

Gaming History & Facts

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Here are some milestones in the history of gaming in Alberta:

1892	The Criminal Code of Canada is amended to tolerate gambling under certain conditions.
1910	An amendment to the Criminal Code of Canada allows pari-mutuel betting and participation in games of chance where profits are used for charitable or religious purposes. Some gaming is allowed at agricultural fairs and exhibitions.
1920s	Bingo is played in community halls and church basements. The popularity of horse racing grows.
1950s	Illegal sale of Lucky 7 jar tickets (pull tickets) occurs until the 1970s, when the sale of pull tickets is legalized.
1967	Alberta's first charitable casino opens at Edmonton's annual fair.
1969	Amendments to the Criminal Code of Canada authorize lotteries and sweepstakes. Provinces have the authority to licence and operate lotteries and casinos.
1970s	Edmonton's Northlands Park and the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede start holding sweepstakes.
1975	An Edmonton Kinsmen Club establishes Alberta's first not-for-profit casino. The first-ever lottery ticket, <i>The Western</i> , is sold.
1979	Lotteries are now exclusively under provincial authority.
1980	Cash Casino, Alberta's first permanent, privately operated charitable casino opens in Calgary.
1981	Casino ABS, Alberta's second permanent, privately operated charitable casino opens in Edmonton.
1982	Lotto 6/49 is launched.
1985	A government lottery review gathers Albertans' views on the disbursement of unused lottery revenue. An amendment to the Criminal Code of Canada allows provinces to operate mechanical gaming devices.
1986	Casino ABS South (now Casino Edmonton) opens in Edmonton.
1987	Revenue pooling becomes an option for casinos and bingo associations.
1988	Frontier Casino (later "Stampede Casino") opens in Calgary. <u>Bill 10</u> establishes the <u>Alberta Lottery Fund</u> .
1989	The first horseracing simulcast is run at Calgary's Trout Springs. Elbow River Casino opens in Calgary.
1990	Teletheatre betting is introduced. Sandman Inn Casino in Edmonton opens but closes after seven months in operation. Palace Casino in Edmonton opens.
1991	Video lottery terminals (VLTs) are tested at summer fairs in Edmonton and Calgary.
1992	The VLT program is officially introduced.

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1993	Casino ABS (now Casino Lethbridge) opens a facility in Lethbridge.
1994	<p>Alberta Lotteries and Gaming releases a commissioned report on gaming behaviour and problem gambling in Alberta.</p> <p>The Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) receives funding for problem gambling treatment, research and education.</p> <p>Gold Dust Casino opens in St. Albert.</p> <p>Fort McMurray casino (now Boomtown Casino) opens as a small temporary operation.</p>
1995	<p>The Lotteries Review Committee releases "New Directions for Lotteries and Gaming: Report and Recommendations of the Lotteries Review Committee" following public consultations. Government establishes new policies for gaming in Alberta after adopting several recommendations from the report.</p> <p>The Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC) is created by combining the responsibilities and operations of the Alberta Liquor Control Board, Alberta Lotteries, the Alberta Gaming Commission, Alberta Lotteries and Gaming and the Gaming Control Branch.</p> <p>Cash Casino opens a permanent facility in Red Deer.</p>
1996	<p>The MLA Committee on Native Gaming releases its report and recommendations on native gaming in Alberta.</p> <p>Slot machines are introduced into Alberta's charitable casinos.</p> <p>Satellite bingo is introduced.</p> <p>The Alberta Racing Corporation is formed to help revitalize the horse racing industry in Alberta.</p> <p>Baccarat Casino opens in Edmonton.</p> <p>Frank Sisson's Silver Dollar Casino opens in Calgary.</p> <p>Casino by Vanshaw opens in Medicine Hat.</p>
1997	<p>VLTs are removed from Rocky Mountain House and Sylvan Lake following local plebiscites. Plebiscites are also held in Barrhead, Wood Buffalo (including Fort McMurray) and Lacombe. Barrhead votes to keep VLTs.</p> <p>Wood Buffalo votes to remove VLTs, but retailers take legal action.</p> <p>Casino Calgary opens.</p> <p>Jackpot Casino opens in Red Deer.</p>
1998	<p>Community Lottery Boards are established by the Alberta government to oversee the distribution of an additional \$50 million in lottery funds.</p> <p>The Alberta Lotteries and Gaming Summit '98 is held in Medicine Hat. Government accepts all eight summit recommendations.</p> <p>During the October 19 civic elections, VLT plebiscites are held in 36 Alberta municipalities. Six municipalities, (County of Lethbridge No. 26; Town of Lacombe; Municipal District of Opportunity No. 17; Town of Canmore; Town of Coaldale; Town of Stony Plain; and the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo) vote to have their VLTs removed. VLT retailers take legal action.</p> <p>Courts rule the Alberta government cannot direct the AGLC to remove VLTs from municipalities unless there is specified legislation in place. Government passes legislation to remove VLTs from Wood Buffalo and the six communities that voted against VLTs.</p>

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1999	<p>Bill 36, the <i>Gaming and Liquor Amendment Act</i>, is passed on May 19, giving the Minister authority to give policy direction to the AGLC and to terminate VLT retailer agreements in municipalities that voted in favour of VLT removal.</p> <p>The Alberta Court of Queen's Bench grants an interim injunction on May 20, prohibiting the AGLC from disabling or removing VLTs pending the constitutional challenge of Bill 36.</p> <p>AGLC launches a Bingo Industry Review to examine the bingo industry and charities that take part in bingo activities.</p> <p>The Ministry of Gaming is created, which incorporates the Department of Gaming, the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission, the Community Lottery Program Secretariat, the Alberta Gaming Research Council. The new ministry also has responsibility for the <i>Horse Racing Alberta Act</i>.</p> <p>An agreement between the Government of Alberta and the province's three major universities results in a leading-edge research institute to study gaming issues in Alberta. The Alberta Gaming Research Institute, a consortium of the Universities of Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge, will sponsor research into the social and economic aspects of gaming, aboriginal gaming issues, gaming trends and other related gaming topics.</p> <p>The <i>Deal Us In</i> program is launched. The program teaches registered gaming workers employed in casinos and racing entertainment centres what responsible gambling is and how to promote healthy attitudes towards gambling.</p> <p>The Great Northern Casino opens in Grande Prairie.</p> <p>Alberta Gaming initiates a review of gaming licensing policies and processes. While the review is underway, consideration of requests to licence or approve new casinos, casino expansions and relocations, new games and gaming environments are suspended.</p>
2000	<p>Government announces the implementation of the majority of recommendations from the Bingo Review Committee.</p> <p>The AGLC teams up with the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) and the gaming industry to develop new programs to assist problem gamblers, including the <i>Casino and Racing Entertainment Centre (REC) Voluntary Self-Exclusion (VSE) Program</i> and <i>Deal Us In</i>.</p> <p>The governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba signed a new agreement with the Western Canada Lottery Corporation, resulting in cost savings to the AGLC of approximately \$2.2 million per year.</p> <p>Casino Yellowhead opens in Edmonton as the largest gaming facility (75,000 sq. feet).</p> <p>Boomtown Casino opens permanently in Fort McMurray.</p>
2001	<p>The Alberta government introduces a new First Nations Gaming Policy, based on Alberta's unique charitable gaming model. First Nation casinos will be located on reserve land, will be regulated by the AGLC and operate under the same terms and conditions as off-reserve casinos.</p> <p>The government releases the Gaming licensing Policy Review (GLPR), which includes 61 recommendations that were developed during a comprehensive, 20-month review of gaming policies.</p>
2002	<p>The moratorium respecting new casino facilities is removed on March 1, after the AGLC developed specific casino terms and conditions to manage and control gaming expansion in the province, consistent with the policy direction provided by government as a result of the Gaming Licensing Policy Review.</p> <p>The AGLC reviews the <i>Gaming and Liquor Act</i> and <i>Gaming and Liquor Regulation</i> in order to ensure gaming and liquor activities are conducted with integrity. This review results in Bill 14,</p>

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	<p>the <i>Gaming and Liquor Amendment Act</i>, which was debated and passed in the spring legislature session and came into effect in May.</p> <p>Bill 16, the <i>Racing Corporation Amendment Act</i>, is debated and passed in the spring legislature, effective in May.</p> <p>The Community Lottery Board program is discontinued.</p> <p>The Community Initiatives Program is introduced on June 24 and commits \$30 million per year for the next three years.</p>
2003	<p>The <u>Alberta Lottery Fund</u> website is launched, and funding increases by 25 per cent to the foundations and granting programs supported through the Alberta Lottery Fund.</p> <p>The AGLC honours the 1997-1998 plebiscite results and removes nearly 200 VLTs from seven communities across the province.</p> <p>DIGI Bingo and Keno are introduced into bingo halls across the province in order to help revitalize the bingo industry.</p>
2004	<p>The VLT Replacement Project is completed. Alberta's 6,000 VLTs are replaced with updated machines that feature new games and responsible gaming features.</p> <p>The AGLC establishes a Social Responsibility Division for the gaming and liquor industries.</p> <p>The <u>GAIN</u> program is introduced to assist charitable groups to better understand the gaming industry, and the responsibilities and requirements tied to a gaming licence. The goal is to make sure charitable groups are accountable for the funds they raise and spend.</p>
2005	<p>Deerfoot Inn & Casino opens in Calgary.</p> <p>The first private bingo facility to operate under Alberta's charitable gaming model is approved for Grande Prairie.</p> <p>Lotto 6/49 is re-launched as a \$2 ticket with larger jackpots and more chances to win.</p> <p>"Mystery" progressive slot machines that can pay out any time on a winning or non-winning combination are introduced at five Alberta casinos: Casino Yellowhead and Palace Casino in Edmonton, and Casino Calgary, Cash Casino and Elbow River Casino in Calgary.</p>
2006	<p>River Cree Resort and Casino opens on the Enoch Reserve adjacent to the City of Edmonton. It is the first casino to open under the province's First Nations Gaming Policy. The Alberta government modifies policies to allow First Nations charities more flexibility to spend charitable gaming proceeds.</p> <p>Century Casino & Hotel opens in Edmonton.</p> <p>The AGLC, in partnership with the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC), launches a new responsible gambling pilot. The two-year pilot project features a <u>Responsible Gambling Information Centre (RGIC)</u> at the Palace Casino in Edmonton. A second centre opens at Calgary's new Deerfoot Inn & Casino.</p> <p>The Ministry of Gaming is eliminated following a December government reorganization. The AGLC is added to the portfolio of the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Public Security.</p>
2007	<p>Casino Camrose opens.</p> <p>Casino Dene opens on the Cold Lake First Nation.</p> <p>Grey Eagle Casino opens on the Tsuu T'ina First Nation near Calgary.</p> <p>The responsible gambling awareness training program, <u><i>A Good Call</i></u>, is launched. The program teaches registered bingo workers employed in bingo halls what responsible gambling is and how to promote healthy attitudes towards gambling.</p>

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	The Honourable Fred Lindsay, Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security, responsible for the AGLC, announces Alberta's first annual <u>Responsible Gambling Awareness Week</u> to be held October 22-28.
2008	Stoney Nakoda Resort and Casino opens in Kananaskis on First Nations land. Eagle River Casino and Travel Plaza opens in Whitecourt on First Nations land.
2009	Rocky Mountain House bar owners/operators present a petition to town council to abolish the VLT ban. A plebiscite is held in July and residents vote in favour to maintain the ban. There are now 16 Responsible Gaming Information Centres (RGICs) in Alberta: 15 in casinos and one at Edmonton Northlands. Lotto Max, Canada's biggest lottery, replaces Super 7.