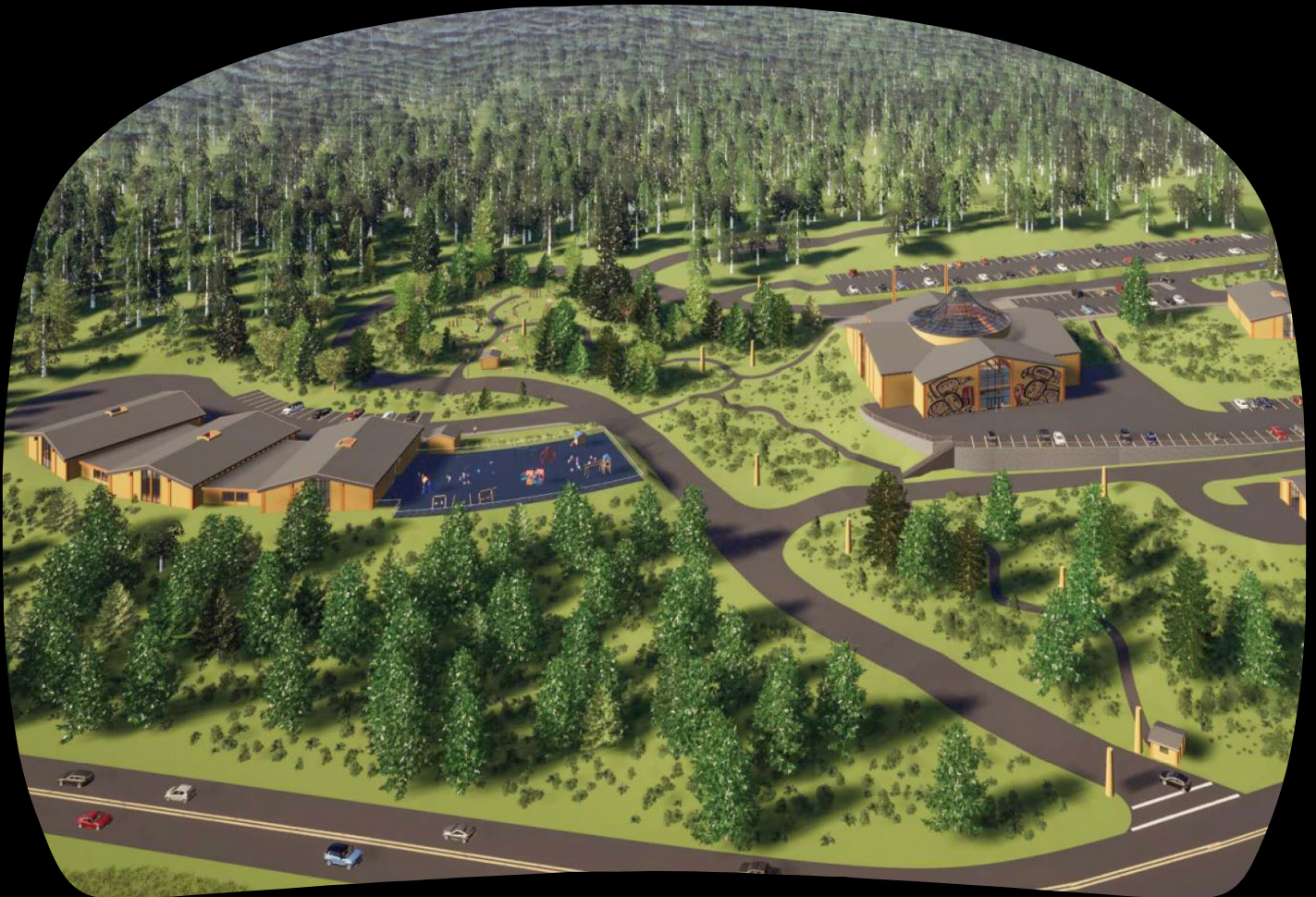




Tribal Education Campus



Sacred Roots
*A Vision for Culture, Land
& Lifelong Learning*



Mission

Preserve our sovereignty, enhance our economic and cultural resources, and promote self-sufficiency and self-governance for our citizens.

Vision

Prosperous, healthy Tribe and tribal citizens who thrive culturally, spiritually and economically.



Introduction

At Tlingit & Haida's 2024 Annual Tribal Assembly, President Richard Chalyee Éesh Peterson announced a bold vision – a Tribal Education Campus in Juneau, Alaska. Situated on 12 acres in our ancestral homelands, the campus will stand as a living expression of Tlingit & Haida's enduring commitment to education, culture and sovereignty.

More than a place of learning, the Tribal Education Campus will be a place of belonging. It will connect generations through language, traditional knowledge, and modern education — from early childhood through post-secondary and community learning. Each space will support tribal citizens to thrive culturally, spiritually and economically, grounded in identity and pride.

This transformational project is an act of reclamation. It restores Indigenous ways of teaching and learning, honors traditional knowledge systems, and strengthens the intergenerational transmission of culture. At the same time, it will serve the broader Juneau community, where nearly 30% of public school students are tribal children, offering an educational foundation rooted in respect, responsibility, and belonging.

The need is urgent. Today, fewer than ten Lingít birth speakers remain, and only one Xaad Kíl birth speaker. Generations of harmful policies disrupted our languages, foodways, and healing traditions. Through this campus, we will change that story, harnessing culture as medicine and education as a pathway to healing and self-determination.

“*We are reclaiming our land and our ways of teaching on it, for our children, ancestors, and generations to come.*”

Our Vision

Our ancestors were our first educators, scientists, and environmental stewards. They studied the land and waters and passed that knowledge forward so future generations could live in balance. The Tribal Education Campus will carry that legacy into the future, weaving ancestral wisdom with contemporary learning. Building on proven successes like Haa Yoo X'atáangi Kúdi, this campus will create an educational village that strengthens sovereignty, restores balance, and ensures our languages, cultures, and people endure for generations to come.

Tlingit & Haida is bringing to life a bold, transformative vision: the creation of a Tribal Education Campus in Juneau, Alaska.

More than a school, this 12-acre campus will be a living learning village — a place where language, land, and leadership converge to nurture every generation. Anchored in Haa Aaní (Our Land) and guided by Haa Shuká (Our Ancestors), it will offer a seamless, lifelong educational pathway from early childhood through post-secondary learning.

Here, traditional knowledge systems will be honored, environmental stewardship cultivated, and the intergenerational impacts of colonization actively healed. The campus will be a space where Tlingit & Haida people can once again learn, teach, and thrive on the land of their ancestors — reclaiming our stories, our teachings, and our future.

Total Land

42 acres

Tribal Education
Campus

12 acres

Tribal Citizens in
Juneau

7,500



Aerial concept of Tribal Education Campus in Juneau, Alaska



Why Now

We stand at a moment that our ancestors dreamed of, and that future generations are counting on. The knowledge that once flowed freely through our clans, families and lands has been tested by centuries of disruption. Boarding schools, relocation policies, and forced assimilation sought to silence our languages and separate our children from their identity. Today, those impacts remain, in our homes, our foodways, and our relationship to the land. Yet our spirit endures.

With fewer than ten Lingít birth speakers and one Xaad Kíl birth speaker remaining, we feel both the weight and the responsibility of this moment. Every word spoken, every story retold, and every song remembered is an act of resistance and of love.

The Tribal Education Campus is our answer to this moment of urgency. It is how we reclaim what was taken and rebuild what was always ours: a circle of learning that connects elders and youth, land and language, heart and mind. Here, we will teach in the way our ancestors intended, guided by the land, grounded in culture, and open to all generations.

This is more than a campus. It is a movement to heal, to teach and to thrive together.



Haa Yoo X'atángi Kúdi *(Our Language Nest)*



Since its founding in 2019, Haa Yoo X'atángi Kúdi (HYXK) has become the heart of Tlingit & Haida's language revitalization efforts, a living classroom where the Lingít language, identity and belonging are woven together. This community-based language nest is more than an early learning program. It is a movement to restore what was nearly lost and to ensure our children's first words reflect the spirit of their ancestors.

HYXK is a State of Alaska licensed childcare program serving children ages 3–5. From late August through May, students are immersed entirely in the Lingít language, learning cultural, social and academic content through storytelling, song, play, and ceremony. Families learn alongside their children, receiving tools and support to continue their language journey at home. This intergenerational model strengthens the bridge between elders and youth, between past and future.

The Tribal Education Campus will expand this model, creating space for youth, families and community members of all ages to come together in language, art and culture.

“From silence to song, the strength of our ancestors lives in the voices of our children.”



Phase One:

Sacred Roots – Grounding Our Vision

Sacred Roots marks the first step in bringing the Tribal Education Campus to life. Named to honor our deep connection to the land, this phase establishes the foundation upon which the entire campus will grow. It is both a literal and symbolic beginning, reclaiming our land, ways of teaching, and responsibilities to future generations.

This phase will create spaces that serve the entire community, fostering engagement through classes, workshops and programs grounded in Tlingit & Haida language and Indigenous knowledge. These spaces will teach life skills, preserve cultural practices, and respond to contemporary needs such as food security, environmental stewardship and climate resilience.

Phase Components

Land Survey & Site Preparation

Surveying, grading and clearing the land while aligning the campus vision with the land's natural features. Establishes the physical and spiritual foundation of the campus.

Infrastructure Development

Installation of utilities (water, sewage, electricity), road access, and foundational systems to support the campus and future growth.

Outdoor Learning Spaces

Includes a totem pole trail, carving house, greenhouse, smokehouse, subsistence preparation areas, orchard, food garden, landscaping, walkways, parking, and recreational areas. These spaces serve as living classrooms where cultural, environmental and practical knowledge converge.

Key Cultural & Educational Features

Totem Pole Campus Trails

These trails act as both physical and cultural pathways, symbolizing the connection between people, history and land. Totem poles reflect identity, lineage and social organization, creating opportunities for intergenerational storytelling, education and cultural preservation.

Carving House

A hub for artisans to practice and teach traditional carving techniques, including totem poles, canoes and culturally significant artifacts. This space ensures the continuity of traditional skills and place-based cultural education.

Smokehouse, Subsistence Preparation Sheds, & Greenhouses

Facilities focused on food heritage, sustainability and environmental justice. The smokehouse and preparation areas support traditional food preservation, while greenhouses teach sustainable agricultural practices and strengthen food sovereignty.

Greenspaces & Landscaping

Native plants and ecological restoration enhance cultural and ecological learning. Outdoor classrooms, gathering spaces and cultural events will be integrated with the natural environment, reinforcing stewardship, biodiversity and environmental justice.

“*We are building the dreams of our ancestors.*”



Conceptual drawing of key cultural and outdoor learning spaces

Our Homeland *is* Our Classroom

*Every word spoken,
every story retold,
and every song
remembered is an
act of reclamation
and love...*



Cultural Design & Identity

The Tribal Education Campus is more than a school. It is a living expression of Tlingit & Haida identity. Every architectural and artistic element is intentional, honoring our ancestors, reflecting who we are, and instilling pride in future generations.

Cedar Hat: A Symbol of Protection and Belonging

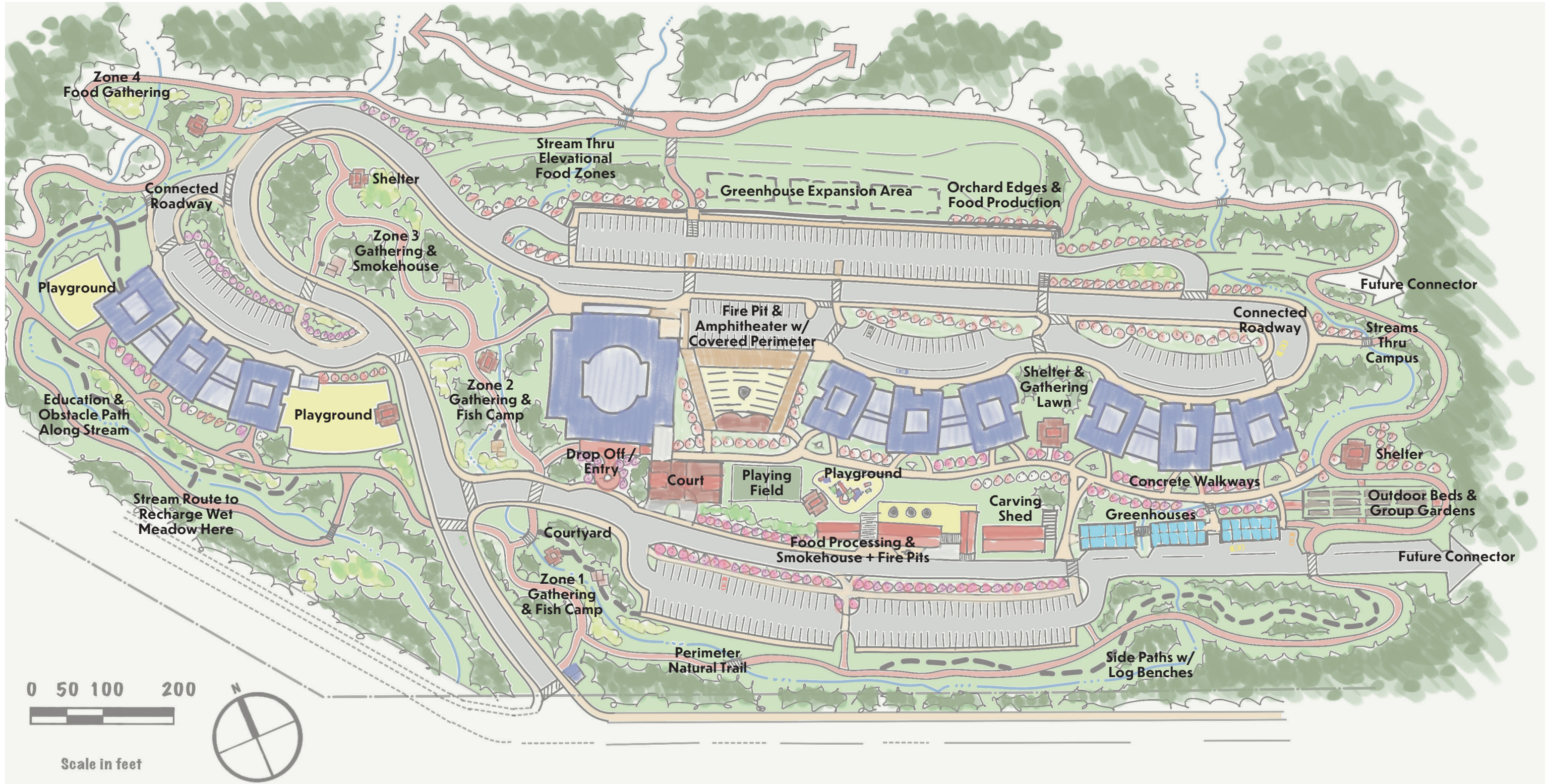
Crowning the gymnasium, a grand cedar hat will stand as a powerful cultural and architectural centerpiece. In Tlingit & Haida tradition, cedar hats connect us to our people and place, symbolizing protection, responsibility, and belonging, and are worn during important ceremonies and gatherings. On the Tribal Education Campus, the cedar hat will welcome students and families, anchor communal moments in respect and unity, and serve as a living teaching tool through hands-on workshops in cedar hat making and cultural storytelling. In this way, the building itself becomes a teacher—passing on ancestral knowledge through lived experience and strengthening the connection between generations.

Northwest Coast Formline Art: Culture Woven Throughout

Murals and design elements inspired by Northwest Coast formline art, created in collaboration with tribal citizen artists, will be integrated throughout the campus. These works will share clan histories, traditional stories, and milestones of the Tribe, surrounding students with culture in classrooms and gathering spaces alike. By embedding formline art across the campus, cultural identity becomes visible, celebrated, and enduring, transforming everyday spaces into lessons of heritage, resilience, and continuity.

Tribal Education Campus

Site Planning Map with Key Features



Expanded Vision

Place, Culture & Community

Expanding Vision & Campus Design

The Tribal Education Campus is envisioned as a comprehensive, land-based learning environment, guiding students from early childhood through post-secondary education. This 12-acre campus will bring together existing programs, including Head Start, Haa Yoo X'atáangi Kúdi (HYXK), and Little Eagles & Ravens Nest (LEARN) child care, while expanding to include a K-12 school and tribal college, creating a seamless educational journey rooted in Tlingit & Haida knowledge and values.

A Campus Designed for Place, Culture and Community

The campus layout centers on a walking path that connects buildings, programs and outdoor learning spaces, symbolizing the interconnectedness of land, culture and community. Highlights include:

- Clustered “Clan House” style buildings for age-specific learning, fostering collaboration and cultural identity.
- Greenhouse-integrated curriculum, teaching sustainable agriculture, food sovereignty, and ecological stewardship.
- A state-of-the-art event center for community gatherings, cultural celebrations and intergenerational learning.
- A gymnasium honoring the late Senator Albert Kookesh, a leader devoted to tribal education and community well-being.

Room to Grow for Generations

Tlingit & Haida currently hold 42 acres at this site, providing space for future growth to support generations to come. In 2023, the Tribe received a State-Tribal Education Compacting Grant to advance this vision. With legislative approval, Tlingit & Haida would become one of only five tribal organizations in the nation eligible to operate a tribally compacted public school, reinforcing sovereignty and local control over education.

Additional early education campuses are underway in Klawock and Craig, slated to open in Fall 2026, reflecting a broader commitment to expanding access to culturally grounded education across Southeast Alaska.

“*Where language, land and learning come together.*”

Outdoor Learning Spaces

The Sacred Roots Phase of the Tribal Education Campus brings learning into the land itself, creating outdoor classrooms where culture, language and ecology intersect. Through a grant from the National Park Service – Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (NPS-RTCA) program, Tlingit & Haida began the initial design work, engaging community stakeholders over six months to envision a space that reflects both our ancestral knowledge and contemporary educational needs.

Healthy Lifestyles & Community Engagement

The campus trails and outdoor spaces are designed to support active, healthy lifestyles like walking, running, exploring, and playing while learning. By integrating workshops and community activities into the landscape, the campus becomes a space for all generations to gather, learn and thrive together.

Every path, garden and gathering area is a tool for cultural continuity, environmental stewardship, and holistic wellness, a reflection of Tlingit & Haida values in actionable, everyday experiences.



Sea to Summit: Four Ecosystem Zones

The outdoor campus is organized into four zones, representing the diverse ecosystems of Southeast Alaska, from the Sea to the Summit. Each zone is designed to be a living classroom, where students and community members can interact with:

- Plants and gardens that reflect native and culturally significant species
- Art installations that tell stories of our clans, legends and histories
- Language and storytelling stations, weaving Tlingit & Haida words into daily exploration
- Hands-on land-based learning opportunities, from ecological stewardship to subsistence practices

These zones embody the principle that learning is rooted in place, connecting students to the land while honoring the cycles, stories and teachings of our ancestors.



Site planning may showing four ecosystem zones



Building the Foundation

Budget Snapshot

Land Survey & Site Preparation — \$7,000,000

Preparing the land with care and precision through surveying, grading, and clearing—honoring the place where learning will begin.

Infrastructure Development — \$8,000,000

Installing essential utilities, road access, and foundational systems to support a thriving, self-sustaining Tribal Education Campus.

Outdoor Learning & Cultural Spaces — \$5,500,000

Creating spaces where culture is lived and taught: a totem pole trail with ten poles, carving shed, greenhouse, smokehouse, covered subsistence preparation area, orchard, food garden, walkways, parking, landscaping, and recreational areas that connect learning to land.

Total Estimated Investment — \$20,500,000

The construction team is prepared to begin as soon as funding is secured. To account for escalation and contingencies, an additional \$2.255 million per year will be required until the project is fully under contract. This estimate reflects core site and infrastructure development and does not include IT systems, furnishings, equipment, or programming. Final costs may vary based on market conditions and design refinement.

More Than a Campus—A Promise to the Future

The Tribal Education Campus is more than a construction project. It is an act of cultural restoration, sovereignty and love for generations yet to come. When we teach on our land, in our languages, and through our values, we are not just building classrooms, we are building the future our ancestors envisioned.

Join Us in Building Sacred Roots!



Learn More

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