



## News release

For immediate release

### **The Government of Canada invests in the installation of solar panels on Hiawatha First Nation Cultural Centre**

**Hiawatha First Nation, Ontario, March 2, 2023** — Today, Jennifer O’Connell, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities and Member of Parliament for Pickering – Uxbridge, and Chief Laurie Carr of Hiawatha First Nation announced federal funding of over \$284,000 to install solar panels on the Hiawatha First Nation Cultural Centre.

The 73.5-kilo-Watt roof-mounted energy system will consist of 210 modules of 350-Watt photovoltaic (PV) panels. The energy it generates will increase the energy efficiency of the Cultural Centre and L.I.F.E (Lasting Individual Family Enrichment) Services building. These improvements are expected to reduce the facility’s energy consumption by an estimated 21.4% and greenhouse gas emissions by 3.5 tonnes annually.

This investment will reduce the facility’s energy costs, freeing up operational funds that will be reinvested in the community. The PV array will make the facility more energy autonomous, reducing the impact of energy disruptions on the facility and making it a more secure space for community members to gather during power outages.

The Cultural Centre and L.I.F.E. (Lasting Individual Family Enrichment) Services building expansion project was completed in spring 2021. It offers accessible spaces and services to the community including a family room, a large event space and a commercial kitchen that provides cultural programs, services, and teachings. It is also used as the community’s emergency use space.

By investing in infrastructure, the Government of Canada is growing our country’s economy, increasing the resiliency of our communities and improving the lives of Canadians.

#### **Quotes**

“Investing in green energy systems is important to foster the growth of safe, healthy, and prosperous Indigenous communities. This investment for the Hiawatha First Nation Cultural Centre will not only help to improve energy security and reduce greenhouse gases, it will also support the operation of an essential community resource. The Government of Canada is committed to working with its partners to create more spaces for Indigenous people to gather, practice their culture and language, and participate in healthy lifestyles.”

*Jennifer O’Connell, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities and Member of Parliament for Pickering – Uxbridge, on behalf of the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities*

“Our community is a small but mighty one with great leadership that fully supports projects like this one. We hope to lead the way for other First Nations in showing what’s possible in our communities. The goal of this project is to increase the energy efficiency of our Cultural Centre

and L.I.F.E. Services building, and to off set grid electricity consumption. We are grateful and appreciative of the support of the GICB program in making this project possible for us.”

*Hayley Vogler, Capital Projects Manager, Hiawatha First Nation*

### Quick facts

- The Government of Canada is investing \$284,219 through the Green and Inclusive Community Buildings (GICB) program.
- The Green and Inclusive Community Buildings (GICB) program was created in support of Canada’s Strengthened Climate Plan, supporting the Plan’s first pillar through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the increase of energy efficiency, and higher resilience to climate change. It is providing \$1.5 billion over five years towards green and accessible retrofits, repairs or upgrades.
- The GICB program aims to improve the places Canadians work, learn, play, live and gather by cutting pollution, making life more affordable, and supporting thousands of good jobs. Through green and other upgrades to existing public community buildings and new builds in underserved communities, GICB helps ensure community facilities are inclusive, accessible, and have a long service life, while also helping Canada move towards its net-zero objectives by 2050.
- At least 10 percent of funding is allocated to projects serving First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, including Indigenous populations in urban centres.
- Announced in December 2020, Canada’s Strengthened Climate Plan includes 64 new measures and \$15 billion in investments towards a healthy environment and economy.

### Associated links

Green and Inclusive Community Buildings:

<https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/gicb-bcvi/index-eng.html>

Investing in Canada Plan Project Map:

<https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/gmap-gcarte/index-eng.html>

Strengthened Climate Plan:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/climate-plan/climate-plan-overview.html>

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### Contacts

For more information (media only), please contact:

**Jean-Sebastien Comeau**

Press Secretary and Senior Communications Advisor

Office of the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc

Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities

343-574-8116

Canada



[Jean-Sebastien.Comeau@iga-aig.gc.ca](mailto:Jean-Sebastien.Comeau@iga-aig.gc.ca)

**Media Relations**

Infrastructure Canada

613-960-9251

Toll free: 1-877-250-7154

[media-medias@infc.gc.ca](mailto:media-medias@infc.gc.ca)

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Web: [Infrastructure Canada](#)

**Hayley Vogler, CAPM, PMP, ACP, ENV SP**

Capital Projects Manager

Hiawatha First Nation

705-295-4421

[capitalmanager@hiawathafn.ca](mailto:capitalmanager@hiawathafn.ca)