



First Nations Relations

a division of the Capital Regional District

Capital Regional District 2019 Forum of All Councils Summary Report



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**Prepared by
Alderhill Planning Inc.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



On November 30, 2019, more than 70 leaders from First Nations and local governments in the Capital Regional District (CRD) convened at the Hotel Grand Pacific in Lək'wəŋən territory (Victoria, B.C.) for a Forum of All Councils. Please see *Appendix A: Participants* for an overview of First Nations, municipalities and electoral areas in attendance. Brought together by the CRD First Nations Relations Division, and guided by Lək'wəŋən protocols, the group spent the day learning from each other and strengthening relationships across the region. A full agenda for the day can be found at the end of this Summary Report as *Appendix B*.

Informed by the CRD's Statement of Reconciliation, the day was divided into three topics: governance (self-determination), shared prosperity, and relationship to land and water. On governance, John Jack and Russel Dyson spoke about the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District's (ACRD) experiences after the Maa-Nulth Treaty came into effect and representatives from the signatory communities joined the ACRD's Board of Directors. Regarding shared prosperity, Bruce Williams provided information about the South Island Prosperity Partnership. The Lək'wəŋən Traditional Dancers and performers from the Pacheedaht Nation shared their cultures with participants through songs, dances, and oral history. The rest of the day was split between networking activities, guided small group dialogue, and plenary comments.

It is clear from the Forum that there is a strong desire on behalf of First Nations and local governments in the CRD to work together in meaningful, respectful ways on issues of common interest. Participants identified key areas where they would like to collaborate, some of the challenges they face, and proposed tools needed to facilitate collective action. In particular, there is a strong desire to collaborate on land use planning and large infrastructure projects in order to ensure care of the environment and community members.

This forum was the first in the region of this type and scope, and the CRD hopes to hold the next one in 2020. This report will be shared with participants, the CRD First Nations Standing Committee, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.

INTRODUCTION



First Nations and local governments play critical roles in ensuring the long term wellbeing of community members and the lands and waters we rely on. Proactive inter-governmental engagement founded on mutual respect can help us identify common goals, contributing to an effective regional approach relative to growth management, environmental protection and restoration, efficient service delivery and smart infrastructure planning. In this spirit, the 2019 Forum of All Councils was devised as a way to bring many elected leaders together to support relationship building and collaborative planning. The day was divided into three topics: governance (self-determination), shared prosperity, and relationship to land and water. Activities connected to each the topics identified clear priorities for future collaboration, while also identifying some of the challenges. Overall, participants enjoyed the day and look forward to this becoming an annual event.

Background & Context

The capital region on southern Vancouver Island spans the Territories of approximately 20 First Nations of the Coast Salish, Strait Salish, and Nuu-chah-nulth Nations. The CRD's neighbouring First Nations include: Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees), Xwsepsum (Esquimalt), W̱JOŁŁP (Tsartlip), BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin), S̱ÁUTW̱ (Tsawout), W̱SIKEM (Tseycum), MÁLEXEL (Malahat), Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay), T'Sou-ke, Pacheedaht and Pune'laxutth' (Penelakut).

The CRD First Nations Relations Division supports the regional district and its Board to build strong and enduring relationships with neighbouring First Nations governments. Assisted by the Special Task Force on First Nations Relations (2015-2018), the CRD has engaged in many activities designed to strengthen relationships between First Nations and local governments in the region. On June 11, 2016 at the First Peoples House at UVic, a Forum of Councils was held with a special focus on Indigenous Cultural Acumen Training.

In 2018 the CRD Board approved a set of recommendations from the [Final Report of the Special Task Force on First Nations Relations](#). This report included eight recommendations, including recommendation 1: "That the CRD Board commit to hosting an annual Forum of All Councils with political representation from all levels of government including 11 neighbouring

First Nations, 13 municipalities, 3 electoral areas, the Federal government (represented by the Department of Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada) and the Province (represented by the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs).”

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION



Gary Sam, Councillor for the Songhees Nation, opened the day with a prayer. Colin Plant, Chair of the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board of Directors followed with opening comments and led some brief introductions around the room. The Ləkʷəŋən Traditional Dancers shared several dances with participants, Ləkʷəŋən blanketing protocols were observed for all speakers throughout the day. Facilitated by Jessie Hemphill of Alderhill Planning Inc., the rest of the day was organized into three structured sessions based on the three identified topics.

Governance (Self-determination)



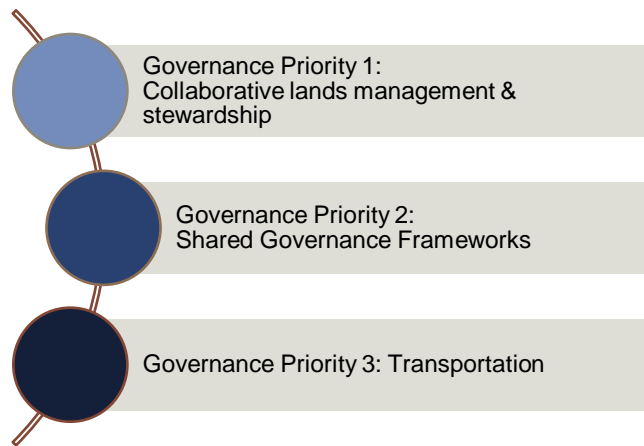
John Jack, Councillor for the Huu-ay-ahut Nation and Chair of the ACRD, and Russel Dyson, former Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) and current CAO of the Comox Valley Regional District, jointly presented lessons learned from the ACRD’s experiences in First Nations relationship building, necessitated in part by ratification of the Maa-nulth Treaty. Some of those lessons learned are contained in a document called “[A Path Forward: A Resource Guide to Support Treaty First Nation, Regional District and Local Government Collaboration and Planning](#)” (2012). Some key points from the presentation included: don’t be afraid to take your time to figure out the logistics of collaborative governance, don’t hesitate to apologize when mistakes are made, and be proactive about finding opportunities to engage other elected leaders, formally and informally.

Following the presentation, participants were encouraged to reflect on the following questions, writing their individual responses on sticky notes which were later collected:

1. *What are the types of decisions we would like to make together?*
2. *What would help us make these decisions together? (tools, processes, policy etc.)*

Participants then self-organized into small groups with a mix of First Nations, Municipal and Electoral Area representation, to share their responses with one another.

The clear priority, based on responses, is lands management. In particular, there is a keen shared interest to work together on environmental protection and stewardship, with many folks also recognizing the need to collaborate on lands management to address climate change. Specific topics under this theme also included management of parks, joint planning initiatives, food security, and public spaces such as playgrounds.



In descending order of priority, other topics folks would like to collaborate on include:

- Developing shared governance frameworks (roles and responsibilities, shared vision and goals for the region, identifying specific areas and methods for partnerships)
- Transportation (pedestrian safety, paved roads on-reserve, beach access, and regional transportation initiatives such as the E&N corridor)
- Water and Sewer treatment and infrastructure, as well as other service agreements
- Addressing social justice and supporting Indigenous cultural resurgence
- Economic development
- Emergency preparedness
- Housing

In response to question two, participants identified the following priorities for fostering region-wide collaboration:

- Identifying areas of mutual interest and common goals to incentive collaboration
- Opportunities for informal relationship building and time for non-Indigenous local governments to learn about the history and culture of neighbouring First Nations
- Frequent, consistent council-to-council and staff-to-staff gatherings and communications
- Developing policy to support collaboration, such as Memorandums of Understanding, protocol agreements, or joint statements
- Establishing collaborative working groups, joint committees, etc.

- Collaborative policy development to support collective accountability
- Facilitating information sharing between all levels of government, including provincial and federal
- Legislative changes to provide better opportunities for collaboration (especially with regards to regional district governance)
- Accessing funding to support ongoing relationship building and collaboration

Shared Prosperity



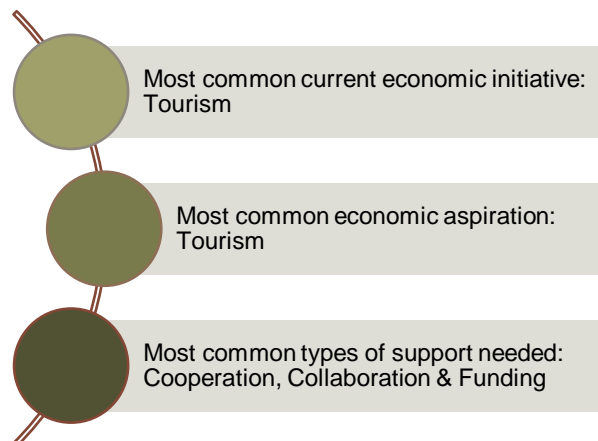
Bruce Williams, CEO of the South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP), sparked the discussion on shared prosperity with an overview of SIPP’s mandate and recent activities. As an economic development organization for Greater Victoria, SIPP has experienced great success in bringing together First Nations and others in the region to strategize for economic and social prosperity.

“Communication is key. [We need] respectful dialogue, recognition + correction of past history, equal education opportunities, joint projects for a prosperous future - solving problems together.”
- Forum Participant

Participants were then asked to write individual responses to the following questions on provided worksheets, before gathering in small groups to discuss their responses:

1. *What are 1-2 key economic development projects you have underway?*
2. *What are 1-2 economic development initiatives you would like to begin?*
3. *What type of support(s) would you seek from a First Nation/Municipal/CRD partner to move your initiatives forward?*

Current economic development projects were quite diverse amongst the participants, however tourism (24%) was a common theme. Participants stated that increased economic development would help with the growth of their communities, with other suggestions including an increase of



residential areas, increasing agriculture, and developing new tech or green initiative employment opportunities.

Participants noted that their future economic development initiatives include increasing their community & culture focus, along with tourism and transportation. Respondents also acknowledged that many of these initiatives require partnerships with other communities or organizations. Cooperation and collaboration was the top response in regards to the type of support needed from other communities/organizations, followed by funding.

Shared Relationship to Land & Water



After the lunch break, which included songs and dances shared by the Pacheedaht Nation, Forum participants engaged in a discussion about lands and water. For some context, participants were encouraged to seek out the recent report from the Indigenous Circle of Experts (ICE) called "[We Rise Together: Achieving Pathway to Canada Target 1 through the creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas in the spirit and practice of reconciliation](#)" (2018)

Participants were then asked to write responses to the following questions on worksheets, before gathering again in small groups to discuss their responses:

1. *When your community tries to sustainably manage lands and water, what are the biggest challenges that you encounter?*
2. *What, if anything, could First Nations/municipalities/CRD do to help address those challenges?*

Participants indicated that barriers included lack of jurisdiction (47%), lack of authority (25%), and lack of funding (31%). 53% of respondents suggested that better collaboration and communication would likely alleviate these barriers.

"First nations hold the key to our survival as a planet and as a human community. We need to listen to, resource, empower, support, etc, First Nations to lead the way to the future. They have all the answers to sustainably manage lands and water."
- Forum Participant



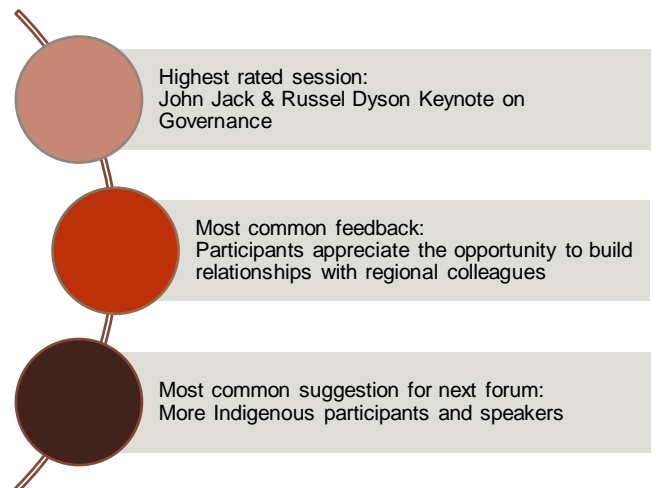
End of Day & Evaluation Form Results



At the end of the Forum, participants were invited to reflect on the day's discussions and share closing comments. From these comments, it was clear that folks felt positive about the gathering and wish to see similar events happen often.

Evaluation form responses showed that the highlight of the day for many was the keynote from John Jack and Russel Dyson

(4.4/5) and the self-determination discussion (4/5), followed closely by the discussion on lands & water (average score of 3.9/5) and the shared prosperity discussion (3.8/5). Opportunities for discussion and relationship building, and some of the words shared by specific speakers throughout the day, were appreciated, and when asked what they found the least valuable part of the day, respondents indicated that the entire day was valuable with perhaps some tweaking of breaks and plenary comments.



Suggestions for future forums included:

- More Indigenous participants, speakers and content – perhaps a blanket exercise or circular format
- More success stories (suggested speakers included Maja Tait and Lisa Helps)
- Do a deeper dive into specific topics, with a focus on actions, roles and responsibilities, and resources
- Share “strawdog” policies for participants to discuss, in order to ground conversations in something more tangible
- More time for networking
- Different topics (climate change adaptation and mitigation, family doctor recruitment and retention, fiscal tools)
- Field trips (to First Nation reserves and/or the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District)
- Folks would like to see these events happen more frequently, perhaps for a shorter duration

NEXT STEPS

It is clear from evaluation results and comments made during the Forum that participants would like to see similar events continue to happen in the region. The following actions will help to move this work forward:

- CRD Staff will be working to summarize all of the notes from the day and will be bringing forward a Summary Report and Recommendations to the CRD's First Nations Standing Committee in February 2020 followed by the CRD Board;
- The Report and Recommendations will be shared with staff from both the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation in the spring of 2020;
- The Report and Recommendations will be shared with all participants and CRD staff will look to establish an action and reporting framework to help in framing the 2020 Forum of All Councils and to support tracking annual progress; and,
- In preparation for a 2020 event, CRD staff will be looking to engage First Nations to explore alternative event timing and various approaches to support more effective dialogue base on areas of interest identified in the 2019 Forum of All Councils.



APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT LIST

| Title | First Name | Last Name | Nation/Municipality/Region |
|--|-------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| Councillor | Jackie | Albany | Lək̓wəŋən (Songhees) Nation |
| Councillor | Marianne | Alto | CRD, City of Victoria |
| Councillor | Ken | Armour | Township of Esquimalt |
| Councillor | Jeff | Bateman | CRD, District of Sooke |
| Councillor | Robin | Bill | W̱SÍKEM (Tseycum) Nation |
| Councillor | Denise | Blackwell | CRD, City of Langford |
| Councillor | Lorna | Bob | BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin) Nation |
| Councillor | Hazel | Braithwaite | District of Oak Bay |
| Councillor | Meagan | Brame | CRD, Township of Esquimalt |
| Councillor | Susan | Brice | CRD, District of Saanich |
| Councillor | Judy | Brownoff | CRD, District of Saanich |
| Councillor | Nathalie | Chambers | CRD, District of Saanich |
| Councillor | Tracey | Charlie | Pacheedaht Nation |
| Chief | Nick | Claxton | STÁUTW (Tsayout) Nation |
| Councillor | Cynthia | Day | City of Colwood |
| Councillor | Zac | de Vries | CRD, District of Saanich |
| Mayor | Barbara | Desjardins | CRD, Township of Esquimalt |
| Cultural Advisor | Florence | Dick | Lək̓wəŋən (Songhees) Nation |
| Councillor | Sara | Duncan | Town of Sidney |
| Chief Administrative Officer | Russell | Dyson | Comox Valley Regional District |
| Elder | Michael | Edgar | Dididaht Nation |
| Manager First Nations Relations | Don | Elliott | CRD |
| Councillor | Sharie | Epp | District of Metchosin |
| Councillor | Christopher | Graham | District of Central Saanich |
| Mayor | Fred | Haynes | CRD, District of Saanich |
| Mayor | Lisa | Helps | CRD, City of Victoria |
| Facilitator | Jessie | Hemphill | Alderhill Planning Inc. |
| Councillor | Herman | Henry | BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin) Nation |
| Director | Mike | Hicks | CRD, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area |
| Founder, CEO | Carol Anne | Hilton | The Indigenomics Institute |
| Executive Director | Katie | Hooper | Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) Nation |
| General Manager Parks & Environment | Larisa | Hutcheson | CRD |
| Councillor | Ben | Isitt | CRD, City of Victoria |
| Administrative Clerk First Nations Relations | Jennifer | Iskiw | CRD |
| Councillor | John | Jack | Huu-ay-aht Nation |
| Councillor | Carl | Jensen | District of Central Saanich |
| Councillor | Brian | Jimmy | W̱SÍKEM (Tseycum) Nation |
| Chief | Tanya | Jimmy | W̱SÍKEM (Tseycum) Nation |
| | Shauna | Johnson | Alderhill Planning Inc. |
| Title | First Name | Last Name | Nation/Municipality/Region |
| Chief | Jeff | Jones | Pacheedaht Nation |
| Councillor | Roxy | Jones | Pacheedaht Nation |
| Community Engagement Coordinator First Nations Relations | Erich | Kelch | CRD |
| Councillor | Dana | Lajeunesse | District of Sooke |

CRD 2019 Forum of All Councils – Summary Report

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| Chief Administrative Officer | Robert | Lapham | CRD |
| Councillor | Marie-Térèse | Little | District of Metchosin |
| Councillor | Ebony | Logins | District of Sooke |
| Councillor | Jeremy | Loveday | CRD, City of Victoria |
| Elder | Mary | Lucas | Dididaht Nations |
| Director | Ben | Mabberley | CRD, Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area |
| Councillor | Andy | MacKinnon | District of Metchosin |
| Mayor | Cliff | MacNeil-Smith | CRD, Town of Sidney |
| Councillor | Ron | Mattson | Town of View Royal |
| Chief Administrative Officer | Norm | McInnis | District of Sooke |
| Councillor | Marcie | McLean | District of Highlands |
| Councillor | Megan | McMath | District of Sooke |
| Councillor | Rebecca | Mersereau | CRD, District of Saanich |
| General Manager Corporate Services | Kristen | Morley | CRD |
| Councillor | Tim | Morrison | Township of Esquimalt |
| Mayor | Kevin | Murdoch | CRD, District of Oak Bay |
| Councillor | Tara | Ney | District of Oak Bay |
| Councillor | Joni | Olsen | WJOLELP (Tsartip) Nation |
| Mayor | Geoff | Orr | CRD, District of North Saanich |
| Councillor | Niall | Paltiel | District of Central Saanich |
| Councillor | Stewart | Parkinson | City of Colwood |
| Councillor | Esther | Paterson | District of Oak Bay |
| Councillor | Patricia | Pearson | District of North Saanich |
| Board Chair | Colin | Plant | CRD, District of Saanich |
| Councillor | Sarah | Potts | City of Victoria |
| General Manager Integrated Water Services | Ted | Robbins | CRD |
| Councillor | John | Rogers | CRD, Town of View Royal |
| Band Manager | April | Roper | Pacheedaht Nation |
| Councillor | Gary | Sam | Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees) Nation |
| Councillor | Mary Ann | Sam | SʔÁUTW (Tsawout) Nation |
| Administrator | Ruth | Sauder | Scia'new (Beecher Bay) Nation |
| Mayor | David | Screech | CRD, Town of View Royal |
| Councillor | Lanny | Seaton | CRD, City of Langford |
| Councillor | Tony | St. Pierre | District of Sooke |
| Councillor | Rose | Stanton | District of Highlands |
| Title | First Name | Last Name | Nation/Municipality/Region |
| Councillor | Celia | Stock | CRD, District of North Saanich |
| Councillor | Lillian | Szpak | CRD, City of Langford |
| Councillor | Ned | Taylor | CRD, District of Saanich |
| Chief | Rob | Thomas | Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) Nation |
| Councillor | Charlayne | Thornton-Joe | City of Victoria |
| Councillor | Karen | Tunkara | Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees) Nation |
| Councillor | Mavis | Underwood | SʔÁUTW (Tsawout) Nation |
| | Harvey | Underwood | SʔÁUTW (Tsawout) Nation |
| Executive Representative | Jodi | Watson | CRD, CUPE Local 1978 |
| Governance Support Manager | Cathy | Webster | SʔÁUTW (Tsawout) Nation |
| Chief Executive Officer | Bruce | Williams | South Island Prosperity Partnership |
| Mayor | Ken | Williams | CRD, District of Highlands |
| Administrator | Becky | Wilson | WSÍKEM (Tseycum) Nation |

CRD 2019 Forum of All Councils – Summary Report

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|---------------|-------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Administrator | Eva | Wilson | SṪÁUTW (Tsawout) Nation |
| Councillor | Erich | Wood Zhelka | District of Oak Bay |
| Councillor | Geoff | Young | CRD, City of Victoria |

APPENDIX B: AGENDA



2019 FORUM OF ALL COUNCILS
AGENDA – Saturday, November 30th, 2019
Vancouver Island Ballroom, Hotel Grand Pacific, 463 Belleville St, Victoria, BC

| | | |
|----------|--|---|
| 8:30 AM | Coffee, Light Breakfast, Registration | |
| 9:00 AM | Opening Prayer | Gary Sam |
| 9:05 AM | Opening Remarks | CRD Chair, Colin Plant |
| 9:10 AM | Ləkʷəŋən Traditional Dancers | Ləkʷəŋən Nation |
| 9:30 AM | KEYNOTE – LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RECONCILIATION Questions | John Jack & Russell Dyson |
| 10:25 AM | THEME ONE: GOVERNANCE | Jessie Hemphill |
| 11:15 AM | Break and Networking | |
| 11:30 AM | THEME TWO: SHARED PROSPERITY South Island Prosperity Partnership Presentation Shared Prosperity Discussion | Bruce Williams Jessie Hemphill |
| 12:10 PM | Lunch | |
| | Paddle Song | Pacheedaht Nation |
| 1:00 PM | THEME THREE: RELATIONSHIP TO LAND AND WATER We Rise Together: Indigenous Circle of Experts Land and Water Discussion | Chief Gordon Planes Jessie Hemphill |
| 2:00 PM | Action Items/Key Themes Report Out | Jessie Hemphill |
| 2:15 PM | Closing Comments from Participants | Jessie Hemphill |
| 2:45 PM | Closing Remarks/Evaluation Form | First Nations Relations Vice Chair, Geoff Orr |
| 2:55 PM | Closing Prayer | Gary Sam |
| 3:00 PM | Event Close | |