



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **MEC supports Ontarians to get outside with new North York store; third in GTA** *Long-awaited 34,000-sq.-ft. Sheppard Ave East location to serve growing membership across region*

**Vancouver, BC (November 28, 2016)** Canada's go-to place for outdoor gear and know-how, MEC is today strengthening its support for active lifestyles in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) with the long-awaited opening of its new two-storey 34,000-square-foot North York store. Located at 784 Sheppard Avenue East in the Bayview Village neighbourhood, MEC North York complements the retailer's downtown Toronto flagship store and its Burlington cousin to serve the 750,000 existing Co-op members across the region and to welcome new members who join MEC.

MEC's North York store is meant to serve people throughout the GTA, especially north of Eglinton Avenue, east to Oshawa and Peterborough and west toward Guelph. The highly accessible location can easily be reached by transit – Bessarion Subway Station is immediately adjacent – by bike from Don Trail or Willowdale Avenue – or by car from the 401 Express Freeway. Two levels of underground parking are available to store visitors and 18 covered bike parking stalls are at hand outside the front doors.

"Like all MEC stores, North York will act as a community hub. By doubling our presence in Toronto with this new accessible location, we are better able to serve our dynamic communities, inspiring new and existing members to get outdoors and lead healthy active lifestyles," said MEC CEO David Labistour. "We are excited to contribute to the neighbourhood, adding lasting value, vibrant in-store experiences and vitality through our services and programming."

MEC North York offers a comprehensive assortment of clothing, footwear and gear for outdoor activities – including cycling, running, camping, hiking, climbing, yoga, fitness, paddlesports, snowsports and travel. In-store services include a full-service ski-tech and bike-repair shop as well as bike- and pack-fitting stations and an equipment rental program, which will launch in 2017.

To support local outdoor clubs and environmental organizations, a community meeting room is available for use free of charge. Plus, events such as the MEC Race and Century Ride series as well as MEC Snowfest, Paddlefest and Bikefest will be jointly supported through the Co-op's North York and King Street locations. More than a dozen events are planned for 2017.

"The store has been in the works for several years, and we are thrilled to now be able to welcome new and existing MEC members to our brand new space in North York. Whether novice or expert outdoor enthusiasts, we are keen to support their favourite activities and passion for getting outdoors," said MEC North York store manager and Ontario regional manager Scott Clifton.

The design of the North York store features key elements of MEC's architectural brand. A distinctive sawtooth roof with clerestory windows floods the second floor with natural light while wood-infused interiors create an inviting shopping environment.

Powered with renewable energy, the store joins MEC's growing portfolio of high-performance green buildings.

Since 2010, MEC has supported over 300 recreation and conservation projects in the Toronto area, investing more than \$570,000 through its Community Contributions program. Province-wide, MEC has supported more than 770 recreation and conservation projects in Ontario, investing over \$2.5 million since 2010.

Today's store opening is part of an unprecedented period of growth for MEC. With a strong focus in Ontario, MEC recently relocated its London store to larger premises, and next spring it will open in Kitchener, a seventh store in the province. Planning is also well underway to relocate MEC's downtown Toronto flagship in 2018, to a more accessible Queen Street West location.

MEC's North York store employs approximately 170 staff members in a mix of casual, part-time and full-time

positions.

The store comprises half of the Sheppard Avenue site. Park Towns, a 50-unit stacked townhome complex that MEC is developing along with Broccolini Construction (the general contractor for both projects), makes up the residential portion on the site's north half. The townhomes are expected to be completed by February 2017.

### **About MEC**

MEC (Mountain Equipment Co-op) is Canada's go-to place for outdoor gear, know-how and inspiration. Combining high-quality apparel and equipment with expert advice and firsthand experience, MEC supports a wide range of activities including camping, snowsports, watersports, cycling, climbing, hiking, running, yoga and travel. Established in 1971, MEC is Canada's largest consumer co-operative with over 4 million members across the country. A lifetime membership is available for \$5. A strong backer of community initiatives, MEC has invested over \$34 million and counting into non-profit organizations that support outdoor recreation and conservation. For more information, visit [www.mec.ca](http://www.mec.ca) and follow @mec, or visit one of our 21 stores nationwide.

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