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MEDIA RELEASE

History in the Making – Calgary Stampede Foundation breaks ground on SAM Centre

Calgary – With a rich history that spans more than 100 years, there are thousands of stories of the Calgary Stampede that are waiting to be shared. The Calgary Stampede Foundation, together with the Calgary Stampede, marked a milestone as we broke ground on SAM Centre today – a new destination that will share Stampede’s stories of culture and spirit, immersing visitors in the extraordinary peoples, cultures, histories, knowledge and artifacts that have shaped not only the history of the Stampede, but Calgary and southern Alberta.

Building the future while celebrating the past, SAM Centre will bring Stampede stories to life through highly interactive and immersive experiences, fueled by technology, compelling story-making, western hospitality, and of course, fun. Visitors to SAM Centre will learn about our local history in an exciting and engaging way, connecting them to our western heritage, and fostering an enduring sense of belonging and connection to our community.

“Anchoring the center of the Calgary Stampede’s Youth Campus, SAM brings together the old and the new, our history and our future highlighting the stories of southern Alberta through the lens of the Calgary Stampede,” says Bob Thompson, Chair, Calgary Stampede Foundation.

SAM Centre is named after Robert Samuel Taylor, the father of Calgary Entrepreneur and Philanthropist, Don Taylor, who generously gave \$15 million to the project.

“I’m so happy to be here today to witness years of planning coming to life. SAM Centre will show visitors the character, the grit and perseverance of the people that make up southern Alberta,” says Taylor.

In addition to the transformational gift from the Taylor Family Foundation, SAM Centre is also generously funded by leadership donations from the Estate of Arthur (Bud) Hall, the Norris Family Foundation, RGO Office Products, the Hunter Family Foundation, and the Government of Canada and Government of Alberta.

“The Calgary Stampede is an integral part of Alberta’s story. The creation of SAM Centre ensures that story is preserved and promoted today, tomorrow and for future generations. The Government of Canada is pleased to invest more than \$4.5 million to support this project. We know that facilities like SAM Centre provide a gathering place for Canadians to celebrate and share experiences together and build lasting legacies that honour the culture and heritage of their communities,” says Minister of Canadian Heritage, Pablo Rodriguez.

“The SAM Centre will celebrate Alberta, this land of fresh starts and new beginnings. It will showcase to the world our western heritage and the people who have grown our food, created our communities and built our unique spirit and identity. Alberta’s government is proud to provide \$5 million dollars to support this important project,” says Alberta Premier, Jason Kenney.

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Limited

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“With support from the federal government, SAM Centre will become the official home for the Calgary Stampede’s storied past. Visitors will now be able to experience the history of the Stampede in new and immersive ways and be able to appreciate the cultural importance of the Stampede in telling not only Alberta’s story, but Canada’s story,” says Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, François Philippe Champagne.

“SAM Centre will be an exceptional facility that shares Alberta’s western heritage and celebrates our province, history and culture. Our government is proud to contribute to a space where visitors and Albertans of all ages can learn, enjoy and appreciate a part of our rich rural and western culture. Thank you to the Calgary Stampede Foundation for their dedication to sharing Alberta’s story and showcasing our province to the world,” says Minister of Culture, Ron Orr.

When SAM Centre opens in spring 2024, it will feature 30,000 sq. ft. of space comprised of a permanent gallery, a changing exhibits gallery, an immersive digital experience, indoor and outdoor public gathering spaces, and an artifact and archival collection space. For more information on SAM Centre, please visit calgarystampede.com/samcentre.

About the Calgary Stampede Foundation

The Calgary Stampede Foundation supports youth of Alberta by providing dynamic programming to enhance their leadership skills, personal growth, creativity, and education. Our vibrant and welcoming campus connects arts, heritage, and education. Working with community leaders and philanthropists to ensure our western legacy is preserved for future generations.

About the Calgary Stampede

The Calgary Stampede celebrates the people, the animals, the land, the traditions and the values that make up the unique spirit of the west. The Calgary Stampede contributes to the quality of life in Calgary and southern Alberta through our world-renowned 10-day Stampede, year-round facilities, western events and several youth and agriculture programs. Exemplifying the theme We’re Greatest Together; we are a volunteer-supported, not-for-profit community organization that preserves and promotes western heritage and values. All revenue is reinvested into Calgary Stampede programs and facilities.

For more information, please contact:

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