

Populous and City of Aurora Celebrate Opening of Southeast Aurora Recreation Center and Fieldhouse

AURORA, Colo. – January 23, 2023 – Global design firm Populous and the City of Aurora celebrated the opening of the 77,000 square-foot recreation center and field house in Southeast Aurora, a marriage of inspiration from the dynamic landscape, views and topography of its mountain-adjacent location and thoughtful design and amenities focused on benefitting the community.

Populous was selected to design the recreation center and field house to respect, celebrate and participate in its site, while also fulfilling the necessary requirements of operational efficiency, cost-effective design and, chiefly, betterment of the community. The project also provides the city's first indoor field house. The project is the second ground-up recreation center constructed in over 40 years for the city — Populous also led the design of Aurora's Central Recreation Center, awarded the Engineering News-Record Best of the Best Sports/Entertainment project in 2019.



“This new recreation center and field house stands apart as a breathtaking example of a community asset that is built to reflect, benefit and showcase its people and its landscape,” said Gudmundur Jonsson, senior architect and principal at Populous. “The City of Aurora now has another cost-effective and operationally-efficient space that will allow it to further serve its community.”

The center's design was influenced by and leverages the site's breathtaking views. Upon arrival, the center emerges from the landscape. Using resources such as natural Douglas Fir structure and decking, the structure mimics the geography of a canyon, with a large open entryway that spans the length of the building and draws visitors into the canyon, providing expansive, unobstructed views through a glass curtainwall of the Rocky Mountains, from Pikes Peak to Longs Peak.

The design employs natural light throughout the space with glass walls providing visibility into the distinct areas such as the basketball courts. In addition, "Florescence," a public art piece by Adam Buente of Project One Studio, extends from the entry to the far curtainwall. The Populous and Project One Studio teams worked together to combine community impressions of Aurora with the architecture of the space, making way for a piece that mimics Aurora's landscape of human activity and the natural world, also depicting the diversity of its community.

An elevated running track extends from inside the gym out into the canyon entryway and along the curtainwall, incorporating changes in elevation throughout the loop. The path symbolizes a journey through the terrain and provides a unique exercise experience.

The fitness area includes a patio and garage door opening to outdoor training areas, creating a further link to the landscape. In addition to the gym, track and other outdoor fitness areas, the recreation center features a field house, pools, community spaces, various indoor exercise areas and lounges, creating a space fit for all residents.

About Populous

Populous is a global design firm that designs the places where people love to be together, such as Yankee Stadium, Tottenham Hotspur Stadium and Climate Pledge Arena. Over the last 40 years, the firm has designed more than 3,000 projects worth \$40 billion across emerging and established markets. Populous' comprehensive services include architecture, interior design, event planning and overlay, branded environments, wayfinding and graphics, planning and urban design, landscape architecture, aviation and transport design, hotels and hospitality, and sustainable design consulting. Populous has offices on four continents with regional centers in Kansas City, London and Brisbane. For more information visit www.populous.com.