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Ministry of Regional Economic and Skills Development  
Industry Canada

## TRADES TRAINING FACILITY BRINGS OPPORTUNITY TO VALLEY

COURTENAY – A new \$8.2-million Trades Training Centre at North Island College (NIC) has officially opened its doors to students and faculty, providing the North Island’s apprentices an educational opportunity that is not only closer to home but at one of the best-equipped trades training facilities in the province.

“Our government has invested in innovation and infrastructure to improve the quality of life for Canadians and set the foundation for economic prosperity,” said the Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, MP for Vancouver Island North. “This investment created jobs for people at a critical period while improving the infrastructure that North Island College will need for years to come.”

“This is a very impressive and vital facility that will benefit apprenticeship students, employers and residents of the Comox Valley and North Island both now and in the future,” said Don McRae, MLA for Comox Valley. “This is also one of the greenest buildings in the valley, and I commend North Island College for their commitment to environmental sustainability.”

The centre offers a number of training opportunities to current and prospective students, and in many cases is providing North Island students with the chance to study closer to home.

NIC’s new facility is home to the North Island’s first carpentry apprenticeship program – the demand for which has already filled the first three classes. NIC will also offer a plumbing program and a cutting-edge marine training program with equipment so unique that it’s the only one of its kind on Vancouver Island north of Victoria.

“Trades training and skills development is a critical component of our province’s economic prosperity and success,” said Ida Chong, Minister of Regional Economic and Skills Development. “The programs offered at NIC are a great example of government’s commitment to trades training and certification that is industry-driven and highly responsive to labour market needs.”

Carpentry is one of the top five trades that will see the greatest number of job openings in the next decade. By 2019, it’s expected that the Vancouver Island region will need over 6,800 carpenters and cabinetmakers to keep up with retirements and industry demand. The Trades Training Centre allows Comox Valley residents to be part of the solution to this future demand.

“The timing of this facility couldn’t be any better. We’re just coming out of a recession and we know that there is going to be growth as a result of a number of large projects,” said Jan Lindsay, president of North Island College. “This is a state-of-the-art facility that will have a phenomenal impact on the ability of the college to do the work that we should be doing.”

The training centre is a LEED gold project, using 60 to 70 per cent less energy than typical buildings of its size. NIC has also committed to preserving part of the surrounding woodland, equal to the footprint of the building, as part of their green initiative.

North Island College also received \$974,000 in additional KIP funding for infrastructure renewal. This included roof replacement on three buildings and an extension of pedestrian walkways on the Comox Valley campus and boiler upgrades at the Port Alberni campus.

These are some of the 39 projects at post-secondary institutions across the province funded through a joint federal-provincial investment of \$497 million. The total investment in these projects is \$519 million including contributions from institutions.

The projects are also part of an overall \$14-billion capital infrastructure program supported by the Province that will create up to 88,000 jobs and help build vital public infrastructure in every region of B.C.

Canada’s Economic Action Plan sets out to stimulate the Canadian economy and to improve our long-term competitiveness through \$12 billion in new infrastructure investment, which includes the \$2-billion Knowledge Infrastructure Program.

For more information on post-secondary education, trades training and the labour market in B.C., visit: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/resd/>

For more information about the federal Knowledge Infrastructure Program, visit: [www.ic.gc.ca/knowledge-infrastructure](http://www.ic.gc.ca/knowledge-infrastructure)

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