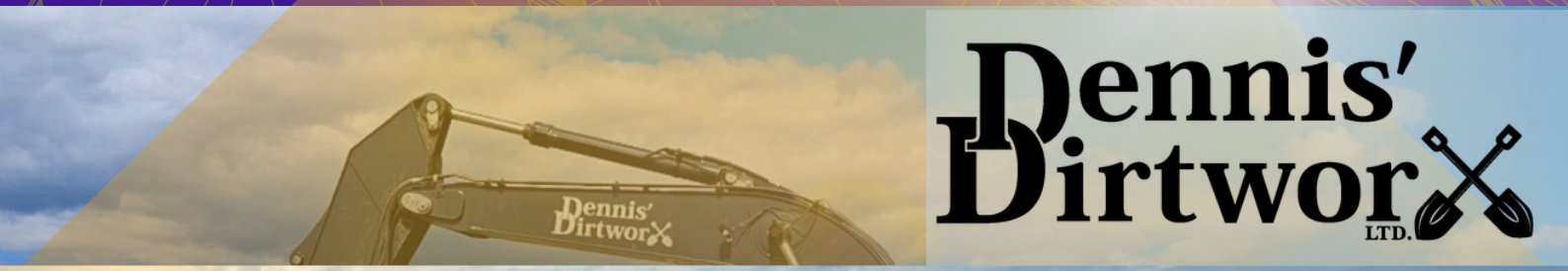
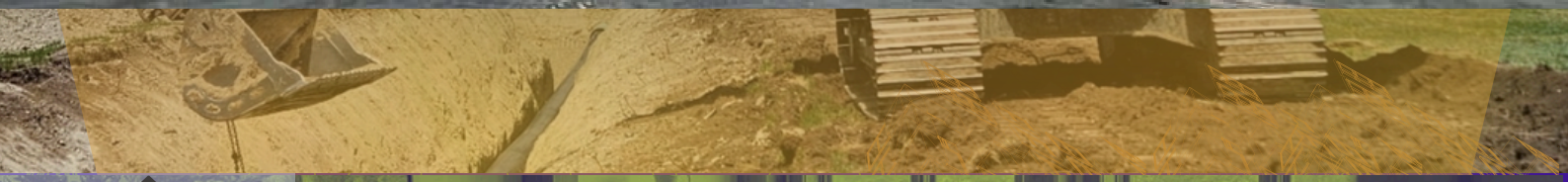
CAPSTONE MAGAZINE

Canada's Construction Intelligence

THE CAPACITY ISSUE









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Editors Note

Welcome to the third edition of Capstone, Canada's Construction Intelligence.

This is The Capacity Issue, and the question behind it is simple to ask and hard to answer: does Canada have the people, the firms, and the discipline to build what it has promised to build? The six companies in these pages answer it in different ways, and not all of them answer it by getting bigger.

Some are scaling. Dennis Dirtworx started in Coaldale in 2009 with a single dump truck, and this year its headcount went from roughly 250 to 300 in three months as work carried it into Saskatchewan. Barclay Street Real Estate spent a quarter century building full coverage of Calgary's commercial market, growing a property management division from 300,000 square feet to more than 4.5 million along the way.

Others have chosen a ceiling. Starna Building Group was founded in late 2018 on the conviction that both partners should personally manage every project, and the firm has stayed small enough to keep that promise. de BLOIS BUILT caps its year at roughly three to six projects, a number set by what the firm can give its full attention. Silvertip Projects works on a cost-plus model so the client wins first, and intends to grow only modestly. Precise Custom Homes has built in Dundas since 2006, and on one recent street, neighbours who arrived sceptical now say they are proud a hometown company built the house.

Our Q4 Insights section takes the same question to the scale of the whole industry. Ahmed Sfeir maps where demand stands this autumn, with housing retrenching while energy, infrastructure and public capital work expand. Sébastien Ameur examines the supply side: labour, productivity, costs, and the trade measures now appearing in building cost indexes. Two independent contributors bring the practitioner's view, on land development feasibility and on the electrical interfaces projects too often leave without an owner. Capacity, read this way, is not just volume. It is knowing how much work a firm can carry without lowering its standard, and building to that number.

Every fact and quotation in this issue has been verified directly with its source before publication. If you find an error, tell us. We will fix it.

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de BLOIS BUILT
Family-led custom builder serving Toronto to the Bay of Quinte

BARCLAYS STREET REAL ESTATE
Commercial real estate brokerage, investment sales and property management

SILVERTIP PROJECTS
Family-run custom home builder working on a cost-plus model

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COMPANIES FEATURED | PROVINCES REPRESENTED | YEARS IN BUSINESS, COMBINED

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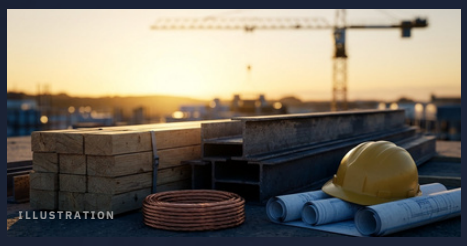
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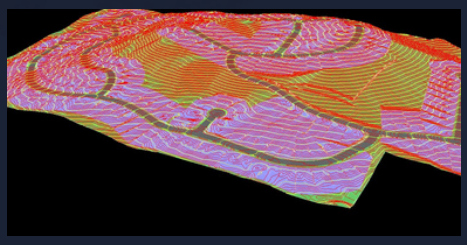
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Capstone profiles the companies, projects, and people building Canada. If your company has a story worth telling, we want to hear it.

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DUE WEST TIRE CO.



Dennis' Dirtwor LTD.



Founded in 2009 by Dennis Overweg, ***Dennis' Dirtworx Ltd.*** *has grown from humble beginnings into one of Southern Alberta's largest excavation operations. Seventeen years later, the Coaldale-based company proudly employs upwards of 300 people, building a strong reputation through hard work, dedication, and a commitment to getting the job done right.*

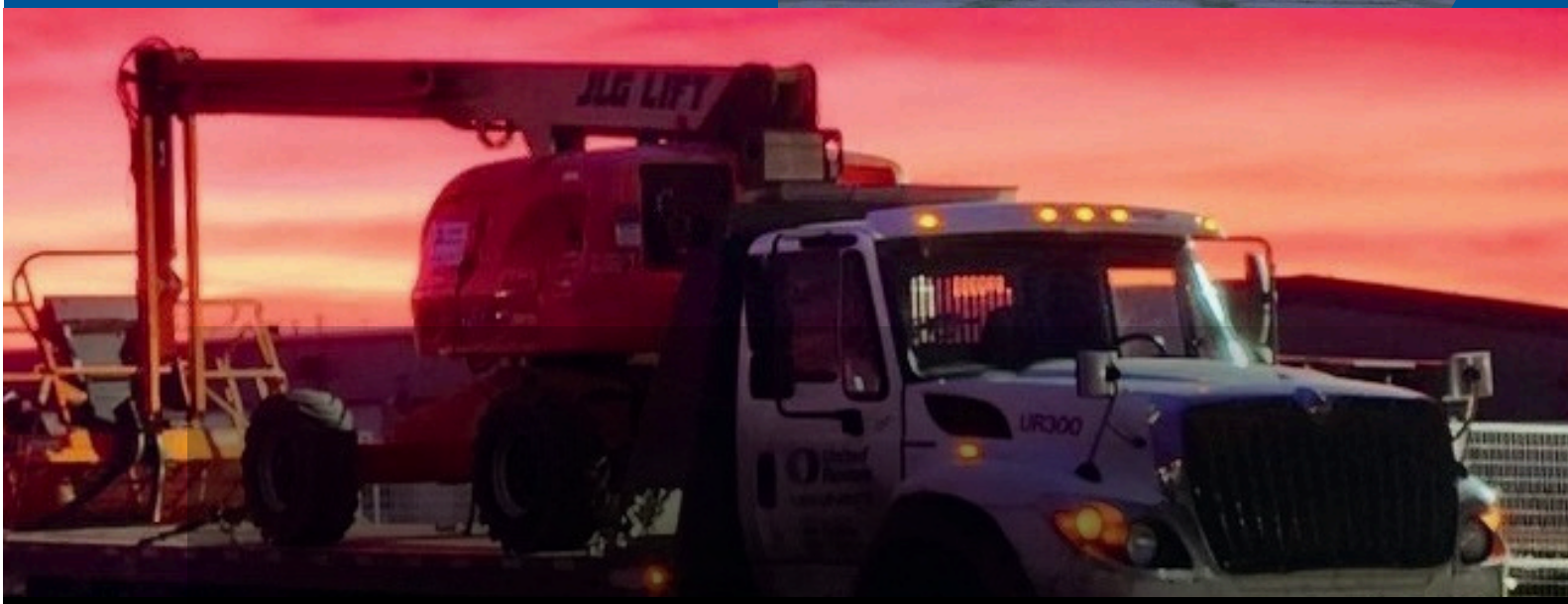


Dennis' Dirtworx Ltd. started with one mini excavator purchased at an auction and a handful of small jobs around Coaldale. From digging basements to building lasting relationships, word spread and the calls kept coming. As the work grew, Dennis began bringing on subcontracted workers to help keep up with demand. What started as a small operation soon grew into something much bigger. Word of mouth carried the company from there. "Little by little he grew," says Kaley Van Der Meer, the company's HR and payroll manager, who has watched much of that growth from the inside. When she joined in June 2020, Dennis Dirtworx stood at roughly 120 people. Earlier this year it was around 250. Today it is upwards of 300. The one-man operation has become a full-spectrum excavation contractor working across agricultural, commercial, industrial, and civil scopes, with demolition capability alongside, throughout southern Alberta.

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TWO SEASONS, ONE WORKFORCE

The company's year is built around a deliberate rhythm. Spring, summer, and fall carry the bulk of the civil and agricultural work, feedlot construction and work for Hutterite colonies across the region, with the civil side focused on subdivision, demolition, and commercial development. Winters are anchored by irrigation pipeline installations for the irrigation districts in and around southern Alberta. The structure is not accidental.

It keeps crews employed year round in an industry where seasonal layoffs are the norm. “We love our winter projects as they allow us to provide consistent work and keep our dedicated crews employed year-round” Van Der Meer says. “We don't have a huge layoff turnover.”

FEEDLOTS AT SCALE

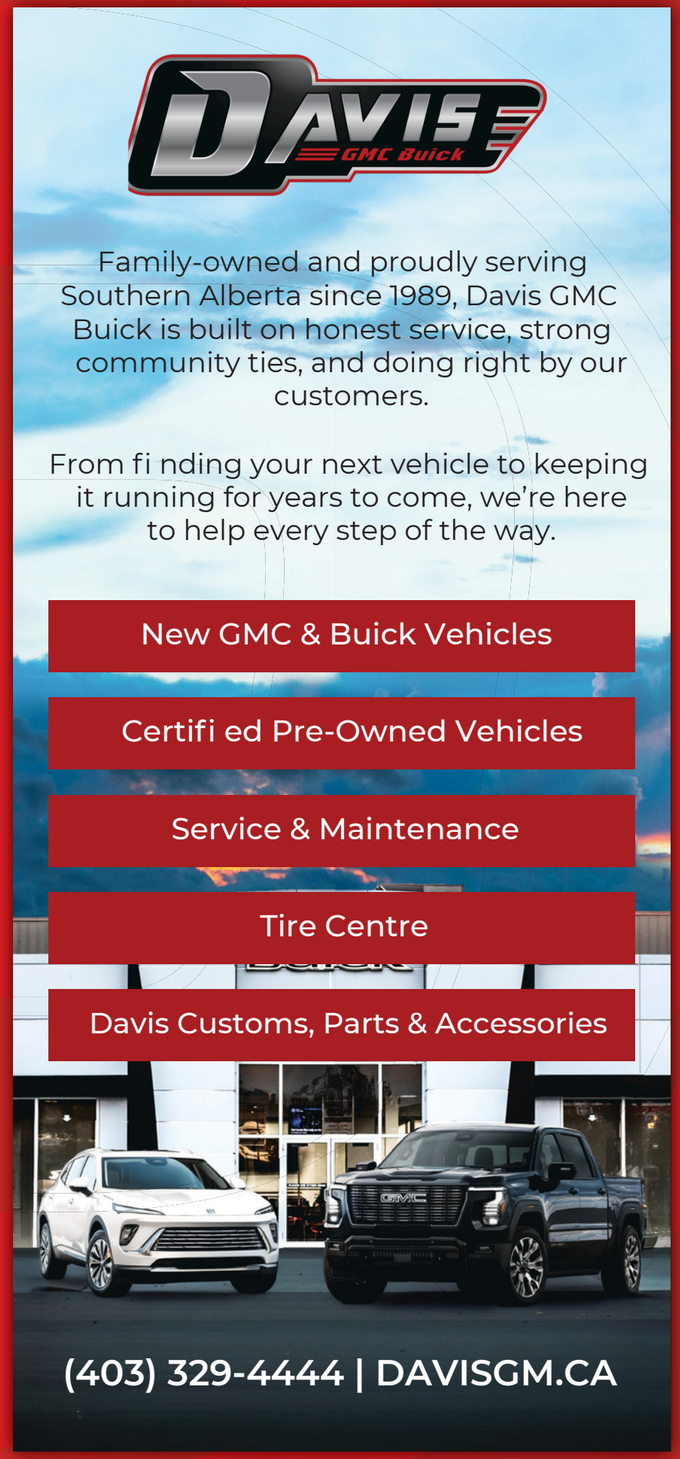
Feedlot development has become some of the largest work Dennis Dirtworx takes on, and the projects run for years at a time. A major feedlot build draws on nearly every crew the company fields: dirt crews, a dedicated pipeline crew, and a roller compacted concrete (RCC) crew, with subcontractors brought in for scopes the company does not self-perform, such as conventional concrete work. A project manager oversees a project from start to finish. The company has delivered both ground-up feedlot construction and major expansions and upgrades of existing operations across southern Alberta. “It's a few years of work that goes into these projects,” Van Der Meer says. Most feedlot projects are designed in house, making Dennis Dirtworx, in Van Der Meer's words, a one stop shop.


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Roller compacted concrete (RCC), a stiff, low-moisture concrete placed and compacted with rollers rather than poured and finished conventionally, has become a significant line of work, driven almost entirely by feedlot demand in southern Alberta.

The material is strong under compression, more economical than conventional concrete paving, and better suited to livestock than a simple clay base. “It's more durable for the cattle and it's easier on the cattle too,” Van Der Meer says. The company's RCC crews are among its most specialized, and demand for the product runs high from spring through fall.

IRRIGATION AND THE DISTRICTS

Dennis’ Dirtworx Ltd.’s civil division specializes in subdivision development, commercial excavation, and demolition, supported by strong, longstanding relationships with developers throughout Southern Alberta. The company has also established a solid reputation working with irrigation districts and Alberta Transportation on major projects, including pipeline installations, ponds, and gabion walls.

“Our success comes from the trust we’ve built, the quality of our work, and the dedication of our crews,” says Van Der Meer. “We take pride in challenging ourselves, and the skill and capabilities within our team continue to impress us.”

Supporting these operations is an in-house survey and design team equipped with advanced GPS and UAV technology, allowing the company to deliver projects with precision and efficiency.




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RUNNING THE FLEET

Van Der Meer puts the equipment count at upwards of 180 pieces, deployed simultaneously across agricultural, commercial, industrial, and demolition projects. Coordination runs through a project management team overseen by an operations manager, working alongside dispatch to move machines where they are needed, when they are needed. Morning meetings keep the management team on the same page as weather and site conditions shift, and a dedicated heavy hauler crew handles the constant movement of iron between sites. “Our teams are based on trust, and reliability and dedication,” Van Der Meer says. “When everybody is on the same page, it does work pretty seamlessly.”

HIRING FROM THE SHOVEL UP

Hiring is handled by Van Der Meer and the operations manager, and the philosophy is explicit: promote from within. “If we can hire labourers who are willing to train and learn and start with a shovel in their hand, those are the ones that sometimes make the best operators,” she says. The company hires outside only when a skill level demands it. The approach shows in retention. Turnover runs lower than the construction industry would predict, and the proof walks the sites: one labourer who started with a shovel and a rake when Van Der Meer joined is now a lead hand running crews and one of the company's main RCC men. “If you put in the hard work and dedication, you're going to go somewhere.”

Overweg himself sets the tone. Van Der Meer has described the founder as a go-getter and a smart businessman, and the operation he built reflects it: a management team with long tenure, crews that work together across seasons, and a company that would rather open doors internally than fill them from outside.

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SAFETY AND ASSOCIATIONS

Dennis Dirtworx is a member of the Alberta Construction Association and holds COR certification, with membership in ISNetworld.

BUILT IN COALDALE

Coaldale is not a large community, and the Dennis Dirtworx name is known in it. The company placed the foundations for the town's new high school and recreation centre, a project with particular weight for a company whose people largely live there. “It's one of those projects where you smile when you're doing it because you know you're increasing the value to all these families in and around where you live,” Van Der Meer says.

The community role extends well past the jobsite. The company supports local food banks, school programs, and playground installations, backs organizations across the Lethbridge area, and a 2017 charity auction it held raised nearly $60,000 for local causes.

Each June, when Coaldale hosts its big truck petting zoo and area companies bring their equipment in for children to climb through, Dennis Dirtworx hosts and donates the barbecue. “We wouldn't have it any other way, because this is where most of us live,” Van Der Meer says.



THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Asked where the company goes from here, Van Der Meer's answer starts with a correction of premise: Dennis Dirtworx is not out looking. “Honestly, the work comes to us,” she says. Agricultural work has taken off over the past four to five years and now forms a major share of the book, while the civil side keeps pulling the company toward new technologies and new engineering. The focus now is expanding what the company knows how to do, taking on new innovations and new ways of working as they cross the desk, and the growth curve suggests the strategy is working.

The goal, as the company puts it, is to continue doing what it does best: building relationships, providing employment opportunities, and executing projects to a standard second to none. Seventeen years from a mini hoe, the company Dennis Overweg built shows no sign of slowing.

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starna
BUILDING GROUP



Natasha Jurakhan and Peter Sitarz founded Starna Building Group in late 2018 on the conviction that construction management works best at a scale where the partners never leave the project. Seven years on, the Toronto firm delivers custom homes, complex renovations, and commercial construction management, and still answers for every home it has built, down to a quarterly maintenance visit.







Natasha Jurakhan and Peter Sitarz founded Starna Building Group in late 2018. *The reason was a conviction about what custom home building actually is. "You're not just dealing with construction," Jurakhan says. "You're dealing with people's personal and most intimate spaces, which is their homes." That, in her view, demands a level of attention and client care she felt the market was not consistently delivering.*

The answer was a firm built deliberately boutique: small enough that both partners personally manage every project and every client relationship, from first consultation through handover and beyond. Both partners brought extensive backgrounds in high-end custom home construction, supported by combined experience in construction management, commercial projects, and architectural technology. In the firm's establishing years they took the work available, ground-floor renovations and additions, scaling their new-build expertise to smaller projects until the new construction opportunities followed. Today Starna operates as a full-service construction management firm, with a project mix spanning complex renovations, additions, and ground-up custom homes across the Greater Toronto Area, alongside commercial construction management work.





starna

BUILDING GROUP

THE FOUNDERS' BACKGROUNDS

Before Starna, Jurakhan worked in Washington, DC as a facility management consultant, advising major cultural and government institutions on the operations and maintenance of their facilities, experience grounded in the institutional, commercial, and industrial world. She holds both the Facility Management Professional (FMP) and LEED AP designations. Sitarz brings the complementary half: a background in architectural technology and years of hands-on construction leadership in the field. It is an unusual depth of pedigree for a boutique firm, and it shapes the work in a specific way: Starna builds with the entire life of a building in mind, not just its completion date.

That means the maintenance burden of every product and detail is considered during tendering, not discovered after possession. Some clients are happy to maintain elements of their home seasonally; others want as little upkeep as the physics of a house allows. Jurakhan's team surfaces those trade-offs up front, recommending longer-lasting alternates where they fit, so the home a client receives matches not only how they want to live in it but how they want to care for it.





CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT, END TO END

Starna's service scope runs the full arc of construction management: preconstruction planning, procurement, budgeting, scheduling, project coordination, and construction oversight. Ask Jurakhan where a project succeeds or fails and the answer is unambiguous: before a shovel touches the ground. Starna encourages clients to engage the builder at the very beginning of the process, before design is established. The alternative, being retained after design is complete, too often produces a budget that exceeds expectations, followed by value engineering, reselection, and redesign, a cycle that burns consultant time and calendar in equal measure.

Engaged early, Starna works alongside the architect, designer, and consultant team to set project goals so the design aligns with the client's budget from the first drawing. Pre-construction proceeds through periodic team meetings on details, site logistics, and execution, with incremental budget updates as the design matures.

By permit drawings, the budget typically holds within a ten percent variance pending finishes and site conditions, and the issued-for-construction set becomes, in Jurakhan's words, the bible for the build. The phase also covers subcontractor conversations, tendering for startup trades, and the scheduling groundwork that lets the site team hit the ground running. "The longer you have to plan the project, the easier it is for us to execute on site," she says.





RENOVATION AND THE DISCIPLINE OF TROUBLESHOOTING

Jurakhan is careful not to undersell new construction, building on Toronto's tight urban lots involves shoring details and engineering that carry real complexity. But renovation, particularly of the city's older housing stock, is a different discipline. Homes dating to the 1800s were built under standards far more lax than today's codes, and opening their walls reveals the evidence: holes drilled through joists, insufficient insulation, structural deficiencies that no professional builder can close back up unaddressed.

Tying new work into existing structure demands building science, troubleshooting, and close collaboration with engineers and architects, and sometimes it demands a builder's alternative to a detail that would be prohibitively expensive as first drawn. It also demands something outside the technical entirely: managing the client through it. Discoveries cost time and money, and Starna treats educating the client through those moments, honestly and as a team, as part of the technical work itself. It is, Jurakhan notes, precisely the kind of complexity some builders prefer to avoid.



DIVIDING THE WORK

The partnership divides cleanly. Jurakhan runs operations: project managers, coordinators, administrators, and the project accountant report to her. Sitarz, as director of construction, spends his days on site, managing supervisors and trades for quality and schedule. Estimating is shared ground, both partners prepare budgets, negotiate with trades, and award contracts.
The rhythm of the firm is a weekly project team meeting with the schedule on the wall and the site supervisor, project manager, and coordinator in the room, walking the budget and timeline in real time and resolving deviations as a group rather than by memo.

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THE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

Starna's most distinctive offering was never planned as a business line. As the firm's completed homes aged, clients kept calling, for filter changes, seasonal shutdowns, hose bibs, the accumulating small needs of a well-built house, and a quarterly maintenance program for Starna-built homes grew organically out of answering them. It has since become a revenue stream, but its logic is architectural rather than commercial. “Nobody knows your house better than your builder,” Jurakhan says.

Starna knows what is behind every wall it has closed, holds the documentation, and knows where the radiant heating lines run before anyone drills a floor.
The program is also the clearest expression of what clients say distinguishes the firm: it does not leave. Relationships with clients routinely outlast the build itself, which Jurakhan takes as its own form of evidence. “They like us, which is also a good indicator that we did a good job.”

SUSTAINABILITY IN PRACTICE

Jurakhan holds a LEED AP designation, and Starna applies sustainable products and systems where clients ask for them, a choice that carries real cost and is therefore left to the client.

Where the firm exercises sustainability unilaterally is in its own conduct: reusing materials, ordering to need, returning surplus, and separating waste for disposal, discipline that costs the client nothing and is applied on every project regardless of mandate.

CLIENT EDUCATION AND THE FINAL STRETCH

Starna knows both sides of a divide here. The partners’ commercial construction management experience makes consultant teams, architects, and business clients familiar ground; custom residential, by contrast, is usually a client’s first build. Starna treats closing that knowledge gap as core scope. Millwork, to take Jurakhan's own example, is among the longest lead items in any home: shop drawings, review, approval, ten to sixteen weeks of fabrication depending on the shop, then installation, and only then can countertops be measured and their own shop drawing cycle begin.

Every element carries interdependencies like these, and Starna walks clients through them so the sequence on site makes sense rather than mystifies. Then there is the end. “The last ten percent is the hardest percent of any build,” Jurakhan says: the client is exhausted and wants their house, and it is exactly the moment some builders check out. Starna's answer is *all hands on deck*, both partners included, on site through the finish. “If we have to push a broom, we'll push a broom.”





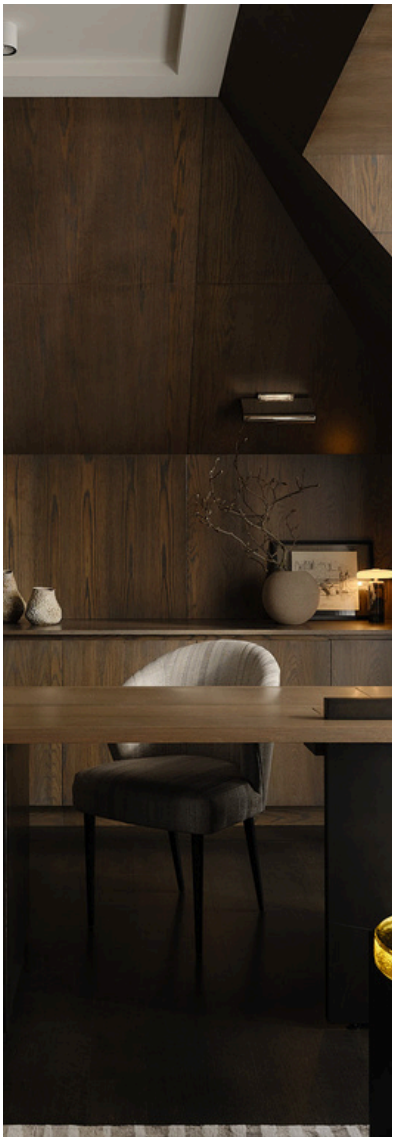
THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Jurakhan frames the future as deliberate growth rather than expansion for its own sake. She and Sitarz set out to build a boutique firm and intend to keep its defining qualities, personal involvement, quality, and attention to detail, intact as the business develops. The ambition runs toward the caliber and complexity of projects, and the possibilities include a satellite presence in Ontario's cottage country, where building activity is strong. What will not change is the model: projects are never handed off to someone with limited involvement, and growth never comes at the cost of the partners' presence on every job.

"You're only as good as the people that work for you," she says, and she credits the firm's team as the other half of the model, a happy team making happy clients. The promise Starna sells has not changed since 2018, and Jurakhan states it plainly: "We're here to build your home and you're going to love it, and we're not leaving you." At the firm's chosen scale, that is not a slogan. It is a standard the company is built to keep, and it is the whole point.

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BARCLAY
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David Wallach joined a Calgary brokerage in February 2000 and was running it by January 2003. A quarter century later, Barclay Street Real Estate covers every commercial market segment, manages more than 4.5 million square feet, and just brought one of the world's most exclusive luxury brands to the city.



Before the firm, there was a decision about a city. In September 1997, David Wallach spent ten days in Calgary ahead of his family's immigration to Canada, meeting business brokers and the Alberta government's local immigration officer, and taking the measure of the place. *What he found was a mid-sized prairie city becoming something larger, carried by an entrepreneurial streak and an oil and gas economy that was starting to pick up even with crude trading cheap. "You felt when you talk to people that the opportunity is just ahead of us," he recalls. He called his wife and told her Calgary was the place. The family arrived in 1999, and Wallach set about building a Canadian career from the ground up.*

THREE YEARS TO THE HELM

Wallach entered Canadian commercial real estate in February 2000, joining the firm that would become Barclay Street as an associate, and immediately continued past his associate licence toward a broker's licence. The timing proved decisive. A year after he joined, the company's founder decided to sell, inviting a group of associates to buy his shares. Wallach was brought into the buying group for a specific reason: he was the only one among them who had built and run a business of his own, an insurance brokerage he had owned before immigrating.

That experience made him the natural hand for the mechanics of ownership, the unanimous shareholder agreement, the bylaws, the financials, and the group installed him as vice president and secretary-treasurer from the outset. Within two years, the partners decided he should run the company. He took the helm in January 2003, exactly three years after walking in the door.



COVERING EVERY SEGMENT

The firm the partners bought in 2001 was a brokerage only, and one that did not yet cover all of its markets in the right fashion. The first five years went to fixing that. Barclay Street built out full coverage across retail, office, and industrial leasing, investment sales, land sales, and property sales across every subcategory of the market.

Brokers came and brokers went over the years, as Wallach notes plainly, but the coverage never narrowed.

That full-segment breadth, unusual for a locally owned firm, remains the structural foundation of the brokerage today, supported by a second office in Edmonton.

FROM 300,000 TO 4.5 MILLION SQUARE FEET

The second structural move came in December 2006, when Barclay Street acquired Anchor Management, a small local property management company with roughly 300,000 square feet under management, after about a year of negotiation.

The acquisition seeded a property management division that has since grown to more than 4.5 million square feet, built alongside the brokerage rather than at its expense.

The two platforms reinforce one another: management depth keeps the firm inside its clients' assets long after a transaction closes, and the brokerage keeps the division connected to the flow of the market.

Capstone Magazine

THE TCN WORLDWIDE CONNECTION

In 2011, Barclay Street joined TCN Worldwide, a network of independent commercial real estate firms that now reaches more than 1,500 offices globally.

The logic was rooted in Calgary's particular position as Canada's second largest head office market after Toronto. The city's oil and gas head offices looked to the United States for growth, and Barclay Street needed trusted counterparts south of the border to service those clients in both directions without surrendering the relationship.

“I think we referred more down than we got back here,” Wallach says of the two-way flow, and he considers that a distinction without a difference: the result is the same as long as the client is well served.

The network also became a channel for sharing best practices among firms like Barclay Street, privately owned and local to their own markets, and for turning cold calls into warm introductions through member referrals. Wallach served multiple terms on TCN Worldwide's board across two stints, including as regional vice president for Canada, before recently stepping down.

TRIUMPH, SEPARATE BY DESIGN

Wallach's move into ownership began with limited partnerships, finding a property and assembling a few partners to buy it. In 2014 that practice was formalized as Triumph, a private real estate investment fund acquiring revenue-producing properties in Canada and the United States, now backed by more than a thousand investors.
He is emphatic about the architecture.

Triumph and Barclay Street are completely separate entities, with Wallach himself the only connection between them. There is no financial linkage and no shared responsibility. What the fund does draw on is intelligence: the brokerage's visibility into off-market properties and the TCN relationships that support acquisitions in the United States. The deal flow informs the fund; the structures never touch.

SEVENTEEN MONTHS OFF MARKET

Asked for the deal that best captures what Barclay Street does well, Wallach points to the most recent one: bringing Hermès to Calgary. The Paris luxury house had operated Canadian locations only in Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal. Barclay Street worked the file for 17 months, one broker and one property manager alongside Wallach, without anyone in the market learning of it. “We worked on that deal for 17 months without anyone in the market knowing about this,” he says. The City of Calgary, with which the firm has a strong relationship, helped move it forward. The deal was announced only last month, and the flagship store is already under construction. “Now everybody's waiting for opening night.”

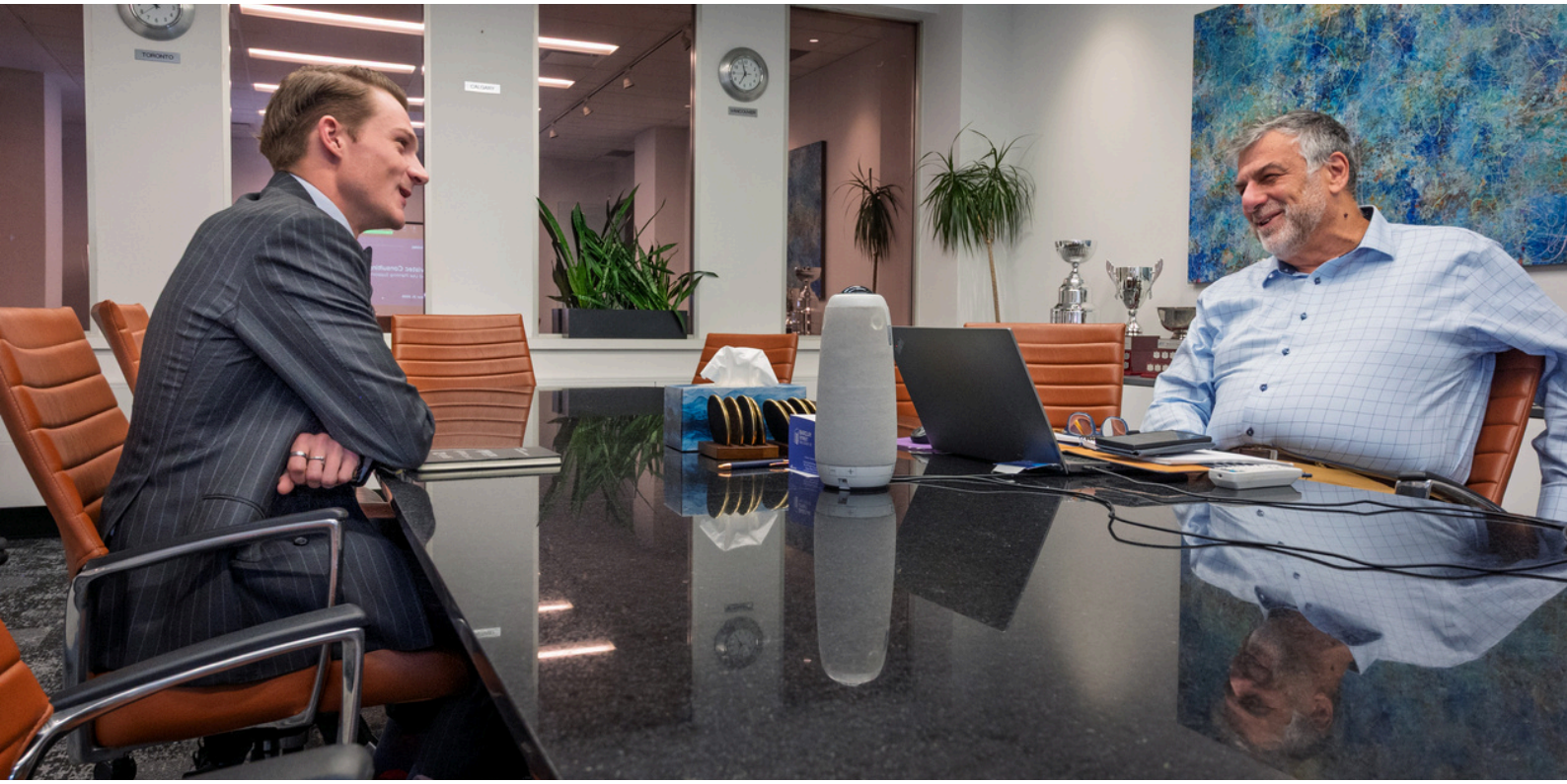


A CITY BECOMING A LAND HUB

Wallach, a CCIM designate since April 2013 and a former co-chair of the Calgary Economic Development Real Estate Advisory Committee, reads his market as growing faster than at any point in recent memory, for two reasons.

The first is people: three years of heavy migration and immigration into Calgary, putting real pressure on retail. The second is geography. Calgary sits at the junction of Highway 1, running east to west across the country, and Highway 2, running from the oil fields south toward Texas. Goods landing at the Port of Vancouver increasingly move to Calgary for distribution north, east, west, and south. “Calgary is becoming now a land hub,” he says, and the industrial market is growing accordingly.

His market judgment is in demand beyond the firm. Wallach sits on the advisory board of High Tide, Canada's largest cannabis retailer, where his mandate is identifying retail locations across Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba for the company's growth.



BECAUSE WE CARE

Barclay Street's internal slogan is three words: because we care. Wallach unpacks it without hesitation. The firm cares about its clients, about Calgary, and about the province it serves from two offices. In practice, it means the relationship does not end when the deal is inked. Markets rise and fall, lenders create issues, circumstances change, and Barclay Street stays on the file after it has been paid and the lease signed. “We don't disappear after the deal is done. We're always there,” he says. “Our relationships are long term relationships.”

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THE BOUTIQUE POSITION

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THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Wallach's outlook for the firm tracks his outlook for the city. As long as Calgary continues to flourish, he sees Barclay Street among the leaders of its commercial real estate arena, and he sees room in a city of more than 1.7 million for privately owned local experts who are focused on their own market and can make decisions on the spot. His closing image is naval. The big international firms are tankers, needing layers of permissions to change course. “We can turn on a dime,” he says. Fast, to the point, and professionally: that is where the added value lives, and it is how Barclay Street intends to keep competing.


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de BLOIS
BUILT



Mike and Roisin de Blois founded their company in 2009 and built it around a deliberate ceiling: three to six projects a year, each with the partners' full attention. From Trent Hills in Northumberland County, de Blois Built serves clients from Toronto to the Bay of Quinte.



de Blois Built began in 2009 under a different banner, Bright Design Build, founded by Mike de Blois and his wife Roisin. The rebrand to the family name came later, and Roisin describes it as a company growing into itself. Mike came up from the front lines, apprenticing as a carpenter, earning his Red Seal, and graduating into general contracting, and after decades in the industry the couple reached what she calls a level of maturity and confidence that spans both edges of the trade: the administrative discipline of running projects as a general contractor and the skilled-trade craft underneath it. Putting the family name on the door was a statement of identity and values.

TWO VALUES, NAMED DELIBERATELY

When the couple examined how the company had evolved, two values surfaced: connection and curiosity. Connection is the general contractor's actual job as Roisin frames it. The builder sits in the middle of every project as the connector among clients, designers, trade partners, and stakeholders, and on some projects that can mean 30 or 40 stakeholders to hold together. Curiosity is the answer to an industry she believes is often devalued and stigmatized despite its genuine complexity, administrative and technical alike.

“Trying to figure things out, always trying to evolve, always trying to improve,” is how she puts it: learning from mistakes, staying dynamic, and progressing step by step through a process that is rarely linear. Both values extend to the firm's teams, where mentoring and support are treated as commitments rather than slogans.

The connection value reaches past the jobsite entirely. The couple are active in their local music community, hosting festivals and house concerts, with stages the company built on their own property. It is, Roisin notes, a natural crossover with what the firm already stands for: community and connection.

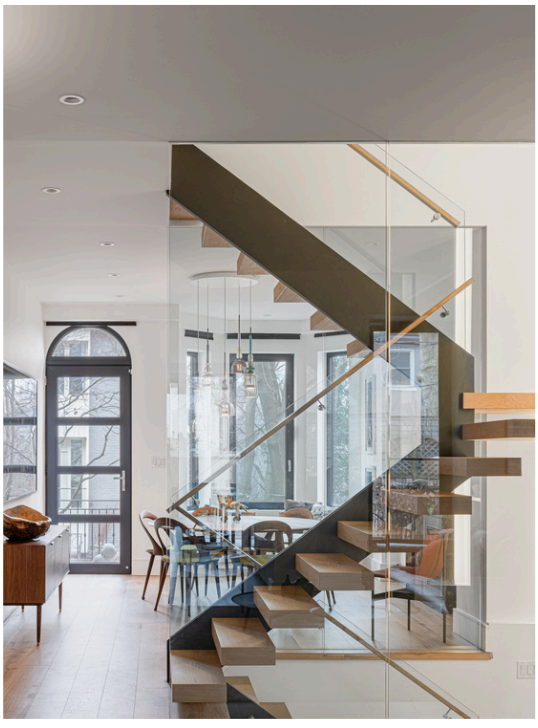


THE BOUTIQUE CEILING

de Blois Built deliberately caps its volume rather than scaling. The range, depending on project size and the economy's mood, runs roughly three to six projects a year, a mix of smaller and larger builds, and the number is set by a simple test: the firm's capacity to give every client and every project its full attention. Past that line, Roisin says, the work is at risk of diluting, and so is the balance between the couple's professional and personal lives.

The ceiling also reflects how the firm actually works. While one year's projects are in production, the next year's are already in preconstruction, which de Blois Built treats as a core service rather than a preamble. The discipline was earned gradually.

Mike started out taking on the scopes that fit his expertise at the time, bathrooms, decks, fences, kitchens, then main floors, then additions, then full guts. There was no single leap, Roisin says, just stepping stones, year by year.





BUILDING THEIR OWN

Among the firm's showcase projects is the family's own home on Richardson Road, which was featured in Grapevine Magazine. Building it meant becoming their own client, with all the advantages and none of the convenience: the project ran after hours, because business hours belong to clients, and it demanded the same labour, project management, and supervision the firm sells.

It took longer for exactly that reason. But Roisin watched the process give Mike something client work rarely allows: room to indulge a builder's creativity. He collaborated with the architect on the structure, then took much of the interior finishing into his own hands. Carpenters, Roisin observes, are creative at heart and often carry an engineer's mind for sequencing, because unlike a single trade, they have to see the whole build.

THE HIBOU PROJECT

The project Roisin calls the firm's first significant architectural endeavour sits a few doors from where the family once lived in Etobicoke. Hibou was a 1950s bungalow on a big lot, tight little rooms inside, owned by the couple's neighbours, and the same architect who designed the family's own home led the full architectural and interior design scope.

hThe project had drama before it began: while it was still in planning, a massive flood hit the Humber Valley floodplain and filled the clients' basement while they were on the other side of the country, with the de Blois family on hand to help. The renovation itself ran about a year.

The house kept its 1950s character on the exterior and was opened up completely within, done, in Roisin's words, very tastefully, very subtle, but really beautiful. The finished home was picked up by Dwell. “I think that home will stand the test of time,” she says.

CREDENTIALS AND THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

de Blois Built is a RenoMark member, Tarion registered, and licensed with the Home Construction Regulatory Authority, alongside membership in the Canadian Home Builders' Association, the regional home builders' association, and the local chamber of commerce.

Roisin is direct about why the credentials matter in an industry where a significant share of the market operates unregulated: they sit on top of more than two decades of doing the work, and they are reflected in the level of service the firm can stand behind.

The firm also invests in its own education with unusual seriousness. For roughly ten years it has been a member of Breakthrough Academy, a residential construction consultancy whose peer network puts the couple in regular contact with builders across Canada and the United States to compare systems, estimating, project management, sales, and mentorship practices.

Mike holds his Red Seal, the company runs apprenticeship programs, and the partners see themselves as mentors and educators, attending and giving workshops, reading, and listening their way through the industry's evolution.



de BLOIS BUILT



SYSTEMS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The firm's operational core runs on JobTread for project management, Google Workspace as the internal engine, and QuickBooks for accounting, increasingly supported by emerging AI tools. The industry, Roisin notes, has long outgrown the handshake and the piece of paper.

Once projects reach real scale, the general contractor's true function emerges. “That's what project management is: managing risk,” she says. The firm evolved from its own internal spreadsheets into these platforms precisely because of the volumes of data a project generates, tenders, estimates, bids, line items, scope definition and scope changes, costing, margins, schedules.

The platforms earn their keep by making that data traceable and reusable across projects and years, with the vast majority of project communication channelled through the system rather than scattered across text messages. But Roisin is clear-eyed about their limits. “They're only as good as the energy put into them,” she says. The firm's own processes have to be built into the tools, and the payoff is a single highway of data that can be read through an analytics lens, and then a strategic one.



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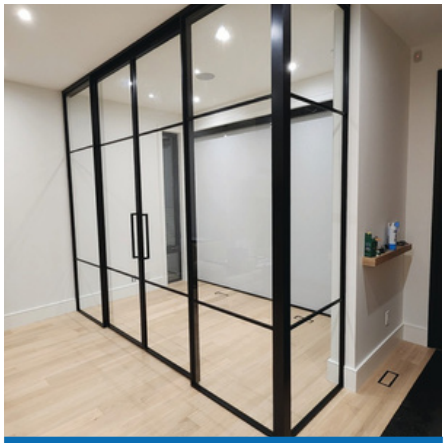
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TRADES AND SUPPLIERS ACROSS TWO NETWORKS

de Blois Built keeps a deliberately lean core and works through a network of trusted trades and suppliers rather than holding everything in house. The network is really two networks. The first was built over two decades in Toronto, where the firm still runs projects. The second has been cultivated since the family relocated to Northumberland County six or seven years ago, extending across the surrounding counties, the Kawarthas, and the eastern corridor of the GTA.

Selection is fit-based rather than habit-based: instead of pressing repeat on the same roster, the firm asks which kitchen company, which trade, which supplier is right for this particular project, and new scopes bring new partners through a screening process the firm keeps deliberately rigorous. Underneath it is a stated respect for everyone's time and resources, and a sales philosophy to match: the right client and the right builder have to fit each other. “It's like a two-way street,” Roisin says. “It has to go both ways.”

SUSTAINABILITY WITHIN ANY BUDGET

Mike and Roisin are both in their early fifties, and Roisin is candid that the horizon has entered the conversation. “We're definitely starting to think of the finishing line,” she says, and what the next ten years look like is an evolving question. What it will not look like is aggressive growth. The goal is sustainability in the fullest sense the firm uses the word: sustaining excellent service, quality, value, sound systems, and margins that keep the company healthy, at a volume the partners can stand behind.

The variables ahead are the industry's as much as the firm's. The economic landscape and consumer behaviour have shifted over the past couple of years, and the integration of AI has already changed the industry noticeably within the last year alone. Closer to home, there is another possibility. The couple's five children will come of age over the next decade, and some are showing interest in the industry, whether trades, engineering, or design. If they choose that road, their parents intend to mentor it. “That's a nice thought,” Roisin says. “A second generation business.”

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

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PRECISE

Custom Homes

DESIGN • BUILD • RENOVATE



Precise Custom Homes brings two decades of craftsmanship to custom homes and renovations across Dundas, Flamborough, Ancaster, Hamilton, Burlington and Oakville. Combining thoughtful planning with a commitment to transparency, the team takes on a select number of projects to stay closely involved from the earliest decisions to the finishing details.





Precise Custom Homes is a Dundas, Ontario custom home builder and renovator that has been delivering exacting residential work since 2006. The company operates deliberately at boutique scale, taking on only a handful of homes a year, so that every project receives the full engagement of its leadership, its core team, and a hand-selected roster of trades. The name is a working description. “It’s definitely a reputation we need to maintain, but honestly, it’s how we both approach our work,” says co-owner Braden Lomanto. “Because we’re so particular, the result is a great product.”



CRAFT AND ENGINEERING AT THE HELM

The company's leadership pairs two disciplines that rarely share an office in residential construction. Founder Rick Wiersma is a builder with hands-on experience reaching back to his teens and a reputation, long predating the company, for a high level of craftsmanship and detail in even the smallest projects. He leads the day to day on site.

“He's seen more, he's done more, he's solved more,” Lomanto says. Lomanto, a mechanical engineering graduate of Western University with a background in large-scale project execution at Hatch and in scaling companies at a Toronto science accelerator, leads planning and operations, built to grow with the company while keeping the office and the site moving simultaneously. “We work well together because we each focus on our strengths. Rick brings his experience and craftsmanship to the site, and I focus on planning and operations.”



FULL-SCOPE CUSTOM BUILDING

Precise Custom Homes delivers the entire arc of a residential build: lot development and excavation planning, foundations, framing, roofing, windows, siding, and the full range of interior finishes, across ground-up custom homes, major renovations, and additions.

The operational discipline behind it is a core company asset. Planning and site execution are run as one system, closing the gap that undermines so many builds, an office that does not know what is happening in the field. On a custom home, that integration shows up as schedules that hold, decisions sequenced before they become urgent, and a build that proceeds according to plan.

WHERE PRECISE BUILDS

The company serves Dundas, Flamborough, Ancaster, Hamilton, Burlington, and Oakville, with its home base and its heart in Dundas. “We love building where we live,” Lomanto says. “Our homeowners are also our neighbours, and those relationships matter to us long after the work is finished.” The commitment is self-reinforcing: strong local projects keep producing the next one, and the team lives in the communities it builds in.

Reach follows relationships, the company is currently taking a longtime Hamilton client's dream property out toward Grimsby, but capacity is guarded on principle. “If you're stretched too thin, you can't provide great service, and then cracks start to form. We try to be very careful about how many homes we take on for this reason."

LICENSED, WARRANTED, AND THEN SOME

Precise Custom Homes is licensed by the Home Construction Regulatory Authority (HCRA) and registered with Tarion. HCRA licensing requires builders to demonstrate competency in areas such as building codes, construction practices, project management and customer service. Tarion backs the statutory warranty protection builders provide for eligible new homes.

“The company’s boutique model also helps keep the team accessible, with homeowners able to speak directly with the people who built their home. “We stand behind our work,” Lomanto says. “If something needs our attention, we want homeowners to know they can reach us and that we’ll follow through.”



THE WORK

The portfolio runs from estate-scale builds, including a roughly 13,000 square foot property ,to heritage homes that treats the past as a design brief.

The company has helped Dundas families carry the character of their century homes into new builds. One project honours a beloved old farmhouse through carefully reproduced trim and doors, as well as reclaimed wood incorporated into the new home.

One of the company's most meaningful recent projects is its first custom home build in downtown Dundas. Set in the heart of the team's hometown, the 2,500-square-foot home sits on a teardown lot in an established neighbourhood where some families have lived for generations.

Neighbours arrived sceptical, worried about noise, dust, and the character of their street, and the company treated those conversations as part of the project scope. "We're not afraid of approaching difficult conversations," Lomanto says.

With the home complete, the street has rendered its verdict. "People walk by and tell us how beautiful the home is and how well it fits into the neighbourhood. It's rewarding to hear that from the people who live here and care about the character of their street." Neighbours who initially had reservations now tell the team they're proud how the home was built and that it was built by a local company.



RECOGNIZED BY ITS PEERS

A member of the West End Home Builders' Association, Precise Custom Homes has won a best custom home award for a small timber frame build, recognition earned among the region's strongest builders. The company holds the honour in deliberate proportion. Lomanto says. "And recognition from literally ourselves, because we have to do this every day. Do we love what we do?" Every completed project gets the same internal review: how could it come together even better next time?

"We also have to be proud of our own work. We do this every day, and it matters that we enjoy the process and feel good about the homes we're building."



A TRADE NETWORK BUILT ON RESPECT

Precise Custom Homes works with a deliberately short roster of trades, selected because they are the best at what they do and because they work seamlessly with each other, communicate, and respect the home and the homeowner. The company holds up its end in concrete terms: sites are prepped before trades arrive, payment is on time, and trades are treated as the professionals they are. In a market where the best trades choose their builders, that discipline is a competitive asset. “Good trades have a choice about who they work with,” Lomanto says. “When they know we’re organized, respect their time and share their attention to detail, they’re more likely to come back. They want to be part of projects where their work is valued.”

SUSTAINABILITY, BUILT IN

Every Precise Custom Homes build starts ahead on performance, because modern custom building is itself the upgrade. Many building products such as insulation and enclosure systems are vastly superior to those of twenty years ago, and the thoughtfulness of custom execution compounds the gain before any specialty system enters the conversation. From that baseline, the company educates homeowners on the full range, up through solar generation and geothermal, and matches the choices to the budget. “It's our job to educate.”



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WHAT COMES NEXT

Precise Custom Homes plans to grow carefully, with a goal of managing three to five custom builds at a time. Homeowner referrals and positive reviews continue to bring new enquiries, with projects scheduled to begin anywhere from six months to several years ahead. The company is increasingly focused on new custom homes, where its attention to detail can carry through every stage of construction. “Our reputation comes from the homes we finish and the experience people have building with us,” Lomanto says. “Doing that well is what brings the next project our way.”

The company’s boutique approach will guide that growth. “We want to build increasingly refined custom homes while staying closely involved with the people we’re building for,” Lomanto says. “That means giving each project the time it needs, from working through the early decisions to getting the finishing details right.” For Precise, success means delivering a thoughtfully built home and an experience homeowners are happy to recommend.











SILVERTIP PROJECTS

CUSTOM HOMES



Silvertip Projects is a Calgary luxury home builder covering the full arc from land acquisition to handover, and when a client chooses, to resale, on a transparent cost plus model the company says leaves 10 to 15 percent of equity in the homeowner's hands.









Silvertip Projects is a family company in the literal sense. *Its building roots in Calgary reach back to 2013, and in 2023 the family's businesses were amalgamated into a single operation under one name. The structure maps directly onto the family. Levi, who leads the company, serves as overall project manager, scheduler, and budgeter. His father-in-law, building since 2013, and his brother-in-law run the sites as supervisors. His wife, a licensed real estate agent, drives land acquisition and partners on interior design. Drafting, architectural design, and engineering are handled by trusted third parties; everything else lives in house.*

EVERYTHING UNDER ONE ROOF

The company's defining capability is coverage of the entire journey: land acquisition, design, construction, supervision, and handover, with resale expertise standing by for clients who choose to sell. It starts before a shovel or even a drawing. Every piece of property is vetted alongside the client, lots and streets handpicked to protect value, no bad streets, nothing backing onto a shopping centre, so that the client is positioned to hold equity before construction begins. From there, Silvertip designs the interiors in house, manages the build through its own supervisors, and, for clients who sell after completion, has the real estate side ready to go again. The company considers its clients part of the team, and the model is built to prove it.

THE COST PLUS MODEL

Where many builders price a home against what the finished product will be worth, Silvertip builds on a transparent cost plus basis, with a fee the company holds at or below the Calgary average.

Strong trade and vendor relationships bring premium pricing on inputs, and the arithmetic flows to the client: on the right land, with the right strategy, sometimes two infills on a single lot, the final number typically lands 10 to 15 percent below what the same home would cost from a builder selling finished product. That margin is the client's equity, whether they live in the home, rent it, or sell. “We want our clients to make money. We want everyone to make money,” Levi says. “We'd rather have everyone win, and that establishes future relationships with our investors.”

THE SOUTH CALGARY BROWNSTONE

The company's most recent showcase is a roughly 4,000 square foot, three storey detached brownstone perched on the hills of South Calgary near Marda Loop, with city views and a large rooftop patio.

The design carries a modern New York twist executed to a luxury standard: custom millwork throughout, a showpiece custom waterfall island, ironwork, Venetian plaster, and a layering of textures and tones that puts character into every piece of the home. It is a working example of the company's conviction that a home is also a piece of art, built in exactly the kind of premium, sought-after neighbourhood where Silvertip concentrates its work.

BUILT FOR INVESTORS AND HOMEOWNERS ALIKE

Silvertip's client base spans both sides of the market. Many clients build to hold and rent, or to sell within a few years, drawn by the equity the model creates; others build their own home and move in. The dual-lot strategy, building two homes on one parcel, keeping one and selling or renting the other, is a recurring play for investment-minded clients, and the in-house real estate capability means the exit is as managed as the build.




ICELAND
VENICE

PROCESS IN A FLUID MARKET

The company runs its project management, quality control, and scheduling on a suite of modern software tools, but its real operating system is experience. Calgary's market moves constantly, trade and material prices fluctuate, city timelines shift, and the company treats each cycle as a new problem to solve efficiently. “Every year it seems like it's a new year,” Levi says. “It's a very fluid market in every aspect.” The response is front-loaded planning: budgets built properly, timelines set early, and efficiencies found while the work moves.



RELATIONSHIPS ON FAIR TERMS

Silvertip's trade and vendor network runs on an explicit principle of mutual fairness. Schedules and budgets are aligned, updates flow both ways, trades show up on time, and the company pays on time. It refuses the nickel-and-dime approach on principle, even at a cost. “Everyone needs to get paid. Everyone needs to be fair,” Levi says. “Treat your guys good. They're not our guys, but they're part of the team indirectly.” The return is a network that holds its schedules and its quality across projects.

STRESS FREE BY DESIGN

The company's stated mission is to redefine home building as a stress-free environment with some fun along the way, and day to day it is run that way. Clients are encouraged to stop by their sites, photos of anything exciting go straight to them, and walkthroughs come with the details pointed out, the things an untrained eye would miss. The design process is deliberately front-loaded and as visual as possible, so selections are settled early and clients have room to change their minds before it costs them. The touches go beyond the build: for one client's statement wine rack, Levi offered to pick up and arrange the wines himself so the piece would land fully dressed. “My clients never seem to have much worry,” he says. “They seem to trust us.”





WHAT SETS SILVERTIP APART

Calgary's crowded custom home market, Silvertip's clients point to hustle and honesty: a tight schedule, a tight budget, quality control maintained under both, and transparency and communication throughout. On the product side, the company builds in luxury, sought-after neighbourhoods and refuses to ship the standard. “We don't like to just build standard stock homes,” Levi says. “We like to put in the work and put the details in.”





THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Silvertip's growth plan is deliberate. “We're looking to grow, but modestly, and keep the circle strong,” Levi says. “We're not looking to be a giant corporation. We like the personal, smaller companies.” The service mix will stay anchored in home building, but the ambitions point toward more distinctive work: niche custom projects, possibly beyond Calgary, with mountain builds and cabins high on the list. For a company built on family, fairness, and a model where the client wins first, the next five years look like more of the same, done in ever more interesting places.

Capstone Insights

THE CONSTRUCTION ISSUE

CAPSTONE INSIGHTS Q4 2026

Two Markets, One Industry: Where Canadian Construction Stands in Q4 2026

By Ahmed Sfeir



Canadian construction at the frontier of energy, housing and public capital

Canadian construction is running at two speeds. Housing is retrenching under weak condominium demand and higher borrowing costs, while non-residential building, engineering and public capital work are carrying the industry. The question for 2027 is whether the second can keep offsetting the first.

The headline numbers look healthier than the mood. Investment in building construction reached $23.5 billion in August 2026, up 7.9% from a year earlier, or 4.7% in constant dollars (Statistics Canada, Investment in building construction, August 2026). Construction GDP rose 1.3% in July, its fourth consecutive monthly gain, with non-residential building up 2.9% and engineering up 1.5% (Statistics Canada, GDP by industry, July 2026). Underneath those totals, the composition of activity is changing faster than at any point in the past decade.

On October 28, the Bank of Canada raised its policy rate to 2.50%, said that "housing is expected to remain relatively weak," and projected GDP growth of 1% in 2026 and 2% in 2027 (Bank of Canada, October 28, 2026). The same Monetary Policy Report raised its estimate of business investment's contribution to 2027 growth to 0.5 percentage points, from 0.2 in July, and put government spending's contribution at 0.7 points. Housing's contribution is estimated at minus 0.1 points in 2026 (Bank of Canada, October 2026 Monetary Policy Report). That is the market in three numbers: public and business capital rising, housing flat to negative.

Housing: starts holding, outlook falling

Housing starts have held up better than sales. CMHC reported a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 248,896 starts in September 2026 and a six-month trend of 250,411, essentially flat. Actual urban starts were down 4% year to date (CMHC, Housing starts, September 2026). The pipeline remains large, with 371,617 units under construction in centres of 50,000 or more and 143,929 permitted but not yet started.

The forward view is weaker. CMHC's July outlook projects national starts of 241,400 in 2026, 223,400 in 2027 and 211,900 in 2028, down from 259,028 in 2025 (CMHC, 2026 Housing Market Outlook, summer update). Its September Housing Supply Report estimates that restoring pre-pandemic affordability by 2036 would require 417,000 to 469,000 starts a year, against a business-as-usual pace of about 231,000 (CMHC, Housing Supply Report, Fall 2026).

Source: CMHC, 2026 Housing Market Outlook summer update (baseline, July 22, 2026) and Fall 2026 Housing Supply Report (Sept. 10, 2026)

CMHC's deputy chief economist, Aled ab Iorwerth, put the risk directly in the September release: "a key risk for Canada now is not building enough during this period of softening housing markets."

The condominium reset

The weakness is concentrated in one product. Only 156 condominium units were started in the City of Toronto in the first half of 2026, while rental apartment starts rose 82% and exceeded condo starts for the first time in decades. In Vancouver, condo starts fell 40%, the weakest first half since 2011, and purpose-built rental reached about 60% of starts. Montréal's rental share reached a record 86%, and Ottawa's condo starts fell 49%.

The sales data explains why. In the Greater Toronto Area, new condominium sales totalled 215 units in August, 78% below the 10-year average, against 19,030 units of new-home inventory, or 38.5 months of supply (BILD and Altus Group, via BNN Bloomberg). Because lenders typically require most units to be presold before releasing construction financing, a collapse in presales becomes a collapse in starts 12 to 24 months later. The rental shift is partly a financing shift, toward projects backed by CMHC programs rather than buyer deposits.

The regional picture is uneven. CMHC's six-month trend in September showed starts up 7% in Calgary, 6% in Vancouver and 5% in Edmonton, and down 8% in Montréal and 1% in Toronto. Edmonton is the only large market CMHC assesses as having no supply gap, with a record 17,900 units under construction.

Policy support for housing supply

Federal and provincial measures now operate on cost, financing and direct delivery at the same time.

- **Direct delivery:** Build Canada Homes, launched in September 2025 with $13 billion in capital and given statutory footing in June 2026, has identified six initial federal sites for about 4,000 homes in Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Longueuil, Ottawa and Dartmouth (Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada; BLG).
- **Financing:** the April 2026 Spring Economic Update accelerated more than $7 billion to CMHC for rental construction financing (Department of Finance).
- **Development charges:** agreements under the $51 billion Build Communities Strong Fund require the highest-charging jurisdictions to reduce development charges for three years, and Ontario has agreed to cuts of up to 50% (Spring Economic Update 2026, Chapter 1).
- **Tax relief:** the federal first-time buyer GST rebate of up to $50,000 is in force, and Ontario's HST rebate of up to $130,000 for all buyers of new homes up to $1.5 million runs to March 31, 2027 (CP24).

The measures are large, but most of them work on a lag. Development charge reductions and tax rebates affect project economics now; the starts they enable appear in 2027 and 2028, the same years in which CMHC's baseline shows the steepest decline.

Non-residential: the stronger side of the ledger

Non-residential building is where momentum is building. In the second quarter of 2026, non-residential permits rose by $1.9 billion to $15.4 billion, which Statistics Canada described as the largest quarterly increase in the series, while residential permits fell 4.3% (Statistics Canada, Building permits, June 2026). August permits rose 8.8% month over month to $13.6 billion, with industrial permits up $317 million, led by Alberta and Quebec (Statistics Canada, Building permits, August 2026). Institutional investment rose 1.9% in August, driven by school construction in the Toronto and Montréal areas.

Private commercial real estate is more cautious. CBRE reports 25.4 million square feet of industrial space under construction nationally in the third quarter, about 1.2% of inventory, with 2026 deliveries projected at 19.3 million square feet, the lowest in eight years (CBRE, Canada Industrial Figures Q3 2026). Office construction stands at 1.4 million square feet, just above a 22-year low (CBRE, October 2026). Where office activity exists, it is increasingly conversion work; Calgary reports it is nearly halfway to its goal of removing six million square feet of downtown office space through conversions (LiveWire Calgary).

Data centres are a new category of demand. Meta has begun construction on a data centre in Sturgeon County, Alberta, valued at more than $13 billion, with about 3,000 construction workers expected at peak (Meta, July 2026). Statistics Canada noted that imports of processors for data centres helped lift machinery and equipment investment to its highest level since 2024 in the second quarter (Statistics Canada, Q2 2026 national accounts).

The major projects pipeline

The largest source of future construction demand is a small number of very large projects, most of them in energy, transportation and trade infrastructure. BuildForce Canada tracks nearly 800 major projects worth more than $500 billion nationally (BuildForce Canada). The federal Major Projects Office lists 16 referred projects and seven strategies valued at more than $135 billion (Government of Canada, June 2026).

PROJECT	SECTOR	VALUE	STATUS, OCTOBER 2026
Labrador clean energy package (Churchill Falls expansion, Gull Island)	Hydro, wind, transmission	Nearly $70B	Announced Aug. 17, 2026; 23,000 construction jobs projected
Pacific Link pipeline	Oil pipeline, Alberta to B.C.	$35B to $44B	Designated in the national interest Oct. 1, 2026; not a final approval
Ontario Line	Transit, Toronto	About $34B	Under construction; opening early 2030s
Darlington New Nuclear (BWRX-300 SMRs)	Nuclear generation	$20.9B envelope	Unit 1 basemat placed April 2026; grid connection targeted by end of 2030
Meta data centre, Sturgeon County	Digital infrastructure	More than $13B	Under construction since July 2026
LNG Canada Phase 2	LNG export	Not disclosed	Final investment decision Sept. 28, 2026; up to 4,000 workers at peak
Alto high-speed rail	Intercity rail, Toronto to Quebec City	$60B to $90B (federal); $75B to $113B (PBO)	Construction start planned for 2029

The timing of these projects matters as much as their value. Most are in early design, regulatory review or initial site work, so their peak labour and materials demand falls between 2028 and the mid-2030s. That matches BuildForce's projection that non-residential investment will rise into 2029, with provincial peaks spread from 2027 in British Columbia to 2031 in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Public capital as the stabilizer

Government capital spending is the most predictable support for the industry over the next three years. Budget 2025 set out $115 billion for infrastructure over five years (ReNew Canada). The Build Communities Strong Fund commits $51 billion over 10 years, then $3 billion a year on an ongoing basis. The Canada Infrastructure Bank's capital authority was raised to $45 billion in March 2026, on top of $18.1 billion committed across 108 projects (Canada Infrastructure Bank, 2026-27 Corporate Plan Summary). Defence adds a further channel, with $81.8 billion over five years in Budget 2025 and more than $8 billion in active defence infrastructure projects (National Defence).

Statistics Canada's survey of capital spending intentions, conducted early in the year, showed planned construction spending of $274.0 billion in 2026, up 5.9%, with the public sector accounting for $163.4 billion of total capital spending (Statistics Canada, Capital and repair expenditures, 2026 intentions).

Business confidence after the trade breakdown

Trade negotiations between Canada and the United States broke down on August 21, 2026, followed by 50% US tariffs on about $20 billion of Canadian goods and Canadian counter-tariffs from September 8 (PBS NewsHour, AP). The effect on construction demand so far appears limited. The Bank of Canada's third-quarter Business Outlook Survey found that the share of firms planning for a recession fell to 6% from 17%, and that investment intentions "eased slightly but remain robust." Housing-related firms described demand as "stabilizing,

not recovering," while infrastructure and defence spending supported other firms' outlooks (Bank of Canada, Business Outlook Survey, Q3 2026). The survey's fieldwork ended on September 2, before the counter-tariffs took effect.

What to watch

Several releases due before year-end will test this picture:

- **Federal Budget 2026, November 5:** the scale and timing of infrastructure and housing commitments, and the fiscal room for them.
- **Building permits, November 12, and investment in building construction, November 19:** whether the non-residential momentum of the second quarter carried into the autumn.
- **Housing starts, November 17:** whether the six-month trend holds near 250,000 as the condominium pipeline thins.
- **Third-quarter GDP, November 30:** the first full read on residential and engineering investment after the trade breakdown.
- **Bank of Canada, December 9:** whether the October increase is followed by another.

The Canadian construction market enters 2027 with demand that is real, financed and in many cases already contracted, but unevenly distributed. Residential builders face the weakest outlook in several years, while civil, energy, institutional and digital infrastructure contractors face the fullest order books in a generation. Firms able to move between those markets will be best placed.

CAPSTONE INSIGHTS Q4 2026

The Capacity Equation: Labour, Cost and Productivity in Canadian Construction

By Sébastien Ameur | Managing Editor



The supply side: labour, materials and the trade regime now shaping Canadian build costs

Canada's build agenda now depends less on demand than on whether the industry can supply the people, materials and output per hour to deliver it. Every measure of that supply side moved in the third quarter of 2026, and most of them moved against the builder.

On October 29, Statistics Canada reported that non-residential building costs rose 4.3% over the past year and residential costs rose 2.7% (Statistics Canada, Building construction price indexes, Q3 2026). The day before, the Bank of Canada raised its policy rate by 25 basis points to 2.50%, its first increase after seven consecutive holds, and projected inflation to remain around 3% through much of 2027 (Bank of Canada, October 28, 2026). Those two releases frame the quarter. Construction in Canada is now operating with rising input costs, a tighter labour pool, a heavier trade regime and more expensive money at the same time.

This piece examines each of those constraints in turn, using the newest data available as of late October 2026.

The workforce: a full hiring decade ahead

BuildForce Canada's 2026 to 2035 outlook, released in July, is the reference point for the labour question. Construction accounts for 7% of Canadian GDP and employs 1.6 million people, about one in every 13 working Canadians. BuildForce projects that roughly 135,000 workers will retire over the forecast period, and that the industry will need to hire 306,200 workers in total, about 271,900 of them new entrants aged 30 and under. Even under heightened recruitment, it projects a shortfall of up to 34,300 workers (BuildForce Canada, Construction and Maintenance Looking Forward 2026-2035).

The composition of demand matters as much as the total. BuildForce projects residential construction employment to fall 4% by the end of the decade relative to 2025, as residential investment contracts from 2026 to 2028. Non-residential employment is projected to rise 6% by 2035, supported by roughly 800 major projects worth more than $500 billion. The labour pressure, in other words, is shifting toward civil, industrial, energy and institutional work, which draws on a different and often more specialized trade mix.

The current data already shows a tight market. Construction's unemployment rate fell to 3.8% in September 2026, the lowest since October 2024, with construction employment up 20,400 (1.2%) year over year (BuildForce Canada analysis of the September 2026 Labour Force Survey). The national picture came in weaker: total employment fell 68,000 in September and the overall unemployment rate stood at 6.5% (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, September 2026). Construction is holding its workers while the broader economy softens.

The detail beneath the headline is the concern. Employment among construction workers aged 15 to 24 fell 2.7% year over year in September, while employment among workers 55 and older rose by 8,400. The regional split is equally sharp: Alberta added 17,900 construction jobs (6.9%) and Ontario 11,600, while Quebec lost 15,800 (4.7%) and British Columbia 8,300 (3.1%). A workforce that is ageing at the top and thinning at the entry point is the opposite of what a decade of 306,200 hires requires.

The training pipeline

The apprenticeship system is drawing more people in but is not yet converting them at the rate needed. New apprenticeship registrations reached 101,541 in 2024, up 5.9% and the highest since 2008, and registrations in the construction trades group rose 24.2%. Certifications, however, rose only 1.0% to 46,971, still 9.6% below pre-pandemic levels (Statistics Canada, Registered Apprenticeship Information System, 2024). Registrations are a leading indicator; certifications are what reach the jobsite as journeypersons. The gap between the two is a lag of several years that the industry cannot shorten by recruitment alone.

Immigration: a smaller, more targeted inflow

Newcomers made up about 20% of the construction labour force in 2025, compared with 28% across all occupations, according to BuildForce. The federal 2026 to 2028 Immigration Levels Plan holds permanent resident admissions flat at 380,000 a year, shifts the economic class to 64% of admissions by 2027, and reduces temporary resident arrivals to 385,000 in 2026 and 370,000 in each of 2027 and 2028 (IRCC, 2026-2028 Immigration Levels Plan). Statistics Canada counted 2,779,774 non-permanent residents on July 1, 2026, down 0.7% from the previous quarter (Statistics Canada, population estimates, Q3 2026).

Within a smaller overall intake, the trades channel has widened. The Express Entry trade occupations category issued 3,500 invitations on October 1, 2026 at a cutoff score of 476, after 3,000 invitations in April and 1,250 in September 2025 (Moving2Canada, Express Entry trades draw tracker). The policy direction is fewer temporary arrivals overall, with a larger share of selection pointed at skilled trades.

Productivity: the constraint underneath the others

If the industry cannot easily add workers, output per worker becomes the decisive variable, and it has been moving the wrong way for two decades. A February 2026 study by Statistics

Canada and CMHC found that real gross output per worker in residential construction fell 37.3% between 2001 and 2023, an average decline of 2.1% a year. Over the same period, business-sector productivity rose 12.5%. Toronto recorded the steepest decline, at 3.4% a year (Statistics Canada and CMHC, residential construction productivity, February 2026).

The recent period is the steepest part of the slide. CMHC estimates that residential construction productivity grew 1.5% a year from 2008 to 2019, then fell 3.8% a year from 2019 to 2024, as hours worked rose 3.9% a year while real value added was essentially flat. CMHC attributes $6 billion to $8 billion in added costs, and up to 20% of new home price increases over that period, to the productivity loss (CMHC, Framework for Change: Productivity in Housing Construction). The Centre for the Study of Living Standards reaches a similar figure, placing 2024 output per hour 8% below its 2000 level and the cost to the average buyer at $24,000 to $31,000 (CSLS Research Report 2025-08).

The structure of the industry is part of the explanation. Firms with fewer than 20 employees still accounted for 66.1% of residential construction employment in 2023, down from 79.6% in 2001. Small firms carry less capital per worker and have fewer means to standardize, which limits the gains available from repetition.

Costs: tariffs reach the price indexes

The third-quarter cost data shows where the trade dispute has entered building budgets. In non-residential construction, the largest quarterly increases were in structural steel framing (3.3%), conveying equipment (3.1%) and metal fabrications (2.1%). In residential construction, metal fabrications rose 2.4%. Statistics Canada directly cites Canada's retaliatory tariffs on US goods, which took effect September 8 at rates from 15% to 50%, including 50% on certain steel and aluminum products, alongside higher fuel, transportation and skilled-labour costs.

Cost growth is also uneven by region. In the third quarter, residential costs rose 2.3% in Québec City and 1.8% in Regina, compared with 0.4% in Toronto and 0.2% in Vancouver.

Non-residential costs rose 2.4% in both Québec City and Regina and 2.0% in Montréal. Altus Group's 2026 Canadian Cost Guide, built on 6,652 projects worth $573 billion, similarly reported 2025 cost increases of 4% or more in Calgary, Edmonton, Montreal and Winnipeg, and declines in Toronto and Vancouver, with skilled labour identified as the leading 2026 risk in Alberta (Altus Group, 2026 Canadian Cost Guide insights). Where activity is strongest, costs are rising fastest.

Upstream, input prices are rising faster still. In September, Statistics Canada's Industrial Product Price Index was up 14.5% year over year and the Raw Materials Price Index was up 27.0%, with unwrought copper up 46.3%, unwrought aluminum up 26.9% and diesel up 106.1% (Statistics Canada, IPPI and RMPI, September 2026). Much of that has not yet passed through to the building indexes, which move more slowly because they measure contracted and installed costs.

The trade regime, measure by measure

The tariff environment affecting Canadian construction inputs now runs through several separate instruments.

THE TRADE REGIME, MEASURE BY MEASURE

MEASURE	INPUTS AFFECTED	CURRENT STATUS
US Section 232, steel and aluminum	Structural steel, aluminum products and derivatives	50% US duty since June 4, 2025; CBP Section 232 derivatives list expanded Aug. 18, 2025 (Blakes)
US Section 232, timber and lumber	Softwood lumber	10% US duty since Oct. 14, 2025 (Global Affairs Canada)
US anti-dumping and countervailing duties	Softwood lumber	All-others combined rate cut to 24.75% from 35.16% in the seventh administrative review, finalized Oct. 14, 2026 (Global Affairs Canada)
US Section 338	About US$20 billion of Canadian goods	50% from Aug. 22, 2026; goods already under Section 232 excluded; cement removed Sept. 15 (Davis Wright Tremaine)
Canadian counter-tariffs	C$27.6 billion of US goods, including steel, aluminum and wood	15%, 25% and 50% tiers from Sept. 8, 2026 (Blakes)
Canadian steel tariff-rate quotas	Imported steel from non-FTA sources	Year two from June 28, 2026, with a 50% over-quota surtax (GHY International)

For lumber, the seventh-review result lowers the duty burden, but combined with the 10% Section 232 tariff, the all-others total still stands at 34.75%. The broader framework is also less settled than it was. The United States declined to renew CUSMA at the July 1, 2026 joint review, which moves the agreement to annual reviews while it remains in force to 2036.

On the procurement side, the federal Buy Canadian Policy applies to federal construction and defence contracts of $25 million or more that require at least $250,000 of steel, aluminum or wood, and requires those materials to be made or processed in Canada (Public Services and Procurement Canada). For domestic producers, that creates a protected source of demand. For contractors, it adds a sourcing requirement to bids at a time when domestic capacity in some product categories is already under pressure.

Financing: the cost of starting

The October rate increase adds to financing conditions that were already restrictive for one segment in particular. The Bank of Canada noted earlier this year that lenders typically require about 70% of condominium units to be presold, with buyer deposits of around 20%, before construction financing is released, and that 2025 condominium starts in Toronto were at lows not seen since the 1990s (Bank of Canada, What's behind the slowdown in Toronto's condo market). In the third quarter of 2026, the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area recorded only 60 preconstruction condo sales, the twelfth consecutive quarter of annual declines (Urbanation, via CP24).

Government charges add a further layer. CMHC's December 2025 analysis placed Toronto's development charges at $130,200 per apartment and $180,600 per single-detached home, compared with $8,584 per apartment in Montreal. In Markham, charges equal 15.7% of a new condominium's price (CMHC, We built this city: development charges).

Industrialized construction as a capacity strategy

The federal response to the productivity problem has centred on how homes are built, not only how many. Build Canada Homes was launched in September 2025 with $13 billion in capital and a mandate that prioritizes factory-built, modular and mass timber methods (Prime Minister's Office). Its August 2026 partnership with the City of Toronto covers nine projects and 1,885 homes, with pilots in volumetric modular, panelized and mass timber construction (Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada).

The codes are moving in the same direction. The 2025 National Building Code raises the height limit for encapsulated mass timber construction from 42 metres to 50 metres and adds greenhouse gas emissions as a formal code objective (Urban Development Institute). British Columbia and Ontario already permit encapsulated mass timber buildings up to 18 storeys. Policy analysis is converging on the same list. C.D. Howe's October 2026 report calls for standardized codes, an end to duplicate inspections of modular units and financing and insurance products designed for factory-built housing (C.D. Howe Institute, The Productivity Blueprint).

The argument for industrialized construction is fundamentally a labour argument. Factory production moves work indoors, standardizes repetition and uses fewer site hours per unit, which is the one lever that addresses the workforce gap and the productivity decline at the same time.

Resilience, for now

The stress has not yet produced a wave of failures. The Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy recorded 752 construction insolvencies in the 12 months to August 2026, down 5.5% from a year earlier, and 44 in August alone, down 21.4% year over year (Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy, August 2026). Contractors are absorbing higher input costs and tighter labour without a rise in business failures, at least through the summer.

What to watch into 2027

The capacity question will be answered in a small number of data series over the next two quarters:

- **Fourth-quarter building cost indexes,** the first full quarter in which the September 8 counter-tariffs will register, and whether the gap between input price growth and building cost growth narrows.
- **Youth construction employment** in the monthly Labour Force Survey, the clearest early signal of whether the entry pipeline is recovering.
- **Apprenticeship certifications for 2025,** expected in Statistics Canada's next RAIS release, against the 9.6% pre-pandemic gap.
- **Bank of Canada decisions in December and January,** given a projection of inflation near 3% through much of 2027.
- **Modular and mass timber delivery under Build Canada Homes,** measured in completed units, not announcements.

Canada's demand for construction is not in question. Its capacity to supply that construction at a stable cost is, and that is now the defining variable for the industry.

CAPSTONE INSIGHTS Q4 2026

From Back-of-the-Napkin Sketches to AI: The Evolution of Land Development Feasibility

By Christopher Troke | Independent Contributor

How an early vision for 3D ground-mesh technology helped me rethink land development - and how today's AI tools are advancing that same idea.



Dundas Street streetscape (Envision)

The Problem That Started Envision

My journey into development technology started with a frustration many developers will recognize: trying to figure out what a piece of land could become before spending a lot of money finding out.

While working for a global asset management firm, I was also acquiring land, pursuing rezoning opportunities, and developing projects for myself and my clients. The first question was always the same: What is the highest and best use of this property, and does the opportunity make financial sense?

Before preparing a meaningful pro forma, I needed preliminary density calculations, building areas, and site massing. Traditionally, that meant hiring architects, surveyors, and planners before I could confidently assess the numbers.



Envision project rendering

Their expertise was essential, but the process took time and money. By the time preliminary work was complete, a property might have sold, an opportunity might have disappeared, or the asking price might have increased.

So, like many people in the business, we started with what we called back-of-the-napkin designs. We sketched building footprints, estimated density, and ran preliminary numbers to decide whether a property was worth pursuing.

For larger sites, that wasn't good enough. I wanted something more visual, practical, and efficient.

That frustration led me to establish Envision Designs & Developments. The objective was simple: expedite the feasibility process and help people see a property's potential earlier.

Seeing the Vision, Not Just the Site Plan



Site plan to 3D model progression

My research eventually took me to a GIS conference in Berlin, where I explored three-dimensional ground-mesh technology, geographic information systems, and the potential of drone-based data collection and geotagging.

I ultimately purchased 3D ground-mesh software from a firm in South Carolina. The technology later became part of a business acquired by Bentley Systems. I also tried to secure Canadian rights, although the company had not approved my proposed business model at the time.

What excited me was the ability to combine the software with SketchUp and Google Earth to place proposed designs directly into their actual geographic surroundings.

We could create interactive site flyovers, illustrate vehicle and pedestrian movement, and produce shadow studies showing how a proposed building might affect neighbouring properties throughout the year.

Rather than asking planning staff or council to interpret a flat drawing, we could show them the vision. Following a preliminary presentation or first reading, we could revise the design, test alternatives, and present the changes.

The software also allowed us to virtually parachute into almost any location in the world. By geolocating an address or development site, we could build and visualize concepts in their actual surroundings without being physically present at the outset.

Naturally, we still had to research local planning requirements, including zoning, setbacks, and riparian restrictions near waterways. The technology helped us explore possibilities, but understanding the local regulations remained essential.

From Comox to the Caribbean - and Iceland

One project particularly close to home was a seniors' condominium development we designed on Aspen Lane in Comox. We used visualization to communicate the proposed development and help decision-makers understand the concept.



Envision project rendering

Once the project received preliminary approval, we found a buyer for the owners based on the seniors' development concept. The buyer ultimately built what we had designed.

For me, that demonstrated the value of combining development planning with real estate experience. We weren't simply creating drawings; we were helping owners understand, present, and realize the value of their land.

The technology also opened doors internationally. We undertook extensive site planning across hundreds of acres in the Dominican Republic and Belize, exploring single-family

subdivisions alongside multifamily residential and commercial uses.

These projects required us to consider local planning requirements and site-specific constraints, not simply draw attractive layouts.

One of the software's most useful capabilities was its elevation data. With elevations accurate to within approximately 0.25 metres, we could explore how natural ground levels might influence building placement, grading, and civil works.

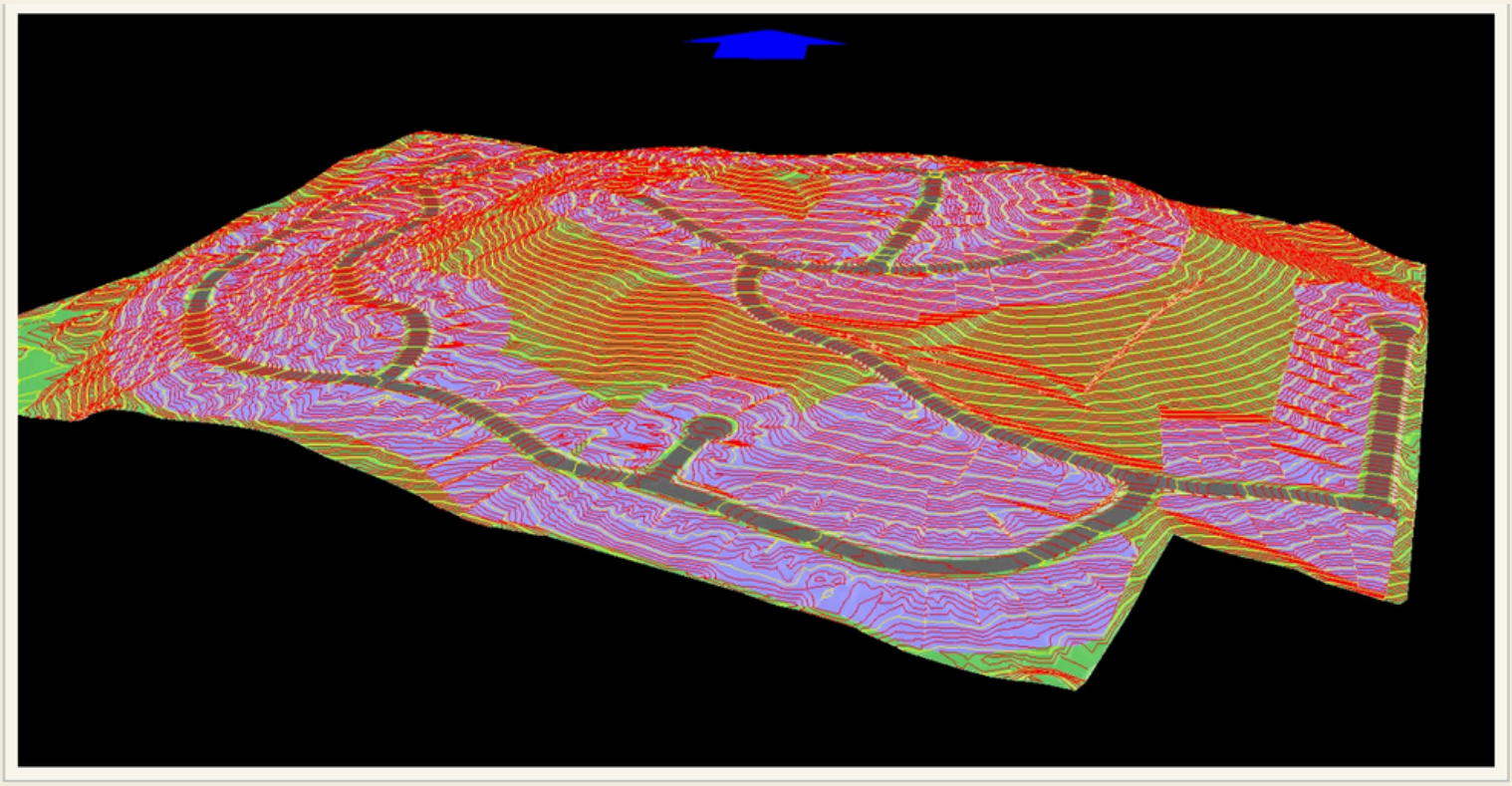
By working with the site's natural contours, we could aim to minimize unnecessary excavation and fill. We could also estimate the volumes of material that might need to be brought onto or removed from a site, helping inform preliminary site-preparation costs.

The same approach could extend to infrastructure. We could develop preliminary cost analyses using local unit rates for earthworks, asphalt paving, and concrete requirements, including heavy-duty warehouse loading areas. These were estimates rather than final engineering quantities, but they helped connect the proposed design to the financial realities of construction.

Another memorable project took us to Reykjavík, Iceland, where we helped redesign a zip line and downhill sled ride in the area of Reykjavik. I had met the owner, originally from Whistler, in the Dominican Republic, and we became good friends.

He had leased the site from the government, and we used the software to reconsider the layout and landing points for the towers. It was a fascinating example of applying the same technology to a completely different type of development.

Working on projects in other countries was one of the most rewarding aspects of Envision. We could explore the concept digitally, travel to the site for reviews when required, and use what we learned on the ground to refine the design.



Early Envision 3D ground-mesh work

The Modern Parallel: AI and Generative Design

Fast-forward to today, and many of the capabilities we were pursuing are becoming more accessible.

AI-assisted design, generative layouts, and automated feasibility tools can produce preliminary concepts in minutes. Developers can explore building configurations, generate massing studies, estimate floor areas, and visualize alternatives much faster than was practical when I started Envision.

The underlying idea hasn't changed: shorten the distance between identifying a property and understanding its potential.

However, a concept generated in minutes isn't necessarily a reliable feasibility study. AI can produce convincing images while overlooking zoning restrictions, setbacks, parking requirements, servicing constraints, or inaccurate site information.

A visually impressive building doesn't guarantee municipal approval or financial viability. The results still depend on accurate data, sound assumptions, local knowledge, and professional judgment.

What Has Changed - and What Hasn't

The technology has advanced enormously, but the fundamental questions remain familiar.

What can this property accommodate? What will it cost to build? What approvals are required? What is the likely value, and does the opportunity justify the investment?

What has changed is how quickly we can explore alternatives and communicate them to owners, planners, councils, investors, and prospective buyers.

What hasn't changed is the importance of experience. A density calculation is not an approval, a preliminary concept is not a construction drawing, and a pro forma is only as credible as its assumptions.

I believe the next phase will connect site modelling, planning information, AI-generated designs, construction costs, and financial projections into a more integrated workflow.

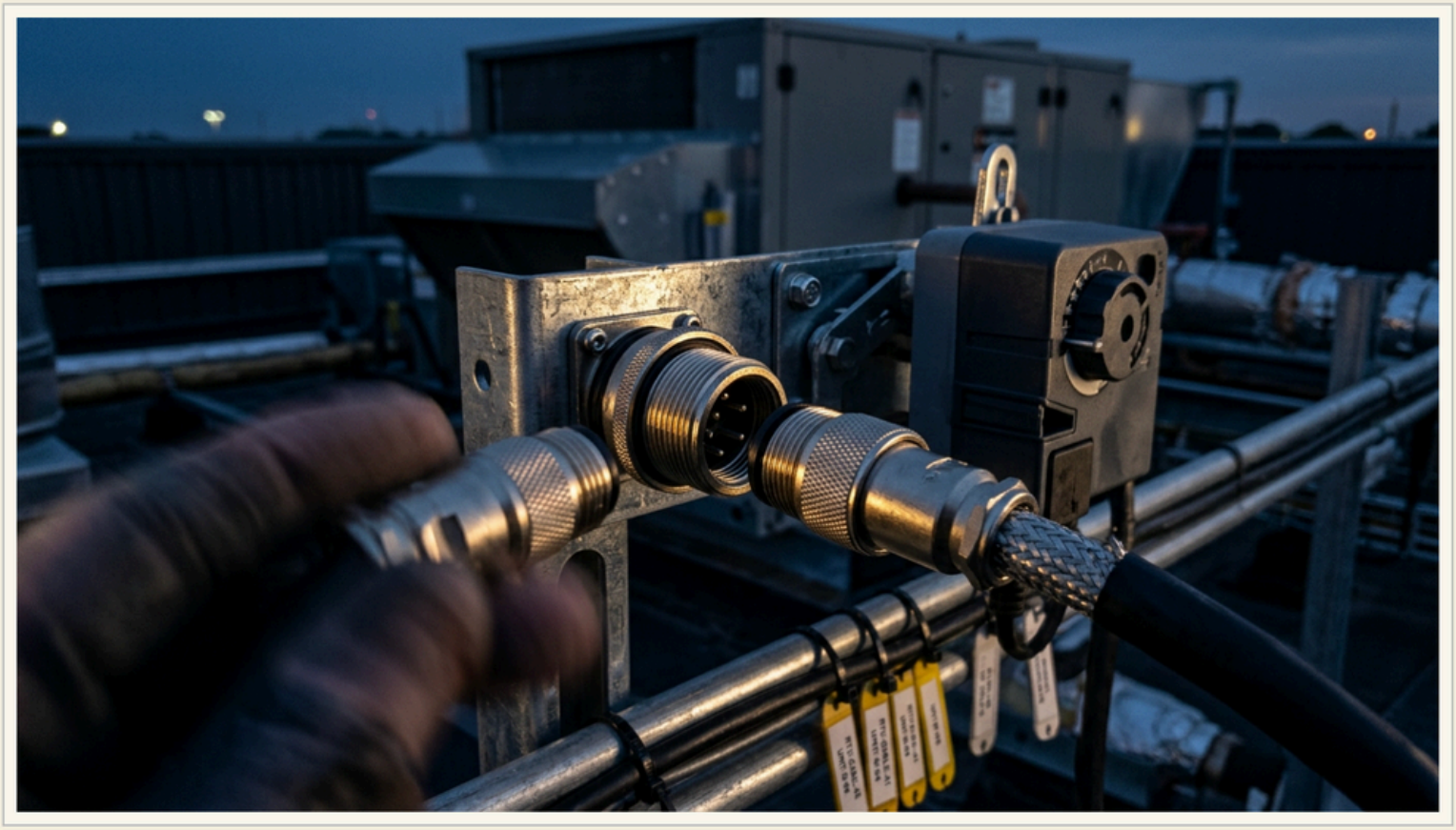
Looking back, Envision grew from a problem I encountered in my own development and real estate work. We were trying to make feasibility faster, visualization clearer, and development decisions better informed long before today's AI tools became widely available.

The real opportunity isn't simply to design faster. It's to see the potential earlier, communicate the vision clearly, and make better decisions before committing significant time and money.

CAPSTONE INSIGHTS Q4 2026

The MEP Interface Gap: What to Define Before Procurement and Handover

By Dennis Chiang | Independent Contributor



Where the field interface can lose its owner: electrical and control connections at a rooftop unit

Why replaceable electrical and control connections need an owner before the project reaches commissioning

Several years after handover, a facilities technician is replacing an actuator at a rooftop unit. The device tag is legible and the replacement unit is available, but the O&M manual identifies the actuator without recording the cable assembly, pin assignment or mating interface. Before the new device can be connected, the technician has to reconstruct information that could have been captured during the project.

The issue is narrow but practical: when an interface is expected to be disconnected or replaced during the life of the equipment, the project should define what it is, who supplies each side and how that information will survive handover.

This article deals mainly with control and signal circuits used for sensors, actuators, BAS points and selected communications. Here, "low-voltage" is used only as project shorthand for those circuits, not as a code classification. The applicable electrical code governs how a particular circuit is classified and wired. Line-voltage and branch-circuit connections remain outside this article's scope and must follow the applicable electrical code, equipment approval or certification requirements, manufacturer instructions and project specifications.

Where the interface can lose its owner

On many projects, responsibility is divided across several packages. In one common arrangement, the consultant defines the control function, the equipment OEM supplies a device or packaged unit, the BAS contractor completes controls wiring and the electrical contractor provides power infrastructure. Commissioning confirms operation; the owner inherits the system for service.

A field interface can appear on several documents without being fully defined on any one of them.

Permanent building wiring, OEM internal wiring, replaceable field connections, controls interfaces and communication links are different categories. A permanent termination may suit a connection that is rarely disturbed. A detachable interface can be useful where a sensor, actuator or modular assembly is expected to be removed. For communications, physical mating is only one check; protocol, shielding and pin assignment can matter just as much.

Put the decision into the project workflow

The following is a recommended project practice rather than a Canada-wide code requirement.

During design, the consultant or controls designer can identify which field connections are

expected to be opened for replacement or maintenance and define circuit function, voltage and current, signal type, shielding, environment and the consequence of incorrect mating.

During equipment and controls submittal review, the OEM and installing contractor can turn that requirement into a defined assembly. The shop drawing should identify the interface, mating counterpart, pin assignment where relevant, cable construction and who supplies each side. It should also distinguish an OEM-supplied lead from a cable that will be terminated in the field.

At commissioning, the installed connection can be checked against the accepted submittal, with equipment labels, drawings and the O&M record brought into agreement before closeout. That gives the interface a clear owner without creating a new process for every cable on the project.

Define the circuit before choosing hardware

A BAS temperature sensor, damper actuator and communication trunk may all be described casually as low-voltage work, but they do not have the same electrical or data requirements. For each replaceable interface, establish the actual voltage and current, conductor requirements, signal characteristics and shielding.

Location changes the material question. A connection above a ceiling in conditioned space faces a different duty from one at a rooftop unit, in a damp mechanical room or in a parkade exposed to moisture and contaminants. Where visually similar connections sit beside each other, coding, keying, labelling or another means of differentiation should be considered.

Before a replacement device or cable is energized, it should be checked against the interface record and the manufacturer's data because mechanical fit does not establish electrical compatibility.

Keep the Canadian regulatory boundary clear

The 2025 edition of the National Building Code of Canada is published as a National Model Code. Provincial and territorial governments adopt or adapt the National Model Construction Codes into regulation, and the NRC directs users to the appropriate jurisdiction to determine what applies.

In many jurisdictions, building-code and electrical-safety requirements are administered through related but distinct regulatory frameworks, although the two can cross-reference each other. CSA C22.1:24 is the 2024 Canadian Electrical Code, Part I, 26th edition. CSA states that Canadian authorities having jurisdiction reference the CEC, while each jurisdiction determines which edition is referenced in its regulations.

A component data sheet is therefore not an installation approval. Local amendments, AHJ decisions and applicable equipment approval or certification requirements still have to be satisfied for the final installation.

An IP rating answers a narrower question

IEC 60529 covers the classification of degrees of protection provided by enclosures under the IP Code. An IP rating should not be treated as proof of chemical resistance, UV durability, corrosion performance or cable flex life.

For a detachable connector assembly, the project should confirm the configuration in which the manufacturer claims the IP performance, including whether correct assembly and full mating are required. That becomes relevant during service, when caps, seals or mating parts may be removed.

Cable construction belongs in the same review. Conductor size, shielding, jacket material, strain relief, support and routing should be checked at shop-drawing stage rather than left to whoever terminates the cable on site.

Prefabrication makes the boundary more visible

Mechanical skids and factory-assembled controls create a literal shop-to-site connection point. A cable may be disconnected for transport and reconnected in the field. If two adjacent receptacles look alike, a site crew can restore the mechanical connection without necessarily restoring the intended electrical one.

The shop drawing and equipment identification should make the intended mating relationship clear before the assembly leaves the factory and still be clear after transport, installation and commissioning.

Handover should preserve what was accepted

As recommended project practice, an owner or consultant can require selected replaceable interfaces to appear in the as-built and O&M information. An interface schedule can record equipment and location, function, mating counterpart, pin assignment, cable specification, electrical or signal information, shielding requirements and the reference used for replacement.

If the schedule includes an "approved replacement," the basis should be clear: for example, an OEM reference, an accepted project standard or another designated approval authority. Where continuity of service justifies it, the owner can also decide whether spare mating cables or counterpart assemblies belong in the turnover package.

Before final closeout, commissioning should confirm that the record matches the installed equipment. Years later, a technician should be able to identify the intended connection and verify a replacement without having to reconstruct the project team's original decision.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dennis Chiang is founder of Teyconn (teyconn.com). His work focuses on industrial electrical interfaces and cable assemblies for automation and equipment applications, including interface selection, installation requirements and replacement documentation. He writes from a manufacturer's application perspective and does not represent a Canadian authority having jurisdiction.



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