

NORTH COWICHAN MUNICIPAL HALL

LOCATION

North Cowichan, British
Columbia

COMPLETION

2013

**ARCHITECT AND
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**

Stantec

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Century Group Inc.

PROJECT OWNER

Municipality of North Cowichan

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Municipal Hall for North Cowichan, B.C. is located on the west side of the Trans-Canada highway on a site shared with the municipal works yard and operations buildings. The parking lot to the south of the municipal hall that separated it from the other buildings, proved to be the ideal site for the new addition, enabling improvements to be made to vehicle circulation and permitting construction to take place in phases.

The existing Municipal Hall is a two-storey structure that took advantage of the sloping site to achieve grade access from the adjacent parking lots to both the upper and lower floors. The new addition was designed on the lower land directly south of the existing building, enabling an efficient

connection to be made via stairs between related program elements in the old and new portions of the building. The location also maximizes the opportunities for daylighting the new structure.

The expansion provides additional offices, meeting rooms, a customer service counter, male and female washrooms with showers and lockers, along with open collaborative work stations. The main public entrance to the Municipal Hall is now located on the east side of the new expansion. The second floor of the new building connects directly into the lower floor of the existing structure, providing easy access to both administrative services and council chambers.



Photo courtesy of Sarah MacNeill

“In our Municipal Hall addition, wood plays a major role both as a structural element and surface finish. The strength and versatility of wood is complemented by its beauty and warmth. As a former carpenter, I truly value the renewable nature of wood and the opportunities it provides for local companies in supply and installation. As Mayor, I’m happy that in this project we’ve been able to further promote a community culture of using wood — consistent with our Wood First policy.”

Mayor Jon Lefebure, Municipality of North Cowichan

WOOD USE

The extensive and prominent use of wood both internally and externally was a conscious decision from the outset of this project. Wood has many advantages over other materials, including being a renewable resource, having a favourable strength to weight ratio, being familiar to local building trades, and offering the opportunity for prefabrication of building components.

The structure is almost entirely made of wood. All of the new interior and exterior walls were constructed with wood framing and the main structure is comprised of glue-laminated (glulam) beams supported by steel columns. The roof structure throughout was designed with wood joists that combine wood top and bottom chords with a

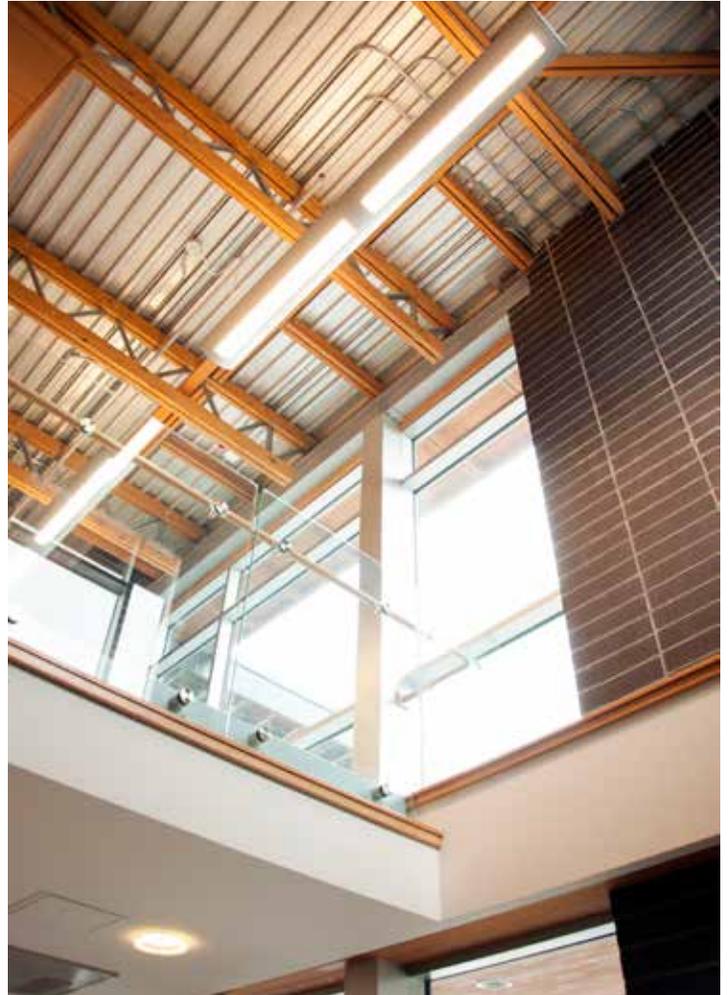
web made from galvanized steel pipes.

The interior design uses wood in several different ways.

Wood doors and frames were selected for the offices, and most of the trim, including base boards, is fir. A feature slatted wood ceiling is used above the main circulation routes, providing acoustical absorption for the open office space and concealing some of the main mechanical systems.

The elevator shaft in the new entry hall was detailed with wood cladding panels that provide a warm focal point in the two-storey circulation space. Millwork is fir veneer finished.

Externally, the building features naturally durable Western red cedar cladding and wood soffits on the roof overhangs.



Photos courtesy of Sarah MacNeill

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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

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