

September 13, 2006

Calgary Courts Centre reaches key milestone

Phase two of project gets green light

Calgary... Construction has been completed on the external structure of Calgary's new consolidated courthouse complex while the project's second phase will proceed as planned.

A 'topping-off' ceremony marked the important construction milestone and affirmed government's commitment to the project's second phase, which will include restoration of the Court of Appeal building, demolition of the Court of Queen's Bench building, and construction of a 700-stall underground parkade and urban park on the Queen's Bench site.

"The new Calgary Courts Centre will make the justice system in Calgary more efficient, build on the energy of the city's vibrant downtown and, in the long run, save taxpayers money," said Premier Ralph Klein.

The new \$300-million, one-million-square-foot facility will house both the Court of Queen's Bench and the Provincial Court of Alberta in 73 courtrooms under one roof, replacing five smaller court facilities that are currently scattered throughout downtown Calgary.

"As a government, we recognize our responsibility to provide and maintain safe, functional and appropriate court facilities," said Ron Stevens, Minister of Justice and Attorney General. "The Calgary Courts Centre is a state-of-the-art facility designed and built to accommodate future growth in Calgary and the province. It's an investment in the continued safety and security of our communities."

The Calgary Courts Centre, located between 6th and 7th Avenues and 5th and 6th Streets S.W., will be an environmentally friendly facility, designed to meet or exceed the internationally recognized LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver standard. Last spring, government adopted LEED Silver as the design standard for all new government-funded buildings.

"Adopting LEED Silver for government-funded buildings such as the Calgary Courts Centre means lower energy consumption, less impact on the environment and savings for Albertans," said Ty Lund, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation.

Phase one construction began in August 2004 and is expected to be complete in summer 2007. Work on phase two will begin sometime after the completion of phase one. Approximately 600 people will work in the Calgary Courts Centre, including 85 justices and judges, 100 security personnel and 400 court, library and external agencies' employees.

- 30 -

Editors note: Backgrounder attached

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Background

September 13, 2006

Construction update as of September 7, 2006

- The concrete structure for both towers is complete.
- The steel structure for the atrium is underway.
- The target date to complete enclosure of the building, except for the main floor, is October 31, 2006.
- Installation of steel studs for partition walls has reached level 12.
- Drywall installation has reached Level 12.
- Finishing (carpet and painting) has reached Level 6.
- Courtrooms on Levels 2 and 3 are completed.
- Furniture installation on the lower floors is about to begin.

Project need and project details

- For more than 20 years, government has considered the need for a new courthouse in Calgary to improve court access. In the past, economic downturns, government debt reduction and other government spending priorities prevented the project from moving forward.
- Calgary's Court of Queen's Bench and Provincial Court are currently located in five separate facilities: the Provincial Court building; the John J. Bowlen Building; Court of Queen's Bench building; Trimac House and Rocky Mountain Plaza. A sixth building, the Courthouse Annex, was demolished to make way for construction of the new project. All courts are near or over capacity and there is continued pressure to expand due to population and business growth.
- The Government of Alberta funded the project at a cost of \$300 million. The private sector designed, is building and will operate the facility. About 1,000 people (600 at peak of construction) will work on the project over its lifespan, not including those who will work in the building once it is complete.
- The west block development project consists of two atrium-linked towers with a 24-floor north tower and a 20-floor south tower, encompassing 73 courtrooms as well as an underground parkade for 220 vehicles. The phase two parking garage will have 700 stalls.
- Alberta Justice and Attorney General intends to eventually use the historic Court of Appeal Building for court-related purposes.
- The Court of Appeal will continue to operate at the TransCanada Pipeline Building, where it has been located since the historic Court of Appeal building closed in 2001. The historic Court of Appeal Building currently serves as the contractor's project office.

Green building design and operations

- The building's design should meet or exceed the [LEED Silver](#) standard, which government adopted in May 2006. For more information about LEED, visit the Canada Green Building Council at <http://www.cagbc.org>. The building's operations will satisfy the [BOMA Go Green](#) standard, which government adopted in March 2006 for all major government-owned and supported facilities. For more information on Go Green, visit <http://www.bomagogreen.com>.

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Fast Facts

Size

Highest point: 129.8 metres

The 20-floor south tower: 99.7 metres

The 24-floor north tower: 116.9 metres

While not the tallest building in Calgary, the Calgary Courts Centre's floors are taller than conventional buildings-its 24 courtroom stories equal a regular 32-storey building. The atrium (which is the highest point of the Calgary Courts Centre tower) is the same height as the smaller of the two Petro Canada Towers (which is 32 storeys and about 130 metres high).

Ceiling heights range from 4.3 metres for administration floors to 5.5 metres for courtroom floors. There are 9 different ceiling heights in the project.

This will be one of the largest consolidated courthouses in North America, with one million square feet of floor space and 73 courtrooms.

Other factoids

- Approximately 12 million kilograms of rebar was used in the building-that's equivalent to the weight of 4,000 yellow school buses.
- The building contains 22,221 square metres of glass.
- At the start of construction, 77,328 cubic metres of material was excavated-enough to fill 77 Olympic-sized swimming pools.
- The amount of concrete used in this project would fill approximately 62 Olympic-sized swimming pools.
- One of the most striking architectural features of the building is the grand atrium. This consists of a single story glass atrium that connects the two towers and will reach a height of 125 metres. This atrium provides a feeling of transparency and orientation which are extremely important features in a courthouse. The atrium also includes glass public elevators that will be connected by the bridges to each of the towers.

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