

BC Association of Aboriginal
Friendship Centres
BCAAFC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 18, 2026

BCAAFC Calls for Long-Term Investment in Friendship Centres in Budget 2027

VICTORIA, B.C. – The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) welcomes the release of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services' Report on the Budget 2027 Consultation and is calling on the Province to turn what it heard into sustained investments in Indigenous people and communities.

BCAAFC participated in the consultation to highlight the growing challenges facing urban Indigenous people across B.C. who make up approximately 80 percent of B.C.'s Indigenous population, and the essential role Friendship Centres play in supporting their communities. As needs related to housing, the toxic drug crisis, cost of living, mental health, and gender-based violence increase, Friendship Centres are being asked to do more each year without the stable, long-term funding needed to keep pace.

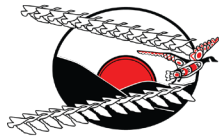
"Friendship Centres are under significant pressure, often filling gaps in housing, health care, mental health, food security, employment and other essential services," said Celeste Hayward, Executive Director of BCAAFC. "Short-term and stagnant funding makes it difficult to retain staff, keep up with growing community needs, and plan for the future. Budget 2027 is the provincial government's opportunity to invest in organizations that communities already know and trust."

BCAAFC is calling on the Province to prioritize three areas in Budget 2027:

- **Sustainable capacity funding for Friendship Centres** that reflects the real cost of providing culturally safe wrap-around services, including staffing, facilities, administration, transportation, technology, and cultural programming.
- **Dedicated and flexible Indigenous youth services funding** that allows communities to provide safe spaces, food security, land-based learning, recreation, employment supports, mental health services, and other programming based on local needs.
- **Expanded Indigenous-led mental health and wellness services**, including prioritizing Indigenous-led approaches within programs such as Complex Care and investing in prevention, trauma-informed care, addictions supports, cultural healing, and outreach.

"We know what our communities need because we see it every day," said Nox Stikine (Annette Morgan), President of BCAAFC. "We are asking the Province for partnership, stability, and a long-term commitment to the urban Indigenous service network that so many people across B.C. rely on. Stable organizations create stable communities."

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BCAAFC is prepared to work with the Province as it develops Budget 2027 to turn these priorities into meaningful action.

Learn More

To read the Report on the Budget 2027 Consultation, visit https://www.leg.bc.ca/committee-content/23211/Report_Consultation_Budget-2027%202.pdf

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