PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Silver Award winners in the Vancouver Regional Construction Association’s 2019 Awards of Excellence demonstrate leadership, teamwork and innovation | B2-B3

Clockwise from top left, the Great Northern Way Pavilion, Vancouver House tower, BC Place play lighting system and Salton Road pedestrian/cycle bridge are among the projects that won Silver Awards in the Vancouver Regional Construction Association’s 2019 Awards of Excellence.
CONSTRUCTION LEADERSHIP: SUSTAINABILITY IS A BIG

New Zero Emissions Building Leadership Award added

BY BRIGITTE PETERSEN

Companies that worked on Simon Fraser University’s (SFU) new Sustainable Energy and Environmental Engineering (SE3P) building took home the lion’s share of Silvers Awards during the Vancouver Regional Construction Association’s (VRCA) 2019 Awards of Excellence.

VRCA received 123 nominations this year, totalling a construction value of more than $440 million. The annual awards, now in their 31st year, recognize B.C.’s top construction projects and companies in sectors ranging from industrial to commercial to institutional and highrise residential.

The $126 million SE3P building, located at Surrey, won companies seven Silver Awards. Featuring five storeys and 20,458 square metres of space, the building was designed as a living showcase for sustainable building standards.

Other notable projects included Vancouver Public Library’s vertical expansion, Aldergrove Credit Union Community Centre, and Rocky Mountain District project. Among the awards, one winner from each category was handed out this year in 15 project categories.

One winner from each category was awarded the Gold Award, one of the most prestigious within the construction industry. The Gold Award recognizes the most exceptional project management.

Categories recognized general, building, infrastructure, retail and industrial to commercial to institutional to highrise residential.

A total of 46 Silver Awards were handed out this year in 15 project categories, recognizing the use of innovative techniques, new materials and exception project management. One winner from each category will be selected as a Gold Award winner at the annual Awards of Excellence gala.

Categories recognized general, trade, mechanical and electrical contractors, and manufacturers and suppliers who completed a project, or part of a project, in the past two years.

Describing the calibre of this year’s submissions as “exceptional,” awards committee co-chair Bob Proctor said companies face greater challenges each year, including aggressive time constraints, labour shortages and structures being designed during construction.

“Nominees demonstrated that through strong leadership and teamwork even the toughest project can be successfully completed,” said Proctor.

General contractors

In the General Contractors over $4 Million (Directors’ Trade) category, Bird Construction won a Silver Award for SFU’s SE3P building. The company overcame numerous challenges, from completing the 400-seat theatre prior to the building envelope to meeting a rigorous schedule, according to senior project manager Jerry Woykyn.

“The more unique aspects of this project included an envelope made up of curved precast panels and corresponding curtain wall system, and construction of a full-building-height atrium, which encompasses a large gathering space including stairs, seating places and tree wells,” said Woykyn.

“The true value of this facility is the complex research and teaching facilities and associated electrical and mechanical systems that support it all.”

Ledcor also won in this contractor category for the new Great Northern Way building project, while Peter Kiewit Sons ULC won for removal and replacement of existing rtp-rtap on the upstream face of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam in Hudson’s Hope.

Smith, Streets & Hudson (BC) Ltd. (SBW) won a Silver Award in the General Contractors $15 Million to $50 Million category for major upgrades to the Commercial-Broadway SkyTrain station, the busiest transit hub in TransLink’s network.

The project included building a new platform and a new pedestrian bridge over Broadway, widening of the pedestrian bridge over the Grandview Cut and another work. SBW faced several challenges including an unexpected and significant increase in Canadian National Railway (CN) traffic and a large volume of design changes.

Project manager Michael van Senden said it was the most complex upgrade SBW has undertaken in 40 years.

“Building over a live CN railway was the biggest challenge,” explained van Senden. “Increased rail traffic meant construction activities in the Grandview Cut had to be shut down while trains passed through the site. There were days our work crews sat idle for the entire shift waiting for CN to give us the ‘all clear’ to work.”

To address this challenge, SBW engineered and installed a hoarding arrangement on the outside of the bridge envelope to allow work to continue while trains moved below.

Graham Design Builders LP also won a Silver Award in this category for the Aldergrove Credit Union Community Centre project, which involved constructing a new, 70,000-square-foot, two-storey building and Otter Co-op Outdoor Experience water park on the Fraser Highway.

Built as a destination facility for Aldergrove’s downtown core revitalization, the project includes an arena of 500-plus seats, an NHL-sized ice surface with tilt-up panels, running track, fitness centre, outdoor water park and other amenities.

The project included a number of sustainable features, including heating of the pool water with a boiler plant and solar panels, as well as rainwater management and harvesting, storm retention and water table infiltration. Wood and brick from the former Aldergrove Elementary School, which had been located on the same site, were repurposed for various components.

The big challenge for this project involved laying the underground piping and conduits, which included 70,000 feet of rink piping, 18,000 feet of pool piping, 3,700 feet of sanitary, sewer and water piping, and 90,000 feet of electrical conduit.

“Proper co-ordination with our experienced partner trades and use of Revit modelling allowed us to perform our work avoiding any conflicts and rework,” said project manager Jasman Cheema.

Also winning in this category were JMJ Construction Ltd. and QM Environmental for the Middle Harbour Fill Site remediation project, which involved removing extensive contamination from a former paint manufacturing facility around Laurel Point in Victoria harbour.

Silver winners in the General Contractors up to $15 Million category were Graham Infrastructure LP for the Salton Road pedestrian/cycle bridge project; Peter Kiewit Sons for the Highway 99 Ten Mile Slide advanced anchor work; and Metric Modular for the Trinity Western University Jacobson Hall student housing facility.

Tenant improvement

SBW also won two awards in the General Contractors Tenant Improvement category for rehabilitation work at the Kitsilano Pool and renovations on levels 8 and 9 at the Vancouver Public Library central branch. Chandos Construction won in this slot for its work on the Boston Pizza Stadium District project.

Trade contractors

Silver winners in the Trade Contractors over $4 Million (Directors’ Trade) category were Carion Construction Ltd., for work on the Vancouver House project; Glas-tex Glazing Contractors Ltd. and Syber Concrete Forming Ltd., for work on the SFU SE3P building; and Vancouver Pile Driving Ltd., for dock work on the G3 Terminal Vancouver project on the North Shore.

Winning in the $2 Million to $4 Million (Founder’s Trade) category were Alliance Scientific Inc. and Suresspan Structures Ltd. for work on the SFU SE3P building.

Companies involved in the construction of Simon Fraser University’s new Sustainable Energy and Environmental Engineering building won seven Silver Awards | Robert Stefanowic
FOCUS OF WINNING PROJECTS IN AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Nominees demonstrated that through strong leadership and teamwork even the toughest project can be successfully completed.

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BOB PROCTOR, CHAIR, VRCA AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

KUDOS

and Glastech Glazing Contractors for glazing and glass work on the Commercial-Broadway SkyTrain station upgrade.

Taking home awards in the $1 Million to $2 Million (President’s Trade) category were Horizon Landscape Contractors Inc. for work at the Aldergrove Credit Union Community Centre; Spearhead Inc. for its involvement in the Great Northern Way Pavilion project; and Spectrum Painting & Restorations Ltd. for work at Parq Casino.

Winners in the Trade Contractors up to $1 Million (Chairman’s Trade) category were ESC Automation for work on the West Village Park and District Energy Centre project; Keith Panel Systems Co. Ltd. for developing the exterior panel system for the facade at the Great Northern Way Pavilion; and Westcoast Cutting & Coring for work on the Vancouver Public Library project.

**Mechanical contractors**

Modern Niagara Vancouver won twice in the Mechanical Contractors over $5 Million category for work at a new forensic laboratory at RCMP E Division headquarters and mechanical work on the Valleyview Hospital project. Division 15 Mechanical Ltd. also placed in this category for work on the SFU SE3P building. Canstar Mechanical Ltd. took home a Silver Award in the $3 Million to $5 Million category for the Aldergrove Credit Union Community Centre. Trotter & Morton Building Technologies Inc. won two awards in this category for the Vancouver Island University Health and Science Centre project and the West Village Park and District Energy Centre project.

Black & McDonald Ltd. also won two awards in the Mechanical Contractors up to $5 Million category for renovations at the Vancouver central library and the Vancouver General Hospital Centre of Excellence for Simulation Education and Innovation project. Division 15 Mechanical Ltd. also won in this slot for the first phase of the Northeast False Creek District Energy System with two steam-to-hot-water conversion stations for the Parq Casino and Rogers Arena South Tower buildings.

**Electrical contractors**

Western Pacific Enterprises Ltd. (WPE) won three Silver Awards, one in each of the electrical contractors categories. The Couplin based company placed in the Electrical Contractors over $8 Million category for delivering full electrical works at the new Stanton Territorial Hospital in Yellowknife. This project, the largest in the Northwest Territories’ history, replaced the old hospital and doubled capacity.

Much of the work, including design, prefab, testing and management, was completed in Coquitlam, according to project superintendent Ace Johnson. Consultants and contractors from across Canada worked on the project, calling for many on-line meetings.

“This project was a great success in WPE’s eyes as it allowed us to showcase our years of developing health-care-specific build methods and design management tools,” said Johnson.

F&M Installations Ltd. also won a Silver Award in this category for replacing the aging John Hart Generating Station in Campbell River, and Houle Electric Ltd. placed in this slot for electrical construction, security, and network and infrastructure for a new patient care tower at Penticton Regional Hospital.

In the $2 Million to $8 Million category, Canem Systems Ltd. won for its involvement in the SFU SE3P building project; Houle Electric won for replacing the field of play lighting system at BC Place stadium; and WPE took home a Silver Award for upgrading and replacing the main switchgear and retail distribution equipment in the Pacific Centre mall.

In the Electrical Contractors up to $2 Million category, Alltech Line Contractors Inc. won for its involvement in the Seton River 60L021 Structure Relocation project, Status Electrical Corp. got a Silver Award for electrical work during a major infrastructure project at the Vancouver International Airport, and WPE won for integrating new electrical systems at the Lougheed Town Centre food court.

**Manufacturers and suppliers**

Silver winners in the Manufacturers and Suppliers category were Modu-Loc for its advanced anchor work project; and Marcon Metalfab for design-build work on the Salton Road pedestrian/cycle bridge; and Modu-Loc Fence Rentals Ltd. for providing barriers for a 47-storey, mixed-use third Metrotown development.

Going for gold

One Silver Award winner from each category will be honoured with a Gold Award during the Awards of Excellence gala on October 28 at the Vancouver Convention Centre West.

VRCA will also present Outstanding Achievement awards to companies and individuals demonstrating commitment to the industry and community. Categories include: Lifetime Achievement; Education Leadership; Outstanding Woman in Construction; Innovation and Productivity; Safety; VRCA Member of the Year; U40 Excellence in Construction; and Construction Workplace Health and Safety. One individual who has made significant contributions to the industry and the association will also receive a VRCA life membership.

New this year is the Zero Emissions Building Leadership Award, recognizing an individual or company helping the industry understand how to design and build to zero-emissions building standards.

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From an informal collection of builders and tradespeople to the largest regional construction association in B.C., VRCA has come a long way in nine decades.

BY PETER CAULFIELD

The Vancouver Regional Construction Association (VRCA) – the largest regional construction association in British Columbia – is celebrating its 90th anniversary in 2019.

VRCA president Fiona Famulak says 90 years in business is a key milestone and is worth making some 90-decibel noise about. “Our success is a testament to the boards of directors who have charted VRCA’s path throughout its history and to the members who have supported the association over the years,” said Famulak. “VRCA is as strong as it’s ever been, and we’re excited for the future.”

Deep roots in the Lower Mainland

VRCA traces its roots to the 1800s, when a collection of builders and tradespeople came together and created an informal builders’ exchange. However, the exchange closed its doors during the First World War when the value of building permits issued plummeted. In 1929, Vancouver’s construction industry came together again and formed the Building and Construction Industries Exchange of British Columbia, establishing a direct lineage to today’s VRCA. The exchange’s earliest members helped build some of Vancouver’s greatest landmarks, including the Marine Building, the Lions Gate Bridge and the Hotel Vancouver.

The organization maintained its original moniker until the 1960s when it was renamed three times in four years, with the last being in 1966, when the association added new members and became the Amalgamated Construction Association of British Columbia (ACA).

The ACA brought general and trade contractors from Vancouver and Victoria together with the Heavy Construction Association of British Columbia to be the voice of construction for the province. Following the creation of the BC Construction Association three years later, ACA shifted its focus to Vancouver and the Lower Mainland.

In November 1999, ACA became the Vancouver Regional Construction Association.

Today, VRCA serves more than 700 general and trade contractors, manufacturers, suppliers and professional services providers operating in the industrial, commercial, institutional and highrise residential construction industry. Its members are small, medium-sized and large.
SUPPORTING THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

**Fiona Famulak, President, Vancouver Regional Construction Association**

Our success is a testament to the boards of directors who have charted VRCA’s path throughout its history and to the members who have supported the association over the years.

Businesses that are both union and non-union. Together, they build vibrant communities, state-of-the-art buildings and essential infrastructure not only in the Lower Mainland but across B.C. and Canada, as well as internationally.

In recent years, VRCA members have been involved in such well-known projects as the Vancouver Convention Centre West, the BC Women’s and Children’s Hospital redevelopment project, the Parq Casino and Emily Carr University. Current projects include the Royal Columbian Hospital redevelopment and Vancouver International Airport expansion.

The construction industry is an important part of the provincial economy. With $205 billion in proposed construction and $114 billion in construction underway, B.C.’s construction industry is the crown jewel in Canada’s construction landscape.

In 2018, the industry contributed $21.1 billion to B.C.’s gross domestic product, which amounted to 8.6% of the provincial GDP. Construction is also the largest employer in the province’s goods sector, employing 242,500 men and women from across B.C.

**VRCA’s strategic focus**

In 2017, VRCA’s board of directors developed a three-year strategic plan laser-focused on supporting the association’s members and building for the future. Since 2017, the association has been delivering on seven strategic goals that help VRCA to:

- foster a culture of continuous learning in the industry by providing world-class technical and non-technical education and training (education);
- foster an environment that encourages collaboration, innovation and adoption of standard practices in order to promote fair, open and transparent business practices across the industry (advocacy);
- facilitate connections and opportunities across the construction industry by providing a range of business-oriented programs, services and support, including networking opportunities (facilitation);
- optimize the use of VRCA’s building as an educational and promotional tool for construction best practices;
- achieve full recognition as the premier construction centre of excellence in Canada, VRCA’s programs, services and advocacy work;
- lead by example, by adopting best-practice board governance and operational processes and procedures that support the delivery of VRCA’s vision and mission; and
- achieve long-term financial viability through exceptional leadership.

“We believe that excellence, underpinnings by a culture of learning and innovation, is a critical factor for the survival and prosperity of VRCA’s members and B.C.’s construction industry as a whole,” said Famulak.

**Education**

Familuk describes education as a bridge to excellence.

“We want to foster a culture of continuous learning across the industry by offering world-class technical and non-technical training,” she said.

Recently, VRCA commissioned an industry-wide education needs assessment. Its purpose was to define an optimal set of courses, structures and delivery formats to enable B.C.’s construction industry to take on the new challenges facing it.

Andrea Ringrose, VRCA’s education manager, says that of the many courses the association offers, the most popular ones right now focus on foremen skills: for example, Planning for Foremen, and Lead to Succeed: Leadership Skills for Foremen.

New this year are Hiring in a Labour Shortage, and Love Them or Leave Them: Retention. Both have been well received by members.

Looking ahead, Ringrose says there will be more courses that enable VRCA members to prepare for green and zero-emission building requirements.

**Facilitation**

The construction industry depends on connections: connections to people, bidding opportunities and ways to save money.

“We therefore want to help forge connections and opportunities across the industry by offering a range of business programs,” Famulak said.

VRCA offers:

- more than 20 events each year that connect 4,000 leaders from across the industry;
- access to more than 4,500 bidding opportunities through its Bid Centre platform; and
- an employee benefits plan that is tailored specifically for construction companies.

“As the industry’s one-stop shop for programs and services, we help members save time so they can focus on their businesses,” said Famulak.

**Advocacy and innovation**

VRCA’s approach to advocacy is multi-pronged.

In addition to advocating for its members at all levels of government to ensure that good public policy is in place to support the industry and business in general, VRCA proactively engages with procurers of construction services and a range of industry stakeholders, as well as students, teachers and the general public to promote understanding of the construction industry and the business environment in which it operates.

For example, to help address the looming skills shortage, VRCA has been engaging with students and teachers through its school outreach program, a volunteer-led initiative that explains and promotes the many career opportunities in construction to students. Since the program began in 2015, VRCA has made the case for a career in construction to more than 5,500 young men and women in the Lower Mainland.

The construction industry is also being challenged to respond quickly and in a way that uses the latest technology and innovations.

Helen Goodland, VRCA member and consultant specializing in innovative solutions for the construction industry, says VRCA has been a leader in predicting the tools its members will need in the future and advising them how to make the most effective and efficient use of them.

The association has been an eloquent and effective advocate for transforming the design and construction value chain toward cost-effective, attractive, zero-emission buildings.

As the industry’s hub, VRCA hosts Canada’s first and only Zero Emissions Buildings Exchange (ZEBx).

ZEBx is a collaborative platform that strengthens the public, private and civic capacities for zero-emission buildings in Vancouver and B.C., facilitates knowledge exchange and catalyzes action to accelerate market transformation.

**Anniversary celebration**

VRCA is marking its 90th anniversary in a number of ways.

“The key event will be our anniversary gala in February 2020, where we’ll celebrate our past and share details of future plans,” said Famulak, adding that over the course of the year the association is incorporating anniversary themes in some of its bigger events including its annual golf tournament, Awards of Excellence gala and Christmas luncheon.

In addition, VRCA will be celebrating its members’ milestones.

“Throughout the year we will be profiling association members who are also celebrating key anniversaries,” said Famulak.
OUTREACH: INFRASTRUCTURE SERIES CREATES WIN-WIN OPPORTUNITY FOR CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES, CLIENTS

October 22 event will feature Vancouver International Airport and its 20-year expansion plan spanning projects from tenant improvements to new parkade and terminal expansion

BY MARY VAN BUREN

The independent and anticipated Industry Trends Report 2019 was released by the Canadian Construction Association (CCA) in August of this year. The report, developed in partnership with Abacus Data, leading Canadian polling and market research firm, provides an overview of the key trends currently impacting the construction industry and provides insights both on their context and on how the industry perceives their impact over the next five to 10 years. Dozens of interviews with experts from the Canadian construction industry, as well as a thorough review of industry literature, informed this unique report. Issues were categorized into five key themes: workforce, technology, market forces, procurement and the future of associations.

Workforce

As baby boomers retire and there is a smaller demographic to replace them, combined with fewer Canadians who see the construction industry as an attractive or viable career, the industry will have trouble maintaining a large enough workforce to keep up with construction demand.

The industry predicted this would become an issue, and individual employers and construction associations have been working with schools and institutions to spark interest in construction as a viable career opportunity.

It is clear, however, that the industry would benefit from a sustained national campaign to show how construction is a fit for everyone – from engineers, drone pilots and carpenters to architects and lawyers and everything in between. CCA has recently published a business case for diversity in the workplace and is working on campaigns to reposition the image of the industry as an inclusive sector with diverse career opportunities.

Technology

Compared with international construction firms, Canadian contractors are falling behind on the development and acquisition of cost-saving technologies that may help fill labour shortages and augment the productivity of their workforce.

CONTINUED ON PAGE B7

CCA report provides outlook on five key areas for industry

Industry Trends Report 2019 offers insights on workforce, technology, market forces, procurement and the future of associations in construction
The adoption of building information modelling, advanced software, the internet of things, 3D printing and drones will grow over the next five to 10 years.

A key barrier to innovation is the requirement for low-cost bidding on projects. Public procurement and the scrutiny on public spending, as well as market competition for private-sector projects, tend to force a race to the lowest-cost bid, which results in less investment in innovation. Adopting new technologies, processes or materials can increase risk, which is usually downloaded to the contractor. Investment is even tougher for smaller and micro firms, which need to be clearly shown the financial benefit.

Project owners and government can assist with innovation by allowing for higher margins and other incentives to promote company reinvestment in innovation.

Market forces
Some believe that as projects grow in scope and complexity – for example, billion-dollar public-private partnership projects – only the very large firms will be able to compete. This will squeeze out mid-size firms from competition. Megaprojects are also creating a capacity gap that is going to attract more international competition.

It is therefore important for the government to help domestic firms grow. If all levels of government were to announce clear timelines and investment commitments, simplify consultations and assessments and secure more access to foreign markets, it would positively affect the industry outlook.

Procurement
The off-loading of risk from the owner to the contractor and continuing downward pressure on price is an unsustainable model. Contractors are increasingly being expected to take on all the risk associated with a project, particularly by public owners. This could lead to increased bankruptcies, project defaults or contractors not taking on government projects.

The industry believes that when it comes to procurement and risk, the disparity between owners and contractors needs to be bridged to enable more fairness, more equitable profitability and more innovation.

The future of associations
Associations must be a strong voice for the industry and the central information hub for all audiences. Associations exist to advocate on behalf of the industry at the municipal, provincial and federal levels, as well as provide a suite of services to help members improve their knowledge, grow their businesses and collaborate through shared contract documents.

Many firms do business in more than one city or province. It’s helpful to have a pulse on what is happening nationally, and national associations provide this service to their members.

CCA believes passionately in the sustainability and vitality of Canada’s construction industry and the industry’s pivotal role in building a better Canada. The world is changing, and the industry is changing with it. We are facing new challenges, and we need to adapt in order to compete globally.

Industry Trends Report 2019 was created by the industry for the industry. We see this report as an important member benefit, providing you with insight into emerging trends so you are better informed to help position your company for the future. ♦

Mary Van Buren is president of the Canadian Construction Association. Email her at mvanburen@cca-acc.com if you have any feedback or comments on how CCA can serve you better. Hear what is going on by subscribing to CCA’s newsletter at bit.ly/ccasubscribe, by following @ConstructionCAN on Twitter or by looking up the Canadian Construction Association on LinkedIn.

The construction industry will continue to adopt increasingly sophisticated technology, but the sector also faces significant barriers to innovation | RAWPIXEL.COM/SHUTTERSTOCK

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The construction industry will continue to adopt increasingly sophisticated technology, but the sector also faces significant barriers to innovation | RAWPIXEL.COM/SHUTTERSTOCK

Join us to celebrate excellence in construction!

Each year, the VRCA recognizes the finest companies, projects and individuals in the construction industry. Join us in honoring the industry’s outstanding accomplishments at the 31st annual VRCA Awards of Excellence, where Silver and Gold Award winners will be celebrated by over 600 industry leaders from across the Lower Mainland.

PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS TODAY!  vrca.ca/aoe2019  awards@vrca.ca  604.293.6595

OVER 75% SOLD!
Let us not seek the partisan answer, but the right answer

Rather than aligning with any political party, VRCA’s role is to monitor public policy and ensure its application is in the industry’s best interests.

BY FIONA FAMULAK

In the week before the federal election was called, a colleague shared with me a quote that made me think about the challenge of electing the best people to represent us in Ottawa.

“Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer but let us seek to fix the blame for the past – let us accept our own responsibility for the future.”

The quote came from John F. Kennedy before he became the 35th president of the United States. Kennedy was a great orator who valued the importance of public service and challenged Americans to ask what they could do for their country.

Its message resonated with me. It’s crucially important that our politicians, both current and future, put partisan politics aside and do what’s right for all citizens – not just those who have their ears.

Sadly, that’s not how politics appear to work these days. And that’s why choosing who will represent us in political office – be it federal, provincial or municipal – has become increasingly difficult.

Today’s politics see us go through periods where the new government actively undermines the work of the previous government. Unfortunately, the pre-decessor’s policies aggrieved one group of supporters or another. Such actions create uncertainty, dampen investment and slow the economy.

If partisan politics were set aside, perhaps we would see an end to the large policy swings that typically accompany a change in government.

Rather than aligning with any political party, VRCA’s role is to monitor public policy and ensure its application is in the industry’s best interests.

Large policy swings that would see an end to the large policy swings that typically accompany a change in government. With those swings eliminated, we’d enjoy a more stable business climate, which in turn would inspire greater investor confidence. That’s not only good for businesses but is also good for the men and women employed by those businesses. It creates opportunity, delivers good-paying jobs and ensures people enjoy a good standard of living.

With the focus set on what party the Vancouver Regional Construction Association endorses. Our response is always the same – VRCA is non-partisan, meaning the association itself does not support one party over another.

Therefore, rather than aligning with a specific political party, VRCA’s role is to monitor public policy – developed by any government – and to ensure that its application is in the best interest of the construction industry and/or business as a whole. If public policy serves industry and business generally, we will applaud it. If not, we will call out and seek collaborative solutions, regardless of which party is in power.

VRCA exists to serve its members. VRCA members expect nothing less.

In June 2019, the Canadian Construction Association (CCA) published a report titled ‘Construction 4cdns.ca and take two minutes to type in your name, address and postal code to generate a prediction of what the future housing market will look like in your area. It also offers quick residential construction industry.

B.C. lags behind in push for prompt payment on construction projects

Builders Lien (Prompt Payment) Amendment Act receiving first reading in legislative assembly is a welcome development

BY NORM STREU AND CHRISTOPHER HIRST

B.C. is poised to catch up with other jurisdictions and pass reasonable protections to ensure timely payment on construction projects.

B.C. has been a global laggard when it comes to legislation to ensure prompt payment. Legislation addressing delayed payment is in place in Ontario, the United Kingdom, the European Union and the vast majority of the United States. While prompt-payment legislation has been discussed in British Columbia for some time, action has been slow in coming.

Why is prompt payment important? Delayed payment by a home owner or contractor can have serious, often significant effects, not only for the homeowner and provide payment to subcontractors and suppliers that operate as both union and non-union providers that operate as both union and open-shop employers in B.C. Industry associations, including the Steel Group. Christopher Hirst is managing partner and leader of the construction group at Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang LLP.

The most severe impact on small and medium-sized companies can be to the contractor’s ability to hire new workers and grow.

On May 28, 2019, the Builders Lien (Prompt Payment) Amendment Act was introduced in the B.C. legislative assembly. The proposed legislation, which was introduced as a private member’s bill by Liberal MLA Mary Polak and needs to gain the support of the majority of MLAs to pass, contemplates the following payment structure on construction projects:

1. Payment is to be made by an owner no later than 28 days after receiving a proper invoice* from the contractor.

2. Once a contractor has received payment of a proper invoice, the contractor must “no later than seven days after receiving payment, pay each subcontractor who supplied services or materials under a subcontract with the contractor that were included in the proper invoice.”

3. If an owner does not pay some or all of an invoice, the contractor is required to pay its subcontractors no later than 35 days after giving the invoice to the owner.

4. The obligation, however, to pay down the contractual line does not apply if a “notice of non-fulfillment” is provided by the contractor, which must state that the amount is not being paid due to non-payment by the owner and the contractor undertaking to refer the matter to adjudication no later than 21 days after the notice of non-payment has been given to the subcontractor.

5. Finally, subcontractors who have received full payment have no further obligations to pay their subcontractors within seven days.

The draft bill does provide for the opportunity to dispute an invoice for seven days. The notice of non-payment must specify the amount of the proper invoice that is not being paid and must detail all the reasons for non-payment.

Prompt-payment legislation is well overdue in B.C., and the Builders Lien (Prompt Payment) Amendment Act is a welcome development.

Norm Streu is president and chief operating officer of the LMS Reinsurance Steel Group. Christopher Hirst is managing partner and leader of the construction group at Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang LLP.

* A proper invoice is an invoice that makes reference to the terms of a subcontract or contract. This would include information about the amount due, the date of the invoice, the due date for payment and the terms of payment. The invoice should also include a reference to the contract number and a description of the work performed or materials supplied. The invoice must also be signed by the subcontractor and/or contractor and dated.

U.S. Steel Group. Christopher Hirst is managing partner and leader of the construction group at Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang LLP.

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Why is prompt payment important? Delayed payment by a home owner or contractor can have serious, often significant effects, not only for the homeowner and provide payment to subcontractors and suppliers that operate as both union and non-union providers that operate as both union and open-shop employers in B.C. Industry associations, including the Steel Group. Christopher Hirst is managing partner and leader of the construction group at Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang LLP.

The most severe impact on small and medium-sized companies can be to the contractor’s ability to hire new workers and grow.

On May 28, 2019, the Builders Lien (Prompt Payment) Amendment Act was introduced in the B.C. legislative assembly. The proposed legislation, which was introduced as a private member’s bill by Liberal MLA Mary Polak and needs to gain the support of the majority of MLAs to pass, contemplates the following payment structure on construction projects:

1. Payment is to be made by an owner no later than 28 days after receiving a proper invoice* from the contractor.

2. Once a contractor has received payment of a proper invoice, the contractor must “no later than seven days after receiving payment, pay each subcontractor who supplied services or materials under a subcontract with the contractor that were included in the proper invoice.”

3. If an owner does not pay some or all of an invoice, the contractor is required to pay its subcontractors no later than 35 days after giving the invoice to the owner.

4. The obligation, however, to pay down the contractual line does not apply if a “notice of non-fulfillment” is provided by the contractor, which must state that the amount is not being paid due to non-payment by the owner and the contractor undertaking to refer the matter to adjudication no later than 21 days after the notice of non-payment has been given to the subcontractor.

5. Finally, subcontractors who have received full payment have no further obligations to pay their subcontractors within seven days.

The draft bill does provide for the opportunity to dispute an invoice for seven days. The notice of non-payment must specify the amount of the proper invoice that is not being paid and must detail all the reasons for non-payment.

Prompt-payment legislation is well overdue in B.C., and the Builders Lien (Prompt Payment) Amendment Act is a welcome development.

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