

City breaks ground on new home for staff in downtown

LEED Gold office tower to house 65 per cent of downtown City staff when it opens in the fall of 2016

Today the City of Edmonton broke ground on its new downtown office tower that will house a majority of City staff working downtown. Designed to be a LEED Gold certified building, the new 27-storey tower will be located on the corner of 101 Street and 104 Avenue and will open in the fall of 2016.



"This is an exciting day for the City of Edmonton as we take a major step towards the consolidation of approximately two-thirds of our staff working downtown," says Gary Klassen, General Manager of Sustainable Development. "This consolidation gives us an opportunity to improve efficiencies, reduce our space needs by 25 per cent, have access to a daycare for staff with young children and reduce the amount of time lost by staff travelling from building to building for meetings."

City staff are currently located in nine buildings—five leased and four owned—downtown. The leases on three of these buildings—CN Tower, HSBC Building and Scotia Place—expire on or before March 31, 2016. It is also expected that City staff would be moved out of the aging Chancery Hall. Plans for the City-owned Chancery Hall have not yet been finalized.

Mayor Don Iveson agrees that this is an important step for the City as well as for Edmonton's downtown. "This is another project that is going to contribute to the ongoing revitalization of our downtown which is really starting to take off," said Mayor Iveson. "As well, the deal that was negotiated allows us to use our capital dollars for other infrastructure projects that more directly benefit the citizens of Edmonton."

The City will lease approximately 60 per cent of the LEED Gold building when it opens. It will provide Edmontonians a one-stop customer service centre, making it easier for citizens to access services such as business and development permits and pet licenses. The City also retains the right to name the office tower, which is being developed by a joint venture of two Edmonton-based companies, Katz Group and WAM Development Group.

Daryl Katz, Chairman of Katz Group, said, "We congratulate Mayor Iveson, Gary Klassen and the City Administration as they break ground on an office tower that will present Edmonton as a dynamic and vibrant city. This tower will say a lot about the new Edmonton and will contribute greatly to the very positive things happening in and around Rogers Place and the Edmonton Arena District."

Darren Durstling, President and CEO, WAM Development Group, said, "The City office tower will be a key component in the ongoing revitalization of downtown and provide an outstanding work environment for City staff. On behalf of our joint venture with the Katz Group, we are very proud to have been chosen as the City's partner on this important project."

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