SEPTEMBER 2022 | ISSUE 04 04

BC

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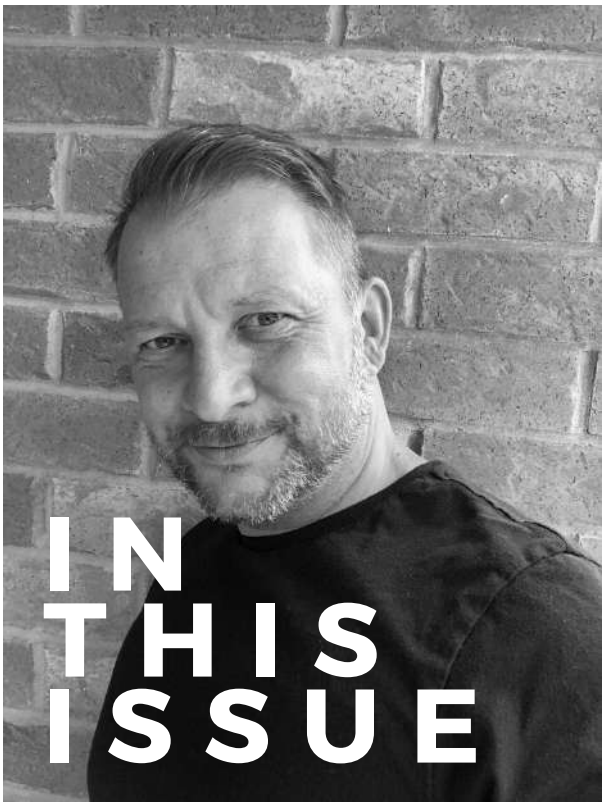

Welcome to the September issue of Build Canada Magazine.

Building and maintaining a strong company culture is the key theme in this issue as we spotlight some extraordinary companies. In the second of a three-part series discussing the importance of infill development and transformation of existing neighbourhoods, Bryn Davidson from LaneFab Design/Build joins to discuss bringing the first laneway house to Vancouver, the importance of passive house building, and the journey to find the missing middle.

Edmonton based Regency Developments Homes has earned a strong reputation in their pursuit of excellence across the multi-family markets. In our lead, Chief Operating Officer Raj Dhunna discusses the company's innovative solutions, upcoming developments, and their capacity to identify properties and locations that are prime for development.

For more great stories of building excellence, keep reading as we continue to Build Canada.

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NEWS >

ARCADIS BUYS CANADA'S IBI GROUP FOR $650M

Dutch consulting engineer Arcadis has agreed a US$650m offer to buy Canadian multidisciplinary designer IBI Group. The two firms made a joint announcement of the deal, by which Arcadis will buy IBI's shares at a 30% premium. The proposal is unanimously supported by IBI's board of directors and its largest shareholder, the IBI Group Management Partnership.

Peter Oosterveer, Arcadis' chief executive, said: "Together with IBI Group's management team, we have big ambitions. Our shared vision to digitally transform our industries and provide clients with innovative technology-enabled solutions differentiates us from our peers.

"Today's announcement will help accelerate this vision, leveraging Arcadis' global platform and IBI Group's strong track record by creating a strong fourth global business area of "Intelligence", complementing the services and solutions we offer to clients through our three existing business areas, Resilience, Places, Mobility."

NET ZERO >

CAN WINNIPEG ACHIEVE ITS ZERO-EMISSIONS TARGET BY 2050?

The City of Winnipeg is taking steps toward a net-zero emissions future; a committee of council has unanimously approved an ambitious, multibillion-dollar road map, with hopes of getting there by 2050.

The Community Energy Investment Roadmap was commissioned by council in 2020. Meant to accompany the city's broader guiding documents (OurWinnipeg 2045 and the 2018 Climate Action Plan), the road map outlines a series of targets for reducing emissions in five sectors, as well as recommendations to help make the goals of the plan a reality.

The committee also approved a plan to request annual progress reports from each department affected, and a motion to discuss hiring two additional employees to tackle work outlined in the report at the next budgetary consultations.

"It is achievable if we all work together on this and I think, as the public, I think we need to recognize that it is absolutely necessary," said Curt Hull, the project manager for Climate Change Connection.

"It recognizes what the actual objective is, which is zero emissions by 2050."
The report focuses mainly on Winnipeg's two largest emitters: transportation and natural gas heating. The road map outlines requirements for all new car and passenger truck sales to be zero emission by 2035 and recommends making transit fully electric by the same year.

"First thing, deep energy retrofits for our buildings," he said. "We need to make our buildings more efficient. We have to make our new buildings as efficient as possible. They should be net zero right off the bat. To make the heating of buildings as efficient as possible, we need to use heat pumps."

HELLY HANSEN

hellyhansen.com

INFRASTRUCTURE >

FREDERICTON RECEIVES $36M

Two projects in Fredericton, New Brunswick, received more than $36 million to upgrade the city's stormwater and wastewater infrastructure to improve services, increase capacity, and reduce the effects of climate change. The provincial government is contributing approximately $12.1 million for these two projects. The federal government is investing around $14.6 million through the Green Infrastructure Stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. The City of Fredericton itself will provide about $9.7 million.

AGGREGATES >

CEMENT SHORTAGES PUTTING PRESSURE ON INDUSTRY

The construction sector is having a boom year, with consumers and businesses pouring more dollars into building infrastructure. But cement, a major component of the concrete industry, is becoming scarce, and shortages – caused by a confluence of increased demand, labor shortages, inflation and issues at major factories – are creating serious problems for the construction industry across the country.

There are many reasons why supply is struggling to keep up with demand. BURNCO, a North American ready-mix concrete producer, says it has problems with supply chains (particularly with machinery, repairs and maintenance) and global constraints that limit the amount of raw materials available to make cement. Canada imported about $895 million in cement and concrete-related goods in 2021, according to Industry Canada, mostly from the United States and China.

PLANNING >

CANADA PLANS TO DOUBLE HOME OUTPUT

Canada has an ambitious plan to double the pace of homebuilding within a decade but the first big challenge is finding enough skilled workers, as the country grapples with the tightest labor market on record and with construction already at a multi-year high. Building more homes is a key peg of the C$9.5 billion ($7.5 billion) in housing spending outlined by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberal government.

The average selling price of a Canadian home has surged more than 50% in the last two years, driven by record low interest rates and tight supply. Construction has failed to keep pace with immigration-driven population growth.

"It's very ambitious. I would say it's going to be equally challenging to pull it off, simply because the construction sector is already more or less operating at full capacity," said Robert Kavcic, senior economist at BMO Economics. There are nearly 300,000 units under construction across Canada, compared with about 240,000 just two years ago, government data shows.

DESIGN >

A NEW DESIGN FOR VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

A $100 million donation from Polygon Homes Chairman Michael Audain's Audain Foundation has influenced the design of the new Vancouver Art Gallery to be built at Cambie and West Georgia. Architects Herzog & de Meuron are involved in the project.

Located at the intersection of Cambie Street and West Georgia Street, Larwill Park will be transformed into the first Passive House art gallery in North America and utilize mass timber construction. Vancouver donated the land, and the new gallery will have 330,000 square feet of exhibition space - twice as large as the current venue.

The new art gallery cost is estimated at $400 million and Audain's donation brings the total raised to $240 million. The gallery is seeking an additional $80 million from philanthropic donors and another $80 million from government and community sources. The updated design features a copper-coloured, woven metal facade with wooden soffits. The veil-like building skin changes appearance depending on the time of the day and the vantage point of the observer.

“The design reveals the complex intelligence of the Coast Salish people, their skill in mathematics and historical knowledge,” said artist and art design consultant Debra Sparrow. “The numerous transformations that the weave will undergo as sunlight strikes it at different angles and times of the day are comparable to the transformative abilities of the Coast Salish people.”

Interior rendering. Credit: Herzog & de Meuron

ANNOUNCEMENTS >

AECON SELECTED FOR TRANSFORMATIVE GO EXPANSION PROJECT

LARGEST TRANSIT PROJECT IN ONTARIO'S HISTORY

Aecon Group Inc. announced that ONxpress Transportation Partners ("ONxpress") has been selected to deliver the transformative GO Expansion On-Corridor Works project in the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area.

Previously identified as the First Negotiations Proponent, ONxpress has executed an agreement with Infrastructure Ontario (IO) and Metrolinx to deliver the multi-billion-dollar project under a progressive design, build, operate and maintain (DBOM) contract model. ONxpress is a consortium comprised of Aecon, FCC Construcción S.A. (FCC), Deutsche Bahn International Operations GmbH and Alstom. Aecon holds a 50 per cent interest in a civil joint venture with FCC, which is undertaking the construction, and a 28 per cent interest in a 25-year operations and maintenance partnership with Deutsche Bahn International Operations.

The innovative, fully integrated contract begins with a two-year collaborative development phase to finalize the scope, commercial structure, and pricing of various elements of the project, with certain construction and early works activities commencing during this phase.

Operations and maintenance are anticipated to commence upon completion of this period, and further information on the contract value and schedule will be disclosed following the development phase. The project is the culmination of the GO Expansion program and will electrify and transform the GO Rail network into a system that will deliver two-way, all-day service every 15 minutes or less across five core rail corridors in the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area.

"Aecon is purpose-built with the multidisciplinary expertise, preeminent execution capabilities and sophisticated processes to build and operate projects of this magnitude and we look forward to working with Infrastructure Ontario, Metrolinx and our partners to deliver this unprecedented and sustainable project," said Jean-Louis Servranckx, President and Chief Executive Officer, Aecon Group Inc.

TOP SELLING TABLE SAWS

DEWALT 10-INCH TABLE SAW DWE7491

DeWalt's DWE7491 still tops the charts years after its initial launch. We love the rack-and-pinion fence system, there's plenty of power from its 15-amp motor, the accuracy is excellent, it has a wider table than many, and the rolling stand gives it a nice stable platform. *www.dewalt.ca*

METABO HPT 36V MULTIVOLT 10-INCH TABLE SAW

Metabo HPT has stands out with a full 10-inch saw and it has a monster 35-inch rip capacity. It's also the only option that's hybrid. By adding the AC adapter, you can use the saw with a battery when it's convenient or on AC power when you need unlimited runtime.
www.metabo-hpt.com

SAWSTOP JOBSITE SAW PRO

The upgraded PRO model carries forward all the features that established the original Jobsite Saw as a class leader, including SawStop's contact detection technology, while adding new capabilities optimized for the construction and woodworking professional. *www.sawstop.com*

$1.2 MILLION GRANT FOR SKILLED TRADES

the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development, Monte McNaughton, visited Niagara College's Welland Campus to announce a $1.2 million dollar Skills Development Fund (SDF) grant for a partnership between the Niagara Home Builders' Association (NHBA) and Niagara College to help meet the demand for skilled trades workers in the residential construction industry.

"All across our province, we continue to see a shortage of workers in the skilled trades, for many life- long careers that pay six figures with defined benefits and pensions," said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. "These unfilled jobs cost our economy billions in lost productivity and mean families are waiting longer for the goods and services they need. That is why our government is making strategic investments to offer hands-on training and paid work placements for eager job seekers in Niagara, connecting them with local employers in their community who are ready to hire."

With Ontario projected to build 1.5 million homes in the next 10 years, the NHBA and Niagara College are working together to help close the skills gap in the construction industry and the trades. The provincial SDF funding will support the delivery of a customized Construction Skills training program – hands-on instruction through NC's School of Trades followed by an eight-week paid work placement – to individuals who have been unable to pursue a career in the trades due to financial or other barriers.

"Studies show that as many as one-in-five jobs within the province of Ontario will be in the skilled trades by the year 2025," said Richard Lawrence, President of the NHBA. "This program will allow the NHBA and Niagara College to develop and train students with the skills they need in order to be job site ready to work their way into building a stable career, while filling the void of the 100,000 workers our industry needs over the next decade."

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INFILL >

INFILL SOLUTION TO GTA RENTAL WOES

As the pandemic surges on, and affordable rental housing continues to be a pressing need in the GTA, some housing experts believe a solution has been sitting in plain sight all along: infill development. Simply put, it means adding new units to existing rental sites where there is room and opportunity for growth. Currently, the Federation of Rental-Housing Providers of Ontario (FRPO) estimates there are some 950 rental sites with the potential to add 176,000 new units throughout Toronto and the wider region.

"A lot of the sites are concentrated outside of the downtown core in relatively affordable markets," says Tony Irwin, president of FRPO. "The other thing that's important is that over 35 per cent of the potential units are within 800 metres of a current or future transit station."

According to a recent Urbanation report looking at supply gap and opportunties for developments, Toronto and the Greater Hamilton Area (GTHA) will be facing shortages of up to 200,000 rental units within a decade unless solutions are implemented in the near-term to change this long-term reality.

PLANNING >

LE MODEN: PROJECT BEGINS

A major real estate project, Le Moden, is rising in the eastern part of Ville-Marie borough. Bertone Development Corporation is proud to officially inaugurate yesterday the start of construction on this $50-million project, which was launched in November.

Built in a single phase, the two towers—one 4 storeys high and the other 10—will feature 126 condo units with a sophisticated design, as well as commercial space on the ground floor. More than 65% of the units have already been sold as buyers take advantage of attractive introductory prices.

Inspired by the principles of TOD—transit-oriented development—Le Moden will offer a living environment structured around urban mobility services and an efficient public transport network. Located next to Frontenac métro station on the green line, a BIXI station, bus stops and a bike path, the project also promotes active mobility around the large Médéric-Martin park and a shopping centre that will soon be completely renovated by Bertone. "The goal is to enrich the life of the neighbourhood and create a friendly living environment for residents, all at the doorstep of a highly accessible downtown core," adds Michael Bertone.

REAL ESTATE >

AVERAGE RENTS

The average rent for all Canadian properties listed on Rentals.ca was $1,885 per month in June 2022, down $3 from May 2022 or down 0.2% month over month. (single-detached homes, semi-detached homes, townhouses, condominium apartments, rental apartments and basement apartments.

INFRASTRUCTURE >

NEWFOUNDLAND LEVIES $27M- TO ENHANCE INFRASTRUCTURE

Three Newfoundland projects obtained funding of more than $27 million to improve public services and protect waters in St. John's, Petty Harbour-Maddox Cove, and other surrounding communities.

In St. John's, new wastewater infrastructure promises to improve municipal services in the Goulds area and help protect Shoal Bay and the harbour. Additionally, residents of Petty Harbour-Maddox Cove will have access to more reliable water Tinfrastructure through ditching and erosion control measures along the Motion Bay Road extension.

These projects will protect the waterways and help communities continue to provide safe and reliable services for families, businesses, and visitors alike. The Government of Canada is investing more than $9.8 million in these projects, while the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is contributing more than $7.4 million, with municipalities' allocation standing at more than $9.8 million.

CIVIL >

BURLINGTON LIFT BRIDGE TO UNDERGO $21M REVITALIZATION

EllisDon Civil Ltd. and Chant Limited have been awarded a $21 million contract to manage the Burlington Canal Lift Bridge deck replacement project.

Through this contract, both companies will replace the lift span's deck, restore the approach spans, and widen sections of the sidewalk to allow more space for pedestrians and cyclists to cross safely and improve traffic flow.

"The revitalization of the Burlington Canal Lift Bridge will ensure safe and accessible use for commercial and recreational needs for years to come," says Karina Gould, minister of families, children, and social development. "This investment highlights the Government of Canada's commitment to building modern and reliable public infrastructure."

On average, approximately 25,000 vehicles cross the bridge each day. This project will also extend and maximize the life of the deck, sidewalk, and approaches. Construction is anticipated to begin in winter 2023, during the annual shutdown for maintenance and repairs, in order to minimize disruptions. The project is expected to be completed by fall 2024.

Lafarge Canada introduces **ECOPact**, the industry's broadest range of sustainable concrete for today's high-performance building and sustainable and circular construction and recycling practices. ECOPact is sold at a range of low-carbon levels, from 30% to 100% less carbon emissions compared to standard concrete. Where regulatory conditions allow, ECOPact products integrate upcycled construction and demolition materials, further closing the resource loop.

LAFARGE

PRODUCT >

AQUOR WATER SYSTEMS' HOUSE HYDRANTS

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Changing the way people access water outdoors.

With Aquor water systems, homeowners have the ability to access water in style and convenience. Aqour hydrants are constructed of high-quality materials that will last a lifetime. The hydrants are leakproof, frost free, and they flush against siding. As per the U.S. EPA, a faucet that drips once every few seconds wastes more than 3,000 gallons of water a year. Aquor's hydrant is the first leak-proof outdoor faucet and modernized hose bib introduced to the home building industry. Besides eliminating concerns about freezing pipes, Aquor's hydrant also automatically seals, drains, and winterizes the water outlet once the hydrant is disconnected.

With the Aquor Hydrants connection system, there is no need to struggle with compact threads that can be cumbersome. Just push and twist to engage the hose connector. To disconnect, simply untwist and the water will stop. Homeowners are looking to protect their utilities against theft as the cost of water rises. Most solutions involve using a physical key to open locks, resulting in increased waiting time and trouble accessing water when needed. The Aquor hydrant is leak proof and tamper-resistant. To unplug an Aquor hydrant, unplug the connector. The connector will remain attached until you lose the entire hose.

Conventional spigots have a flawed sealing mechanism. The friction of rotating compressing a rubber washer onto a brass valve seat causes wear, which creates leaks. Aquor's hydrant uses water pressure to keep its valve closed, rather than a screw- tightened assembly. This valve design seals with the same pressure and motion every time. Unlike a standard hose bib, the hydrant cannot be over-tightened.

Freezing temperatures can cause hose bibs to burst, often resulting in costly damage. In cold regions, homeowners must use shut- off valves, drain each faucet, then cover the spigots with foam. Aquor's hydrant stops water deep inside the homes wall for maximum insulation, where traditional spigots are made of brass, a poor insulator- even frost- free brass models fail in cold temperatures. Stainless steel has better thermal insulation compared to brass, so the hydrant does not need to be covered, even when temperatures reach -35C. The hydrant self-drains when unplugged, automatically winterizing.

Typically, brass plumbing fixtures are designed to meet low-cost requirements therefore exhibit basic quality and construction.Every aspect of Aquor's design was taken into account to create the most robust valve possible. The original concept was engineered for use on marine vessel decks and water tanks, then adapted for homes. The hydrant body is composed of marine grade 316L stainless steel an is virtually indestructible. The internal seals are Viton O-rings, commonly used in aerospace and automotive applications, which are renowned for their longevity.

Aquor connectors are molded from a high-tech polymer called DuPont Delrin. Most spigots are a single unit design, welded shut with no access to the valve seat. Only the handle and the stem can be removed or replaced, and it is impossible to visually inspect the point where its seals.

aquor
water systems

Kobelco's New SK55SRX-7 Compact Excavator

FAST AND POWERFUL DIGGING AND LEVELLING

Source: Kobelco

At ground level, the new excavator reaches to 20 feet. Dig depth goes to 12 feet 9 inches, and the working width measures 6 feet 5 inches.

Compact excavators brought a new generation of contractors into the heavy equipment universe when they were introduced a couple of decades ago. It's not an exaggeration to say their unique performance attributes revolutionized construction.

Kobelco has been a key player in this revolution and has continued to refine and upgrade models to keep performance curves on an upward trend. The company's latest model, the next-generation SK55SRX-7, follows the Kobelco Performance X Design concept for increased productivity, replicating the feel and operator comfort of larger excavator models.

Source: Kobelco

The SK55SRX-7 is a short radius machine with a compact tail swing and a small footprint for operation in restricted spaces such as urban or residential jobsites. The standard arm is 5 feet 7 inches long, but for jobs where additional reach is needed, you can spec a 6-foot 4-inch arm. Both come with a thumb bracket pre-installed.

With a canopy, the standard counterweight model SK55SRX-7 weighs 11,817 pounds. With a cab it weighs 12,147 pounds. It runs on a 37-horsepower Yanmar diesel engine. Maximum digging height with the standard arm is 19 feet, 6 inches. At ground level, the new excavator reaches to 20 feet. Dig depth goes to 12 feet 9 inches, and the working width measures 6 feet 5 inches.

Nothing affects performance on a compact excavator more than the hydraulics. The SK55SRX-7 shortens the digging cycle time by up to 7% compared to the previous 6E series, thanks to improved hydraulic performance. Redesigned travel motors increase the travel speed by up to 12% and hill climbing speeds up to 10%.

Other hydraulic system benefits include smoother operation and improved leveling performance. The integrated flow pump system harnesses extra output from the third pump, which otherwise powers the swing and dozer circuit. This output is directed to the arm and boom for added power when digging, resulting in a fast, smooth raising operation even under heavy loads.

In terms of operator safety, the high-strength cab/canopy meets ROPS, TOPS and OPG Level 1 (top guard) standards. New LED work lights are mounted on the boom, top front and left side of the cab from the factory. Mesh type front and top cab guards are available as options.

EVENTS OF 2022 NOTE

SEPT 13

CEN-CAN RESOURCE EXPO
CANADIAN LAKEHEAD EXHIBITION, THUNDER BAY, CANADA

If you are associated with Mining, Forestry or Energy you can't miss this show. Suppliers, Manufacturers, Mines, Organizations, Government, Foreign delegates, and Investors will be in attendance. This is the only event for all of central Canada's resource sectors to network and learn from each other.

SEPT 22

INTERIOR DESIGN SHOW
VANCOUVER CONVENTION CENTRE, VANCOUVER CANADA

The Interior Design Show (IDS) brings together the newest and most innovative of international and Canadian design. This show is considered as a Pacific platform for all things design which welcomes individual designers, artists,makers and design-centric brands, to showcase their product and explore more in their fields.

SEPT 27

THE CANADIAN STEEL CONFERENCE
SHERATON - VANCOUVER

The CISC Canadian Steel Conference is recognized as the steel construction industry's premier event that models the best practices of the steel construction industry. The Conference offers the valuable opportunity to all participants to meet, exchange, collaborate and network with industry leaders.

OCT 18

MANITOBA BUILDING EXPO
VICTORIA INN HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTRE, WINNIPEG, CANADA

Manitoba Building Expo premier showcase for all the latest products and technologies for commercial and institutional buildings, and a terrific learning and networking opportunity for industry professionals. This premier event for building-industry professionals in Manitoba.

DEC 5

POOL & SPA EXPO
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Construction Technology is Reshaping the Industry

CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY

Success in construction requires the highest-quality building materials and methods, faster build speeds, a skilled workforce, and on-site efficiencies that speed up the project and keep workers safe. This increasingly requires the adoption of new technologies, which are often cloud-based and help with scheduling and workflow management, typically in real time. 1Technology will continue to see greater adoption as construction leaders deal with improving productivity, eliminating inefficiencies, and adapting to a younger workforce of digital natives that expect to work with technology.

AUGMENTED REALITY

AR can layer certain details and elements onto a building plan so stakeholders can get a better understanding of the project. AR can also be used to showcase 3D models and even provide tours, giving clients a solid idea of what a building would look like before it's built. AR can streamline collaboration in remote environments by letting teams share 3D images and videos with team members who aren't on site.

CONSTRUCTION WEARABLES

Construction is one of the riskiest industries to work in, with accidents like falls and collisions with equipment accounting for hundreds of worker deaths each year. Wearable technology offers the possibility of added safety for workers, potentially preventing injuries and fatalities across the industry. Smart Boots, Smart hard gat, and Power gloves are already available today, and other wearables, like smartwatches, monitors and goggles, improve lone worker safety, check for fatigue and enable contact tracing

.

EXOSKELETONS

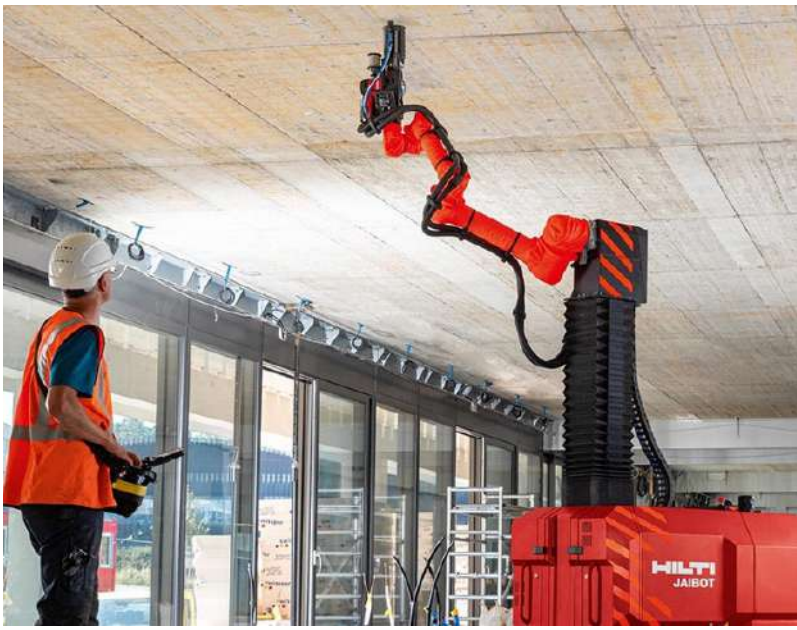
Construction exoskeletons, or exosuits, are wearable machines with motorized joints that provide extra support and power during repetitive movements like bending, lifting and grabbing. While exoskeletons originated in rehabilitation programs, they are gaining attention as a tool to reduce injuries and increase efficiency for construction workers. Some exoskeletons are powered by electricity and others simply redistribute weight throughout the body, but all of them have advantages for workers performing tough jobs. Though exoskeletons are making strenuous jobs easier for construction workers, the industry is also looking toward construction robots to ease the burden even more by offloading certain risky and difficult tasks to machines.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the ability for technology to make decisions independent of human input, while machine learning is the ability for technology to "learn" from past experiences and big data analysis. Both of these technologies have massive implications for construction, where efficient and intelligent decision-making has notable effects on productivity and safety. Machine learning and artificial intelligence will soon affect every aspect of a construction project, from planning to project closeout. Additionally, AI and machine learning are improving novel methods of building, like modular construction, which is a growing part of the construction sector.

CONSTRUCTION ROBOTS

Construction robots are still a ways off from completely taking over the industry, but several designs and proposals are on the table as the industry considers ways to deal with a labor shortage and the need for social distancing. While robots like this have not yet been widely adopted in construction, other formerly futuristic technologies are already widespread. For example, drones are now a common sight on construction jobs, performing work that would have been cost-prohibitive just a few years ago. Construction robots may be involved in specific tasks, such as bricklaying, painting, loading, and bulldozing. These robots help to protect workers from a hazardous working environment, reduce workplace injuries, and address labor shortages.



DRONES

With data and imagery collected via a drone in the air, users can create 2D and 3D maps, orthomosaics, collect elevation data, and gather volumetric measurements to better plan for, build, and develop projects. The high-quality information collected by a drone also give users the opportunity to view a site in real-time as it progresses, to better manage resources and keep projects on schedule. Additionally, drone technology gives those in the industry the valuable ability to view a project from the comfort of their office without having to physically step foot on a site. This way, many different parties can work together to easily track development and collaborate to improve decision-making.

MODULAR CONSTRUCTION

Modular Construction is an alternative building method in which structures are constructed off-site, delivered in pieces and then assembled by cranes. Because construction of the building happens at the same time the site is prepared, modular construction can be up to twice as fast as traditional projects. Decreased construction waste: Since many buildings are constructed simultaneously in one factory, excess materials from one project can easily be used on another.

Q+A

BUILD CANADA MAGAZINE

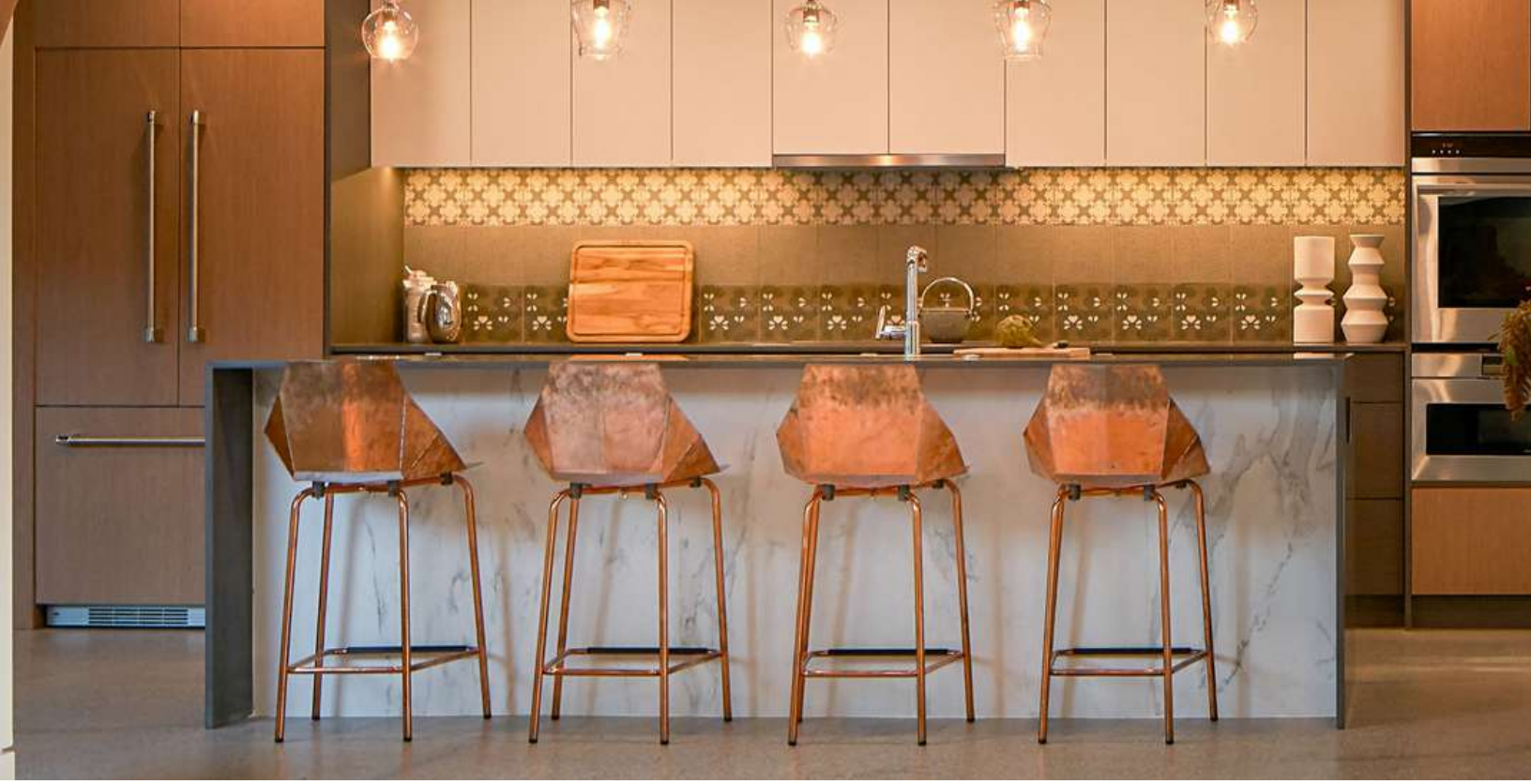
IN CONVERSATION WITH **BRYN DAVIDSON**
PARTNER | LANEFAB DESIGN/BUILD

Building Inspiring Spaces

Vancouver's laneway house pioneers Bryn Davidson and Mat Turner are driven by the belief that every home is a sanctuary, and the company builds communities with a cohesive sense of style, and a symbiotic relationship to the city. As the company has grown and evolved, Lanefab Design/Build has built an impressive portfolio of bespoke custom and laneway homes, including passive houses and duplexes. We got a chance to catch up with Davidson to talk about bringing the first laneway house to Vancouver, the importance of passive house building, and the journey to find the missing middle.

From the foundation to the final touches, what is the best thing about your job?

I run the design side of the business, and since we are a design build company, I look forward to designing projects from conception to completion. Since every project is unique, I enjoy implementing sustainability, innovation, and design solutions that help our clients get the most out of their space.



How did you and Mat team up?

I was always interested in using prefab building systems so I started talking to a local supplier about SIP panels (Structural Insulated Panels). SIP panels have fantastic insulation, can be made to any custom size, and are structurally superior to traditional wood framing. Mat is a general contractor and project manager, and I was told that he was the only builder in town at the time who was using them. We chatted a little bit about and a year and a half later during the global financial crisis in 2008, both of us were suddenly without any work.

The City of Vancouver introduced the Laneway House program in August of 2009 to provide opportunities for more rental housing options in neighbourhoods across the city. This new policy would allow 65,000 lots in the city of Vancouver to become eligible for this new type of housing, and Mat and I decided to brand the company around this new of small, affordable laneway houses while integrating this prefab idea.

Lanefab built the first laneway house in Vancouver, can you let us know how that came about?

Mat and I started in March of 2009, however the laneway housing bylaw wasn't formally approved by the city until August so those first several months we weren't even sure if we were going have a business or not based on how the vote went. The legislation would permit the construction of 500-1000-square foot homes in place of alley-facing garages that were on a majority of existing properties. We were still running around trying to line up potential clients, and we got five different sets of clients on board.

One of those clients had a nice corner site that had great design sensibility, so we decided to push hard on their project and get it completed. It was a two-storey, 710-square-foot home on McGill and Slocan Streets in East Vancouver. We worked a lot of long hours, and we were able to have an open house on Mother's Day in May 2010. There was a huge interest in that first project, and we had lineups literally up and down the block for two days because people were so curious about what these laneway houses were.

And Lanefab also built the first Net-Zero Solar Laneway House in 2012 correct?

We did. It was an 1020 square foot, one bedroom, 2 bath infill project that was on an existing lot. The house was built using SIP panels, 95% LED lighting, a 500 gallon in-ground rainwater tank, heat recovery ventilator, with 12 solar panels installed on the roof.

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How do you work with clients throughout the project?

Almost all our projects are our custom builds and clients will come to us with a piece of land, and some general design ideas and concepts. We start off by listening and discussing what they're needs and goals are. We take a lot of things into consideration and then I'll generate several conceptual ideas using 3D modeling until we arrive on the right design approach. After the zoning permit is issued, we provide a fixed price construction contract, and the project gets handed over to Mat and the build team where we're always in communication with our clients at various stages of the build should they have any questions.

Can you tell us about your key team and how you work together to deliver a project on time and on budget?

We have a dedicated team of residential designers, project managers, interior designers, and carpenters who work closely together to get the most from the design and the quality of the build, and a great team of skilled subcontractors and trades that we work with such as our windows, electrical and drywall partners.

What are the benefits of a passive house?

Passive House is a certification system administered by the PHI (Passive House Institute) in Germany and is the only internationally recognized performance-based energy standard in construction. It's a standard that achieves five passive house principles: thermal bridge free design, superior windows, ventilation with heat recovery, quality insulation and airtight construction. It's the only global system for energy efficient buildings where the goal is to create a home or building that uses 90% less energy for heating compared to a typical house. We decided that we wanted green building to be part of our brand and wanted to build better than standard code.

What type of architecture inspires you?

We like to bring together a blend of West Coast modernism with some elements of Scandinavian modern and traditional Japanese design and bring those passive house elements which is about compact massing, and super airtight construction. Our preference is to use thick walls, efficient windows, and solar strategies. We really love the mid-century modern case study houses that were done in Los Angeles in the 60s and 70s. They were well designed, but they weren't very efficient or well adapted to a cold climate. We're always trying to keep some of those ideas about indoor and outdoor living while combining those ideas that come from passive house building.

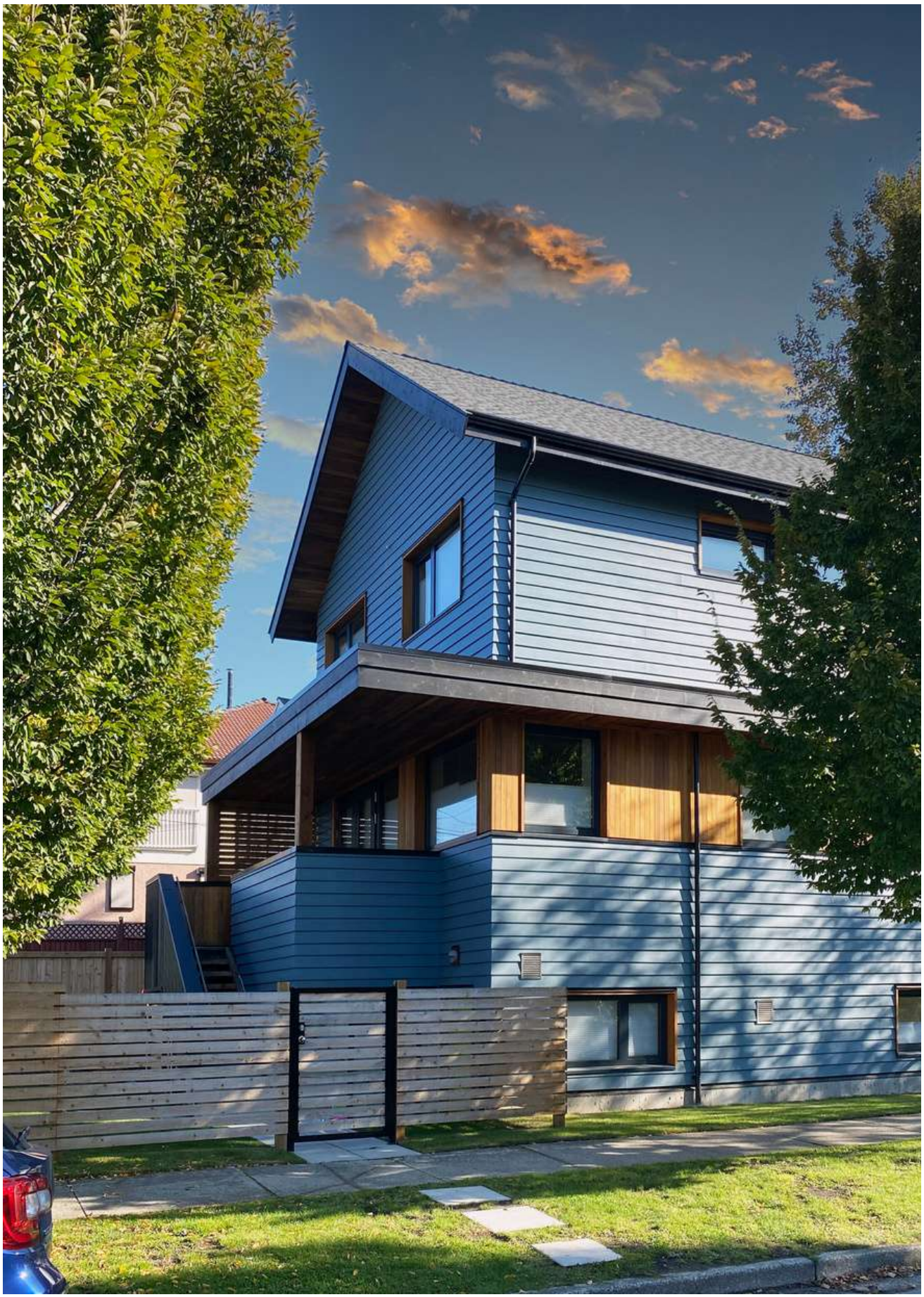
How are you embracing innovation and new technologies into your projects?

One of the reasons we like being a design build company is the business is sort of like a rolling R&D process and we're always trying out new things whether it's prefab systems, drain water, heat recovery, or rainwater. We're always working on trying to optimize that we converse with a kind of global network of designers who are also working on passive house, and we share ideas, and we're also working with the city on their incentives and removing barriers so we're always trying to work with the city to make the process better for everybody.

What are some of your current projects and what's in store for Lanefab in the future?

Currently in Vancouver were doing a lot of passive houses and net zero duplexes. A lot of them have suites in them so essentially, it's a four-plex. But what we're really excited about is that the City of Vancouver recently adopted a new plan for the city to allow as many as six homes to be built on any residential lot in the city as part of its plan to find ways to make more housing accessible so we're building a lot of proto types for small multi-family passive houses.

We've been at it for thirteen years now and we resisted growing just for growth's sake. We got into this because we really enjoyed the processes of designing and building and if we went into a growth mode than we then we would basically just doing project management and there are other companies that have gone that route and they tend to lose some of the focus on green building, innovation and design. I think we will continue to just do interesting work, however I would like to grow into more of this multi-family housing because it is the future of where we need to go with our cities if we want to deal with climate change, affordability ad everything else. It's not enough to just be doing single-family housing anymore.



REGENCY DEVELOPMENTS

BRINGING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

Regency Developments was built from the ground up on the foundation of a dream and dedication to hard work. Their story is one of resilience and of unwavering commitment to complete each project to the highest standard possible. As Chief Operating Officer Raj Dhunna says, "We believe in the principles of honesty, integrity and respect with an understanding that we're building a home for a family that wants to be an active part of the community. Being a family owned and operated business, we are committed to building and maintaining long term relationships with our community, city council, and key partners."

From their humble beginning, Regency's story unfolds with its Founder, Rakesh Dhunna, who immigrated to Canada from his native India as they settled in Edmonton. The city they call home was going through a population growth boom, an expanding economy, and an abundance of employment opportunities which attracted people to Edmonton and fueled population-based demand for housing.

"My parents came to Canada in the early 80s with nothing more than a mid-level high school education where English was a foreign language, and they embarked on a new journey in search of a better life for family," says Dhunna. "They arrived, got to work right away at blue collar jobs and continued doing that for the next decade. In the early 1990's my dad built his first spec home without any previous knowledge or experience. Even though it was a lot of trial and error, he put the work in and committed himself to the project at hand."

The senior Dhunna recognized the potential in the market and started building single family homes, townhomes, and small-scale commercial projects while amassing an impressive rental property portfolio over the next two plus decades. In 2009, he expanded his operation to include strategic land acquisitions to tackle larger multi-family developments and around this time the next generation became more involved with Raj Dhunna becoming actively involved in the company. "I was finishing up my MBA from the University of Alberta while getting a crash course in the school of hard knocks of being a project manager and managing our rental multi-family projects at the same time," Dhunna says. "Balancing time, between school and work wasn't easy, but going through that I learned the value of hard work and built on my foundation of a strong work ethic that my parents instilled in me."

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

At the heart of Regency Developments' core values is the Dhunna's beliefs that building meaningful relationships is directly tied to the success of building better projects. "Delivering quality with a great product is essential in our process, and we take great pride in our ability to remain true to our company values," he states. "To do that, you need to have the right team in place, and we have a devoted sales, leasing, service and management teams that ensure a positive and seamless experience that our valued clients deserve at our quality developments." Building meaningful relationships is also important to Regency Developments when it comes to their vendors and sub-contractors – that's the only way to ensure consistent quality and efficiency. "The relationships we have built with our consultants, trades and suppliers are vital with the scale of projects at hand, and we've been working with many of them since the beginning days, so it's great to have that confidence knowing the work is going to be done right backed with a high degree of trust."

Regency is also proactive when it comes to the polices and plans city officials have to redirect growth to transforming and rejuvenating built-up areas and intensifying the current urban fabric. The benefits of infill development include bringing more people closer to transit, replacing old, inefficient homes, and utilizing existing community infrastructure. "We felt early on at Regency that infill development was a key opportunity because a lot of people in established neighbourhoods want to downsize but not necessarily move away from the neighbourhood they've known their whole lives," Dhunna says. "Increasing housing options represents a generational opportunity to reimagine Edmonton's extensive low-rise neighbourhoods as more inclusive places for existing and future residents to call home."

"Increasing housing options represents a generational opportunity to reimagine Edmonton's extensive low-rise neighbourhoods as more inclusive places for existing and future residents to call home."

RAJ DHUNNA

Unique Scaffold

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However, the boom in development has not been without growing pains. "When we started Regency in 2008, we didn't focus on where Edmonton was at the time, we focused on what the future of Edmonton would look like. We went into the neighbourhoods that hadn't seen any new developments in decades," says Dhunna. "The 'not in my backyard' mentality was really strong, and everyone had a seemingly unjust opposition to development projects. Rezoning at the time wasn't a common thing, but the city was in its infancy when it came to infill developments. It was interesting to build relationships with the city and work with them work on rezoning process and policies such as community contributions that they necessarily didn't even have at the time," Dhunna says. "These community benefits are built within a new project. Sometimes it's a financial payment that delivers benefits somewhere in the city; or building bus stops or using excavated dirt to build a toboggan hill for the school nearby. We are proud to have established deep meaningful relationships with the City, as when they want to try something different with a city pilot project for example they don't hesitate to work with us because they know Regency will deliver every time."

SHAPING THE SKYLINE

Regency has completed many prominent projects that have left their mark on the Edmonton skyline including: The Pearl, consisting of 36 storey and 128 units; the 700+ rental suites at Edgewater Village, a mix of 2 towers and 2 wood walkups, and the 400 rental suites located in two 10-storey mid-rise concrete buildings at 121 West, just to name a few. Each project is approached with a unique architectural objective, attempting to pin down the economic, social, and environmental value of good urban design.

"When we begin a new project we want to design bold and inspiring spaces for people and reinforce a sense of place in the communities we build. With the Pearl we wanted to build an iconic landmark that the city hadn't seen before. We wanted to shift the future identity of our city and our vision was to bring something to a vibrant and growing city core," Dhunna says. "We decided to make it stand out architecturally – sleek and sophisticated with floor-to-ceiling curtain glass walls at 36 stories, at the time the tallest residential building ever built in the city. Our mindset is to bring visionary projects that fit the neighbourhood in terms of its character but brings a modern touch to it."

Committed to building interconnected communities in thriving neighbourhoods, Regency Developments current master-planned redevelopment in Holyrood fulfills one of the city's main goals of developing more densely populated neighbourhoods near public transit. "Edmonton has had its challenges with the development of successful transit-oriented developments (TOD) and we look forward to massively shifting that narrative over the coming years. With TOD, we're not only building the residences, but we're also building neighbourhood renewal that contributes to the overall sustainability of the city," Dhunna says.

Holyrood Gardens will consist of 1,200 residential units in eight buildings over 12 acres that will be between four- and 26-storeys tall, located at 8310 93 Avenue Northwest and adjacent to the Holyrood stop on the Valley Line LRT. Fully finished one, two and a handful of three-bedroom suites will be available with 9-foot ceilings, expansive windows, and plenty of common amenity space for residents. "Almost 50 percent of it is going to be green space, or public amenities space which allows residents get to know your neighbours. One of the many things we collaborated on with the city council and the community was their desire to see family-oriented units.

Photo via CreateTO.

game changer

TORONTO TO BUILD $250 MILLION STUDIO COMPLEX, MARKING BIGGEST PRODUCTION INDUSTRY INVESTMENT IN TWO DECADES

Courtesy of the City of Toronto

Hackman Capital Partners (HCP) and its affiliate The MBS Group (MBS) will develop and operate the Basin Media Hub; a $250 million, purpose-built, state-of-the-art film, television and digital media hub to be located on an 8.9-acre waterfront development parcel in Toronto's Port Lands, located at 29, 35, 41 Basin St.

The HCP-MBS proposal approved by CreateTO last month and City Council last week includes eight purpose-built sound stages, production office space, along with workshop and production support space. This $250 million investment in the development will be one of the most significant contributions to Toronto's film and television production ecosystem in more than two decades. In addition to providing much-need studio and production space within the city, the proposed development will provide the opportunity for HCP-MBS to partner with the City to deliver a public promenade along the water's edge, helping to further transform this area of the Port Lands into a healthier and more liveable space for workers and visitors alike. The Basin Media Hub presents an important opportunity to support the ongoing development of Toronto's film industry and the Media City District. After completion of the construction phase, the expected economic impact of on-going film studio operations includes $280 million in economic activity, $119 million in net contribution to GDP and $32 million in tax revenues across all levels of government. After completion of the construction phase, the expected economic impact of on-going film studio operations includes $280 million in economic activity, $119 million in net contribution to GDP and $32 million in tax revenues across all levels of government.

Photo via CreateTO.

The partnership is expected to create 750 jobs on-site as well as 880 indirect or induced jobs in the broader community. Construction is planned to begin on the Basin Media Hub by 2023. Through its proposal, HCP-MBS has committed to establishing a Basin Media Hub endowment for a local training program with a $1 million initial investment and funding for a Program Coordinator. HCP-MBS will provide training space onsite and support site visits, talks and work experience opportunities for local schools in order to promote a diverse range of careers in the film industry and support training and jobs for people from equity-seeking groups. The training program will be managed by MBS University (MBSu), a division of MBS that has a wealth of experience in creating customized programs for hands-on practical crew training. HCP-MBS has also committed to establishing a $1 million fund to support and encourage Canadian content creation. The HCP-MBS partnership was selected through a competitive market offering process launched by CreateTO, on behalf of the City, in 2020 and concluded in 2021. HCP is a privately-held real estate investment and operating company that specializes in buying, renovating and re-imagining commercial, vintage industrial and studio properties. MBS is an industry-leading studio operations, production services and studio-based equipment provider.

Photo via CreateTO.

"The development of the Basin Media Hub in theheart of the Media City District will help us increase production capacity in the film, television and digital media sector, create new jobs and employment training opportunities and further enhance our ability to attract and retain production investment from around the world. This is a major investment in the future of Toronto's screen industry and I look forward to seeing this $250 million project get underway – it will help ensure that our city comes back stronger than ever," says Mayor John Tory.

"CreateTO implemented a multi-stage offering process to select the proponent for the Basin Media Hub and the proposal submitted by Hackman Capital Partners and The MBS Group represents a tremendous opportunity for the City. The development of this studio complex signifies a major step forward in the continued revitalization of the Port Lands and is the kind of city building CreateTO is mandated to do. This is an exciting addition to Toronto's east end and I look forward to its completion," says Steven Trumper, Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO.

Photo via CreateTO.

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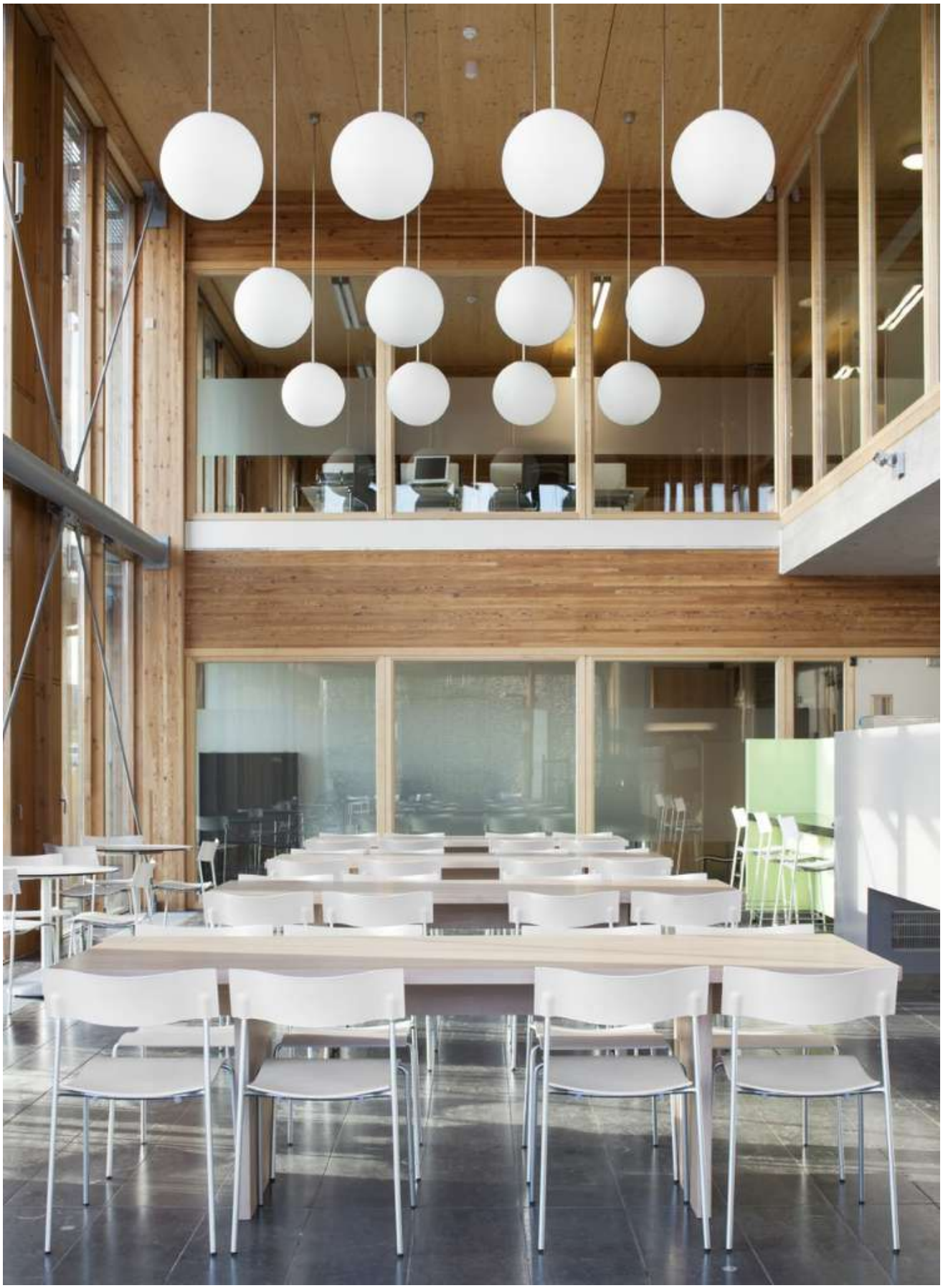


WHELAN CONSTRUCTION

BUILDING TOGETHER

WHELAN CONSTRUCTION LAYS THE GROUNDWORK AS VANCOUVER'S PREMIERE GENERAL CONTRACTING AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT FIRM.

With any construction project, project management is crucial. The process of communicating, strategizing, and planning from the beginning to the completion of a project can be an overwhelming task. To keep a project on track, metrics and project goals must be properly managed to meet each client's unique requirements. Enter Vancouver-based Whelan Construction, a general contracting and construction management firm that operates across multiple market sectors including institutional, healthcare, light rail, airport, renewable energy and building performance upgrades.

A cursory scroll through past projects—from the 100-bed community nursing unit in Loughrea, Co. Galway, Ireland to the Pier D Expansion project in Vancouver—demonstrates how Whelan's founder, Brian Whelan, has been engaged in many notable and challenging projects over his 22 years in the industry. "I've enjoyed both the successes and challenges of working on complex projects in Ireland and Canada. Our experience has given us a clear vision of what a client needs from a contractor and construction management company," he states. "We consider ourselves a proactive, problem-solving business, with a focus on consistent delivery and quality of service."

The company's proficiencies of quality, service excellence, and due diligence are interconnected. This is particularly evident in Whelan's safety management system which lays the foundation for how the team defines excellence on their projects. "Safety is, without a doubt, a key core value for us. It's something that we've pushed to the forefront of our approach. We want to educate, coach, and model the correct way to ensure we improve efficiency and performance while keeping everyone safe," explained Brian.

Communication is essential. The lack of it is one of the fundamental problems when it comes to safety. There's a lot of planning, risk assessments, document management and safety training management required before each project begins. Whelan ensures all trade partners are completely aligned with its safety procedures throughout the entire project.

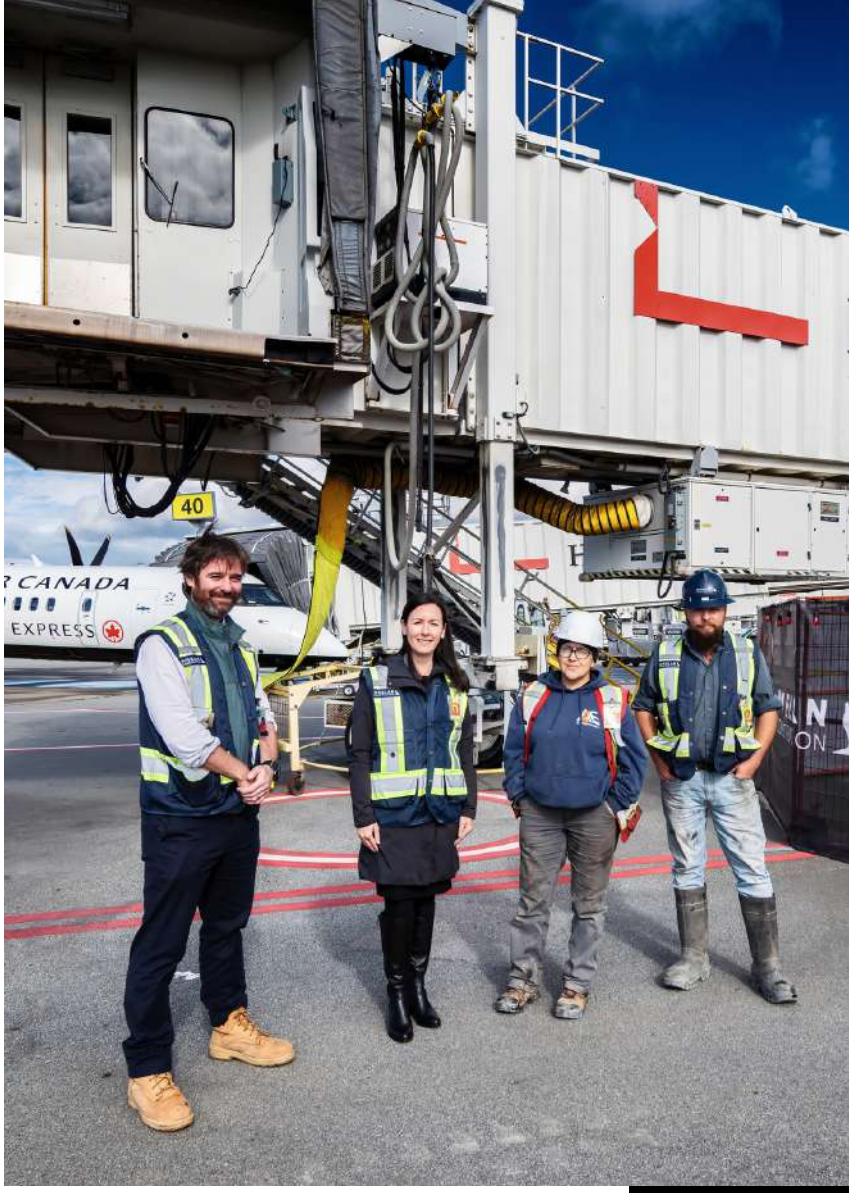
Partnering with the best

Whelan values partnerships as the team recognizes that a best-of-breed approach delivers the best possible outcome for clients. "One important thing that separates us from other contractors is that we have a model whereby we price projects with our trade partners. We don't tender it out to five different trades like other general contractors. Instead, we carry the people who are best suited for the project. It's a perfect model for us and we've been successful to date with it."

Building solid foundations

After graduating from the Technological University of Dublin and spending some time at ABM Design and Build in Ireland, Brian Whelan moved to Vancouver with his family in 2013, where he continued to hone his skills and expertise working on a variety of project types, many of which were based at Vancouver International Airport.

He started Whelan Construction in 2021 and extended its reach into the Metro Vancouver, Fraser Valley, and Squamish-Lillooet regions. Whelan highlights their approach to be open and transparent with clients as a differentiator, and he gave an example of this in action.



"A US-based general contractor, Lease Crutcher Lewis, approached us about a large structural seismic upgrade package for an existing office building in the heart of Gastown," he said. "They asked us for recommendations with regards to constructability and asked for a turnkey proposal given our experience in the field. We highlighted some solutions and constructability recommendations given the design was at 75% and we made recommendations to provide them a streamlined turnkey proposal that better suited their needs. Whelan was successful in being awarded the structural seismic upgrade project. The project will increase the existing cable capacity which allows for higher bandwidth services, further enriching Vancouver's position as a growing global tech hub.

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Whelan underscores the importance of having an organized construction process and ensuring the client's expectations are met during every step of the process. "There are various building models out there and it can be confusing for clients. We simply have a construction management model and a general contracting model. For all our contracting jobs, whether it's a lump sum contract or construction management contract, we use the same simplified model to keep things transparent for the client.

Considering the highly technical and complicated nature of its work, it's no surprise that Whelan embraces technology across its own operations. "We built Whelan as a next-generation construction company with the best-in-class technologies to give us a competitive edge. Everything is cloud-based and we've automated some manual, repetitive back office tasks to save time and reduce the risk of human error. Our system unites office and field teams from the design phase to the construction phase and into operations."

Exciting projects

Growth is crucial in the early stages of any business. Whelan Construction has it covered with several outstanding community projects ongoing across Vancouver and the Lower Mainland. "We recently finished phase one civil scope of works of the Vancouver International Airport bridge replacement project. We conducted all the excavation, demolition, new deep utility work and the installation of utilities to rehabilitate and upgrade the infrastructure to meet current and future needs. We were awarded phase two of that project which consists of the installation of 6 new bridges at the terminal gates in both domestic and international buildings. We are completing the base building, as well as all the mechanical and electrical scope of work, so we're excited to start that," said Brian.

Whelan also just finished a pre-construction seismic upgrade for Vancouver Airport Property Management and has been awarded the Air Canada Jazz refurbishment project.

The road ahead

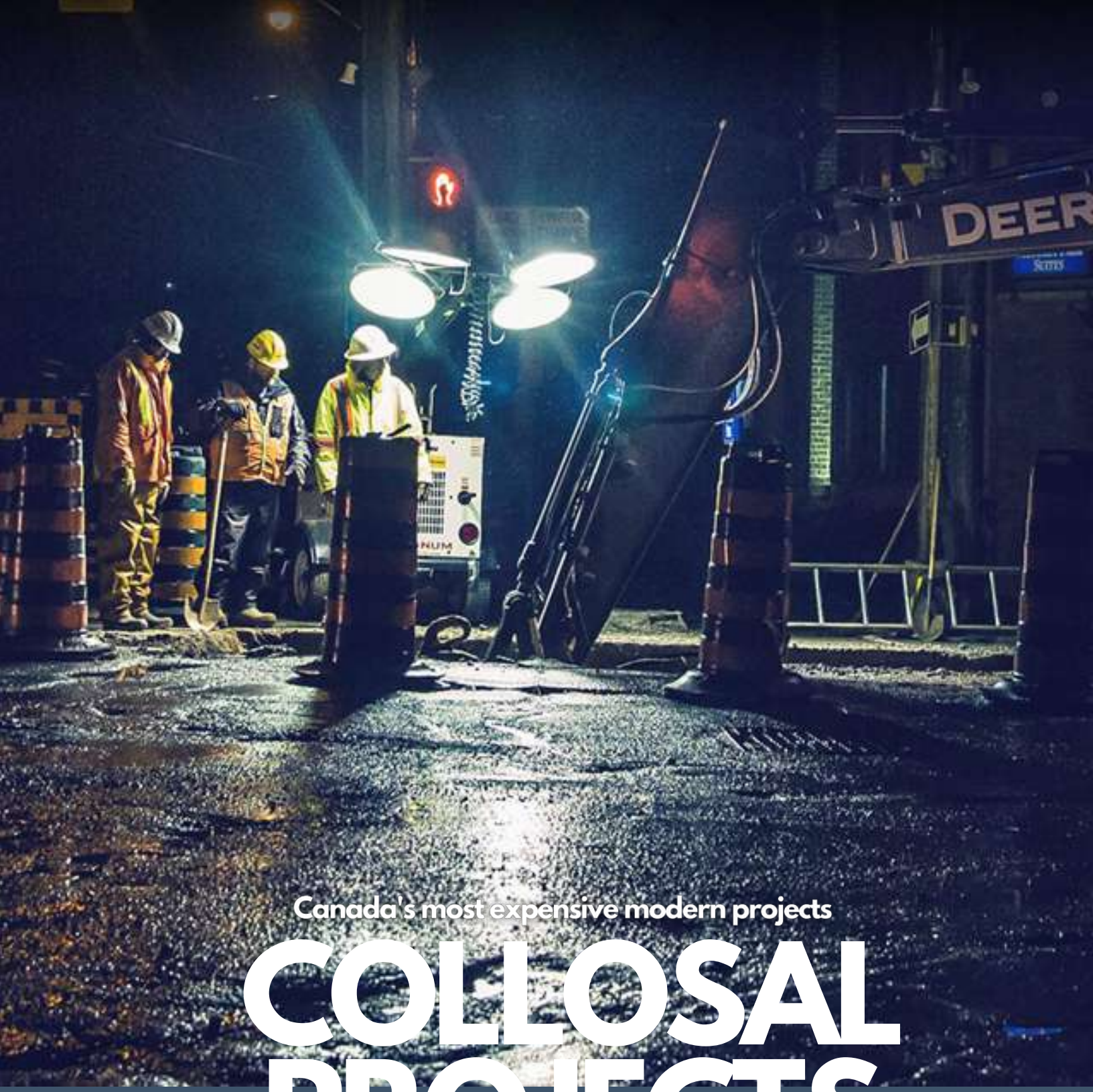
Demand for Whelan Construction's services remains high and Brian is optimistic about the company's future prospects based on its trajectory.

"We will be focusing on a lot on structural upgrade projects in Vancouver and surrounding areas and hopefully we will have an opportunity to partner with Fraser Health Authority to assist in building and equipping their hospitals with new buildings, more operating rooms, and expanding their specialized care options to meet the needs of our communities," said Brian.

In the long term, Whelan plans to invest in offsite modular construction. "Coming from Ireland, where we use a lot of system-build solutions for health care facilities, schools, and social housing, I see a big market for it here in Vancouver," explained Brian.

"One of the big things for us is to grow slowly and deliberately. We want to bolster and grow what we have built so far so having the right people on the team is a priority for us," he says.

In the next five years Whelan plans to have 30-40 people operating in the field to meet demand for its services. Brian concluded, "We're excited to see where the future takes us. Our people—including our valued trade partners—will ensure Whelan continues to build successful, sustainable projects across Vancouver for decades to come."

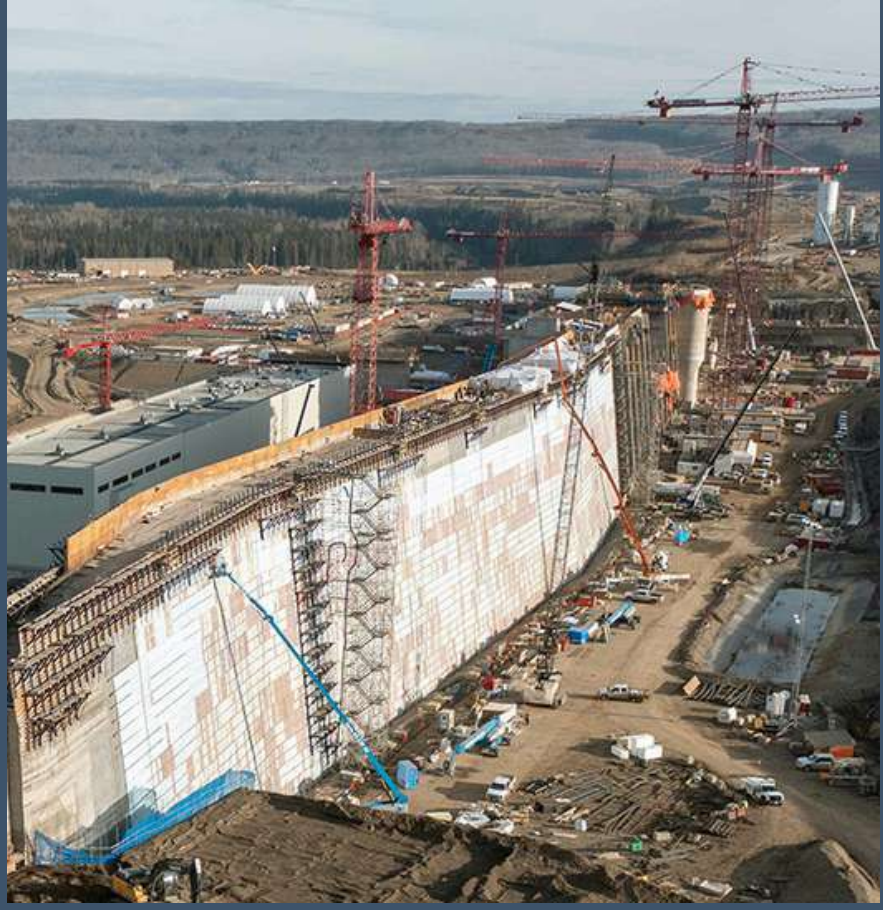


Canada's most expensive modern projects

COLLOSAL PROJECTS

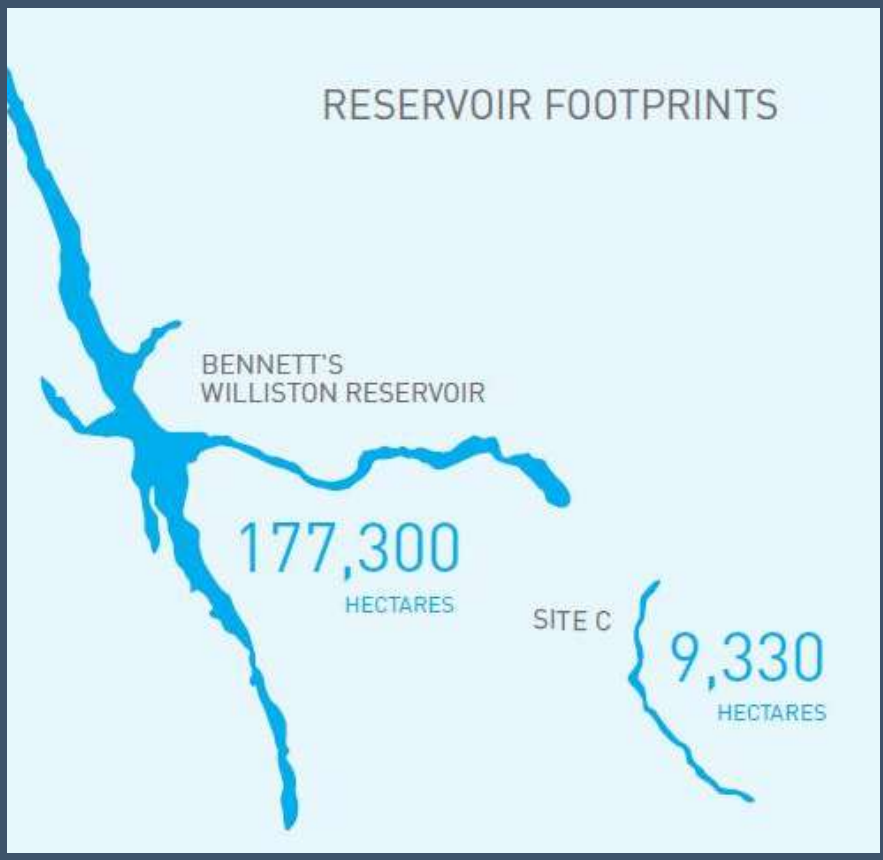
Canada's colossal projects extend from coast to coast and a wide range of sectors, including energy, petrochemicals, commercial development, transportation, and social infrastructure.

$16 BILLION SITE C CLEAN ENERGY PROJECT



TBC Hydro's Site C Clean Energy Project will be a third dam and hydroelectric generating station on the Peace River in northeast B.C. It will provide 1,100 megawatts (MW) of capacity, and produce about 5,100 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity each year — enough energy to power the equivalent of about 450,000 homes per year in B.C.

As the third project on one river system, Site C will gain significant efficiencies by taking advantage of water already stored in the Williston Reservoir. This means that Site C will generate approximately 35 per cent of the energy produced at W.A.C. Bennett Dam, with only five per cent of the reservoir area. British Columbia Premier John Horgan says completing the Site C dam is in the best interests of residents, despite the project's price tag ballooning to $16 billion and a completion date stretching to 2025.



$13 BILLION BRUCE POWER

Bruce Power Refurbishment Project will overhaul all the units of the 6.2GW Bruce nuclear generating station, which is the largest nuclear power plant in Canada. The facility was constructed by Ontario Hydro between 1970 and 1987.Bruce Power Limited Partnership, which consists of OMERS-Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System, Power Workers' Union, Society of United Professionals and TC Energy (formerly TransCanada Corporation), signed a long-term lease agreement with Ontario Power Generation (OPG) in 2001 to operate the plant.

Bruce Power entered into the Bruce Power Refurbishment Implementation Agreement (BPRIA) with the government of Ontario in 2005 to restart Units 1 and 2, which had been shut down by Ontario Hydro, and refurbish the entire plant in phases. The agreement aims to extend the life of Bruce nuclear generating station's CANDU reactors to 2064.

The refurbishment of the four CANDU reactors at the Darlington nuclear power plant in Canada has now passed the midway point with work beginning at unit 1, Ontario Power Generation (OPG) announced. Unit 2 returned to service in June 2020 following its refurbishment, while work on unit 3 began in September 2020. "The refurbishment team's successful track record on units 2 and 3, combined with detailed planning for unit 1, position us well for continued success," said OPG Senior Vice President for Nuclear Refurbishment Subo Sinnathamby.

$12 BILLION MUSKRAT FALLS PROJECT

The lower Churchill River is one of the most attractive hydroelectric resources in North America and is a key component of the province's energy resource portfolio. The project's two sites at Muskrat Falls and Gull Island have a combined capacity of over 3,000 megawatts (MW).

With the completion of the Muskrat Falls Project, Newfoundland and Labrador will be a leader in clean energy. It is estimated that power from the project can displace three to four megatonnes of carbon dioxide annually from thermal generating facilities. This will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the carbon footprint throughout Northeastern Canada and the United States – equivalent to taking almost one million cars off the road for one year.

The Muskrat Falls Project includes construction of an 824 megawatt (MW) hydroelectric generating facility, over 1,600 km of transmission lines across the province and associated electrical equipment. In addition, EmeraNL has constructed the Maritime Link between Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. the province's public utility, Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, will now borrow $1 billion. The debt will be guaranteed by the federal government, which means being able to optimize Ottawa's AAA credit rating, at a time when interest rates are already low.

$11.9 BILLION EGLINTON CROSSTOWN LRT

The Eglinton Crosstown is a light rail transit line that will run along Eglinton Avenue between Mount Dennis (Weston Road) and Kennedy station. This 19-kilometre corridor will include a 10-kilometre underground portion, between Keele Street and Laird Drive. The Crosstown will have up to 25 stations and stops. It will link to 54 bus routes, three subway stations and various GO Transit lines.The Crosstown will provide fast, reliable and convenient transit by carrying passengers in dedicated right-of-way transit lanes separate from regular traffic.

The vehicles will use the PRESTO proof-of-payment system and will have multiple entrances and low floors to ensure fast and accessible boarding. Light rail vehicles can travel as fast as 80km/hr. However, actual speed is determined by the spacing of the stops and the speed limits of surrounding traffic.

The projected ridership of the Crosstown is 5,500 passengers per hour in the peak period per direction by 2031. The capacity of the Crosstown vehicles is 15,000 passengers per hour per direction. Cars can be removed or added easily, thus providing the flexibility to accommodate ridership demands. Light rail transit is a proven technology that is used around the world, including extremely cold places such as Edmonton, Calgary and Minneapolis.

$16 BILLION GORDIE HOWE BRIDGE

The Gordie Howe International Bridge project is the largest and most ambitious bi-national infrastructure project along the Canada-United States border. It will provide for the safe, efficient and secure movement of people and goods across the Detroit River to support the economies of Ontario, Michigan, Canada and the United States. This project will provide an additional crossing option at one of the busiest Canada-U.S. commercial border crossings. The bridge will be publicly owned by both Canada and Michigan, and delivered by Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority through a public-private partnership (P3).

The construction of the Gordie Howe International Bridge will directly create thousands of jobs in Ontario and Michigan. It is anticipated that local businesses will supply goods and raw materials during construction, which will provide regional economic benefits and additional employment opportunities in the area. Many permanent jobs will be created for the operation and maintenance of the bridge and Ports of Entry once open. With direct connections to Ontario's Highway 401 and Michigan's Interstate 75, the bridge will provide the capacity to increase trade and encourage investment between Canada and the U.S., supporting the largest bilateral trading relationship in the world.

$5.6 BILLION HURONTARIO LRT

The Basin Media Hub presents an important opportunity to support the ongoing development of Toronto's film industry and the Media City District. After completion of the construction phase, the expected economic impact of on-going film studio operations includes $280 million in economic activity, $119 million in net contribution to GDP and $32 million in tax revenues across all levels of government. The partnership is expected to create 750 jobs on-site as well as 880 indirect or induced jobs in the broader community. Construction is planned to begin on the Basin Media Hub by 2023.

Through its proposal, HCP-MBS has committed to establishing a Basin Media Hub endowment for a local training program with a $1 million initial investment and funding for a Program Coordinator. HCP-MBS will provide training space onsite and support site visits, talks and work experience opportunities for local schools in order to promote a diverse range of careers in the film industry and support training and jobs for people from equity-seeking groups. The training program will be managed by MBS University (MBSu), a division of MBS that has a wealth of experience in creating customized programs for hands-on practical crew training.

$2.4 BILLION PROJECT HORIZON

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Innovative Hybrid Timber Floor Systems

Replacing steel and concrete with wood — which has significantly less embodied carbon — means that tall buildings could be designed to be lower in embodied carbon. The Hybrid Timber Floor System (HTFS) provides greater spans that are ideal for open floorplates or mixed use.

NEWS PROVIDED BY
Natural Resources Canada

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Canada is advancing toward net-zero through innovations in forestry and construction. The increased demand for renewable building materials is transforming design and architecture from coast to coast to coast. This transformation includes innovations in the combination of cross-laminated timber (CLT) and post-tensioned concrete.

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Natural Resources, is pleased to announce a combined Government of Canada contribution of over $550,000 to the Hybrid Timber Floor System Project led by EllisDon and DIALOG. The project is funded through the Green Construction through Wood (GCWood) Program, a program that encourages the greater use of wood in construction and supports Canada's transition to a low-carbon economy; and the Investments in Forest Industry Transformation (IFIT), a program that supports its recipients in de-risking the implementation of innovation in the Canadian forest sector.

EllisDon and DIALOG's patent-pending Hybrid Timber Floor System is an innovative approach to the existing concept of hybridizing structural materials. The Hybrid Timber Floor System, a mixture of different materials such as concrete and steel combined with mass timber, offers a reduction in carbon and an increase in building design possibilities. As a composite of post-tensioned concrete, CLT and a structurally engaged topping, it also allows mass timber–based floor systems to be used in non-residential long-span construction that had previously been limited to traditional building materials. According to EllisDon and DIALOG's study, this Hybrid Timber Floor System means mass timber can be used to meet the clear spans often desired in the commercial and institutional sectors while delivering exposed finishes. This ability means greener construction options, meaningful use of local natural resources and benefits to the bio-economy.

The EllisDon and DIALOG study is currently underway at EllisDon's modular fabrication facility, located in Stoney Creek, Ontario; the facility is an industrial building of over 27,000 square metres that is fully fit for prefabricated volumetric modules and panelized building components. The project will be completed later this year, with ongoing full-scale and long-term testing planned post-study.

Natural Resources Canada's IFIT program facilitates the adoption of transformative technologies and products by bridging the gap between development and commercialization. IFIT-funded projects help diversify the forest product market through high-value bioproducts such as bioenergy, biomaterials, biochemicals and next-generation building products. The GCWood program supports innovative low-carbon wood construction as part of Canada's goal of reaching net zero by 2050. The program increases awareness of and capacity for innovative tall wood buildings, timber bridges and low-rise wood buildings.

"The hybrid panel presents a unique value proposition allowing for carbon sustainability, the ability for offsite prefabrication and long-span exposed ceilings desired by many commercial tenants. Thanks to the support of the Government of Canada, we are making exceptional progress to move toward a net-zero future by implementing sustainable construction materials in new and exciting applications," states Mark Gaglione, Director, Building and Material Sciences, EllisDon.

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