

2006 COMMUNITY TO COMMUNITY FORUM

MOVING FROM DIALOGUE TO PARTNERSHIP:

**Exploring Innovative
Local Government-First Nation Partnerships**

Vancouver, March 10, 2006

Hosted by:

First Nations Summit and Union of B.C. Municipalities

Sponsored by:

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
B.C. Ministry of Community Services
Municipal Finance Authority
Royal Bank of Canada (Aboriginal Banking Division)

Final Report Prepared by:

Cornerstone Planning Group

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Welcome and Introduction

Conference Objectives

The fourth province-wide Community to Community Forum, *Moving from Dialogue to Partnership*, was jointly organized by the First Nations Summit (FNS) and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). The forum was designed to bring together First Nation and local government community leaders for the purpose of encouraging dialogue and understanding on areas of common responsibility and mutual concern. Creating opportunities for dialogue is essential to improving government-to-government relationships that can meet both present and future community challenges and goals.

The main purposes of the 2006 Community to Community Forum were:

1. To educate and inform;
2. To provide a forum for dialogue; and
3. To strengthen relationships and foster future cooperative action.

For the first time ever, both elected officials and key senior administrative staff were invited to the province-wide Community to Community Forum. The goal was to achieve a more in-depth and comprehensive discussion, from a political and administrative perspective, of the actions that needed to occur for change to happen.

Theme

The themes of past Community to Community Forums were:

A Dialogue Between First Nations & Local Governments in British Columbia – 1997

The Spirit of Cooperation Continues – 2001

Resolving Conflict & Pursuing Joint Opportunities – 2003

This year, *Moving From Dialogue to Partnership* demonstrates the evolving and emerging cooperation and partnership between local governments and First Nations.

The nature and scope of the relationship between BC First Nations and local governments has been changing in recent years. First Nations governments and local governments are creating, renewing and strengthening their government-to-government relationships. Through face to face discussion, the Community to Community Forum helps communities open up the lines of communications, begin dialogue and work toward fostering innovative partnerships.

Agenda

Friday March 10, 2006; 7:45 am – 4:00pm

Renaissance Vancouver Hotel

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|--------------|---|
| 7:45 | Registration and Continental Breakfast |
| 8:30 | Welcome from the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and First Nations Summit (FNS) and Opening Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Danny Watts, FNS, Conference Co-Chair• Chief Leah George-Wilson, Tsleil-Waututh First Nation• Grand Chief Doug Kelly, FNS• Director Terry Raymond, UBCM, Conference Co-Chair |
| 8:45 | A Community to Community Forum Program Retrospective: 10 Years of Relationship Building <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director Terry Raymond, UBCM |
| 9:05 | Moving From Dialogue to Partnership: Economic Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chief Judith Sayers, Hupacasath First Nation• Trevor Jones, Executive Director, Hupacasath First Nation• Mayor Ken McRae, City of Port Alberni• Ken Watson, City Manager, City of Port Alberni |
| 9:50 | Moving From Dialogue to Partnership: Land Use, Servicing and Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finlay Sinclair, Manager of Projects and Communication, Regional District of Fraser-Fort George• Rick Krehbiel, Director of Research and Policy, Lheidli T'enneh First Nation |
| 10:30 | Break |
| 10:45 | Land Use, Servicing and Governance Panel (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Donna Mikkelson, Administrator, Central Coast Regional District• Peter Siwallace, Administrator, Nuxalk Nation• Chief Ross Wilson, Heiltsuk Tribal Council |
| 11:20 | Discussion Session One: The Foundations of Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitator: John Kafka, Cornerstone Planning Group |

12:00	Lunch
12:30	Keynote Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hon. Tom Christensen, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation • Chief Stewart Phillip, UBCIC President & BC First Nations Leadership Council
1:00	Discussion Session Two: The “How To” of Building Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group Facilitators: John Kafka, Julian Wake, Alison McNeil
	1:00 – Discussion 2:00 – report back in break-out rooms
2:20	Break
2:30	Moving From Dialogue to Partnership: Lifelong Learning and Skills Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Fred Sampson, Siska Indian Band • Director Terry Raymond, Fraser Valley Regional District
3:10	Final Plenary Discussion – Building Partnerships: Actions and Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator: John Kafka
3:45	Closing Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Terry Raymond, UBCM, Conference Co-Chair • Danny Watts, FNS, Conference Co-Chair
4:00	Close

The Community to Community Forum, *Moving from Dialogue to Partnership* was held on Friday March 10th, 2006 at the Renaissance Vancouver Hotel.

The conference was opened by the Conference Co-chairs Director Terry Raymond, from the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), who provided introductions and an overview of the day's events and Danny Watts, from the First Nations Summit (FNS), who welcomed participants to the conference. An opening prayer was given by Chief Leah George-Wilson, of the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation and First Nations Summit Co-Chair.

Grand Chief Doug Kelly, of the First Nations Summit Task Group, paid tribute to the late Chief Joe Mathias of the Squamish First Nation and reminded the participants of the great contribution made by Mathias to furthering the dialogue between peoples in British Columbia.

Chief Kelly noted that while there can be a perceived disconnect between Victoria and Ottawa, at the local level there is a shared desire to improve conditions and create better communities. B.C.'s First Nations are united and have committed to work together to achieve reconciliation with the two Crowns. The B.C. First Nations Leadership Council will be working diligently with the province through the New Relationship to make things better on the ground, said Chief Kelly.

"Today we should be focusing on the things we have in common."

Director Terry Raymond, Chair of the UBCM First Nations Relations Committee, gave a retrospective presentation on the last ten years of the Community to Community Forum program. This was followed with a presentation by the Hupacasath First Nation and the City of Port Alberni on partnerships related to economic development. Then the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George and the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation spoke about the land use, servicing and governance partnerships they have formed.

The Nuxalk Nation, the Heiltsuk Tribal Council and the Central Coast Regional District picked up after the morning break with their collaborative approach to governance.

Just before lunch, conference participants held the first of two discussions sessions. First Nations and local government representatives broke into small discussion groups to identify how their respective organizations could support partnership building.

During the luncheon, guest speaker the Honourable Tom Christensen, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, noted the spirit of the New Relationship has already penetrated to the local level. Chief Stewart Phillip, of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and BC First Nations Leadership Council, spoke of the evolution of relationships between local governments and First Nations in the province.

Conference participants once again separated into small discussion groups where they were asked to list the opportunities and challenges around developing partnerships in the area of economic and skills development, intergovernmental relations, servicing, and land use planning. They were also asked to identify specific actions required to improve cooperation.

The forum concluded with closing remarks by Danny Watts of FNS and Director Terry Raymond of UBCM.

Opening Presentation – Community to Community Forum Retrospective: 10 Years of Relationship Building

Overview of Program

Presenter:

Director Terry Raymond, Union of B.C. Municipalities

The following is a synopsis of the presentation by Conference Co-chair, Director Terry Raymond. Director Raymond gave an overview of the last ten years of relationship building that has taken place between local governments and First Nations.

The dialogue between First Nations and local governments began in January 1997 at a province-wide forum very much like the one held this year. This forum was borne out of the recognition that local governments and First Nations face many of the same challenges such as providing services to residents; and as neighbouring communities, living with the same regional, economic and environmental realities. During this first Forum, *A Day of Dialogue*, the guiding principles for structuring local government-First Nation relations were identified.

During the second Community to Community Forum in 2001, a relationship-building toolkit was prepared on the following key areas of joint interest:

- Economic development;
- Natural resource management;
- Land use and services; and
- Government linkages.

The Forum of 2003 discussed dispute resolution and the “how-to” of pursuing joint opportunities. Now, in 2006 the theme is moving from dialogue to partnership.

It is with the kind of leadership that is expressed by you being here, that we will indeed be able to find the solutions to many of the difficult situations that we find ourselves faced with.

Understanding has been built through the more than 135 Regional Forums held over the last five years, including a series of regional economic forums held by the North Central Municipal Association and the Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations in 2003/2004. Many local governments and First Nations opened the lines of communication for the first time.

Some successful examples of this include:

- Village of Burns Lake and Lake Babine Nation signed a new Municipal Servicing Agreement;
- Sunshine Coast Regional District (RD) and the Sechelt Indian Band signed a landmark Joint Watershed Management Agreement;
- Ladysmith and the Chemainus First Nation held a first ever roundtable in conjunction with a historic Canoe Tribal Journey;
- Creston and Smithers met with neighbouring First Nations to discuss regional library service;
- The East Kootenay RD, Central Kootenay RD, member municipalities and Ktunaxa Nation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU);
- The Fraser Valley RD signed an MOU and Protocol Agreements with Yale First Nation and the In-SHUCK-ch Nation;
- The Okanagan Indian Band signed Protocol Agreements with the District of Lake Country and the Village of Lumby;
- Williams Lake signed a Protocol Agreement with the Cariboo Tribal Council Treaty Society and the Xats'ull First Nation; and
- Winalagalis Treaty Society and Mount Waddington RD began a joint investigation of regional economic benefits and opportunities.

In closing Terry Raymond paid tribute to the work of Director Jim Abram, past UBCM president and quoted Kathryn Teneese, former FNS Task Group Member, from the 2003 Province-wide Forum: *"This is a significant event because it sends a strong message that we in this room and those we represent, are committed to building relationships between our communities and our governments. We recognize that cooperative government-to-government relationships at the local level bring direct economic, social and environmental benefits for all of us."*

Partnership Case Studies

Economic Development

Case Study #1 Presenters:

Chief Judith Sayers, Hupacasath First Nation (HFN)

Trevor Jones, Executive Director, Hupacasath First Nation

Mayor Ken McRae, City of Port Alberni

Ken Watson, City Manager, City of Port Alberni

The presenters from this first case study provided an overview on the relationships and partnerships that have developed between the Hupacasath First Nation (HFN) and the City of Port Alberni.

“We began our relationship by acknowledging who we are. The City surrounds and envelops the main HFN reserve. By working collectively, much more could be achieved. The City of Port Alberni acknowledged that we were establishing a government-to-government relationship and began observing our protocols in City ceremonies. The Hupacasath First Nation includes the City Council in our events.”
– Chief Judith Sayers, Hupacasath First Nation

“We tested our relationship and the relationship got stronger.” – Trevor Jones

Examples of HFN and Port Alberni Relationships and Partnerships

Shared Service

- Water Service – including the recent provision to new subdivisions and developments via metered sales;
- Fire Protection – based on the number and value of buildings at a pro-rata cost;
- Sewer Service – has been provided by agreement since 1989, based on the pro-rata cost of providing services per residence; and
- Building Inspection – provided by the City on an as-requested basis.

Joint Tourism Strategy

The HFN and the City of Port Alberni partnered together to develop a Cultural Interpretive Centre. As part of this, HFN constructed a carving shed as a visible connection with Nuu-chah-nulth culture.

Cultural tourism operated from the site includes:

- Choo Kwa Ventures Canoe Tours;
- Annual Choo Kwa Challenge Canoe Races;
- A Nuu-chah-nulth Whaling Monument; and
- A Waterfront walkway funded by HFN, City of Port Alberni, Western Economic Diversification and the Port Authority.

Judith Sayers and Ken McRae are also founding Board members of the non-profit Island Corridor Foundation.

Hydro Electric Project

Hupacasath First Nation partnered with Synex Energy, Ucluelet First Nation and the City of Port Alberni to develop a \$14-million run-of-the-river China Creek hydroelectric project. The four parties formed Upnit Power Corporation in order to secure a 20-year contract to supply 6.3 megawatts annually to BC Hydro. Hupacasath is the major shareholder at 72.5%. All parties have agreed to share maintenance and other expertise, and a comprehensive agreement was signed enabling City control over the project's water supply.

HFN gave the City a 5% interest in the Hydro project to acknowledge the good relationship and:

- For in-kind work on design;
- For good will;
- For cooperation and creating a future together;
- To strengthen relationships; and
- To ensure interests in China Creek are protected.

The benefits of this partnership include:

- Funding opportunities and diversification of the economy;
- Good news stories and opens doors to community;
- Financial, business and governmental support;
- Additional electricity supply;
- A leadership role on advancing green power and reduction of green house gas; and
- The probability of other run of the river projects.

All four speakers remarked on how the relationship is growing every day and how far they have come in a very short time. The catalyst was recognition that they needed to do something now to diversify the economy.

Case Study #2 Presenters:

Finlay Sinclair, Manager of Projects and Communication, Regional District of Fraser-Fort George

Rick Krehbiel, Director, Treaty Research and Policy, Lheidli T'enneh First Nation

Dialogue between the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, the City of Prince George and the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation commenced with a Community to Community event in July 2002. The subsequent partnerships between the three parties have been built on three Principles: equity, quality, and fiscal responsibility, which leads to certainty, sustainability and stability.

"Thinking differently is not a bad thing."

The dialogue phase of the relationship between Lheidli T'enneh and local government has included:

- A Community to Community Forum in 2002 that led to the development of political protocols and MOU's with the City and Regional District;
- Lheidli T'enneh achieved full legislative and management authority over its reserve lands by enacting a Land Code under the First Nations Land Management Act (FNLMA) (Bill C-49) in December 2000; and
- Lheidli T'enneh treaty negotiators have been made welcome at meetings of the Prince George Treaty Advisory Committee.

The foundation of these partnerships is centred on:

- The recognition that cooperation builds trust;
- The understanding that collaborative actions contribute to the health and well being of all communities; and
- The acceptance that building a relationship can be hard.

The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, the City of Prince George and the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation have learned:

- The primary concern is with the use of land not the ownership of land;
- It is important for local politicians to set a direction;
- Leadership is primary and follow-up and implementation by staff and bureaucrats is secondary;
- Success cannot be measured in the short term; what we do is more important than how we do it;
- Building partnerships is not a race, comes about through slow incremental steps;
- An agreement on governance is about defining how we govern and are governed; and
- Workshops between local governments and First Nations are necessary to understand one another's processes.

The experience has taught these lessons for partnership building:

- Be prepared to resolve disputes and disagreements;
- Solidify and unify individual relationships first;
- Respect each other's differences;
- Trust is earned; and
- The process is more important than the end product.

*"The space
between start
and finish is an
important part
of the process."*

Current Partnership Discussions

In addition to the FNLMA processes and Treaty Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings, current discussions between Lheidli T'enneh and local government have focused on treaty implementation in three areas:

- Potential participation as a government on the RD Board;
- Negotiation of a Comprehensive Master Agreement with the RD and the City as a framework for future servicing agreements and harmonization of respective tax, planning, approval processes, and law-making regimes; and
- Finding ways to participate in pre-final agreement land use planning to set the stage for harmonized administration and benefit when the land transfers to Lheidli T'enneh.

Lessons and Approaches to Developing Partnerships

- Continue the dialogue: local government relationships are one of the serendipities of the BC treaty process. Few of us anticipated the benefits or impacts of those relationships when negotiations began.
- Acknowledge the complexity of local government legislation and that administration creates a “vertical learning curve” for most First Nations. One way we have dealt with this is to organize joint workshops between First Nations and local governments regarding development approval processes.
- Long-standing political fears about “municipalization” of First Nation governments need not intrude into these emerging relationships if matters are kept in perspective.
- The Kelowna Accord, treaty negotiations and the ordinary course of intergovernmental business stress the need to advance the quality of life in First Nations communities. Many of the factors that affect quality of life are matters that are wholly or partially within the jurisdiction of local government.
- It is not usually necessary or useful to subject local government relationships to the same level of care and scrutiny that may be necessary with federal and provincial relationships.
- As working relationships develop, the need for adversarial support is being replaced by the need for “business” support.

“In First Nations matters, the past twenty years belonged to lawyers; the next twenty years belongs to planners and administrators.”

Case Study #3 Presenters:

Donna Mikkelson, Administrator, Central Coast Regional District

Peter Siwallace, Administrator, Nuxalk Nation

Ross Wilson, Chief Councillor, Heiltsuk Tribal Council

Central Coast Regional District (CCRD), Nuxalk Nation and the Heiltsuk Tribal Council provided information on their collaborative approach to governance, land use and servicing.

Donna Mikkelson gave a description of the CCRD's scope and representation noting that the area within its boundaries is home to the Heiltsuk, Nuxalk and Wuikinuxv First Nations. Combined, their ancestral territory covers all of the 25,000 square kilometres. Klemtu, home to the Kitsoo X'ais X'ais, is just outside the regional district's boundaries, but because of their Tribal Council affiliation, as well as their traditional territory, the regional district has an interest in maintaining communications with them.

Peter Siwallace noted that addressing issues about the future that affect everyone is what is important. "When inter-dependency was recognized, relationships developed, and agreements were made," said Siwallace.

The Nuxalk Nation have established the following to ensure the survival of its community:

- An agreement with BC Hydro;
- An agreement on local education; and
- A work partnership to maintain the habitats of five salmon species.

Ross Wilson acknowledged the Heiltsuk's need for a diversified economy through:

- Sharing opportunities and cooperation with the CCRD and other neighbours;
- Using their position on the CCRD Board as a forum for the Heiltsuk; and
- Bringing issues back to the community for discussion.

"We share opportunities with our neighbours to encourage a diversified economy."

Four Agreements Successfully Implemented by the Nuxalk Nation and the Central Coast Regional District

Refuse Disposal Cost Sharing Agreement

This Agreement between the Nuxalk Nation and the CCRD predates 1992. The Regional District is responsible for the community landfill in Bella Coola. Until the adoption of the Solid Waste Management Plan last year, the District did not have the authority to increase the tax base for this function.

Working together, the Nuxalk Nation and the Regional District decided that the costs to maintain the landfill should be borne jointly. The Nuxalk Nation contributes on a “per unit” basis; each building being a “unit” and the District contributes through a tax levy.

Mutual Aid Agreement – Fire Fighting (1999)

The Bella Coola Valley community has less than 2,200 people. Fire protection services comprise two improvement districts, the Regional District local service area as well as the Nuxalk Nation fire department. The Fire Chiefs spearheaded the initiative to enter into a formal arrangement for services, thereby ensuring their respective boards or other authority would agree to the provisions of the agreement.

Agreement for the Provision of Water Supply (2003)

The Bella Coola town site has been unable to find a suitable water supply since the 1940s – either on the reserve, or off. The Nuxalk Nation solved their water supply problem by installing a supply main from their reservoir, situated on Crown Land, to the town site reserve as well as to the Four Mile reserve.

Financially, it was in the district’s best interest to come to some form of agreement for the provision of water to the area, which includes a hospital and an elementary school used by the entire population. The Nuxalk Nation was able to recapture a portion of their operating and maintenance costs. The two parties met in a series of meetings and an interim agreement was signed in 2000.

The final document recognizes the importance of high quality water for the “greater community.” This agreement expires in December of this year. Both parties have already expressed an interest in successfully negotiating a continuation.

Protocol for the Coordination of Emergency Management (2005)

In 2004, the RD received interest from a community member to become, what was essentially, a volunteer Emergency Program Coordinator. Emergency personnel determined a protocol agreement would provide for a formal arrangement, whereby both parties would share in equal risk and exposure, and both would benefit from the use of a common emergency plan.

The Nuxalk Nation appointed an emergency coordinator to work in partnership with the regional district's coordinator. Both coordinators form an integral part of the Emergency Executive Committee which oversees the operation of the emergency plan. The Nuxalk have also appointed an Emergency Social Services representative. The protocol allows the Nuxalk Nation to become eligible for First Nations Emergency Services (FNESS) funding programs.

**Copies of these agreements are available at ccrd.admin@belco.bc.ca*

Summary

Donna Mikkelson summarized the successful partnerships that have been established in the valley and others that may be made. She noted the CCRD's need and desire to maintain and continue to build good relationships with local First Nations.

Future projects for the RD include:

- Working with the local health authority and First Nations governments in the ratification of a "Central Coast Health & Wellbeing Charter"; and
- Working collaboratively in the areas of economic development, solid waste management and emergency planning.

"I believe that the UBCM and First Nations Summit sponsored Community to Community forums have really helped to advance the Regional District's dialogue with our First Nations neighbors. We are grateful for the continuing support from the funding agencies – without it, the opportunities to have face to face meetings simply would not exist."

Case Study #4 Presenters:

Chief Fred Sampson, Siska Indian Band, Nlaka'pamux Nation

Terry Raymond, Director, Fraser Valley Regional District

Bridging the Canyons

Chief Fred Sampson and Director Terry Raymond presented information on the Bridging the Canyons Initiative. Bridging the Canyons is an innovative partnership aimed at improving the delivery of lifelong learning and skills development in aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities.

Communities served by the Bridging the Canyons project include Boston Bar, Cook's Ferry Indian Band, Village of Lytton, Lytton First Nation, Spences Bridge, Siska Indian Band and the Fraser Valley Regional District. The project links the communities to health, education, youth, economic development, and social services. Principal funding came from the Office of Learning Technologies (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada) in Ottawa.

Notable projects include:

- Computer courses and a youth run Cyber Centre;
- A literacy project, and a CD and manual for use in schools;
- A farmers market and, agricultural and gardening workshops;
- An arts and crafts co-op store;
- A tourism information and community learning centre;
- A newspaper titled, "The Bridge Bulletin";
- A job skills bank and online catalogue of local resources; and
- The Lytton radio station, started by a focus group of young people and a member of the Village council, and supported by Bridging the Canyons.

Chief Sampson explained how the Initiative is structured, starting from the ground up:

- Community members are participants and recipients;
- Focus groups develop work plans, a strategic plan and recruit participants;
- Community coordinators recruit, chair and work with focus groups, report to board, articulate desired outcomes and evaluate; and
- A Board of Directors is responsible for accountability, and scrutinizes and evaluates projects, recommends future actions, maintains financial accountability and meets accounting requirements.

The Community Learning Networks Initiative

A related pilot program in adult education focuses on learning technologies and encourages all the people living in the Fraser and Thompson Canyons to work and learn together. This year will also see the start-up of a literacy program.

Challenges Were Met

The most outstanding challenge related to funding requirements. The project suffered from late payments because of reporting glitches and partners learned early that initiatives like this need very organized financial management.

As well as the onerous reporting requirements, challenges included getting commitments, finding partners to leverage funding, developing sustainability for the project and keeping up with the pace of the demands for funding infrastructure.

“Be sure to make those interested in a project the coordinators and let them run with it. It all looks very positive for the future.”

– Director Terry Raymond

Bridging the Canyons Significant Victories

- Extensive community and partner involvement;
- Increased awareness of available opportunities;
- Ongoing teaching of the Nlaka’pamux culture and language;
- Access to technology;
- Improved community literacy;
- Increased participation in environmental opportunities; and
- The realization of economic viability for local artists, agri-growers, and eco-tourism.

Keynote Addresses

**The
Honourable
Tom
Christensen**
*Minister of
Aboriginal
Relations and
Reconciliation*

The following is a summary of The Honourable Tom Christensen's keynote address during the 2006 Community to Community Forum.

"There are many reasons to feel optimistic about the New Relationship as it is being developed between the provincial government and the First Nations Leadership Council." Christensen noted the need for the spirit of the New Relationship to penetrate to the local level and was struck by the sheer number of protocol agreements and understandings that have been signed by First Nations and local governments.

"Just yesterday, an Agreement-in-Principle was signed between the Yale First Nation and the Province. There was also a Protocol Agreement signed by the Yale First Nation, the Fraser Valley Regional District and the District of Hope and Yale. This acknowledged the goodwill that has developed between them and committed the parties to long-term cooperation in recognition of the mutual benefits that would flow from it. Joint solutions would be sought to challenges by way of treaty-related measures."

Christensen remarked on the many examples and types of understandings at the local level, such as the protocol agreement signed between the Snuneymuxw First Nation and City of Nanaimo. Another example he provided was Westbank's agreements with Penticton, which are the practical "needs-driven" kind where both parties recognize a shared need for services. There are emerging more comprehensive agreements on subjects like governance and land use planning. These may explore new sub-regional government structures, explained Christensen.

"These are reasons to celebrate and to move to emulate successes."

He went on to say that the Provincial emphasis is on capacity-building and that \$100-million has been set aside for this. As well as being used to enhance skills with training opportunities, it will enable better ways for First Nations to work with local governments.

"In conclusion, congratulations to the Community Forum Program. Much has changed since 1997. When First Nations and local governments are driving together, then we know we have a New Relationship." – The Honourable Tom Christensen

Chief Stewart Phillip

President,
Union of B.C.
Indian Chiefs;
B.C. First
Nations
Leadership
Council

The following is a summary of Chief Stewart Phillip's keynote address during the 2006 Community to Community Forum.

Chief Phillip began by paying his respects to the Coast Salish people and commending the First Nations Summit and the Union of BC Municipalities. "We are entering an important stage in this dialogue," said Phillip.

Phillip spoke about the tumultuous past between First Nations and government and how when the treaty process started, that it too was called a "New Relationship." The current "New Relationship" is based on recognition and respect, and accommodation of aboriginal rights and title, said Phillip. He said the ten-year goal of all parties involved is to:

- Ensure mutual respect and understanding;
- Share our lands and resources;
- Get to where we just have a relationship; and
- Have happy prosperous communities.

Phillip noted that there is still a huge task to make everyone aware of the importance of building relationships, and putting those relationships into practice.

Past disputes have resulted in horrible racial tensions, and there has been tremendous trauma for our people, explained Phillip. Overcoming that period of confrontation and conflict required personal value being attached to relationships.

Phillip recounted how the Okanagan Nation's good relationship with Mayor Tom Perry of Penticton made way for the signing of a protocol agreement. Perry worked alongside the Okanagan First Nation, even during conflicts, and made it his business to learn about the history and values of the Okanagan First Nation. Now there is peaceful coexistence with local government and good relations with the RCMP.

"We are all here to stay" is a reality.

"I have been impressed by the successes that the speakers at this forum have recounted."

"This path of reconciliation needs to be supported. The New Relationship with the Province provides another opportunity, as does the BC Treaty Process. The time and energy and value placed on it will decide what the relationship will be." – Chief Stewart Phillip

Morning Discussion Overview

After hearing the perspectives from local government and First Nation speakers, conference participants met in small groups to discuss how their organizations supported dialogue and partnerships. Participants also discussed the benefits of these partnerships and the key characteristics or foundations for successful dialogue and partnerships.

Participants provided an amazing number of ways in which dialogue and/or partnerships are supported. Across the province, local governments and First Nations have found ways to work together ranging from specific issue driven meetings, (such as the pine beetle outbreak) to developing ongoing dialogue and partnerships, to service agreements. A second feature identified by participants was the range of communication processes. Many participants highlighted the benefits of formal agreements and others heralded the advantages of ongoing informal dialogue. Provided below is a synopsis of the morning discussion groups.

Many participants cited the formal agreements they have entered into which set out the guidelines for dialogue. Examples included dialogue which resulted in land use consultation agreements, sharing and protocol agreements and memoranda of understanding.

Ongoing discussions often led to regular meetings to explore:

- Land and resource uses;
- Economic development opportunities;
- Joint funding opportunities;
- The formation of joint development corporations; and
- Forestry and tourism projects.

Many participants identified that success was based on developing mutual trust, respect and patience. They cited the importance of acknowledging and recognizing one another's interests. Other critical success factors include ensuring that leaders in each community provide direction to their staff on the importance and value of reaching out to one another.

Characteristics for Successful Dialogue

<i>Foundations for Success</i>	<i>Benefits</i>
Informal dialogue	Opens the lines of communication
Participation in events and functions such as community to community forums	Catalyst for dialogue on topics such as education, health and social programs, heritage protection, and conservation
Shared participation at social, healing, recreational, festival and ceremonial activities	Catalyst for fostering the goodwill from which partnerships could develop
Servicing agreements such as water, waste disposal, fire protection and building inspections	Precursors to ongoing relationships
First Nation participation in organizations like hospital boards and invitations to First Nations to be on regional district committees	Contributes to partnering
Local government participation in treaty advisory committees	Brings local governments and First Nations together in the realization of their common interests

Afternoon Discussion Overview

Participants separated into three break-out groups to discuss how to create common understanding and build partnerships.

Topic areas included:

- Economic development and skills development;
- Inter-governmental relations and servicing arrangements; and
- Land use planning.

Participants in each of these three topic areas worked together to:

- List **opportunities** for building partnerships between First Nations and local governments based on their experience and based on speakers presentations;
- List current **obstacles or challenges** for building these partnerships; and
- Identify **who or what needs to be involved** to take advantage of the opportunities and what actions are needed to support politicians, administrators and others to move forward on dialogue and partnerships.

Group 1: Economic Development and Skills Development Opportunities

In this group session, participants shared the experience of their communities and brainstormed ideas for partnering in economic development. Participants ranged from residents of the Greater Vancouver Regional District to Chetwynd.

Suggestions fell into four categories:

- Money-generating ventures;
- Utility and service agreements to promote economic activity;
- Initiatives that are “good-things-to-do” and are fundable or feasible but may not directly generate profits; and
- Activities that are still needed to lay the groundwork for partnerships.

“Practice working together for mutual advantage.”

Business Opportunities

- Timber harvesting;
- Processing and wood product manufacturing such as pre-fabricated housing and pallets;
- The sharing of timber licences in community forests;
- Cultural tourism such as cultural and art exhibitions, arts and crafts retail outlets, and workshops;
- Film production;
- Eco-tourism;
- Fish hatcheries, fishing and fish processing;
- Bottled water, and gravel pit development;
- Utility development in water, wind and co-generation plants;
- Planning and development of subdivisions; and
- Revenue sharing.

Joint Service Opportunities

- The provision of sidewalks, landfill sites, hospitals and libraries;
- Dock infrastructure developments;
- Water, sewage, emergency, and fire protection services;
- Liquid waste – in areas with dense populations; and
- Grander projects like airport expansions.

Other Potential Initiatives

Many participants felt there was much to be gained by working together on activities and projects that communities needed but may not be profitable.

- Creation of virtual museums with grants from Heritage Canada;
- Sharing management services and office equipment;
- Joint land use planning;
- Joint development of regional growth strategies;
- Programs to empower youth (e.g. websites);
- Creative financing such as issuing community bonds; and
- The establishment of a “Sustainable Community Institute” for information on initiatives and projects, funding sources, jobs, training etc.

Obstacles and Challenges

The challenges that almost everyone identified include:

- Shortage of time for meetings and for fruitful dialogue;
- Money – the knowledge of how to access funding programs, and the expertise, resources and personnel to make applications and to meet funding requirements;
- Inconsistent government policies (or, the lack of coordination to meet the different requirements of BC Ministries);
- Public suspicion and lack of knowledge when projects are being discussed and negotiated “in camera”;
- Competition for resources, jealousy, political hierarchies and “old mind sets”;
- Uncertainty by some municipalities as to which First Nations they need to talk to;
- Unintelligible business plans; and
- Agricultural Land Reserve and labour shortages.

Who or What Needs to be Involved

Communities need to work together to get start-up money from all levels of government, and to find ways of attracting seed money and venture capital. Ideas for actions that can be taken to move towards partnerships and working together for mutual advantage are:

- Joint applications for funding;
- Lobbying, harmonization of elections and meetings in First Nation communities and municipalities;
- Joint festivities and block parties; and
- Apprenticeship programs.

Group 2: Inter-Governmental Relations and Servicing Opportunities

Participants in this session noted that partnership opportunities exist for joint development of urban strategies and joint lobbying of the federal and provincial governments. There are sources of funding for partnerships that joint applications can access.

Primary opportunities for developing partnerships are:

- The formal settings of government-to-government tables;
- Working together on regional growth strategies;
- Communication sessions at any of these forums where municipalities and First Nations work together; and
- Ongoing dialogue rather than emergency meetings only.

Obstacles and Challenges

- Overcoming fear of being taken advantage of;
- Perceptions of potential economic breakdown;
- Fear of the unknown arising from lack of understanding of the processes underway in the province, and lack of understanding of a First Nation's jurisdiction;
- Dialogue not taking into consideration the challenges that First Nations are facing to build the capacity to handle the increased volume of responsibilities; and
- Lack of realistic expectations and patience; and
- Relative capacity in the design and definition of emerging new relationships.

"These fears also provide an opportunity to face them together and build trust."

Who or What Needs to be Involved

One suggestion was to pick a small project to start with. As well, sharing servicing costs was seen as an important stage in partnering. Personal contact and committee participation were also recommended.

Group 3: Land Use Planning Opportunities

The participants in the land use planning discussion group agreed that both local government and First Nation communities would benefit from more dialogue, information sharing, and partnerships on land use planning.

Generating a protocol understanding, which would allow leaders and decision-makers in both communities to work together to agree on a vision for their dialogue, objectives to be achieved, and operational guidelines for their staff, would be a beneficial tool toward providing land use planning opportunities.

“A champion of the cause needs to emerge to lead the discussions.”

Obstacles and Challenges

Challenges associated with harmonizing land use planning processes:

- The term “joint planning” means different things to different people; and
- Land use planning has many levels, therefore political leaders and senior staff must become involved in generating a mutual understanding regarding the meaning of and objectives for dialogue on land use planning.

Challenges to proceeding on joint land use planning dialogue:

- Lack of a model or template that will fit all the First Nation communities that are within the area; and
- Entering into numerous arrangements challenges staff efforts to reach and implement understandings.

Overlaps and shared territories:

- Local government staff are uncertain how to determine the correct protocols; and
- First Nations are uncertain about the geographic boundaries and jurisdictions of regional and municipal governments.

Who or What Needs to be Involved

Both First Nations and local government participants noted that staff are currently fully committed with limited resources and capacity to forge into new initiatives which do not have a clear direction. It was therefore suggested that information and examples be made available to local governments and First Nations regarding possible approaches to joint land use planning.

Actions and Next Steps

Summary

All the tables noted that the task of building relationships is the responsibility of everybody. A special role for Elders, and care to include them in discussions was recognized. According to the kind of joint project contemplated, more involvement by the provincial and federal governments is desirable. Bi-monthly Joint Council meetings, and more UBCM and FNS forums and more local community forums, are considered effective. The expectation for the Chief Councillor and the Mayor to lead initiatives was also mentioned.

It was also noted that while champions are required to initiate the dialogue, that formal protocols and understandings be established. This formalization of understandings would ensure that any initiatives remain a commitment even if political leaderships change.

Finally, participants stated that in many regions of the province, it was difficult to establish relationships and long term commitments to planning when communities are isolated from one another by geography such as water and/or distances. It was therefore suggested that communities explore opportunities for job exchanges whereby staff members spend time in each other's communities learning and understanding about one another's land use processes and issues.

Recommendations:

- Find the time to socialize together to learn about each other's traditions, cultures and histories;
- Hold more joint meetings to discuss opportunities and identify what is important and what objectives are shared;
- Create templates for planning processes, business plans, and economic agreements;
- Initiate joint planning for short-term and long-term goals;
- The development of comprehensive community plans involving all groups and citizens;
- Utilize best practices toolkits to enable better communication with First Nations, for ice-breaking and protocol development;
- Develop a website for sharing ideas and the "how-to" of successful projects;

Recommendations continued:

- Write letters to MLA's about changing the relationship between First Nations and city governments;
- Solicit provincial funding for relationship building at the local level;
- Create more integrated committees;
- Develop a clearer identification of the people who can form corporate boards or "Authority Boards" for economic development;
- Initiate partnerships with those who are skilled at marketing;
- Hold elections for terms longer than two years to provide stability and continuity;
- Develop better coordination of skills and capacity training and certification programs;
- Establish a working relationship between Chiefs and Mayors or Regional Directors to create a level of certainty on land use planning dialogue and other issues; and
- Appoint a "champion of the cause" to lead the discussions (e.g. members of Band or local government councils).

Final Comments by Participants

Following the final presentations, participants were provided an opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences.

The following excerpts summarize the comments:

"Don't be afraid to talk to Indians!" What First Nations seek is equality, opportunity, success and health. The future is not scary.

"The Federal government is looking at a claw-back of 50 per cent on self-source revenue. We need to influence Ottawa to review this policy."

"Dialogue regarding taxation, specifically for libraries, hospitals, and services based on tax assessments is required."

"We need a tool kit for communications, best practices, and ice-breaker methods."

Closing Remarks

Daniel Watts,
*First Nations
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Conference
Co-Chair*

There is a need for partnerships, especially now when the logging industry is slowing. So much can be done when we are working together.

We need to celebrate successes and build on them.

Nobody has said anyone should leave. Let us be good neighbours. Learning to treat each other with respect and dignity leads to partnerships. Small relations can lead to bigger partnerships as has been shown in Port Alberni.

Thanks to all.

**Director
Terry
Raymond,**
*UBCM,
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Thanks to the past Chair, Ted Armstrong. Thanks to all for showing up. Local communities can carry a lot of power, working together.

Thanks to the forum's sponsors: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, BC Ministry of Community Services, Municipal Finance Authority, Royal Bank of Canada (Aboriginal Banking Division).

Thanks to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities First Nations Relations Committee.

UBCM and the FNS would like to thank all those who participated and assisted in making this event a success. A special note of thanks goes to the following organizations for their funding support:

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Appendix C: Discussion Guides



DISCUSSION GUIDES:



Exploring Innovative Local Government-First Nation Partnerships

Some Key Concepts:

Dialogue:

- A conversation between two or more people
- An exchange of ideas or opinions

Partnership

- The relationship between two or more people or organizations that are involved in or share the same activity
- Cooperation between people or groups working together
- An organization formed by two or more people or groups to work together for some purpose
- A company set up by two or more people who put money into the business and who share the financial risks and profits

Community to Community Forum

A Community to Community Forum is an event bringing together First Nation and local government community leaders for the purpose of encouraging dialogue and understanding on areas of common responsibility and mutual concern. Creating opportunities for dialogue is essential to improving government-to-government relationships that can meet both present and future community challenges and goals.

Questions for Discussion – Morning Session 1
25 minutes

The Foundations of Partnership

Please do a round of introductions at your table and ensure everyone has a chance to participate in the discussion. Choose a recorder to note the major points on the sheets provided.

- 1. How does your organization [i.e. local government or First Nation as applicable] support dialogue and/or partnerships with your neighbouring organization?**

Examples:

- Policies
- Political support
- Memorandum of Understanding or Protocol Agreement
- Committees

- 2. What are some of the benefits of these partnerships and key foundations for success?**

Benefits

Foundations for Success

Questions for Discussion – Afternoon Session 2
45 minutes in breakout rooms

The How-to of Building Partnerships – Economic Development and Skills Development

Please do a round of introductions at your table and ensure everyone has a chance to participate in the discussion. Choose a recorder to note the major points on the sheets provided and report back at 2:00 pm.

1. From what you've heard from speakers today and from your own experience, discuss and **list some opportunities** for building partnerships between First Nations and local governments in relation to economic development and/or skills development.
2. What are some **obstacles or challenges** to achieving these opportunities?
3. **Who or what needs to be involved** to overcome the obstacles to building partnerships between First Nations and local governments and maximize opportunities in relation to economic development and/or skills development?

For example:

- Political commitment (whose?)
- Staff commitment (whose?)
- Community involvement (how?)
- Policy (what kind?)
- Tools (what kind? e.g. on-line samples of MOUs and Protocol Agreements from elsewhere, mentor network, others?)

Actions Needed

By Organization or Individuals

The How-To of Building Partnerships – Structuring Intergovernmental Relations and Servicing Arrangements

Please do a round of introductions at your table and ensure everyone has a chance to participate in the discussion. Choose a recorder to note the major points on the sheets provided and report back at 2:00 pm.

1. From what you've heard from speakers today and from your own experience, discuss and **list some opportunities** for:
 - Structuring intergovernmental relations (e.g. joint committees, representation on boards) OR
 - Building partnerships between First Nations and local governments in relation to servicing.
2. What are some **obstacles or challenges** to achieving these opportunities?

3. **Who or what needs to be involved to overcome the obstacles to building partnerships between First Nations and local governments and maximize opportunities in relation to:**
- Structuring intergovernmental relations (e.g. joint committees, representation on boards) OR
 - Building partnerships between First Nations and local governments in relation to servicing?

For example:

- Political commitment (whose?)
- Staff commitment (whose?)
- Community involvement (how?)
- Policy (what kind?)
- Tools (what kind? e.g. on-line samples of MOUs and Protocol Agreements from elsewhere, mentor network, others?)

Actions Needed

By Organization or Individuals

The How-to of Building Partnerships – Land Use Planning

Please do a round of introductions at your table and ensure everyone has a chance to participate in the discussion. Choose a recorder to note the major points on the sheets provided and report back at 2:00 pm.

1. **From what you've heard from speakers today and from your own experience, discuss and list some opportunities for building partnerships between First Nations and local governments in relation to land use planning.**
2. **What are some obstacles or challenges to achieving these opportunities?**
3. **Who or what needs to be involved to overcome the obstacles to building partnerships between First Nations and local governments and maximize opportunities in relation to land use planning?**

For example:

- Political commitment (whose?)
- Staff commitment (whose?)
- Community involvement (how?)
- Policy (what kind?)
- Tools (what kind? e.g. on-line samples of MOUs and Protocol Agreements from elsewhere, mentor network, others?)

Actions Needed

By Organization or Individuals

Appendix D: Organizers and Protocol Agreement

Union of B.C. Municipalities

Since 1905, the common interests of local governments in British Columbia have been brought together by the Union of B.C. Municipalities.

UBCM is an association that represents the interests of municipalities and regional districts in the province. It works in three ways to meet the needs of its members:

- Representation of local government concerns to senior government;
- Information and Assistance to local government decision-makers; and
- Member Services that can be best provided on a cooperative basis.

Through its 19-member executive, comprised of mayors, councillors, and regional district directors from communities throughout the province, UBCM works with both provincial and federal governments, in an effort to improve upon current legislation, regulations, and funding arrangements.

First Nations Summit

The First Nations Summit provides a forum for First Nations in British Columbia to address issues related to treaty negotiations. The Summit allows full and equal representation of all First Nations in B.C. without any preconditions that could affect the autonomy of each nation.

The First Nations Summit has mandated the First Nations Summit Task Group to act on its behalf.

In December 1990, First Nations and the federal and provincial governments established a B.C. Claims Task Force to recommend how the three parties could begin treaty negotiations and what those negotiations should include. On June 28, 1991, the B.C. Claims Task Force tabled their report with 19 recommendations, including the establishment of an independent B.C. Treaty Commission to facilitate the process of treaty negotiations. The recommendations were accepted by Canada, B.C., and the First Nations Summit.
