

**National Maritime Centre of the Pacific and the Arctic**  
Backgrounder February 2008

The Province of British Columbia has announced its commitment to establishing the National Maritime Centre of the Pacific and the Arctic subject to federal matching dollars. This dynamic new cultural and educational facility is proposed for the former Burrard Shipyard Site on the waterfront in the City of North Vancouver.

The announcement follows the completion of the full Business Case with the assistance of Partnerships British Columbia and a team of consultants funded by the Government of Canada, Ministry of Western Economic Diversification, and Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Tourism Sport and the Arts. The full business case was necessary for senior governments to consider capital funding to build the Centre. The business case shows the Centre can be built as a public private partnership operated by a non-profit society.

The National Maritime Centre will be the West Coast hub of maritime activity and education. It will bring together historic artefacts and interactive exhibits, maritime education and training, events, business forums and water based activities like sea and boat festivals to be a dynamic year round destination for residents and tourists. It will showcase the west's role in Asia Pacific trade, our Aboriginal roots and our dependence on the marine environment.

Through the development of strong partnerships with local industries, organizations and educators, the NMC will strengthen the fabric of community life. Involvement with community and national partners will keep the facility active and relevant while providing a West Coast venue for reinforcing a sense of Canadian values. A focus on integrating family, youth and training-based programs throughout the NMC will help provide young Canadians with the confidence and tools needed to seize the opportunities the marine world will increasingly offer in trade, scientific research and conservation, undersea technology and resource management. It already has achieved strong community grassroots, business and political support.

The location in a federally designated heritage shipyard on the waterfront at the centre of Canada's largest and busiest port within clear view of downtown Vancouver, the nation's gateway to the Pacific and Asia, is ideal. It is in the centre of the Pier development by Pinnacle International with its hotel and convention centre, residential, commercial and office construction underway. Just east of the site is the Burrard Dry Docks and Vancouver Port. To the west are Lonsdale Quay and Washington Marine's Cates Tugs. The site is able to take advantage of the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre expansion and other tourism opportunities. The NMC spaces and activities can be designed to complement events at the VTCC just a 12 minute Seabus ride away. It is also ideal from an historical and heritage standpoint. A significant part of BC's shipbuilding industry was once situated on the site and the *St. Roch* and many other famous ships were built there.

Two separate previous studies, funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia created the concept and operating model for this new institution and identified the current proposed site. In January 2006 the City of North Vancouver embraced the project when approached by the Vancouver Maritime Museum who had initiated those studies. The City undertook further work summarized in the *NMC Project Definition and Business Case* to fit the model to the North Vancouver site and create an exciting, viable National Maritime Centre that celebrates Canada's Pacific Gateway and the Arctic.

# The National Maritime Centre

For the Pacific and the Arctic

North Vancouver Council rezoned the site to accommodate the NMC in November 2006 and approached the federal and provincial governments in January 2007 to partner in the further development of the National Maritime Centre. In July 2007 the provincial and federal governments announced joint funding for the development of the full business case for the National Maritime Centre. Partnerships B.C. led a team of consultants completed a report in fall 2007 when it was submitted back to the respective sponsoring ministries of senior governments. The provincial throne speech announcement follows their assessment of that report.

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