

The Aboriginal BUSINESS REPORT

A CCAB PUBLICATION

Canadian Council for
ABORIGINAL
BUSINESS




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& MUNICIPALITIES**

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**BUILDING AN INDIGENOUS
PRESENCE IN OUR CITIES**

Pictured: Duke Redbird, Calvin Brooks



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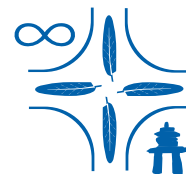
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A 2006 Statistics Canada survey found that 45% of First Nations people living on-reserve and 17% off-reserve require major home repairs. This is 35% higher than non-Indigenous groups. Problems often revolve around three things: structure, cultural relevance and financial obstacles.

- Structural problems include: defective plumbing, defective electrical wiring, foundation issues, and of course, mould.
- Current housing designs do not reflect the environmental, traditional or social needs of First Nation communities.
- Homes cannot be used to secure a mortgage due to the National Housing Act. This causes communities to have to approach government for ministerial guarantees on housing loans and has resulted in major housing shortages across Canada.

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Cluster Community Design

First Nations are community and family oriented and the current community planning provided for First Nations are not reflective of their culture and way of living.

The cluster orientation of the homes provides a circular space in the centre, shared by each family, in which children can play together, adults can converse and elders can teach. The circle provides a symbolic framework which outlines the values of First Nations communities: the children are of utmost importance, followed by the elders, whose teachings of values and culture are passed on to the younger generations. Outward, are the women who tend and care for the children, and finally the men, who protect and provide. On a spiritual level, the space inside a circle is a void, as it allows for the exchange of energies and free play from the border of the circle. No member of the cluster is isolated, as inclusion is an integral part of the education and health of the children.

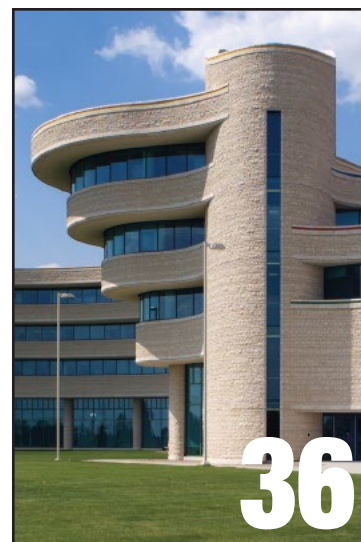
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J.P. GLADU
PRESIDENT AND CEO

With a New Year upon us, I want to take a moment to thank all of our generous sponsors, members and supporters. It is your continued encouragement and hard work that forms the backbone of CCAB and we build upon this foundation each and every day. That's why we can move into 2017 full of optimism and excitement for the challenges that lie ahead.

In this issue of *Aboriginal Business Report*, we explore the relationship between municipalities and Indigenous communities. As we all know, this collaboration is integral to the economic and social wellbeing of many of our Aboriginal communities. On the following pages you will find inspiring examples of Indigenous partnerships with municipalities that have stood the test of time.

Unfortunately, this has not always been the case. Our Indigenous peoples were regularly locked out of business opportunities that were all around them, and our communities have had to work hard at levelling an uneven playing field and 'resetting' these important relationships.

Leading the way has been Membertou in Nova Scotia. In 1995, when Sydney

was amalgamated into the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM), Membertou became the province's only Indigenous band within a city's civic boundaries. Not surprisingly, its leaders recognized the importance of working closely with the new municipal entity. Today, Membertou and CBRM have a successful, reciprocal business and economic relationship based on the idea of 'business mutualism.'

On the other side of the country, Whitecap Dakota First Nation has become a strong ally of the City of Saskatoon. Over the last two decades it has collaborated with the municipality on infrastructure, education and healthcare initiatives. These efforts have benefited both parties and have opened new doors to provincial and federal support for the Whitecap Dakota Nation.

These are just two examples that reflect today's changing realities and underline the need to dispel negative stereotypes. It is success stories such as these that allow Canadians to understand the important economic contributions that Indigenous communities make to the cities and towns that surround them. These are also the stories that one doesn't normally read about in the daily news.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On the topic of inspiring stories, each year CCAB has the honour of celebrating leading Indigenous business figures with its annual awards program. The 2017 winners include Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame Lifetime Achievement recipient Herb Belcourt and Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneur of the Year Isabell Ringenoldus. Both of these amazing award winners have made remarkable strides in their chosen fields of business. You can learn

OUR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES WERE REGULARLY LOCKED OUT OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES THAT WERE ALL AROUND THEM, AND OUR COMMUNITIES HAVE HAD TO WORK HARD AT LEVELLING AN UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

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more about them on our newly launched website, www.ccab.com, and join us in celebrating them at our 19th Annual Toronto Gala on January 31, 2017.

We are also excited about the launch of TFAB, our Tools and Financing for Aboriginal Business program. This novel new program connects Aboriginal entrepreneurs with tools, training and networks through a user-friendly online platform, which in turn helps them strengthen and grow their business. We recently held a successful TFAB Inaugural Business Skills Development Webinar on January 17 called *Understanding what your finances are telling you*, featuring guest presenter and business coach Warren Coughlin.

These are just some of the events CCAB is holding for our business audience. Be sure to check out the Upcoming Events section in the magazine to find out about the many other ways you and your organization can learn of new business opportunities and network with potential partners from across the country.

I look forward to seeing you at one of our events, and wish you and your loved ones all the best in the New Year.



RESTORING AN INDIGENOUS PRESENCE

BY DUKE REDBIRD



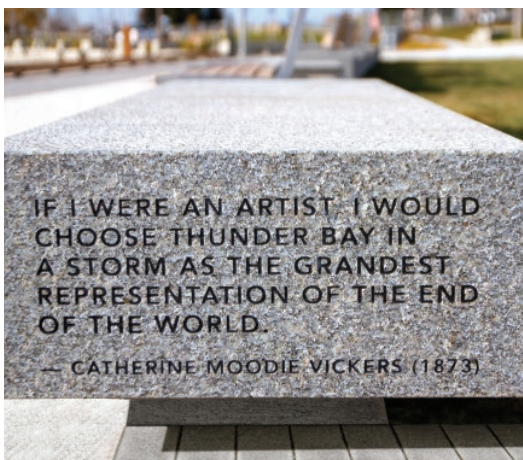
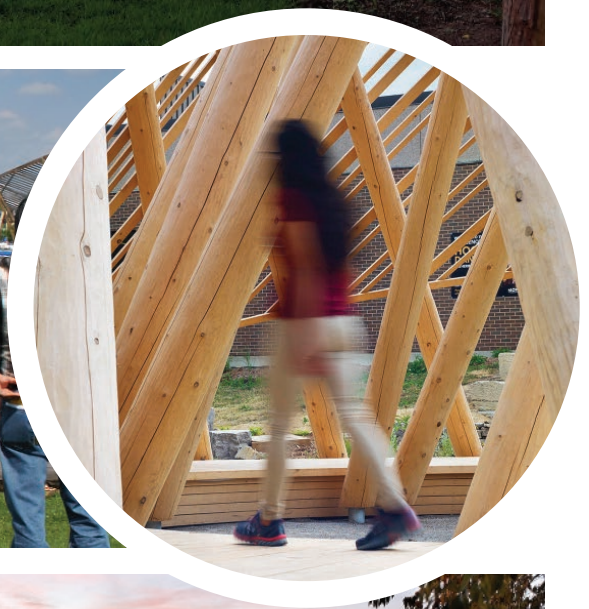
The Mohawk College Hoop Dance

THE INDIGENOUS PLACE
MAKING COUNCIL SEEKS
TO CREATE AN ABORIGINAL
ARCHITECTURAL PRESENCE
IN OUR CITIES

In 1908, a dredging crew was conducting underwater work at the foot of Bay St. in downtown Toronto to create a waterworks tunnel. To their astonishment, they discovered hundreds of moccasin-clad footprints preserved in the blue clay along the city's waterfront. The prints appeared to be the footsteps of a family that had walked along the ancient shore of Lake Ontario between 10,500 and 11,000 years ago.



Examples of Indigenous place making in Canada, clockwise from top: Deer Clan Longhouse at Crawford Lake, Mohawk College Hoop Dance, Aboriginal Honouring Circle, XXX, Spirit Garden at Prince Arthur's Landing in Thunder Bay



W.H. Cross, a city inspector who spoke to the Toronto Evening Telegram at the time, said: "It looked like a trail. Unfortunately the workers ended up covering the footprints with concrete shortly after and we are unable to examine them."

This mention of Indigenous presence appeared in the newspaper and was promptly forgotten for over a hundred years, except by a handful of historians who research the origins of Canada's largest city.

Five hundred years ago, the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island gifted the Europeans with a continent that was natural and uncontaminated – a testament to the conscientious stewardship by Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. The estimate is that the continent supported a population of 20 million people, representing at least 500 separate nations speaking more than 60 different languages.

Visitors to Toronto often ask, "What happened to the Native peoples? Where do they live? Can we experience an Indigenous place?" The answer, sadly, is "no." This is all the more disappointing because, as reported in 1908, all evidence of Indigenous presence in Toronto has been cemented over and buried beneath the concrete steel and glass of the modern urban landscape.

Victoria Freeman, a friend and noted historian and scholar, observed in her seminal work *Toronto has no History* that, "the Aboriginal past and the Aboriginal sacred were one and the same, still existing at very specific sites, but also experienced as everywhere in the city in a largely invisible but unbounded way. Many Indigenous interviewees spoke of ancestors, ghosts, spirits, the energy of sacred sites, and other forms of haunting or spiritual presence from the past actively and invisibly at work in the present-day city, often for Indigenous ends, always producing Indigenous difference."

ARCHITECTURAL ENLIGHTENMENT

While sharing this anomaly over dinner with Calvin Brook, an award-winning Canadian architect, urban

THE INDIGENOUS PLACE MAKING COUNCIL (IPMC) IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT FACILITATES THE CREATION OF UNIQUE, ICONIC SPACES OF GATHERING THROUGHOUT THE FABRIC OF CANADIAN COMMUNITIES



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COVER STORY

The award-winning Spirit Garden at Prince Arthur's Landing in Thunder Bay: a stunning modern interpretation of an Indigenous gathering place



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planner and designer, he expressed profound regret that Canadians have been deprived of the true knowledge, history and culture of the Indigenous peoples. After all, architecture, he reminded me, is defined as “a tangible expression of a way of life.”

Soon after, Brook, a partner with BrookMcIlroy, a certified CCAB PAR architectural practice, became a founding member of the Indigenous Place Making Council (IPMC), an effort committed to creating an Indigenous presence in our country’s urban centres. He is currently leading a talented team of First Nations professionals to reach this goal.

IPMC is a non-profit organization that facilitates the creation of unique, iconic spaces of gathering throughout the fabric of Canadian communities. The aim is for these spaces to facilitate learning, teaching, culture and exchange that embody Indigenous worldviews.

The spaces are created through a co-design process led by Aboriginal youth and elders. The IPMC works with local Indigenous groups in partnership with schools, colleges, universities, municipalities and governments to create beautiful and iconic spaces of inspiration. Recent examples include the Hoop Dance at Mohawk College, the Spirit Garden and new Art Gallery in Thunder Bay, the Institute for Indigenous Entrepreneurship at Algonquin College and the Collingwood Waterfront, to name a few.

Place making is often overlooked as an important agent of change. But it is a key tool for restoring Indigenous presence in our communities, while creating new economic development opportunities. Place making also provides a foundation for non-Indigenous people to develop a deeper understanding of the 12 millennial history of Indigenous presence in Canada.

As Peter Nabokov, author of *Native American Architecture*, noted, for Indigenous People the architecture

Working with Aboriginal Communities

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A photograph of two men standing outdoors in a natural setting with mountains and a river in the background. The man on the left is wearing a blue hoodie and a black cap, holding a large drum. The man on the right is wearing a camouflage jacket and a brown cap, holding a smaller drum with a deer head design. The Repsol logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the image.

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The interior of the award-winning Deer Clan Longhouse at Crawford Lake: a re-imagination of a 15th century longhouse designed by Brook McIlroy in collaboration with Indigenous communities


PLACE MAKING IS OFTEN OVERLOOKED AS AN IMPORTANT AGENT OF CHANGE

refers to more than just the design and decoration of buildings. It embraces what happens whenever human thought or action makes order and meaning of random space. It includes the often unseen social and religious meanings which are encoded into buildings and spatial domains.

My own Indigenous definition of architecture reflects both the rainbow arch that supports the weight of the sky and texture as in the way the soul feels when it is touched: it's about Arch-a-Texture. And it's time we saw more of it in our towns and cities. ■

Dr. Duke Redbird is an Anishnabe Elder and member of the Saugeen First Nation. He is well known as an Indigenous poet, journalist, activist and businessman who currently works with the Toronto District School Board as their Indigenous arts and culture curator and advisor. He is also a board member of the Indigenous Place Making Council (IPMC) and advisor to the Toronto Arts Council Cultural Leaders Lab.

Photos by David Whittaker, courtesy of Brook McIlroy.



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BUILDING BETTER ALLIANCES

BY MATTHEW BRADFORD

THE FEDERATION OF
CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES
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GROUPS AND MUNICIPALITIES
TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE
GREATER ECONOMIC
PROSPERITY

Stronger partnerships. Shared services. Mutual growth. Since the early 2000s, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has taken a lead in helping municipalities and their First Nations neighbours create a shared vision for their economic futures.

"What we're doing today is a result of our membership coming to us and asking how they can better collaborate with the First Nations governments in their region," says Helen Patterson,

program manager of FCM's Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI).

Those inquiries gave way to FCM workshops and programs designed to help municipalities work on a more meaningful level with First Nations communities on issues within their region. One of the first concerns high on FCM's agenda was that of the boiling water advisories in First Nations communities that were located close to municipalities

with clean water. For FCM and its members, it was a disconnect that could not be ignored.

So in 2010, with support from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), the Federation launched its Community Infrastructure Partnership Program (CIPP) to assist First Nations communities and municipalities in forming water service arrangements.

"The idea behind CIPP was to support First Nations and municipalities in coming together to address issues of drinking water and sewage management, which was a big concern for First Nations communities as well as smaller municipalities," says Peigi Wilson, CIPP program manager with FCM. "It was a program designed to help both parties acknowledge that they could both benefit by sharing services and supporting one another."

Through CIPP, FCM initiated talks between First Nations communities and neighbouring municipalities throughout Canada, many of which represented historic "firsts." It also facilitated service agreements between the communities, paving the way for similar partnerships down the road.

CEDI

CIPP's success was influential in the formation of FCM's Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI), headed by Patterson. Launched in 2013, the multi-phased program builds on CIPP's vision and helps First Nations and municipalities come together once again, only this time on joint economic and land management issues.

With the support of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, FCM took the idea to CANDO, a national Aboriginal organization focused on community economic development. They became a key partner in making CEDI a reality. "At the time, there was no venue for a First Nations government and municipal government to sit down and discuss how they could build their economy together," recalls Patterson. "So we built a program around the idea

of building capacity within those local governments to conduct joint economic development planning."

The CEDI program received over 280 applications from First Nations communities and municipalities across the country, and six were selected to participate in the pilot project. The idea was to use these initial partnerships to develop and test CEDI tools that could then be used by a wider range of communities.

"For that first round, we wanted all First Nations communities to see themselves in our examples, so we selected communities that were small, remote, near large urban centres, and represented a large range of sectors," Patterson explains. "We learned a lot from each of those communities and we were able to provide support in building those relationships and providing peer mentoring from both FCM and CANDO."



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GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

A large part of CEDI's success has been its focus on relationship building. This has been accomplished through sitting down with First Nations and municipal governments, discussing past histories, working through current barriers, and assessing the needs of both parties. Explains Patterson: "Each of these communities now has an established venue for joint planning, and we're actively involved in following up, going out there, and collecting those best practices."

All six of CEDI's initial community partners have had success with the program. In Manitoba, the program was instrumental in bringing together the Town of Pas, the Rural Municipality of Kelsey and the Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN) to sign a Friendship Accord in 2014 outlining their commitment to work together for the benefit of the region. This partnership led to the creation of a Tri-Council through which the parties have continued collaborating to promote their region and address infrastructure issues. Highlights from the partnership include the drafting of a Regional Economic Analysis Process and the joint publication of an investor attraction brochure and website.

"Getting the Regional Economic Analysis Process done was big," says Duncan Lathlin, EDO for Paskwayak Development Corporation. "Trying to find a way to use that information... is something we're trying to do right now. We (need) an investor profile for our region because we've found that investors don't have enough information about the Pas and about OCN. Our local businesses are really enthusiastic about it."

In Ontario, CEDI played a role in bringing together the Lac Seul First Nation in the municipality of Sioux Lookout and Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (KI) for the purposes of relationship building and joint strategic planning. That partnership has laid the groundwork for the development of a 10,000-square-foot regional distribution centre in Sioux Lookout, among other initiatives. "This partnership has been welcoming to all those who want



Katie First Nation Chief Susan Miller and Pitt Meadows Mayor John Becker sign cooperative agreements for fire, water and sewage services as part of an FCM initiative

to partner," says Vicki Blanchard, economic development manager at Sioux Lookout.

Elsewhere, B.C.'s Seabird Island Band and the District of Kent worked through the CEDI program to create a joint marketing and river management strategy. FCM and CANDO's work has led to similar partnerships in Quebec (between Eagle Village First Nation, the Town of Témiscaming and the Municipality of Kipawa), Alberta (Sawridge First Nation, the Town of Slave Lake and the Municipal District of Lesser Slave River No. 124), and New Brunswick (Madawaska Maliseet First Nation and the City of Edmundston).

"We have learned a lot from that first round and made some amazing partnerships thanks to the incredible leadership on both sides. One of the biggest achievements, though, was proving that it's possible for two governments to come together despite jurisdictional and cultural boundaries to create joint economic planning initiatives, a greater

voice, and access to other services and funding in their respective provinces," says Patterson.

Phase 2 of the CEDI program is already underway and set to run until 2021. It will include 30 participating communities and include larger cities. It will also make a stronger call for all Canadians to work on reconciliation with First Nations communities.

While the original CIPP program is no longer active, it has inspired a new pilot project in Manitoba, where Indigenous Northern Affairs is working with FCM to replicate its national approach on a regional level. "We want to demonstrate that there is no magic to what we're doing," says Wilson. "From our experience with CIPP and CEDI, we have lots of tools and resources to share with any organization that is interested in doing what we've done on a more local level. If we can help a larger number of communities access these same services, everyone will achieve their objectives faster." ■

STRONGER TOGETHER

In 2015, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) took steps to share the knowledge and know-how gained from its Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI) with a broader audience.

The result is the 148-page toolkit called *Stronger Together*. This educational guide helps First Nations communities and municipalities build closer collaboration on their own initiative.

The handy toolkit provides information on bridging the differences between communities and working towards a united vision. It includes a comprehensive, step-by-step guide on initiating and managing a joint First Nations-Municipal CEDI process. There are handouts, templates, workshop agendas and other tools, as well as detailed case studies on how other communities have used the CEDI process to improve the quality of life of their citizens.

To access the toolkit, visit: www.fcm.ca/home/programs/community-economic-development-initiative/our-toolkit-and-more-resources.htm.



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THE STUNNING SUCCESS OF MEMBERTOU

BY ADAM GOULD

THE EAST COAST ABORIGINAL GROUP TAPS INTO THE TALENT AND SKILLS OF RETURNING MEMBERS TO HELP NAVIGATE A REMARKABLE COMEBACK

One hundred years ago, Membertou (then Kun'tewiktuk) had a prime location situated on the shore of Sydney Harbour at the entrance to the booming steel town of Sydney, Nova Scotia. But a local property owner turned politician petitioned the federal government to have the Mi'kmaw community relocated away from the commercially valuable land it occupied.

Sadly, he got his way. In 1926-1928, Kun'tewiktuk was relocated about one kilometre away to its present location, where the inhabitants could be kept out of sight. The land was poor, and over the years the community inevitably slid into dependency on federal funding.

While Sydney expanded to a population of about 35,000, Membertou struggled to improve

its circumstances. Then in 1971, the Chief and Council negotiated with the federal Department of Indian Affairs to sign a Service Agreement with the City of Sydney. The agreement established federal funding for the provision of municipal services to Membertou.

The groundbreaking agreement – believed to be the first of its kind in Canada – took 15 months to negotiate and helped bring Membertou

"into the 20th century," according to Membertou senior advisor Dan Christmas.

Still, by 1995, the community was in dire straits. Following a couple of failed business ventures, unemployment was hovering around 90 per cent and Membertou was totally dependent on federal monies. The community was struggling to carry a \$1-million annual deficit on a \$4-million annual budget, and that deficit had to go. "If you are in debt, you have a noose around your neck and the federal government controls all your decision-making power," recalls Membertou Chief Terry Paul.

NOVEL SOLUTION

Fortunately, 1995 turned out to be a turning point. That's when Chief Paul and his Council decided that Membertou's real problem was people. "We didn't have the right people working for us. We didn't have people who were well educated," Chief Paul says.

So they took an unprecedented step. Chief Paul and the Council began to recruit community members who had left to pursue education and employment elsewhere in Canada, bringing them back to Membertou to take a leadership role in turning things around. Returnees included lawyers, educators and government staff who were hired into executive and leadership roles. They included Bernd Christmas, a Bay Street lawyer, and Dan Christmas, a provincial Aboriginal political staffer, both of whom play key roles in the community today.

Under its new leadership, Membertou was debt-free by 2000. That same year it made history once again by becoming the first Aboriginal community in the world to receive ISO 9001:2001 certification. "It was assumed that because we were a First Nation, we were unable to manage ourselves or our business," says Dan Christmas. "ISO certification... was like somebody flipping a switch. One day we were nobodies, and the next day

QUICK FACTS:

- Membertou was the first Indigenous group in Canada, and possibly the world, to earn 9001:2001 certification from the International Organization or Standards (ISO)
- Membertou is the 3rd largest employer based in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality
- An average of 37% of Membertou's workforce is non-Indigenous
- Membertou is the only Indigenous community in Nova Scotia to be serviced by a regional or city police service
- Urban Indigenous communities not only generate revenue for themselves, but studies show that benefits extend to other communities

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In 1926 Membertou, then Kun'tewiktuk, was forcibly relocated to an area where land was poor and its inhabitants could be kept out of sight

we became known as one of the finest First Nations in Canada.”

Right after its certification, Membertou was approached by an aerospace company that wanted its help in a bid for a manufacturing contract. Clearly, Membertou was ready to do business, and since 2001 the community has gone from strength to strength.

Today, Membertou is a leader in developing infrastructure and capturing market demand. As the population of the municipality around it continues to shift and old infrastructure becomes obsolete, Membertou's leadership has seized the opportunity to drive economic development and, more importantly, to build reconciliation, mutual trust and optimism for the future.

The latest venture, the Membertou Sport & Wellness Centre, is an \$18-million facility that was made possible with band resources, private donations and capital funds that other groups could not procure. The centre boasts two NHL-sized ice surfaces, offices, and a brand new YMCA gymnasium. With older arenas preparing to close, the timing was perfect.

Demand for lodging and conference space was addressed with the opening of Membertou's Trade & Convention

Centre in 2004, and the Hampton Inn, with partner D.P. Murphy, in 2012. The commercial area, which boasts a full-service market and business park, has attracted local businesses in the fields of research, public relations, small retail, cancer research, physiotherapy and continuing care. Plans are now underway for a new palliative care centre to be co-constructed by Membertou on land it actually donated.

The next business venture from Membertou Commercial Realty is Churchill Crossing, slated for tenancy in spring 2018. The light commercial and retail development will bring additional new products, services and jobs to the community.

MEMBERTOU HAS EVOLVED FROM A FORCIBLY EXILED OUTPOST TO A THRIVING EXAMPLE OF FIRST NATION INGENUITY



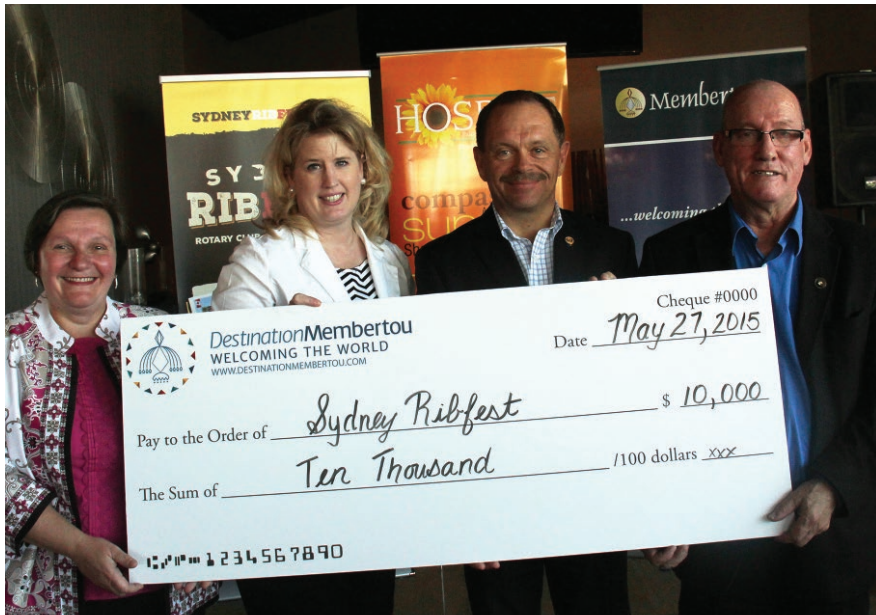
MUNICIPAL SERVICES

In 1995, Sydney was amalgamated into the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM). As the only Indigenous band situated within a city's civic boundaries in Nova Scotia, Membertou recognized the importance of working closely with the new municipal entity.

Today Membertou and the CBRM have created a successful business and economic relationship based on “business mutualism” or what you could call a symbiotic relationship. As one example of the new symbiotic approach, Membertou has enjoyed a spirited relationship with the Cape Breton Regional Police Services since 2007. That year, the RCMP was honourably relieved of its duties in the community and instead local officers were sworn in, including a band member.

Indigenous police services are usually performed by RCMP or tribal police. Historically, community members have been highly resistant to city or regional policing services, often with good reason. In Membertou's case, the distrust was deepened by the wrongful conviction of Donald Marshall in 1971. He wasn't exonerated until 1989.

So reluctance was the “elephant in the room.” Fortunately, the acting Sergeant at the time was well aware



Membertou is one of the most prolific charitable partners in Cape Breton



Today Membertou is a thriving community and the 3rd largest employer based in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality

of the problem and worked to change perceptions. Today, community members praise the work of former and current sergeants and officers who can be found using community gym facilities, performing walking patrols, and serving on band and community committees.

The CBRM and Membertou not only share space above ground, but also beneath it. Water, a community's most valuable utility, is provided by CBRM as Membertou lies within its boundaries. With water service also come fire and emergency services. A signed memorandum of

understanding between both parties states that one will support the other in times of need and emergency.

Clearly, Membertou has come a long way in the last hundred-odd years. It has evolved from a forcibly exiled outpost to a thriving example of First Nation ingenuity. It's a community that has made wise use of its human capital, while collaborating effectively and on its own terms with the local municipality. ■

Adam Gould is manager of communications and government relations at Membertou.

GIVING BACK

With progress and success comes social responsibility. Today, Membertou is one of the most prolific charitable partners in Cape Breton. Its Entertainment Centre alone has donated over \$1.1 million since 2007.

In the past three years, Membertou has been the main sponsor for large festivals, including Cape Breton Pride and the Sydney Rib Fest. The Cape Breton Bike Rally, another sponsored partner, has a new annual home in the community.

Through revenue generated from band businesses on addition-to-reserve (ATR) lands, Membertou contributes over \$1 million (\$1.8 million in 2015-16) in tax revenue to the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

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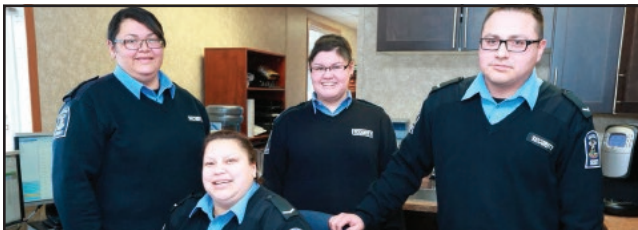
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Celebrating the 2014 announcement of the land transfer for the project: AHT's Executive Director Joe Hester and board members Joanna Shawana, Joni Shawana, Jacques Huot, Ellen Blais, Shirley Gillis-Kendall, Emily Gallienne

AN ABORIGINAL HUB

TORONTO'S RECONCILIATION PROJECT

BY JULIE COOKSON

PARTNERSHIPS AND PHILANTHROPY HELP A NEW INDIGENOUS
LANDMARK TAKE ROOT IN DOWNTOWN TORONTO

The urgent need for a larger, purpose-built Aboriginal Community Health Centre in Toronto has opened the door to a new Aboriginal Community Hub for Canada's largest municipality. In addition to providing health support, the Hub will also support cultural and economic growth for the city's growing and diverse Indigenous population.

Anishnawbe Health Toronto (AHT) is a fully accredited Community Health Centre with a mission to improve the health and wellbeing of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in spirit, mind, emotion and body by providing traditional healing within a multi-disciplinary healthcare model.

A vision of the late Elder Joe Sylvester, AHT grew out of a research project studying diabetes and Toronto's

Aboriginal community. The study identified the need for an Aboriginal-led health facility that offered safe, judgment-free support and traditional healing services.

"Guided by the teachings of traditional healers, elders and medicine people, we aim to build a healthy, strong Aboriginal community by looking at health holistically. We don't just offer a Band-Aid (solution) – we are helping clients to overcome the social determinants of health that have put them on the path of homelessness, poverty, trauma and/or addiction. Re-connecting clients with identity and culture is central to our work," according to Joe Hester, executive director of AHT.

In 1987, the doors opened on a primary care facility in a retrofitted

bank branch building across from Moss Park at Queen and Sherbourne. As AHT's services grew to incorporate mental health and addiction services, two additional locations in adapted residential buildings were added.

These facilities, however, were not built for healthcare and today they are beginning to show their age. And, as the urban Aboriginal population grows, demand for AHT's client services has ballooned to more than 27,000 visits a year. Stretched to capacity, concerns about overcrowding, privacy, confidentiality and infection control are an everyday reality at AHT.

NEW SITE

This is about to change. After years of negotiations, a partnership with the Government of Ontario has

resulted in Anishnawbe Health Toronto purchasing, for a nominal fee, 2.4 acres of land in the West Donlands area of the city. This prominent site was part of the 2015 Pan Am/ Parapan Am Games Athletes' Village and is adjacent to the thriving Distillery District and near the popular Corktown Common. The site includes the Cherry Street Hotel, a historically designated property with special heritage requirements. The development of the area is governed by Waterfront Toronto, a partnership of the three levels of government, with the aim to redevelop one of the most significant waterfronts in the world.

The new 45,000-square-foot Aboriginal Health Centre will require less than one acre of the land to make the dream of a new, larger, purpose built Health Centre come true. There will also be space for ceremonial grounds, including a sweat lodge and healing gardens.

With the remaining land, AHT is leading the planning for the development of an Aboriginal Hub, which will include cultural venues and economic services. The full plan is being submitted to the provincial government in early 2017. The concept promotes the value of connecting with surrounding streets and neighbourhoods as well as nature's integral part in healing, wellness and restorative powers.

The project team, guided by the unique needs of AHT and the requirements of the city and Waterfront Toronto, is working towards a LEED Gold Certified green building. The goal is to create an optimum site and landscape design approach that addresses both the building needs and integration of the Hub into the surrounding neighbourhood.

"Bringing health services, cultural and business facilities together in the West Don Lands will contribute to a vibrant neighbourhood and an enhanced quality of life, enriching both Aboriginal peoples in Toronto and our city as a whole," states provincial MPP Glenn Murray, a strong proponent of the project who helped secure the land deal during his time as Minister of Infrastructure.

COMING TOGETHER

The Hub is drawing on the experience and guidance of a number of sectors under the strong leadership of Hester and the AHT Board of Directors. The \$200-million-plus Hub project is an ambitious endeavour that reaches far beyond AHT's experience as a community health centre. To help move the project forward, AHT has brought together a volunteer committee of Aboriginal business leaders, property development professionals, representatives from the West Don Lands community and Aboriginal groups interested in relocating to the Hub.

"It's really building a bridge between the neighbourhood, the city and the Aboriginal community and has started us down the path to reconciliation in Toronto," says Mark McLean, chair of the project's Advisory Committee, member of the AHT Board of Directors, and vice-president, sales at Blue Goose Pure Foods. "Ultimately, our vision is an Aboriginal Hub that not only serves our community but also leads to a deeper understanding,

respect and appreciation of Aboriginal practices and culture among all Toronto residents and visitors."

AHT is counting on extending that community engagement in the project into the realm of philanthropy. While \$17 million in capital funds from the Ministry of Health and the sale of current AHT-owned property will fund part of the \$30-million Health Centre project, Anishnawbe Health Foundation was launched this past summer to build additional donor support.

The new Foundation provides an opportunity for Torontonians and Canada's philanthropic community to be part of a project that aims to help some of the most vulnerable people in the city. At the same time, donor support is expected to help in the creation of a new downtown landmark that will recognize the first inhabitants of the area and convey the cultural richness that First Nations, Metis and Inuit people bring to the community. ■

Julie Cookson is executive director at the Anishnawbe Health Foundation.



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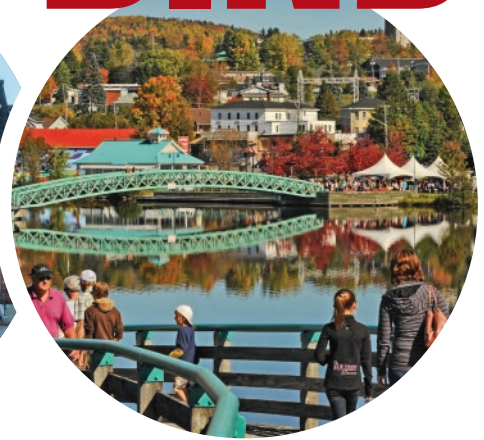
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TIES THAT BIND

HOW TWO MUNICIPALITIES
CAME TOGETHER WITH THEIR
INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES TO
SEEK A COMMON APPROACH
TO ECONOMIC GROWTH



A growing number of Canadian municipalities and First Nations communities are coming together to share resources and expertise to help drive economic growth and create new business opportunities. Case in point is the productive relationship forged between the Town of Truro and the Millbrook First Nation in Nova Scotia, as well as the City of Edmundston and Madawaska Maliseet First Nation in New Brunswick.

These partnerships mark a dramatic change from decades earlier when most First Nations communities and municipalities remained isolated from each other. Rarely did they work together on projects that could benefit both parties. Municipal services, for instance, were almost never shared with First Nations, leaving them on their own to supply basic services like water and sewage to their members.

That has changed, says Andrew MacKinnon, director of engineering and public works with the Town of Truro. The town has long worked closely with Millbrook First Nation, a Mi'kmaq community located within its boundaries, to provide access to and use of its infrastructure services and assets. "We have always understood collaborative efforts benefit us both," says MacKinnon of the partnership, which began in the early 1970s.

MacKinnon's role as director covers everything from coordinating the town's public work crews for snow removal and street maintenance, to managing infrastructure assets like roads, water and sewers. Sharing important resources and services has allowed both communities to embark on business development projects that bring reciprocal benefits.

Terry French, director of commercial operations with the Millbrook First Nation, points to the recent development of the Millbrook Power Centre. The project began in 2000 as a hub for retail, recreational and leisure-based businesses. The first phase allocates 46 acres of land for development and currently has some \$30 million worth of investment on site. The project's second phase earmarks an additional nine hectares of land to the site, with new roads, water and



Official signing of the Friendship Agreement between Edmundston and Madawaska Maliseet First Nation. Top right: Scenes from Truro and Edmundston

sewer services to be added. "The town provided the municipal services to us for the Power Centre, such as water and road plowing... (while) the business development part of the project was entirely (our initiative)," says French.

French adds that Millbrook First Nation meets regularly with the town to discuss and coordinate plans that impact both communities. Some meetings aim to ensure municipal services are being delivered properly across both communities while others focus on prioritizing capital-intensive projects to maximize their benefit. Says MacKinnon: "We have been having these regular meetings since 1988 and at those meetings we can coordinate all future development and capital work... We are there to help (Millbrook First Nation) with any maintenance issues and provide advice for expanding the systems or any capital work."

The benefits of this common approach are tremendous, emphasizes MacKinnon. "It makes it so much easier for both (communities) to support initiatives that help grow their commercial area, which in turn helps foster growth in the region, which in turn helps foster our town's growth, especially the downtown (core)," he says.

JOINT APPROACH

Cyrille Simard, mayor of the City of Edmundston in Madawaska County, New Brunswick, confirms that collaboration between First Nations communities and municipalities has been growing in importance for many towns and cities. He points to Edmundston's close relationship with the Madawaska Maliseet First Nation located within the city boundaries.

The ties between the two communities, notes Simard, both geographically and historically, have been deeply intertwined. "We are very fortunate to have a First Nation community that is enclosed within our boundaries. We have been living together since the first Acadian was welcomed by the Maliseet in 1785," explains Simard.

Edmundston and Madawaska Maliseet were part of a pilot project initiated by the Federation of Canadian

Municipalities (FCM) to help First Nations communities and municipalities develop joint economic planning. "We had a lot of meetings where we could share ideas about economic development and we identified common ground where we could work together on a communications plan to attract new business," says Simard of the program, which involved six First Nations communities from across Canada. *(For more on the FCM program, turn to page 16.)*

In 2014 the two communities signed a friendship agreement that formalized their collaboration and participation in the initiative. They have been meeting regularly to discuss challenges and concerns, with a strong focus on job creation, attracting and retaining young people, and strengthening sustainable economic development, such as efforts to attract more tourists to the region.

"We have been having discussions about the tourism sector," says Simard.

"The Trans-Canada Highway crosses Edmundston and you have millions of people using that highway. We want to intercept some of those tourists and bring them to our communities."

One way that is happening is with the ongoing development of the Grey Rock Power Centre, a commercial project that will consist of retail shops, food service establishments, an entertainment centre, hotel, waterpark and the largest truck stop in Atlantic Canada. It is expected to generate \$320 million in sales, tax revenues, business start-ups and employment in its first eight years.

Whether through an official government program like the one spearheaded by the FCM, or on their own initiative, municipalities and Aboriginal communities are learning that when it comes to economic development, two hands are always better than one. ■



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AN ALLIANCE LIKE NO OTHER

BY MATTHEW BRADFORD

**WHITECAP DAKOTA FIRST
NATION PAYS TRIBUTE TO ITS
ROOTS AS IT POSITIONS ITSELF
AS A STEADFAST ALLY OF
NEIGHBOURING MUNICIPALITIES**

It's fitting that the Whitecap Dakota First Nation (WDFN) has become a strong ally of the City of Saskatoon. After all, "ally" is literally in WDFN's name – "Dakota" means "friend" or "ally" in the Dakota language.

Over the last two decades, the First Nation community has worked with its neighbouring municipalities and regional authorities on several infrastructure, education and healthcare initiatives. The results have benefited both parties and opened doors to provincial and federal support for the Whitecap Dakota Nation.

Moreover, says WDFN Chief Darcy Bear, this alliance has honoured a historic partnership. "Whitecap was here before there was a Saskatoon. It was our Chief Whitecap who picked out the location when (Methodist Minister and entrepreneur) John Lake was looking for a place to put a Temperance colony and administrative centre. He sought the guidance of Chief Whitecap and the Chief led him to a spot along the North Saskatchewan River that allowed for an ease of crossing, resulting in a settlement that would flourish to become a city," explains Chief Bear. "It took 125 years to recognize Chief Whitecap as one of Saskatoon's founding fathers, but now there is a larger-than-life statue of him downtown."

Chief Darcy Bear has been a driving force for growth in his community. Since assuming his leadership role 22 years ago, he has worked to bring WDFN closer to Saskatoon, local rural municipalities and other regional authorities. "Back when I was just

starting, I looked at the fact that we had no money in our bank account and a 70 per cent unemployment rate. But we were located right beside the City of Saskatoon. The Dakota people have always believed in creating alliances that have mutual benefit. So I said, 'Why aren't we working in partnership with the communities around us?'"

WDFN extended its hand to Saskatoon and surrounding municipalities to create better relationships with its regional neighbours. One of the community's early successes came when it earned the support of Saskatoon and nearby municipalities to build a new tourism corridor running through Saskatoon into WDFN territory and reaching its newly developed casino, before continuing further south to Lake Diefenbaker.

"We had a secondary highway that went from Saskatoon to Whitecap, but it was very narrow, with dangerous curves and needed work," says

**The WDFN Health
Centre with the
Charles Red Hawk
Elementary School
visible in the
background**



Chief Bear. "I knew if we approached the province alone and asked them to rebuild it to go to our casino they would say no. So instead, Whitecap approached the City and the four rural municipalities to sign a memorandum of agreement to build a tourism corridor and took that to the province. They couldn't say no."

That deal represented a first in highway construction partnerships between a First Nations community and municipalities in Saskatchewan's history. As well, WDFN handled three out of the five phases of the \$45-million project. As a final touch, the municipal partners all agreed to name the new tourism corridor the Chief Whitecap Trail.

SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

The Trail marked the beginning of many successful joint ventures between WDFN and its neighbours. In the years since, Chief Darcy Bear and his team have forged an ongoing partnership with the Saskatoon Public School Division (SPSD) to have the community's schools included in the city's Ward 7 district, which gives them access to the SPSP's educational services, resources, professional development and purchasing power. WDFN maintains its control of education through the partnership's joint governance and operations committees.

"The federal government funds this partnership, and it ended the educational disparity in our community. Now that our operational budget has doubled we're getting the same services for our children as any provincial school," says Chief Bear.

Building on this momentum, WDFN has leveraged funds to develop a new school at the south end of Saskatoon. Once opened, Whitecap students will comprise 10 per cent of the student body. Because of this, the First Nations community has contributed 10 per cent (\$2.7 million) towards the facility's \$27-million price tag.

This September, WDFN also partnered with the federal government, the province and a corporate financial sponsor to fund the development of a \$2-million early learning centre within the First Nations community. "The Early



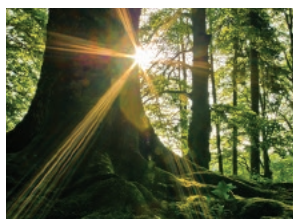
Whitecap Dakota First Nation Chief Darcy Bear has spearheaded many of the community's collaborative initiatives with local municipalities



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Official ribbon cutting for the WDFN Early Learning Centre, with council, staff, children and Hon. Don Morgan, Deputy Premier and Minister of Education for Saskatchewan

Learning Centre is another partnership developed with the Saskatoon Public School Division. It's open to anyone – you don't have to be from Whitecap," explains Chief Bear.

Agreements like these are now commonplace in the WDFN community. Chief Bear also gained both federal and municipal support to create a provincial primary health clinic within the community, led by

a nurse practitioner and a team of health professionals to serve Whitecap and the surrounding area. "We've broken down the doors of segregation through that partnership with the Saskatoon Health Region, and we now have a provincial primary health clinic in our community that's open to anybody who needs it," he says.

WDFN has also made arrangements to access support from the Saskatoon

Fire Department. In 1998 its leaders approached the city to discuss a fire protection arrangement, which led to the creation of a volunteer fire department within the community that benefits from training and back-up support from Saskatoon. Not only has this improved safety for WDFN residents, but the collaboration has given rise to local role models and mentors for its youth.



Stakeholders at the official announcement of the Building Canada Fund infrastructure project: (from left) FSIN Chief Bobby Cameron, Whitecap Elder Melvin Littlecrow, Hon. Ralph Goodale (Canada), WDFN Chief Darcy Bear, Mayor Don Atchison (Saskatoon-former Mayor) and Hon. Jim Reiter (Government of Saskatchewan)

"Our recreation coordinator, who was one of our fire volunteers, enjoyed working with the volunteer department so much he decided to take the training at Brandon Fire College and became Saskatoon's very first First Nations professional firefighter. He and a colleague saved a life on the first fire he went to," recalls Chief Bear. "His career is all thanks to this partnership. And because of how well he's done, other young First Nations people can look to him and say, 'I can do that too.'"

Creating role models and enhancing the quality of life in the Whitecap

Dakota community are among the many benefits to come from the First Nation's work with its local municipalities. Boasting a low unemployment rate of five per cent and a thriving workforce both within Saskatoon and its own community, the partnerships also serve as a model for other First Nations groups.

These partnerships are based on mutual benefit and everyone is expected to contribute. "Whitecap's approach to partnership is to always have a strategy that creates mutual benefit. We don't walk in saying, 'Here's a problem.' We come in with

a solution that makes sense and we contribute our fair share."

With a reflection on how that vision has served WDFN to date, Chief Bear adds, "Remember, Dakota means ally. All we did was focus on the past and how our ancestors governed themselves through mutually beneficial and working partnerships. That's guided us forward into some very positive relationships. And when rural Saskatchewan is successful, large urban centres benefit by supplying goods and services to drive economic development. We create win-win partnerships, and our allies understand that." ■



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BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

BY SARAH B. HOOD

TSAWWASSEN FIRST NATION SPEARHEADS TWO UNIQUE MALL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS



The \$600-million Tsawwassen Mills shopping centre has 1.2 million square feet of retail space and a 1,100-seat food court

“always talk about this as reconciliation in action,” says Tom McCarthy, CAO of Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN), a Coast Salish First Nations community in British Columbia. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, he’s talking about a major shopping mall development.

McCarthy was commenting on Tsawwassen Mills, a \$600-million shopping centre occupying two million square feet on 185 acres of TFN land near Delta, B.C. The mall opened for business this past October and features 1.2 million square feet of retail space with a 1,100-seat food court. It was built by Ivanhoe Cambridge, the same real estate company that developed Vaughan Mills mall in Ontario and CrossIron Mills in Calgary.

Adjacent to the Tsawwassen Mills is another new mall project: Tsawwassen Commons, a 550,000-square-foot big-box shopping centre spearheaded by the Property Development Group (PDG). This project is expected to be completed by mid-2017.

It’s the Tsawwassen Economic Development Corporation that’s charged with seeking partners such as PDG and Ivanhoe Cambridge to develop suitable projects on TFN land – projects that generate long and short-term lease revenues for the First Nation while providing training and employment for its members and their businesses.

As evidenced by these two mega-projects, the corporation has been successful in its endeavours to date. “We’ve succeeded in finding partners that are prepared to deliver on both of those mandates,” says Chris Hartman, the Tsawwassen Economic Development Corporation CEO.

LONG-TERM VALUE

It was in the late 2000s that the Tsawwassen EDC first started looking for a stable tenant that could add long-term value to the community. This happened at the same time that Ivanhoe Cambridge was searching for a suitable piece of land for another of its Mills projects. PDG, meanwhile, had already eyed an opportunity for its own

mall on TFN land. In both cases, says McCarthy, it proved a good match for the First Nation. “What was so magical about this was that we realized that the two parties wanted to achieve mutually beneficial interests,” he notes.

But first there were some wrinkles that had to be ironed out, namely that PDG had already tied up 100 acres of the TFN site before Ivanhoe Cambridge came to the table. So the Tsawwassen EDC increased the size of the land parcel from 100 acres to 185, which in turn allowed Tsawwassen Mills to be located on 120 acres and PDG’s Tsawwassen Commons to occupy the remaining 65 acres.

“We broke a lot of new ground with respect to the negotiations,” Hartman says. “Even though I think this was the sixth project for PDG on First Nations land in B.C., we brought forward some new concepts that Ivanhoe Cambridge or PDG hadn’t seen before.”

This included capacity building in the form of jobs, training and

opportunities for members and their businesses. As well, TFN negotiated a legacy revenue, similar to a participation rent for a tenant in a commercial mall, which provides a portion of the tenant's ongoing revenue to the landlord.

The economic benefits for the TFN community are considerable, with two revenue flows coming their way: the prepaid lease revenue, which represents market value for the 185-acre land parcel, and the legacy revenue, which represents a significant income stream that will be provided to the members over the term of the 99-year lease. "TFN uses those monies to help provide services to the TFN members – all your typical municipal services, plus other responsibilities in health and education. There's property tax as well," says Hartman.

BROAD SUPPORT

Almost all TFN's 480 members supported the two projects, with 97 per cent voting in favour. This included the 40 per cent who live outside the immediate area in the Okanagan region and the area around Bellingham, Washington. "Most people saw that it was a really good way to put Tsawwassen on the map," says McCarthy.

The First Nation is even starting to see some of its members return home for new job opportunities. There are 4,000 permanent jobs available in the retail projects and as many as 4,000 more opening up in the industrial lands that will house a logistics centre. "TFN is becoming a major employment centre in the Lower Mainland," boasts Hartman. "We're not only benefiting the TFN community, we're also providing employment benefits to all of the South Delta and Lower Mainland."

The projects have had an additional ripple effect in the First Nation community: they've offered support to its talented group of artists and craftspeople, some of whom have been commissioned to create original decorative artwork for the new buildings. Even the crosswalks have been conceived to reflect Coast Salish designs.



The shopping centre in Tsawwassen showcases beautiful examples of Indigenous art and culture

"Our artists have never been busier," says McCarthy. "The project has caused a real cultural renewal at Tsawwassen First Nation as we require that all our projects incorporate an art element. Ivanhoé Cambridge hired a number of artists and they commissioned original pieces: weavings, baskets, totem poles, carvings."

A further benefit has been a deeper understanding of the community on the part of its business partners. "I witnessed through the course of our discussion a huge growth of learning

on the companies' part about First Nations culture," says McCarthy. "As our partnership grew and deepened, we had senior executives at Ivanhoé Cambridge telling some of their anchor tenants what would be appropriate in terms of cultural content. They had learned enough to educate their tenants."

While both projects may have begun purely as a lucrative business venture, they ultimately ended up as something far more meaningful. They are connecting people in a way that has resonated among all the stakeholders. ■

CHIEFS OF ONTARIO



The Chiefs of Ontario is an advocacy forum and secretariat for collective decision-making, action, and advocacy for the 133 First Nations communities located in Ontario.

www.Chiefs-of-Ontario.org

BUILDING ON A LEGACY

BY MATTHEW BRADFORD

GRAHAM CONSTRUCTION BUILDS ON A SUCCESSFUL HISTORY OF PARTNERSHIPS
WITH THE COUNTRY'S INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

What started with a father, his sons and a few shovels in 1926 stands today as one of the largest and most experienced construction firms in North America. Since that time, Graham Construction has grown into a massive operation spread out across 13 offices in North America.

Despite its large size, the original family values of commitment, integrity and reliability continue to serve as the company's foundation. "While we're a \$2-billion company, the family 'feel' remains in today's employee-owned Graham, where the people who work beside you are treated with more courtesy and camaraderie than companies that don't have that," Ron Graham, Graham Construction's chairman emeritus, said as he reflected on the company's 90th anniversary in its in-house *Visions* magazine.

That family approach has defined Graham ever since founder Phillip Wigglesworth Graham first put his modest crew to work building railways in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan for the Canadian Pacific Railway. Since that first contract, Graham Construction has steadily grown in size and reputation, contributing to countless commercial, industrial and infrastructure projects throughout Canada and beyond.

Driving the company's growth has been its commitment to developing talent within the Aboriginal community while engaging with its business leaders. A big help in this regard has been Graham Construction's employee-owned structure, set up in 1985. "At the time, the owners – the Graham family – recognized that an extraordinary employee reward system was necessary to retain key employees for the long term, because retaining

talent has allowed Graham to take on larger and more complex projects," said Ron Graham.

PROMOTING GROWTH

That passion is reflected in Graham's partnerships with Aboriginal stakeholders, many of which were established to promote growth and provide meaningful employment in Aboriginal communities across Canada.

"We started partnering with Aboriginal communities over 30 years ago, and it's been a very important focus for our company," says June Verhelst, vice president of Graham's industrial division.

The first of these partnerships was Points Athabasca (PACL), which was established in 1999 alongside majority partner Athabasca Basin Development Limited Partnerships. PACL has since completed numerous projects in the





Northern Saskatchewan resource sector, and is the largest employer in Points North, Saskatchewan.

Inspired by this partnership, Graham and File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council LP created Points Athabasca FHQ, which has since gone on to complete a number of projects in Southern Saskatchewan by employing and training First Nations people.

In its most recent First Nations collaboration, Graham paired with the Siksika First Nation, the Niitsitapi, to form Niitsitapi-Graham LP. That partnership is currently overseeing the pre-construction phase of a retail development, an industrial park, an herbs agricultural facility, an administrative multipurpose facility and the Sun Roads Farmory.



Graham has also partnered with First Nations communities on several real estate projects through its wholly owned subsidiary, Gracorp Capital Advisors. This includes the 300,000-square-foot Eagle Landing shopping centre in Chilliwack, B.C., 50 per cent owned by the Squiala First Nations band, which contributed land to the project on a long-term lease. It also includes the Tsawwassen Commons Power Centre Project, a proposed 550,000-square-foot shopping centre slated for construction on Tsawwassen First Nations lands. *(For more on this project, turn to page 34.)*

Both projects have generated business and employment opportunities for the collaborating First Nations communities, as well as access to

services and expertise from Gracorp Capital, a subsidiary of Graham Group, and its partners.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Through these partnerships, Graham has linked major projects to First Nations communities, creating employment and business development opportunities as a result. While turning a profit is vital for any business, there is more that motivates the business strategy at Graham Construction. "These partnerships are developed to respond to the need for growth in some of these regions," explains Verhelst. "They're not just about business. We want our partnerships within the First Nations communities to be authentic and have some depth and breadth to them... The fact that our partners have a



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percentage of ownership allows their profits to be distributed back within their communities."

Graham Construction is committed to ensuring each of its First Nations partners is provided with the resources and logistical support needed to drive growth in their individual businesses. "Delivering projects in the industrial marketplace comes with a high level of complexity, so we're always working with our partners to give them a guiding hand to make sure they can respond to projects with full expertise

and carry them out with the highest standards," says Verhelst.

Moving forward, Graham intends to help its Aboriginal partners respond to larger and more sophisticated projects, with an aim to expand its partnerships on the west coast in British Columbia.

Off the jobsite, the company is also deeply embedded in many Aboriginal communities. It regularly sponsors local and international cultural events, hosts industry nights, and collaborates with educational and training

institutions – like British Columbia's Aboriginal Mentorship & Training Association (AMTA) – to nurture tomorrow's Aboriginal construction leaders.

"Thanks to our size and experience, we're in the position to engage our communities and help them to find employment and meaningful engagement around the facilities they're trying to build," says Verhelst.

Graham Construction has come a long way from its railway days, but the company's focus on building new opportunities remains as strong today as it was almost a century ago. ■

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Canada



Senator Murray Sinclair

Katherine Power,
Sodexo CanadaRandy Moore, Bee-Clean
Building Maintenance

On September 22, 2016, the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) hosted its 14th Annual Vancouver Gala, where we celebrated and recognized Senator Murray Sinclair, the 2016 recipient of the Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations.

The Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations recognizes a Canadian who has contributed, through professional and voluntary commitments, to building bridges between Aboriginal people and Canadian society.

Senator Sinclair's work over the past six years with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), culminating in the release of the TRC report, has provided the basis for a more respectful relationship between Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians.

CCAB also recognized the 2016 Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) committed and certified companies at the Vancouver Gala. PAR is a certification program that confirms corporate performance in Aboriginal relations at the bronze, silver, gold or committed level.

Earlier in the day, CCAB held a Progressive Aboriginal Relations Luncheon featuring keynote presenters Katherine Power, Vice President of Communications and Corporate Affairs with Sodexo Canada, and Randy Moore, Vice President of Strategic Development and Aboriginal Relations with Bee-Clean Building Maintenance. The Luncheon focused on partnering with Aboriginal businesses and communities to build capacity. Both spoke to their own experiences from development to delivery.

Thank you to our Vancouver Gala Lead Sponsor **Scotiabank** and our Dinner Networking Reception Sponsor **Cameco**. Thank you to our PAR Luncheon Lead Sponsor **Cameco** and our Supporting Sponsor **BC Housing**.

Aboriginal Business
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14TH ANNUAL

VANCOUVER GALA
AND PAR LUNCHEON

BANFF

ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE



Natan Obed, President, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami; J.P. Gladu, President and CEO, CCAB; National Chief Perry Bellegarde



Honorable Perrin Beatty, President and CEO, Canadian Chamber of Commerce



Chief Terrance Paul, Community of Membertou;
Randy Moore, VP, Bee-Clean, Building Maintenance

On October 19-20, 2016, the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) hosted its second annual Aboriginal Economic Development Conference (AEDC) in beautiful Banff, Alberta. The event recognized the contributions AEDCs make to Aboriginal business, community prosperity and the Canadian economy, while also providing networking and knowledge-sharing opportunities for businesses, AEDC executives, community leaders, government and corporate Canada.

The 2016 AEDC focused on financing and the importance of maintaining positive relationships between AEDCs and their communities. More than 40 business leaders from across Canada took to the stage to speak on topics that covered intergovernmental relations, financing, community relations, infrastructure, procurement and leadership.

Speakers included the Honourable Perrin Beatty, President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce; Perry Bellegarde, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations; Chief Jim Boucher of Fort McKay First Nation; Chief Clarence Louie of the Osoyoos Indian Band; and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami President Natan Obed.

The 2017 Aboriginal Economic Development Conference will be held May 11, 2017, in Calgary, Alberta, in conjunction with the 4th Annual CCAB Calgary Gala where the AEDC Award will be presented.

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Chief Jim Boucher, Fort McKay First Nation



Josh Bilyk, President, Alberta Enterprise Group

On November 23, 2016, the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) and the Alberta Enterprise Group (AEG) hosted *Aboriginal Connections* Keynote and Reception in Calgary, Alberta.

Over 200 business leaders from across Western Canada attended the gathering to celebrate the achievements of Fort McKay First Nation's Chief Jim Boucher.

Chief Boucher gave a compelling account of the history, present day and future of Fort McKay First Nation, one of Canada's most enterprising Aboriginal communities. He was introduced by Dr. Eric Newell, Chancellor Emeritus and Special Advisor to the Provost, University of Alberta, and recipient of the CCAB Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations in 2012.

Thank you to our Event Partner **Alberta Enterprise Group (AEG)**, our Coat Check Sponsor **CAPP** and our Contributing Sponsor **BAMSS Contracting Inc.**



CALGARY

**ABORIGINAL CONNECTIONS
KEYNOTE AND RECEPTION**



UPCOMING EVENTS

GALAS, LUNCHEONS & HOT TOPIC SERIES

19TH ANNUAL TORONTO GALA

January 31, 2017
5:30 pm - 9:30 pm
Ritz Carlton Hotel
Toronto, ON

The 19th Annual Toronto Gala will honour and celebrate the 2017 Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame Lifetime Achievement Inductee and the fourth recipient of the National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur of the Year Award. Both awards are founded and exclusively sponsored by ESS Support Services Worldwide, a division of Compass Group.

The 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award will be given to respected Métis entrepreneur Dr. Herbert Belcourt, CM, LLD (Honorary), founder of several businesses, including Belcourt Construction, and co-founder of the Belcourt Brosseau Métis Awards Fund, a \$13-million endowment with a mandate to support Métis students pursuing further education.

The 2017 National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur Award will be awarded to Isabell Ringenoldus (First Nations), founder, owner and operator of TAWS Security, a security company that specializes in oil sands gate and mobile patrol security solutions. Based out of the Fort McMurray #468 First Nation in Anzac, Alberta, TAWS Security has an ownership and management team made up fully of local Fort McMurray residents.

To reserve your seat, go to
www.ccab.com/events



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WINNIPEG HOT TOPIC SERIES

Aboriginal Power & Renewable Energy

March 23, 2017

Fort Garry Hotel

Winnipeg, MB

Green energy has always existed in the Aboriginal world where respect for the land is respect for the creator. In the 21st century many communities have embraced wind, solar and battery energy storage as a path to sustainable economies that mother earth powers. These are decisions made by the communities and their leadership. Join us as our panelists discuss how green and renewable energy is either working or not working for their community. It's about discussing and exploring potentials and the choices made along the way.



INDIGENOUS WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP AWARD & KEYNOTE

April 6, 2017

Design Exchange

Toronto, ON

The role of women in traditional life has long been one of leadership and strength. Through the tenacity and determination of our Indigenous women, families have endured as has the culture and adaptation to changing economic and political landscapes since the arrival of the new peoples on the shores of Turtle Island. Join us as we award one of Canada's top Indigenous women with the 1st CCAB Indigenous Women in Leadership Award. Learn from our Award Winner as she discusses the challenges, achievements and vision for an equitable and prosperous future for all Canadians. **This award is founded and exclusively sponsored by TD.**

Lead Sponsor: TD



3RD ANNUAL ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

May 11, 2017

Calgary Convention Centre

Calgary, AB

The 3rd Annual Aboriginal Economic Development Conference (AEDC) will highlight innovation in the Indigenous economy. Aboriginal economic development corporations (AEDCs) work in a competitive environment, with constantly moving targets and changing expectations. To stay relevant in this environment, companies are continually innovating to gain market share, develop and apply new technologies and improve operations and processes. These innovations take place every day across the country, in big and small ways. From the construction of sophisticated energy and internet infrastructure to new ways of engaging cultural tradition in business operations, Aboriginal AEDCs are innovating to deliver a better future to their communities and Canada.





ANNUAL CALGARY GALA

May 11, 2017
Sheraton Suites Calgary Eau Claire
Calgary, AB

The Annual Calgary Gala will honour and celebrate the achievements of the CCAB Aboriginal Economic Development Award. The award is founded and exclusively sponsored by Sodexo Canada.

Lead Sponsor: Sodexo



HALIFAX HOT TOPIC SERIES

Aboriginal Tourism
June 28, 2017
Halifax Convention Centre
Halifax, NS

Visitors from all over the world are learning about the diversity and depth of Canada's Aboriginal peoples through immersive and transformative experiences, as Aboriginal communities and companies market unique tourism opportunities. From eco-tourism to art galleries, fishing lodges to boutique hotels, these ventures showcase the best of traditional and modern expressions of Aboriginal culture. Join our expert panel as we explore the exciting ideas and visions promoting cultural awareness and reshaping the Aboriginal economy.



2017 AWARD DEADLINES

ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AWARD

The Aboriginal ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AWARD

Canadian Council for
Aboriginal Business

The annual Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) Award goes to an outstanding AEDC and affirms the substantial value AEDCs bring to Aboriginal communities by way of employment, business development and revenue generation. AEDCs are valuable conduits between industry, government and Aboriginal communities. By showcasing their initiative, CCAB points to a vision of shared prosperity and progress. Past laureates include Tsuut'ina Nation, Penticton Indian Band Development Corporation, and Membertou Development Corporation. The winner is celebrated at our Annual Calgary Gala in May.

Nomination deadline: February 3, 2017

More information: www.ccab.com/awards



*Tsuut'ina Nation,
Aboriginal
Economic
Development
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Award Laureate*

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN ABORIGINAL RELATIONS

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE In Aboriginal Relations

Canadian Council for
Aboriginal Business

The Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations recognizes a Canadian who has contributed, through professional and voluntary commitments, to building bridges between Aboriginal peoples and Canadian society. Their efforts will have made a substantial impact across Canada and across sectors, including the business sector. Past winners include Willa Black, Mary Simon, Phil Fontaine and Paul Martin. The winner is celebrated at our Annual Vancouver Gala in September.

Nomination deadline: June 29, 2017

More information: www.ccab.com/awards



*Senator Murray
Sinclair, 2016 Award
for Excellence in
Aboriginal Relations
Laureate*



15TH ANNUAL VANCOUVER GALA

September 28, 2017
Fairmont Waterfront | Vancouver, BC

The 15th Annual Vancouver Gala will celebrate and honour the recipient of the Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations as well as the CCAB Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) certified and committed companies.

Lead Sponsor: Scotiabank



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2017 VANCOUVER PAR LUNCHEON

September 28, 2017
Fairmont Waterfront | Vancouver, BC

The 2017 Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) Luncheon in Vancouver will bring together Canadian companies that are committed to promoting and developing partnerships with, and investing in, Aboriginal businesses and communities. The PAR Luncheon features two keynote speakers discussing the benefits of investing and partnering with Aboriginal businesses and communities to build capacity, speaking to their experiences from development to delivery.



THUNDER BAY HOT TOPIC SERIES

Leveraging Business Strengths
October 12, 2017
Valhalla Inn Hotel
Thunder Bay, ON

This Hot Topic session will focus on partnerships between Canadian companies and Aboriginal communities to launch businesses in urban and rural markets. The discussion will explore issues including the creation and alignment of shared goals, team building and management, and resource maximization.

CONGRATULATIONS

Bee-Clean Building Maintenance would like to congratulate our friend **Herb Belcourt** on his induction into the CCAB Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame!



Progressive
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The Aboriginal BUSINESS REPORT

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CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Aboriginal Business HALL OF FAME

ENTREPRENEUR
of the Year



Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame: National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur Award

CCAB calls for self-nominations from up-and-coming Aboriginal entrepreneurs under the age of 35.

Nomination deadline: September 15, 2017
More information: ccab.com/national-youth-award

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Entrepreneur
Award
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Aboriginal Business HALL OF FAME

LIFETIME
Achievement



Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame: Lifetime Achievement Award

The Lifetime Achievement Award is part of CCAB's Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame, which recognizes Aboriginal persons whose business leadership has made a substantive contribution to the economic and social well-being of Aboriginal people over a lifetime.

Nomination deadline: September 15, 2017
More information: ccab.com/aboriginal_business_hall_of_fame_abhf



Herb Belcourt
2017 ABHF Lifetime
Achievement Award
Laureate

Aboriginal Business A W A R D

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION



Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation Award

The annual Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) award goes to an outstanding AEDC and affirms the substantial value AEDCs bring to Aboriginal communities by way of employment, business development and revenue generation.

Nomination deadline: February 3, 2017
More information: ccab.com/aboriginal-economic-development-corporation-award



Tsuut'ina Nation
Aboriginal Economic
Development
Corporation Award
Laureate

Aboriginal Business A W A R D

EXCELLENCE IN
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Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations

The Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations recognizes a Canadian who has contributed, through professional and voluntary commitments, to building bridges between Aboriginal peoples and Canadian society.

Nomination deadline: June 29, 2017
More information: www.ccab.com/award-for-excellence



**Senator
Murray Sinclair**
2016 Award for
Excellence in
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Laureate



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For more information, please contact
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