

Canadian

# Design & Construction

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VOLUME 10, ISSUE 2, SPRING 2019

Report

## The new Canada Infrastructure Bank

– How it plans to leverage \$35 billion in capital more than \$100 billion in new projects

### **SPECIAL FEATURES:**

**Passive House Leaders**

**BC Top 10 Non-Profit and Affordable Housing Industry Leaders**

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# Editor's viewpoint



There's much to read in the pages of this issue, ranging from technology to the environment; from business trends to upcoming projects and opportunities. You might reasonably ask how we decide which stories/issues to cover and select for special attention.

There are two answers to this question. The first, frankly, is commercial imperative. Any free publication (and most readers see this magazine online without charge) must generate enough advertising revenue to be viable.

This creates a special problem for publishers. Advertising is much less effective than editorial publicity, so publicists and marketers do everything they can to be recognized (positively) in the news/editorial section, rather than pay for their space.

Conversely, neither advertising nor editorial are very effective in publications/media that contain nothing but sponsored content – you know, those magazines and shopping channel broadcasters where everything is turned into a marketing pitch of one kind or another.

Our solution to this challenge, like many other publishers, is to work with a hybrid standard. We'll publish much independent content and accept commercially-oriented news releases if we are satisfied that the editorial coverage will benefit the audience as a whole much more than the business or organization seeking publicity.

As well, we'll develop features and services appealing to advertisers, such as our "Top 10" features. In these stories, the lead-in and much of the editorial content is produced independently of advertising considerations (most of the companies listed in the Top 10 stories do not pay anything for their positive publicity), while we produce more extensive editorial profiles in co-operation with advertisers.

This way, we retain enough editorial independence and integrity to deliver a truly useful magazine, while avoiding exploitation by public relations game-players (who, after all are paid well by their clients for publicity services), allowing us to enough money from advertising to remain in business.

So, if you have a news release or story suggestion, please feel free to email a note to me at [buckshon@cadcr.com](mailto:buckshon@cadcr.com). I may refer your inquiry to the business office for a potential paid editorial feature – or we might include it in an upcoming story/feature – depending on the results of the overall value-to-audience test.

*Mark Buckshon is the Canadian Design and Construction Report's co-ordinating editor. He writes a daily blog at [www.constructionmarketingideas.com](http://www.constructionmarketingideas.com).*

## Canadian **Design & Construction** Report SPRING 2019

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# The new Canada Infrastructure Bank

## – How it plans to leverage \$35 billion in capital more than \$100 billion in new projects

*Canadian Design Construction Report staff writer*

How will the new Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) create and expand opportunities for the construction industry?

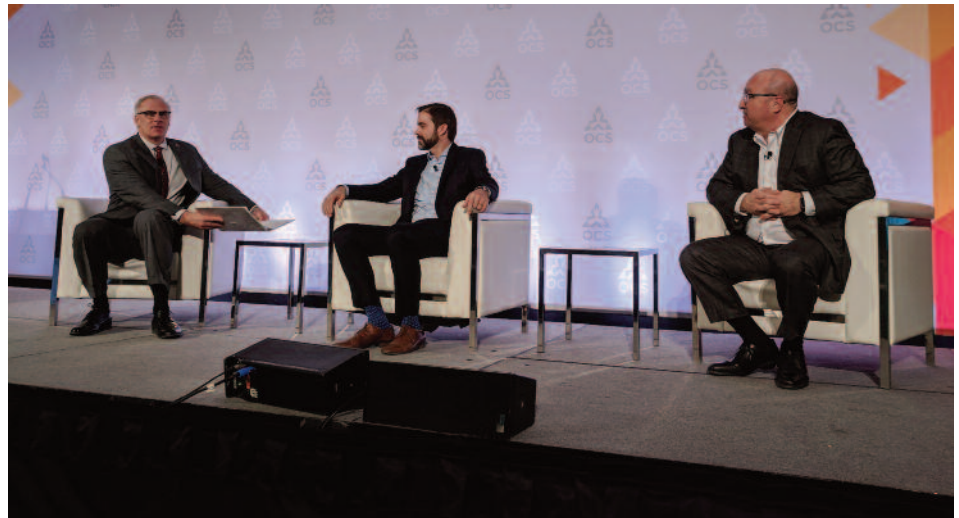
The answer, say two bank representatives, is that the organization will fund projects that would not otherwise be viable, in three fundamental areas: Public transit, trade and transportation and green initiatives, which cover a wide scope from renewable nuclear power to waste water.

“We are a crown corporation created by the federal government with an arms-length private sector board,” said John Casola, CIB’s managing director, investments. The bank has been capitalized at \$35 billion, he said.

Based on the bank’s objective to fund projects only if there is at least two dollars in private money equity and debt for each dollar invested, this suggests the bank will, if it uses all of its capital, fund more than \$100 billion in new infrastructure projects.

The story is exceptionally new. Speaking at an Ontario Construction Secretariat (OSC) conference on March 7 in Toronto, Casola and colleague Charles Todd, senior director, investments, said they have only been working at the bank for seven weeks “and we’re veterans on the team there.”

This means the new bank is at the early stages, but already is reviewing several project opportunities. Todd said that so far about 75 projects have been introduced. “We’re looking at 30 of these in a serious way, and for 10 projects, we’re having in-depth



discussions with the project sponsors.”

The challenge is making sure the proposed projects meet the bank’s investment criteria.

“We’re not a granting agency – we’re also not a procurement agency,” he said. CIB projects need to be brought forward by public sponsors. These could be federal, provincial, territorial or indigenous governments.

The second part of the funding equation is what he described as “bankability.”

“Does the financial logic make sense for us?” Casola said. This means the project must be deemed to be important, be within one of the approved sectors, and “would have a hard time getting done without us.”

If the project can be conventionally financed in the private sector, the CIB does not want to participate – the goal is not to replace funding available elsewhere.

The bank’s mandate, he said, is to

fund “projects that can’t get there, where the risk profile and capital cost is too high, for the sponsoring public authority.”

“Our mission we believe is to get many more projects on the street that just wouldn’t have gotten there,” he said. “It’s not rearranging the deck chairs. We’re funding projects that couldn’t get there financially.” There’s still a need for private capital – “for every dollar invested by the CIB, we would like to see two in private money and debt.”

Todd described some of the projects under review, including transit projects – “a lot of projects are on the cusp – some municipalities and provinces are starting to have some financing issues.” He said “trade and transport is a broad category” and can include ports. “The green category – this is anything that is going to further Canada’s overall policy of lowering greenhouse gas. If it’s public infrastructure, we’re interested in looking at it,” he said.



# Ottawa signs on for \$4.6 billion LRT as \$4 billion LeBreton Flats development project collapses



*Canadian Design and Construction Report*  
staff writer

Even as the federal government's National Capital Commission (NCC) was forced back to the drawing board on proposed \$4 billion development, Ottawa City Council gave the go-ahead for a \$4.6 billion massive expansion to its Light Rail Transit (LRT) project.

The latter news fuels projections for a robust construction economy in the National Capital Region.

The LRT project will cost more than \$1 billion than its original budget, meaning that the projected \$4.6 million cost will require at least \$700 million in additional municipal debt financing.

The East West Connectors consortium, led by Vinci Group headquartered in France, and Omaha-based Kiewit, has offered to build the east and west extensions to the Confederation LRT line for \$2.57 billion, about \$600 million greater than the amount

originally projected by the city. Other participants include WSP Canada and Hatch Ltd., responsible for design and engineering work.

Meanwhile, TransitNEXT, wholly owned by SNC-Lavalin Ltd., will build the Trillium Line extension to Riverside South and the Ottawa International Airport.

Construction is scheduled to start this summer and be completed by

2025, about two years later than originally projected.

City documents say the project, resulting in the construction of 24 new stations and 44 km of track, as well as extensions and expansions to existing Trillium Line stations, plus new maintenance, repair and storage facilities, will create nearly 27,000 person-years of employment, or the equivalent of more than 1,000 full time jobs.





Municipal officials said that federal and provincial contributions are expected to remain as originally budgeted, at \$1.2 billion each – and Ontario’s provincial Conservative government has signed off on its commitment to the original Liberal financial commitments.

The project is undeniably extensive, with many details, and work hours for engineers, architects, contractors and sub-trades, and will fuel the local construction industry’s economic health.

“This is twice as big as the current Confederation Line project, and is the largest project in Ottawa’s history, said Michal Morgan, the city’s director of rail construction.

The LRT sign off came days after mediation talks to save the \$4 billion RendezVous LeBreton Group development of Ottawa’s LeBreton Flats collapsed, causing the National Capital Commission (NCC) to reset the vision for its 55 acres of vacant land near downtown.

The agency which oversees federally-owned land in Ottawa and Gatineau decided on March 7 to proceed in stages, breaking the area into different parcels. It said it will start by requesting proposals to develop the Library District, a 2.9 acre mixed-use site adjacent to the future location of the new Ottawa Public Library and Library and Archives Canada.

“The NCC will be open to a flexible real estate strategy to increase competition and leverage opportunities,” it said in a news release.

“A lot of work is already under way and soon we will invite the public to provide their input to help us design a refreshed vision for LeBreton Flats,” said NCC CEO Tobi Nussbaum. “The redevelopment of LeBreton Flats remains one of the NCC’s top priorities. While we are starting a new process today, we are not starting from scratch.”

The original and much larger area slated to for development was to include a new home for the Ottawa Senators, as well as other residential and commercial developments. The smaller Library District, which includes land that is ready for immediate development and would not have the arena. However, an arena or major



anchor attraction could still be included in a future development phase.

The NCC said it had decided to cancel the original competition, meaning that will not negotiate or proceed with the proposal from the second place finisher, Devcore Candereel DLS.

“The (NCC) board made clear its desire that the new process incorporate lessons learned from the previous Request for Proposals and that it build upon and update the planning work that has been done by the NCC to date,” the NCC said in a Feb. 28 statement.

“Important to the success of the new approach will be community and public engagement, Algonquin consultation and collaboration with the City of Ottawa as well as private sector partners. This will be a timely, inclusive and creative process that

reflects the site’s importance as both a capital and city-building opportunity.”

RendezVous LeBreton, a joint venture with participation from the Senators and The Trinity Group, ran into trouble when Senators owner Eugene Melynk and John Ruddy from the Trinity Group could not reach an understanding about shared risk and investment in the project. The dispute ended up in the courts in December as a January sign-off deadline neared.

The NCC says that the Library District site should be shovel ready by early spring of 2021.

It will launch the RFP by November or December. Meanwhile, it anticipates inviting RFPs for “one or more” of the other parcels by the spring or summer of 2020, with the additional development starting in the fall of 2021.



# Three key tests for earning editorial publicity

## Ideas about how you can promote your business through the news media

By Mark Buckshon

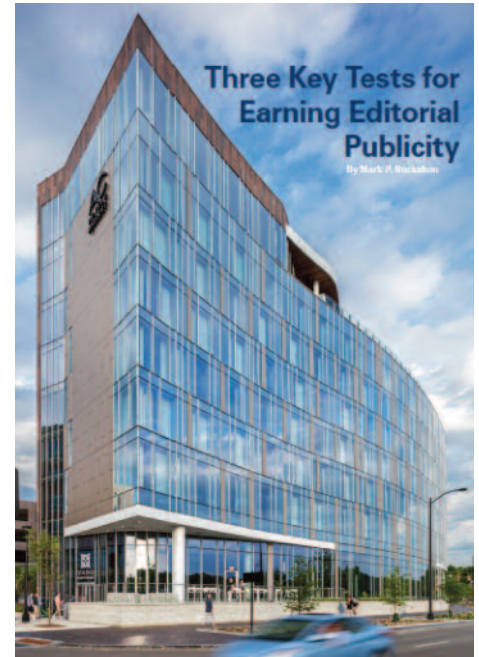
Are you guilty of mismanaging your relationships with the news media? I'm afraid you might be, based on my often-painful personal experience as an editor. Fortunately, there are some simple steps you can take to earn positive publicity in relevant publications without paying to play. Consider the tests of readership value, editorial quality, and timing.

My business publishes regional architectural, engineering, and construction trade publications. We earn most of our revenue from advertising, often associated with sponsored (pay-to-play) editorial features. However, we are not purely a "you pay, we publish" organization, because that sort of media lacks credibility and, in any

case, I am a journalist at heart.

In fact, my career spans three disciplines—working journalist, public/media relations specialist, and finally, for the past 25 years, architectural, engineering, and construction trade publisher. My career has allowed me to practice some real journalism, without being beholden to an impersonal media corporation hierarchy. Nevertheless, we still need to pay the bills, while resolving a challenging business conflict, which can be expressed simply as:

***We must give away our most valuable offering (independent editorial coverage) for free, while charging top dollar for much less effective advertising.***





In my experience, far too few publicity-seekers appreciate the business news publishers' conflicts between editorial integrity and revenue requirements. Potential authors offer poorly written self-serving news releases and announcements, sometimes implying they are doing us a favor in providing hashed-over material. Then they hire a third party to follow up with insistent phone calls, saying, "I'm calling on behalf of (publicist) and am wondering if you've received our announcement."

There are three pillars to the decision about whether your news releases will be accepted/adapted for free publicity or punted to the advertising sales department with a pay-to-play response.

While my observations below may not apply to every media organization, I'm confident that if you adhere to them, you will succeed with your media relations and achieve much more effective earned-publicity success.

### 1. How valuable is the news you are providing to the reader/community compared to its more limited relevance to your own business?

If you have completed a project and wish to brag about it, my reaction is "so ... who cares?" However, if you have just won a competition to design or build a major new development, the story is different — because sub-trades and suppliers might be able to get in on the action. They care.

### 2. How easy do you make it for us to give you free publicity?

Is your news release/announcement well-written, with factual details and without puffery? Do you include enticing images or videos to go with the story? Is it written in Associated Press style with clearly attributed quotes, with a captivating lede (introductory sentence)? Can the news release be turned into editorial content with minimal editing and without requiring full-scale interviews or editorial research?

### 3. How good is your timing?

If you submit your announcement when we have dozens of others waiting for attention, you may find yours lands on the trash heap, when a week later, we might use it. Unfortunately, you can't control this variable because the times when there is likely to be little competition (say between Christmas and New Year's Day) are also likely to occur when few people will be reading your news.

If you think especially about the first two variables, you will increase your chances of success. Unless you pay for your publicity, there is no 100 percent certain thing, and efforts to push the issue — such as phoning the editor, or spamming with excessive emails—will disqualify you under the second criteria. Intrusive follow-up efforts cost us valuable time.

Of course, you can shortcut the rejection or timing risk and speed things up by opting for pay-for-play coverage. I'm working on one of these files now. The client, knowing our systems, agreed to purchase a

substantial advertisement, but asked that his requested editorial content be published a month later. I'm willing to spend several hours conducting interviews and ensuring that the story is written to journalistic standards because we are being compensated. The fee-paid approach for editorial publicity (or what is called "native advertising" in social media) is often a worthwhile investment, especially in publications that include both earned editorial and fee-paid content. You have control over the timing and editorial focus, and still achieve editorial credibility.

However, it's also okay to go the "free" route. Just remember that in aiming for independent editorial coverage, earned positive publicity isn't really without cost, even if you don't pay for advertising. You must take care to ensure the news you seek to promote meets the three criteria outlined above and retains realistic expectations. Respect the editors' time and remember that there is no publicity guarantee unless you are willing to put your money to work in providing content that provides real value for your intended audience.

*Mark Buckshon is president of the Construction News and Report Group, which publishes the Canadian Design and Construction Report. Republished with permission. ©Marketer, The Journal of the Society for Marketing Professional Services, February 2019, www.smps.org.*

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# CaGBC study proves Zero Carbon Buildings eliminate greenhouse gas emissions while reducing operating costs and achieving positive returns

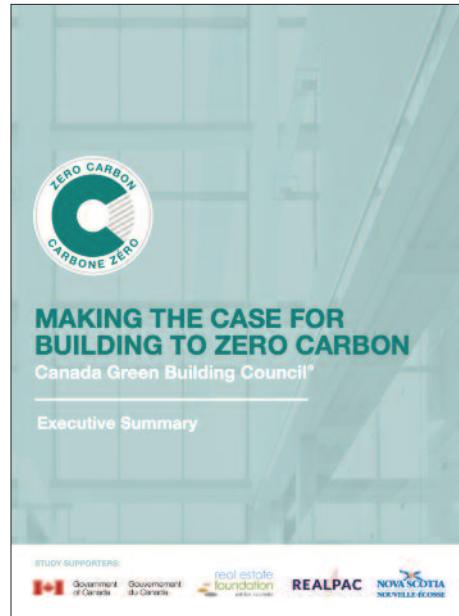
Canadian Design and Construction Report  
staff writer

The Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC) has issued a new report – the first of its kind in Canada – that it says proves Zero Carbon Buildings offer meaningful greenhouse gas reductions and positive financial returns.

Entitled “Making The Case For Building To Zero Carbon,” the CaGBC report confirms that Zero Carbon Buildings are financially viable today, with a positive financial return over a 25-year life-cycle, inclusive of carbon pollution pricing, and requiring only a modest capital cost premium. The economic case for Zero Carbon Buildings is reinforced over time with the rising cost of carbon, increased resiliency, and by avoiding costs such as future retrofits.

Eliminating pollution from buildings is important if Canada is to meet its climate action goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. The CaGBC report found that, by 2030, over four million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions per year can be avoided cost-effectively if the seven building types studied are built to be Zero Carbon Buildings. This represents more than 22 per cent of the 20 million tonnes of greenhouse gas reductions that the Pan-Canadian Framework recognizes as potential savings from the building sector.

These emission reductions can be accomplished with a total incremental capital cost of \$3.3 billion per year, which would fund the construction of approximately 47,500 new residential units and 4,800 new commercial/institutional Zero Carbon Buildings annually.



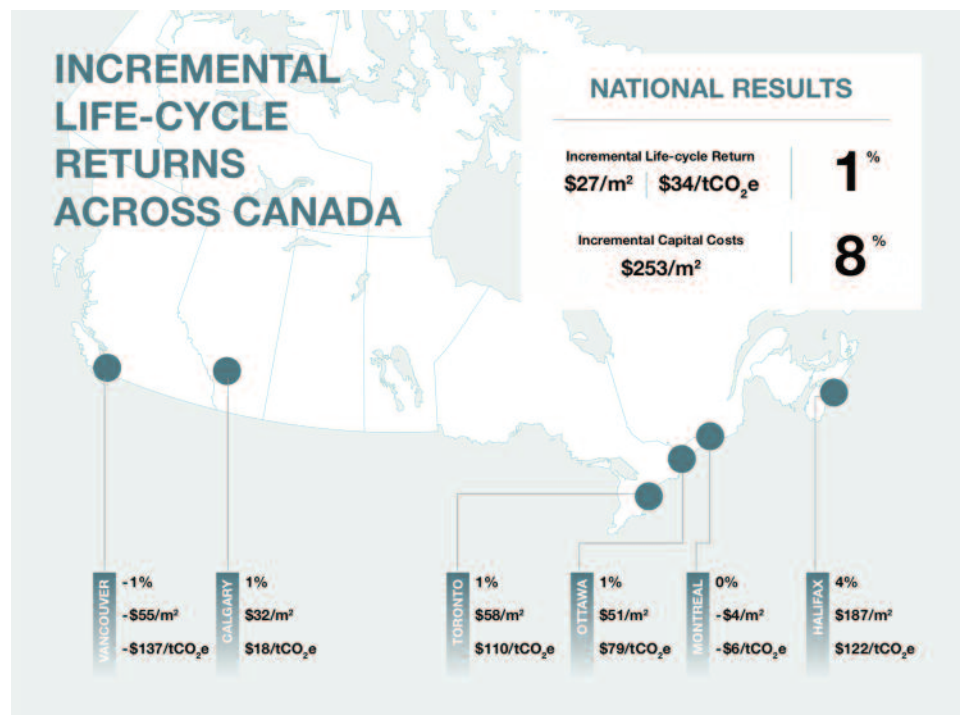
“The cost of not adopting Zero Carbon Buildings grows with each passing day,” says CaGBC president and CEO Thomas Mueller. “This study

shows us definitively that Zero Carbon Buildings can be achieved with existing market-ready technologies and approaches for most building types, and that operating cost savings will cover the needed investments.”

“The Canadian building industry and governments now have proof to make the changes needed to create Canada’s low carbon building stock and avoid creating buildings that will become a liability in a carbon constrained economy.”

The report applied a tailored package of carbon reduction measures across seven types of buildings – low-rise office, mid-rise office, low-rise multi-unit residential, mid-rise multi-unit residential, primary schools, big box retail and warehouses in Vancouver, Calgary, Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Nationally, the

*Continued on page 13*





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# B.C. city discovers immediate and lasting cost savings with iGUIDE floor plan and visual technology



## *Canadian Design and Construction Report special feature*

When public works officials in Courtenay on Vancouver Island, B.C., decided to contract for floor plan maps of their municipal buildings, they discovered a taxpayer-savings surprise.

"We tendered it out, and got different responses, and the fellow with the iGUIDE system was actually the most affordable. . . with the most value added," said Chris Thompson, an asset management technologist with the city's public works services department.

"In fact it was \$60,000 cheaper than the other bids," he said.

Michael Koster of Varoom Studios in the 26,000 population Comox Valley community said city officials also discovered that they weren't just saving money on the initial floor-plan mapping project.

Koster, working with Kitchener based Planitar, creators of the iGUIDE

Technology, said the photographic images with the floor plans have proven exceptionally useful to help city officials and contractors more efficiently and effectively manage the city's properties.

Koster said Courtenay officials weren't expecting the iGUIDE's visual power and cost-saving efficiency when they first met with him earlier in the year. However, they quickly caught on – and other city departments joined in discovering its potential.

As an example, officials responsible for renting public spaces now can provide reliable information about meeting room capacity and layouts. The images and floor plans also will be helpful in describing and encouraging public building usage.

"It's helpful for both staff and the public to have easy access to facility information at our fingertips," said Lisa Zervakis, the city's communications and marketing specialist. "For example, people interested in renting

a room or facility, or teaching a program, can view our rooms without a site visit. The other good thing is that you can set it up to just show and feature certain spaces."

However, the city's public works department has already started saving money by receiving competitive bids for services that wouldn't have been available without iGUIDE, suggesting that the taxpayer cost savings will ultimately be far greater than \$60,000.

"We've had two or three companies already come in and do work that they wouldn't have bid on," Thompson said. The iGUIDE system has removed much of the need for expensive site visits, making it possible for contractors to review the environment and prepare their quotes.

As an example, a HVAC contractor from Nanaimo needed some information, and saved a site visit by viewing the iGUIDE data, Koster said.

In the end, the city asked Koster to photograph 55 structures, ranging



from large buildings such as City Hall and a 35,000 sq. ft. recreation recreation complex, “down to a 100 sq. ft. public bathroom in a park.” He had three months to complete the work, some of which had to be done after hours to avoid disrupting building operations.

Thompson said the city’s only concern with iGUIDE was that the floor plans and images could be too detailed and accurate for public consumption when security is an issue, such as within the city’s computer server room. However, he said Planitar quickly resolved the issue by explaining how to apply privacy settings to restrict public access to specific buildings.

Koster says he expects Courtenay will call him back for further work as buildings are renovated or new structures are constructed, though he doesn’t expect to be needed that often because the data collected is so easy to use and readily acceptable.

However, there are plenty of opportunities for him in surrounding municipalities. The cost is so low and the value-added benefits are so high that he expects other communities and public agencies will appreciate the system’s effectiveness and economic advantages.

“We’re very happy with the floor plans and images,” said Courtenay’s Thompson. “It’s just the information we need to understand the plans and pass on information to contractors doing work in the buildings. A picture says 1,000 words.”

Thompson’s views are shared by the David Allen, the city’s chief administrative officer.

“I support a corporate culture that includes innovation and a team approach to problem solving, and the iGUIDE is a great example and outcome of this approach,” he said. “Having easier access to detailed imagery and data for our facilities will improve efficiency in our organization, as well as make this information more accessible for the public. It’s a big step forward and I think the benefits will continue to increase over time as the system becomes embedded throughout the city’s operations.”

## CaGBC study

*Continued from page 12*

different archetypes yielded the following financial outcomes: mid-rise and low-rise offices offer the highest life-cycle returns at close to 3 per cent; warehouses and big box retail facilities can yield returns above 1 per cent; and multi-unit residential buildings and primary schools are cost neutral or nearly cost neutral.

“This study shows that Zero Carbon Buildings provide tangible benefits to owner-operators, design teams and policy decision makers,” says Antoni Paleshi, senior energy performance specialist (sustainability and energy), WSP in Canada, who co-authored the study. “There is an

opportunity for building owner-operators, design teams and governments to demonstrate leadership in normalizing the processes and technologies that will make Zero Carbon Buildings the go to industry standard for building excellence.”

The development and publication of this study was made possible through financial contributions from Natural Resources Canada, The National Research Council, Public Services and Procurement Canada, The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, REALPAC, the Government of Nova Scotia and the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia.

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# Passive House Leaders:

## Top 10 under 40

## in the US and Canada

*Canadian Design and Construction Report special feature*

Imagine putting this story in a time capsule. What will we recall in the future about the 10 individuals in this special leadership list, representing innovators within the Passive House movement in the U.S. and Canada?

Of course, no one can answer that question yet, but we can already see these leaders' contributions to the future, where institutional, commercial and residential buildings are truly sustainable, requiring upwards of 90 per cent or more less energy than conventional structures.

Passive House has rapidly evolved from an eco-extreme concept to one where even the most conservative beancounters can quickly see payback and return on investment with massively reduced energy bills; in structures that are both appealing in design and comfortable as homes and work-places.

The names here were selected through a review of relevant association leadership, business accomplishments, and other forms of public recognition. Individuals are listed alphabetically, so shouldn't be ranked in any hierarchy.



**Stuart Fix, principal,  
ReNü Engineering**

Stuart Fix has built a thriving and leading-edge organization focusing on Passive House and Net Zero Energy building construction in Canada's western provinces. "ReNü's focus has always been on pragmatically delivering the most cost effective high performance buildings possible," he says. "We use a blend of building science and mechanical engineering to find the right balance between building envelope and HVAC systems to deliver comfortable, healthy and low life cycle cost spaces to our clients."

See detailed profile page 16.



**Michael Frank,  
vice-president of  
engineering,  
McKinstry Company**

Michael Frank is passionate about designing for performance. "However, what really gets him out of bed in the morning is trying to bring the best out of all the engineers on his team by not only being amazing engineers, but being active participants in the communities where we live and work," his profile says.

He's managed the design of many major projects including office buildings, data centers, museums, medical centers, industrial facilities, residential condominiums and laboratories. Frank has LEED accreditation.



**Katrin Klingenberg,  
co-founder and  
executive director,  
Passive House  
Institute US (PHIUS)**

Katrin Klingenberg designed and built the first home in the United States constructed to the passive building energy standard. Her experience led her to co-found e-ecological Construction Laboratory (e-colab) with builder Mike Kernagis in 2003 as a non-profit affordable housing developer in Urbana, Illinois to further investigate the feasibility of applying passive building principles in the United States. Later she took part in starting PHIUS, according to her biography.

Klingenberg has designed and consulted on numerous passive building projects across North America's varied climate zones. As PHIUS' executive director, she directs the organization's technical and research programs. She is also the lead instructor and director of curriculum development for the PHIUS Certified Passive House Con-





sultant (CPHC) training program.  
**Owen Marten, lead draftsman, Artisans Group**

Owen Martin has contributed to several of this Washington state sustainable architect's projects, including the Madison House in Olympia.

"Designed to be the ideal energy-efficient home for the couple, the Madison House is bright and comfortable with a light-filled interior, consistent temperatures throughout, and high indoor air quality," the project award citation says. "The great room's expansive views create a sense of connection between the interior and the surrounding community. This passive house also includes a utility room with driveway accessibility and plenty of space for repair and storage to let the couple continue to bike as their main form of transportation."



**James Ortega, PHius**

Based in Chicago, James Ortega has a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the Illinois Institute of Technology and is a member of the PHius certification team, where he provides design review and energy modelling services to evaluate project qualifications for PHius+ Certification.

"Ortega works closely with the submitting CPHC to provide feedback on questions pertaining to energy modelling and building plans. He also provides consulting services on static and dynamic energy modelling in WUFI Passive and THERM, and spearheads energy modelling deliverables on feasibility studies for projects interested in pursuing PHius+ Certification," his PHius profile says.



**Sacha Sauvé, manager of communications, Passive House Canada**

Sacha Sauvé says she is inspired in "witnessing people's commitment to changing the way we build."

There is a growing network of

people who are stepping forward and demanding their governments join them in the movement toward sustainable development," Sauvé says. "The community is making incredible strides and changing policies from local municipal government to the United Nations Framework on High-Performance Buildings. The unprecedented shift towards a higher standard that is better people and the planet is incredible to be part of."



**Tessa Smith, architect and principal, Artisans Group**

Tessa Smith is a Certified Passive House Consultant and has LEED AP certification. Based in Washington state, her vision of the future is that "architecture is a cohesive part of lasting and joyful experiences" and is dedicated to "stunning and sustainable design." She focuses on projects with determination and optimism and says she loves tackling design challenges.



**Matthew Tokarik, vice-president, development at Subterra Renewables**

Besides his work at Subterra Resources, Tokarik is a seasonal instructor at the Ryerson University Department of Architectural Science in Toronto, Ontario.

He has been a Certified Passive House Consultant (PHius) since 2013 and sits on the steering committee for the Canadian Green Building Council's (CaGBC) Zero Carbon Buildings Standard. He's also presented at numerous conferences, speaking about the financial impact of energy saving measures.

"I love to find simplified solutions for complex problems," Tokarik says. "I do not believe we are waiting for any new technology to reach our national/global carbon reductions targets. We can achieve our goals with the industry knowledge and technology currently available such as Passive House design strategies, heat pumps, and photovoltaic solar panels. We only require the willingness and attention to deliver."



**Tiffany Rolwing, principal, Idea Broker**

Tiffany Rolwing's resume lists some impressive credentials, including leadership roles with the Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia, the American Institute of Architects' Housing Committee of Philadelphia, and serving on the Green Committee (Home Builders' Association chapter) of the Building Industry Association of Philadelphia. She also is an adjunct professor at Jefferson University.

"To me, passive is simple. It just makes sense. But it's challenging to implement," she says. "That's one of the reasons I like it. I enjoy all of the aspects of systems thinking—considering diverse perspectives in order to find a solution that reduces our dependencies on natural resources.

"Also, I enjoy mobilizing a diverse team of highly technical individuals to accomplish a goal. Part of the satisfaction I get from doing this work is the education and training I get to do throughout the building process. Often, I end up learning as much as everyone else!"



**Willem Paynter, engineering technologist, Passive Design Solutions**

"I have always wanted to do my part for the planet, and Passive House allows me to do that while combining my interests of buildings, engineering and technology," Paynter says, describing his work with the Nova Scotia organization. "Passive House is the most energy efficient, comfortable and durable building standard and is a product that I am proud to work with."

Paynter has presented at the North American Passive House Conference in Boston about Integrating Passive House and Canada's Net Zero Home program.

# Edmonton-based ReNü Engineering achieves sustainability with economical Passive House and Net Zero Energy building design

*Valleyview Townhall Passive House, Valleyview, AB*



## *Design and Construction Report special feature*

Edmonton-based ReNü Engineering is achieving the sustainable ideal – building a solid, environmentally responsible engineering practice on sound scientific knowledge.

Principal Stuart Fix is a pioneer in the Canadian Passive House movement, turning the energy savings concepts into a diversity of successful projects in the western provinces.

“ReNü’s focus has always been on pragmatically delivering the most cost effective, high performance buildings possible,” Fix says. “We use a blend of building science and mechanical engineering to find the right balance between building envelope and HVAC systems to deliver comfortable, healthy and low-life cycle cost spaces for our clients.”

“Sometimes the outcome is a Certifiable Passive House building, sometimes it is a Net Zero Energy building, and other times it is simply a ‘damn good’ building,” he said.

The story behind ReNü’s practice goes back a decade, when Fix was focusing his career as a mechanical engineer designing oilfield sector machinery, clearly at the opposite end of the environmental movement.

“It was enjoyable work, and I learned a lot about detail-oriented, practical design in an international setting,” he recalls. “I didn’t, however, enjoy the boom/bust cycle of that industry, nor that I was ultimately contributing to a sector that we know must eventually play a lesser role in global energy supply.”

“I sought out a new industry, and decided that buildings would be

something we’ll always need, and that the construction sector is a focal point for a large portion of the environmental movement.”

Fix moved to Toronto for two years and completed a master’s degree in building science. He also connected with the Passive House movement in its earliest days, founding Passive Buildings Canada (PHC) in 2009. (He has served on PHC’s board for many years since, and he continues to serve on the US Passive House Institute’s technical committee.)

Fix returned to Edmonton in 2010 “to practice the blend of building science and mechanical engineering that we still use today.”

Today, ReNü Engineering has a team of five with technical, engineering, and sustainable construction ex-



**Mosaic Center for Conscious Community & Commerce, Edmonton, AB**



perience, and the organization is working on a diversity of challenging and innovative projects.

Completed ReNü projects include several memorable initiatives, including the Cottonwood Passive House, in Fort Saskatchewan, AB, which was the province's first certified Passive House.

This single family home, completed about four years ago, uses about 90 per cent less energy for heating and cooling than a typical home. It has 20-inch-thick walls, intelligently angled to the sun. The maximum energy needed to heat the house is equivalent to running five hair dryers – and the building has superb air quality, its owners say.

Another significant ReNü project is the Mosaic Centre in Edmonton, the first Net Zero Energy Commercial building in Alberta, for "which we provided energy modelling, life cycle cost analysis and Net Zero Design."

Powered by an array of over 213 kW photovoltaic (PV) panels, and heated/cooled by 32 geothermal wells, it is one of the most environmentally-conscious buildings in Canada, a building description says. "It has achieved LEED Platinum Certification, the highest possible level of recognition for environmental stewardship on a construction project. The building is also a bright, fresh-air, positive energy environment designed to help building occupants feel happy and inspired at work."

In Fort St. John in Northern BC, the 50-unit BC Housing Passive

House "is the largest cold climate certified project in Canada," Fix said. Also impressively, another 50-unit social housing structure in Alberta is "likely the most exciting, as our design build team responded to a traditional housing RFP, offering Net Zero

**Cottonwood Passive House Fort Saskatchewan, AB**



**BC Housing 50-unit Passive House, Fort St. John, BC**



Energy construction for no increase in project budget."

"This paves the way for major industry change," Fix said. "We're offering proof at the provincial level that higher performance buildings offer excellent economic value."

ReNü provided Passive House and mechanical engineering design for the Valleyview Townhall, the first commercial building in Alberta receive Passive House certification.

"I believe major change is coming to the construction industry, and within 10 years you'll see Net Zero Energy and Passive House type projects become the new normal," he said. "Building codes are pointing in that direction, and we're proving today that the economics work in many cases."

For more information about ReNü Engineering, see <http://renu.engineering/about-us>.

# Canada's Resilient Flooring, Terrazzo Tile and Marble Contractor Top 10 Industry Leaders

*Canadian Design and Construction  
Report special feature*

Here's a list of the 10 industry leaders within the Canadian resilient flooring, terrazzo tile and marble contracting community.

This specialized field requires skill in both the trade and in business management and operations. This special feature also recognizes significant suppliers and distributors. Leadership goes beyond the basics, to encompass relevant association and community contributions.

The list here is primarily alphabetical, not hierarchical – so you shouldn't rank the companies as they all qualify for recognition. However, we recognize Lab Flooring Industries first because of its advertising sponsorship.

## Lab Flooring Industries

More than 25 years ago Dino Papadopoulos and his brother, Steve (who has died), started Lab Flooring Industries with the goal of bringing quality products and top-notch customer service in installing all types of flooring.

The company still adheres to those standards. Lab Flooring Industries does installation work in residences and businesses, but most of the company's projects are institutional such as at hospitals, arenas, schools and pools.

The business is a member of the Terrazzo, Tile and Marble Association of Canada (TTMAC) and the Local 27 Resilient Union. The company has about 85 employees who are well-trained in the installation process. Dino says, moving forward, the company has hired younger people who have innovative ideas in the marketing and engineering fields.

## Ames Tile & Stone

Ames Tile & Stone is one of the chief distributors of tile, stone and accessory products in western Canada with branch offices in Vancouver, Burnaby, Edmonton, Calgary and Winnipeg.

Not only has the company set itself apart as a source for leading edge, mainstream tile and stone products, but it prides itself in product knowledge, top-notch relationships with both clients and suppliers and prides itself on exemplary customer care. Ames Tile & Stone maintains a team of talented, dedicated employees who share that passion for customer care. In fact, Ames has received the Best Workplace in Canada award every year since 2008.



## Ardex Canada

Family owned and operated Ardex Canada is a subsidiary of The Ardex Americas group which has been the quality leader in offering building chemicals for four decades. The company delivers industry leading innovation and time tested consistent solutions to the most complex installation problems for concrete repair and resurfacing, substrate preparation, flooring installation and for setting natural stone, ceramic tile and any other type of flooring materials.

Ardex Canada is a system solution provider operating in a spirit of fairness, transparency and responsible business practices. Recently, Ardex has introduced more than 100 new products to its roster proving the company is not only providing innovative, high-performing products, but also providing solutions.

## Bellavita Tile

Bellavita is the Italian term for "good life" and that is exactly what this company tries to create for its customers, its employees and the world. Bellavita strives to bring ambience, comfort and style into the homes and businesses where their tiles are installed. Staff help clients to select the right tile for their individual needs, but also ensure proper installation and assist clients to care and maintain their tile so it looks just as good in a decade as it does on the first day of installation.

The company offers a wide selection from which to choose: Commercial floor tile, glass mosaics, glass tile, glazed porcelain, wall tile, stone mosaics and cement tile. Bellavita strives for creativity, energy and commitment to improve the lives of everyone with whom they come into contact.



### **Carrelages de Montreal Ltée**

Carrelages de Montreal Ltée was founded in 2001 and now boasts of a management team and employee workforce who are experts in floor finishing and building cladding. The company is also a tour de force in laying tiles, ceramics, marble, granite and terrazzo. Most of the company's projects are in the commercial, institutional and residential sectors in Montreal, but it also has a footprint in many regions of Quebec, Ontario and the Maritimes.

Carrelages de Montreal Ltée has been a forerunner in the construction and renovation of semi-Olympic and Olympic ceramic pool liners and has also been instrumental in repair work in subway stations and airports. Large-scale, complex projects are a company strength, with services in technical project analysis, development and/or refinement of plans and specifications, budget and scheduling development and others. The company also takes on relevant general contracting projects.

### **Flesher Marble and Tile**

Flesher Marble and Tile was established in Calgary in 1910 by family patriarch Nick Flesher. Back then, the company focused on supplying and installing terrazzo chips and marble popular during that era. The company is part of Calgary's history and its handiwork can be seen in such places as the courthouse and the Burns Building. The company now brings the same craftsmanship to residential clients with renovations and builds.

Flesher Marble and Tile has a vast showroom filled with a range of different tiles available for clients' projects. They include limestone, marble, porcelain, slate, luxury vinyl, travertine, among others. The knowledgeable team will help clients choose the right tile options for their needs.

### **Floors Plus**

When Larry and Pat Gibson were told the company for which they had been working would be closing, the couple had to make a decision. That was in the mid-1980s and instead of staying in the working-for-someone-else realm, they decided to become entrepreneurs and opened Floor Plus. Since then, the company has grown by leaps and bounds.

With its head office in Burnside, Nova Scotia, it also has locations in Dartmouth, Halifax, Truro, Cambridge and Moncton/Dieppe. The staff listens to its clients and draw on their vast experience to bring flooring projects to life. However, the company isn't just about floors. They can also help with window treatments, countertops, furniture and lighting, among others. They are there for planning, installation and flooring emergencies.

### **Huard Group of Companies**

Huard Marble & Tile was founded in 1992 by Owen Huard. The company continues to provide its clients with the greatest level of professional workmanship the industry has to offer. Through the years, Huard has forged ahead with a team of skillful tile and stone experts who

keep up with modern innovations ensuring customer satisfaction. When it comes to services, the company not only does tile and stone installations, but also waterproofing, substrate reinforcement, crack isolation, and the supply and fabrication of natural and engineered stone, among others.

Employees also aid clients in maintenance and repairs doing jobs such as mending chipped countertops, replacing loose tiling, replacing grout, floor refinishing, cleaning and sealing, and the like.

### **Schluter Systems**

Schluter Systems says it prides itself on the innovative installation systems for tile and stone. Company founder Werner Schlüter has consistently met the needs of a rapidly evolving industry by developing practical solutions to tile installation challenges. The company has three locations in North America, including Montreal. More than 900 people employed by the company worldwide are dedicated to creating innovative solutions for the tile industry and work alongside distributors, dealers, tile contractors, architects, specifiers and others in the building and construction industries.

The company offers practical solutions for common tile installation challenges and is committed to providing reliable ceramic and stone tile installation systems that not only solve problems but benefit the entire tile industry.

### **Stone Tile International Inc.**

Sylvia Benchimol founded Stone Tile International Inc. in 1992. She has been hands on in the business from the beginning and has been involved in sourcing, sales and service. Today, the company has more than 160 employees with showrooms across Canada. Stone Tile has a reputation for quality products and customer service as well as a stellar reputation of keeping one step ahead of the industry in terms of fashion trends and innovation.

Stone Tile offers a number of products including natural stone, manufactured tile, engineered wood, laminam, setting materials and exterior cladding. The company also takes environmental responsibility very seriously. It has developed an environmental policy addressing the environmental concerns of the hard surfaces and construction industries.

## LAB FLOORING INDUSTRIES

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# BC Top 10 Non-Profit and Affordable Housing Industry Leaders



## *Canadian Design and Construction Report special feature*

How do you select the Top 10 leaders in B.C.'s non-profit and affordable housing community?

A good start is to look at the board of directors and leadership of the B.C. Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA). While we are not representing the association's endorsement or support of this list, it is clear that businesses who take on leadership roles within BCNPHA are worthy of consideration for this listing.

We also looked at a variety of other considerations including the businesses or non-profit organizations' histories, community contributions and innovations.

The Top 10 list is alphabetical. It is challenging enough to figure who should be on this list; let alone rank them in any sort of hierarchy.

### **A1 Windows**

Since its inception in 1992, A1 Windows has become a full-service,

independent window manufacturer and installer specializing in residential, commercial and multi-family window replacement. The company provides clients with the very best value in windows and patio doors by combining quality products, award-winning service and everyday competitive pricing. Clients can rely on company employees' expertise to help guide them through the process and recommend what best suits individual applications and budgets.

### **Aboriginal Housing Society of Prince George (AHSPG)**

The Aboriginal Housing Society of Prince George (AHSPG) provides safe, healthy and affordable housing for Aboriginal people of all incomes, ages, and capabilities. The society serves about 500 people in Prince George on Lheidli T'enneh traditional territory and across many other communities in northern BC. The society has its footprint in 12 communities and provides a variety of housing to meet the needs of families and individuals.

### **Capital Region Housing Corporation**

The Capital Region Housing Corporation is a leader in non-profit housing in the capital region delivering affordable, attractive, inclusive, sustainable housing. With a mission to develop and manage affordable housing within the capital region for low income households, CRHC values honesty, integrity, reliability and openness. The corporation works collaboratively with its stakeholders, community partners and tenants to build safe, vibrant and accessible communities where individuals can feel a sense of pride and belonging.

### **Kraus Flooring**

Kraus Flooring was founded in Kitchener, ON in 1959. Since that time the company has expanded with 10 offices in Canada and the United States, one of which is located in Delta, BC, with its head office located in nearby Waterloo. The company provides clients with stylish, classic flooring solutions that meet a full spectrum of tastes and budgets. The organization prides itself on unparal-



lled customer service. Modular tile, hardwood, laminate and luxury vinyl are some of the materials well-known to the company. In 2014, Kraus Flooring was presented with a Water Efficiency Award.

### **Lookout Housing and Health Society**

Lookout Housing and Health Society was founded in 1971 to meet the needs of a growing number of homeless adults in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Through innovative foresight and determination, Lookout extended its services to include shelters, supportive housing, independent housing, outreach, health services and resource centres. Today, the society operates 42 facilities and four extreme weather shelters serving thousands of individuals annually through its 90 programs in 14 municipalities across Metro Vancouver, the Fraser Valley and Vancouver Island. The society believes in helping people help themselves.

### **M'akola Group of Societies**

M'akola is a leader in providing appropriate and affordable homes for British Columbia's Indigenous communities. The society works with its partners and are mindful of Aboriginal traditions while providing and maintaining quality homes. Originally known as the Victoria Native Indian Housing Society when it was founded on Feb. 6, 1984, M'akola was initially formed to help Indigenous families living off-reserve to find affordable and appropriate housing. Currently, M'akola's housing spans Vancouver Island and Northwest BC with more than 1,600 homes serving more than 5,000 family members.

### **SPICE Management Group**

SPICE Management Group partners with B.C. housing co-ops, using a unique level of passion and commitment. It offers a diversity of services to relieve voluntary co-op board members from day-to-day challenges, reducing costs and stress. And its passionate team works with its clients to source opportunities to expand affordable housing by redeveloping and enhancing existing sites.

See special feature page 20.



### **S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Housing**

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. operates and manages social, affordable market and non-market housing projects with care and financial due diligence. The organization provides high quality and responsive services for its residents and is committed to social responsibility. Since 2008, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. has focused on the needs of those who live in low income rental housing. Working with BC Housing, the cities of Vancouver and Richmond, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. is the operator and service provider at seven sites. The S.U.C.C.E.S.S. vision is "a world of multicultural harmony."

### **Whistler Housing Authority**

The Whistler Housing Authority (WHA) is an independent, municipally owned corporation that oversees the development, administration and management of resident restricted housing in Whistler. The organization has a goal of housing at least 75 per cent of employees locally within Whistler and continues to maintain and aug-

ment its inventory of resident restricted housing so both rental and ownership accommodations are available and affordable for local income earners and retirees in perpetuity. The WHA has been the recipient of a number of housing awards.

### **Xpert Mechanical**

With its beginnings in 1981, Xpert Mechanical Ltd. has developed a stellar reputation for being one of the oldest and most reliable service companies in the Lower Mainland. The company expanded in 1997 when it purchased Jack K. Lillie Ltd. Technicians on board are experts in all things mechanical and include qualified journeymen and indentured apprentices who are insured, bonded and licensed. The company has the tools with which to design and engineer clients' projects and the ability to respond to emergencies quickly with 24-hour service, seven days a week, every day of the year.



# SPICE Management Group increases capacity and reduces costs for Lower Mainland housing co-ops



*Canadian Design and Construction Report staff writer*

SPICE Management Group Inc. has developed a housing co-op management business with a social enterprise focus – reducing management stress and lowering costs, while delivering affordable housing to residents.

The organization currently serves 15 co-ops and about 750 residents from its offices in Delta, B.C. Chief Executive Officer John Waldo says SPICE employs 19 team members with a diversity of skills and interests, and that is about as large as the company plans to grow.





"All of the crew members are really passionate about providing housing that is affordable in the Lower Mainland market," he said. "It's a really diverse group with different interests and talents," large enough to accommodate the various challenges that housing co-ops must experience, but small enough that that individuals can work as a team, communicating effectively.

While other property management firms provide basic management to serve the co-op community, SPICE takes pride in reflecting non-profit housing values with a customised model.

Waldo says SPICE frees volunteer co-op board members from service, maintenance and rent collection tasks, allowing the board and committees to focus on community building and planning.

With its market knowledge, the company finds the best value for services such as garbage collection, insurance, elevator service and construction repairs.

SPICE maintains an effective system to collect rents, helping reducing bad debt costs. As well, "we apply for grants and low interest financing" where appropriate, he said.

The effective result is that SPICE's co-op clients save money and the boards are free to look to the future – and this is where Waldo sees the company growing along with the needs of the co-ops



"We're in the process of refurbishing about half of our clients' properties – inside and out, roofs, windows, siding, bathrooms, piping, kitchens and more."

More significantly, SPICE is working with its clients to better use land in redeveloping properties "especially for seniors and people with disabilities, or in leveraging additional space to build more housing," he said.

This redevelopment work won't come at the expense of current members (residents) in Vancouver's overheated market. SPICE is keeping housing charge (rent) increases to reasonable levels. The additional ca-

capacity will allow co-op clients "to provide housing to others currently paying way more than they can afford to pay."

Overall, SPICE Management has created the ideal environment for a business that values its employees and community. "We didn't want to be a non-profit ourselves," Waldo said. "But we didn't want to be a hard, impersonal and insensitive corporation either."

And indeed the company's co-op clients appreciate SPICE's combination of pragmatism and humanity.

For more information see [www.spicemanagementgroup.com](http://www.spicemanagementgroup.com).



Learn about our unique model  
[www.spicemanagementgroup.com](http://www.spicemanagementgroup.com)

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# Grit, ethical standards and adaptability worthy of exceptional achievements



## *Canadian Design and Construction Report special feature*

Petroleum industry contractors have unique environmental regulatory challenges. They must contend with the industry's economic volatility. It takes a special combination of grit, specialized knowledge, adaptability, and patience to succeed in this specialized area of the construction business.

We've based our Top 10 listing on years of industry experience, the companies' individual reputations, association participation and leadership and their community and voluntary contributions.

The listing here is alphabetical, not hierarchical, because it is challenging enough to select the Top 10, but would be truly difficult to rank

the companies below as all deserve their recognition.

### **Cantest Solutions**

This company focuses on testing and calibrations. It was the first company in the world to develop and offer an electronic closed-loop calibration service, "eliminating all the sources of error and limitations."

With offices in Vancouver, Calgary and Pointe-Claire, Quebec, Cantest says it performs about half of the calibrations done in Canada. It is Measurement Canada's only authorized service provider with national coverage.

### **Capital Petroleum Service Ltd.**

This Regina-based business traces its roots to 1982, initially installing and servicing petroleum

equipment for service stations and bulk plants in southern Saskatchewan. Later the business opened a Saskatoon branch to serve the northern part of the province, along with western and northern Manitoba. Its focus encompasses the renovation and construction of service stations, bulk plants and car-washes.

### **Century Petroleum Construction**

Century Petroleum Construction has successfully operated in the Winnipeg area since 1988 by providing quality petroleum equipment and service. The company has worked on both small and large scale construction, repair, and alteration projects and installs and services all types of petroleum equipment at public and private sites.



The company's full-service package includes design, site preparation, cost estimates, construction, repair and alteration for both large and small-scale projects. The business has a strong focus on safety, achieving and maintaining CoR certification since 2009.

### **Comco Canada**

Based in Barrie, Ontario, Comco leads in overseeing Environment Assessments (EA) and Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) – ensuring that its fuel systems “are some of the safest and most future friendly available today.”

The company has been engaged with petroleum management and environmental services since 1964. It has set up rigorous in-house safety training and retraining programs and its staff have been trained to operate a diversity of equipment, allowing for an integrated approach while minimizing project delay risks.

### **Kenstruct Ltd.**

Kenstruct focuses on the general contracting, pre-engineered steel buildings and petroleum construction industries. It has two offices, in northern and southern Ontario, and “has been involved in the design, construction or upgrading of a large percentage of the fuel facilities in Ontario over the past 30 years and also many projects in other provinces.”

The business works with the public and private sectors, as well as on many First Nations projects.

### **MI Petro Service**

MI Petro Service can build a service station from scratch, with complete construction, installation, and service set-up. The company, with offices in B.C. and Alberta, serves major brand clients, but also helps independent operators develop and maintain their service station businesses with equipment sales, service, construction and electrical systems.

### **Middleton Petroleum Services**

Based in Kamloops, B.C., Middleton provides fuel equipment and



maintenance across the western province and in Alberta, in both urban and rural locations.

The contractor has completed more than 300 projects since 1987, including all aspects of service station maintenance, such as installation, diagnostics and repairs, including tank monitoring and leak detection systems.

### **National Energy Equipment**

The company says it is Canada's largest distributor of energy-related equipment, providing service from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland through its 12 branches. Overall, the \$200 million industrial distribution and service company has more than 400 employees. “We arrange training schools and educational seminars on a regular basis to keep our employees, and our customers, up to date on new products safety and industry standards.”

### **Service & Construction Mobile Ltée.**

Based in Laval and Gatineau, Que-

bec, this business's services include aboveground tank installation and removal, equipment service, general contracting, tank inspections and testing, and equipment sales.

Its mission statement values statement reflects the enterprise: Safety – A way of life; thoroughness as a basic principle; employees driven to client satisfaction; transparency in all its actions; respecting deadlines and the environment; teamwork in perfect complementarity and development of human capital.

### **Teksign, Inc.**

Teksign, Inc. based in Brantford, Ontario, traces its roots to 1946 as a plastics industry pioneer. The business has evolved through the decades, developing and expanding its expertise to deliver more than two million signs to every continent other than Antarctica.

See comprehensive profile on Page 26.

# Teksign builds on decades of experience to fulfill challenging signage projects



*Canadian Design and Construction Report*  
staff writer

Teksign, Inc. based in Brantford, Ontario traces its roots to 1946 as a pioneer in the plastics sign industry. The business has evolved through the decades, from its foundation of servicing petroleum signage and expanding its expertise into a business that has delivered more than two mil-

lion signs to every continent other than Antarctica.

General manager Drew Mullin says the company adjusts its program management model to accommodate the demands of very different sites and projects. Aside from exceeding customer service expectations, the Teksign team's interface with other trades features a constantly changing variety of archi-

tecs, engineers, city permit officials, designers, installers and contractors.

Mullin says the business's history dates back over 70 years. As a post-war pioneer, Teksign produced a broad range of products including window mouldings and household appliances before evolving into black-lit signage.







Drew is in his family's third generation associated with the company, though he says he sees the enterprise as a collaborative group rather than a family business.

"Our company has evolved. The outfit has shifted to a boutique-style," he said.

"We emphasize working in small teams, where company/customer expectations are met collectively, and every member works to achieve a common goal."

Teksign continues to serve large clients at a diversity of locations. When a national business decides on a rebrand, it may need new signs to be produced and delivered to every province. Site conditions, the building environment, local ordinances, and other details mean that each sign is a custom project.

"This is not a massive assembly line production environment," he said. "The company model as a mass assembly line is dated. Today's sign industry has elements of advertising, construction, design innovation, and logistic all while protecting the customer's brand integrity. Everything is different. The communication, the people involved, the different trades . . . it takes more of a small team with diversified skill sets approach to push everything through."

Many of Teksign's clients continue to be from the petroleum industry – for example, the business has served Imperial Oil since 1956 – but the company also delivers signs to hotels, restaurants, manufacturers, government agencies, and other clients.

Currently the company's business encompasses most parts of Canada and the U.S. "Depending on market

demand, there isn't much we cannot take on."

"We've shipped highway enclosure signs to the U.S., we've installed fiberoptic signs in Hong Kong and even sent installers there, provided signs for service stations in Russia and an Esso Station in Panama, and, in the early 1990s, provided signs for the Bank of China."

"There's an image in our files where we needed to use a helicopter to put a sign in place, and we have images of bamboo scaffolding from Hong Kong," he said.

Most of the work these days – about 3,000 installations a year – is less dramatic, but it still vitally impor-

tant for significant construction projects across Canada.

"We work as a fellow trade within the construction industry," fulfilling specifications and integrating with other trades and suppliers, Mullin said. These relationships, along with an understanding of the requirements of building owners and corporations for which signage is a vital for business identity, ensure that the signs are delivered the way they should, and the clients return for more.

For more information, contact Drew Mullin at [admullin@teksign.com](mailto:admullin@teksign.com) or phone (519) 756-1089 ext 250.



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## BRITISH COLUMBIA

### Court bans Vancouver-area asbestos removal contractor for repeated safety violations

The BC Supreme Court has issued an exceptional decision prohibiting Mike Singh and his company, Seattle Environmental Consulting Ltd., from doing any asbestos removal work from April 15 for an indefinite time.

The company and its operator had repeatedly violated the province's worker safety rules more than 20 times at 11 different Vancouver-area work sites between 2013 and 2017.

"Seattle is responsible for repeated and egregious breaches of the (Workers Compensation) Act and regulation, including significant failures to properly dispose of asbestos waste, to ensure adequate containment during high-risk work and to provide safe supervision of workers," Justice Francesca V. Marzari said in her 177-page decision.

The *Vancouver Sun* reports that the court observed in two cases there were reasonable grounds to believe that Seattle issued clearance letters, which would allow unprotected workers to enter a site, before all asbestos had been removed.

WorkSafe B.C. sought an injunction against Seattle Environmental and Singh "on evidence of the likelihood of Mr. Singh breaching the regulation and the resultant significant threat to workers," Al Johnson, WorkSafe B.C.'s vice-president of prevention services said in a written statement.

The company failed to ensure workers wore full-face respirators, failed to test for airborne asbestos during high-risk work and failed to seal containers of asbestos waste, the safety agency had asserted.

## ALBERTA

### Alberta plans \$226 million children's mental health centre in Edmonton

Alberta's government has announced plans for a new \$226-million

children's mental health centre in Edmonton.



Construction of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centre is expected to begin in the spring of 2021, with the centre scheduled to be completed by 2024.

The project will be funded with \$200 million from the province and a \$26-million contribution from The Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation and constructed on land east of the Glenrose Rehabilitation Centre, which is owned by Alberta Health Services.

The project's design phase is expected to begin in a few months, and construction would create 200 to 250 jobs, the government said in its announcement.

## SASKATCHEWAN

### Construction industry tumbles during 2018; politicians call for ending PST on contracts

Construction earnings and employment declined in Saskatchewan in 2018, more than any other province. As a result, the NDP opposition has called for ending collection of Provincial Sales Tax (PST) on construction contracts.



Statistics Canada reported that average weekly earnings in the province's construction industry fell from \$1,360.19 in December 2017 to \$1,233.08 by the end of last year.

That pushed Saskatchewan down from second among the provinces to slightly below the national average. Construction employment dropped from 30,261 to 28,336 workers over the same period, the *Regina Leader-Post* has reported.

Most other Canadian provinces reported construction employment growth last year. While Alberta lost more construction workers, Saskatchewan led the decline in percentage terms.

In a news release, the NDP related the industry's plight with the provincial government's 2017 decision to apply provincial sales tax (PST) to construction contracts.

Previously, PST had only applied to construction materials. The 2017-18 budget changed tax rules to impose the levy on the final contract or sale price, effectively extending the tax to labour and overhead. Since the added tax took effect April 1, 2017, it added about \$197.6 million to the provincial revenues, less than the anticipated \$350 million.

Mark Cooper, the Saskatchewan Construction Association (SCA)'s CEO, says the NDP is right to draw a link between the tax hike and the StatsCan data, which further underlines what he called the industry's "sombre" and "uncertain" mood.

"There's no doubt that adding the PST onto construction labour is a tax on investment and a tax on growth," he said. "That's not a good choice, and we've said that pretty consistently."

## MANITOBA

### WCA confirms 2019 Board of Directors

The Winnipeg Construction Association (WCA) confirmed its 2019 Board of Directors during its Annual General Meeting on Feb. 20. "We're looking forward to working together to continue to build the future of the construction industry in Manitoba," the association said in a statement.





The directors are: Bryan Trottier, electrical division chair, Trotco Electric Inc.; John Enns, vice-chair, Vector Construction Ltd.; Dan Bockstael, director-at-large, Bockstael Construction Limited; Peter Bernatsky, director-at-large, Advance Pro; El-lowyn Nadeau, treasurer, Red River College; Brian Fedorchuk, director-at-large, Antex Western Ltd.; Roger Tuk, general contractor division chair, M.D. Steele Construction Ltd.; Jim Brown, director-at-large, Penn-Co Construction (2003) Ltd.; Laura Lomow, director-at-large, AQ Group Solutions; James Gibson, YCLM representative, Graham; Chris Precourt, trade contractor division chair, Econo Wall & Ceilings Ltd; Jeff Olafson, director-at-large, Gardon Construction; David Van Hooren, director-at-large, PCL Constructors Canada Inc.; Dom Costantini, director-at-large, Bird Construction Co.; Ron Hambley, president, Winnipeg Construction Association; Peter Grose, chair, Westland Construction Ltd; Soo Lee, MWC representative, Marwest Group of Companies; Terri Randall, director-at-large, Ambassador Sales (1986) Inc.; Mark Kennedy, manufacturer and supplier division chair, Star Building Materials Ltd.; Chris Henry, director-at-large, Wescan Electrical Mechanical Services; Dan Olson, mechanical contractor division chair, ABCO Supply & Services Ltd.; Andy Dutfeld, immediate past chair; John Schubert, past chair's committee representative.

## ONTARIO

### Ontario government to move forward with Tarion home warranty program regulatory split

Ontario's Conservative government has announced it plans to move

forward with changes originally proposed by the previous Liberal government to change the provincial regulatory framework for new home and condo construction, by separating the regulatory authority from the Tarion new home warranty program service.



Bill Walker, the minister of government and consumer services, described Tarion as "broken" in a Feb. 21 news release. The government will create a new Home Construction Regulatory Authority with a new board and new mandate to create rules that have frustrated consumers, including large-scale condo cancellations and chronic maintenance problems.

"Really, the focus would be on those bad apples," Walker told the *Globe and Mail*. "We'll penalize them and almost try to squeeze them out of the marketplace."

The splitting of regulatory power from the warranty program administration was originally introduced by the previous Liberal government, but it didn't proclaim the changes before it lost power.

The government says it is following through on proposals to consider a multi-provider insurance model, which would allow competitors to offer warranties – ending Tarion's monopoly on the new home/condo warranty market. "The analysis will include consultations with stakeholders in early 2019, including the insurance and new home building sectors, consumer groups, Tarion and our ministry partners," the statement says. Alberta and BC allow third party insurers.

## QUEBEC

### Construction starts on first Club Med four seasons mountain resort in Quebec



Construction has reportedly started at Club Med Québec Charlevoix, the brand's first four-season mountain resort, based on designs from architect Lemay Michaud.

An earlier announcement set the developers' investment at \$120 million for the 300-room resort.

Recently local residents expressed concern about the project, and upwards of 1,000 signed a petition asking that a building permit be denied unless traffic and other concerns are resolved.

Partners, including the governments of Quebec and Canada, Guy Laliberté and Lune Rouge, Investissement Québec, Pierre Thabet, Groupe Germain all have confirmed their investment, while Desjardins and the National Bank of Canada have established their support, the 2017 initial announcement said, indicating that the construction work would create 375 direct and 400 indirect jobs.

### NOVA SCOTIA

#### Nova Scotia introduces \$691.3 million 2019-20 capital plan, largest since 2013

Nova Scotia's Liberal government has committed \$691.3 million for hospitals, highways and schools in 2019-2020, its largest capital plan since it came to power in 2013.



The figure announced on March 6 is an \$86-million increase over last year's capital budget.

Road construction will be the largest category, at \$300 million. Health-care projects will come second, including \$156.9 million to redevelop the QEII Health Sciences Centre in Halifax and design work for new health-care facilities in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

Finance Minister Karen Casey said the government's fiscal prudence has allowed it to spend in priority areas.

"We are able to manage our debt, we are able to manage our expenses," Finance Minister Casey said. "Recognizing that we are in a position where we have been able to maintain that balance, this gives us ... an opportunity to do things like this and make these investments."

While no new schools are planned, \$63.1 million will be allocated for continuing work on 11 projects, a decline from the \$102 million spent last year. However, government officials said schools spending is part of a five-year plan announced last year and more projects are expected in future years. Casey said that would allow spending to approach levels reached in previous years.

The plan also includes a \$48 million contingency fund, with money for projects that have not yet been announced. "The contingency plan is always unallocated, but it is there in case there is a project that needs additional dollars," Casey said.

### NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

#### Newfoundland construction industry emerging from slump: Labour shortage issue looms, says NLCA chair

Incoming Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association (NLCA) chair James Loder says conditions are improving for the province's construction industry.

In an interview with *VOCM* after the NLCA's annual conference in early March, he said that small and independent builds are powering the industry, replacing high profile mega-projects, as the industry emerges from a slump.

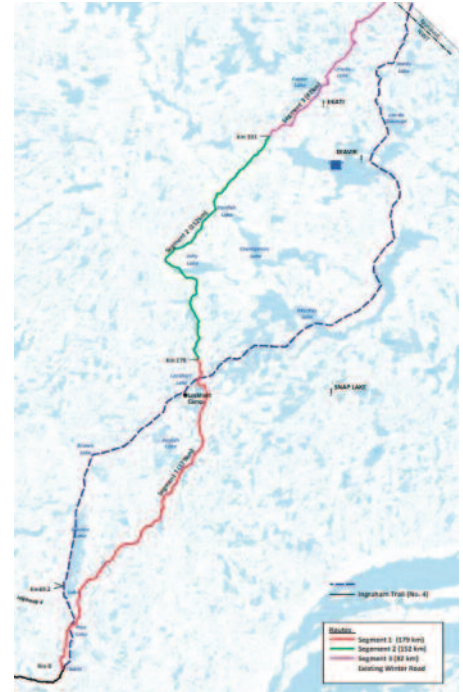
He says the industry's next big challenge is finding people to fill the rush of jobs as workers retire. There is a need to replace retiring workers, he said, by making the work more enticing or encouraging immigration from other parts of the country or the world.

### NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

#### NWT and feds to spend \$3.4 million on preliminary NWT Slave Geological Province access corridor road work



The Northwest Territories (NWT) and federal governments say they plan to spend nearly \$3.4 million on preliminary work for a proposed all-season road to a region believed to be rich in minerals.



The Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) is putting about \$2.7 million toward the development of the Slave Geological Province Access Corridor project, while the territorial government is investing \$678,000, according to a government news release.

Those investments are among the \$5.1 million in government money that was announced on March 4 for two projects related to NWT resource development. The territory's three operating diamond lines are located in area to be served by the proposed new road.

"This is an important day for us," Wally Schumann, the territorial minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, told the *Canadian Broadcasting Corp.* after the announcement.

CanNor also will invest about \$2.4 million on area mapping and aerial surveys, with the NWT government investing \$280,000 and industry partners investing \$749,000.

Schumann said the government hopes the road construction can begin in five years.



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