

KATZIE FIRST NATION - THE CITY OF PITT MEADOWS

SIGNING AGREEMENTS AND BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS



PATHWAY OVERVIEW

Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows are two communities located on the banks of the Fraser River in the Lower Mainland. Over recent years the communities have taken big steps forward in building a strong relationship. In January 2016, the communities signed three collaborative agreements that marked a new approach to relationship building, cultural understanding, and communication between the communities. This new approach to collaboration has continued to grow as new leadership in the communities has made relationship building the cornerstone of their approaches to governance.

PATHWAY ACTIVITIES

The collaborative pathway activities undertaken by the Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows include the following.



**Protocol and
Communications Agreements**



**Servicing Agreements
and Infrastructure**



**Relationship-Building and
Leadership Forums**

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The first major milestone in the relationship building process was the signing of three servicing agreements. The replacement of the outdated agreements began with a joint application to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Municipal Community Infrastructure Partnership Program (CIPP) in 2014. Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows were selected as one of six pairs of communities to participate in the program, out of 55 applicants across the county. Once on board with the CIPP program, leadership and staff from the two communities embarked on an 18-month long working process to replace the expired agreements.

Katzie First Nation is composed of 5 parts and stretches over numerous municipalities. Katzie IR 1 is bordered by Pitt Meadows and the Fraser River. Katzie IR 1 had for years

received sewer, water, and fire protection services from the City of Pitt Meadows without a formal servicing agreement in place. The process leading up to the renewed servicing agreements included series of webinars with resource toolkits, case study examples, and draft template agreements. From these examples, the communities were able to craft new servicing agreements to meet their evolving needs. In addition to the webinars, two separate day long strategic planning and relationship building workshops were hosted by CIPP staff.

The collaborative service agreement process between Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows was guided by three objectives: See more Katzie culture reflected around Pitt Meadows; Establish institutional continuity from Council-to-Council meetings, and; Build and renew relationships.

The new servicing agreements were only the tip of the iceberg for the new relationship between the communities. After new councils were elected, the spirit of collaboration continued to grow. Chief Grace George (née Cunningham) and Mayor Dingwall marked the beginning of their terms by attending each other's inaugurations and making sure that Council reflected on the history and occupancy of the land, and on what it means to be on the land today.

The relationship between Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows has taken a lot of hard work, but has reached the point where there is a, "deep level of respect for each community," according to Mayor Dingwall. This deep foundation is more than symbolic. The meeting agendas of regularly occurring Council-to-Council meetings are now packed with items to work on together, and staff are involved in the meetings to make sure that follow-up work is completed. The high level of commitment to collaboration between the communities is clear from the number of meaningful outcomes that have emerged.

OUTCOMES

On January 27, 2016, leadership and members of Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows gathered in the Katzie Health Centre to sign the three historic agreements: renewed water and sewer agreements, a renewed fire agreement, and a new communications protocol. These agreements marked an important milestone in the relationship, but the work did not end there.

Four pillars of partnership emerged from the original servicing agreement process: relationship building, formalized agreements, joint governance, and staff-to-staff collaboration. These pillars have been central to subsequent collaboration efforts.



PHOTO: Chief George at the Inaugural Council Meeting of the new City of Pitt Meadows Council, in November 2018

Collaboration between Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows has become a key component across a range of projects. Both communities now have a greater understand of each other's governance and legislative frameworks, and they have maintained regular communication since the agreements were signed. This communication includes social media interaction between the leaders – a piece of the relationship that Mayor Dingwall says is important in helping to build ties and share events between the communities.

Collaboration extends to the land development process. City of Pitt Meadows staff reports now require a response to the question, "What is the impact on Katzie First Nation?" The permitting process also involves Katzie Nation right away, so that Katzie archeological crews can be involved in relevant projects. On a major development project in the City of Pitt Meadows, conversations around archeological protocol and the cultural importance of artifacts and remains were initiated between the communities before any shovels hit the ground.



Demonstrating the strength of their collaborative relationship has been important in working with other levels of government. Collaboration has been a key feature of discussions with the Ministry of Transportation on a much-needed potential secondary access road to Katzie IR 1. This access road is intended to address public safety concerns and open up new economic development opportunities for Katzie First Nation. The communities have also received \$450,000 for a review of dikes and flood mitigation approaches. Maintaining a collaborative approach will be crucial as they move towards the implementation stages on the flood mitigation projects and apply for federal funds.

City Hall meeting rooms in Pitt Meadows have been renamed to traditional Katzie names in the hən̓q̓əmiṇəm language. At Katzie Day celebrations, the Pitt Meadows Council and firefighters attended as honoured guests. All park signs in Pitt Meadows will be translated into hən̓q̓əmiṇəm. And a new approach at the City Museum has also been adopted, as discussions around Katzie First Nation representation – both historical and present-day – have moved forward.

Work on a potential fourth servicing agreement – on policing services and public safety – is also in the pipeline. The priority for policing is to make sure that police services work well for both communities. These outcomes will continue to grow and evolve. Upcoming priorities for staff-to-staff collaboration identified by the communities include emergency management, dog control, land use/planning, building permitting, and taxation/land valuation.

LESSONS LEARNED AND KEYS TO SUCCESS

Key to the success of the collaborative process was the willingness of both communities to engage in a process of relationship building. Other lessons and keys to success include:

- ✓ **Take the time to build friendships.** Building strong friendships between communities makes it easier to work together to solve new challenges.
- ✓ **Be open to learning.** Being vulnerable and asking questions leads to a deeper understanding of each other. Be sure to make equal efforts in listening as you do share.
- ✓ **Be open to sharing cultural values.** Sharing sacred cultural values can open a pathway to building understanding and acceptance.
- ✓ **Involve staff in discussions.** Having staff involved in discussions between Council's helps ensure that the capacity is there for following up and completing further work on agenda items.
- ✓ **Social media matters.** Following each other on social media, sharing each others' posts, and promoting events across communities helps to keep leaders and communities up to date and connected.
- ✓ **Collaboration helps project funding.** Demonstrating a strong collaborative relationship is crucial for successfully moving big projects forward with the Provincial and Federal governments.

“Collaboration is the foundation of good relationships and respect for each community.”

Mayor Dingwall, City of Pitt Meadows



PHOTO: Joint governance meeting between Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows

“Collaboration is fundamental, as it’s based on Katzie’s historical occupancy of land. We’ve taken it to a deeper level of understanding with Pitt Meadows, which has paved the way for what our deep collaboration looks like.”

Chief Grace George (née Cunningham), Katzie First Nation



PATHWAYS TO COLLABORATION

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

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

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



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