



RBC Convention Centre

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EXPANSION ANNIVERSARY

CELEBRATING OUR FIRST YEAR



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RBC Convention Centre expansion a huge success:

Millions in spin-off benefits for province and city

When civic leaders opened the Winnipeg Convention Centre in 1974, it was the first free-standing, multi-purpose-built convention centre in Canada – and an important economic driver for the City of Winnipeg.

Imagine yourself here

Expanded building now spans two city blocks



Photo by: Gerry Kopelow Photographics Inc.



Executive Team (left) James Dark, Warren Sawatzky, Klaus Lahr, David Chizda, Carmyn Pepler

Photo credit: Nardella Photography



RBC Convention Centre

W I N N I P E G

“It was an incredible milestone,” says Klaus Lahr, president and CEO of what is today the expanded RBC Convention Centre. “Those civic leaders were visionaries in their own right and brought conventions to Winnipeg that we could never have attracted before the centre was built.”

Local, national and international organizations responded, drawing thousands of delegates to the city for conventions, business gatherings of all sizes and trade shows. The bookings generated millions of dollars in tax revenue for the three levels of government and bolstered the local economy through spin-off benefits for hotels, restaurants, transportation providers, tourism attractions and other businesses.

But, as the years went on, in the midst of aggressive competition from convention centres in other Canadian cities, Winnipeg began to lose ground to other high-profile facilities. The time had come to expand Winnipeg’s convention centre or fall behind.

“We needed to step up and put this convention centre in second gear and expand, because everybody else had caught up with us. We were the leaders, but we didn’t stay in the lead,” says the president and CEO.

That reality led to 15 years of careful planning to expand the Winnipeg Convention Centre and a push for financial commitments. Once again, the people of Manitoba and Canada stepped up, and financial backing was forthcoming from the three levels of government and the convention centre itself, which contributed \$33 million of the \$186-million cost.

It was all based on business projections that the convention centre board had to make. Lahr says projecting future business was a little risky, but proponents were optimistic once the facility was expanded.

“That’s really a risky thing to do because there’s nothing much to base your projections on without space to sell,” says Lahr. “You are only selling an idea, so you don’t know

whether people are going to buy into your idea.”

Fast forward a year, and this spring the CEO was delighted to report that the economic projections were not only met but exceeded in terms of revenue and added business.

He generously credits the supporters who made the expansion a reality and is pleased that the biggest beneficiaries will be the people of Manitoba.

Numbers tell the story

The numbers tell the story. Prior to the expansion, in an average year, delegates dropped \$30 million in the city on hotels, car rentals, restaurants, souvenirs, theatres, museums, retail, tourist attractions and for a variety of goods and services. In an average year, the centre would produce 80,000 to 90,000 room nights in local hotels.

Now, a year after the expansion, the centre has recorded \$38-million in delegate spending, an increase of \$8 million, and during the same period, has generated 145,000 room nights for local hotels.

It is a satisfying moment for the CEO.

“The convention centre is not here for its own benefit. The centre is here to attract activity into the community. In that regard, the expansion has shown itself as the right thing to do. We always said that the \$186 million would be recovered through additional economic gains in about 12 years. And I think we are well on our way to achieve that – if not sooner. Of course, the various levels of government benefit in the way of increased taxes. As people spend more money in the City of Winnipeg, they collect more GST and more PST, so everybody gets their share. In 2016, the centre put \$62 million into the local economy from sales taxes and what we

spend on supplies and so forth. That is not an inconsequential activity in an economy the size of Winnipeg.”

Local companies benefit in many different ways including putting together the registration bags for delegates.

“The convention delegates all get a registration bag. So, somebody has to make these bags. Somebody has to print these bags, somebody has to purchase these bags, and in these bags, there are pencils, paper pads. We had a retired meeting planner tell us that she would spend \$1 million to \$3 million on delegate packages alone. Printers need to print the program,” says Lahr.

The centre also employs from 750 to 800 people a year. They help make possible an average 700 events a year or nearly three

“We needed to step up and put this convention centre in second gear and expand, because everybody else had caught up with us. We were the leaders, but we didn’t stay in the lead”

- Klaus Lahr, president and CEO



Third floor exhibition hall



Centre Place Café Bridge connecting north and south buildings

events per day. And, while the number of events has not increased over the last year, the size of the events has.

“That is actually a key point,” says David Chizda, director, sales & business development for the RBC Convention Centre. “We are home to all the major consumer shows: the Boat Show, the RV Show, the Wedding Show. All those shows used to occupy our third floor which was comprised of 78,000 square feet of space. That wasn’t enough for them. They would often come down to the second floor and the first floor, which of course prevented us from selling those spaces while they were in the building,” he explains.

“Now, since we’ve expanded from 78,000 to over 131,000 square feet, they have their shows all on one floor which enables our sales

team to sell the second floor and the first floor in the north and south buildings. Also, as mentioned, we weren’t able to attract large conventions, so we are now able to attract large conventions that never before looked at Winnipeg and we are now able to do more at the same time. Within one week in May, we had basically three large virtually city-wide events going on in the convention centre, some even simultaneously.”

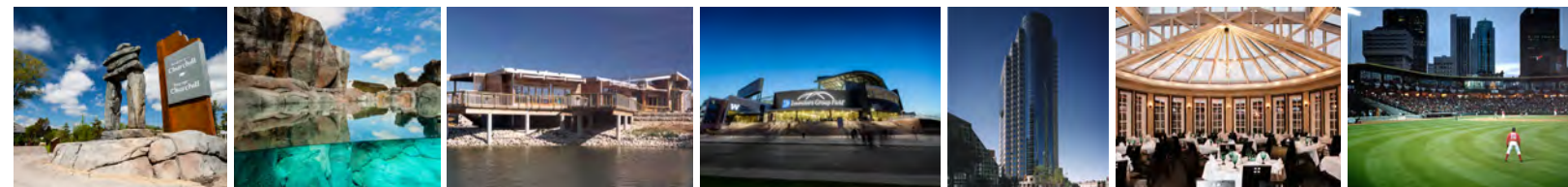
With all this activity – and despite the new Alt Hotel that opened in 2005 and the soon-to-be-opened Sutton Place Hotel that will be part of the True North downtown development when it is completed, estimated for 2020 – the executives say there is still room for more hotel rooms downtown as a result of convention centre business, particularly those connected to the Winnipeg skywalk system.

“Because we can attract these conventions and multiple conventions, some organizations would prefer to have their delegates in hotels that are connected to our facility,” says Chizda.

Chizda is quick to point out however that if conventions cannot find enough hotel rooms downtown, the convention centre does shuttle guests to the airport hotels for lodging where there is more availability.

Dayna Spiring, president and CEO of Economic Development Winnipeg, is pleased that the centre can now host large conventions simultaneously.

“In late May and early June, for example,



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Winnipeg Home + Garden Show

Photo credit: Winnipeg Home + Garden Show

Winnipeg's tourism industry rolled out the red carpet for three big back-to-back conventions, including Centrallia, the Liberal Party of Canada's 2016 biennial convention and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities annual conference and tradeshow. Nearly 5,500 delegates experienced the best of Winnipeg over this 12-day span," she says.

"As well, I hosted the Grey Cup gala in Winnipeg in 2015, where

we christened a new room in the convention centre, the City View Room. It was a spectacular event. You look out one window, and you see the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. You look out the other, and you see the Golden Boy. Local hotels, restaurants and related operations all benefit when more and more business travellers experience the city. This is great news for Winnipeg because these travellers spend about four times as much as other travellers do," added Spiring.

Lots to see and do

Delegates attending conventions in Winnipeg will find themselves with lots to do while in the city. The city is alive with attractions and events year round for everyone from sports fans to arts lovers to nature enthusiasts.

Just some of the capital city's sports' teams include the Canadian Football League's Winnipeg Blue Bombers; the National Hockey League's Winnipeg Jets hockey team; the American Hockey League's Manitoba Moose hockey team and the Winnipeg Goldeyes minor league baseball team to name just a few.

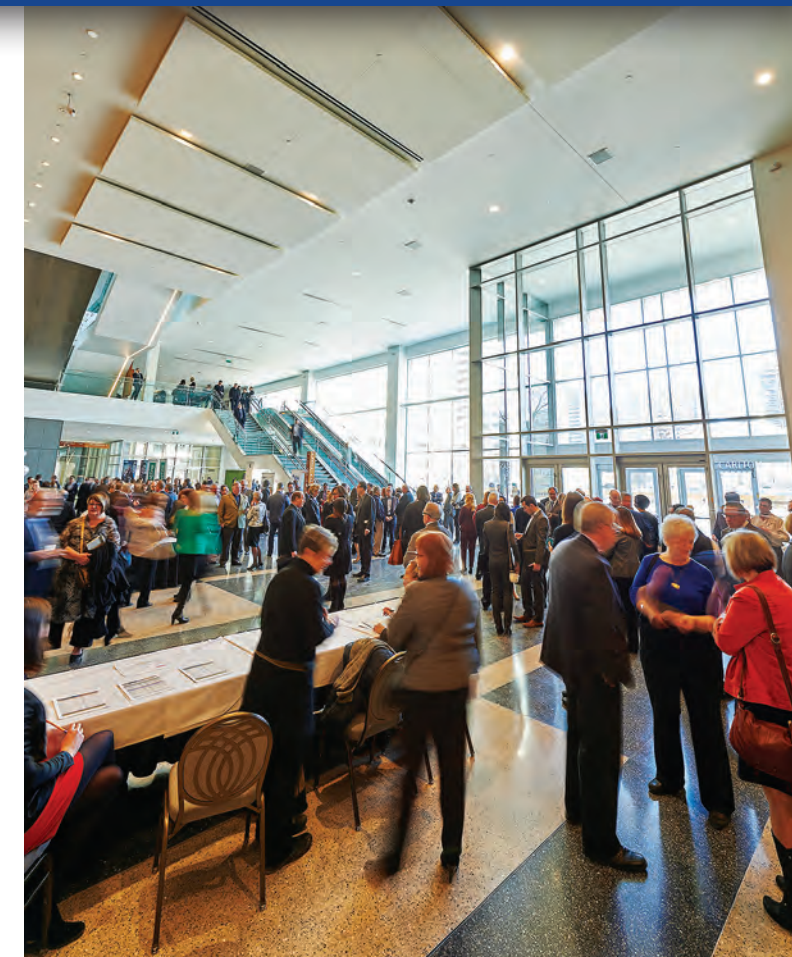
Arts lovers can take in a performance of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the world-class Canadian Museum for Human Rights, the

Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, the Winnipeg Art Gallery, and the many different galleries of the culturally rich Exchange District, developed among the charming turn-of-the-century architecture of the District.

"When people come in and look for something to do, there is everything from travel up north, fishing opportunities, world-class attractions like Journey to Churchill, Folklorama and other festivals"

- Colin Ferguson, president and CEO of Travel Manitoba

Nature lovers will delight in Journey to Churchill at Assiniboine Park, an award-winning exhibit that is home to polar bears, muskoxen, Arctic fox, wolves and other northern species, the most comprehensive northern species exhibit of its kind in the world – or take in the bison and the many attractions and activities at Fort Whyte Alive. The environmental, education and recreation center is located in southwest Winnipeg along the migratory path of Canada geese and is home to wildlife and outdoor activities and events year round.



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Third floor Carlton Concourse creates beautiful pre-function space

Few convention delegates will want to miss the opportunity to take in the many attractions and events at The Forks, which is at once an historic meeting place at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine rivers in the downtown, an eclectic market and home to a wide variety of restaurants and entertainment events.

Local tourism organizations often work with conference organizers to help develop exciting itineraries for delegates, and local restaurants and businesses communicate with the convention centre in order to help arrange the best and most happy experiences for visitors while in the city.

Colin Ferguson, president and CEO of Travel Manitoba, says while the convention and meeting delegates help to support the province's \$1.5-billion tourism industry, the many events and attractions may factor into some conference organizers' decision to book their functions at the RBC Convention Centre.

"When people come in and look for something to do, there is everything from travel up north, fishing opportunities, world-class attractions like Journey to Churchill, Folklorama and other festivals. This summer, we will have a huge crush of people coming in for the Canada Games, and projections are we could have upwards of 20,000 visitors. That is huge! This is staggering, and they are going to be looking for things to do. Delegates may extend their stay to do the many other things the city has to offer."

Downtown renaissance

As the RBC Convention Centre expanded, Winnipeg's downtown was undergoing a remarkable resurgence itself with numerous new building projects and companies locating in the heart of the city, activity that was also expected to bolster not only the city but support the growth of conventions in the city.

The MTS Centre, home to the Winnipeg Jets, the Manitoba Moose and high calibre entertainment, has long been thought



Third floor exhibition hall accommodates tradeshow, meetings, conventions and so much more.

Photo credit: Centralia

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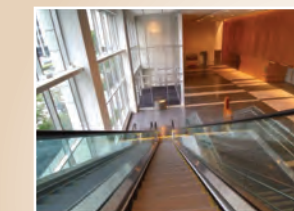
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Memorable moments from the City View Room

Photo by: Gerry Kopelow Photographics Inc.

to be a major catalyst to the exciting business development of the urban core. When the high-profile sports and entertainment facility opened in 2004, the MTS Centre, recently renamed Bell MTS Place, signalled a welcome confidence in the downtown that could only help to draw other companies to the city's core.

In November of 2014, owners at True North Sports & Entertainment celebrated a very significant and exciting milestone: the tenth anniversary of the centre. It was also a time when it became clear that the MTS Centre had more than lived up to its promise

of attracting new businesses to the downtown with numerous new developments completed or underway. This included the Alt Hotel, new offices for architectural firm Stantec and \$400-million True North Square, arguably the most comprehensive downtown development in Winnipeg in the history of the city. The joint venture between James Richardson & Sons and True North Sports & Entertainment will be a public plaza complete with outdoor stage, skating rink in winter, office, commercial, residential spaces and the new Sutton Place Hotel.

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York Ballroom can host large galas or be divided into four meeting/conference rooms

All of the activity is music to the ears of Stefano Grande, executive director of the Downtown Winnipeg Business Improvement Zone (BIZ), an organization that markets the city centre on behalf of local businesses.

Grande was also instrumental in attracting an international convention to the centre recently as part of a program called Bring

it Home. The program encourages influential Manitobans such as Grande to draw business to the centre whenever possible. As a result, the RBC Convention Centre is expected to host the International Downtown Association (IDA) conference this September.

A news release describes the IDA as: "The International Downtown Association is a world leader and champion for vital and

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liveable urban centres...IDA provides tools, intelligence and strategies for creating healthy and dynamic centres that anchor the well-being of towns, cities and regions of the world."

What better fit could there be for a city focused on dynamic growth for its RBC Convention Centre and the city's downtown than the International Downtown Association conference? This is just one in an intriguing and diverse list of conventions and meetings planned for the convention centre in the coming year.

Grande says having a world-class convention centre was critical to landing the international convention with delegates coming from around the world.

"I think we were told right up front that if the expansion was not built, we would not be coming here. And that's our direct experience. The impact of this conference is expected to be \$1.2 million

to \$1.3 million to the provincial economy. So that's a large stimulator for hotel rooms, for taxis, for restaurants and retailers so the expansion of the convention centre was critical."

Grande says Winnipeg's BIZ is developing a social media campaign to let their members know what conventions will be coming into the city "to put out the social media mat, encouraging people to learn about our downtown."

He adds that BIZ gets calls from restaurants downtown asking to inform them when there are conventions in the city because they don't want to be caught without enough staff. Chizda adds: "We work very closely with the Downtown BIZ to make sure they can inform all their members of what's going on here."

As for the president and CEO, Lahr points out that expanding the convention centre was necessary regardless of what was happening in the city at the time. But he is quick to acknowledge that new developments in the city's core and Winnipeg's top-tier attractions will be helpful when attracting new business.

"The need for the expansion 35 years following its inception would have been promoted by us regardless of where we were located, downtown or in the suburbs. But there was a certain synergy created because of downtown revitalization, and our project in the end was a wonderful addition to the revitalization," he says.

"So, now with a year under our belt, I can tell you with some certainty and pride that the results have been better than our predictions and it can only get better from here on in." He commends the convention centre's board for its diligent process, saying, "It was a \$186-million project that we brought in under budget and on time."

Only the best for attendees

Once inside the centre, delegates will enjoy numerous conveniences. Aside from the centre's onsite restaurant, Centre Place Café, attendees can access free lightning-fast Wi-Fi throughout the building; a hair salon on the premises; flexible board rooms that can comfortably accommodate 12 peo-

ple; high quality meals prepared in-house in collaboration with convention clients and second-to-none customer service. Thanks to the expansion, the centre now boasts two kitchens which allows it to serve a kosher menu when clients request it.

There are also two levels of climate-controlled underground parking in the north building and one level in the south building that can accommodate up to 729 vehicles. There is also wheelchair accessibility, motion-activated sliding entrance doors, passenger elevators with raised panel and Braille keys, designated disabled parking stalls, TTY Pay Telephone on the first floor of the southeast concourse, washrooms with wheelchair accessible stalls and sinks.

In 2017, the convention centre rolled out a new four-year customer-service training program for all staff to ensure that clients receive excellent service during their stay.

Back in the game

Ask longtime CEO Klaus Lahr how he feels now that the expansion is a documented success, and he is quick to point out that the project was always focused on what it could bring to the city and the people of Manitoba.

"This is about Winnipeg. It was always about moving Winnipeg forward. When the original convention centre was built under Mayor Juba, Bernie Wolfe was the deputy mayor at the time, and a number of community leaders such as Jack Levit and others all came together and reasoned that a convention centre was needed. These civic leaders were visionaries in their own right. They built the first free-standing, multi-purpose-built convention centre in Canada: the Winnipeg Convention Centre. That's an incredible milestone in itself. The expansion needed to be done, and that is what we did, simply play a role to bring Winnipeg back in the game," he says.

"Today, we're back in the game," Lahr adds enthusiastically.



Cecil Richards Suite



Presentation Theatre

Photo credit: Wolf Kutnagorsky





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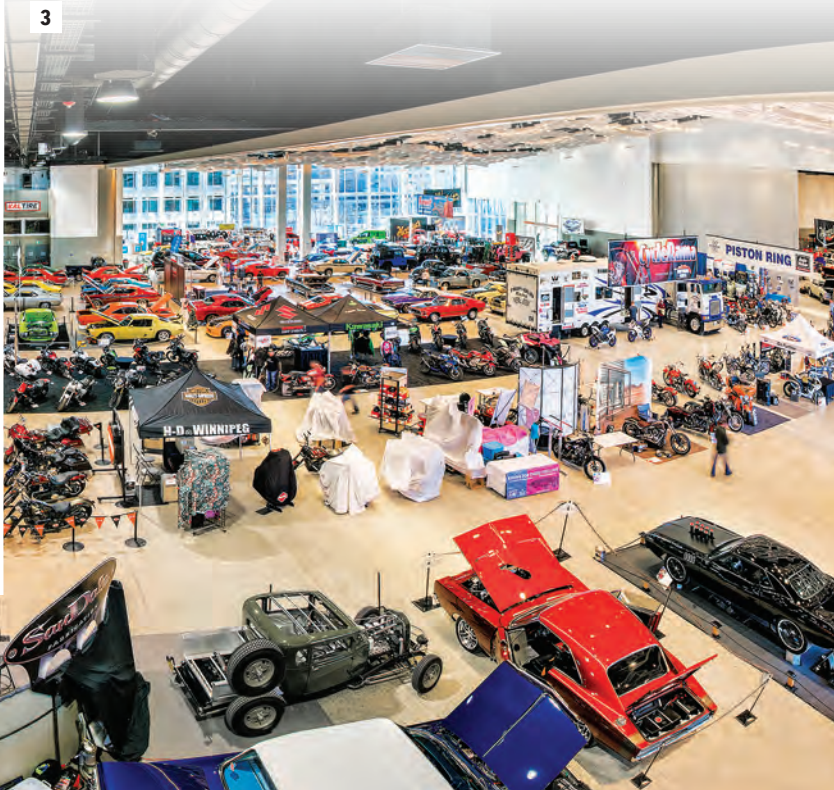
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The RBC Convention Centre's flexible spaces have hosted a wide variety of events over the years.

Photos clockwise:

1. 2016 Mid Canada Boat Show - Photo credit: Darrin Bohonis Photography,
2. Trade Show
3. World of Wheels
4. Walls of the south building home to Indigenous art display,
5. Under 14 Western Canada Volleyball Championships Photo credit: Douglas Portz Photography,
6. Winnipeg RV Show Photo credit: Winnipeg RV Show.



Space Breakdown

Existing Space (pre-expansion)

160,000 sq. ft.

Expanded Space

100,000 sq ft

New main floor public lobby, concourse, registration area – 22,400 sq ft.
New main floor ballroom – 24,000 sq ft

New additional 3rd floor exhibition hall – 53,000 sq ft (131,000 sq ft in total)

Total Rentable Space after expansion

260,000 sq. ft.

(includes exhibition hall; multipurpose, meeting and banquet space; public lobby; concourse; registration area; pre-function space)

Facility Features

TOTAL Facility Footprint (All Floors)	879,934 sq. ft.
Rentable Space - North Building	149,378 sq. ft.
Rentable Space - South Building	112,086 sq. ft.
Total Combined Rentabel Space	261,464 sq. ft.
Parkade Area	262,119 sq. ft.
Total Revenue Generating Space	523,583 sq. ft.
Total Parking Stalls	729
Total Building Capacity (Max Ppl)	20,150

Total Annual Economic Contribution

Total Provincial Tax Revenues	\$5,402,139
Delegate & Exhibitor Spending (Net of Tax)	\$37,862,418
Payroll Injection Local Economy (Net of Provincial Payroll & Income Tax)	\$7,385,254
Supplier Spend: Purchases (Net of Tax)	\$10,456,788
Supplier Spend: Utilities (Net of Tax)	\$1,540,902
TOTAL	\$62,647,501



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RBC Convention Centre expansion: on time, on budget & developed by local design and construction teams



Exterior Carlton Avenue

Photo by: Gerry Kopelow Photographics Inc.

A glittery 43,000-square-foot room sits atop a structure connecting the north and the new south building of the expanded RBC Convention Centre. Situated directly over busy York Avenue in a traffic-intensive part of the city, the floor to ceiling windows of the beautiful City View Room offer an exciting view of some major city landmarks. There is the Golden Boy of

the Manitoba Legislative Building, the high rising spiral of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and the construction site of True North Square.

Here, in this inviting flexible space, up to 3,150 guests can enjoy a lavish sit-down dinner or walk through a busy trade show while enjoying the surroundings.

Below City View Room, an enclosed



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“The building was completed on time and on budget. Not only was the team able to meet the schedule, they were able to accommodate the premier event of the Grey Cup in November 2015 (when the convention centre hosted the Grey Cup dinner)”

- Terry Danelley,
of LM Architectural Group

bridge connects the north and south buildings of the RBC Convention Centre, providing guests with a climate-controlled walkway to stroll between the two buildings and a pleasant sitting space for a private lunch or coffee from the nearby Centre Place Café.

These are two of the showy high-profile features of the RBC Convention Centre when it expanded more than a year ago, adding 100,000-square-feet of additional rentable space in total to the existing convention centre.

The expansion, a joint venture between LM Architectural Group + Number Ten Architectural Group, Architects in Joint Venture, with LMN Architects of Seattle as design consultants included a new main floor public lobby, concourse and registration area and an elegant 24,000 square foot main floor ballroom in the new building. It increased the centre's exhibition space by 53,000-square-feet to a grand total of



Structural steel framing for the expansion

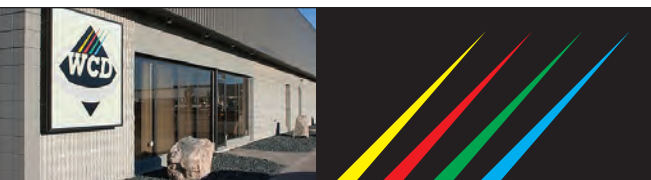
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Interior of City View Room

Photo by: Gerry Kopelow Photographics Inc.

131,000-square-feet of continuous exhibit space. This is sufficient to host large scale trade shows, accommodate more than 680 booths, and welcome a diverse range of events to its space.

Architect Terry Danelley, of LM Architectural Group, the design principal for LMAG + NTAG, was proud of the team effort that led to the success of the project.

“The building was completed on time and on budget. Not only was the team able to meet the schedule, they were able to accommodate the premier event of the Grey Cup in November 2015 (when the convention centre hosted the Grey Cup dinner),” he says.

“That was six months before the building was scheduled for completion. In addition, this project utilized a Design/Build delivery method where Winnipeg-based Stuart Olson was contrac-

tually engaged by the RBC Convention Centre to construct the project for a guaranteed maximum price and they delivered,” adds Danelley.

“That says a lot about the contracting and design team that we were able to get the building occupied when we did. It was a focussed, collaborative team that worked on the project, and the best part is that the contractor and many of the major consultants and sub-trades were local.”

The expansion was developed to LEED Silver standards, featuring energy-efficient LED lighting, high efficiency boilers, air exchangers, and other green features.

The south building was constructed on a vacant parking lot on the south side of east-west York Avenue. At completion, one level of underground parking had been added to the new building; a



View of City View Room from York Avenue

Photo by: Gerry Kopelow Photographics Inc.

new full-service commercial kitchen built adjacent to the new ballroom and the existing building upgraded to current building code standards. The successful two-year project was completed in March of 2016.

The Design/Build Team consisted of:

Contractor	Stuart Olson Construction Ltd
Architect/Prime Consultant	LM + Number Ten Architects in Joint Venture
Design Consultant	LMN Architects
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Come feel the warmth of the natural light streaming through the floor-to-ceiling windows on all three levels. Imagine the flexibility of the main floor pillar-less York Ballroom with its high ceilings, beautiful lighting and a view to the street level plaza right outside the windows.

Walk the vast third floor exhibition hall that now encompasses two city blocks. Experience the City View Room with its stunning view, its unique architectural ceiling and dramatic lighting creating a visual experience from the third floor and the street.

When we couple all this with our complimentary Wi-Fi along with a wide array of current distinct and unique meeting rooms, we have the right space, creative expertise and staff, to make any size event a memorable one.

SET FOR A DINNER FOR 2,300 THE CITY VIEW ROOM IS BREATHTAKING



YORK BALLROOM CAN HOST LARGE GALAS OR BE DIVIDED INTO FOUR MEETING/CONFERENCE ROOMS



THIRD FLOOR CARLTON CONCOURSE CREATES BEAUTIFUL PRE-FUNCTION SPACE



NATURAL LIGHT STREAMS THROUGH CARLTON LOBBY WINDOWS



RBC Convention Centre

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