz or other music festivals.
  - Permanent or pop-up vendors including restaurants; experiential art installations.
  - Activities – walking tours; yoga; biking and running trails; picnics; and other activities.
  - Invest in new public art.
  - Increase partnerships to expand programming and establish year-round tours attracting new visitors to our grounds.
- We will complete a review of the green space and park amenities, and design to promote alignment with both our events and the needs of the broader community while being guided by the principles of the Relax Zone articulated in the Exhibition Place Master Plan.

### **Expected Outcomes:**

We will know that we are being successful in this area if we can demonstrate:

- Expansion of the number of activities or events that promote a 365-day use of Exhibition Place and that provide new opportunities for the community to enjoy the grounds.
- Recognition from external organizations for our efforts to showcase historic sites and Indigenous history of the area; art, music or other cultural events and installations; urban architecture and design; and sustainable practices.
- Increase in recreational activities and opportunities for the community to engage in physical activity to promote community health and wellbeing.
- Become a top 20 visitor tour attraction in Toronto.
- Increase community partnerships.



### 5.4.3 Strategic Goal 3: Solidify Position as a Leading Convention and Event Space



The conventions, exhibitions, conferences, and events at Exhibition Place represent the core of our business.

We must continue to grow this business to sustain our operations and promote economic activity across the region. This will require investments in our facilities, technology, and infrastructure. The tenants and businesses operating on the Exhibition Grounds provide a unique opportunity for us to promote greater collaboration with, and between, these businesses to support their success and the growth of our convention and event business.

#### **For Exhibition Place, this means:**

- We will identify and make investments in our facilities and infrastructure, including expansions where necessary, to ensure we have the capacity to become a leading convention and event space in North America.
- We will implement modern, state-of-the-art technology to work towards modernization and digitization of systems on the grounds.
- We will identify and incorporate innovative industry best practices into our operations and service offerings to inform continuous improvement efforts for our convention and events operations.
- We will engage with industry stakeholders including clients and suppliers to identify new ideas and opportunities that would enhance the convention and event experience.
- We will develop leasing strategies and tenant investments on the grounds that will complement our convention and events offerings.
- We will work with the businesses operating on the Exhibition Place grounds to take advantage of the synergies and opportunities that add value to our visitor experience, convention and event clients. We will also work with our City Partners to encourage the development of new tenants at Exhibition Place that will complement our convention and events offerings.

#### **Expected Outcomes:**

We will know that we are being successful in this area if we can demonstrate:

- That we have become one of the top 10 convention centres/event spaces in North America.
- An increase in repeat exhibition and event bookings at Exhibition Place.
- An increase in economic impact over the course of the plan.
- New or enhanced products and offerings that benefit events and conventions taking place at Exhibition Place.
- Deep understanding and adoption of reinvestment methodologies to build and enhance capital required to position Exhibition Place as a prime convention and event space.
- Technology enhancements in our convention venues that position Exhibition Place as a leader in the new digital environment.



#### 5.4.4 Strategic Goal 4: Enhance Brand Identity and Promotion

Exhibition Place is known for delivering some of the City’s largest and most beloved events. However, the true scope of what Exhibition Place does, or what we can deliver is not always fully understood by stakeholders outside of Exhibition Place. Our brand and identity can get mixed with that of our events, clients, and tenants. While these events are critical to our exceptional reputation and success, it is time for the Exhibition Place brand to articulate the success stories we must tell to become an iconic landmark for Toronto. Improving our brand identity by maximizing the interrelatedness of service offerings across stakeholders, tenants, and clients will refresh this prominence as a leading convention, exhibition, event and entertainment destination, that is Exhibition Place.

**For Exhibition Place, this means:**

- We will create an all-encompassing brand strategy to promote and enhance the understanding of who Exhibition Place is, what we do, and what we can offer to our clients, businesses on our grounds, and the community. This will be aligned to our activities in developing a leasing strategy for Exhibition Place.
- We will ensure our branding strategy builds on our Strategic Plan and promotes a cohesive and collective Vision that highlights all the activity at Exhibition Place – including the exceptional services, events, and experiences delivered by the tenants and clients on the grounds.
- We will engage with local Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and with businesses directly to explore possible cross-promotional opportunities.
- We will maximize branding opportunities across the Exhibition Place grounds to highlight our name internally on the grounds. We will develop branding links across the site and through externally facing marketing and communications.
- We will establish communication strategies to fully tell the story of the economic impact that Exhibition Place has within the City of Toronto, the Region, and the Province. We will work to fully detail and quantify the economic impact of activities generated through events facilitated by Exhibition Place.

**Expected Outcomes:**

We will know that we are being successful in this area if we can demonstrate:

- A refreshed brand strategy and identity that diversifies and exhibits the uniqueness of Exhibition Place from the events that take place on its grounds.
- Increased marketing reach for our service offerings to existing, past, and potential future clients of Exhibition Place.
- Increased cross-promotional and business activity with tenants and clients.
- Improved understanding among external stakeholders of the core activities and businesses of Exhibition Place.
- An evidence-based methodology for demonstrating the economic impacts of Exhibition Place and methods to communicate this to key stakeholders.
- Public engagement with, and satisfaction of, our processes and activities to communicate our priorities, activities, and decisions.



### 5.4.5 Strategic Goal 5: Invest in our People and Culture

Our people are the heart of Exhibition Place. They are dedicated, knowledgeable, and able to deliver the largest and most complex events that occur in the country. Our People will be instrumental in our ability to achieve our Vision. We must make sure our staff have a safe and respectful workspace; recognize the diverse workforce that continues to our success; and empowers individuals to make decisions that are in the best interests of fellow staff, our clients, and Exhibition Place.



#### **For Exhibition Place, this means:**

- We will provide employees with the tools and training they need to deliver on our commitments to our guests, clients, tenants, and community.
- We will retain and develop talent with deep expertise and invest in continued learning and development opportunities.
- We will promote a culture of inclusion by building Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) practices into our daily work.
- We will foster a culture that recognizes and rewards behaviours aligned with our values.
- We will make available learning and development opportunities for staff to encourage growth and help advance their careers.

#### **Expected Outcomes:**

We will know that we are being successful in this area if we can demonstrate:

- Recognition as an employer of choice attracting top talent within the industry.
- Implementation of a robust career development program that considers succession planning.
- Industry-leading talent retention rates, internal progression, and achieving a high level of satisfaction amongst our staff.
- Enhanced culture of career development and learning with opportunities for job shadowing, leadership, core service training and people management growth, and professional development opportunities.





## 5.4.6 Strategic Goal 6: Ensure Competitively Priced Services and Sustainable Operations

Exhibition Place successfully delivers on a wide range of events. The grounds are host to some of the City's largest festivals and exhibitions; marquee-sporting events from Canadian National Teams and the City's most treasured professional sports clubs; to smaller more intimate events and conferences. This wide range of activities provide many unique challenges that Exhibition Place must respond to. There truly is no event too large or too small to be successfully delivered by the Exhibition Place team. Moving forward, we remain committed to ensuring our operations are both efficient and effective so that we will deliver exceptional visitor experiences and sustain the growth of our organization.

### For Exhibition Place, this means:

- We will review current systems, agreements, practices, and processes to assess opportunities for more efficient, effective, and sustainable delivery of operations and be open to change – including future enhancements that are required to support growth in our events, conventions, and tradeshow business.
- We will work with the City of Toronto to enable reinvestment of financial revenue to promote the advancement of Exhibition Place as a business and drive financial sustainability.
- We will develop a robust planning and asset management process to evaluate and operationalize opportunities for improvement, expansion, and continued enhancement of the grounds.
- We will work with our committed partners to develop sustainable approaches to labour, supplier, and other operating costs.
- We will ensure advanced sustainable and green practices are built into our infrastructure and processes to service the grounds in a responsible way, and continue to establish new commitments for sustainability targets.



## Expected Outcomes

We will know that we are being successful in this area if we can demonstrate:

- Improvements in operational efficiency, job satisfaction, and the number of improvement projects identified directly by employees.
- The systems and processes used across Exhibition Place are efficient and right-sized to meet the needs of our operations and clients achieving improved satisfaction results.
- Clear and consistent communication practices to internal and external stakeholders on how and why key decisions are made.
- The development and achievement of sustainability targets for all aspects of our operations – from infrastructure developments and enhancement all the way to how we manage our events.



## 6.0 The Strategic Planning Process

The Strategic Plan was developed by the Exhibition Place Leadership Team, with close guidance and approval by the Board of Governors to guide Exhibition Place over the next four and half years. The process began in the Fall of 2021 and was completed in Spring 2022. The Plan involved four critical inputs:

### 1. Environmental Scan and Supporting Plans

In developing the plan, we considered the internal and external operating environment by examining our organization's current strength and opportunities for improvement. The Exhibition Place Master Plan led by the City of Toronto was also used to inform this Plan to ensure alignment between the two documents.

### 2. Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement was a critical activity for the development of the Strategic Plan and will remain critical as the Plan is implemented. Throughout the process, engagement has included consultations with: Exhibition Place staff, leadership, and the Board of Governors. In addition to our internal stakeholder input, over 30 external stakeholders representing the community, our tenants and clients, the City and the Province were engaged to provide input into the plan through a variety of mediums including interviews, facilitated sessions, and focus groups.

We held two community input sessions in the Fall of 2021, and another in the Spring of 2022. The input received from these town hall meetings has been instrumental in identifying opportunities for the community to benefit from investments in public realm infrastructure, as well as to promote art and cultural activities.

Exhibition Place acknowledges that there are a number of equity-seeking groups that confront barriers to full participation. As part of our engagement, outreach to stakeholders representing marginalized communities was prioritized. Targeted outreach and consultation took place with several of these organizations.

The comprehensive stakeholder engagement activities allowed Exhibition Place leadership to hear and document numerous ideas and priorities from all stakeholder groups. The elements of the Strategic Plan reflect the common and overlapping feedback and priorities of stakeholders. Exhibition Place will continue to consult with stakeholders to understand ongoing priorities, and work with groups to advance areas of common interest and mutual success that bring Exhibition Place closer to achieving our stated Vision.

### 3. Planning Workshops

The Leadership Team of Exhibition Place met multiple times during the Winter 2021/22 to review input from all sources and stakeholders and develop the Vision, Mission, Values, and Strategic Priorities of the Strategic Plan. This was supported through ongoing engagement with Exhibition Place's Board of Governors.

#### 4. Implementation

The Strategic Plan is built around a Vision for Exhibition Place and provides the organization with the framework for moving forward. Our next step is to bring this plan to life through the development and implementation of specific initiatives that will advance each of our Strategic Goals.

The task of administering and implementing the Strategic Plan involves coordinating and realigning resources and activities in support of the organization's Vision, Mission, and Strategic Goals. In doing this it is critical that the Strategic Plan be valued and understood by our employees and all stakeholders.

This realignment is best achieved by involving operational staff in developing initiatives that define specific actions to advance and support the Strategic Goals. The initiatives developed will connect to the Strategic Goals and have positive impacts on our operational outcome measures. By involving staff in the development of initiatives and defining outcomes for us to measure, we will ensure that every employee can draw a clear line between the importance of their role and our collective efforts to achieve the Strategic Goals.

As a starting point the implementation of the Strategic Plan will move forward with the following actions to support the effective operationalization and implementation of the Strategic Plan:

- A. We will develop a communication plan that informs all stakeholders of the Strategic Plan and their role in the Strategic Plan's success.
- B. We will build awareness of the Strategic Plan in our operations by ensuring that our staff orientation, onboarding, and appraisal processes are aligned to the contents of the Strategic Plan.
- C. Our process for developing the initiatives that will be required to achieve our Strategic Goals will involve staff from across Exhibition Place.
- D. Our processes and ideology for establishing and allocating our resources and budgets will be aligned with the Goals of the Strategic Plan and the initiatives developed to ensure their achievement.

Throughout this process we will work with key stakeholders to ensure our partners are involved in decision making where appropriate. Through our aspirational Vision, dedicated planning efforts, and committed partners we will attain our ambition that transforms Exhibition Place into ***Canada's premier destination for conventions, exhibitions, events, and entertainment.***

### The Board of Governors of Exhibition Place

Councillor Mark Grimes, Chair  
Councillor Michael Ford, Vice Chair  
Councillor Gary Crawford  
Councillor Joe Cressy / Councillor Joe Mihevc  
Councillor Anthony Perruzza  
Sharleen Ahmed  
Peter Leon  
Howard Lichtman  
Tess Romain  
Alison Fowles, Board Solicitor - City Legal Services

### Exhibition Place Leadership Team

Don Boyle, Chief Executive Officer  
Hardat Persaud, Chief Financial Officer &  
Corporate Secretary  
Laura Purdy, General Manager  
Mark Goss, General Manager - Operations  
Kelvin Seow, Chief People & Strategy Officer  
Gilles Bouchard, Director - Event Management  
Services  
Jackie Kerner, Manager - Human Resources,  
Payroll & Benefits  
John Koperwas, Director - IT,  
Telecommunications, Records and Archives  
Judy Mahoney, Director - Sales & Marketing  
Steven Nushis, Director - Accounting Services  
Tony Porter, Director - Security & Transportation  
Paul Torkan, Director - Operations & Facility  
Services

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For more information on Exhibition Place events and services access our website

**EXPLACE.ON.CA**

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For more information on Exhibition Place Tenants access their websites

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

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

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

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

[marlies.ca](http://marlies.ca)

[queenelizabeththeatre.ca](http://queenelizabeththeatre.ca)

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

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

[argonauts.ca](http://argonauts.ca)

[coca-colacoliseum.com](http://coca-colacoliseum.com)

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[torontofc.ca](http://torontofc.ca)