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**Seahawks Training Center Officially Opens**

**Renton, Wash.** -- The Seattle Seahawks announced the completion of the new Virginia Mason Athletic Center (VMAC), after spending the last 22 years in Kirkland.

Designed by Crawford Architects of Kansas City, the state-of-the-art training facility is located on Lake Washington and is more than 225,000 sq. ft., second largest in the NFL. The site is bounded by Interstate 405 to the east, Lake Washington to the west, residential properties to the north and open land to the south. The building sits on 19-waterfront acres, compared to 10 acres in Kirkland.

VMAC is designed to serve as a year-round training facility for the Seahawks players, as well first class office headquarters for coaches and administrative staff. The facility features approximately 50,000 sq. ft. of training space including: a 6,000 square foot weight room, 146-person auditorium and a locker room with 80-custom lockers. A 30-foot current training pool is equipped with a built in tread mill and the ability to video tape the players to evaluate form and efficiency.

VMAC will allow the Seahawks organization to work under one roof for the first time in 10 years as the football front office, administration, corporate sales and marketing, fan development, along with the Sounders FC staff will be housed in Renton.

The building is equipped with a permanent indoor practice facility, an amenity that is currently lacking at the Kirkland facility. The practice facility is more than 88,000 sq. ft. and 112 ft. high (95 ft. clear). The playing surface is the identical FieldTurf that is used at Qwest Field. VMAC will also feature three regulation size outdoor grass fields.

The facility incorporates several green features including the site itself. Project Director David Murphy states that "From an urban planning perspective, the site has many qualities we look for in sustainable redevelopment, it doesn't contribute to urban sprawl, and the client was committed to lakeshore restoration." David Murphy adds "We layer in the drama of capturing the lake's outdoor activities during training camp, just like Husky Stadium captures the magic of the boaters anchored in the harbor, and we found we had all the qualities to make this a very special place for the Seattle Seahawks."

The design solution incorporates a regional flair including gracious overhangs, natural lighting, use of regional materials such as quarried stone, and a local landscape design strategy that restores the Lake Washington shoreline to its native habitat. According to project designer Tom Proebstle, "One of our very first design tasks was to identify the unique aspects of Pacific Northwest architecture, and blend those qualities into our client's program to create a facility that is unique to the NFL, and frankly would be out of place if it was constructed for any other team."

Seahawks CEO Tod Leiweke and President Tim Ruskell credited Crawford and the overall design team for creating the best training facility in the NFL, if not in all North America, for any sport. Head coach Mike Holmgren remarked that the facility demonstrates the Seahawks commitment to championship football. According to Murphy, "as our clients, partners and friends, Vulcan Inc. and Ray Colliver have been instrumental in the success of this project. Their ideas and insights in regard to creating a world class sustainable training center that captures the spirit and essence of the region has been invaluable."

Crawford Architects is an international architecture and planning firm with offices in Kansas City, Missouri and Sydney, Australia. Crawford specializes in mixed-use commercial developments, sports facilities, convention centers and master planning. Recent projects include the University of Northern Iowa's McLeod Center Arena, Qwest Field Renovations for the Seahawks, Purcell Pavilion for the University of Notre Dame, and the Franklin Field Renovation for the University of Pennsylvania.

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