

2024 Central Business District (CBD) Cordon Count

Summary:

Each year in May, Mobility Monitoring and Analytics conducts the Central Business District (CBD) Cordon Count. This study is performed at 30 locations across Calgary’s downtown over a four-week period, capturing data about how people travel in and out of the city’s downtown core. The overall trend of the 2024 data continues to be positive. Calgary’s downtown core experienced volumes comparable to those of 2023, indicating what can be considered typical volumes following the Covid-19 pandemic. Total volumes inbound and outbound over all modes of transportation experienced a slight increase during the AM and PM Peak periods while transit ridership travelling outbound from Calgary’s downtown during the AM Peak increased from 29% to just over 40%. All other transit ridership experienced volumes similar to those of 2023.

Key Findings:

The following are key findings discovered when comparing this year’s study data to that of the 2023 CBD Cordon Count:

- Automobiles continue to be the mode of choice for travel into and out of Calgary’s downtown core, making up approximately 58% of trips.
- Total travel inbound to and outbound from Calgary’s downtown core from 06:00 – 22:00 decreased from just under 642,000 people to almost 610,000, a 5% decrease as traffic patterns stabilize following the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Transit usage remained relatively stable throughout the day, however the AM Peak outbound transit usage increased from almost 28% to 40%.
- Pedestrian trips increased slightly throughout the 16 Hour study period excluding the outbound AM Peak where pedestrian trips decreased from over 12% to just under 8%.

Modes	AM Peak		PM Peak		16 Hour	
	<i>Inbound</i>	<i>Outbound</i>	<i>Inbound</i>	<i>Outbound</i>	<i>Inbound</i>	<i>Outbound</i>
Passenger Vehicles:	48.3%	51.2%	54.8%	46.3%	58.5%	58.6%
Transit/School Bus:	43.6%	40.2%	32.2%	40.9%	30.1%	29.0%
Pedestrians:	6.4%	7.8%	11.1%	10.3%	9.6%	10.4%
Cyclists:	1.7%	0.8%	1.9%	2.5%	1.8%	2.0%
Total:	47,000	19,000	24,000	48,000	311,000	298,000

Table 1: 2024 Modal Split Summary

Introduction:

The Central Business District (CBD) Cordon Count is a large-scale annual study conducted by Mobility Monitoring and Analytics. It involves the collection and analysis of data regarding how people travel to and from Calgary's downtown core. This data involves both volumes by mode of transportation, as well as vehicle and transit occupancy. It is an important performance metric used to monitor changes to travel in to and out of the city's downtown year over year. The data collection methods and locations are consistent each year to allow for direct data comparisons. Please note that occupancy data was not collected in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Area of interest:

The Central Business District (CBD) Cordon includes all of Calgary's downtown core. It ranges from the Bow River to the north to the railway tracks along 10 Avenue S and from 11 Street in the west to the Elbow River in the east.

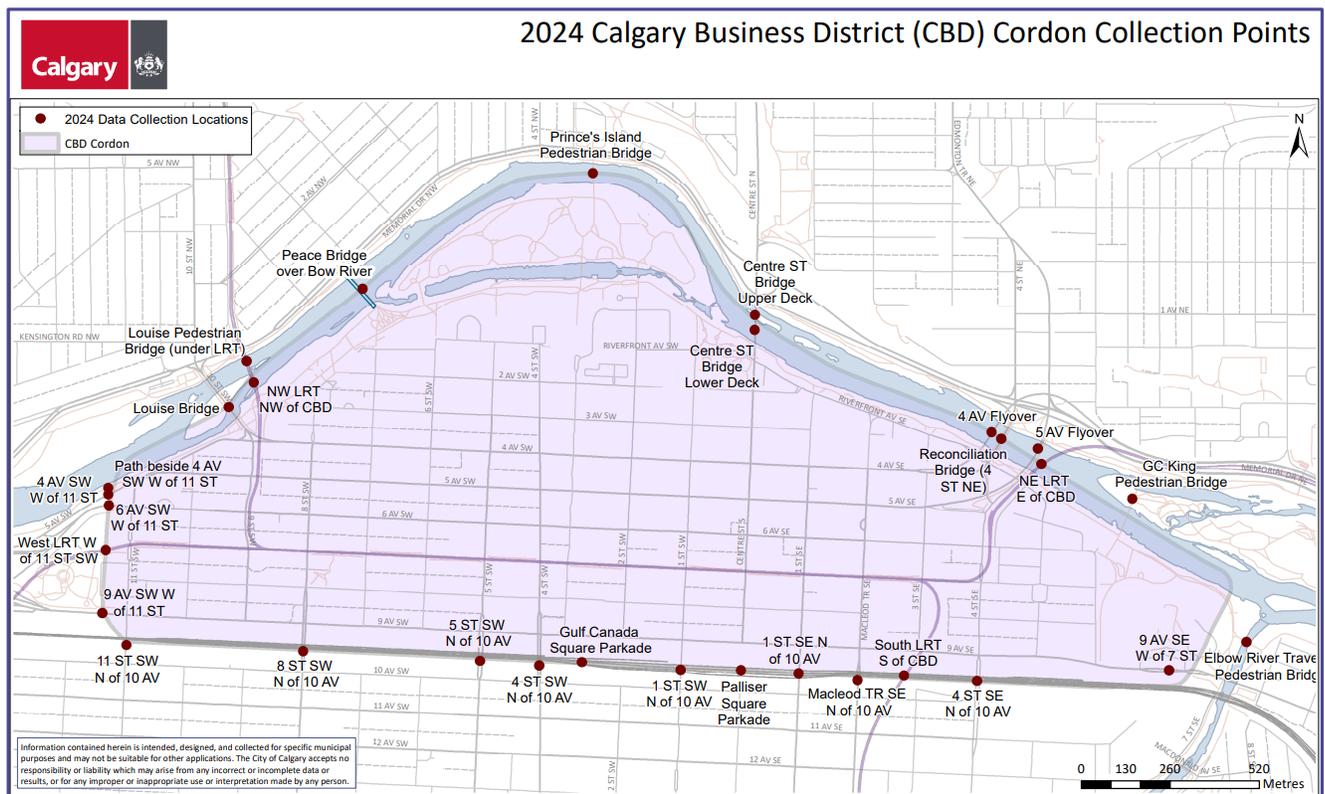


Figure 1: CBD Cordon Count Locations

Methodology:

Each year, during the month of May, the Mobility Monitoring manual Data Collection teams are positioned at each of the 30 CBD Cordon count locations. They count each person that enters or exits Calgary's downtown. Over a 16-hour period, they record modes of travel such as automobile (as a passenger or driver), walking or cycling, or taking an LRT or bus, as well as the occupancy of

vehicles and transit. Working in tandem with these manual Data Collectors, there are also Automatic Data Collection Technicians using cameras and automatic hose counters to collect vehicle and pedestrian volumes.

After the data collection is completed, the data is downloaded, processed, and analyzed by the Mobility Analytics team. The data is cleaned and documented to record any location factors that may have impacted collection such as construction or a collision at or near the study area. The data is then run through an analysis process that is consistent year over year, quality controlled to ensure there are no data discrepancies, and the results are provided to the public.

It is worth noting that each CBD Cordon count location is collected on a single day each year. Because of this, the resulting data serves as a “snapshot” of a day and is not necessarily indicative of a trend. Factors such as weather, construction, or traffic incidents at a location one year versus another may cause variations in the data. For example, Calgary has been known to get snow as late as May. If we collect on a day when it is snowing, the volumes of people walking and cycling into and out of the downtown core will likely be much lower when compared to years with fair weather.

The 7 ST SE South of 9 AV SE location no longer exists as a CBD Cordon location since the completion of the Inglewood bridge.

Analysis Results:

Calgary’s downtown core is experiencing an overall consistent pattern in vehicle volumes and transit ridership when compared to data from 2023. As people settle into flexible work schedules after Covid-19 they continue to consistently travel to the downtown core as we see similar volume data between 2023 and 2024. While the overall volumes are still 11.9% lower than those observed pre-pandemic in 2019, the consistent volumes between 2023 and 2024 may be indicative of a “new normal” for travel volumes into and out of the Central Business District (CBD).

Transportation Mode Usage (Modal Split)

The transportation mode (modal split) that people use to travel in to and out of Calgary’s downtown core can be influenced by several factors. Variables such as infrastructure investments like the downtown cycle track network, construction, economic fluctuations, and weather can all impact behavior and result in differences in the modal split breakdown each year. Between 2022 and 2023, the continued return to a post-pandemic “normal” appears to have had the most sizeable impact on how people chose to travel into Calgary’s downtown.

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate how transportation modes used by people travelling inbound to Calgary’s downtown during the AM peak hour have changed between 2014 and 2024. The percentage of people using transit to travel into Calgary’s downtown in the morning has remained steady at 44% from 2023 to 2024, while the percentage of people traveling by automobiles has increased slightly from 47% to 48%. The consistency between 2023 and 2024 may be indicative of Calgary’s downtown core achieving a “new normal” of travel behavior following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Figure 2: CBD Cordon Count AM Peak Hour Modal Split Percentages – Inbound

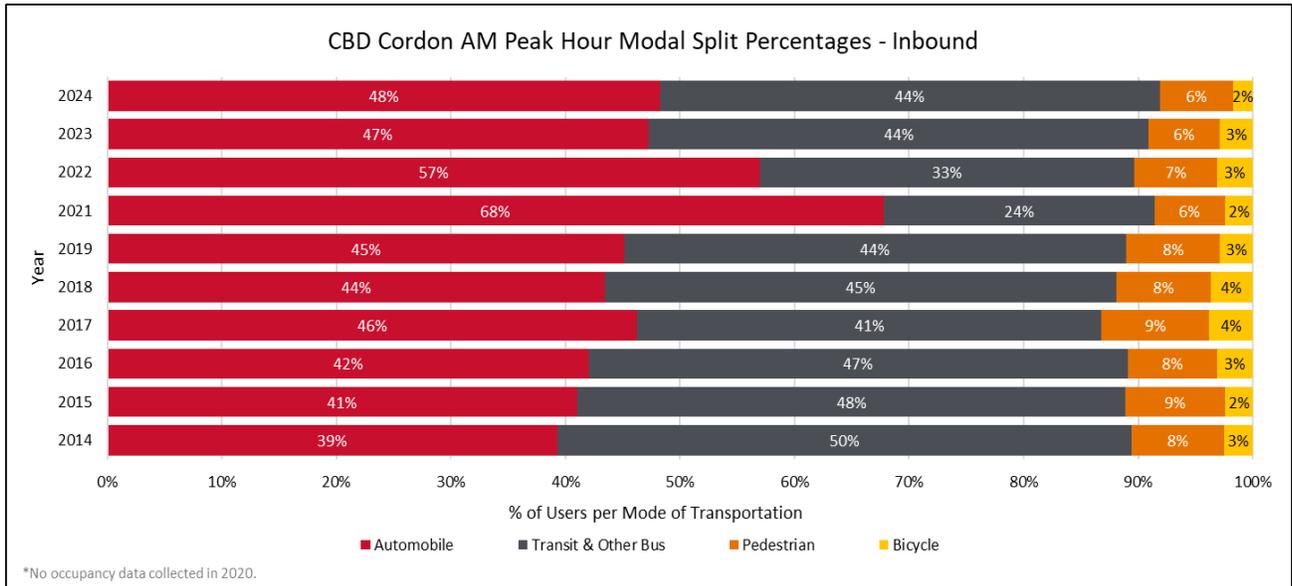
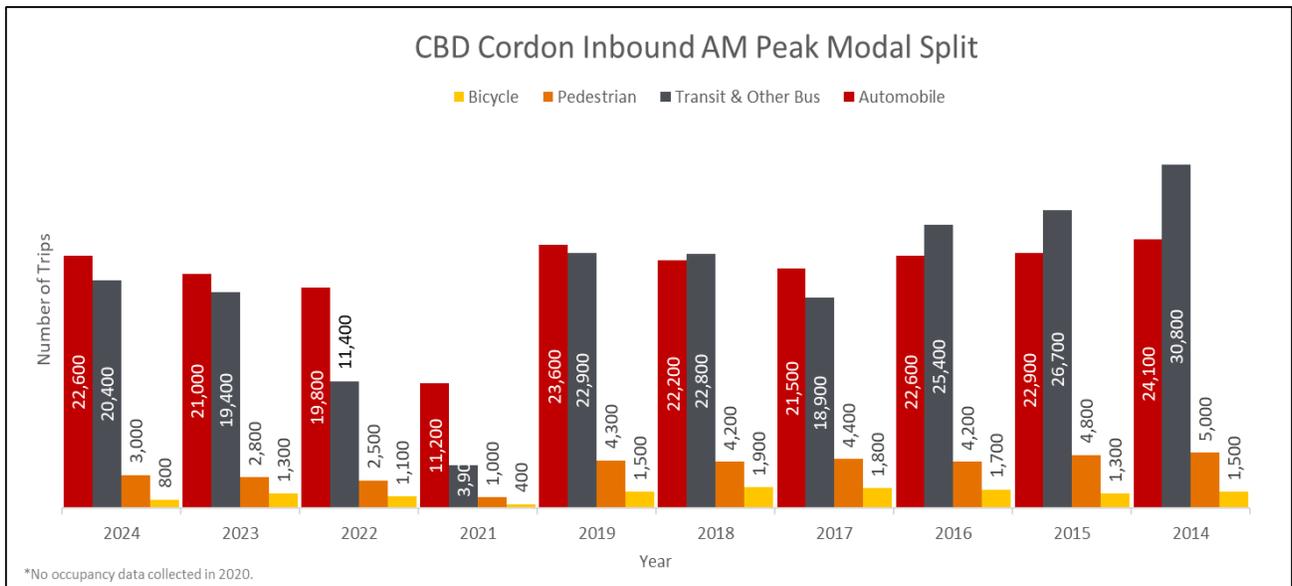


Figure 3: CBD Cordon Count AM Peak Hour Modal Split Volumes – Inbound



Figures 4 and 5 illustrate a similar pattern between the 2024 outbound PM peak hour modal split and inbound AM peak hour modal split. There is a comparable percentage of people exiting Calgary’s downtown core using transit compared to 2023 while the percentage of people travelling via automobile has increased slightly between 2023 and 2024.

Figure 4: CBD Cordon Count PM Peak Hour Modal Split Percentages – Outbound

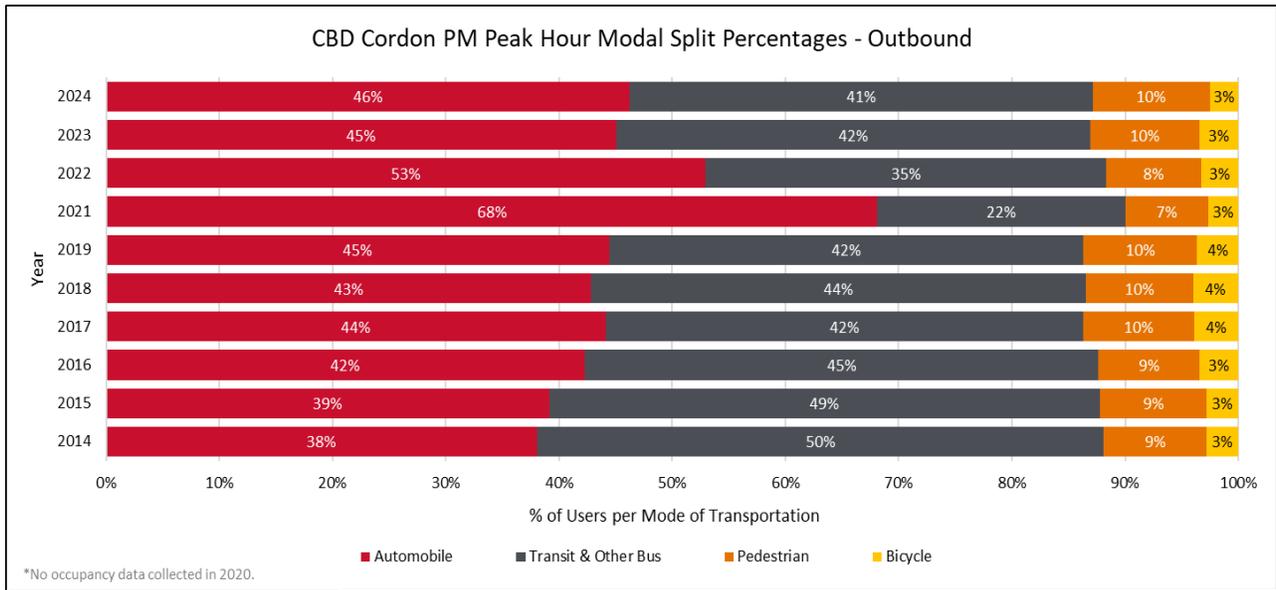
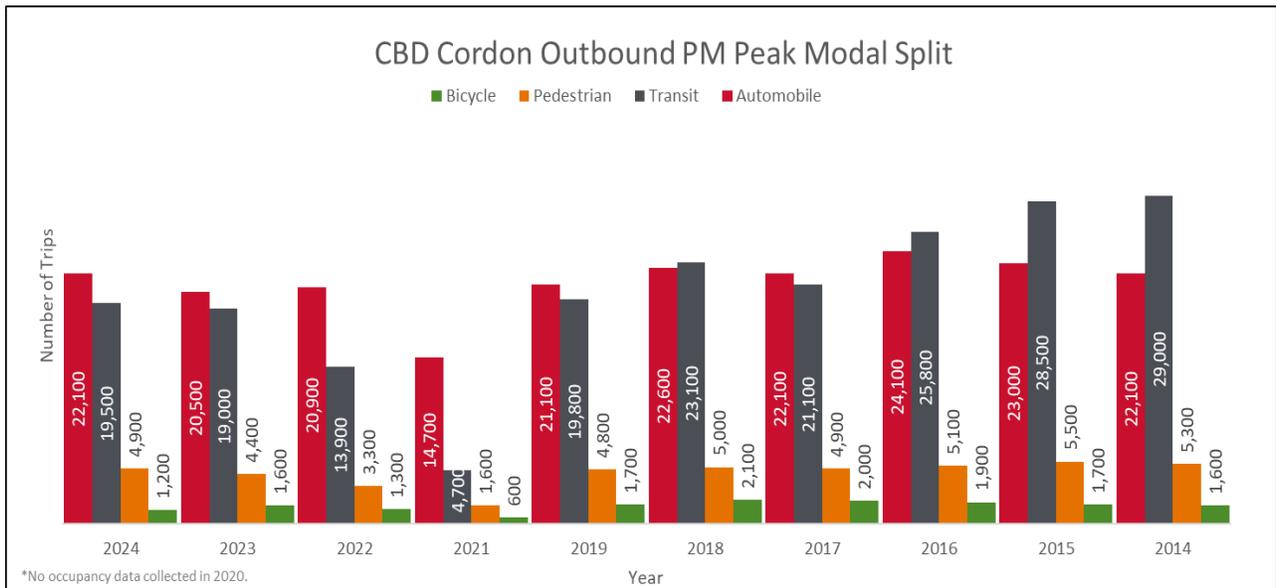


Figure 5: CBD Cordon Count PM Peak Hour Modal Split Volumes - Outbound



CBD Cordon Locations with the Highest Volumes per Mode of Transportation

The overall volume of people travelling into and out of Calgary's downtown core is slightly lower for many modes of transportation in 2024 compared to 2023. Tables 2 and 3 below illustrate the locations that possess the highest user volumes across the CBD Cordon for 2024, broken down by mode of transportation for both inbound, and outbound traffic.

For automobile travel, 9 AV SW, west of 11 ST SW continues to be the location with the highest inbound volume, while the 5 AV Flyover remains the location with the highest outbound volumes from Calgary's downtown core.

Regarding Transit, the NE LRT east of the CBD has the highest volume travelling inbound to the CBD while the NW LRT, south of Sunnyside Station has the highest volume travelling outbound from the CBD.

Pedestrian travel remained consistent as pedestrians walking on foot had the highest volumes on 1 ST SW, north of 10 AV both inbound and outbound, while cyclists prefer the Peace Bridge as their means of travelling into Calgary's downtown core, and the Elbow River Traverse to exit the CBD.

Table 2: 2024 CBD Cordon Locations with the Highest Inbound Volumes per Mode of Transportation

Ranking	Mode of Transportation			
	Automobile	Transit & Other Bus	Pedestrian	Bicycle
	Location & Volume			
1	9 AV S.W., west of 11 ST S.W. 44085	N.E. LRT, east of CBD 18625	1 ST S.W., north of 10 AV S.W. 3475	Peace Bridge 937
2	4 AV Flyover S.E., south of Memorial DR E. 26236	South LRT, south of CBD 16470	8 ST S.W., north of 10 AV S.W. 2989	Elbow River Traverse 892
3	Macleod TR S.E., north of 10 AV S.E. 25471	N.W. LRT, south of Sunnyside Stn 15435	Peace Bridge 2624	G.C. King Pedestrian Bridge 735

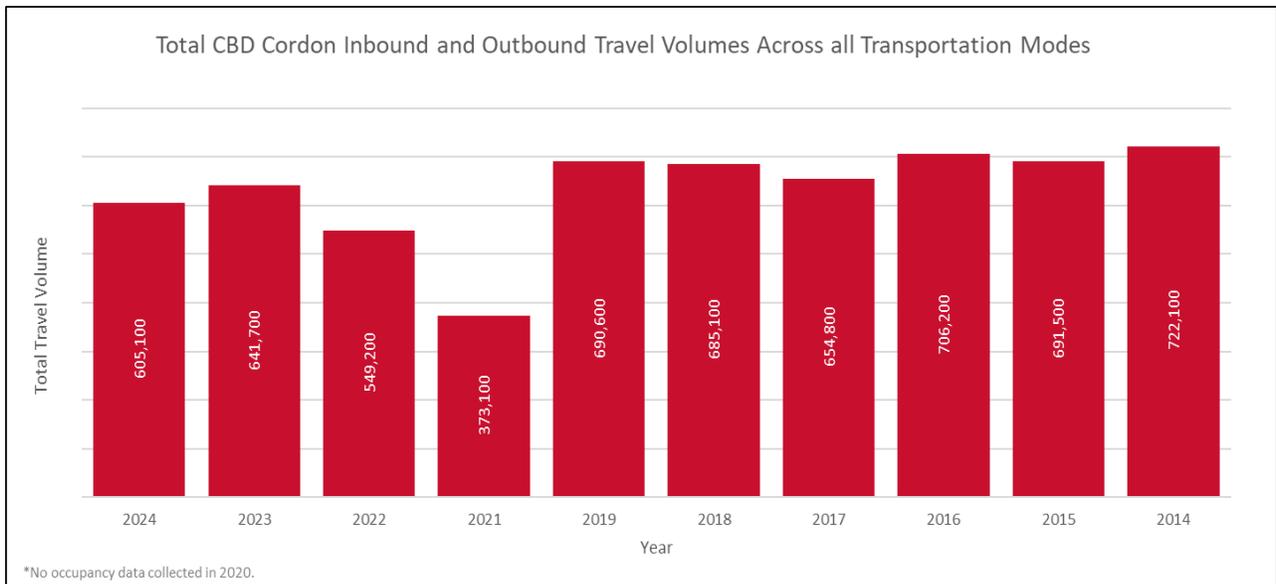
Table 3: 2024 CBD Cordon Locations with the Highest Outbound Volumes per Mode of Transportation

Ranking	Mode of Transportation			
	Automobile	Transit & Other Bus	Pedestrian	Bicycle
	Location & Volume			
1	5 AV Flyover, south of Memorial DR 36843	N.W. LRT, south of Sunnyside Stn 17160	1 ST S.W., north of 10 AV S.W. 3620	Elbow River Traverse 1067
2	1 ST S.E., north of 10 AV S.E. 27984	West LRT, west of 11 ST S.W. 16070	8 ST S.W., north of 10 AV S.W. 3127	Peace Bridge 943
3	6 AV S.W., west of 11 ST S.W. 25570	South LRT, south of CBD 15690	Peace Bridge 2765	Pathway beside 4 AV S.W., west of 11 ST S.W. 848

Total 16-Hour Travel Volumes Across all Modes of Transportation

Total travel both inbound and outbound from Calgary's downtown core across all modes of transportation experienced a slight decrease from 2023 to 2024. This increase can likely be attributed to the continue post-pandemic recovery across the city and the province as arriving at a new "normal".

Figure 3: Comparison of Total 2024 CBD Cordon Inbound and Outbound Travel Volumes Across all Transportation Modes to Previous Years



Conclusion:

The overall trend of the 2024 data is similar to that of 2023, with Calgary's downtown core experiencing a return to normal volumes after the Covid-19 pandemic. Total volumes over all modes of transportation experienced a 6% decrease. While the overall volume of people travelling to and from downtown is still lower than pre-pandemic levels, the relative consistency of travel volumes between 2023 and 2024 is a positive indicator that Calgary may have arrived at a new post-pandemic normal.

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