

Waterfront plaza, Canucks rink development moving forward

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— JAMES KM CHENG ARCHITECTS/CANADIAN METROPOLITAN PROPERTIES



Rendering of a proposed development at Plaza of Nations.

A massive waterfront Vancouver development, which will change the face of False Creek's north shore and give the Canucks their first dedicated practice facility in more than a decade, is working its way through the development process, after years of work behind the scenes.

The vision for the Plaza of Nations, built as one of the key venues for Expo 86, is described in a plan submitted to the city as a new neighbourhood that will emerge on one of Vancouver's last undeveloped waterfront properties.

James KM Cheng Architects, on behalf of the current owner of the site, Canadian Metropolitan Properties (CMP), has applied to develop the project that would include "terracing" buildings of up to 30 storeys combining condos and commercial space, as well as public amenities including an outdoor plaza, a daycare facility, community centre, music venue and an NHL-sized rink to be used by both the Canucks and the public.

The project has been in the works for several years, and CMP hopes to move forward and break ground by the end of 2020. The formal development application was filed last September, after Vancouver's previous council approved the rezoning in July 2018.

An open house for the development was scheduled for Wednesday, but was postponed because of the weather. The open house has tentatively been resche-

duled for Jan. 20, after which it's expected the project will go to the urban-design panel for review in February and then to council for final approval in the second quarter of 2020.

The Plaza of Nations property has also been the subject of legal battles for years, between CMP and companies affiliated with the site's former owner, Concord Pacific. A claim filed in court by Concord in 2016 pegged the value of the Plaza of Nations' site at about \$500 million, Postmedia News reported that year.

Last year, a B.C. Supreme Court judge dismissed Concord's claim against CMP, a decision that Concord's lawyers indicated they might appeal, Business in Vancouver reported last September.

Asked Wednesday about the lawsuit, CMP senior vice-president Daisen GeeWing said: "It's been dismissed

and we're proceeding as we were throughout the whole process."

Gee-Wing said the company is "very excited" to get through the next stages of the process, and they "look forward to breaking ground very soon."

CMP has been in talks with the Canucks for years about the creation of an NHL-sized rink in the civic centre at the Plaza of Nations development.

Plans submitted to the city in 2017 described the vision for a Canucks facility. This would give the Canucks their own dedicated training facility, something the organization has not had for about a decade, and it would be located immediately beside their home ice at Rogers Arena. Currently, the Canucks use Rogers as their primary training facility, but on days where there is an event or concert, the team has used ice at the University of B.C. and Burnaby over the past decade, as their secondary facility.

If approved, it's expected that the first phase of infrastructure work could begin by the end of 2020, but features like the rink wouldn't be finished until at least 2023 or as late as 2025.

