

Populous announced to design team for Calgary BMO Centre Expansion

Populous named as one of the primary designers with Stantec and S2 Architecture in partnership with CMLC to lead the \$500 million expansion of Calgary's landmark convention and meeting venue

(May 24, 2019) The Calgary Municipal Land Corporation (CMLC) and the Calgary Stampede have selected Populous, Stantec and S2 Architecture to serve as the primary design consultants for the \$500-million BMO Centre expansion project in Calgary, Alberta. The project is part of a large-scale enhancement to Calgary's iconic Stampede Park and will spark development of Calgary's emerging Culture & Entertainment District.

This team has extensive international experience in convention centre design, intimate understanding of the building requirements and the local area, and a strong sense of how the centre fits into and enhances the local community. Populous will lead the architectural design for the expansion project.

"We're honored to partner with CMLC and the Calgary Stampede on a project that has such a rich history of bringing people together for unforgettable experiences," says Michael Lockwood, senior principal at Populous. "With our background in convention centre design, Populous will help expand not only a marquee events facility, but also expand and grow the whole guest experience in and around Stampede Park. Our design solutions for this complex urban convention centre expansion will help usher an exciting new future where residents and international event attendees co-exist daily in a dynamic and burgeoning culture and entertainment district."

The expansion project will transform the BMO Centre into a modern and international-ready venue. BMO Centre has been Calgary's premier venue for consumer and trade shows, special events, meetings, and conferences since its opening in 1982. Two previous expansions have allowed it to hold its own among the region's meeting and convention venues and this latest expansion—the design of which is set to begin—will position the facility to compete with top-tier global convention centres.

"We've always been about community building, and this project is a perfect driver for the Culture & Entertainment District," said Michael Brown, President and CEO, CMLC. "The BMO Centre expansion is a transformational project that will make significant direct and indirect contributions to the growing energy and excitement in east Victoria Park. It's a signal to the world that Calgary is coming into its own as a first-class destination for international visitors. The Calgary Stampede is a wonderfully supportive and gracious partner in giving CMLC the honour of delivering the city's top-tier convention centre it deserves."

A key component of the redevelopment of downtown Calgary's east end and BMO Centre expansion is the shared vision of CMLC, the Calgary Stampede, and the City of Calgary to diversify Calgary's economy by developing trade and tourism within the region. The expanded BMO Centre will enable Calgary to compete for major international meetings and conventions—which will add jobs, inject new energy, and help catalyze the transformation of downtown Calgary's east end into the city's new culture and entertainment district.

"The collective experience and strength of this team is testament to the importance of the BMO Centre expansion for Calgary," said Dana Peers, President & Chair of the Board of the Calgary Stampede. "The team at Populous, Stantec, and S2 Architecture offer un-paralleled expertise in not only the building's design, but how it will interact and integrate with the surrounding community and Stampede Park. After years of planning, it is very exciting to bring this team on board to realize our vision."

“When the expansion is completed in 2024, BMO Centre will have more than doubled its current rentable space, with nearly one million square ft. of total floor space—making it the second-largest facility of its kind in the country,” Peers added. “This is a tremendous opportunity for growth and development in the city—one that comes after years of focused planning and eager anticipation. The Calgary Stampede is extremely pleased with the project team now in place. Their success in leading projects of this magnitude not only makes them the right team to do this work, but we know they will help us deliver on our commitment to our community and continue to provide exceptional guest experiences.”

“Stantec took great pride in helping CMLC usher in a new era in the Rivers District by designing and implementing the award-winning (and well-loved) Jack & Jean Leslie RiverWalk™ along the Bow River,” said Stantec principal Léo Lejeune. “Urban connectivity and community activation have always been important parts of our design approach, and we bring this same perspective and accountability to the BMO Centre expansion project.”

The three-firm design team will begin design immediately with the design expected to be unveiled later this year. The full expansion project is expected to be completed by 2024. The BMO Centre expansion in Calgary continues Populous’ global footprint in convention center design. Designs for places like the Anaheim Convention Center, Henry B. González Convention Center and ICC Sydney create emotional connections between people and the civic, sports and entertainment places and events they love best. [Contact us](#) to learn more about our approach to convention center design.