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ARCHITECTURE | DESIGN | CONSTRUCTION

June 2017
\$5.00

**SCOTT TORRANCE
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT**

Connect To Nature



Cascades Casino Penticton

by ZUZANNA WODZYNSKA

The community of Penticton, B.C. saw a boost in local economy and an addition to its entertainment options with the opening of the brand new Cascades Casino Penticton in April this year. "Located at the South Okanagan Events Centre Complex, Cascades features 45,000 square feet of premium entertainment space where friends can come have a delicious dinner, take in a show and enjoy a great selection of slots and table games," says Michael Magnusson, general manager at Gateway Casinos & Entertainment Limited.

The new building appears to emerge out of an iconic desert landscape with the help of a hardy regional palette of perennials, grasses and groundcover. "The landscape design intent was to recreate the Okanagan desert landscape with drought tolerant shrubs and grasses that have vivid colours and textures, augmented with sandstone boulder outcrops and rolling berms as well as local gravels and rock mulch," states Michael Enns, lead designer on the project from Enns Gauthier Landscape Architects. "It wasn't about a single material; it was about creating the right mix and proportions of materials."

Sculptural shore pine trees form a silhouette against the new building along with quaking aspens and golden desert ash. Those in the drive court and front entry spaces are illuminated to enhance the sense of arrival.

Cascades' outdoor space isn't limited to the perimeter of the building at this latest location. A rooftop patio at MATCH Eatery & Public House is a first among Gateway's 26 existing gaming properties. "It will be perfect for summertime socializing; wine dinners under the open sky," notes Magnusson. "It also provides private party space that residents, community organizations and local businesses can enjoy."

The Casino has another, more family-friendly restaurant option as well as space for live entertainment. In addition, the 17,000-square-foot gaming floor offers 400 slot machines and 11 table games.

The new casino space is an attachment and expansion of an existing building with tenants that had to be relocated during construction to ensure that their business wouldn't be negatively affected. "We moved the VQA Wine Information Centre to a temporary location," says Brandon Russell, project manager at Norson Construction LLP. "They were then relocated to their permanent space at the north east corner of the building to coincide with Cascades' grand opening."

The main building frontages and main entry locations include a range of canted elements and forms with a combination of contemporary and local design vernacular. "Conceptually, we approached the project as a village of parts, integrating interior and exterior areas on several levels," notes Christopher Gowing, principal at Mallen Gowing Berzins Architecture. "The challenge was assembling this collection of elements successfully, both existing and new, so that they fit comfortable together and within the building's context." This approach also served to reduce the impact of the facility's significant size and respond to different programmatic, pedestrian and vehicular needs.

"The design is enhanced by the use of a wide range of materials and colours inspired by the local architecture and landscape to complement a successful balance of form and experience that is, we believe, a very successful addition to Penticton for both residents and visitors," adds Gowing.



The mechanical, electrical, telecommunications and lighting engineering design paid close attention to the architecture to ensure the highest quality of lighting was responsive to the building's form, composition and style. "As a result, this high-performance LED lighting and digital control system enhances the facility's energy performance," comments Gary Rhode, associate principal at Integral Group. "We also paid close attention to all critical systems in the casino to ensure there is no interruption of the entertainment, gaming and security operations."

Construction on the project was completed in under 12 months. With existing tenant space lease due to expire in May, there was an aggressive timeline for the complete construction to avoid loss of business. "Construction crews worked seven days a week and around the clock to meet the required deadlines," notes Russell. "The project was successful in large part because of a team effort approach."

The \$25-million investment resulted in an additional 150 new permanent jobs to bring the existing team of local employees to over 300.

"The response from the community and our own team members has

been overwhelmingly great," says Magnusson. "Having the ability for families to visit us as an entertainment destination has really shown positive results in other communities where we have introduced this," comments Tony Santo, Gateway's CEO. "We want people to understand that we are in the entertainment business and not just about gambling." ▀

LOCATION
553 Vees Drive, Penticton, B.C.

OWNER/DEVELOPER
Gateway Casinos & Entertainment Limited

ARCHITECT
Mallen Gowing Berzins Architecture

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
Norson Construction LLP

STRUCTURAL CONSULTANT
WHM Consulting

**MECHANICAL/
ELECTRICAL CONSULTANT**
Integral Group

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
Enns Gauthier Landscape Architects

INTERIOR DESIGN CONSULTANT
Mackay Wong

AV CONSULTANT
Engineering Harmonics

TOTAL SIZE
45,000 square feet

TOTAL COST
\$25 million