



FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT



TO: LOCAL GOVERNMENT MAYORS, CHAIRS, ADMINISTRATORS & BC FIRST NATIONS

FROM: UBCM EXECUTIVE AND FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT TASK GROUP

DATE: MARCH 12, 2004

RE: **COMMUNITIES IN COOPERATION – A GUIDE TO ALTERNATE DISPUTE  
RESOLUTION FOR FIRST NATIONS & LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN BC**

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We are pleased to present you with the *Communities in Cooperation Guide*, developed for the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and the First Nations Summit (FNS) with the support of the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

This guide is a product of the UBCM - FNS Protocol Agreement on Communication and Cooperation which has as one of its objectives, "*to find ways to encourage dispute avoidance and promote effective methods of resolving disputes between First Nations and local governments in BC*".

We strongly believe in the importance of building effective working relationships between First Nations and local governments. To this end we have supported the Community to Community Forum program since 1999. While relationship building remains our emphasis, our respective members have told us that they also need tools to help them deal with disputes if they occur.

The *Communities in Cooperation Guide* is intended to be a primer on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) for use by elected leaders and their staff. It provides readers with a basic understanding of considerations, options and process steps for First Nations and local governments when they encounter a dispute. It identifies documents within which First Nations and local governments may want to include dispute resolution provisions and lists additional training, information and other resources.

This guide adds to the growing body of resources for First Nations and local government to use in developing their relationship and in dealing with disputes. These resources include a background study by David Morris on the history of local government and First Nations relationships in BC and the nature of their disputes. We encourage you to visit our websites to access other resources ([www.civicnet.bc.ca](http://www.civicnet.bc.ca) and [www.fns.bc.ca](http://www.fns.bc.ca)).

Additional copies of the *Communities in Cooperation* guide are available from the UBCM and FNS offices and can be downloaded from our websites. We welcome your feedback on the guide and on resources you would like to see available in future.