

## New Downtown Community Arena Welcomes Residents

September 25, 2016

Edmonton has more on-ice recreation opportunities now that the Downtown Community Arena has officially opened its doors.

Attached to the northeast corner of the newly opened Rogers Place, and easily accessible by public transportation, the Community Arena was built with citizens in mind.

"The Downtown Community Arena was an important part of our commitment to ensuring a significant community benefit would accompany the Rogers Place development," said Mayor Don Iveson. "It will offer great City programming every week, including some no-cost opportunities for community members and I look forward to seeing the positive impact it will have on communities in the downtown core."

The City owned Downtown Community Arena is the result of strong partnerships. The City used \$7 million of its federal Gas Tax Fund (GTF) allocation toward the construction of the \$25 million facility. The federal GTF helps municipalities build and revitalize local public infrastructure through predictable, flexible funding transfers every year.

"Through the predictable, reliable, long-term funding of the federal Gas Tax Fund, communities across Alberta and the rest of Canada direct federal dollars towards their local infrastructure priorities like this recreational facility," said the Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities. "The Government of Canada is proud that the flexibility of this fund allows municipalities to fund a wide range of great projects which help ensure increased mobility, greater economic opportunities, and sustainable communities, all while creating good, well-paying jobs that can help the middle class grow and prosper."

MacEwan University, whose men's and women's Griffins hockey teams will call the new arena home ice, contributed \$3.5 million for additional enhancements including locker rooms and extra seating for spectators to meet ACAC standards.

"MacEwan University is both grateful and proud to be a partner in the Downtown Community Arena," said David Atkinson, President of MacEwan University. "That the Griffins hockey teams will now have a new permanent home so close to our campus, really is a dream come true."

The remaining \$14 million for the Arena will be funded by the City of Edmonton through the Downtown Community Revitalization Levy.

Additional programming support comes from the Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation (EOCF) which, along with the Katz Family, contributed \$1 million for the creation of a fund to support new programs at the Edmonton Downtown Community Arena that will serve highest-needs residents in the community. The fund will be jointly administered between the City of Edmonton and Oilers Entertainment Group. A committee will collaborate to plan and implement the programming for the Downtown Community Arena.

"The Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation is dedicated to changing lives and improving communities throughout northern Alberta," said Natalie Minckler, EOCF Executive Director. "We believe this funding and subsequent partnership can create a lasting impact for inner city residents. We are excited to work with the city and our neighbours to deliver much-needed programming for inner city residents."

Through a comprehensive public engagement process initiated by the City of Edmonton, the community showed support for a new community arena, believing the area would benefit from increased recreation opportunities.

"The Community Arena is a significant amenity for residents living downtown and around the core," said Chris Buyze, President of the Downtown Edmonton Community League. "It was a tangible community benefit early in the arena discussions our members were excited about. We were happy to see it included in the project and commend the City on finding the resources to bring it to reality."

The City of Edmonton allocated one per cent of the construction budget for public art as part of the *Percent for Art* policy, which is managed by the Edmonton Arts Council. There are two pieces that can be viewed at the Downtown Arena: *9 Figures in Motion with a Puck* by Al Henderson, and *Skaters' Arch* by Douglas Bentham.

An urban mural, *Pillars of the Community* by Layla Folkmann and Lacey Jane, is also being painted on the LRT vent outside the arena on 105 Avenue N.W.. While not funded by the *Per Cent for Art* policy, it is through a partnership between ETS, Boyle Street Community Services and the Edmonton Arts Council.

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### For more information:

[edmonton.ca/downtowncommunityarena](http://edmonton.ca/downtowncommunityarena)

### Media contact:

[Christopher Webster](#)  
Communications Advisor  
Citizen Services  
Office: 780-496-8259  
Cell: 780-868-0103

**After hours media manager:** 780-423-5956

Share:     

3rd Floor, City Hall  
1 Sir Winston Churchill Square NW  
Edmonton, AB  
T5J 2R7  
[www.edmonton.ca](http://www.edmonton.ca)

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