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For immediate release

SHAWNIGAN LAKE MUSEUM EXPANSION TO BOOST VISITATION AND EXPAND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Museum plays key role in regional cultural and tourism economy

COURTENAY, 10 November 2020 – The Shawnigan Lake Museum is expanding to provide much needed space to display the facility’s unique collections, develop new exhibits as well as attract new events, thanks to funding through the Island Coastal Economic Trust’s (ICET) *Economic Infrastructure and Innovation Program* (EIIP).

The Shawnigan Lake Historical Society is leading a project to triple the Museum’s floorplan. This expansion will create a new exhibit area showcasing the entire collection of original E.J. Hughes drawings, as well as new E.J. Hughes acquisitions. The expansion will also facilitate an improved visitor experience and a more comprehensive display of the popular Kinsol Trestle exhibit, including more archival records, construction photos and improvements to the Kinsol Trestle model. A new Cowichan Tribes Exhibit in collaboration with Cowichan Tribes is also being developed.

“This project builds on Shawnigan Lake’s recognition as a regional recreation destination and will help diversify and broaden its reputation as a cultural and heritage draw,” says ICET Board Chair Aaron Stone. “Prioritizing tourism funding to address gap and growth areas is essential to our work – especially now – and the Museum’s expansion has the potential to become a significant attraction for the region.”

In addition to developing the display and exhibition areas, the visitor experience will be improved through the creation or enlargement of several other new spaces. A larger gift shop will provide opportunities for local artists and artisans to have their projects displayed and purchased. A multi-purpose room, known as the Great Room, will be built to accommodate events, traveling collections, group visits and rental space accommodating up to 100 people. A 500 square foot archives and research space and a 200 square foot public Community Living Room will be developed. A new, open and spacious lobby, with a reception area and public washrooms will also be created.

“The Museum is a gateway to visitors in the South Cowichan region and plays a role in promoting the tourism assets in the South Cowichan area,” says Shawnigan Lake Museum Executive Director Lori Treloar. “This project will not only allow for an improved visitor experience, but will also provide catalysts for new business development in the area, cultural programming for children and youth and cultural benefits through community activities and safe gathering spaces.”

ICET will contribute \$250,000 to the project’s overall \$1,827,000 cost. The project is expected to get underway in 2021.

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About the Island Coastal Economic Trust

Created and capitalized by the Province of BC in 2006, the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) mission is to create a more diverse and globally competitive Island and Coastal economy. In partnership with local and regional government, non-profits and indigenous communities, ICET serves nearly half a million residents. Funding and support for economic infrastructure and other economic diversification initiatives is delivered through a unique, community centered, decision-making process. Since inception, ICET has approved more than \$53.8 million in funding for over 230 initiatives. These investments have leveraged over \$270 million in new investment into the region creating more than 2550 construction phase jobs and 2700 long term permanent jobs. To learn more, visit www.islandcoastaltrust.ca

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