



For Immediate Release

Major Donor Announced for Werklund Centre and Olympic Plaza Transformation Projects

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Werklund Centre is excited to announce local philanthropist Kenneth (Ken) Havard has stepped up as a major supporting donor with a \$1 million gift for the Werklund Centre and Olympic Plaza Transformation projects. Drawn to the design of the central feature within the revitalized Olympic Plaza, which will serve as a focal point for the skating rink in winter and as a water feature in summer, Ken's donation further enhances the vision for an integrated cultural campus.

"I am very pleased to be part of this transformational project in downtown Calgary. I was compelled to contribute after seeing the plans for this beautiful centrepiece, which will give joy to many in the future and will show my love of birds and nature," says Havard.

Inspired by the "sunflake", the official emblem of the 1988 Olympic Winter Games, a 12-metre-tall central feature will serve as a landmark for the plaza in all seasons. The centrepiece itself is inspired by Olympic medal colouration and is adorned with the likeness of numerous local and migratory bird species representing Alberta's diverse wildlife, inviting visitors to discover, learn and connect with their environment in new ways. This homage to the natural world was what resonated with Ken.

As a revitalized outdoor extension of the Werklund Centre campus, Olympic Plaza Transformation envisions an enduring public gathering space that is accessible to all. The design of the new plaza celebrates the historical legacy of the 1988 Olympic Winter Games, while projecting a future defined by year-round vibrancy in both winter and summer months.

Mr. Havard has a long-standing history of support for Werklund Centre as both a ticket buyer and donor, coming on board as our very first Explorers Circle Engagement Sponsor in conjunction with the 2012-13 Season our distinguished speaker series - National Geographic Live. Ken has also been a member of Werklund Centre's donor program, Founders Circle, since the 2015-16 Season.

A Canadian geologist, energy executive, and philanthropist, he is best known for his leadership as President of Firefly Resources Ltd., a Calgary-based oil and gas exploration company. Beyond his professional accomplishments, Ken is recognized for his philanthropic support of a wide range of organizations in Alberta. His contributions have been associated with the Alberta Wilderness Association, Birds Canada, and the Nature Conservancy of Canada, demonstrating a commitment to environmental stewardship and conservation. He has supported community services like Discovery House Family Violence Prevention Society, the Calgary Food Bank and the Mustard Seed. These efforts reflect a



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broad dedication to enhancing cultural life, protecting natural landscapes, and supporting vulnerable communities.

“Ken’s longstanding support of Werklund Centre reflects a deep commitment to the role culture, science, and shared experiences play in building a vibrant city. Over the years, he has become not only a generous champion of our work, but a trusted friend to our organization—helping ensure our programs remain accessible to all Calgarians,” says Alex Sarian, President and CEO of Werklund Centre. “With this gift, he is extending that same commitment to access, storytelling, and a shared appreciation of the natural world into one of Calgary’s most important public gathering spaces.”

This announcement follows the Olympic Plaza Transformation groundbreaking, which took place Thursday, May 28. The Werklund Centre Transformation is being led in partnership by Calgary Municipal Land Corporation, The City of Calgary, and Werklund Centre.

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Werklund Centre (formerly Arts Commons) is the steward of Western Canada’s largest arts centre and the artistic and civic cornerstone of Calgary’s downtown core that fosters the arts through live performance, educational opportunities, and artist development programs. For 40 years, it has been a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians—a commitment that is being renewed through the Werklund Centre Transformation project, the largest cultural infrastructure project in Canadian history. It is home to five resident companies, including Alberta Theatre Projects, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Downstage, Theatre Calgary, and One Yellow Rabbit. It houses six gallery spaces, five theatres, a concert hall, rehearsal and education spaces, costume and scene shops, and a restaurant.