

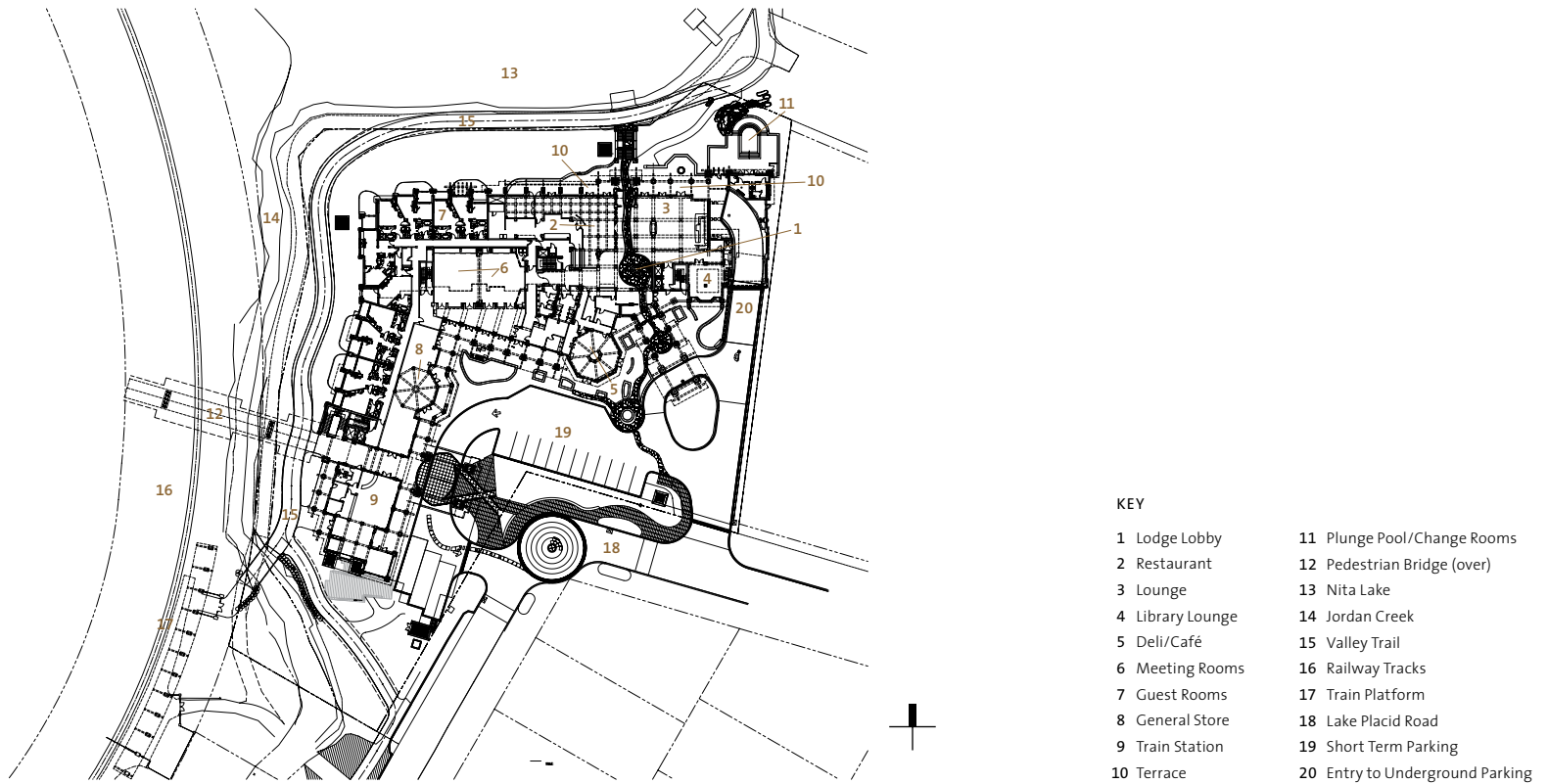
TRADITIONAL FORMS WORK WELL FOR  
THIS CONTEMPORARY RESORT FACILITY

# NITA LAKE LODGE





Nita Lake Lodge



## ARCHITECTURE

**NITA LAKE LODGE IS SITUATED** in the Resort Municipality of Whistler, British Columbia, a world-class ski destination in the heart of the province’s Coast Mountains. In addition to 77 guest rooms, with related dining, leisure, meeting, retail and other facilities, the project includes a new train station that was the point of entry to the town for many visitors who attended the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

The location is both prominent and sensitive—perched on the shore of Nita Lake, situated on the axis of Lake Placid Road, and highly visible from the Valley Trail which parallels the lakeshore to the west. The two main components of the building, the train station and the lodge itself, are separately expressed, and the mass of each is further broken down to reduce the apparent scale and help the lodge sit comfortably among its residential neighbours.

*“One of my main concerns as an architect is to design buildings that fit comfortably on their site, and within their physical context. The architectural character was an essential factor in generating public support for the project, and we worked hard to maintain that character through a long and sometimes difficult design process.”*

PETER LANG, ARCHITECT – IBI/HB ARCHITECTS (IBI GROUP)

The architectural expression recalls that of early mountain lodges and train stations, with multiple gables and balconies, and a portecochère. Many of these design elements are built in heavy timber, or in a wood–steel composite construction. Many accents and details are also in wood—those that are structural being in Douglas-fir, and those that are simply decorative being in western red cedar.



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#### FACTS

- This 100,000-ft<sup>2</sup> (9,300-m<sup>2</sup>) facility combines a range of resort-related uses, including a lodge, restaurant and café, spa, retail space and a mini, multi-modal, transportation interchange
  - A comprehensive rezoning process resulted in many benefits to the community, including the preservation of 25 ac (10 ha) of natural wetland through density transfer
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## STRUCTURE

**THE PRIMARY STRUCTURE OF THE BUILDING** is cast-in-place concrete. However, the ancillary structures are built either entirely of wood or of a combination of steel and wood. Several structures have a primary framing system of hollow steel section (HSS) columns and beams—the beams being fitted with steel saddles and knife plates that enable heavy timber purlins to be attached between them. The purlins are typically 8×8-in (203×203-mm) Douglas-fir at 4 ft (1,370 mm) centres, with 2-in thick tongue and groove Douglas-fir decking and 3/8-in (9-mm) Douglas-fir plywood sheathing.

Other canopy structures support green roofs and are constructed completely of heavy timber. The vertical supports for these canopies are split logs that taper from a diameter of 21 in (508 mm) at the base to 16 in (406 mm) at the top. Spreading from these central supports are 8×8-in (203×203-mm) Douglas-fir diagonal struts that in turn support 8×8-in (203×203-mm) Douglas-fir purlins at 39 in (1,000 mm) centres. The decking is 2-in (63-mm) tongue and groove Douglas-fir, with 3/8-in (9-mm) Douglas-fir plywood.



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#### FACTS

- Local Douglas-fir and western red cedar are featured throughout the complex in a variety of secondary structural and exterior finishing applications
  - The interior design features several wood species, including Douglas-fir for doors and trims, and alder, a fast-growing and versatile hardwood species, that has been laminated into panels and used for cabinetry
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## WOOD AND SUSTAINABILITY

**THE RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER** has in place a series of non-prescriptive sustainability goals as part of a plan known as Whistler 2020 ([www.whistler2020.ca](http://www.whistler2020.ca)). The plan is based on The Natural Step (TNS) Framework which, among other things, facilitates the planning of developments that support rather than interrupt the cycle of natural environmental systems, and that incorporate renewable building materials such as wood.

Nita Lake Lodge is situated on a previously developed site, utilizes geexchange ground source heating and cooling to reduce energy consumption and incorporates a green roof at podium level to control storm water runoff from the building. The rezoning of the property included the transfer of development density from other sites, and resulted in the preservation of 25 ac (10 ha) of natural wetland elsewhere in the municipality. Donations were also made to organizations concerned with the preservation of fish and wildlife habitat.

*“We’ve had an overwhelmingly positive reaction from our guests about the look and feel of the lodge. Everyone likes the warmth of the wood and stone, and many people just drop in to soak up the atmosphere. With the café and other facilities, the lodge has provided a much needed meeting place for the Creekside community, and a popular stopping point on the Valley Trail.”*

NATE MCINTYRE, DUTY MANAGER – NITA LAKE LODGE

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The Nita Lake Lodge location can be considered a mini, multi-modal, transportation interchange that connects intercity trains and buses with municipal bus routes and with bicycle and pedestrian trails. These many alternative transport options keep private car use to a minimum.



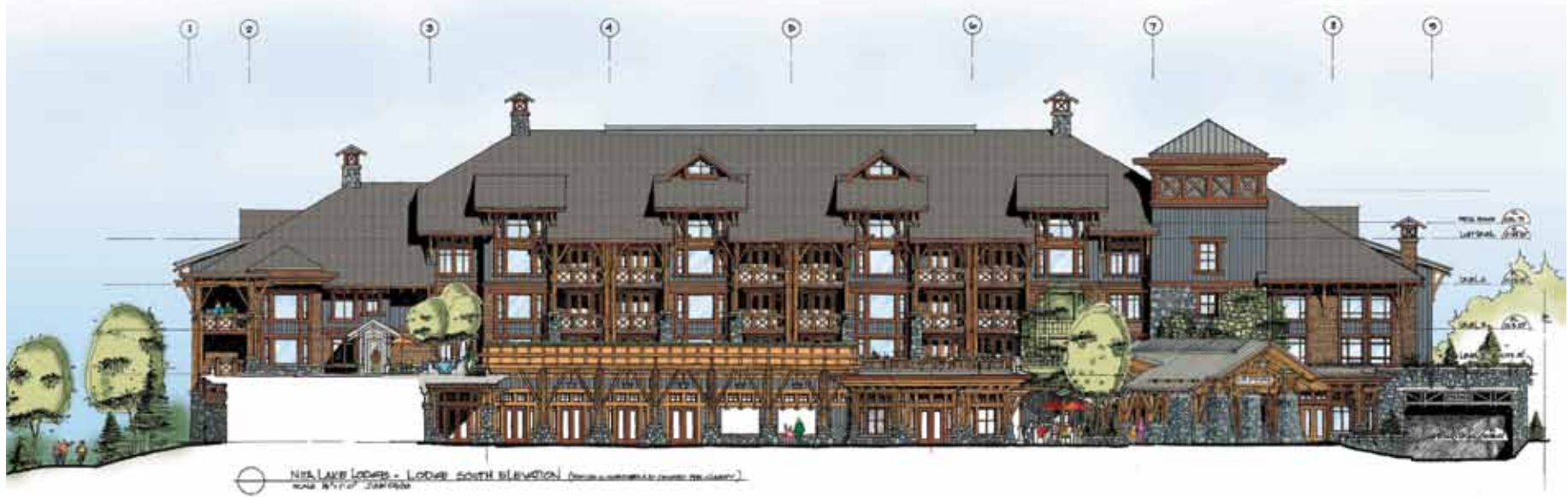
## INTERIOR DESIGN

Wood also plays a key role in creating the interior character of the hotel. The public route through the building that connects Lake Placid Road to the lakeshore is identified by a river of blue stones that passes between Douglas-fir faced columns that are similar in appearance to those outside. Alder doors and trims add to the visual warmth of the lobby area, and complement other custom designed pieces such as the restaurant gates fabricated from iron railroad spikes.

Much of the cabinetry in both the public areas of the building and in the guest rooms is made of local alder. Straight grained and

fast growing, alder is the most abundant commercial hardwood in this region of British Columbia, and can be used for a variety of interior applications. Its small diameter means that it must be laminated to create panel stock suitable for cabinetry.

Alder is naturally light in colour, so the cabinetry in the north-facing rooms was stained dark cherry to create a warmer atmosphere, while a honey colour was used for the cabinetry in the brighter south-facing rooms. The clean lines and crisp detailing of the millwork help maintain a sense of spaciousness.



*“Our aim was to capture some of the romantic associations we have with the golden age of railroad travel, without being nostalgic or overly decorative in our approach. We’ve carried the exterior aesthetic into the main public areas of the building, but rendered it in a more contemporary way—a look we think of as ‘Modern Mountain.’”*

SHARON BORTOLOTTO, PRINCIPAL – BBA DESIGN CONSULTANTS





# NITA LAKE LODGE

## PROJECT CREDITS

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### CLIENT

Nita Lake Lodge Corporation

### ARCHITECT

IBI/HB Architects (IBI Group)

### STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Glotman Simpson Consulting Engineers

### MECHANICAL ENGINEER

Quadra Pacific Consultants

### ELECTRICAL ENGINEER

Nemetz (s /a) & Associates

### LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Tom Barrett Ltd. Landscape Architects

### INTERIOR DESIGN

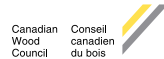
BBA Design Consultants

### PHOTOGRAPHERS

Ivan Hunter Photography Inc., KK Law



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