

# GIBSONS RCMP FACILITY

**LOCATION**

Gibsons, British Columbia

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**

Weiler Smith Bowers

**SIZE**

2,100 m<sup>2</sup>

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

RCMP Project Management

**COMPLETION**

2012

**PROJECT OWNER**

Town of Gibsons

**ARCHITECT**

Mobius Architecture /  
RBM Architecture

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

This new 2,100 square metre facility is located on the outskirts of Port Alberni, B.C. It brings together the provincial electrical utility's indoor and outdoor workers for the first time under a single unifying roof - a metaphoric bridge connecting these historically independent departments. Located in Canada's highest seismic zone, and required to function as a post-disaster operations centre, the building has been designed for strength, flexibility and durability.

Under the province's Climate Action Plan, BC Hydro is required to work towards carbon neutrality in its operations, and thus this project targeted high standards of environmental design and energy performance. The architects' approach was to maximize building performance using passive design strategies, and only then add active environmental control systems.

The program, which includes offices and warehouse spaces, is arranged on a single storey with a partial mezzanine. The plan is elongated in the east-west direction to maximize the benefits of solar exposure and optimize control for daylighting and energy performance. Louvered skylights bring daylight deep into the building, while the double-height volumes assist with natural ventilation.

The building envelope is highly insulated and incorporates high-performance double glazing to reduce energy demand for heating and cooling. Primary energy comes from an extensive geo-exchange system.



Photo courtesy Alan Burns Photography

*“The new RCMP facility is an attractive building that incorporates design themes and materials from the Gibsons area, including locally harvested wood products. Though working under safety and security constraints, features were incorporated such as street-fronting windows, a varied roof line, and a building form that provides visual interest.”*

**Paul Gibbs, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Gibsons**

## WOOD USE

The ‘Wood First’ policy adopted by the Town of Gibsons is integrated into all aspects of the structure and exterior finishing. Wood provided a quick and economical building system that met the budget and scheduling constraints while utilizing locally available materials and trade skills.

As a renewable resource, wood was considered the appropriate choice for both the building structure and exoskeleton. Wood affected by the mountain pine beetle was used for the structural roof decking which, along with glue-laminated (glulam) roof beams, is exposed in feature areas of the interior. The wood provides a warm complement to the bright colours used on accent walls.

Externally, western red cedar is the predominant material. In addition to the exterior posts, it was also used as the primary cladding material and for lining the sloping soffits of the extensive roof overhangs. On the exterior walls, the texture and pattern of cedar shingles complements the smooth surface and horizontal lines of the tongue and groove boards. The cedar gives the building an overall warm appearance, and serves to tie it to the surrounding landscape.



Photos courtesy of Alan Burns Photography

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

This profile is published by Forestry Innovation Investment, the Government of British Columbia's market development agency for forest products.

For more examples of innovative wood building projects throughout British Columbia, visit:

[naturallywood.com](http://naturallywood.com)