

CREATING A LEGACY

Whether it's his company's latest housing development, his association with BC Children's Hospital or work on upgrading the BC Place Stadium roof, David Podmore is wholly involved in the community, his family and, when time allows, leisure activities.

BY TONY WHITNEY

You don't have to look too far around B.C.'s Lower Mainland to see the legacy of David Podmore and the real estate and development enterprise he heads – Concert Properties.

A 33-year veteran on the Vancouver development and real estate scene, Podmore co-founded Concert in 1989 with the late Jack Poole and today its buildings – many of them significant landmarks – can be seen almost everywhere in the region. Concert is a diversified Canada-wide operation active in industrial and commercial properties, rental housing, condos, resorts and seniors communities.

Podmore is especially happy with Collingwood Village, a multi-family residential community in east Vancouver. "This is a very large project and was the first large-scale, transit-oriented development in the city," he said. It



provides an exceptional example of what can be achieved on a major scale around a transit station, he added. 600 Drake, a 12-storey concrete highrise in Vancouver, which "pioneered the development of small suites," also is rated highly by Podmore, as well as a recent collaboration involving the new downtown YMCA and its elegant 42-storey residential tower, The Patina.

David Podmore's contributions to local communities and businesses are almost too numerous to mention. He holds directorships at Terasen, LifeLabs, the Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships and Imperial Parking Canada Corp. He is chair of the BCIT Foundation and immediate past-chair of the BC Children's Hospital Foundation.

"My association with the redevelopment of BC Children's Hospital is something I am particularly proud of," Podmore pointed out. "This initiative started in 2005 when I was chair of the BC Chil-

dren's Hospital Foundation Board." His work eventually earned a response from the province involving a formal commitment to aid completion of the project over the next five years.

In recent times, he's been very much in the news as chair of BC Pavilion Corporation (PavCo), the Crown corporation overseeing BC Place Stadium as well as the twin-facility Vancouver Convention Centre. He's been one of the driving forces behind the quest to replace the stadium's now-ancient inflatable roof with a state-of-the-art retractable system. The old air-supported dome served the province well for decades and played a key role in the Olympics, but its time has passed and such technology is no longer "state-of-the-art."

The stadium upgrade may not be the biggest construction project in the city's history, but it's one of the most exciting and is sure to attract widespread public attention. PavCo hopes it will become

The BC Place Stadium retractable roof by the numbers:

18,000 tons: combined weight of all steel used in the roof's construction

76,000 square metres: area of fabric used to cover the roof

90 mm: diameter of each cable used in the spans between the masts. By comparison, Whistler's Peak to Peak gondola system uses 56 mm cables

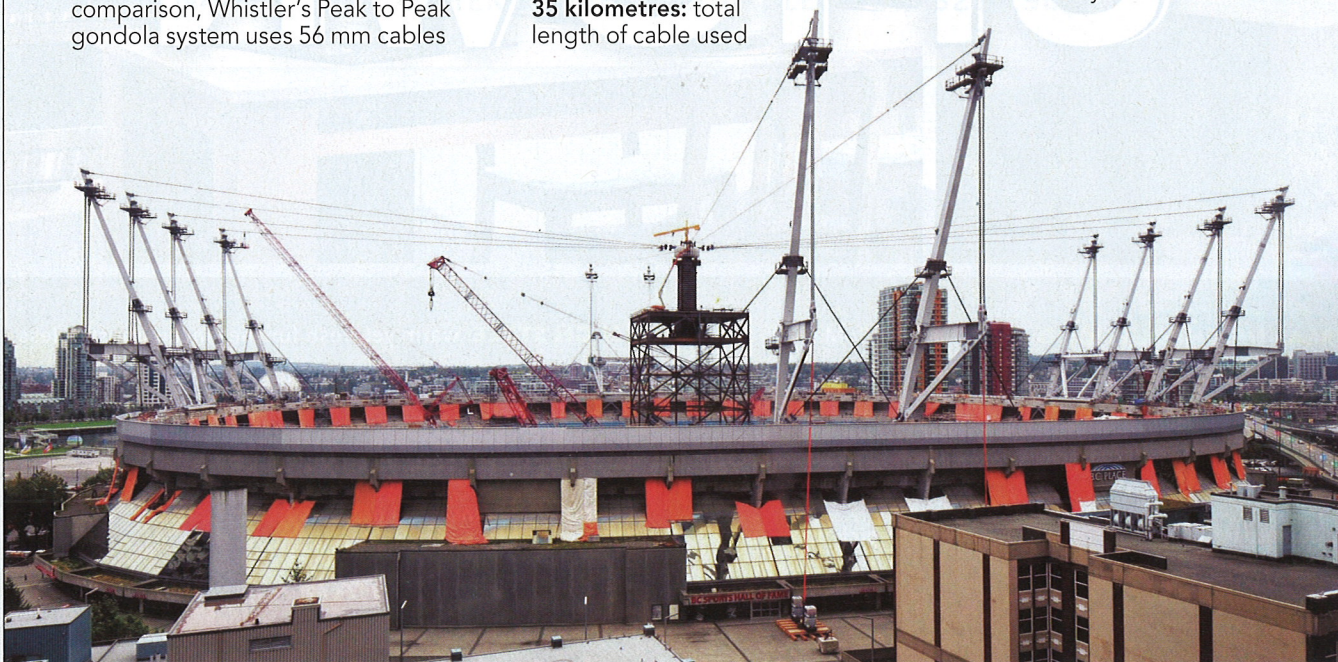
50 metres: approximate length of each supporting mast

220 tons: average weight of each mast and its attachments

35 kilometres: total length of cable used

600 tons: maximum lift capacity of the crane used to hoist large sections of the roof (in the configuration being used at BC Place)

85: number of semi-trailers required to transport the giant red crane to the stadium for assembly



“an architectural signature” for the city. When the new cable-supported roof is opened, it reveals an area of 100 metres by 85 metres, the same size as the field below.

A key feature of the new roof is its ability to allow users to tailor the atmosphere for any kind of event. These can include anything from sunny summer festivals to football games under the stars. There are plans to bring major league soccer to the stadium, too. With the roof in place, the stadium will be able to stage an even wider range of indoor events, from auto shows to home and garden expositions.

Said Podmore: “The stadium will have a significant beneficial impact on our region and province, bringing over \$100-million annually in economic benefit through its operations and the more than 240 event days a year that we expect will be hosted in this facility. On a social basis, it will serve as an important

gathering place with enhanced opportunities to support a wider variety of community and provincial events.” PavCo’s objective is to have the permanent roof in place by next July and then install the retractable portion after that. There will be events staged prior to the November 2011 Grey Cup to test the building and make sure everything works the way it was designed to.

Asked if there are any future projects he’d like to be involved with – planned or otherwise – Podmore said he is keen to play a role in the future development of First Nations opportunities in B.C. “There are exceptional opportunities to work with First Nations on a collaborative basis – to achieve important objectives for their communities and contribute to the economy and development of our region,” he added. Other opportunities entail possible developments along the Canada Line corridor, with which he hopes to be involved.

It would be easy to believe that someone with a schedule like David Podmore’s would have little time for leisure interests, but that’s not quite the case. “My problem is that I have too many interests and not enough time,” he said. “I do manage to get in some fishing, golf, boating and downhill skiing.” He also points to “a passion for metal and woodwork” and hopes to refine his skills in these areas some time in the future. “I also enjoy travel to other parts of the world and any opportunity to spend time with my wonderful family – and I love my work!”

Vancouver has been fortunate in past years to have industry leaders who could take charge of major programs that provide enduring benefits to the city. Just as Jim Pattison’s name will forever be linked with Expo 86 and Jack Poole’s with the Olympics, David Podmore will always be associated with the re-born BC Place Stadium and its iconic status in the Vancouver cityscape. ■