



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Skidegate Breaks Ground on New Wellness Centre**

**SKIDEGATE** - Community members, Elders, leaders and partners were on hand for a momentous ground-breaking at a new wellness centre in Skidegate on Haida Gwaii today. The groundbreaking included a ceremonial fire on the building site and offerings of food and tobacco.

The new 9,400 square foot health centre will house the Nation's health programs and services including Home and Community Care; Mental Health; Dietician services; Maternal Child Health; Alternative Medicine & Traditional Healing; and Life Skills programming.

"As a Nation we are transitioning to a wellness model," said Skidegate Chief, Bill Yovanovich. "There is no better way to communicate this transition through this new building. For us, this building represents a return to our teachings and practices as central to health and wellness."

Recent population growth in Skidegate has put increased demand on the current health centre, staff and programming. The new health centre will provide room for growth, alongside the community. The Health Centre is a building block of the local Comprehensive Community Plan, with future plans in the works for Elders Housing, Assisted Living Facilities, and other services.

"This new health facility is designed to reflect our Haida values of being welcoming and interconnected," added Skidegate Health Director Lauren Brown. "Its purpose is to support generations of Haida to achieve their highest level of wellness."

The relocation of the site of the health centre is an important aspect of earthquake readiness. The new building is earthquake and tsunami safe, after an October 2012 magnitude 7.8 earthquake near Haida Gwaii triggered an assessment of the current health centre.

"The First Nations Health Authority is pleased to support the creation of this important healing centre in Skidegate," said FNHA Chief Operating Officer Richard Jock. "Multi-year investments in projects like this are now possible through FNHA's enhanced flexible funding agreements. This is one of the benefits of a long-term tripartite arrangement with our partners."

The First Nations Health Authority contributed \$6 million towards the project. Construction is anticipated to be complete in Spring 2019.

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## Artist Rendering of Skidegate Wellness Centre

