

CHINOOK BLAST

Pure magic

SUMMARY REPORT

February 2 to 19, 2024

The City of Calgary | Calgary Arts Development | Calgary Economic Development | Tourism Calgary



WHAT IS CHINOOK BLAST?

Chinook Blast is Calgary’s winter festival celebration that brings together partners from the arts, nonprofit, neighbourhood, tourism, and sports communities to create an inclusive event that showcases the best of our city.

Our vision is to build a uniquely Calgary winter experience that draws visitors from all corners of Calgary and all around the world.



CHINOOK BLAST 2024

Chinook Blast returned for its fourth year, running from February 2 to 19, 2024. With a mix of arts, culture, sports, and unique experiences, Chinook Blast 2024 was “so winterful” and spanned over 200 events in the heart of our city.

WINTER STRATEGY IN ACTION

This Festival is a great example of activating the City of Calgary's Winter City Strategy as it

- Helped extend Calgary's festival and event season and provided opportunities for Calgarians to be more active and creative during the winter months.
- Designed diverse and accessible programming, which provided activities for everyone to take part and enjoy.

Chinook Blast is more than just a fun-filled celebration, it was a strategic move that showcases and celebrates Calgary's unique winter experiences, while also building a stronger sense of community and increasing economic activity in the winter, benefitting local artists, businesses and entrepreneurs.



ICONIC FESTIVALS

Our festival partners, including **BIG Winter Classic, Block Heater, High Performance Rodeo and Ethnik Festivals** put on their festivals at locations across Calgary, including Olympic Plaza. They curated fun, compelling, and accessible programming that brought Calgarians and visitors together.



NEW IN 2024

We saw many firsts at Chinook Blast 2024, including:

- Exhibitions created by local artists were submitted for the chance to be showcased. 30 submissions were reviewed and 11 were selected to join and enhance the overall experience of Chinook Blast.
- The Calgary International Blues Festival, Calgary Zoo, GlobalFest, Heritage Park, and JazzYYC joined Chinook Blast and hosted interactive events.
- Fan Zone February, presented by Tourism Calgary, brought professional winter sports to Calgary with events including the ISU World Speed Skating Championship, Scotties Tournament of Hearts and the Snow Rodeo FIS Freeski Halfpipe World Cup.
- Frost Fest featured a beer garden, Crokicurl, food trucks, and live entertainment including seven diverse performances presented by GlobalFest.
- The SpanicArts Contemporary Art Exhibition explored winter's impact on immigrants.
- Taste the City, a culinary experience that connects customers with restaurants in their community, were thrilled to join Chinook Blast and are eager to return for 2025.
- The Winter City Design Competition, in partnership with the City of Calgary had three interactive art pieces—1000 Faces, PARC and Fancy Meeting You Here—exhibit in Calgary's downtown during Chinook Blast.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

Supporting Local

- Over 1,700 creative makers, businesses, community organizations, etc., participated in Chinook Blast 2024.
- Nearly 60 sports-related events were held during Chinook Blast.
- The Friends of Chinook Blast Funding Program helped 30 organizations put on their events as part of Chinook Blast celebrations.

Attendance

- Over 433,000 festival goers attended Chinook Blast.
- 63,000+ people attended the showcases and mini jams at the Central Library Artists Pavillion, sponsored by TD Bank Group.
- 230,000+ people visited the Artists Pavillion pop-up galleries at libraries across the city.
- 7,400+ visitors attended the markets held by the Programming Partners. Attendance at the Asian Night Market increased by 61%.
- 19,200+ people attended Pillar Festival Partner events during Chinook Blast, and attendance at the High Performance Rodeo increased by 51%.

Other Metrics

- Chinook Blast overall attendance increased by 16%.
- Visits to chinookblast.ca increased by 34%.
- Media mentions increased by 29%.
- Social media connections grew by more than 200%.
- Downtown hotel occupancy increased by 4.3% in February and overall Calgary occupancy increased by 6.4%.
- Chinook Blast generated \$15.7 million in economic impact (a 16.5% increase over 2023).

CHINOOK BLAST'S IMPACT

“Chinook Blast is a beautiful platform for us to showcase new and/or improved large-scale interactive public art where it belongs—free to the public, in public space. It’s an event the whole team looks forward to each year because we rely on the videos and images we capture to use in marketing materials as we prepare these installations for tour.”

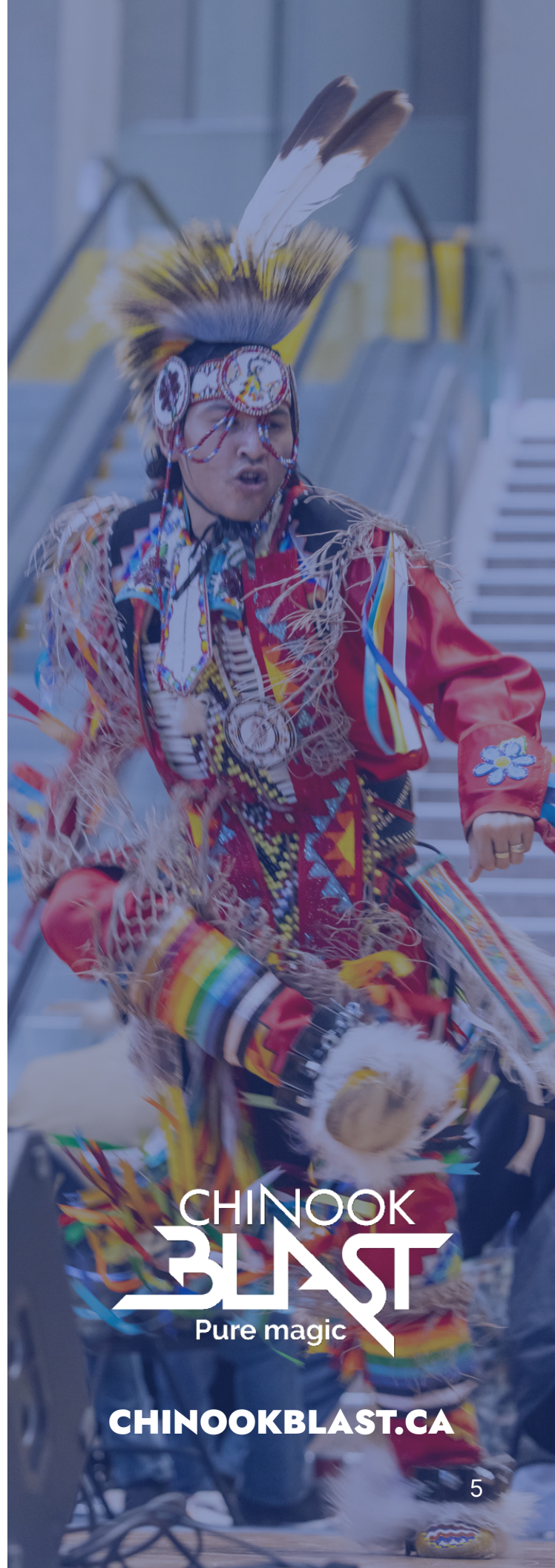
- Big Art

“The opportunity to display Indigenous art and culture on such a large scale is an important part of reconciliation and allows our artists to dispel stereotypes and educate the greater community. Chinook Blast also kick started opportunities for our small business to connect with larger local and provincial organizations, which in turn provided even more opportunities over the last year for Indigenous artists to share their work on a larger scale and has made Indigenous art more visible in the local community.

This opportunity also allowed us as an organization to connect with a wide variety of Indigenous artists interested in displaying their work in a public setting, we have been able to create opportunities for this to happen with those who we connected with post the library performances. Chinook Blast created many opportunities for not only our business but the businesses of many Indigenous artists and entrepreneurs across Treaty 7 & 6.”

- Tony and Melissa Tootoosis
Four Winds Indigenous Market and Showcase

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