

April 4, 2019

### ***NEW BIKE PATH CONNECTS TOFINO TO PACIFIC RIM NATIONAL PARK***

COURTENAY – The Island Coastal Economic Trust is investing \$385,000 into cycling infrastructure that will connect Tofino to the Pacific Rim National Park, completing 40km of uninterrupted pathway for residents and visitors to experience the park in an entirely new way.

A federal investment in the ʔapščiik tʼašii Trail established a cycling path through the National Park but stops short of connecting to Tofino’s existing multi use path by 2.8km. Led by the District of Tofino, the project will leverage this investment by building a 3m wide, separated asphalt pathway creating a cycling route from Tofino through Pacific Rim National Park.

“Tofino has been steadily developing slow, sustainable forms of tourism that reinforce our commitment to nature, education and culture, and this project aligns perfectly with those values,” said Britt Chalmers, Acting Mayor for the District of Tofino. “This project will provide an alternative, non-motorized way to explore Tofino and the National Park, attracting new markets in the process.”

Mayor Aaron Stone, ICET Vice-Chair, noted that the project also means new business opportunities, for Tofino and the nearby Tla-o-qui-aht communities.

“Recreational cyclists are an underserved market in the region, and this project will attract both overnight and daytrip cyclists, creating new opportunities for tour operators, shuttle services, bike shops, coffee houses and other services catering to trail users,” added Stone.

An economic analysis conducted by ICET estimates the project will generate approximately 22 new direct and indirect jobs in the next three to five years. These are expected to result from new business and revenue growth to accommodation, hospitality and other business that will serve the growing cycle tourism market.

“Interconnected, well-built pathways, separated from motor vehicle traffic situated in spectacular settings have proven to be big draws for visitors,” explained Nancy Cameron, Executive Director of Tourism Tofino. “This project will create another year-round attraction that will inspire travel to the Pacific Rim region with the growing number of folks seeking active cycling experiences that connect them with local peoples, unique environments and beautiful scenery.”

The Tla-o-qui-aht communities of Esowista and Ty-Histanis will also benefit from enhanced integration, creating opportunities for collaboration in cycling and cultural tourism, while improving access to basic services and employment in Tofino.

The \$3.7M project is expected to begin construction this spring, with completion in spring 2020.



Building a diverse and sustainable economy.

### **About the Island Coastal Economic Trust**

Created and capitalized by the Province of BC, the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) has been at the forefront of economic diversification, planning and regional revitalization for the past twelve years.

ICET is independently governed by a Board of Directors and two Regional Advisory Committees which include more than 50 locally elected officials, MLAs and appointees from the Island and Coast. This exceptional team of leaders collaborate to set regional priorities and build vital multi-regional networks.

Through a community centered decision-making process, ICET has approved more than \$50 million in funding for over 200 economic infrastructure and economic development readiness projects. These investments have leveraged over \$270 million in new investment into the region creating more than 2500 construction phase jobs and 2600 long term permanent jobs.

A full overview of ICET can be found at [www.islandcoastaltrust.ca](http://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca).

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