

DECEMBER 1981

The Federal Government, citing dissatisfaction with British Columbia's approach to financing, backs out of the Pier BC convention centre project entirely. In an announcement, Premier Bennett confirms that the project has been cancelled. EXPO 86, so closely tied to the rapid transit system, is put on hold while new Federal/Provincial negotiations begin. The cost is now estimated at \$300 million. Ottawa pledges renewed support and involvement in EXPO 86. The City agrees to leave Expo the 20 acres at the east end of False Creek. Despite the physical presence of Patrick Reid and his seconded staff, there is no official Federal involvement as the year ends. Burns is planning for disposal of assets and shutdown of project.

JANUARY 1982

The Federal/Provincial talks have bogged down again and are aggravated by a split in Vancouver City Hall as Mayor Michael Harcourt; citing escalating costs, mounts a heavy media attack against the project while his council urges Premier Bennett and Prime Minister Trudeau to resolve their differences and find a formula to make the exposition happen. Throughout this period, Patrick Reid and Bruno Freschi continue their intensive public appeal to keep EXPO 86 alive. Top international designers are commissioned to consult with the design and planning staff and this preserves a healthy and optimistic spirit during this uncertain period. The first BC Place Report is published.

FEBRUARY 1982

The Federal Government makes its offer. The original 60 million dollars for the rapid transit will be forthcoming whether or not the exposition is held. For EXPO 86, Ottawa offers 75 million dollars for a Canadian pavilion and 25 million dollars towards offset of the deficit. British Columbia would be expected to provide all the working capital.

The Province's expectation has been for equal cost-sharing, based on the Expo 67 and Montreal Olympics model. The unilateral financing of EXPO 86 is unacceptable. The prospects for the survival of the project and the staff morale are at a low ebb. The minister responsible, Evan Wolfe, promises final decision on fate of project by month's end. Premier Bennett publicly introduces restraint policies in Government spending. BC Place and City of Vancouver reach cost-sharing agreement on surrounding roadways.