

# NEWS RELEASE

February 13, 2025



## **CLUTESI HAVEN MARINA REVITALIZED THROUGH PARTNERSHIP**

**Port Alberni, BC** – Since 2022 cīšaaʔath (Tseshah First Nation), Hupačasath First Nation, and City of Port Alberni have participated in the First Nations – Municipal Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI) through the creation of a CEDI Working Group. The purpose of the CEDI Working Group is for the three local governments to work together to build and strengthen their inter-community relationships, and to build capacity for joint planning and community economic development.

In 2023, our local CEDI Working Group identified a joint area of interest to launch their first collaborative project, Clutesi Haven Marina. A place that holds significant cultural meaning to both Nations, yet is owned by the City of Port Alberni and leased by the Port Alberni Port Authority. Through regular meetings, the CEDI Working Group developed a strategic vision of the underutilized space next to the marina parking lot on Highway 4/River Road at Beaver Creek Road.

Using placemaking as a pillar in their conceptual planning, the CEDI Working Group agreed to a pilot project that would see increased vendor spaces using retrofitted Seacans, both for food and retail, a gazebo and small courtyard for visitors to sit and enjoy riverfront views and a stage to allow for small concerts and live performances.

To fund the vision, the City set to applying for funding across several streams and were successful in receiving over \$400,000 for various aspects of the work:

- Island Coastal Economic Trust contributed \$27,847;
- Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure BC contributed \$91,360;
- Tourism Growth Program (PacifiCan) contributed \$248,000; and
- CEDI contributed \$45,000.

Other project highlights include:

- Indigenous art featured on the new Seacans
- Increased parking for cars, trucks and boat trailers through better use of the space available
- Changes to the entry and egress of the marina in coordination with the Ministry of Transportation.

The project has and will continue to unfold using a phased approach with the intent of having all work complete and the new vendor spaces operational by Summer 2025.

To align with grant funding criteria, ground preparation work will commence in mid-February and take approximately two months to complete. The new Seacans will land in late March and all vendors currently on site will continue to operate without interruption. As work progresses the CEDI Working Group will send out a call for vendor submissions to fill the estimated six spots coming available.

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## **QUOTES**

“This is a really exciting project for our three governments,” said Wahmeesh (Ken Watts), Elected Chief Councillor of Tseshaht First Nation. “Tseshaht has made vital steps toward our Nation’s economic diversification. This project is another example of how collective thinking and creative placemaking can help shape a community,” concluded Chief Watts.

“As Hupačasath, our mission is one that builds on existing partnerships and explores new opportunities to strengthen our community. Through this project we will be transforming this important piece of waterfront property into a vibrant market that showcases our nations and builds on important partnerships that will re-energize this highly visible asset,” said Brandy Lauder, Elected Chief Councillor of Hupačasath First Nation.

“Grant funding has played a major role in the viability of this project with 99 per cent of the project funds coming from various agencies,” said Sharie Minions, Mayor of Port Alberni. “The City is excited to have the funding secured and is eager to see this area transformed into one that creates opportunities for small business development, builds a space that attracts tourists and locals alike all while raising cultural awareness through placemaking,” concluded Mayor Minions.

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## **BACKGROUND**

Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI) is a national program delivered jointly by Cando (the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM).

The CEDI program supports include third-party neutral facilitation, monthly meetings, bi-annual workshops, and joint strategic planning.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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