



Tseycum First Nation

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Union of BC Municipalities,
Suite 60 – 10551 Shellbridge Way,
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Attn: Errin Armstrong

Dear Errin,

Re: Tseycum's 2004/2005 Community to Community Forum report

The Community to Community Forum has provided the Tseycum First Nation and the neighbouring District of North Saanich several opportunities during this last year to meet and discuss their significant issues. The Tseycum First Nation would like to thank the Union of BC Municipalities for the support that made this possible. The difference in the relationship between the First Nation and the Municipality has been considerable.

The first event took place shortly after the funding was received in late 2004, when an icebreaking social function was hosted by the Tseycum for members of both communities. It was intended that this initial gathering would allow enough discussion to set the framework for a more formal business meeting later. It was clear from this initial get together that both sides were interested in dealing with the major issues head-on, and there was considerable enthusiasm by both parties to find resolution to several long standing problems. The general consensus from this meeting was that a formal event should take place after the Christmas holidays where the agenda could be set out to both parties beforehand. The two sides could then present their research on many issues.

This first formal meeting of the Community to Community Forum process took place on January 24, 2005 at the Tseycum First Nation. Present at the meeting were the full Mayor and Council of the District of North Saanich, full Chief and Council of the Tseycum First Nation, President of the Victoria Airport Authority, all of the support staff (engineers, administrators) of both the First Nation and the District, and many community members. After an informal gathering, the business meeting began with all parties present.

The agenda for this meeting was structured so that the larger and more contentious issues were placed first. This turned out to be a good thing, as this meeting ran very late again, but the major areas of concern had at least been fully heard by both parties. A number of resolutions were determined. A short list of some of the major issues will be presented later in this report.

A different approach for the future came out of this meeting as it was resolved that liaisons should be appointed by the First Nation and the Municipality. This has proved beneficial as several informal meetings between the appointed liaisons have taken place since where progress has been made. Some recommendations have later been agreed to by the Councils of both groups.

All parties agree that the Community to Community Forum process has relieved tensions between the groups. A short list of issues that have been worked on are:

1. The expansion of the North Saanich Marina. This issue has been fully resolved after several meetings, a Public Hearing, and decisions made by both Tseycum and North Saanich.
2. The Sewer Line. It is expected that a resolution to this will be in place before the summer of 2005. If the Municipality uses Tseycum land for this project, it is estimated it will save the taxpayers of North Saanich \$100 per meter, or possibly several hundreds of thousands of dollars.
3. Polluted Waterways. Meetings have taken place where this issue was discussed, but it is anticipated that it will have to be a long term solution, rather than a short term answer to this problem.
4. Stormwater Runoff. A very high degree of cooperation between the First Nation and the Municipality was evident concerning this issue. The engineers representing both groups have discussed this problem, and a solution is presently being worked out that may concern work/funding from both the District of North Saanich and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. The time frame for an agreement on the problem will likely be within the next two fiscal years.
5. Written Terms of Reference. Significant progress has been made on this issue, especially with the cooperation of other First Nations who have provided copies of their recently signed Terms of Reference agreements with their nearby neighbours. Most significantly was the work provided by Chief Walter Paul of the Sliammon First Nation, who recently signed their Terms of Reference with the Municipality of Powell River in 2004.

The Chief and Council of the Tseycum First Nation are pleased with the progress on many of the above issues, and look forward to several more resolutions in the near future. The Community to Community Forum process has been beneficial to all parties, and we would like to continue this in the next fiscal year.

Thank you for your considerable help again to continue this project, and we look forward to an even more beneficial result in future.

Yours truly,

Rick Steinson