

EDMONTON'S NEW ICE PALACE

Rogers Place, the new home of the NHL Edmonton Oilers, is the keystone for the major downtown ICE District Development. Feature writer, Steve Traidman, gets the inside story from the City, Oilers Entertainment Group, ICON Venue Group and architect HOK.

When the CAN\$480m **Rogers Place** opened this September with its innovative above-street **Ford Hall** entrance and adjoining **Community Ice Rink**, it was the culmination of a public/private partnership (PPP) that represents a true brokered meeting of minds.

The imposing venue seats 18,241 for hockey and 20,734 for concerts, with 57 suites, 24 theatre boxes with private lounge, 850 Loge seats and 500 Drink Rail seats. Also offered are 3,100 Club-access seats with two Club Seat mezzanine lounges; full food-service **Sportsnet Club** and **Sky Lounge** with connected arena bowl seating; a full-service Loge level restaurant and three team stores.

The **NHL Oilers**, with its home opener October 12 versus the **Calgary Flames**, share the venue with the **Western**

Hockey League Edmonton Oil Kings, who host their first hockey game September 24.

Rogers Place also promises to be one of Canada's leading concert venues. Sheena Way, Assistant General Manager of Live Entertainment, reported that after the official Open House on September 10, a prime concert schedule kicked off with Keith Urban, September 16, followed by Dolly Parton (17); Drake & Future Summer Sixteen Tour (20-21); and Dixie Chicks with Elle King (29). Upcoming concerts are Kanye West's Saint Pablo Tour, October 15; John Fogerty (22); Chicago & Earth, Wind & Fire, November 5; Florida Georgia Line (15); and Amy Schumer Live (30).

Ford Hall entrance with Festival plaza in foreground, hotel and condo
Courtesy: ICE District JV

ROGERS PLACE

Fact File & Project Team

Location	Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
Construction Cost	CAN\$480m, Total: CAN\$611m
Opening Date	September 2016
Owner/Operator	City of Edmonton
Design & Construction Partner	Edmonton Arena Corp. (Katz Group subsidiary)
Architect	HOK
Coordinating Architect	Michael Shugarman Architects and Design
Associate Architects	Architecture Tkalcic Bengert & DIALOG
Construction Manager	PCL Construction
Owner's Representative	ICON Venue Group
Structural Design/Engineering	Thornton Tomasetti & DIALOG
Structural Steel	Structal-Heavy Steel Construction/Canam Group
Civil Engineering	Stantec
Mechanical Engineering & Plumbing	ME Engineers, Stantec, MCW/Hemisphere
Pedestrian & Transportation Services	Bunt & Associates
AV/Sound/Acoustics	Aquila
F&B Services	Bigelow Companies & Burnstad Consulting
F&B Concessionaire	Aramark
Wayfinding, Graphics & Branding	Downstream & Studio Tilt
Major Tenants	NHL Edmonton Oilers, WHL Edmonton Oil Kings

Amenities

Venue seats 18,241 for hockey and 20,734 for concerts, with 57 suites; 24 theatre boxes with private lounge; 300 Loge Ledge seats; 300 zone seats; 500 Drink Rail seats; 3,100 club-access seats with two mezzanine Club Seat Lounges; full food-service Sportsnet Club and Sky Lounge with connected arena bowl seating; full-service Loge level restaurant; and three team stores.

EXPERT OPINION

Rick Daviss, Executive Director of the **Downtown Arena District Project** on behalf of the City, and Bob Black, Executive Vice President of **Edmonton Arena Corp** and Chief Development Officer for the **Oilers Entertainment Group (OEG)**, provided the project's details for *PS&AM*.

Daviss has been with the City for 42 years, most of that time as manager of the Corporate Land and Facilities Programs. He took on his challenging new role in 2010 to lead the City's efforts in partnership with the **Katz Group**, owner of the Oilers.

Black is a Q.C. (Queen's Counsellor), formerly a senior partner with Alberta law firm **Brownlee LLP**. In 2009 he joined the Katz Group, owner of the **Rexall Entertainment Group** and the Oilers. He led the design and construction of Rogers Place from OEG's side and was a member of the negotiating committee that put in place the Master Agreement for the Arena development with the City.

THE VISION FOR ROGERS PLACE

When describing the project background, Black noted: *"The vision of Rogers Place was born when Daryl Katz purchased the Oilers in 2008. He had two fundamental objectives: to sustain the long-term*

viability of the Oilers in Edmonton and, building off models like L.A., Denver and Columbus, that a new arena could provide the critical mass for private sector revitalization of downtown.

"We spent a lot of time studying other projects – over 40 across North America and around the world – and did extensive research on what made them successful, and what could produce negatives. We were very focused on finding an architect who could assist us in achieving our aspirations not only for a highly functioning facility for our fans but also an exceptional piece of architecture. Our choice of 360 Architecture, since acquired by HOK, led to a spectacular piece of architecture."

Daviss advised: *"When Daryl purchased the team, we knew the Oilers were playing in the NHL's third oldest and smallest arena, owned by the City of Edmonton. Independent studies concluded it would take up to CAN\$250m to bring it up to speed and the big question was 'Do we want to spend that kind of capital on an old building, or something new?'"*

Black observed: *"At this point, both the City and Katz Group mutually felt »*



Oilers fans will get the NHL's largest centre-hung Panasonic videoboard

Courtesy: OEG

« that a new arena would ignite major private sector development of the downtown core.”

Daviss confirmed: “From the City’s view, not only did we need a new arena, but we had a chance for a private-public partnership that would lead to significantly more downtown development.”

PROJECT EVOLUTION

Speaking about the project’s evolution, Daviss said: “In early goings of negotiations, a flashpoint was that Katz was focused on a world-class arena but the City was very budget conscious. The project’s total cost was about CAN\$611m, including the land and

adjacent infrastructure, featuring a new CAN\$7m connection to the adjacent LRT line, CAN\$480m for the Arena, CAN\$56m for Ford Hall (the above-street entrance) and CAN\$23m for the adjacent community ice rink. The Oilers wanted a second practice rink from the start, and this was an ideal addition to the project.

“Once the Architect’s design became public and people became aware of the iconic nature of the project, we confirmed a budget and design that met both partners’ expectations and were implored ‘not to screw it up’.

“The project is being financed primarily by the City through CRL (Community Revitalization Levy) funding that applies

incremental tax revenues from new development in the vicinity surrounding the arena. From the Katz Group, about 25% will be recovered through lease payments over 25 years, with the balance of 25% from a ticket tax that is collected by the Oilers. It was a very important element with our citizens that users pay a significant contribution for the project.”

ICON VENUE GROUP

Daviss continued: “Another important element was the City decided to have the Oilers Entertainment Group drive the interior design and construction, recognising that revenues generated through operations would be the main source of revenue to keep Oilers financially viable in the City. The team understands its fan base much better than the City. Early on, we brought in ICON Venue Group as owner’s representative for both the City and the Katz Group. They really knew what to look for and how to focus some of the content to our architect.”

CANAM AT ROGERS PLACE

Emotions are running high as the new 18,000+ seat home of the National Hockey League’s Edmonton Oilers nears completion just in time for the 2016 NHL season.

The new Rogers Place arena will be an architectural icon of downtown Edmonton and the hub of the city’s **ICE District**, Canada’s largest mixed-use sports and entertainment district.

Canam has completed its contribution to the design and development of Rogers Place by providing design-assist, detailing, BIM, steel fabrication, steel erection and project management services. A project like this doesn’t just put itself together; it’s a highly orchestrated design and construction effort with absolutely no room for errors.

In order to meet tight schedule requirements, many of the venue elements needed to be prefabricated off site and delivered in a ready-to-install state. These prefabricated elements all interfaced with Canam’s fabricated structural steel and required coordination prior to arriving on site.

The Official Rogers Place Public Open House was held September 10, 2016, and included viewings of the major public spaces, plus samplings of some of the food and beverage options.

www.canamheavy.com

Festival Plaza at entrance includes Cineplex, drugstore and space for outdoor events
Courtesy: ICE District JV



Black said: *"ICON's role was very important. In the dark days of negotiations, Dan Vaillant, ICON Senior Vice President who served as Project Executive, helped us greatly in achieving a very functional partnership."*

Daviss concurred with these sentiments and added: *"ICON had the confidence of both parties. Dan was a very patient, thoughtful, diligent guy who guided both of us towards common viewpoints."*

In regards to ICON's role on the project, Vaillant explained: *"This project came together in an almost unbelievable way. We had to carefully balance the interests and requests of two parties with somewhat competing interests. The City was very budget focused, while the Katz Group was concerned about ensuring that the overall scope of the arena and associated facilities met their aspirations and fiscal requirements. Negotiations between the two parties were certainly intense, highly public and, at times, contentious."*

"In fact, there were several points in time where many of us thought perhaps the project would be terminated. Thankfully, the two parties stayed engaged and

Parklike setting with lush landscaping for Rogers Place

Courtesy: Ice District JV



ultimately prevailed with an agreement that appears to be materialising into the win-win proposition everyone hoped it would be. We all believed that Rogers Place would ultimately be a catalyst to transform Edmonton's downtown and it is amazing to see how quickly that is happening.

"When the negotiations were complete, both sides did an incredible job of leaving the past behind and creating a cohesive and productive partnership that fostered the development of an event centre that everyone involved can be proud of. Rogers Place is going to set a new standard in arena design for other cities to emulate while providing the people of Edmonton unforgettable experiences for many years to come." »

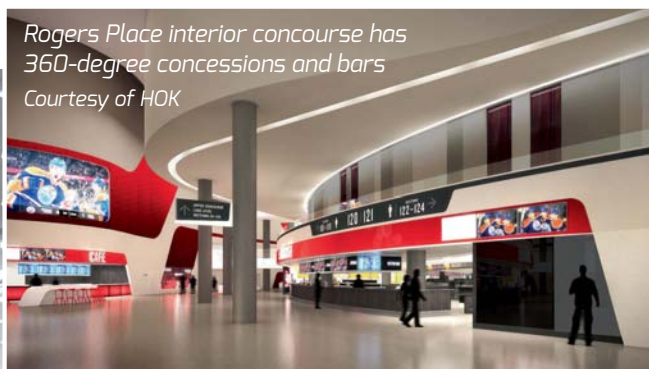
Rogers Place ICE District Plaza set for night movie showing

Courtesy: ICE District JV





HD Broadcast Media Center is open to public view
Courtesy of HOK



Rogers Place interior concourse has 360-degree concessions and bars
Courtesy of HOK

« When speaking about securing a naming rights sponsor for the new arena, Black confirmed: **“Getting Rogers Communications as naming rights sponsor contributed significantly to the new arena. We had the benefit of their design resources that greatly contributed to the quality of the technological design. With Panasonic as technology partner, we have over 1,250 HDTV monitors and the largest HD centre-hung board in the NHL or NBA. Rogers Place will be a real jewel in the crown for HOK.”**

ARCHITECT INSIGHT

Ryan Gedney, Senior Project Designer, has been with HOK since the 360 Architecture merger and with the Group since 2001. Among his other major sports projects are **Little Caesars Arena** in Detroit, the soon-to-be new home of the **NHL Red Wings**; **Sprint Center** in Kansas City, MO; and **MetLife Stadium** in East Rutherford, NJ, shared by the **NFL New York Jets and Giants**.

Gedney told *PS&AM*: **“We got involved with the City and Oilers in the late fall (autumn) of 2011, after earlier development work on the arena, the adjacent community ice rink and ancillary development. We also were involved with master planning of the Ice District – how the arena sits on the site led to siting of other projects on adjacent blocks.”**

“Edmonton has a substantial network of second level activity and elevated bridges in the very active downtown retail area. There’s a very wide and fast-moving street between the arena and

the Ice District that led us to an elevated connection over 104th Avenue. The 33,800ft² Ford Hall is an identity piece with shops and restaurants as the main entrance to Rogers Place. It is open during business hours, so the lobby is not only for arena events but also a key connection for pedestrians to reach the other side of the street.

“Like many new arenas we design, we had an exhaustive review time including the fan base and demographics. Our own unique goals were to open the connections between the concourses and seating bowls. While suites were an important part of preferred seating, we added other smaller premium products like loge terraces, and wound up with a full horseshoe of three tiers. In addition to the VIP suites and several larger party suites, there are two major clubs on each sideline on the mezzanine level, a larger club feeding the loge terraces, and a multi-level club on the stage end at the mid-loge level.”

GREEN CREDENTIALS & DESIGN CHALLENGES

Speaking about the venue’s ‘green’ credentials and the project challenges, Gedney advised: **“The arena is the first LEED Silver hockey facility in Canada, as the City requires of all public buildings. Close to 90% of construction waste was diverted away from landfills, energy modelling was very efficient, water and power consumption was reduced, plus connectivity to public transport and density of our urban design as other factors.**

“From groundbreaking until the opening this September, the major situation that the project team faced was the weather challenge; something PCL Construction – an internationally-recognised construction firm based out of Edmonton – was very familiar with, as it deals with this on a regular basis. Also a critical factor was PCL’s expertise in managing just-in-time delivery of key construction materials with hard dates necessary in a busy downtown environment.

“Teamwork was vital and constant communication was very important. The partnership between Oilers Entertainment Group, the City, PCL, WAM Development for ancillary components and ourselves worked very well. ICON Venue Group was a great hub for collaboration between all stakeholders. Katz Chairman Daryl Katz was personally involved in constant design evaluation. We leveraged the value of face to face contact versus technology to keep the process as streamlined as possible – completing the entire project on time and on budget.”

When asked to summarise the project, Black said: **“When Daryl Katz bought the Oilers in 2008, he stated a desire to not only find the Oilers a new home in downtown Edmonton, but to do it in a style that would transform our City and encourage further downtown development. Through this partnership with the City of Edmonton, that vision has already been realised, and now continues to expand.” ■**

Let's Dream Big.

We are a robust, North American professional steel services organization that helps the best and brightest design, build, and collaboratively deliver the world's most complex steel structures.



www.canamheavy.com