

# **A G E N D A**

## **RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2019 AT 4:30 PM  
AT CITY HALL**

### **PRESENT:**

1. Welcome
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes – January 16, 2019
4. Discuss Urban Communities Partnering for Reconciliation grant application
5. Review of Draft Final Report
6. Next steps
7. Next meeting – TBD
8. Adjournment at \_\_\_\_\_ pm.

**MINUTES OF THE  
RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2019 AT 4:30 PM  
AT PORT ALBERNI CITY HALL**

**Committee:** Wally J Samuel, Cynthia Dick, Ann Robinson, Jim Tatoosh, Brandy Lauder, Sheena Falconer and Sharie Minions

**Guests:** Pam Craig and Ian Thomas

**Absent:** Ian Benoit

**Staff:** Timothy Pley, CAO  
Alicia Puusepp, Communications Manager

**1. Welcome**

Sharie Minions welcomed guests to City Hall and acknowledged the meeting was taking place on the unceded territories of the Hupacasath and Tseshaht First Nations. Dinner was provided.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

*It was moved and seconded:*

***That the agenda be approved as circulated.***

CARRIED

**3. Adoption of Minutes**

*It was moved and seconded:*

***That the minutes of the December 5, 2018 meeting be adopted.***

CARRIED

**4. 2019 'Secret Path' event with Mike Downie**

Pam Craig addressed the committee and thanked them for having her to speak about an upcoming event called the Secret Path, the story of a young First Nation's boy who died while trying to escape a residential school. Pam is working to bring Mike Downie to Port Alberni for two events in October 2019. One event will be held for students and one for community members.

## 5. Review Draft City Report

Alicia reviewed a draft report on the committee's approach for presenting the final report to respective councils for the City of Port Alberni, Hupacasath First Nations and Tseshaht First Nation.

The committee liked the approach and discussed whether the Friendship Centre should be included in the proposed Council to Council to Council presentation. Each member of the Reconciliation Committee provided their thoughts on the Friendship Centre and out of respect for protocol, it was decided that the committee would engage with them separately on the recommendations.

Alicia's report is expected to go to Council on February 11, 2019, for consideration, provided the City has received support for the approach from both First Nations councils.

If approved by City Council, Alicia will work to set a meeting with all three councils and the committee in the last week of February or first week of March. Alicia will assign themes from the list of recommendations to each committee member for presentation to the councils.

Following the presentation, the committee will present to the Friendship Centre and submit the list of recommendations to City Council for consideration at a regular meeting of council. The City may then choose to host a celebratory event where the recommendations are presented to the public.

## 6. Next Meeting

TBD

## 7. Adjournment

It was moved and seconded:

***That the meeting adjourn at 6:30 p.m.***

**CARRIED**

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Sharie Minions, Chair

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Davina Hartwell, City Clerk

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Cynthia Dick, Chair



# CITY OF PORT ALBERNI

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## CLERKS DEPARTMENT

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TO: Tim Pley, CAO FILE  
FROM: Alicia Puusepp, Communications Manager  
COPIES TO: Mayor & Council

DATE: February 11, 2019

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**SUBJECT: Reporting Back on the Reconciliation Committee's Recommendations**

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**Issue:**

That council direction be given on the approach for presenting the Reconciliation Committee's final report to the respective Councils for the City of Port Alberni, Tseshaht First Nation and Hupacasath First Nation.

**Background:**

The city of Port Alberni is located entirely within the traditional unceded territories of the Hupacasath and Tseshaht First Nations. Given the city's geographic location on Vancouver Island, it also serves as a hub for a number of other First Nation administration, education, and commercial offices that provide a variety of services to the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council and other First Nations' individuals and communities.

In 2008 a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established by the Government of Canada to guide and inspire First Nations peoples and Canadians in a process of reconciliation and help renew relationships based on mutual understanding and respect. This commission was responsible for hosting national reconciliation events, collecting relevant archival documents relating to the residential schools from church and government bodies, collecting statements from survivors, and overseeing a commemoration fund to support community reconciliation events. In 2015 the commission released a report which included 94 "Calls to Action" that urged all levels of government to work together to repair the harm caused by residential schools and move forward with reconciliation.

At the local level, community discussions around reconciliation were gaining momentum. On March 27, 2017, a walk for reconciliation was held in Port Alberni that saw over 200 people from all different backgrounds band together to demonstrate their collective desire for change in the community. The walk concluded at City Hall where a joint delegation was heard by City Council encouraging the City to engage in meaningful reconciliation with local First Nations. Following the delegation, Council for the City of Port Alberni directed staff to bring forward a draft Terms of Reference regarding the creation of a select committee of Council to consider and report back on potential community-based actions towards reconciliation with local First Nations.

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On July 10, 2017, staff presented the draft Terms of Reference which Council adopted. The City then sought members for the committee through an expression of interest and on September 18, 2017, announced the successful candidates, including the appointment of then City Councillor, Sharie Minions.

Comprised of eight members (one member of City Council, two individuals identified by the Hupacasath First Nation, two individuals identified by the Tseshaht First Nation, and three residents at large appointed by City Council) the committee's purpose was to "investigate practical actions for the City and the community to help foster reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples." The committee first met on November 30, 2017, and has since met 17 times.

Once active, the committee identified the need to hear from community members. Using grant funding provided by the Union of BC Municipalities' (UBCM), the committee hosted a community forum on March 27, 2018, called 'Advancing Reconciliation in Port Alberni.' The event welcomed approximately 112 residents, local First Nations, and elected officials from around the Alberni Valley. Attendees were invited to participate in a World Café which involved ten facilitated table discussions, each with a different question regarding reconciliation. The input received at the event formed the basis for the 27 recommendations developed by the committee.

### **Discussion:**

The Terms of Reference set out for the committee indicate that a final report be presented to the respective councils for the City of Port Alberni, Hupacasath First Nations and Tseshaht First Nations. As the recommendations have implications to all three councils, the committee is requesting that a joint event be held in 2019 to present their recommendations.

### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that Council for the City of Port Alberni direct city staff to coordinate a joint community forum with the Hupacasath First Nation, Tseshaht First Nation and Friendship Centre at which the reconciliation committee present the 27 recommendations to the three respective councils.

## Final Recommendations

January 16, 2019

### KEY RECOMMENDATION:

That the respective councils of the City of Port Alberni, Tseshaht First Nation, Hupacasath First Nation and Board of the Friendship Centre support the creation of a new (similar) committee to advance and foster reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in the Alberni Valley with a revised Terms of Reference and expanded membership to be agreed upon by all parties.

THEME	RECOMMENDATION
Cityscapes	Redesign the City's logo to incorporate First Nation elements.
	Add First Nations words/names to numbered streets and other destinations/locations/structures within City limits and include First Nations words/names on the City's <i>Approved Street Names</i> list.
	Install two new flag poles at City Hall to fly the two local First Nation flags year-round. In the meantime, fly both Hupacasath and Tseshaht flags on Aboriginal Day (June 21st).
Government Relations	Create a Working Group with the ACRD, City of Port Alberni, Hupacasath and Tseshaht with Terms of Reference to aid govt-to-govt. relations.
	Engage and encourage First Nations to get involved in local politics, seek political office and join various committees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage diversity on committees by various means, including but not limited to sending "Expressions of Interest" to First Nations for consideration.</li> </ul>
	Develop a reconciliation protocol to guide collaborative processes between Port Alberni, Hupacasath and Tseshaht communities.
	Develop a process to jointly pursue grant funding opportunities.
	Review C2C funding opportunities for development of a quad-partite agreement between the City, Hupacasath, Tseshaht and Friendship Centre.
	That the City review its policies and procedures to reflect intent and specific actions of the TRC Calls to Action and UNDRIP.
	That the City, when next amending their Strategic Plan, seek to include the intent of the TRC Calls to Action and UNDRIP.
	That the City creates a policy to establish a government-to-government engagement process for major projects.

Date of Issue: Jan 22, 2019

## Final Recommendations

January 16, 2019

THEME	RECOMMENDATION
Education	Provide educational opportunities within the community on the history of local First Nations, the resources available and the purpose of UNDRIP and the TRC Calls to Action.
Events	<p data-bbox="583 375 1262 410">Hold a Blanket Exercise for City staff and Councillors</p> <p data-bbox="583 427 1787 500">Promote First Nations events on social media and within the City (Orange Shirt Day, National Aboriginal Peoples Day, etc.)</p> <p data-bbox="583 516 1814 552">That March 27th be proclaimed a day that recognizes reconciliation in Port Alberni henceforth.</p> <p data-bbox="583 568 1801 651">That the City, Tseshaht, Hupacasath and Friendship Centre hold joint community events twice annually. One to be a reconciliation workshop the other to be a celebration.</p> <p data-bbox="583 667 1892 750">That the City, Hupacasath, Tseshaht and Friendship Centre host joint screening events of the First Contact series at the Paramount Theater with support.</p>
Partnerships	Compile report identifying obstacles that create inequality in the opportunities for First Nations employment in the workforce and identify a means to increase employment opportunities for First Nations people in the City and the community.
Languages	<p data-bbox="583 922 1864 1037">Draft a letter endorsed by the City, Hupacasath, Tseshaht, and Friendship Centre with recommendations on how to further support approaches for teaching traditional languages within Port Alberni's educational jurisdiction.</p> <p data-bbox="583 1053 1843 1136">Incorporate language into Council meetings (i.e. part of welcome/acknowledgment of traditional territories.)</p> <p data-bbox="583 1153 1549 1235">Educate on place names in Port Alberni using original First Nations names. Example: rename Canal Beach to Tiipis Beach</p>

**Final Recommendations**

January 16, 2019

<b>THEME</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
Urban First Nations	The committee lobbies to improve access to services for First Nations living away from home.
Other	Commission a joint public art piece that is representative of all four groups.
	That the City seek funding opportunities to hire a person dedicated to leading reconciliation actions, events and initiatives in the community.
	That the City embeds funding in their annual budget for reconciliation.
	That the City creates a program, similar to the Community Investment Program (CIP), for reconciliation events or that a dollar amount from the CIP is dedicated to reconciliation.





UPDATE 2019

# RECONCILIATION REPORT



CITY OF  
PORT ALBERNI



hupačasath  
First Nation



Tseshaht First Nation  
[cišaaʔath]

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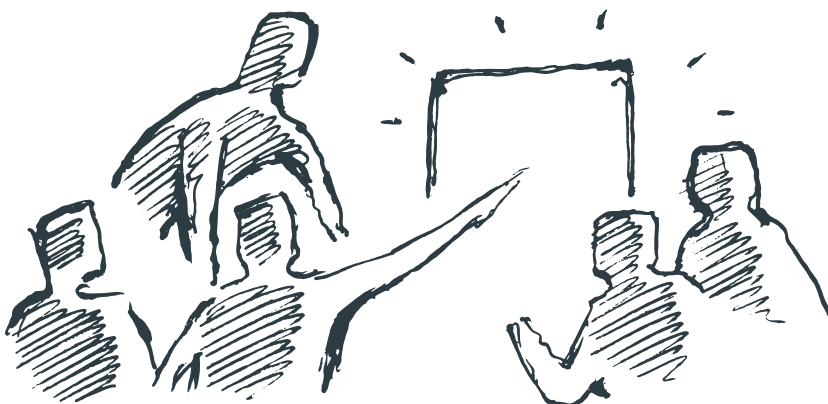
# Background

In 2017, discussion began at a local level around the issue of reconciliation in Port Alberni following a walk for reconciliation on March 27. By September of that year, the City of Port Alberni (the City) formed a committee and work began to establish a path toward reconciliation between the City, Tseshaht First Nation and Hupačasath First Nation.

The Committee is made up of two representatives from Tseshaht, two from Hupačasath, one from City Council, and three from the community at large. To date, the Reconciliation Committee has met 17 times since its inaugural meeting on November 30, 2017.

## OBJECTIVE

The objective of this report is to provide council, its partners at Tseshaht and Hupačasath, and the general public an overview of the progress of the committee to date and recommended next steps in the local reconciliation process.



# History

## FIRST NATIONS

The City of Port Alberni is located within the traditional unceded territories of the  $\acute{c}\acute{i}\acute{s}\acute{h}\acute{a}\acute{a}\acute{\lambda}\acute{a}\acute{t}\acute{h}$  (sis sha ahtah – Tseshaht) and the Hupačasath First Nation.

Both nations are members of the Nuuchaanul (Nuu-chah-nulth Nations), which consists of 14 nations located on western Vancouver Island. Originally known by Europeans as the Nootka people, The Nuu-chah-nulth are all people of the land and sea.

Tseshaht translates into “people of a rancid smelly place.” It is believed this name is a reflection of their history as great whalers and, as a result their village reeked of whale oil, which some considered a good thing as it tended to signify wealth. Tseshaht is made up of five tribes. The Nation’s birthplace is believed to be Benson Island, the furthest west of the islands now referred to as the Broken Group of Islands.

Tseshaht members reside mainly on the west side of the Somass River, on Tsehaheh Reserve, where they have their administration office, long house, a number of businesses, and an elementary school. Tseshaht families also live at Teepis, a reserve on the shore of the Alberni Harbour.

Hupačasath is believed to mean “people residing above water.” It is made up of three distinct tribes; the Muh-uulth-aht, Kleh-koot-aht and Cuu-ma-as-aht (Ahahswinis) and resided in different parts of the territory. The three tribes amalgamated just prior to the arrival of European settlers. It is believed this was done in order to defend their territory from encroachment by other First Nations.

Hupačasath members reside primarily on Ahahswinis Reserve where their administration building, House of





Gathering, and a number of businesses are located. There is also a significant residential presence at Klehkoot along the banks of the Sproat River.

Today most of the two Nations' members call the Alberni Valley home, although traditionally their territory was spread out all the way down the Alberni Inlet and into the Barclay Sound.

In pre-contact and early post-contact times, the Nuu-chah-nulth people were significantly greater in numbers. Warring and outbreaks of diseases believed to have come with European traders, such as small pox, decreased the Nuu-chah-nulth population. It is estimated that as high as 90 per cent of Nuu-chah-nulth people died as a result of outbreaks by the 1830s.

First contact with European explorers and traders is believed to have occurred in the early 1700s when Russian and Spanish ships visited the area. In 1778 James Cook visited Nuu-chah-nulth territory in search of a western entrance to the much sought-after Northwest Passage between Europe and Asia. Cook's expedition traded furs with Mowachaht/Muchalaht people in what became known as Friendly Cove on Nootka Island. Those furs were resold for immense profit, thus triggering a fur trade industry in

Nuu-chah-nulth territory that brought European and American traders to the coast.

In 1860 Captain Stamp arrived in the Alberni Harbour. He purchased access rights to land and timber for the purpose of building and operating a sawmill; the first sawmill on the coast purpose-built for export. After a brief attempt to negotiate for a prime location on which a Tseshaht village was located, Captain Stamp forced the Tseshaht from that site under threat of violence. European occupancy in the Alberni Valley continued from that point, as did the practices of resource extraction and displacement of Tseshaht and Hupačasath people from their land onto reserves designated by Canada's Indian Agents.

Through the late 1800s, while the Alberni Valley experienced continued expansion of European





presence and settlement, the Canadian government began to take measures that would change the lives of First Nations inhabitants. Residential schools were built, First Nations children were removed from their homes, and housed in centrally located residential schools.

In 1892, the Alberni Indian Residential School (AIRS) opened, originally known as the Alberni Girls' Home until 1899 when it was renamed. It served initially as a school for children primarily from Tseshaht and Hupačasat̓ communities. Eventually the school grew and included children from other First Nations around the province.

Located on the west bank of the Somass River on the Tsehaheh Reserve, the school was managed by the Women's Foreign Mission Society of the Presbyterian Church and the United Church of Canada. Later management and operation of the school was taken over by the Department of Indian Affairs. In 1967, the school became known as the Alberni Indian Student Residence. The school remained open until 1973.

Although originally occupied by mostly local First Nations children, in 1948 the residential school opened a day school for children from Tseshaht and Hupačasat̓. This made room at the

residential school for children from reserves around the province. By 1950, students from Tseshaht and Hupačasat̓ began attending the provincial school in Port Alberni.

Although the 1950s saw an integration of school-aged children in the Alberni Valley, communities within the Alberni Valley remained quite independent of each other. This was especially true in terms of the divide between indigenous and non-indigenous communities. Through the ensuing years, efforts have been made to reverse the damage that was done by the residential school system, and through the years the communities of the Alberni Valley have come together as neighbours. The Reconciliation Committee was formed in the spirit of moving beyond being neighbours in the same valley and toward being a more integrated, inclusive community.



## EUROPEAN SETTLERS

The influence of the early presence of Spanish explorers on the coast is evident in the proliferation of Spanish place names within Nuu-chah-nulth territory. The name “Alberni” was derived from Captain Don Pedro de Alberni, a Spanish officer who commanded Fort San Miguel at Nootka Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island between 1790 and 1792. As European activities turned from trading to resource extraction, European settlement increased. A European community sprung up in the Alberni Valley. In 1912, the City of Port Alberni was incorporated,

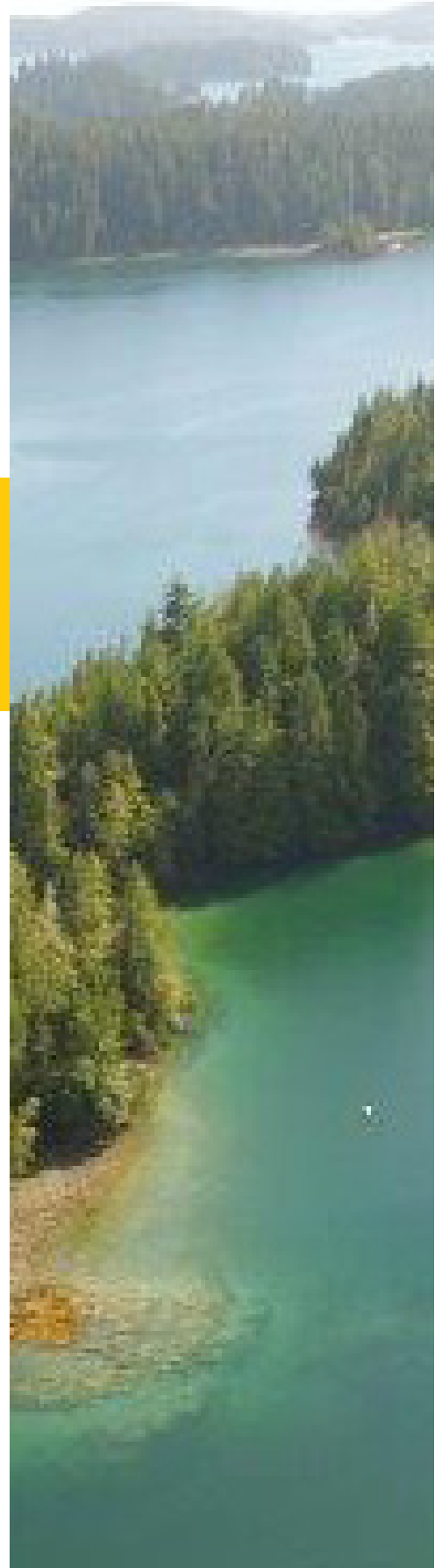
**“ The Reconciliation Committee was formed in the spirit of moving beyond being neighbours in the same valley and toward being a more integrated, inclusive community.”**

and in 1913 the City of Alberni was incorporated. Significant early settlement also occurred in the rural areas of the Alberni Valley.

The arrival of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway brought many changes to the Valley. The railway opened the door for effective and timely overland travel and trade out of the valley. The trans-Pacific telegraph cable terminating at Bamfield, and later in Port Alberni, also contributed to urban growth and development. The Alberni Valley became a hub for mining, fishing, and forestry. That activity largely bypassed Tseshaht and Hupačasath people, and contributed to their further displacement from their lands and traditional way of life.

In 1964, a tsunami struck Nuu-chah-nulth coastal areas, resulting in significant damage in low lying areas of the Alberni Valley. The tsunami provided the impetus for the ongoing discussion of amalgamation of the Cities of Alberni and Port Alberni. In 1967 the two cities were merged into one.

Today the broader Alberni Valley community of approximately 30,000 people is made up of the City of Port Alberni, regional areas known as Cherry Creek, Sproat Lake, Beaver Creek and Beaufort, as well as the Tseshaht and Hupačasath communities.



# National and International Efforts

## UNDRIP

The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) was adopted by the UN in September 2007. Its goal was to protect the collective rights of Indigenous People that might not be covered under other human rights charters that address only rights of the individual. A report, the "*Study of the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations*," released in 1982 by the UN Special Rapporteur of the Subcommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities started the ball rolling for UNDRIP. From its findings the Working Group on Indigenous Populations was formed. By 1985 this group had begun to draft a declaration of Indigenous Rights.

In general terms, UNDRIP is a non-legally binding declaration designed to outline how Indigenous Peoples should be treated. It protects their traditions, culture, and language, and prohibits any form of discriminations against them. After almost 25 years, in 2007 the draft was approved by the majority of the UN General Assembly. Canada was one of four countries that did not sign. The others were Australia, New Zealand, and the US. Each had concerns around the amount of autonomy recognized for Indigenous peoples. They also believed that they already upheld human rights for all people. By 2010, these four countries reversed their position and supported UNDRIP.

In Canada's statement of support issued in 2010 it said, "The Government's vision is a future in which Aboriginal families and communities are healthy, safe, self-sufficient and prosperous within a Canada where people make their own decisions, manage their own affairs and make strong contributions to the country as a whole." It went on to say, "In endorsing the Declaration, Canada reaffirms its commitment to build on a positive and productive relationship with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples to improve the well-being of Aboriginal Canadians, based on our shared history, respect, and a desire to move forward together."

According to the declaration it is a "document that describes both individual and collective rights of Indigenous peoples around the world. It offers guidance on cooperative relationships with Indigenous peoples to states, the United Nations, and other international organizations based on the principles of equality, partnership, good faith and mutual respect. It addresses the rights of Indigenous peoples on issues such as: culture, identity, religion, language, health, education, and community.

The declaration is made up of 46 articles. To look at the full declaration, go to [www.un.org](http://www.un.org).





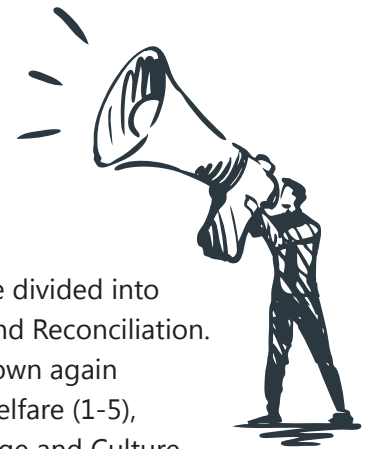
## CALLS TO ACTION

Between 2007 and 2015, the Government of Canada established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada to facilitate reconciliation among former students, their families, their communities, and all Canadians. It was an opportunity to begin their healing journey, and part of that involved participating in the Truth and Reconciliation Hearings. The TRC travelled across the country for six years and heard from more than 6,500 witnesses. They also hosted educational events and opportunities to honour and share the stories and experiences of former students.

In 2015, the TRC presented a report on its findings and released 94 recommendations, or what they referred to as their “calls for action.”

The 94 Calls to Action are divided into two categories: Legacy and Reconciliation. These are then broken down again into six sections: Child Welfare (1-5), Education (6-12), Language and Culture (13-17), Health (18-24), Justice (25-42), and Reconciliation (43-94). According to the CBC’s Beyond 94 in-depth research, 70 of the 94 items are in progress with projects underway. They broke it down into 32 not started, 33 in progress – projects proposed, 19 in progress – projects underway, and 10 complete.

The full report on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action is available online at [nctr.ca](http://nctr.ca).



### SOME OF THE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDE

All levels of government **adopt and implement** the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation

The Federal Government **launch a national inquiry** into the missing and murdered aboriginal women

The Federal Government **enact the Aboriginal Language Act**

The Federal Government **create a national holiday**

to remember and honour the survivors of residential schools, their families, and communities

Canada will, in consultation with Aboriginal groups, **establish a National Council for Reconciliation**

All levels of government **acknowledge** that the current state of Aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government

The Federal Government **draft a new Aboriginal legislation** that will include a commitment to sufficient funding

All levels of government **commit to offering opportunities** for people to be educated on the history that lead up to the TRC final report

All levels of government **commit to offering opportunities** for people to be educated on the history that lead up to the TRC final report

# Reconciliation Committee

## BACKGROUND

***Reconciliation talks began in the Alberni Valley following the outcome of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report in 2015. The 94 Calls to Action released by the commission encouraged all levels of government to work together. This report inspired elected officials across Canada to begin working on repairing the scars of the past to create a future where provincial, federal, and municipal governments work side-by-side with First Nations communities.***

On March 27, 2017, the broader community of the Alberni Valley took a significant step toward reconciliation. On that day, more than 200 people from all different backgrounds gathered for a walk for reconciliation. It was an opportunity to come together to demonstrate a collective desire for change in the Valley. The walk concluded at City Hall, where an inspiring rally was followed by a joint delegation to Port Alberni City Council. The delegation encouraged Council to:

- engage in building stronger relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments;
- fully adopt UNDRIP as a framework for reconciliation;
- implement the TRC Calls to Action; and
- acknowledge that the City of Port Alberni is on the unceded territories of Hupačasath and Tseshaht First Nations at the start of council meetings and events.

City Council saw reconciliation as an important step for the community of Port Alberni. Located on the unceded territories of Hupačasath and Tseshaht First Nations, it is also home to the head office of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, which



carries out different services for its 14 member nations. Many of Port Alberni citizens are also First Nations members, and the community serves as a hub for a number of First Nations administration, education, and commercial offices.

The reconciliation walk was successful in acting as a catalyst for change in Port Alberni. From that initial meeting, the City has taken steps toward reconciliation with local First Nations and First Nation citizens.

Council adopted the Reconciliation Committee draft terms of reference on July 10, 2017, and put a call out for members of the committee. On September 18, 2017, Council announced the members of the committee.



The committee was comprised of then City Councillor Sharie Minions representing City Council, two Hupačasath members, two Tseshaht members, and three residents from the Alberni Valley, appointed by City Council.

The purpose of the committee is to “investigate practical actions for the City and the community to help foster reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples.” The committee met for the first time on November 30, 2017, and has since met 17 times.

**“ The committee was comprised of then City Councillor Sharie Minions representing City Council, two Hupačasath members, two Tseshaht members, and three residents from the Alberni Valley, appointed by City Council.”**



## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### ANN ROBINSON

COMMITTEE MEMBER

*Ann Robinson is a member of Tseshaht First Nation, and is the fourth eldest daughter of Kathy and Doug Robinson. Ann was born and raised in the Alberni Valley, but left the community for a short time. Eventually she got married and returned to live with her husband, Keith Hunter, on the Tsehaheh Reserve.*

**“ In order to change, all of us have to change... it is not just the obligation of the political bodies, it's up to all of us.”**

Ann is an active member of her tribe, volunteering on the treaty team when it was active and numerous other committees.

Through the years, Ann has work at a number of places in Port Alberni, including stores, the museum, USMA, the Nuuchah-nulth Tribal Council, and her Nation. She and her husband now own and operate First Nations Wildcrafters.

Ann represents Tseshaht on the Reconciliation Committee and was interested in getting involved because she grew up in the community and has been stereotyped as a teen, adult, and elder. “I want a different life for my grandchildren. I’m not afraid to say what needs to be said to create open, straight forward conversation.”

She said a lot of the work on the Reconciliation Committee comes down to respect and a willingness to work together around the table realizing that the truth is what needs to be said, but not in a hurtful way. Ann believes the committee is the foundation for change.

“In order to change, all of us have to change,” she said. “It is not just the obligation of the political bodies, it's up

to all of us.” She added that elected officials must find a way to implement those changes because it has to be more than just talk.

Reconciliation has to be rooted in honesty and there must be a willingness to see the problem and move towards healing. She said it is easy to get held up by policy and forget that people have to be part of reconciliation so that the whole community benefits and heals.

Ann acknowledges that there are many challenges, and there is nothing wrong with that. The biggest of these is that there is so much fear and uncertainty that comes along with change. It is essential in Ann’s eyes to have a plan that involves the people who live in the Alberni Valley, because everyone has a voice that needs to be heard.





“ A ridiculous amount of time is wasted on both sides to put each other down.”

## BRANDY LAUDER

COMMITTEE MEMBER

*Brandy Lauder is a Hupačasath First Nation member and elected councillor. She was born in Port Alberni and grew up in the Alberni Valley. She is in her first term as an elected councillor for her nation and is currently running for her second term.*

Brandy also works for her nation at the office as a computer mapper (GIS). In addition to this, she also does archaeology and anthropology. When she is not exploring those passions, she enjoys being outdoors

camp, hunt, and fish. Brandy also enjoys exploring her creative side by sewing, drawing, painting, carving, knitting, and doing embroidery. All of her life she has taken part in traditional activities, such as dancing, bark stripping, and collecting berries and medicines. She also likes to learn new things and is always up for a challenge.

Brandy was appointed to the Reconciliation Committee by Hupačasath's elected council. She is glad to serve on the committee, and sees its importance.

Being raised on reserve, Brandy has seen racism from both sides – natives hating non-natives, and non-natives hating natives.

“A ridiculous amount of time is wasted on both sides to put each other down,” she said.

She believes that reconciliation is the amalgamation of both people together. This can be done by working together and sharing through language and songs. She also believes both sides must recognize each other's differences and respect each other.

Brandy believes the Reconciliation Committee faces two major obstacles – fear and racism.



## CYNTHIA DICK

### COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR

*Cynthia Dick is a proud member of Tseshaht First Nation and elected councillor for her tribe. In 2016, she was appointed by council to sit as the Nation's Chief Councillor. In addition to representing her Nation as co-chair of the Reconciliation Committee, she was appointed to the Board of Directors for the Port Alberni Port Authority and sits as a director for the Bread of Life.*

Cynthia grew up in the Tseshaht community and is the mother of a young daughter, Arianna. She says her daughter is her motivation to make the world a better place. Cynthia is passionate about working for her community and giving back where she can. In her spare time, she enjoys time with her family, travelling, hiking, and being on the water.

Growing up in the Alberni Valley, Cynthia could see misinformation and misguided beliefs and attitudes exist when it comes to Indigenous people. She completed her Bachelor of Arts from Vancouver Island University, majoring in Sociology and minoring in Psychology. It was then she realized those misconceptions were common everywhere. As a result, she became passionate about creating social change for the betterment of communities and all people and living things.

For Cynthia, the teachings of the past and present are essential to reconciliation and creating stronger relationships with one another, with ourselves, and with the valley and all that inhabit it.



"Reconciliation is being able to put our best foot together," she said. "Reconciliation is us doing our part to leave a good path for our children. It is creating the space for everyone to feel safe, feel heard and supported to their fullest potential."

Cynthia says the Alberni Valley has so much potential but to reach it we must eliminate the division that exists and begin to work together collaboratively. Instead of letting our differences keep us apart, she believes we need to work together to see the commonalities and opportunity in each other.

For Cynthia, fear of change is one of the greatest challenges in the reconciliation process. However, with collaboration, understanding and acceptance, she believes we can work together to change for the better.





**“ Port Alberni had existing political, legal, economic, and social systems prior to the assertion of the Crown's sovereignty. These systems were not disposed of by any acceptable means and, as such, still deserve our observance.”**

## IAN BENOIT

COMMITTEE MEMBER

*In 2014, Ian Benoit moved to Port Alberni from Haida Gwaii, where he was born and raised. He lived for a short time in Victoria where he studied political science at the University of Victoria. He then received his Masters of Public Policy at Simon Fraser University. In 2012, his travels took him home to work as a policy analyst for the Council of the Haida Nation. His move to Port Alberni came when he got a similar position with Huu-ay-aht First Nations.*

Ian is active in his community as a long-distance runner and hiker. He is a member of the Young Professionals of the Alberni Valley, the Alberni Valley Search and Rescue Squad, and the Sproat Lake Volunteer Fire Department.

Ian believes Port Alberni is a community that struggles with poverty and associated social problems. He sees the Reconciliation Committee as having an important part to play in reducing the inequalities between First Nations populations and the general population.

It can also improve the well-being of people in the community who need it most.

Through his work experience and education, Ian brings a combination of academic and real-world experience engaged in issues relevant to reconciliation.

“I see reconciliation as a mutually accepted remedy to the problems created by the imposition of colonial order of law,” he explains. “Port Alberni had existing political, legal, economic, and social systems prior to the assertion of the Crown's sovereignty. These systems were not disposed of by any acceptable means and, as such, still deserve our observance.”

He believes that, in an absolute sense, reconciliation would involve the restoration of past systems in such a way that it respects the well-being of all people who call the Alberni Valley home. In a practical sense it is more unknown because this has never been accomplished. In Port Alberni, Ian believes to make practical and meaningful progress the city must make concerted efforts to receive the consent of First Nations with respect to decisions affecting their asserted interests.

Given that so many First Nations people call Port Alberni home, the city must be acutely sensitive to their rights.

## JIM TATOOSH

COMMITTEE MEMBER

*Jim Tatoosh is a member of Hupačasath First Nation. He grew up in the Alberni Valley and has always dedicated his time to making his community a better place to live. Jim is currently in his third term on council and is running for a chance to have a fourth term as an elected councillor for his nation.*

**“ The members of my Nation think it's important so I go out of my way to make it better for others through the committee's work.”**

Jim worked at the pulp mill in Port Alberni, now Catalyst, from the time he graduated from university to his retirement in 2008. He enjoyed his 29 years at the mill, but was glad when the time to retire came. He is now living with his partner in Parksville and travels to Port Alberni for council business from Monday to Thursday.

He enjoys serving his community on council and says he definitely does not do it for the money but for the contribution he is making. This is one reason he was



happy to be appointed to the Reconciliation Committee by his Nation.

“I think reconciliation it going to take a long time,” Jim said. “The members of my Nation think it’s important so I go out of my way to make it better for others through the committee’s work.”

By bringing his viewpoint to the committee, he makes it more diverse. By asking the tough questions, it helps bring information to light that, in the end, will help others process what a huge task lies ahead.

Jim has a strong hope that things will get better and sees a lot of positive things coming out of the work that is being done on reconciliation. He believes the big picture is that people are working hard together to get there, and they must continue on.

He thinks education is the key, but also one of the most challenging aspects of reconciliation. By ensuing people with the wrong information or attitude are educated things will change. Jim is proud of the work the reconciliation committee has taken on to date, and he looks forward to the day when all three communities are working together for real change.







**My years on council have taught me a lot about working with people who have varied backgrounds. It has taught me it's important to listen and learn first, then form opinions and try to bring the group to consensus through conversation."**

## SHARIE MINIONS

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR

*Sharie Minions grew up in Port Alberni and is now raising her own family here with her husband Colin. She is a politician, mortgage broker, and restaurant owner, and any spare moment she spends with her children.*

Sharie is Port Alberni's current mayor, but she was appointed to the Reconciliation in her first term as a city councillor. Although she was nervous about the opportunity, she was also excited.

"I've always enjoyed learning about First Nations and thought this would be a great opportunity," she said. "My years on council have taught me a lot about working with people who have varied backgrounds. It has taught me it's important to listen and learn first, then form opinions and try to bring the group to consensus through conversation."

This was a quality she would use on the committee as in the first meeting she was elected co-chair, along with Cynthia Dick.

Sharie sees relationships as the key to reconciliation. She believes governments can reconcile by genuinely changing the way they work together. This involves taking in each other's input at an early stage and building plans together, while building relationships and friendships. If this is successful, it creates open dialogue and each party can call on the other when they have questions or concerns.

Sharie believes that the Reconciliation Committee is important and thinks there is a huge opportunity to define Port Alberni as a community through the diverse culture backgrounds. By working together, the Alberni Valley can showcase its differences and be proud. In order to do that, relationships must be built and reconciliation must happen first.

She believes it is a challenging process because it is so personal to the people involved in the committee, and they all genuinely care about the results and process. She is thankful that after a few meetings the committee took the time to talk and get to know each other. This allowed them to recognize the commonalities in their values. After that they started working more efficiently together. Sharie thinks it will always be a tough process, but getting to know each other was key.

## SHEENA FALCONER

### COMMITTEE MEMBER

*Sheena Falconer has lived in Port Alberni for more than 20 years. She has raised her children and is now enjoying her time as a grandmother.*



**“ I struggle with the term reconciliation... As I don't think it speaks clearly to what we are trying to achieve.”**

Since coming to Port Alberni, Sheena has become involved with many groups and organizations that are working to improve quality of life in the Alberni Valley. This includes work in environmental restoration, and volunteering with the Alberni Valley Hospice Society, and McLean Mill.

When Sheena saw that the city was forming a Reconciliation Committee, she wanted to get involved. She believes the Reconciliation Committee is important because it will bring the community together in a meaningful way.

Through her career and work life, Sheena has gained experience working with all kinds of people with different backgrounds. By working together with

various stakeholders, she has gained an understanding of the importance of differing points of view. She points out that the key is working as a team while still respecting the different opinions and perspectives others bring.

Although she sees reconciliation as an important step for Port Alberni to take, she has a hard time defining it. “I struggle with the term reconciliation,” she said. “I don't think it speaks clearly to what we are trying to achieve.”

Sheena thinks reconciliation in Port Alberni is evolving and changing, and is passionate about that journey and what it could do for the community.





“ I understand the effects on our First Nations people who do not live in their home villages.”

## WALLY SAMUEL

COMMITTEE MEMBER

***Wally Samuel is a member of Ahousaht First Nation, the largest of the Nuu-chah-nulth nations.***

In 1966, Wally moved to Port Alberni where he continues to be an active volunteer in community activities and youth sports, including activities that promote Ahousaht culture.

Although he has called the city of Port Alberni home for more than 50 years, it has not always been an easy experience. Wally is a residential school survivor. He has lived and experienced the effects of government policy and residential school.

As a visible First Nations person, he has experienced the racism and prejudices often shown to First Nations people. He has also experienced and witnessed the stereotyping that First Nations people face on a daily basis. It is this understanding that made him want to volunteer for the Reconciliation Committee.

Through his experiences, he became interested in helping others. For 25 years, until his retirement, Wally has worked for First Nations organizations in community programming, advocating for Indigenous people locally, as well as provincially and federally.

“I have lived and experienced the strife, suffering, and trauma of First Nations people,” he said. “I understand the effects on our First Nations people who do not live in their home villages.”

He believes that understanding is what he brings to the Reconciliation Committee, and it is the main reason he wanted to get involved. He wants people in this community to have a better respect and appreciation of each other’s history.

By respecting and understanding each other, Wally thinks Port Alberni will be more productive and thriving city. But he believes that also is what makes the goals of the Reconciliation Committee challenging.

# Progress to Date

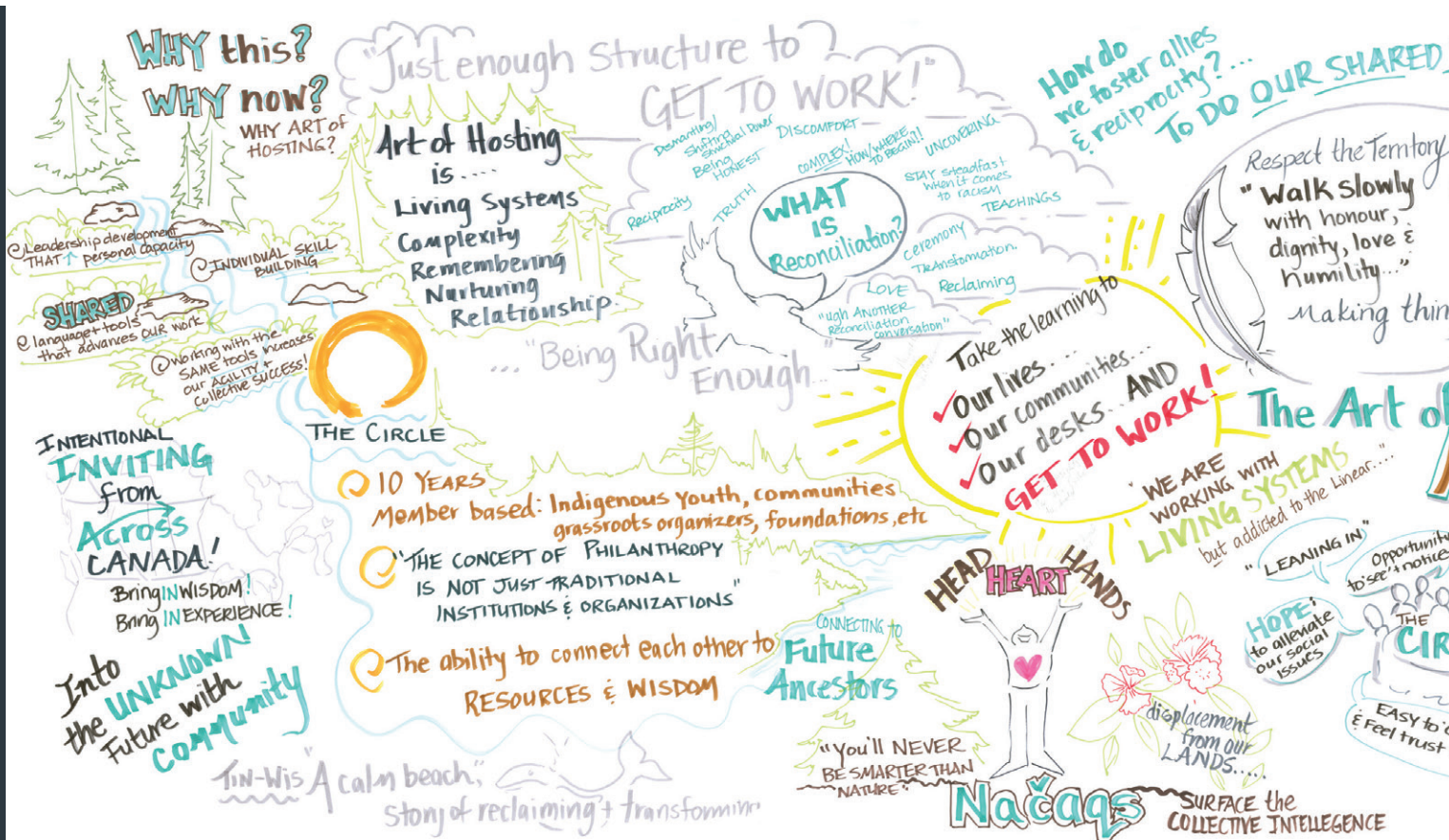
*The Reconciliation Committee is a select committee of Port Alberni City Council. It is appointed for the purpose of investigating practical actions for the City and the community to help foster reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous people.*

*Once the committee members were selected, the group set out to establish the needs of the community.*

In 2018, the City was successful in receiving a grant from the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM). The grant money was used to host a community forum planned for March 27, 2018, the anniversary of the walk for reconciliation, and focused on furthering reconciliation efforts and cultivating cross-cultural awareness in Port Alberni.

The event was successful attracting approximately 112 people. It was a diverse crowd made up of Valley residents, local First Nations, and elected officials for the Alberni Valley. A World Café model was used to encourage participants to give their input on ten facilitated questions. These were:

- What does reconciliation mean to you?
- What can the community do to advance reconciliation in Port Alberni?
- What do you know about the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous



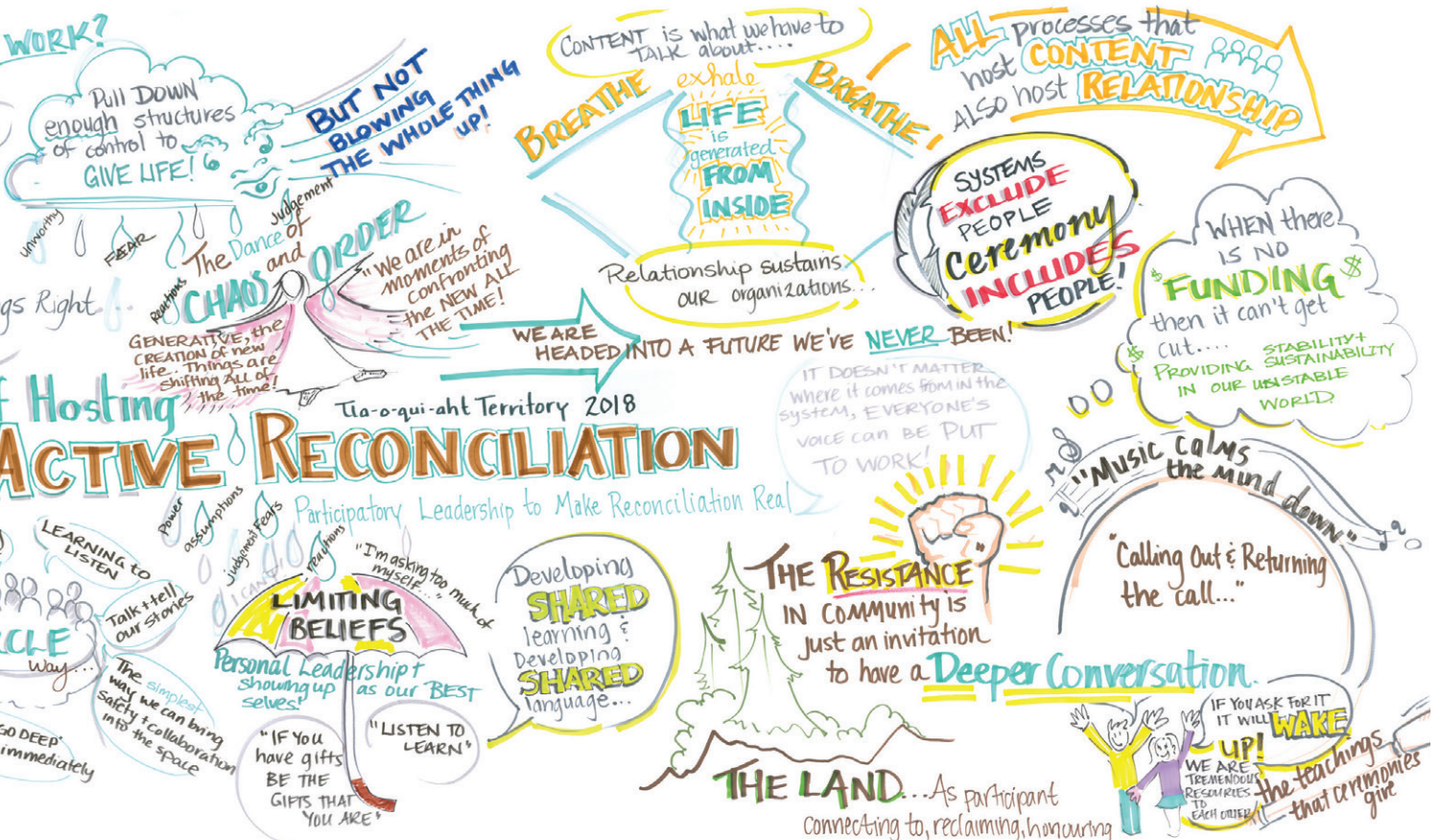
Peoples, and how could we better educate people on these two documents?

- What does Port Alberni look like as a more reconciled community?
- What would you like to see the city of Port Alberni, Tseshaht First Nation, and Hupačasath First Nation do to further reconciliation in Port Alberni?
- What do you know about the Reconciliation Committee and its work, and do you have any suggestions for the committee going forward?
- What are some reconciliation success stories you've heard?
- What does reconciliation look like in the urban First Nations population?
- What are some of the positive things happening in our community?

- Who needs to be part of the reconciliation discussions?

As a result of that forum, the Advancing Reconciliation in Port Alberni document was created to summarize the information gathered from the ten tabletop discussions. The full report can be found at [www.portalberni.ca](http://www.portalberni.ca) by searching "reconciliation."

The information received that night was integral in the formation of the Committee's 27 recommendations. These recommendations were broken down into eight categories, including cityscapes, government relations, education, events, partnerships, languages, urban First Nations, and other.



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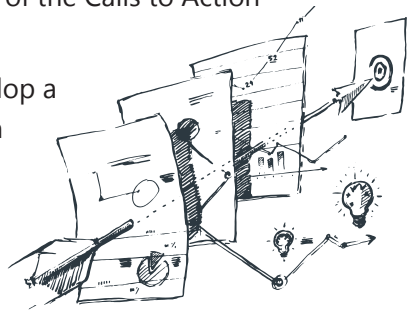


## CITYSCAPES

- The City of Port Alberni will redesign its logo to incorporate First Nation elements
- Within the city, add First Nations words and names to numbered streets and other destinations, locations, and structures. In planning, include First Nations words and names on the City's Approved Street Names list.
- Two new flag poles will be installed at City Hall to fly the flags of Tseshaht and Hupačasath. Until they are available, ensure that the flags of both nations are flown at City Hall on National Indigenous Peoples Day.

## GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

- Create a working group with the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, the City of Port Alberni, Hupačasath, and Tseshaht with the terms of reference to aid government-to-government relations.
- Encourage diversity by engaging and encouraging First Nations people to get involved in local politics, seek political office or join various committees. This could be done by sending expressions of interest notices to First Nations offices in the area for consideration.
- Develop a reconciliation protocol to guide collaborative processes between Hupačasath, Tseshaht, and the City.
- Develop a process to enable joint grant funding opportunities.
- Review community-to-community funding opportunities for the development of a quadripartite agreement between the City, Hupačasath, Tseshaht, and the Friendship Center.
- Undergo a review of the City's policies and procedures to ensure they reflect the intent of UNDRIP and the TRC Calls to Action.
- In its next Strategic Plan, the City will seek to include the intent of the Calls to Action and UNDRIP.
- The City will develop a policy to establish a government-to-government process for major projects.

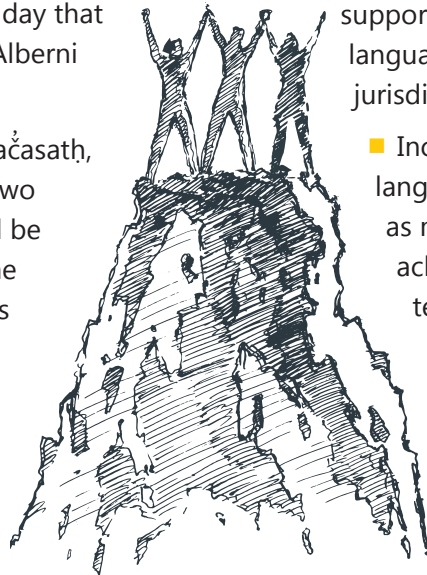


## EDUCATION

- The City will help make educational opportunities available in the community that will inform people on the history of local First Nations. Funding should be available through grants as it is meeting the recommendations of UNDRIP and the Calls to Action.

## EVENTS

- Hold a KAIROS Blanket Exercise for city staff and councillors. This is a participatory history lesson. Developed in collaboration with First Nations elders, knowledge keepers, and educators, it is designed to “foster truth, understanding, respect, and reconciliation among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.
- Promote First Nations events on social media and within the city. This can be such things as Orange Shirt Day or National Indigenous Peoples Day.
- Proclaim that March 27 will be a day that recognizes reconciliation in the Alberni Valley.
- Annually the City, Tseshaht, Hupačasath, and the Friendship Center hold two joint community events. One will be a reconciliation workshop and the other a celebration. These parties will also host a joint screening event of the First Nations series at the Paramount Theatre with support from other organizations.



## PARTNERSHIPS

- Compile a report identifying obstacles that create inequality in the opportunities for First Nations employment in the workplace.
- Identify a means to increase employment opportunities for First Nation people in the city and community.

## LANGUAGES

- Draft a letter endorsed by the City, Tseshaht, Hupačasath, and the Friendship Center that contains recommendations on how to further support approaches for teaching traditional languages within Port Alberni's educational jurisdiction.
- Incorporate the Nuu-chah-nulth language into Council meetings, such as making it part of the welcome and acknowledgements of traditional territories.
- Educate the public on the original First Nations name for common places around the Alberni Valley. For example, Canal Beach could be called Tiipis Beach.

## URBAN FIRST NATIONS

- The committee lobbies to improve access to services for First Nations living away from their traditional territory.

## OTHER

- Commission a joint public art piece that represents the City, Tseshaht, Hupačasath, and the Friendship Center.
- The City will seek funding opportunities to hire a person dedicated to leading reconciliation actions, events, and initiatives in the community.
- The City will create a program, similar to the Community Investment Program (CIP), for reconciliation events or that a dollar about from the CIP is dedicated to reconciliation.

The final step in this process for the Reconciliation Committee is to create this report summarizing its work. This report will be presented to the respective councils for the City, Hupačasath First Nation, and Tseshaht First Nation.

The Reconciliation Committee also recommend that the City, Tseshaht, Hupačasath, and the board of the Friendship Center support the creation of a new committee similar to the current one with the intention of fostering and advancing reconciliation between Indigenous and non-indigenous people in the Alberni Valley.





**RESERVED FOR  
"NEXT STEPS"**

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# Reference Materials

## ONLINE RESOURCES

[www.portalberni.ca/reconciliation-committee](http://www.portalberni.ca/reconciliation-committee)  
[www.un.org](http://www.un.org)  
[www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca)  
[www.hupacasath.ca](http://www.hupacasath.ca)  
[www.tsshaht.com](http://www.tsshaht.com)  
[www.pafriendshipcenter.com](http://www.pafriendshipcenter.com)  
[www.nuuchahnulth.org](http://www.nuuchahnulth.org)  
[www.nationaltoday.com/national-aboriginal-day](http://www.nationaltoday.com/national-aboriginal-day)

## GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

[www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding/lgps/community-to-community-forum.html](http://www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding/lgps/community-to-community-forum.html)  
  
[www.ubcm.ca/assets/Funding~Programs/LGPS/UCPR/ucpr-pilot-2019-program-guide.pdf](http://www.ubcm.ca/assets/Funding~Programs/LGPS/UCPR/ucpr-pilot-2019-program-guide.pdf)  
  
<https://fcm.ca/en/programs/first-nation-municipal-collaboration/community-economic-development-initiative>

## KEY DOCUMENTS

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) The first principle of reconciliation for Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) confirms UNDRIP is the framework for reconciliation for all sectors of Canadian society.

**ELECTRONIC:** Click [here](#) for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples [PDF].

**PRINT:** Visit [www.un.org](http://www.un.org) for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action TRC of Canada's 94 Calls to Action (2015), are an appeal to mobilize all levels of government, organizations and individuals to make concrete changes in society to advance reconciliation.

**ELECTRONIC:** Click [here](#) for the TRC Calls to Action [PDF].

**PRINT:** Visit [www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca) for the TRC Calls to Action.

To further reconciliation efforts and cultivate cross-cultural awareness in Port Alberni the committee hosted a community forum on March 27, 2018. The input provided at the event was compiled into a summary document which was used to develop the 27 recommendations put forward by the Reconciliation Committee.

**ELECTRONIC:** Click [here](#) for the forum's Summary of Input [PDF].

**PRINT:** Visit [www.portalberni.ca/reconciliation-committee](http://www.portalberni.ca/reconciliation-committee) for the forum's Summary of Input.

“ Reconciliation is us doing our part to leave a good path for our children. It is creating the space for everyone to feel safe, feel heard and supported to their fullest potential.”

- CYNTHIA DICK, Tseshah First Nation