

BLT

B.L.T. Construction Services Inc.



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Hot Stove Club
Air Canada Centre, Toronto



Canada's Hospitality Building Partner



BLT

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From renovations to construction, BLT Construction is known for completing projects from start to finish and has become a force to be reckoned with in Toronto's entertainment district and throughout Canada.

Written by Leon Bracey

BLT was started in 1995 by Mark Watts, whose family had a longstanding history of owning and operating restaurants in the Toronto area. At a young age, Mark saw the mounting construction and maintenance needs of those restaurants, and opted to step away from the family restaurant business in order to found BLT in order to accommodate these construction needs. Since those humble beginnings, the company has evolved to embrace a number of services including Construction Management, General Contracting, and Design/Build projects throughout Toronto and the rest of Canada. »



The company presently employs 50 fulltime employees and up to an additional 45 contract / part time workers depending on the size of projects at a given time. BLT recently opened offices in Vancouver, servicing similar markets to its headquarters in Toronto.

- The vast majority of BLT's projects are based upon a preferred Construction Management fee structure, which allows for more of a partnership with the client throughout the project. Conversely, BLT also offers services as a General Contractor, where clients have the option of choosing from a Lump Sum or a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) contract.

BLT's Design/Build service provides cost effective solutions to complete challenging jobs in short timeframes. This helps save clients money while maintaining design integrity and quality craftsmanship.

The company primarily builds hotels, restaurants, retail, and recreational facilities. The company has also worked on residential and office projects. Robert Downey, Director of Construction for BLT Construction, was happy to share some details.

"Providing excellent service is the most important factor to our success," Mr. Downey says. "Our company modeled a lot of its aspects from the hospitality business since that's where we got our start."

"The hospitality industry is very vibrant right now," says Mr. Downey. "In general, restaurants and hotels are doing well in Toronto and Vancouver is a similar marketplace. Many companies are either renovating spaces or building new construction. Clients and guests alike are demanding more of their spaces and expect more. They want a higher level of finish, so we've worked on a lot of projects to retrofit, rebuild and refurbish existing spaces as needed or build new if required."

BLT's relationships with its clients, consultants, and trades are treated as partnerships. The company assembles a strong




team early in a project, building trust, commitment, and integrity among the team, working toward a common goal of successfully bringing a project to completion.

“Restaurants and hotels are doing well in Toronto and Vancouver is a similar marketplace.”

“You’re only as good as your last project,” asserts Mr. Downey. “Our main concern is making sure that we’re always raising the bar to produce a better build for our clients. We’re always pushing quality and value with our construction, and meeting the needs of our clients. We’re always driving to push further and make our clients happier with the builds that we provide them.” Indeed, the company’s diverse array of projects reflects BLT’s dedication to constructing high-quality facilities for its clients.


One particular project of note is the construction of the Central Park Arena in Collingwood, Ontario. The project consisted of constructing an NHL regulation-size hockey rink. The arena has spectator seating for 390 people, a mezzanine lounge for viewing or rentable space for special events and presentations, six dressing rooms for players, a large referee room, a dedicated dressing room for women, and a community room »



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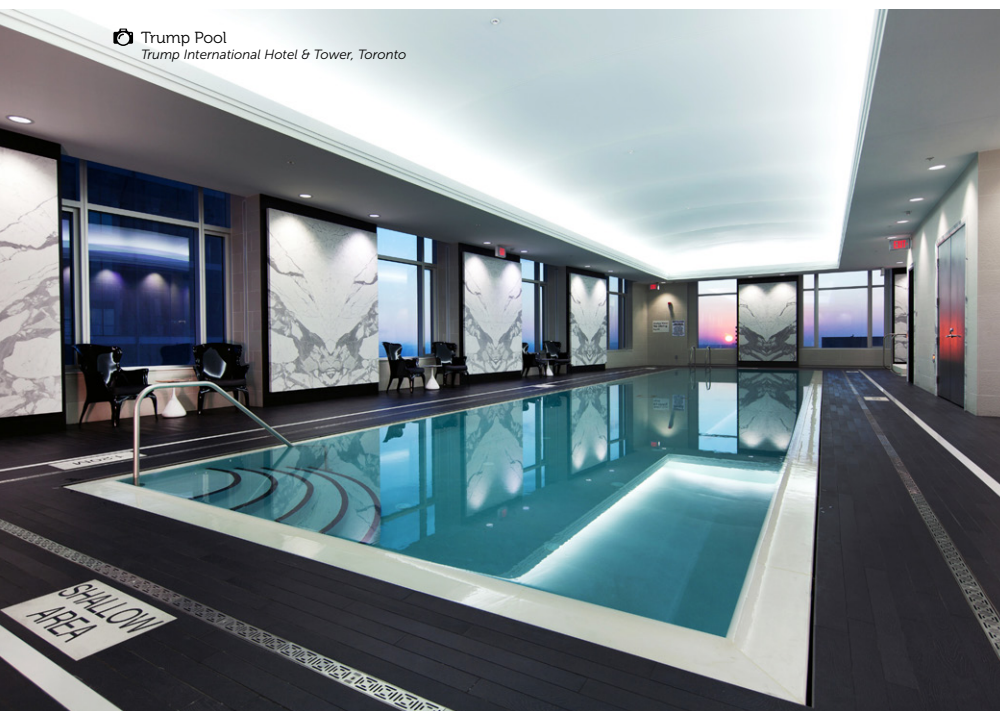
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► for meetings and events that can be rented by people in the area. The quality of this facility was noted when the Toronto Maple Leafs held a training camp at the arena this past August. BLT Construction also refurbished an aquatic centre in the city.

“We’re always pushing the bar to produce a better build for our clients.”

The company has also recently expanded into the hotel market. A major project in this sector was BLT Construction’s contracting services for the Trump International Hotel & Tower in Toronto. At 65 storeys and standing at a height of 276.9 m / 908 ft, the skyscraper is the second-tallest in Canada and is the tallest mixed use building in the city and fourth tallest structure in the city. Along with constructing the main restaurant space – Stock located on 30th floor – BLT Construction was also heavily involved with constructing the Presidential Suite of the hotel, as well the spa and aquatic facility – Quartz Crystal Spa. Known as the Infinity Salt Water Lap Pool, the pool is heated and offers guests and spa patrons a natural salt infinity-edge pool and whirlpool overlooking the Toronto skyline from the 32nd floor. It’s the only one of its kind in a Toronto hotel and uses pure natural chlorine made from salt rather than harsher chemicals that are used in conventional pools.

The hotel’s presidential suite uses materials such as granite, onyx, ebony, velvet, leather, crystal and bronze. The attention to detail and the use of such high-end materials set the property apart. BLT Construction also built the Quartz Crystal Spa at the Trump Tower by incorporating ebony accents, matte finishes and mixing modern and classic elements that emphasize the luxury of the hotel.

Other hotel projects of BLT Construction include the renovation of the Main Ballroom at the Omni King Edward Hotel in Toronto, a penthouse at the Soho Metropolitan Hotel, and the extensive construction of the recently opened Drake Devonshire Inn in Wellington, Ontario.

At the Air Canada Centre in Toronto, BLT was involved with extensive renovations of the facility. These projects included numerous restaurants – Hot Stove Lounge and Chairman’s Suite – as well as the remodelling of the both the Raptors and Maple Leafs’ locker rooms.

Movie Director and Producer Ivan Reitman (Ghostbusters, Road Trip) recently worked with BLT Construction to open a restaurant in his native Toronto named Montecito. The two-storey, 11,000 square foot, 280-seat restaurant opened next to the TIFF Bell Lightbox building in the heart of the city’s entertainment district this past summer. Reitman partnered with Master Chef Jonathan Waxman to provide California-inspired cuisine using Canadian produce and meat.

Other restaurants BLT Construction has built include Against the Grain Leaside, Amsterdam BrewHouse on the Lake, Drake One Fifty, Real Sports (Toronto + Ottawa) as well as numerous Jack Astor, Canyon Creek and Pickle Barrel locations through southern Ontario. Notable restaurants that BLT has recently both designed and constructed are Luckee



Restaurant and the first Wahlburgers restaurant in Canada, both located at the base of the Soho Metropolitan Hotel.

The opening of the Vancouver office gives BLT Construction the opportunity to expand into Western Canada and build facilities in the region. "We're very excited about the new office in Vancouver," shares Mr. Downey. "The expansion to the West Coast is a challenge because it is a new market. We are very lucky to add new clients to our portfolio in the area."

BLT Construction recently signed on the Vancouver Canucks as the company's

first client in the region, and is working on a list of projects for them in Rogers Arena such as additional restaurant projects slated to open in the next few months, right in time for hockey season.

Several towers are also under construction around the arena so fans can enjoy activities before, during, and after games. The first three towers built will connect at the southwestern end of Rogers Arena, with the first five floors expanding the concourses of the rink. BLT is involved in the construction of the West Tower, which will give spectators a greater variety of food and beverage selections; there will be increased bathroom facilities as well. The arena space is expected to be operational for the 2014-15 NHL season.

BLT has also constructed and renovated a number of office projects for its clients, one of which includes the building of 16,000 square feet of new office space for the Toronto Police Association. In addition, BLT also has constructed numerous projects in Ontario's resorts and casinos, including the renovation of Canyon Creek and the Platinum Lounge at Fallsview Casino Resort, as well as the renovation of the Turf Lounge and the Northern Dancer Room for the Woodbine Entertainment Group.

With so many projects in its portfolio and many more in its pipeline, BLT Construction Services is known for its quality, variety, and ability to quickly construct and remodel facilities for its clients, which is why the company has proven to be one of the most successful construction companies in Toronto's entertainment district. With additional growth in Vancouver and various projects throughout Canada, BLT's dedication to service and quality guarantee that the company will continue enjoying success well into the future.

"We want potential clients to look at BLT Construction as their hospitality construction partner," says Mr. Downey. "We're very much a partnership with our clients because we come at it with a very personal, professional touch. We look at each project as a step in developing relationships – we don't want to build just one restaurant for our clients, we'd love to build ten for a client. We look forward to continuing building great projects for great clients and we'd like to thank our clients for having such great vision to build what they build. We're lucky to have them and with their partnership comes continued success." ■



Ecological Mechanical takes great pride in their **30 years of service** in the Greater Toronto Area.

"The years have been challenging and rewarding" says Tim Shoniker, President & CEO.

"We would like to thank all the folks that have joined us throughout this journey. Congratulations to BLT Construction on their Canadian and Usa expansion we wish you Continuing Success."

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