
METLAKATLA FIRST NATION



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

METLAKATLA UNVEILS NEW HEALTH CENTRE AND LANDING CRAFT

Thursday, October 2nd, Metlakatla members and partners gathered to celebrate the grand opening of their new Health Centre in the Village of Metlakatla, alongside the christening of the new Landing Craft vessel for their Public Works Department. .

“Five years ago this was just an idea. Now it’s blossomed into a Centre to meet all of our health needs,” said Tara Leighton, Metlakatla Health Director.

Representatives from Health Canada, the First Nations Health Authority and Metlakatla Governing Council, who funded project, gathered with designers, architects, staff and community members to celebrate the opening of a building that was five years in the making.

The day began with the christening of the Landing Craft vessel by Councilor Alvin Leask, followed by a ribbon cutting celebration at the Health Centre, and lunch, traditional dancing and speeches at the Community Hall.

The new Health Centre offers a more private and confidential setting – and allows Health staff to offer a wider array of services to the community, including home care, immunizations, and a new kitchen for the Meals on Wheels program. Since a soft opening in the spring, the Health Centre has also brought on Cynthia Reece, a Home Care Nurse who is available to provide home care and assessments to residents.

The building itself pays tribute to both the modern and the traditional – its sleek exterior is paneled with local yellow cedar, and it’s heated by geothermal energy. “It has been a pleasure to work with Metlakatla staff. We would not have achieved such a successful project without two main contacts Metlakatla Governing Council gave us to work with – Ron Smith (Director of Public Works) and Gordon Tomlinson (Executive Director),” said

Fereydoun Dabiri, President of David Nairne and Associates, the architectural firm that worked on the project.

The contractors also had positive feedback for staff. “We are very proud to be invited to the project. We have enjoyed working in the community, and made some good friends,” said Rob Roy, President of Vector Projects Group.

Metlakatla’s new Landing Craft Vessel, *the Metlakatla Transport* was also unveiled at the event. The vessel was completed at the end of August in partnership with Broadwater Industries. Mike Collins (Broadwater Industries), Gordon Tomlinson (Metlakatla Governing Council Executive Director), and Ron Smith (Metlakatla Director of Public Works) were involved in designing the vessel. This vessel was built for Band operations, maintenance, and community needs. It can carry a limited amount of supplies, and can be used for charters.

These infrastructural upgrades are also not the only ones currently underway for Metlakatla. The new sports field and skate park, the *Metlakatla Guardian* Emergency Vessel, wastewater treatment facility, new waste transfer station and recycling program are all recent initiatives undertaken by the Metlakatla Governing Council to make Metlakatla a more livable and sustainable community.

Metlakatla Governing Council would like to thank all who attended the event, especially the Git xe’en Ts’msyen dance group, for helping to celebrate the special occasion, and Pastor Charlie Carlick for his blessings.

If you’d like more information on this issue, or to schedule an interview, please contact Veronika Stewart, Metlakatla Communications Manager by calling (250) 628 3234 (ext. 28) or emailing vstewart@metlakatla.ca.