

# CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES IN PLACEKEEPING PARTNERSHIPS

## Our Common Grounds Case Studies

### Our Common Grounds: Incorporating Indigenous placekeeping in Toronto's parks and public realm

Civic commons include natural public spaces and ecologies in cities such as parks, trails and gathering spaces. As the original stewards and care-takers of the lands and waters of Toronto, Indigenous peoples are key to the process of co-creating a narrative based on the shared living history of the Toronto Islands and their cultural, ecological and social significance to diverse communities and to the future of city-making. The City of Toronto's TOcore initiative includes a new 25-year plan for Toronto's downtown area, and a series of five infrastructure-related strategies to implement the plan: community facilities, parks and public realm, mobility, energy and water.

Within the City of Toronto's larger long-term strategy, a framework has been developed for integrating Indigenous placekeeping principles and values within projects, especially related to parks and public spaces. The Indigenous placekeeping framework for downtown parklands includes an Engagement Plan with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and other Indigenous knowledge-keepers and practitioners, proposing the following key insights and opportunities to inform the strategic plan:

- Calls to action and statement of commitment.
- Consultation on TOcore, Parkland Strategy and other initiatives.
- Various one-off programs, places and initiatives.
- Previous park naming proposals.
- Focus on ravine and watercourse projects.
- Semi-annual gathering of AAC, Indigenous collaborators, public realm staff, project leads.
- Cross-divisional engagement and participation to ensure coordination.
- Annual review of upcoming capital projects for prioritization.
- Ongoing engagement and discussion.

Feedback from the Indigenous community focused on the the following principles to guide the placekeeping framework for the transformation of parks and civic spaces in the downtown core so that Indigenous presence and culture are represented in their designs and activations of:

- Everything is connected: think 7 generations into the future.
- Importance of the relationship of Indigenous communities with the land and water.

- Celebrate Indigenous culture and history in public space.
- Space for ceremony and customary use: to restore identity and social structures.
- Restore pre-settlement landscapes (ravines, islands, etc.).
- Engagement and partnerships: involvement of Indigenous youth.
- Implement the Indian Residential School Survivor (IRSS) Legacy project.
- Keep Downtown inclusive: i.e. affordable housing and community services.
- Park re-naming process (Indigenous name agreed upon by Anishinaabe, Wendat and confederacies).

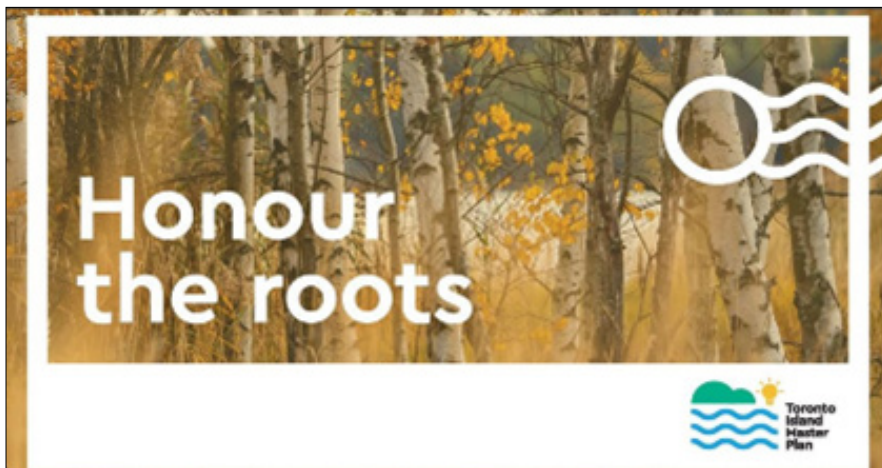
Plan for Indigenous Placekeeping in parklands and public spaces includes:

- Vision recognizes the lands of Toronto as traditional territory and home to diverse Indigenous peoples.
- Shared history should guide future planning and investment.
- Indigenous culture and history to be celebrated in parks.
- Partnership with Indigenous communities in design, development and programming.
- A focus on placemaking, naming, wayfinding, art, and interpretive features.

- 'Core Circle' linking and restoring natural features encircling Downtown.
- Co-create an evolving framework.
- Focus on ravine and watercourse projects.
- Semi-annual gathering of AAC, Indigenous stakeholders, public realm staff, and project leads.
- Cross-divisional engagement and participation to ensure coordination.
- Annual review of upcoming capital projects for prioritization.
- Ongoing engagement and discussion with Indigenous community.
- Sacred fires – develop a protocol for sacred fires in Toronto's parks and identify locations in the four directions for sacred fires
- Lower Don Parklands – naming and place-making "Wonscotonach Parklands"
- Toronto Island Park management plan

## Toronto Island Park

For thousands of years, the Toronto Islands have been a place for different First Nations, including present-day treaty holders: Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, to gather for healing and ceremony. Today, it is one of Toronto's signature parks that acts as an oasis for Toronto residents and visitors. However, the park has faced numerous pressures over the years, including increased demand, aging infrastructure and flooding.



*Credit: Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation*

The Toronto Island Park Master Plan will address these issues and ensure that the Park can be a cherished gathering place for generations to come. Led by the City of Toronto, it will be a long-term planning document that is being collaboratively created with Michi-Saagiig (Mississaugas) of the Credit First Nation (MCFN) and other Indigenous rights holders, local communities, and the public. As traditional treaty holders to the lands and waters of what is now known as the Toronto Islands, the MCFN view the Master Plan as an opportunity to do planning differently and to recognize the need for municipalities to work in step with Indigenous partners and cultural protocols. Mohawk Elder Pat Green of Six Nations of the Grand River shared during the virtual launch of the Master Plan: "Hopefully, if Toronto is being honest and truthful, from this point on we will all benefit from working together to make sure that Toronto Island remains a sacred place."

Cathie Jamieson is the treaty-holder and councillor for MCFN and identified, along with City of Toronto project leads, a number of important values, principles and protocols that will guide development and delivery of the Master Plan for the Toronto Islands:'

- Aligned with Anishinaabeg natural laws, protocols and values.
- Priority given to honouring the ancestral and cultural significance of the land and place that constitutes the Park.
- Priority given to sharing Michi Saagiig teachings and ceremonial practice.
- Storytelling is central to co-creating a shared history and future between the Mississaugas and other Indigenous peoples, and settler communities.
- Acknowledging Indigenous lands and knowledges, and collaborative relationships with Indigenous peoples.
- Observing Michi Saagiig cultural protocols when engaging MCFN partners.
- City of Toronto acknowledges that the Islands Park is an Indigenous place and fostering it as an Indigenous space.
- Planning public green spaces needs to incorporate the elements of water, earth, sky and fire.



*Credit: David Smiley. <https://nowtoronto.com/news/toronto-islands-indigenous>*

The next steps of the Master Plan co-design process include:

- Pre-engagement Scoping and Planning: Oct - Dec 2020
- Phase 1 Towards a Vision: Jan - March 2021
- Phase 2 Testing ideas: April - Nov 2021
- Phase 3 Confirming a path forward: Dec - May 2022
- Celebration of Final refinements: June - Aug 2022

## Toronto Island/MNCFN Friendship Group

The Friendship Group hosts the Mississaugas-Toronto Island Community Exchange and was established to provide the opportunity for Toronto Island residents and visitors of the Toronto Island Park to form closer social and cultural ties with the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. The group's mandate is to build relationships organize public events at which islanders, park visitors, and members of MCFN can learn from and with one other e.g. MCFN flag-raising ceremony, Elder and historian talks, pow wows, feasts, water ceremonies, and medicinal plant tours.

While the flag-raising event was the first official collaboration between the Toronto Islanders and the MNCFN, there has been a long-standing connection between the groups and the Community Exchange events held both on Toronto Island and on the MCFN reserve and demonstrate how to foster relationships that build trust and engagement in public spaces so that multiple (his)stories can co-exist.

## Lower Don Parklands

The Don River Valley Park is a collaborative community project between Evergreen, the City of Toronto and the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), in consultation with Indigenous Community (including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation) and has reenergized an important conversation related to these questions:

- What is the nature of the city's relationship to the Lower Don?
- Can we better define the landscape of the Lower Don and create a special identity for it?
- Can we reclaim an identity lost through industrialization, river straightening and highways?
- While the Lower Don has many places and spaces with their own identities, such as Riverdale Park East, is there potential for an overarching identity from the river's mouth all the way to the "forks" near Don Mills Road, where the East Don, West Don and Taylor Massey Creek converge to become the Lower Don?
- What more can we learn about this place and Indigenous place names, and the teachings and traditions of this place, to inform the project?
- How do we balance the diversity of Indigenous peoples and cultures when considering potential Indigenous names for places in the city?
- What do we need to be considering when we pursue Indigenous place names or other namings that celebrate Indigenous people, culture or language?
- How should the City move forward in pursuing Indigenous place names or other namings for new and existing parks and public spaces?

## Wonscotonach Parklands

The Wonscotonach Parklands engagement process between municipal, non-profit and Indigenous collaborators includes:

- **Program Vision:** What would happen in the Wonscotonach Parklands?
  - What ceremonies, activities, education and art would we bring to this place to live out the new name?
- **Placemaking Vision:** What would the Wonscotonach Parklands look like?
  - As part of the review of the master plan for this park, what needs to be changed or added to the plan so that the vision of the park is realized over time?
- **Language Circle:** "Wonscotonach" may not be the correct spelling and pronunciation for this name.
  - Some have suggested that it is an anglicized version of "Waa-sayishkodenayosh," or perhaps another spelling. A Language Circle will bring Anishinaabemowin language-carriers/scholars together to clarify the name spelling and meaning, which will inform the identity.
- **Identity:** How would the name take shape in visual identity, communications and outreach? What icons, symbols or images would be used on the web, social media, wayfinding, and so on?
- **Public Feedback:** After these first phases of engagement, and communications about the outcomes, the process will move to public feedback on the proposed name.

Restoring the original Anishinaabemowin name has been, and continues to be, an ongoing conversation within the Indigenous Community. Beginning in November 2018, the name was brought forward in a series of community gatherings, events and focused conversations facilitated by Evergreen and the City of Toronto, and in consultation with Indigenous people and organizations. The need for a language circle to explore spelling and pronunciation; place markers in multiple languages, and other way signage along the trail that share Indigenous teachings.



*Credit: York as it appeared in 1793 from the mouth of the Don River, looking west, by Sir E.W. Grier in late 1800s, from a picture by Elizabeth Simcoe (1790s). From the Toronto Public Library Digital Collection. <https://donrivervalleypark.ca/news/rivers-parksand-reconciliation-wonscotonach-parklands-proposal/>*

Through community and Language Circle meetings and outreach, the name Wonscotonach Parklands (or perhaps Waasayishkodenayosh) emerged as a suggested name that could be used moving forward. Wonscotonach/Waasayishkodenayosh was documented as the Anishnaabemowin place name for the Lower Don River and likely translates as “burning bright point” or “peninsula” as shared in writings by Dr. Basil Johnson, one of the most revered Anishinaabe scholars. There are several translations and many histories, and this name may refer to the practice of torchlight salmon spearing on the river, where the Mississaugas of the Credit River First Nation had a seasonal settlement to fish and hunt in the marshlands for muskrat, duck and deer. This discussion parallels other similar discussions that are happening across the City regarding the naming of public spaces in the context of Truth and Reconciliation and decisions around which words, and which languages to present.

The river, like all bodies of water, is essential to the culture, teachings and life of Indigenous peoples in Toronto, and the move to restore the name of this land is part of a commitment towards transformative reconciliation. In these conversations, topics have included:



*Credit: Sculptures from Cree artist Duane Linklater's installation in the Lower Don/ Wonscotonach Parklands*

- **Indigenous Programming:** What can happen in the Wonscotonach Parklands?
  - What activities, ceremonies, education and art would we bring to this place to live out the new name?
- **Indigenous Placekeeping:** What would the Wonscotonach Parklands look like?
  - What needs to be changed or added to plans so that the vision of the park is realized over time.

Following these conversations, City staff will be bringing forward a final report for the naming of the parklands to Toronto and East York Community Council, which has delegated authority for property naming.

Feedback generated from these gatherings is helping to guide the process along the following themes and opportunities:

### Land-based learning opportunities

- Journey walks with youth and elders to explore ecology, medicines and land use.
- Opportunities for land stewardship.
- Areas for urban agriculture to grow and harvest medicinal crops (requires clean soil).
- Water-based learnings: the importance of physically reaching and connecting with the water.
- Sports and space for skill-building activities e.g. space for lacrosse.

- Music and performance spaces.
- Cultural celebrations, including Pow Wows.
- Safe areas for overnight camping: specifically for youth.

## Restoration of the lands

- Soil remediation to cleanse polluted lands using plant-based techniques and urban agriculture. A multiyear or multigenerational process i.e. traditional 7 generations way of thinking.
- Growing wild rice along river banks to help cleanse the water and land.
- Transforming the former snow dump area into a program space for ceremony, overnight camp, youth program area, etc.

## Facilities

- Facilities to support gathering spaces (i.e. washrooms, sacred fires spaces, TTC access).
- Increased accessibility into the valley (i.e. TTC connections, pathways, elevators, etc.).
- Wigwam and teaching lodge spaces.

## Participation

- Ensure all ages and voices are heard during the process.
- Support program opportunities and reduce barriers from permitting.
- Continue to engage in conversations within the community.



*Credit: Tash Naveau [still]*

## Teaching Lodge

ᓂᓃᓃᓃᓃ ᓃᓃ

### **Shkakamikwe kido**

Shkakamikwe kido is an installation project from artist Tash Naveau, a documentary media maker based in Toronto, Ontario. The name was given by her cousin, Alex Jacobs, an Elder and languageteacher from Atikamiksiing (Whitefish Bay First Nation). It conveys the idea of knowledge coming from the land, or land-based knowledge in Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe).

## Context

The project started out when Naveau learned about a group of Indigenous activists, community members, and knowledge keepers who were working along the Humber river to restore ecological balance through replanting Indigenous species and removing invasive plants from a section of the Humber river floodplain.

They were also working in various ways to revitalize local Indigenous cultural practices and relearning land-based teachings to re-connect with that space through cultural practice and placemaking on the land.

## The Approach

The artist spending time learning about these practices, doing them and developing a relationship with that space and the people involved. She then decided to recreate this experience where Indigenous knowledge of land and water are shared, highlighting the human connection with the land and water through the installation.

## Outcomes

“The installation is held within a replicated Anishinaabeg style Teaching Lodge or Kinomaage gamig, which is a multipurpose dwelling designed to relay the ceremonial knowledge, bring community together through building and sharing, and learning from the land itself. The lodge, in this instance, occupies a different space of learning, adding onto what we know as science, Indigenous methods of process and understanding of our natural world”.

## Artist & Author

Tash Naveau, is a documentary media maker based in Toronto, Ontario. She received a BFA from NSCAD, Halifax, and is an MFA graduate of Ryerson’s Documentary Media program. She is of eastern European (Polish, Ukrainian/Siberian) and Dene (Chipewyan) heritage, although she was adopted by her Anishinaabe (and French) father, where she was raised in Mattagami First Nation.

The lack of knowledge transfer within all of her cultural connections, due to colonization, has greatly influenced her work and interests that tend to navigate conversations of identity and intersectionality, learning through culture and community, and our relationship to land and the water.



*Credit: Tash Naveau [photo]*



## Knowledge-Keepers

**Michael White** is from the Bear Clan and the Anishinaabek Nation. Michael is a registered member of M'Chigeeng First Nation and is now an active member of the Toronto Indigenous community, serving as a ceremonial conductor, traditional teacher and trainer.

**Alex Jacobs** is Anishinaabe from Atikamikshiing, Whitefish Bay First Nation. His Ojibwe name is Waasaanese (Roaring Thunder), and he is a fluent speaker of Anishinaabemowin and had lived in Toronto for over 17 years, teaching the language and participating in cultural activities in an Elder capacity.

**Nancy Rowe**, Giidaakunadaad, is Mississauga of the Anishinaabek Nation and lives in the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, ON. Nancy is an educator, consultant, and a Traditional Practitioner of Anishinaabek perspectives, customs, and lifeways.

**Dr. Debby Wilson Danard** is Anishinaabekwe, of the sturgeon clan and a member of Rainy River First Nation. She is a Traditional Knowledge Practitioner, Artist, Lecturer, Water Protector, Life Promotion Ambassador and Eagle staff carrier.



*Credit: Teacher candidates listen to Métis educator Doug Anderson (centre) as he explains the different lessons the land offers to those who listen*

# CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES IN PLACEKEEPING PARTNERSHIPS

## Quebec partnership develops shared tourism strategy

The First Nations–Municipal Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI) is a joint project of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and Cando (the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers). From 2013 to 2016, the initiative worked with six community partnerships across Canada in urban, rural and remote settings. Hundreds of communities expressed interest in collaborating with this unique initiative and as a result, FCM and Cando are currently implementing a second phase of CEDI until 2021.



*Credit: Kebaowek First Nation, Town of Témiscaming, Municipality of Kipawa and CEDI staff pose with newly created assets for promoting tourism., Federation of Canadian Municipalities*

CEDI enables collaboration to pursue joint community economic development (CED) initiatives by fostering stronger relations and supporting mutually beneficial initiatives. Released in September 2015, CEDI's Stronger Together toolkit systematizes the knowledge and experience from the first phase. The First Nations–municipal CED methodology is articulated around four milestones, starting with building a relationship and mutual respect.

In 2017, CEDI staff visited one of the partnerships located in western Quebec. Through CEDI (Phase 1), Kebaowek First Nation (formerly Eagle Village First Nation), the Town of Témiscaming and the Municipality of Kipawa developed a tripartite friendship, agreed to pursue a shared tourism strategy and started to explore a coordinated approach to regional economic development. The CEDI toolkit includes a case study outlining the history and milestones of the partnership. The last activity of the partnership under CEDI support took place in June 2015, but the tripartite collaboration continues to flourish and grow.

## First Nations–Municipal Collaboration is Groundwork for National Truth and Reconciliation

In 2013, the Town of Témiscaming (population 2,385) and Kebaowek First Nation (261 on-reserve and 568 off-reserve) described the state of their relationship: "We live next door to one another yet don't necessarily know each other; we coexist." In the wake of the national Truth and Reconciliation process, this situation remains all too common across the country.

Témiscaming and Kebaowek are located on the traditional territory of the Algonquin Nation, in a resource-rich region of Quebec, approximately 70 kilometres northeast of North Bay, Ontario. The two communities were concerned about their dependency on the forestry industry and saw the opening of a new provincial park, Opemican Park, as a way to support tourism growth. They decided that a regional approach would better attract tourists and asked the nearby Municipality of Kipawa (population 474) to join them. They developed a joint vision statement to guide their collaboration. “We want to create a memorable experience by welcoming visitors to share our natural beauty, cultural heritage and friendliness.”

While it seemed that conditions favoured a successful venture, the partnership had a difficult start because the three communities held opposing views over a proposed mine in the region. Over the course of several months, through openness and mutual commitment, community leaders managed to overcome this barrier. They “agreed to disagree” on the rare-earth mineral mine project. The CEDI Dialogue Principles were instrumental to that process. These communities came to better appreciate their respective histories and issues, and the need to collaborate to build a better tomorrow.

Trust and respect were built over time. During a meeting, Chief Lance Haymond repeated these two words. He explained, “Understanding and educating is the biggest part of the Truth and Reconciliation. Fighting prejudice. Few people know the contribution that First Nations have had for the development of Canada.”

This sentiment resonates with his counterparts. Nicole Rochon, Mayor of Témiscaming, said, “Understanding the Indigenous culture has helped me realize some of the constraints and challenges that the Band Council has to deal with. This remains true today.

They have to manage everything, including contracting and paying the nurses. We don't have that responsibility as a municipality.”

By 2016, at the end of their formal involvement in CEDI, the partners had accomplished the four milestones. The foundations of friendship were in place. A tourism strategy had been adopted. And a series of key objectives were in sight:

- Develop a tourism marketing plan
- Create a name, logo and slogan to build the brand
- Hire a joint tourism development officer
- Create a website and promotional material, including a short video

The completion of the four stages of joint First Nation-Municipal CED is not the end of the process; rather it marks the start of a new way of thinking about, and working with, neighbouring communities. Long-term success depends on making joint CED the new normal in communities:

- Invest in building mutual trust and respect
- Develop a broad network of supporters and champions
- Make formal commitments and governance structures
- Address difficult issues as they arise
- Try new things; learn and improve

## More than Economic Development, CED is Vital to Social Inclusion and Wellbeing

Chief Haymond knows his community thoroughly. He speaks persuasively of the prejudices of social welfare and challenging circumstances. He points to the legacy of residential schools. He knows the responsibility and small window of opportunity for the five remaining elders in his community, aged between 60 and 86 years old, to pass on their language and culture: the traditions, the names of the lakes, the knowledge of the land. Community development is complex and there is much at risk.

Adding to the challenges are complicated jurisdictions, legal and fiscal arrangements, and accountability mechanisms that can make development processes cumbersome. As Chief Haymond explains, “In Canada, we have Indigenous communities that have a legal relationship with the federal government and municipalities that work under the jurisdiction of their provincial municipal acts.” These dynamics create boundaries and silos, resulting in neighbouring communities that cannot easily collaborate. People circulate freely on the land and through the towns, but social issues create islands of solitude.

One case in point is the segregation of school systems. Throughout the history of the three communities, English and French school systems were planned separately with children divided by language and culture. As a result, children living in the same neighbourhood did not play together. Racism and intolerance feed on ignorance.

While municipalities are not responsible for schools, Témiscaming, Kebaowek and Kipawa have started to advocate together for change with the school boards. These issues affect everyone, and the communities are finding strength and leverage with stakeholders through collaboration.

Chief Haymond acknowledges that the partnership has come a long way, and that it was not always easy. “Through dialogue and mutual respect, and cooperation, we are starting to see the benefits. The more we talk, the more we realize that we have things in common.”

## From Coexisting to Long-term Collaboration

At the forefront of the collaboration with Témiscaming and Kipawa, Justin Roy, Director of Economic Development for Kebaowek First Nation, has seen the relationship develop from its early stages. “We haven’t missed a single meeting of our committee since it started. There are a lot of moving parts to our collaboration. We don’t want this to go off the road!”

CEDI provided the technical support, the advice and the encouragement to break down barriers and create relationships. “With time, we build trust,” said Roy. “Trust that gets bigger and better. That’s the biggest thing we’ve got from the project.”

- Reflecting on the lessons learned from the CEDI project, Roy spoke of open communication and transparency as key to success. Trust and friendship were built by:
- Ensuring equal representation of partners in all discussions
- Taking time to get to know one another on topics such as governance, policy, culture, history
- Leaving politics out of the collaboration to focus on joint objectives for community wellbeing
- Creating open conversations
- Picking common goals

“Tourism is a nice, clean industry that we can all take part in,” said Amanda Nadon-Langlois, Tourism Development Officer at Kipawa Tourism, and it is also a strong ground for long-term collaboration.

## Leading Together

FCM and Cando were invited to an event to launch the logo of Kipawa Tourism in spring 2017. The logo features three proud loons, standing together heads high under a shared horizon: a beautiful and powerful representation of the relationship that is developing amongst the three partners.

“We are three cultures here: the Algonquins, the French descendants, and the English descendants. We work together. We play together. And we build our future together,” said Norman Young, Mayor of Kipawa. “You cannot work with someone if you don’t know them. The road that we have walked together over the years has built great friendship. We started with the idea of tourism. But now, we’re starting to think about other things.”

An addition to the reserve, growing the snowmobile and bike trails, and developing commercial activities are on the radar, said Justin Roy. Through their collaboration, the communities have been able to attract three doctors. “We see new leaders emerging. We see new faces, younger people. We discuss new things that I don’t think we would have been able to discuss just a few years ago. This is making our communities better.”

At the Kipawa Tourism launch event, all partners acknowledged CEDI’s important contribution to enable and nurture their relationship.

Helen Patterson, CEDI Project Manager reminded guests and partners, “We asked you to show us the way for Canadian municipalities and First Nation collaboration. You have demonstrated rigour, commitment and dedication. Congratulations on your success! Thank you for being the example.”

The launch event culminated with a preview of the promotional video developed as part of the tourism strategy. With the fitting theme “At the heart of nature,” the three communities are poised to take flight into their future.



*Credit: RounddanceatFriendshipAccordSigningin2014.  
The First Nations–Municipal Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI)*

# CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES IN PLACEKEEPING PARTNERSHIPS

## CEDI Partnership Profiles: Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation and County of Antigonish

### Unique Features of this Partnership

In 2016, just as Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation and County of Antigonish began to explore a formal partnership, Paqtnkek received approval for a major economic development opportunity with the highway Interchange project, a development that is bringing positive impacts to the entire region. While this partnership continues to explore collaboration on energy efficiency initiatives, it is their commitment to one another, their communities and to sharing the benefits of First Nation – municipal partnership with other Nations and municipalities across Nova Scotia that makes them unique. Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation and County of Antigonish participated in CEDI between 2016 – 2019

### Areas of Collaboration – Joint CED Themes

- Collaborating on energy efficiency initiatives and developing capacity for renewable energy
- Convening First Nations and municipalities from the region and across Nova Scotia to explore the benefits of joint community economic development.
- Sharing services and land-use planning



*Chief Paul Prosper and Warden Owen McCarron planted a black ash tree in an area known as Walnek as part of the Friendship Accord signing ceremony, Cando (Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers)*

## Accomplishments

- Joint Workshop to explore traditional and current day land-use, governance and jurisdiction (November 2017)
- Developed and signed an Anku'kamkewey (Friendship Accord). Organized a public signing ceremony including local dignitaries and community members (May 2018)
- Joint Workshop to learn from Indigenous Clean Energy and other provincial energy experts about energy efficiency and renewable opportunities (May 2018)
- Joint Workshop to plan for joint community economic development initiatives and to revise annual work plan (November 2018)
- Hosted first joint council-to-council meeting, chaired by Chief PJ Prosper in County of Antigonish Chambers (November 2018)
- Hosted Anku'kamkewey: Regional Economic Development Forum (in May 2019), bringing Mi'kmaw and municipal leadership from across Nova Scotia to explore regional collaboration on economic development.
- Established a Joint Steering Committee and Terms of Reference (June 2019)
- Worked in collaboration on several joint submissions for projects and programs, including Smart Cities Challenge and Low Carbon Communities.
- Worked collaboratively to develop new Active Living Plans, and recreational programming to ensure inclusion, including Nitap program (a Mi'kmaw word for friend). This program, being modelled elsewhere, brought community members together to share

traditional skills and artistry, develop self-awareness, and explore traditional health.

- Presented on partnership at the 2017 Cando National Annual Conference and 2018 FCM Annual Conference
- Awarded grant funding from the Low Carbon Communities program for a joint solar energy feasibility study (February 2020).

## In the Media:

- The Casket, May 17, 2019, "Forum focuses on progressive partnership between Paqtnekek, Antigonish County"
- CBC, January 15, 2019, "Highway interchange gives Paqtnekek Mi'kmaw Nation access to cut-off land"
- CBC, May 6, 2018, "Paqtnekek and Antigonish County sign 'historic' friendship agreement"
- The Globe and Mail, March 5, 2018, "Divided by a Highway, a Mi'kmaw Nation Paves Its Road to Revival in Nova Scotia"
- Port Hawkesbury Reporter, February 19, 2020, "First Nation, municipal and community projects approved under Low Carbon program"

## Why Work Together?

"The CEDI initiative provides a new and fresh perspective on how community and economic development can flourish through partnership with our local municipal neighbours. We are a community within communities and through our joint efforts we are exploring new and innovative ways to improve the lives of all our residents."

- Chief PJ Prosper, Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation

"By committing to CEDI the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and Paqtnkek have committed to each other and to recognizing our community as one. Within the first year of the working through CEDI we have and are continuing to develop relationships and both a trend and habit of working more closely together. Russell Boucher our former Warden and I shared a strong desire to explore new ground through this partnership and his enthusiasm and dedication to CEDI and working with Paqtnkek is echoed by myself and Council. CEDI has allowed us to build and strengthen our relationships, our knowledge and understanding of how we govern and how we operate day to day as local governments. That process and base is an important component of reconciliation and will allow us to determine where our collective community goes in partnership through the duration of CEDI and beyond."

- Warden Owen McCarron, the Municipality of the County of Antigonish

"By using the pathways outlined in the calls to action as a guide and keeping Economic Development as a focal point; and with the wisdom and guidance of our Elders, of FCM and Cando we can only succeed. This is a time where municipal leaders have to be open to new approaches, pool resources, and communicate openly. This project is encouraging us to do this with support. We want to make our community, one that includes Paqtnkek and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish a place of peace, and prosperity, a place of respect and dignity, and a place that has a thriving economy. During our initial workshops and meetings together we demonstrated we have the political will, the leadership to do it and that we are committed to working on the rest together."

- Former Warden Russell Boucher, the Municipality of the County of Antigonish

## Next Steps

This partnership has graduated from the CEDI program. Through their Joint Steering Committee, elected officials and senior staff meet to forward the joint solar energy feasibility study, energy efficiency initiatives and other regional opportunities. Together, Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation and the County of Antigonish lead the way by actively encouraging and supporting other communities in Nova Scotia to pursue their own First Nation – municipal partnerships.



# CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES IN PLACEKEEPING PARTNERSHIPS

## Squamish Nation - The District Of Squamish Government-To-Government Collaboration

### Pathway Overview

The District of Squamish is located on the unceded territory of the Squamish Nation, whose territory stretches from North Vancouver to Gibson's Landing to the north area of Howe Sound. Squamish Nation has seven reserves within the District of Squamish, and is a significant land owner within the District, with lands poised for economic development purposes and future member housing. In 2007, the District of Squamish and Squamish Nation formalized their commitments to a spirit of co-operation and government-to-government relationship by signing a Co-operation Protocol agreement.

Based on the principles of co-operation outlined in the agreement, the Nation and the District established a working relationship that has allowed them to collaborate on several fronts. Today, the fruits of this collaborative relationship can be seen in an ongoing initiative to establish a jointly administered community forest.

### Project Overview

The District of Squamish and Squamish Nation have been working together in a spirit of collaboration for many years now. In 2007, a Co-operation Protocol was signed with the intention of establishing a government-to-government relationship. The purpose of the protocol was to formalize information sharing, improve communications, address specific issues of mutual interest, and raise awareness and understanding of Squamish First Nation title and rights.

The agreement formalized communication and co-operation protocols, including yearly meetings of the respective Councils and a permanent working level staff committee.

The protocol also committed the two governments to moving forward in a relationship based on "trust, respect, and mutual understanding." Since the signing of the Co-operation Protocol, the District of Squamish and Squamish Nation have moved forward together on several collaborative initiatives.

The Squamish communities are nestled in a beautiful natural area enjoyed by a wide range of people. The Squamish area is an internationally renowned destination for rock-climbing, mountain-biking, ski-touring, hiking, kite-boarding, and other outdoor activities. The forested lands surrounding Squamish are also a productive area for timber harvesting and natural resource development.

The District of Squamish and Squamish Nation have considered options for bringing areas of the forest under local control for several years. In 2018 this initiative was kicked into high gear, with the selection of a board of directors for their newly created oversight company, the Squamish Community Forest Corporation. The board has equal representation from leadership of the District and Squamish Nation. This is the first partnership agreement signed between the Nation and the District where the two governments will be co-managing a local asset.

With the creation of the Squamish Community Forest Corporation and selection of a board, about 10,000 hectares of forest will be brought under a formalized governance structure shared between the two governments. This will allow the Squamish Community Forest Corporation to directly oversee forestry operation and operate a business while retaining community values. Timber harvesting operations will be handled by Sqomish Forestry, a local company owned by Squamish Nation.

Community forests can bring many benefits to local communities. Community forests are different from forests that are under provincial management. Under the province, forestry contracts are awarded through BC Timber Sales and contracts are generally awarded to the highest bidder.

Community forest governance also allows the District and the Nation to share in a portion of the profits from the forestry activity.

## Community Forest Agreements

Community Forest Agreements are long-term, area-based land tenures. They are designed to encourage community involvement in the management of local forests while expanding economic opportunities and opening doors for local job creation. Of the Community Forests in BC,

nearly half are operated by First Nations or by partnerships between First Nations and neighbouring non-Indigenous communities.

## Outcomes

The formal creation of the community forest is still ongoing as of October 2019, with initial harvesting scheduled for 2020. Community consultation was launched in the spring of 2019, where local residents and community groups shared their visions for local economic benefits and access to recreational areas. A significant amount of well-used recreational assets (i.e. trails) run through the proposed area of the community forest. As the vision for the community forest moves forward, balancing the needs of all users and stakeholders will be necessary for the long-term success of the project.

By allowing the District of Squamish and Squamish Nation to make their own rules for the management of their local forest resources, the creation of the community forest should make it possible to balance the needs of all those who use and benefit from the forest. The community forest will bring local level decision making into place for management decisions regarding cultural and spiritual sites. It will also open up opportunities for education and greater community awareness of forest management. The University of British Columbia (UBC) Faculty of Forestry has already expressed interest in using the forest for educational purposes. The area would be the closest community forest to UBC's Vancouver campus, and it would be an ideal site for students to learn and conduct research on the sustainable management of community forests.

## Lessons Learned and Keys to Success

One of the main takeaways from the project was for the partners to build on and strengthen their existing relationship. Other lessons learned and keys included:

Incremental steps. Years before collaborating on the community forest agreement, the District and the Nation of Squamish signed a Co-operation Protocol that established the level of mutual trust and respect needed for bigger projects.

Put your values up front. Agreeing upon shared values can open the door to finding new partnerships and opportunities for collaboration.

---

Case Study adapted from: 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, visit [www.ubcm.ca](http://www.ubcm.ca)



*Credit: Log sort in Squamish.  
Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), Pathways for Collaboration*

# CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES IN PLACEKEEPING PARTNERSHIPS

## 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.

### 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 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 Spel̓kúmt̓n 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 Key Successes

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.

---

Case Study adapted from: 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, visit [www.ubcm.ca](http://www.ubcm.ca)

