



**GROWING AND  
BUILDING THE FUTURE**





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In 2014, Wilco Civil Inc. was recognized for their involvement as general contractor by the RAIC National Urban Design Awards for the Westminster Pier Park. An innovative leader in civil and landscape construction, Wilco Civil continues to grow its reputation as the go-to for open space site development.



It's all in the family at the Wilco group of companies. What started in Thunder Bay, Ontario in 1952 quickly spread nationwide to cities like Regina, Saskatoon, Fort McMurray, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver. To meet the demands of projects and operations, individual corporations were formed under the Wilco umbrella. Out of four corporations, three remain family-owned. One of them, Wilco Civil has been in operation since 1992.

Based out of Vancouver, Wilco Civil employs between 80-90 people. A unique corporate culture that blends longevity and togetherness, Wilco Civil President and CEO Rob Maat has been involved since the outset. "Wilco is corporate but also family oriented," Maat said. "We encourage people to develop their careers here and as a result we have a lot of senior people here that have been here for a long time. In fact, our longest term employee had a 25-year anniversary. All



of our senior management has been here for 20-years plus.”

“In terms of employees, now we’re heading into third generation,” he continued. “Our accounting is family, and the junior estimator is family. We build strong relationships with employees by working with them, encouraging them and giving those incentives, opportunities and education. By understanding and respecting the employee, we’re geared towards people who are family oriented.”

## PROJECT PREPAREDNESS

Taking on projects in a variety of sizes and scopes, ranging from \$2 to \$4 million up to

\$15 million and from parks to flood work protection illustrates Wilco Civil’s depth of knowledge and expertise as a builder of urban and open spaces. As a company that wears many hats and tackles different industries, challenges are inevitable.

“We don’t design any of the projects, we take plans from somebody and just build them,” Maat said. “We have frequent challenges because a lot of our work is custom-designed by the landscape architects. We have to find solutions on a constant basis for new designs and new ways of achieving detailing on hard structures and with that goes complex site development – so staging and flow of work is

a constant challenge to determine what the best way to get a quality product is.”

Entwined within Wilco Civil’s corporate and family-oriented approach to business and projects, their commitment to quality service and working with the client plays a key role in achieving success on site development projects.

“We pride ourselves on being team players and working with the clients to develop solutions,” Maat said. “Most projects have a week or bi-weekly consultation with either a consultant or consultant and client. So we work together with them and work with partnering with all the players involved.”

## WESTMINSTER PIER PARK

Wilco Civil’s attention to cohesiveness and continuity when working within a team has paid dividends. As the general contractor for the Westminster Pier Park, Wilco Civil played an integral role in bringing the park revitalization to life. A part of the city of Vancouver’s long-term vision to integrate the waterfront with the historic downtown core, the project and the recognition they received from it instills a strong sense of pride and sophistication in the type of work that

the Wilco Civil team is able to produce.

Externally, the recognition further cements the company’s reputation as a premium landscape contractor for urban construction.

“When we talk to developers who may not have heard of us or talking to a new consultant, it gives us instant recognition that yea, we’re quality people,” Maat said.

Winning any award takes hard work, due diligence and the willingness to overcome

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obstacles. For Maat, the process and experience of a project like this was an arduous one, filled with difficulties in working on multiple aspects of the projects simultaneously.

“Access was a huge challenge,” he said. “There was a very significant and stringent, critical path to the construction schedule. In order to get items completed in succession it was very difficult. Because of access you had to complete step one before you could get to step two.”

Along with access restrictions, issues pertaining to geographic, physical and even design limitations also presented themselves.

“Constraint of the rail, track on one side and the Fraser River on the other side and one access point from the south end, everything

had to come through that access point,” Maat said. “At the construction stage in the critical path, this was a major item.”

“All the custom detailing, too,” he added. “There was a large timber structure that was prominent architectural piece in the park that was laser-fit by a large timber frame contractor from Kootenay that was brought in, positioned and assembled on site. Access again was an issue, had to bring in the big cranes to erect that structure.”

## SELECT SUPPLIER SUPPORT

Through the years, Wilco Civil has built and maintained strong links within their supply chain. The long-lasting relationships that have been forged prove just how vital a cog suppliers and partnerships are in the overall



operation and progression of your business. “Suppliers are what can make or break a project,” Maat said. “We have a select group of people that we go to to get competitive pricing, but we definitely use a select few of our suppliers to ensure quality and continuity. We’ve established good relationships with them by keeping them included as part of the team, keeping the communication lines open with them and by using them repeatedly over a number of years.”

## GREEN POLICY

Protecting the urban spaces they build remains a top priority for Wilco Civil. By implementing their very own environmental green policies with their projects, Wilco ensures that they are doing their part to protect the environment and the spaces they bring to life.

“We recycle and reuse as much as possible,” Maat said. “We try to use recycled materials. We definitely do waste management on our sites to make sure that the waste is not going into the main stream; for example, we sent off to recycle waste wood for forming materials, etc.”

## THE FUTURE

Known for their prowess in undertaking the most sophisticated landscape projects in the lower mainland, Wilco Civil’s has a distinct differentiation from the competition. Built on a foundation of longevity, tradition, loyalty and respect, Wilco Civil’s long road to success and profitable has stretched nearly all over Canada. From Thunder Bay in 1952 to Vancouver in 2015, Wilco Civil’s future remains focused on the family.

“We’ll continue to work on developing professionals within the company,” Maat said. “We’re looking to grow our people through education programs – specifically targeting the needs within the company.”

As times – and needs change – the traditions instilled in the past will guide the new generations as the evolution at Wilco Civil continues.

