



NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Skidegate Band Council

\$4 MILLION PRESERVES HAIDA CULTURE AND BUILDS TOURISM

SKIDEGATE – The Province has contributed \$4 million towards the Haida Heritage Centre at Qay’lnagaay (pronounced Kay-AL-nuh-guy) project, which will become an international tourism destination showcasing Haida art and culture, Premier Gordon Campbell announced today.

“The Haida Heritage Centre at Qay’lnagaay will give visitors and students from around the world the opportunity to experience the unique culture, art and history of the Haida Nation,” said Campbell. “The Province is proud to support the preservation of Haida objects and treasures for future generations, build tourism and create sustainable employment on the Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands.”

The Province’s one-time funding contribution will support research, design and construction of cultural exhibits at the estimated \$26-million centre. Scheduled to open in 2007, the 50,000 square foot centre will house an international teaching centre, a new oral history and archives centre, a canoe house, performing arts theatre and headquarters for the world-renowned Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve.

“Our heritage centre is a place of inspiration, hope and sharing, a place to learn and teach, a place for the Haida voice to be heard,” said Skidegate Chief Willard Wilson. “These funds will help us share our story with the world and develop new opportunities for our people.”

Over the course of the construction period and once fully operational, the Haida Heritage Centre will create approximately 130 direct and indirect jobs in Skidegate. The centre lies at the heart of a long-term economic development strategy developed by the Skidegate Band, which includes a resort hotel, golf course, RV park and cabins, and new opportunities for tour guides. The centre is anticipated to draw more than 10,000 additional visitors to Haida Gwaii each year.

The Province is building a New Relationship with First Nations founded on the principles of mutual respect, recognition and reconciliation of Aboriginal rights. The goal is to ensure Aboriginal people share in the economic and social development of British Columbia, in line with government’s five great goals for a golden decade.

For more information on the project and a list of additional funding contributors, visit www.haidaheritagecentre.com.

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