

## New Youth Centre will help grow next generation of Tsawwassen First Nation leaders

Tsawwassen First Nation's Youth Centre opens today, providing a place for young people to learn and explore their passions on TFN Lands.

TSAWWASSEN, B.C., Feb. 12, 2020 – Tsawwassen First Nation celebrated the grand opening of its new ǵəʔis məstiməxʷəwtxʷ (youth centre) today. The building gives the Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) community a home for their youth programs, allowing the creative freedom to expand their physical literacy, artistic, culinary and multimedia programming to better support their youth. The 12,000 square foot building will allow more programs to be offered simultaneously for a variety of age-appropriate groups, and the kitchen, weight room and gym will allow new programs to be offered.

The Tsawwassen First Nation child and youth care workers support young people aged 5 and above with after-school programming and summer programs. The new youth centre located at 2287 Tsawwassen Drive gives TFN youth a space where they can feel at home, with amenities to support a wide variety of programming to help them excel in all areas.

“Our young people are our future. They needed a place where they felt welcomed and valued. This centre will be a place of learning, nurturing and preparing our youth for becoming our next generation of leadership. This centre will offer both indoor and outdoor activities, a computer lab, games room, an art room, TV room, a community kitchen and large dining area – all spaces that the youth can enjoy together and call their own. This is truly a momentous day for our youth and Members. My hands go up to each and every one who made this happen,” says Chief swənnəset (Ken Baird).

“I offer my sincere congratulations to Chief Baird, Executive Council, the Tsawwassen Legislature and the Tsawwassen First Nation for the grand opening of their new Community Youth Centre,” said the Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Member of Parliament for Delta, B.C. on behalf of the Honourable Catherine McKenna, Canada's Minister of Infrastructure and Communities. “This new two-storey building provides space for people to come together, to share experiences and create memories for generations to come. Funded with a \$5 million contribution from the Government of Canada, this project is a great example of what we can accomplish when we work closely together to fund community-specific projects.”



*Photo of new youth centre by Solos Productions*

TFN artists Karl Morgan, skiljaday (Merle Williams) and təxˈiləm/Yaahl liwaans (former Chief Bryce Williams) contributed artworks on the exterior and interior pole structure as well as windows, benches, walls and floors to bring some of the community's culture into the new space.

“New child care spaces at the Tsawwassen First Nation Youth Centre will provide a culturally rich space for children to learn and grow for many years ahead,” said Mitzi Dean, Minister of Children and Family Development. “This beautiful new centre is a testament to the power of partnerships and I look forward to continuing to work with Tsawwassen First Nation to provide inclusive and cultural early learning experiences.”

In 2017, Tsawwassen First Nation committed to providing a facility for youth to feel at home and excel in their endeavors. To ensure the design reflected their needs, TFN worked closely with young people throughout the development process. Funding was secured through the Childcare BC New Spaces Fund, the First Peoples' Cultural Council of B.C., and through the federal-provincial Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program – Community, Culture, and Recreation stream. A particular focus was paid to ecology. “Local B.C. woods, including Hem Fir mass timber and Western Red cedar, reduce the environmental footprint of the environmental footprint of the building, ameliorating climate change by sequestering more carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) in the building than used to build the structure,” said Dr. Nancy Mackin, the project architect.

“I’m thrilled that Tsawwassen First Nation’s youth finally have a recreation centre to call their own,” said Josie Osborne, B.C.’s Minister of Municipal Affairs. “Our government will continue to invest in projects like this one that make life better for people, promote active lifestyles and connect communities through culture and recreation, bringing people together, albeit safely, during this time of the pandemic.”

“We’re so proud to support new licensed child care at the Tsawwassen First Nation Youth Centre,” said Katrina Chen, Minister of State for Child Care. “A safe, nurturing place where kids can continue to learn about their culture and language is vital to the wellbeing of families and communities. The new centre will be a place where children can learn and grow for generations to come.”

The youth centre opens today and programming will be moving into the new space next week.

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### **About Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN)**

Tsawwassen First Nation is a Coast Salish First Nation community located in southwest British Columbia. In 2009, Tsawwassen Members ratified the first urban Treaty under the BC Treaty process, providing TFN with self-government jurisdiction and land ownership on a renewed land base. TFN’s economic development initiatives include developing TFN’s land assets to create a sustainable economy for TFN by generating revenues and creating jobs and business opportunities for TFN Members.