PART 1
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Use for all categories. Projects are judged based on criteria of sustainable design, architectural merit and innovation. **Please submit Part 1 and Part 2 as separate pdf files.**

2026
CANADIAN GREEN BUILDING AWARDS
THE NATIONAL PROGRAM OF SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE & BUILDING MAGAZINE SABMag

PROJECT CATEGORIES

Identify which Award category you are entering

☐ **1. Residential [small]**
Open to new or renovated buildings less than 600m² in area, of which a minimum of 75% is dedicated to single-family or multi-family residential uses.

☐ **2. Residential [large]**
Open to new or renovated buildings [typically multi-unit buildings or groups of related buildings] greater than 600m² in area, of which at least 75% is dedicated to residential uses.

☐ **3. Commercial/Industrial [small]**
Open to new or renovated buildings up to 2,000m² in area, of which more than 75% is dedicated to commercial or industrial uses.

☐ **4. Commercial/industrial [large]**
Open to new or renovated buildings [or groups of related buildings] greater than 2,000m² in area, of which at least 75% of the floor area is dedicated to commercial or industrial uses.

☐ **5. Institutional [small]**
Open to new or renovated buildings up to 2,000m² in area, of which more than 75% is dedicated to institutional uses.

■ **6. Institutional [large]**
Open to new or renovated buildings [or groups of buildings] greater than 2,000m² in area, of which at least 75% of the floor area is dedicated to institutional uses.

☐ **7. Mixed Use**
Open to new or renovated buildings [or groups of related buildings] of any size, in which no individual use exceeds 75% of the overall floor area.

☐ **8. Existing Building Upgrade**
Open to buildings of any size or type in which the primary focus of the work has been to enhance the performance or extend the life of an existing structure. Entries in this category are required to respond only to the submission criteria appropriate to the project.

☐ **9. Interior Design**
Open to interior design projects of any size or type. Entries in this category are required to respond only to the submission criteria appropriate to the project.

An award will be given in each category at the discretion of the jury.

PROJECT DETAILS

Project name: tul'al'txw – Student Housing Commons at North Island College
Address: 2300 Ryan Rd, Courtenay BC V9N 8N6
Year completed: 2025

PROGRAM AND CONTEXT

Project type: [Identify all uses occupying 10% or more of gross floor area]
Student housing, family housing, social lounges, communal kitchens, multi-purpose gathering spaces, wellness centre, laundry, lobbies, study rooms, administration offices, bike storage

Project site: [Check all that apply]

■ Previously undeveloped land ☐ Urban ☐ Rural

☐ Previously developed land ■ Suburban

Other Building description: [Check only one]

■ New ☐ Renovation ☐ Both [If both, list __% new and __% renovation]

METRICS* Provide the following information as applicable to your project.

- Site Area: 3800 m²
- Building gross floor area: 9336 m²

Energy Use Intensity (EUI)
This key metric measures the total energy consumption of a building per unit of gross floor area per year. This figure includes heating, cooling, lighting and operating equipment such as computers and elevators. For industrial and commercial buildings with specific processing equipment, identify this separately from the basic EUI figure.

- Building EUI = 53.9 kWh/m²/year
- Process EUI (if appropriate) = _____ kWh/m²/year
- Reduction in EUI relative to reference building = 88 % please specify the standard used (ASHRAE/MNECB or other)
- State reference standard: NECB

- Recycled materials content: _____ % by value
- Construction materials diverted from landfill: _____ %
- Regional materials by value: _____
- Water consumption from municipal source: _____ litres/occupant/year

[Include both base building and process consumption]

- Reduction in water consumption: 43.6 %
- State the reference on which the % reduction is based: ■ LEED or other ☐

*NOTE FOR PART 9 RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS: PROVIDE THE STATISTICS ABOVE IF AVAILABLE. Include in the Executive Summary [see next page] the EnerGuide or the Home Energy Rating System [HERS] ratings if available, and the WalkScore rating [see www.walkscore.com]. Also, a qualitative assessment of project performance should be included in the appropriate sections of the narrative.

tul'al'txw

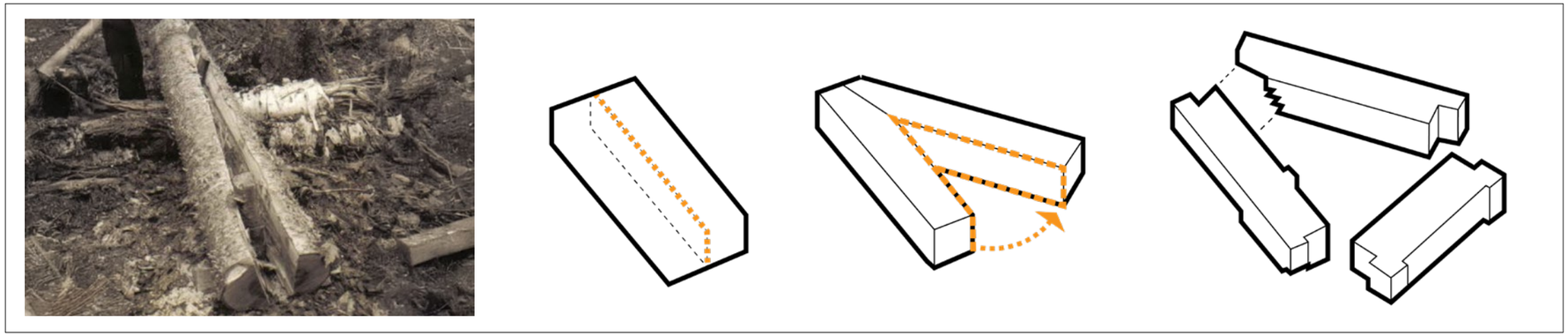
NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE STUDENT COMMONS

Comox Valley, BC, Canada

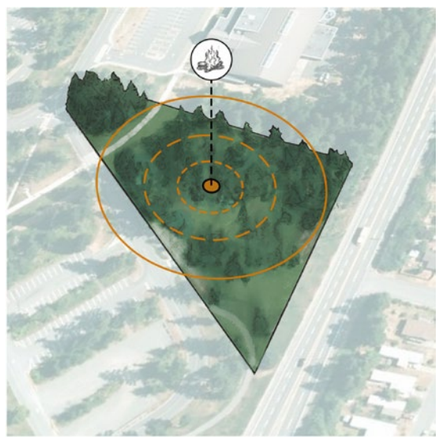
The tul'al'txw Student Housing Commons is more than housing. 217 beds are arranged across three four-storey wings surrounding a central outdoor gathering space, the Hearth, promoting safety and belonging. Mixed unit types support a broad diversity of student profiles. Variously sized gathering spaces, distributed vertically and horizontally, bolster interaction and activity. Amenities include an outdoor kitchen, a family playground, an outdoor amphitheatre, a community learning garden, a wellness centre, an interfaith room and an Indigenous gathering place, all combining to offer a rich new hub to campus life.

Shaped by K'ómoks First Nation teachings, art and culture, the wings' placement define three key passages into the Hearth, each physically manifesting local history, traditions, and craft. The K'omoks were involved throughout; large art murals by local artists, consultation and contributions by local trades and consultants, guidance by elders and leaders from the K'omoks Cultural Committee.

The project, awarded Rick Hansen Gold Certification, and a CLF BC Embodied Carbon Award, meets BC Energy Step Code 4 and LEED Gold equivalency through hyper-efficient envelopes, thoughtful materiality and assemblies, and on-site rooftop PV energy production. Mass timber and wood framing reduces embodied carbon, and native planting and central biodiverse stormwater features enhance ecological responsibility.

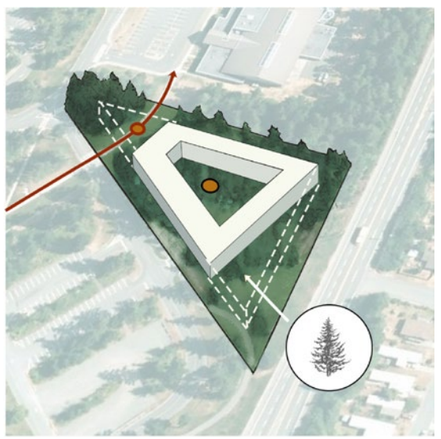


Massing Principles Inspired by Traditional K'omoks Log-Splitting

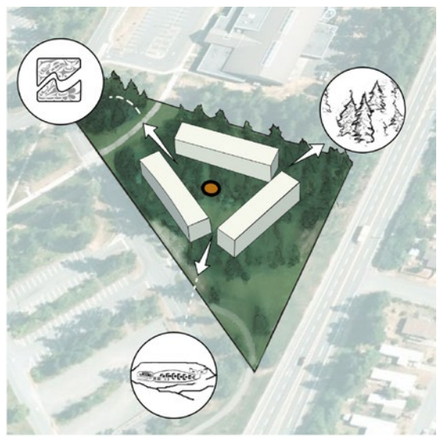


Hearth Centred in Site

Hearth Protected by Commons



Commons Inflected by Context



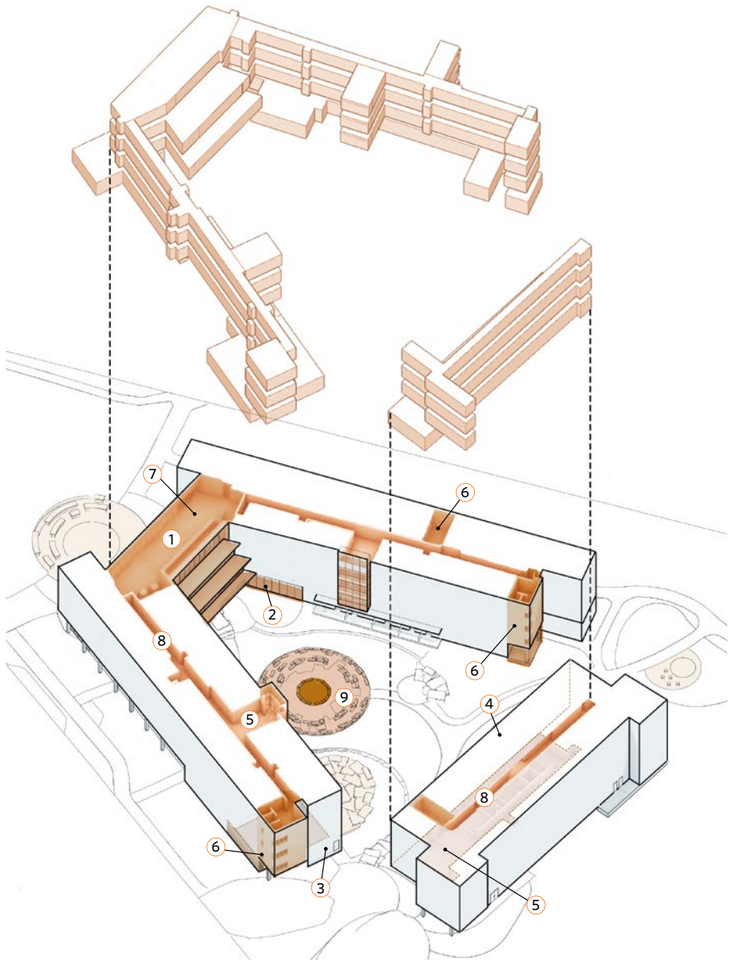
Corners Opened to Create Passages

Gathering Places Multiplied

STRATEGIC DECISIONS

The project was strategically developed to create a new, visible hub of living and gathering on campus, inspired by and designed to embody the K'omoks First Nations through the architecture, interiors and landscape. The site was chosen for its central location to **extend campus life** beyond commuter hours and to engage with the campus' **natural features**, respecting natural **watersheds** and facing a feature **grove of trees**.

Orientation and program organization are guided by Indigenous knowledge which structure movement and gathering while optimizing **daylight, views, and passive comfort**. A gathering Hearth sits at the centre of the site, with the Commons designed to surround, protect and open to it. Three passages, each with cultural relevance to the K'omoks, create **welcoming thresholds** to the Hearth. A series of inward-facing gathering spaces distributed across the Commons encourage **belonging** and interaction.



1. Knowledge Bridge Lounges
2. Wellness Centre
3. Indigenous Gathering Place
4. Family Commons & Play Space
5. Living Room
6. Study Space
7. Community Kitchen & Lounge
8. Hallways & Niches
9. Hearth

Program Distribution
Loud to Quiet

COMMUNITY

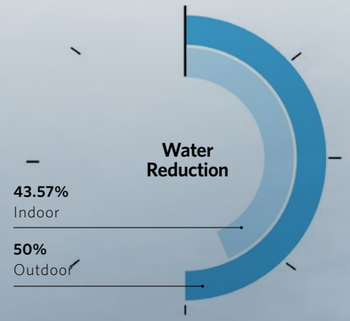
Set in the **heart of campus**, on the main pedestrian spine, the project is central to student life.

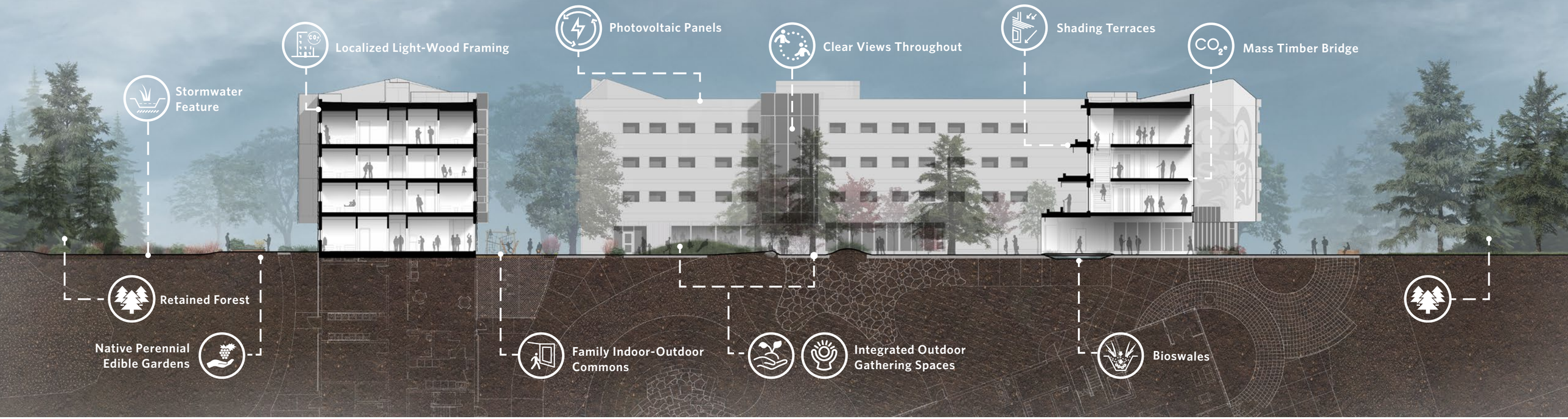
A variety of gathering spaces—outdoor/indoor collective kitchens, teaching amphitheatres, community gardens, social lounges, study spaces, interfaith room, wellness centre, and an Indigenous Gathering Space — are intentionally distributed around the Hearth, connecting **community activity** and spreading it responsibly across the Commons.

Electric vehicle parking and bicycle facilities promote **healthy transportation**. Originally a commuter campus, the Commons offers an alternative for living, studying and socializing longer on campus, reducing car use.

Rainwater Collection
& Biodiversity

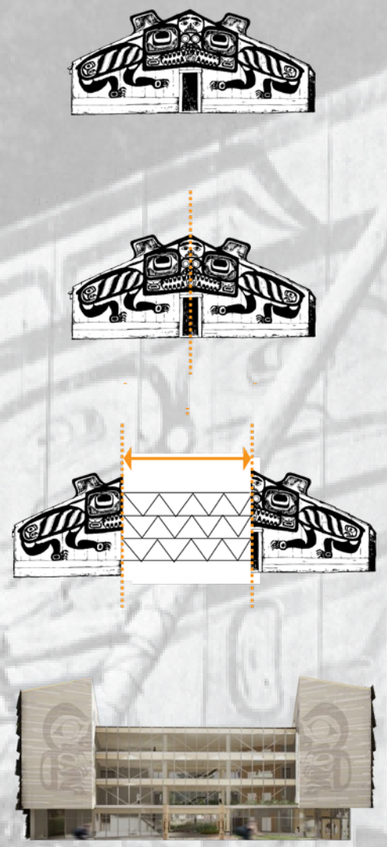
Tree Retention





SITE ECOLOGY

Sustainable features prioritize ecological responsibility. Drought-resistant native plantings ensure resilience and low-maintenance and **reduce outdoor water use by 50%.** A biodiverse stormwater system filters rainwater into raingardens, enhancing habitat value and offering visible hydrological education. Bioswales hold **100% of on-site storm water**. Peak storm water run-off is designed not to exceed peak flows for the 1-in-25 year 24-hour storm event. **+30% of the site is open** and **+25% vegetated**, maximizing tree retention. Urban heat island effect is mitigated by **high albedo roofs** and **high SR paving**. Low flow fixtures provide **43.6% reduction** for indoor water use. Arrays of rooftop photovoltaic panels further reduce energy demands.



The Knowledge Passage

An Opening of the Big House Ceremonial Front

Featuring KFN Artist Pamela Mitchell's

"Knowledge Keeper"

LIGHT & AIR

Informed by indigenous vernacular architecture, the building massing, judiciously placed glazing, unit distribution, and smart circulation provide **abundant daylight** and **natural ventilation**, supported by the central Hearth and Passages that channel views and breezes.

Reflecting

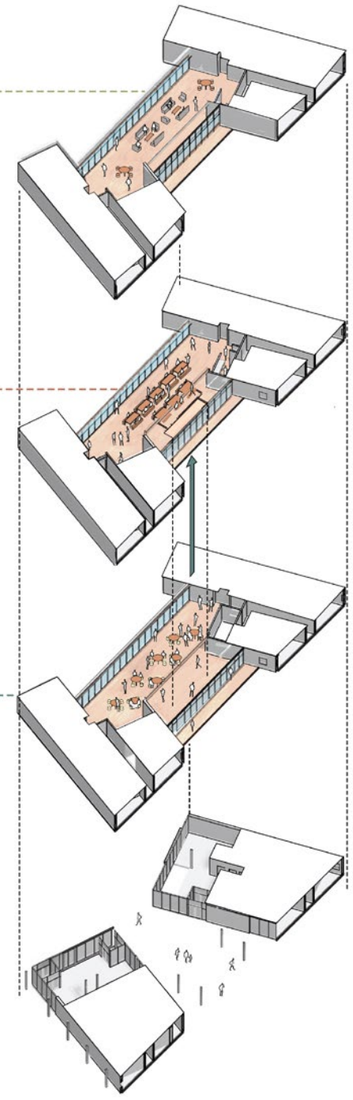
Feasting

Dialogue

The Knowledge Bridge

3 Levels of Interconnected Social Spaces

Inspired by the Potlatch Ceremony



LIGHT & AIR

The thin floorplate and substantial glazing in the Knowledge Bridge Lounges **maximize connection to the outside**, while ensuring overall energy performance by opacifying other areas of the façade.

ERVs for all ventilation units provide minimum 75% performance effectiveness. Demand controlled ventilation was designed for common areas, offices and knowledge bridge using CO_2 sensors. **Occupancy sensors** for common areas, stairwells, and utility rooms further reduced energy demands.

Daylight & Comfort

LIGHT & AIR

All units and amenity spaces provide **operable windows** for natural ventilation. Daylight modeling calibrated the panoramic window size, ensuring an adequate balance of daylight, views, fresh air, and thermal performance.

An Interconnected Ground Floor

1. Lobby/Front Desk
2. Living Room
3. Offices
4. Gender-Neutral Washroom
5. Cleansing & Reflection
6. Indigenous Gathering Place
7. Outdoor Amphitheatre
8. Elder-in-Residence
9. Family Commons
10. Playground
11. Educational Gardens
12. Bike Storage
13. Study Spaces
14. Wellness Centre
15. Outdoor Learning Space
16. Student Units
17. Family Units

WELLNESS

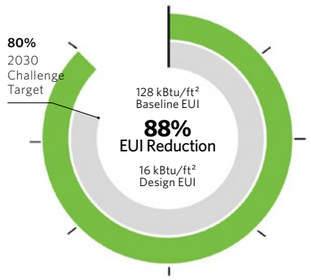
Wellness is addressed holistically through **biophilic** landscape connections, social programming, and **accessibility**. The project is designed to achieve **Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility** certification, improving inclusive access across residences and amenities. The Indigenous Gathering Space and Hearth at the courtyard's centre support **cultural expression,** reflection, and **community health**.

More than 75% of floor area has views to nature and the surrounding context. A dedicated Wellness Centre supports health, and interconnected spaces opening to the Hearth support activities to **improved physical and mental health**.

WELLNESS

A series of intentional social spaces ensure community **wellbeing**, offering opportunities to collectively prepare and enjoy meals and socialize.

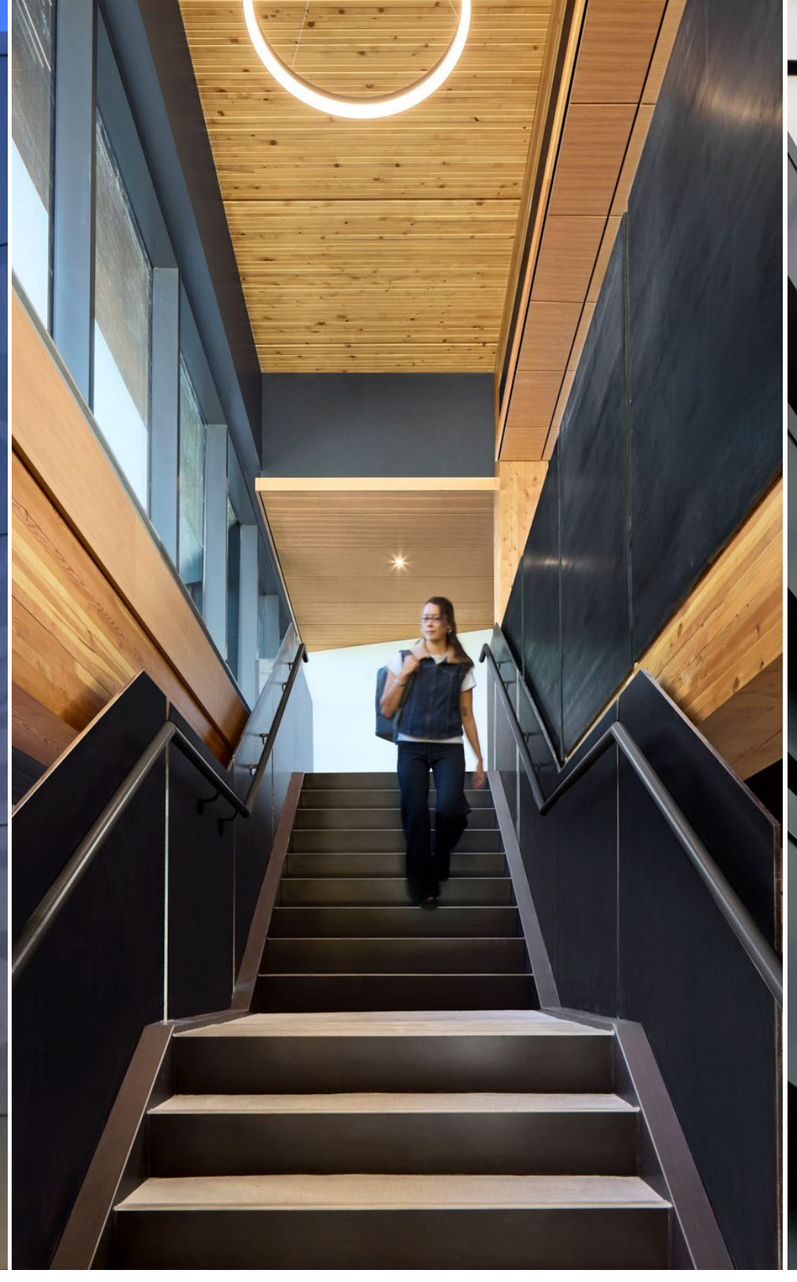
Passive Energy Reduction



OPERATING ENERGY PRESENT & FUTURE

Passive forward envelope design is complemented by efficient active systems to achieve **BC Energy Step Code 4** and **LEED Gold** equivalency targets with a TEDI of 10.7 kWh/m². **Mass timber assemblies** and **reduced thermal bridging** lower heating and cooling loads. The envelope achieves: Walls: **R-30 effective performance**, triple glazed suite windows (USI-0.91, SGHC-0.33), triple glazed curtain wall (USI-1.14, SHGC-0.3). **Exterior roof: R-45**. Exposed floor: R-30.

Fully electric, low-GHGI systems include **Variable Refrigerant Flow** (VRF) system for heating and cooling to common spaces and other specialty spaces. Suites are heated with electric resistance heaters with partial cooling from the VRF cooling coil connected to the central ERV. **Rooftop photovoltaic** provide 15% of building's annual energy use, reducing the GHGI to 0.64 $kgCO_2/m^2$.



MATERIALS & RESOURCES

The indigenizing of material choices, detailing, and procurement strategies minimized industrialized, mechanized, and complex assemblies in favour of raw, **simply-operable**, and **low-maintenance** solutions. All major materials met **ILFI's Red List** requirements.

Material selection prioritizes **durability** and **occupant health**. Authentic, **raw** materials were specified to minimize surface applications and finishes. Verification of legal and responsible sourcing of all **wood products** ensured reduced embodied carbon while **sequestering biogenic carbon**. Robust **native plantings** were selected to reduce maintenance requirements.

Envelope and MEP approaches, congruent with Passive House principles, minimize energy demand. Responsible detailing assemblies reduced embodied and operational carbon while supporting **Step Code 4 performance** and **LEED Gold** equivalency targets.

Embodied &
Operational Reduction

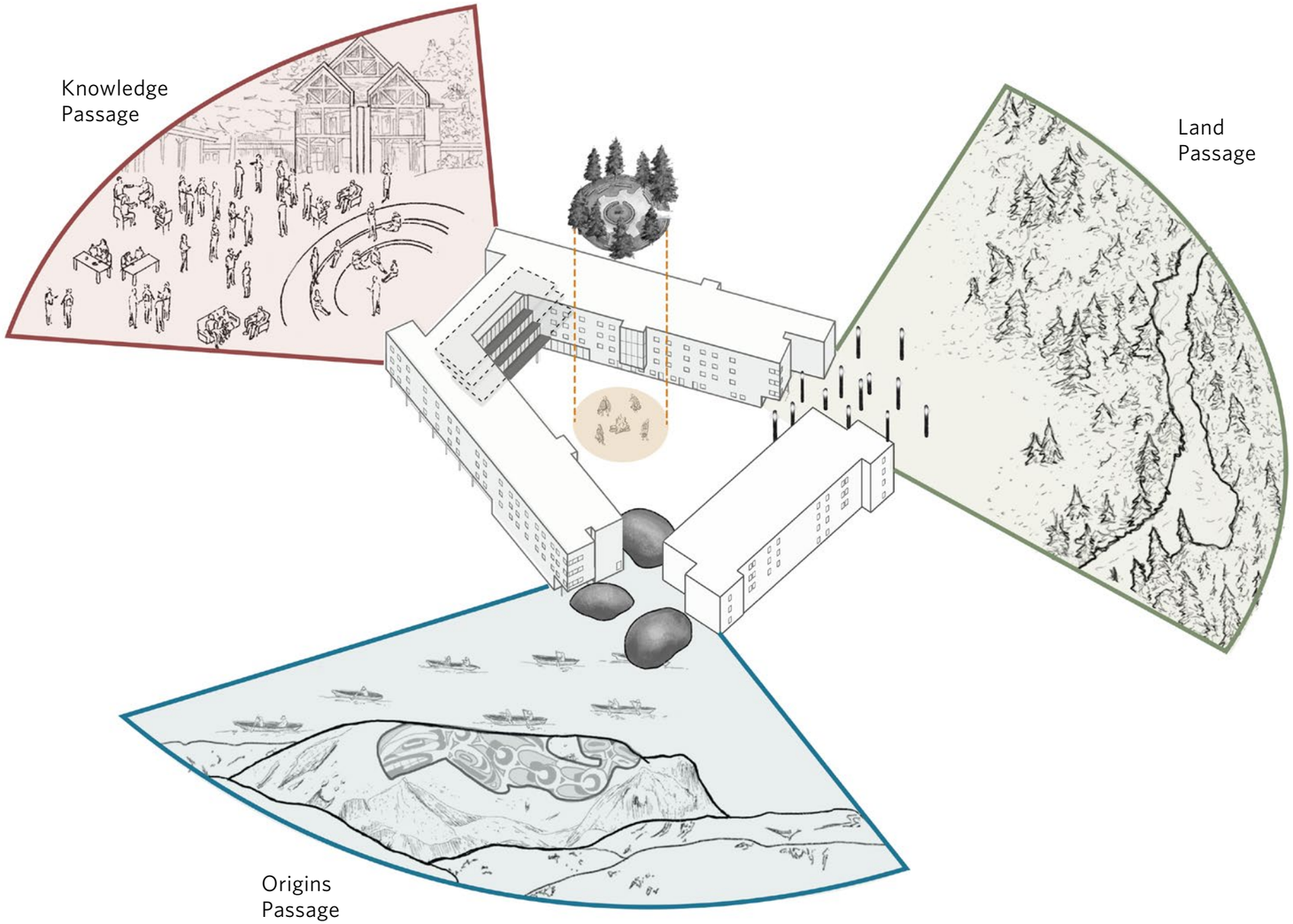
Embodied Carbon

141

BUILDING LIFECYCLE CONSIDERATIONS

The project was recognized with the **2024 Carbon Leadership Forum (BC) Embodied Carbon Award for Large Buildings**, underscoring its life cycle carbon strategy and material choices (e.g. wood frame and mass timber). The **embodied carbon** intensity is 140kgCO_2e/m², a 53% reduction relative to a baseline.

Compact forms with a balanced depth for daylight factor for better **thermal performance**. Height and unit sizes were optimized for **light wood frame** construction to reduce embodied carbon. The siting of the southernmost Family Building situates it in an optimal position for **solar photovoltaic panels**.



The Indigenous Gathering Space

EDUCATION & INFORMATION SHARING

The campus facing design integrates **cultural interpretation** and **environmental literacy** into daily life: named passages (Origins, Land, Knowledge) communicate **local history**; the Hearth and Indigenous Gathering Place bring **ceremony** and **learning** to the community. Flexible spaces support various pedagogical events, sharing knowledge by **indigenizing** educational spaces.

EDUCATION & INFORMATION SHARING

Spaces and project features are designed to embed culture and into **activity-based** teaching. The visible stormwater nature garden demonstrates site hydrology and biodiversity. Engagement with the **K'ómoks First Nation** and **NIC's Indigenous Advisory Committee** shaped program priorities, supported art integration, and wove cultural practices into **spatial design**—creating a rich educational backdrop for learning and living.

CONTACT SHEET

Education & Information Sharing

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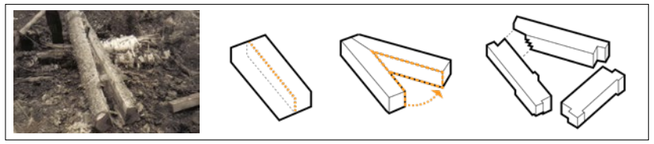

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Light & Air

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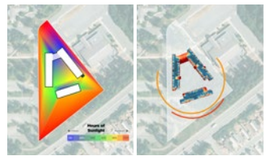

Materials & Resources

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Community

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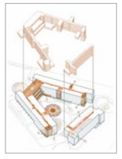

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Wellness

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Building Lifecycle Considerations

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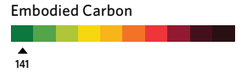

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Site Ecology

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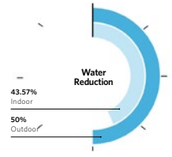

Operating Energy Present & Future

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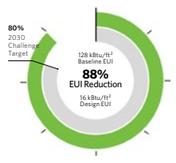

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Education & Information Sharing

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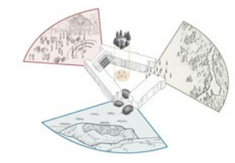

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