



LIL'WAT NATION - THE VILLAGE OF PEMBERTON

BUILDING THE PATH FORWARD



PATHWAY OVERVIEW

Located just 30 kilometres north of Whistler in the beautiful Pemberton Valley, Lil'wat Nation and the Village of Pemberton have worked collaboratively on numerous projects, including joint servicing agreements and, most recently, a new community forest initiative.

PATHWAY ACTIVITIES

The collaboration pathway activities undertaken by Lil'wat Nation and the Village of Pemberton include the following.



Protocol and Communications Agreements



Servicing Agreements and Infrastructure



Relationship-Building and Leadership Forums



Joint Economic Development Initiatives

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Over the years, the two communities have met regularly and developed a number of joint protocols and agreements. They first engaged with one another at a Community to Community (C2C) Forum organized by the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District that also involved Xa'xtsa7 (Douglas Nation), Samahquam Nation, and the Resort Municipality of Whistler. The Village of Pemberton hosted its own C2C Forum in 2003 with Lil'wat and In-SHUCK-ch Nation. A third forum in 2004 was organized by Pemberton for the two communities and they came together again at a 2006 C2C Forum.

Additional relationship building and leadership forums have continued with Pemberton, Lil'wat Nation and other

regional partners over the years with the most recent sessions taking place in 2018. Lil'wat and Pemberton also participated in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) First Nations–Municipal Community Infrastructure Partnership Program to explore servicing agreements.

Building on this work, the two partners have moved ahead with a broader range of projects, including servicing agreements, joint economic development initiatives, and, most recently, a community forest initiative.

OUTCOMES

In November of 2017, Pemberton and Lil'wat Nation reached an agreement to enter into a three-year service agreement for Pemberton Fire Rescue to provide the same service levels provided to both the Village and the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District. Pemberton Fire Rescue will also work closely with the Lil'wat Nation Fire Department on coordinated training and operational initiatives to support Lil'wat Nation in re-establishing their own Fire Department and Service.

Negotiations on the Water Service Agreement between the Village and Lil'wat Nation to provide water to the Pemberton Industrial Park are continuing. The FCM helped support some early service agreement work through the First Nations–Municipal Community Infrastructure Partnership Program. This involved three facilitated workshops with FCM staff where Lil'wat Nation and Pemberton began to explore and re-negotiate water pricing and shared priorities. Lil'wat Nation currently supplies the Pemberton Industrial Park with water.

In 2017, Pemberton prioritized establishing stronger ties with Lil'wat Nation by expanding their knowledge of the traditions and culture of their important neighbours. To accomplish this, Council and staff attended the *“Building Bridges Through Understanding”* workshop, organized in partnership with the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD). The Village was also invited to sit on an organizing committee for a regional gathering focused on relationship building and exploring the meaning of reconciliation. Following the gathering a number of recommendations were put forth to Councils in attendance to further relationship building and collaboration. One of the recommendations led to Pemberton working with Lil'wat



PHOTO: *Sharing services among both communities, like Pemberton Fire Rescue, helps to create opportunities for training and other initiatives that support Lil'wat Nation in establishing their own services.*

Nation to develop a Territory Acknowledgement statement which was adopted by Pemberton Council and has been incorporated into all Pemberton Council meetings.

In 2018, after several years of negotiations between the two partners and the Province, Lil'wat Nation and Pemberton signed incorporation documents for the formation of the Spelkúmtn Community Forest Corporation. The Limited Partnership will seek to balance environmental, social and economic values of a community forest area while taking into consideration the desires of its member and neighbouring



communities. The long-term agreement gives the two communities greater control over, and benefits from forestry activities surrounding the communities. Timber harvesting will be undertaken while preserving and protecting cultural sites, working with local recreation groups and providing local employment and training opportunities.

In 2017, the Regional Economic Development Collaborative was formed, led by the Pemberton + District Chamber of Commerce. The Collaborative includes elected officials and staff from the Village of Pemberton, Lil'wat Nation, the Lil'wat Nation Business Corporation, the SLRD, and representatives from the Chamber and Tourism Pemberton. The partners recently received a major grant in 2019 to develop a Community Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan for the area. Lil'wat Nation is also contributing in-kind funds to the initiative.

Most recently, the Village of Pemberton has worked with an artist from Lil'wat to design street banners and banner wraps on utility boxes. They can be found throughout downtown Pemberton and at the industrial park to which Lil'wat provides water services.

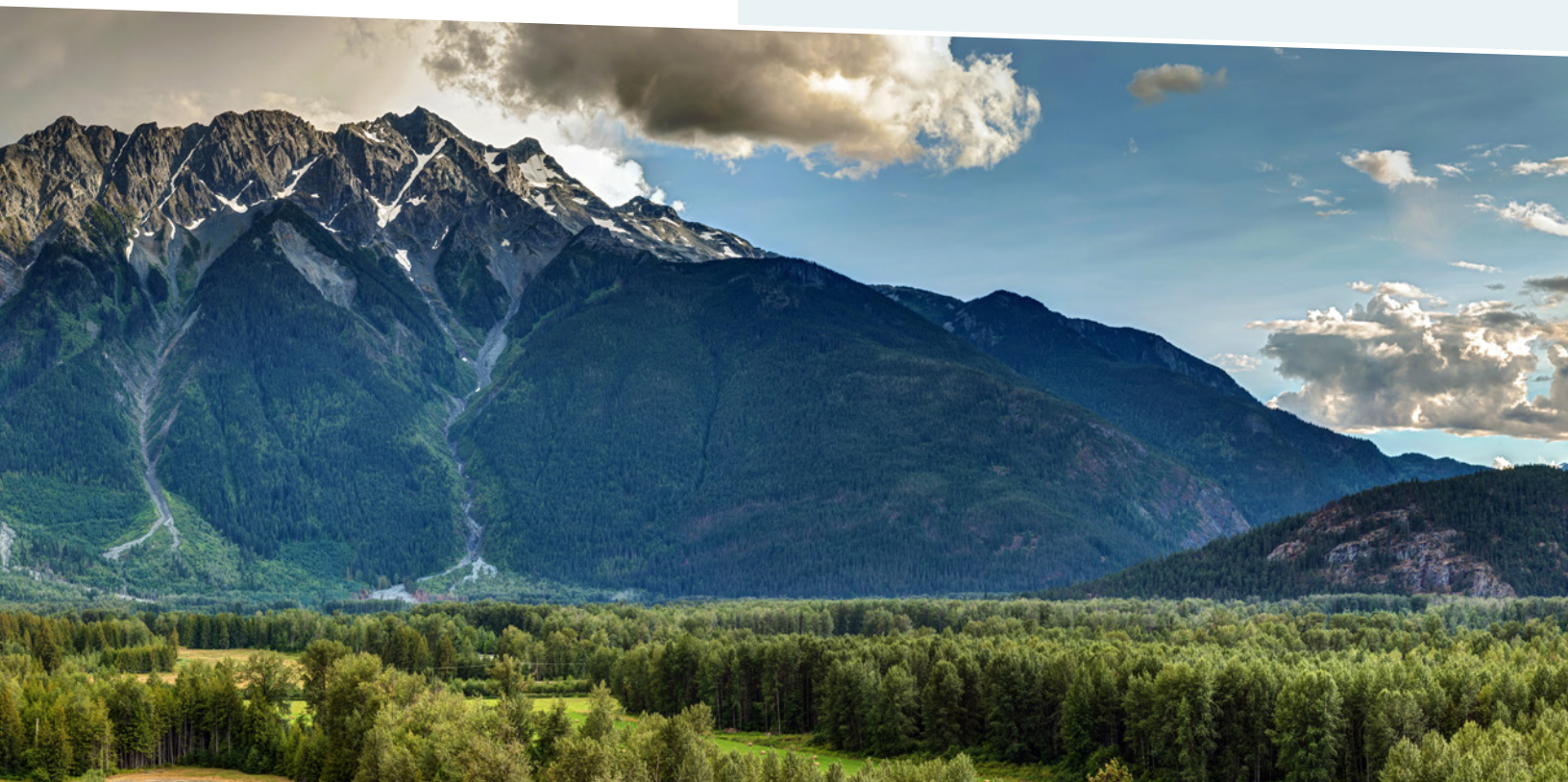
LESSONS LEARNED AND KEYS TO SUCCESS

One of the main takeaways from the project was for these partners to utilize the relationship building work done in the past. Through all the work done previously, they were able to harness and build on the knowledge of each other which allowed them to identify and co-develop new areas for collaboration work. Other lessons learned and keys included:

- ✓ **Engage leadership.** Having each community's councillors involved in the process and at the table to talk about initiatives while they are being developed gives everyone a better understanding of the process and responsibilities.
- ✓ **Learn about your partners.** Whether it's a service agreement or a community forest, understanding the general context about governance, leadership structures, and authorities is key to successful collaboration.

“We are proud to partner with the Village of Pemberton on this initiative. The Spel'kumtn Community Forest is an act of reconciliation and relationship building between our two communities.”

Lil'wat Nation Chief Dean Nelson



“The establishment of a Community Forest with Lil’wat Nation provides enormous opportunity, including financial and environmental benefits for both communities. However, I am most proud of this opportunity to further build on our relationship with Lil’wat Nation.”

Pemberton Mayor Mike Richman



PATHWAYS TO COLLABORATION

Pathways to Collaboration is a joint initiative of the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), the Province of British Columbia, and the First Nations Summit with funding from the Indigenous Business & Investment Council (IBIC). The project aims to showcase the growing number of successful economic development collaborations and partnerships between First Nations and local governments, while highlighting lessons learned and key steps to success.

The pathways to collaboration communities take are unique, reflecting the context of the communities involved, and involve different activities. Common pathway activities include protocol and communications agreements; servicing agreements and shared infrastructure projects; collaborative land use planning and development projects; joint economic development initiatives; and shared tourism projects. Like signposts along a pathway, these pathway activities are identified in the case study series.

For more information on the project, please contact the communities profiled, or visit www.ubcm.ca.



**Indigenous Business and
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