

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



RBC PLACE  
LONDON

## WE ACKNOWLEDGE...

RBC Place London is located within the traditional territory of the Anishinaabek (Uh-nish-in-ah-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lunaapéewak (Len-ah-pay-wuk) and Attawandaron (Add-a-won-da-run) nations; land that is also shared by Metis, Inuit and urban Indigenous community members.

We acknowledge all the treaties that are specific to this area: the Two Row Wampum Belt Treaty of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy/Silver Covenant Chain; the Beaver Hunting Grounds of the Haudenosaunee NANFAN Treaty of 1701; the McKee Treaty of 1790, the London Township Treaty of 1796, the Huron Tract Treaty of 1827, with the Anishinaabeg, and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum of the Anishnaabek and Haudenosaunee.

We hold all that is in the natural world in our highest esteem and give honor to the wonderment of all things within Creation. We bring our minds together as one to share good words, thoughts, feelings and sincerely send them out to each other and to all parts of creation. We are grateful for the natural gifts in our world, and we encourage everyone to be faithful to the natural laws of Creation.

The three Indigenous Nations that are neighbours to London are the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation; Oneida Nation of the Thames; and the Munsee-Delaware Nation who all continue to live as sovereign Nations with individual and unique languages, cultures and customs.

RBC Place London acknowledges the 94 calls to action outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and is committed to ensuring Indigenous peoples have equitable access to positions at RBC Place London. RBC Place London is also committed to providing educational opportunities for the team on equity, diversity, and inclusion.

## CONTENTS

Message from our CEO	3
2023 Board of Directors	4
Vision and Mission	5
2023 Strategic Priorities	6
How Did We Do?	7
2023 Events Spotlight	8
Event Fundraising Success	9
London's Meetings Industry Matters	10
Ambassadors Awards	10
Arts, Culture, Music and Community	11
We're Investing in Sustainability & Enhanced Physical Spaces	12
Welcome to the King Street Patio	13
Our Exceptional Team	14
Looking Forward to 2024	15



# DEAR COMMUNITY... A PARTING MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

2023 was a record-setting financial year for RBC Place London. During the first quarter of 2023, our annual event revenue grew by almost \$1 million which was equal to pre-pandemic revenue growth for an entire year. 184 events were hosted at RBC Place London in 2023, 26 were multi-day events. Together, the events hosted produced \$22.6 million in economic impact for London. Over 20,100 hotel rooms were generated from events hosted at or in combination with RBC Place London. Total event revenue was \$7.2 million, a new record with 33% growth over 2022.

RBC Place London operated with a year-end surplus resulting in no operational funding being required from the City of London. \$250,000 in operational surplus funds were transferred to the capital reserve held by the City of London to help fund future RBCPL capital projects. Balancing out our positive results were stellar guest survey scores with an increase of 6.3% over 2022 to hit a high of 95% in the top 2 categories measured. The RBC Place London team satisfaction from 105 members, was also up over 2022. 2023 set new records, but most importantly, RBC Place London was open all year, with team members working to provide exceptional guest experiences for convention delegates and social event attendees in downtown London.

For me personally, it was an amazing year to wrap up my career. I am retiring in my 19th year with the London Convention Centre Corporation, and a total of forty years in London's amazing hospitality industry. I have enjoyed my time with this wonderful organization and am excited to watch, from the sidelines, as RBC Place London continues to support this community, adding vibrancy to the core and driving economic impact for the community. I am leaving this organization with a strong and determined team in place and have no doubt that 2023 was the start of a new period of growth for RBC Place London.



Our organization has many to thank for helping us hit new historic highs. Thank you to our Board of Directors for their commitment and guidance. Thank you to City of London Council, and the administrative team for understanding the importance of business events and supporting the organization as we recovered. Thank you to all our hospitality and tourism partners for their professionalism and passion for this industry. Most importantly thank you to our event organizers, who trust us to deliver exceptional experiences helping them achieve their in-person event goals.

Thank you to the community for supporting RBC Place London. We know we are only as good as our last event, and promise to continue working hard to deliver exceptional experiences.

Signing off one last time! Yours in hospitality,

*Lori Da Silva,  
General Manager & CEO*

# 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennifer Diplock, Chair  
Ross de Gannes  
Jeffrey Floyd  
Susan Judd  
Linda Nicholls  
David Smith  
Garrett Vanderwyst  
Eunju Yi

Mayor Josh Morgan  
Councillor David Ferreira  
Councillor Susan Stevenson  
Deputy City Manager Scott Matthers

## CORPORATE OFFICERS

Lori Da Silva, CEO & General Manager  
Darrin Pollard, Director, Business Development  
Shannon Moxey, Director, Corporate Services and Sustainability

## FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

As I reflect on my two-year term as chair of the RBCPL board, I can't help but feel a sense of pride and satisfaction at the successful recovery of our organization. It is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our exceptional team.

I am most proud of how the team stayed focused on making a positive impact on the London community, fostering economic growth and strengthening community partnerships that extend our reach even further, all while hosting extraordinary events.

A highlight for me was participating in the unveiling of the UNESCO City of Music mural in RBCPL's main entrance foyer. Together with the City of London and the London Arts Council, we can help support the City's strategic objectives by providing meaningful, compensated opportunities and exhibition space for local artists.

It has been my great honor to work with Lori Da Silva during my nearly 7 years with this board. As Lori sets out on her well deserved retirement, I reflect on her great leadership and the impact she has made to London and RBCPL. On behalf of the Board, past and present I would like to thank Lori and congratulate her on her 17 year legacy leading RBCPL.

Looking ahead to 2024, I know the future is bright and the team is ready to build on a solid foundation and reputation for excellence, under the leadership of our new board chair Susan Judd. It continues to be my great honour to serve the community alongside this outstanding team.

*Jenny Diplock, Chair of the Board (2022/23)*



# VISION

RBC Place London is nationally recognized as a community connector, adding vibrancy to London's downtown, and supporting the City of London as an economic driver.

# MISSION

RBC Place London attracts and hosts meaningful experiences, which connects communities, adds vibrancy, and generates an economic benefit for London in a fiscally responsible and sustainable way.



**BE**  
**DE**  
**LIGHT**  
**ED.**

"The on-site staff were absolutely amazing from start to finish. A lot of people were impressed by how seamlessly they all work. That event would not have been the great experience it was for me had it not been for all of them."

*-2023 ISAO Conference Delegate*

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2023

## FOUNDATIONAL EXCELLENCE... BUILD ON THE MOMENTUM

Building on RBC Place London's solid foundation of high quality meeting and event space with solid technology and excellence in food preparation, presentation and service delivery. RBCPL will recover because of the great team.

## REFINED SPACES AND PROGRAMS... MOMENTS MATTER

People need to gather to make new connections and build on new relationships and RBCPL offers strong event programming support with enhanced technology and options for in-person or virtual events. It's a new story to tell.

## NEW AND ENHANCED EXPERIENCES... PHYSICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

RBC Place London is creating an enhanced outdoor gathering space supported by new lighting features on King Street and new signage on York Street, resulting in high awareness programming.

## CONNECTING LONDON... A UNESCO CITY OF MUSIC

Connecting the whole of London through vibrant arts and culture at business events to help position and showcase London's entertainment scene.

## ADVOCACY AND INVESTMENT... CONVENTION HOSTING PARTNERS

RBC Place London, owned by the City of London, works with many partners to host conventions that drive economic impact for the community. It takes support from all levels of government to sustain economic growth.



# HOW DID WE DO?

**\$22.6 MILLION**  
DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT

**60 PERCENT**  
BUILDING UTILIZATION RATE

**112,026**  
DELEGATE DAYS

**47.3 PERCENT**  
SPACE UTILIZATION RATE

**20,130**  
HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS FROM CONVENTIONS



## **BE** **RE** **MARK** **ABLE.**

"The Birds as Bridges conference was a great size for the city and for RBC Place London. Members really felt they were the centre of attention and appreciated the efficient and friendly service."

*-Dr. Scott MacDougall-Shackleton, Local Planning Chair  
AOS and SCO-SOC Joint Conference*



## 2023 EVENTS SPOTLIGHT

We hosted 184 events which produced a total of 112,026 delegate days.

**ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPALITIES OF ONTARIO CONFERENCE**

**COUNTRY CLASSIC AUCTION**

**AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY AND SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS JOINT CONFERENCE**

**TIM HORTONS BRIER THE ORIGINAL 16 PATCH**

**ONTARIO BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE**

**CITY OF MUSIC EXPO AND CONFERENCE**

**FIGHT TO END HOMELESSNESS**

**IVEY 100TH ANNIVERSARY GALA**

**NATIONAL LIBERAL CAUCUS**

**ST JOSEPH'S HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION TRIBUTE DINNER**

**LONDON HEALTH SCIENCES FOUNDATION KNOCK OUT KIDNEY DISEASE**

**YMCA WOMEN OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

**2023 ANNUAL PLANT SYMPOSIUM**

**GRAIN FARMERS OF ONTARIO MARCH CLASSIC**

**RBC ALL LEADERS CONFERENCE**

**BREAKFAST FOR YOU**

**LONDON BRIDAL EXPO**

**CIFST CANADIAN FOOD SUMMIT**

**CHILDREN'S HEALTH FOUNDATION MAGICAL BALL**

**CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF EXPOSITION MANAGEMENT ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**LONDON COMIC CON**

**ISA ONTARIO CONFERENCE**

### EVENT PLANNERS REPORT CARD

Facility was clean and well-maintained A+

Customer Service Representatives were friendly and helpful A+

Event Services Team was helpful A+

Food Quality and Service A+

Bar Service/Coffee Service A+

(based on feedback collected from event organizers as part of a 2023 event satisfaction survey)



# EVENT FUNDRAISING SUCCESS

RBC Place London is the perfect venue for large scale fundraising events, as proven by the successful gatherings held here in 2023. From the Country Classic Auction (London Health Sciences Foundation), the Children's Magical Winter Ball (Children's Health Foundation), and Breakfast of Champions (St Joseph's Health Care Foundation), to the Fight To End Homelessness (Youth Opportunities Unlimited), the United Way Harvest Lunch and many other successful events, RBCPL has become a hub for impactful giving.

With its spacious layout and adaptable spaces, RBCPL can host large groups of donors and guests comfortably, fostering an environment of generosity and community engagement. In 2023, charitable events held at RBCPL raised a total of over \$3.5 million dollars to combat homelessness, fund medical research, create safe spaces for vulnerable youth, and more, right here in our community.



**BE**  
**SUC**  
**CESS**  
**FUL.**

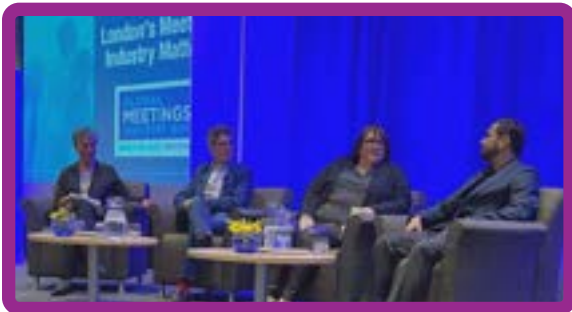
"Thank you again to you and your team for knocking it out of the park! We can't thank you enough for your patience and expertise. . . you really killed it this year! We truly appreciate and value our partnership with you!"

*-Brett Lucier, Co-Founder/Co-Chair  
Fight to End Homelessness*

# LONDON'S MEETINGS INDUSTRY MATTERS

On Global Meetings Industry Day, RBC Place London hosted an in-person celebration called London's Meetings Industry Matters that brought together members of the business events industry, government officials, and members of the academic community to network and discuss the crucial impact of the meetings industry on London.

The event featured a panel discussion with Minto Shneider (MMBC), Kapil Lakhota (LEDC), Jennifer Allaby (CAEM) and Barry Smith (CCC), moderated by Heather Reid (PCMA Canada East). The panel discussed the importance of collaboration in advocacy and the need for a collective voice in the industry's recovery from the pandemic. They also talked about the critical role that the new generation of planners of meetings and business events will play in the industry's future. Additionally, the panel highlighted the value of building connections with colleagues and peers as a crucial aspect of the meetings industry.



## AMBASSADOR AWARDS

In October 2023, RBC Place London celebrated the actions of 9 individuals whose passion and commitment to their respective business or organization heightened London's profile, while generating significant economic impact.

The Ambassador Awards recognize local individuals who are influential in bringing a convention or event to London. Since 2000, RBC Place London has recognized 102 individuals for their enthusiastic support in attracting provincial, national and international conventions and events to London.

The 2023 Ambassadors have helped produce over 39,600 delegate days with a combined economic impact in excess of \$14.75 million for the City of London.

Congratulations to our Ambassadors:

**DR. CATHERINE NEISH**

54th Meeting of the Division for Planetary Sciences

**CRISPIN COLVIN**

Ont. Federation of Agriculture Conference & AGM

**PETER INCH**

Tim Hortons Brier: The Original 16 Patch

**DR. SCOTT SHACKLETON-MACDOUGALL**

AOS & SCO-SOC Joint Conference

**ADAM THOMPSON**

Association of Municipalities of Ontario Conference

**JAMES SMITH**

Cdn Institute of Food Science & Technology Conference

**DR. ALIDA VAN DIJK & DALE NIKKEL**

Cdn Association for Spiritual Care Conference

**2023 ICON AWARD: CANADA LIFE**



# ARTS, CULTURE, MUSIC, AND COMMUNITY

In 2023, RBC Place London put a significant emphasis on the need to showcase local art and support for the City of Music designation within our building. We partnered with the London Arts Council and the City of London to bring vibrant art into our facility for public consumption. We initiated two major projects through this partnership: the installation and unveiling of the City of Music mural and the creation of The Gallery at RBC Place London.



## UNESCO CITY OF MUSIC MURAL

In the Spring of 2023, the City of London, London Arts Council and RBCPL unveiled the London UNESCO City of Music Mural, located front and centre in our building's main entrance foyer. The mural was created by local artist Tova Hasiwar through the City of London's Public Art and Monument Program. As a UNESCO City of Music, London is a distinguished and unique hub for creativity, which is signified through the bold and bright design of this piece.



## THE GALLERY AT RBC PLACE LONDON

The purpose of The Gallery program, initiated in Fall of 2023, is to promote the work of artists and creators residing in London and surrounding First Nations, to display original artworks for exhibition, with sales opportunities, on highly prominent and specially designated wall space within this municipally owned building. In response to demand from local artists for exhibition space and to promote and celebrate our talented local artists, the London Arts Council and the City of London Culture Services collaborated with RBCPL to pilot The Gallery as part of our London Arts Live (LAL) program offerings.



As one of the most highly recognized convention centres in Canada, RBC Place London plays a vital role for this community. Our partnership with the London Arts Council, and the City of London provides visitors and conference attendees with further context for London's artistic community when welcoming them to our city.

**BE**  
**WEL**  
**COM**  
**ED.**

"For many visitors, RBCPL serves as the first point of contact to learn about our city and what we can offer. We have many talented artists of all different artistic disciplines, and through this partnership, we achieve an important goal of the UNESCO designation: recognizing arts/culture as a crucial strategic factor for sustainable urban development.

*-Eunju Yi, Executive Director, London Arts Council*

# WE'RE INVESTING IN... SUSTAINABILITY

RBC Place London is committed to protecting our environment.

In 2023, RBCPL signed the Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge to demonstrate our commitment to improving the sustainability performance of our business between now and 2030.

The UN World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.”

Currently efforts are directed to reducing waste and energy use, and recycling/reusing as many items as possible while continuing to offer a safe environment for guests and staff.

RBCPL partners with Waste Management to keep track of our green efforts and together we are reaching some amazing milestones!

In 2023, we recycled:



**50% OF OUR TOTAL WASTE WAS RECYCLED (UP FROM 46.86% IN 2022). THAT MEANS OVER 24.8 METRIC TONNES OF RECYCLABLES AND FOOD WASTE WERE DIVERTED FROM LANDFILLS!**

These recycling efforts conserved the following resources:



## ENHANCED PHYSICAL SPACES

In 2023, RBC Place London invested a total of \$1.925 million in capital improvements including:

**INSTALLING A NEW AUTOMATED PARKING SYSTEM**

**UPDATING ELECTRONIC SIGNAGE SYSTEM TO CLOUD-BASED PROGRAM**

**UPGRADING KITCHEN WITH NEW COMBI OVEN AND OTHER ENERGY-EFFICIENT CULINARY EQUIPMENT**

**REPLACING STEAM TRAPS AND UPDATING HVAC CONTROLS**

**COMPLETING RENOVATIONS AND LAUNCHING THE KING STREET PATIO OUTDOOR EVENT SPACE**



# WELCOME TO THE KING STREET PATIO

In 2022, RBC Place London received funding from FedDev Ontario as part of the Canada Community Revitalization Fund (CCRF) to renovate the King Street Patio. Completed in summer of 2023, the project has created a vibrant, outdoor event space able to accommodate up to 500 guests for receptions, concerts, and pop-up marketplaces.

The revitalized King Street Patio has truly enhanced the guest arrival experience and provides an attractive, accessible, and safe venue for social gatherings by both residents and visitors. The welcoming space showcases graffiti artworks of nationally recognized artists, complete with barrier free paths constructed with environmentally friendly permeable paving, drought-resistant native plants and shade trees, and a large open patio.

The gated and licensed event space is also fully-equipped with electrical, audio, and WIFI connections, as well as customizable and coloured LED lighting to support our events.

We couldn't be more excited for these upgrades to our facility as we're always looking for ways to enhance our guests' experience and encourage the growth and support of London's Tourism Industry.



**BE**  
**MODERN.**

"I would recommend anyone doing a large event in London to contract with RBCPL. The space is really good, modern, clean, functional, and intuitive. The staff are bright and hard-working. The food was awesome, too, which isn't always a guarantee at larger facilities."

*-National Liberal Caucus Event*



# LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024

## OPERATING WITH EXCELLENCE

Building on a solid foundation and reputation for exceptional event hosting, RBCPL will strengthen our very capable team, with more diverse professionals across departments, on our continuous improvement journey becoming London's hospitality employer of choice.



## GROWING ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR LONDON

Executing a leveraged marketing plan and relationship building through direct sales with new partnerships, securing more booked events.



## CONTRIBUTING TO LONDON'S PROFILE AS A DESTINATION OF CHOICE

Hosting exceptional events that attract community participation and drive positive word of mouth messaging about the appeal of downtown London hosted events, raising community willingness to become event ambassadors.



## ADDING VALUE TO LONDON

Operate with the highest level of integrity and fiscal responsibility with a focus on increasing the asset value through effective, proactive capital improvements and advocacy for funding support.

**BE**  
**CONFIDENT.**

"Thank you to all! Your teams were all wonderful to work with and we are very grateful for all the extra care and effort they provided to help make a magical experience for our families. We look forward to working with you for 2024."

*-Jake's House Holiday Event*



RBC PLACE  
LONDON