

Reconciliation Roundtables

Feedback Summary +
Committee
Development



FALL 2023



The City of Prince Rupert is located on the territories of the T'smsyen Smalgyax-speaking people, and is home to many diverse indigenous groups from our region and beyond. Kxeen (Kaien Island) has always been a place where people from many areas met to trade with the Ts'msyen. Our intent is to move forward continuing in the spirit of connection, sharing and respectful exchange.

***T'oyaxsut nüüsm** to all elders, knowledge keepers and community members who participated in our roundtable events.*

Participants + Interviewees included:

Belle Stewart, Nicholas Blackwater, Diana Caputo, Clarence Nelson Jr, Marlina Joseph, Billy Nelson, Joanne Finlay, Henry Green, Arny Nagy, Russell Mather, Symbia Barnaby, Roberta Etzerza, Lori Burger, Miranda Kessler (PRACSS), Reid Skelton-Morven (City Council), Teri Forster (City Council), Veronika Stewart (City staff), Myfannwy Pope (City staff).

Note that additional invitations were extended but not all who were invited were able to attend.

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Background

In October of 2022, the City adopted a Framework Policy for Reconciliation. One component of the policy was to develop a Council appointed committee of indigenous residents and organizational representatives to bring forward recommendations for how to advance reconciliation and indigenous cultural awareness in our community. To move forward in a well-informed and collaborative way, the City established a partnership with Prince Rupert Aboriginal Community Services Society (PRACSS) and initiated informal 'roundtable' meetings to gather information from residents about how best to move that committee forward.

In the Spring-Summer of 2023, City staff, our partners at PRACSS Society and Council representatives met with community members to gain better understanding from the community at-large about how best to develop a Committee for Reconciliation for Prince Rupert. What should we focus on? What are some areas that they care most about? We had four total roundtable sessions with participation ranging from 2 people up to 12. Invitations were sent to community members known to be culturally active from across different sectors, with folks encouraged to extend the invitation to others who may be interested or suggest additional attendees.

In the following pages, we have worked to summarize the comments and opportunities that our participants identified within our roundtable exercises. These opportunities will be brought forward for prioritization/action as we establish a formal committee to advance reconciliation and cultural awareness in our community. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but it's a starting point for us to work from.

This may sometimes be sensitive and difficult work. One piece of feedback that was received was that it would be appropriate for a committee that calls upon elders and community members to dive into potentially sensitive topics to be provided a stipend consideration for the emotional labour required from them. To support this work, the City and PRACSS successfully applied for a grant from the UBCM for \$10,000 to carry out this work. A portion of those funds will be dedicated to committee member stipends, a portion towards a new or existing community event, and \$5,000 of the funds will be put towards a project of the Committee's choosing.

We are very excited to be moving forward with this important work, and commit to keeping an open mind and heart about the feedback we receive through this process.

Key Themes

The need for services to feel comfortable and familiar

Advocacy for culturally appropriate care/design of programs , cultural awareness for service delivery staff

Local celebration of Indigenous culture

City encouraged to promote indigenous events, volunteering, indigenize existing events, places

Relationship Building

Seeking opportunities to build relationships and understandings with indigenous partner organizations as well as hereditary leaders and traditional knowledge keepers

Equity as a guiding principle to address colonial impacts

Affordable housing as a key need linked to impacts of colonialism

Promotion of sustainable/indigenous food systems

Specific Comments/Opportunities

Topic	Comment/Opportunity
Environment	Seek and promote opportunities for salmon enhancement in partnership with area First Nations
	Advocate for fisheries protections with CN Rail/DFO regarding spraying of pesticides adjacent to the Skeena River
	Adopt archaeological finds policy that aligns with protocols enacted by area First Nations
	Advocate for inclusion of food sustainability/learning
	Specific sites to be considered for protection/advocacy: McNicholl Creek, Hays Creek
Events + Gatherings	Importance of beach/waterfront access for cultural connection
	Consider future development of an arts/cultural centre space, and/or improvements to access to existing spaces such as the Museum and carving shed. Space needed for carving, dancing, feasting, genealogical work.
	Staff, City and community attendance and promotion of events/ interpersonal recognition and acknowledgement a component of reconciliation
	Consider cultural pavilions in community parks and/or posts that could be installed and implemented with removable planks for semi-permanent uses
	Promote territorial recognition during Seafest
Internal City Capacity Improvements	Suggested to develop in-house capacity through indigenous liaison role at City
	Survey indigenous employees re: experience of working with the City, seek opportunities for improvement
	Seek relationships with hereditary leadership and to improve understanding of community protocols

Specific Comments/Opportunities

Topic	Comment/Opportunity
Service Delivery	<p>Importance of opportunities for inclusive/culturally safe youth programming</p> <p>Seek opportunities to support/partner with local indigenous organizations</p> <p>Consider cemetery procedures, designated sections, if possible/ culturally appropriate protocols for stone movings and other indigenous funeral ceremonies</p> <p>Consideration for culturally appropriate language and care in service provision (staff training)</p> <p>Advocate for cultural awareness and sensitivity training with local RCMP, and encourage RCMP commitment to local restorative justice programs</p> <p>Promote addressing of systemic racism across diverse local service providers</p> <p>Development of annual award to indigenous cultural leaders as part of existing Civic Awards process. Seek input from hereditary leadership for nominees, and Committee could be responsible for adjudication.</p>
Social Supports	<p>Continue to identify the need for treatment facilities, culturally appropriate supports and care (sweat lodges; re-learning programs/ opportunities/places)</p> <p>Identify opportunities to partner with and support Trinity House - local rehabilitation program</p> <p>Promote consultation of elders and trauma-informed programming with local service/health providers</p> <p>Support and advocate for improved business planning capacity locally, specifically for indigenous businesses to access tourism sector</p> <p>Advocate for affordability of housing and poverty reduction supports— build internal/external understanding of poverty/homelessness as a symptom of colonialism</p> <p>Advocacy for improved midwifery services in Prince Rupert as an opportunity for more culturally appropriate maternal care</p>

Specific Comments/Opportunities

Topic	Comment/Opportunity
Education/Cultural Recognition Opportunities	<p>Learn protocol around existing/new totem poles and support the raising of new Ts'msyen poles in the community</p> <p>Seek out opportunities to implement interpretive information/learnings on City properties (parks/trails, etc) - including information on pre-contact societies, where appropriate. This can take advantage of technological advances like QR codes;</p> <p>Implement territorial acknowledgement, and seek to understand tribal associations in different areas of the community (will need to be carefully considered, led by knowledge-keepers)</p> <p>Naming—consider indigenous people, place names in renaming/naming of parks and other public spaces; this includes formal acknowledgement of the place name of Lax Kxeen (Prince Rupert)</p> <p>Take opportunities to celebrate and acknowledge seasonal rounds/traditional harvesting—including through support for food security programming, protection + promotion of food forests/native plantings in community parks</p> <p>Connect with Prince Rupert Library as well as Wap Sigatgyet re: existing resources and opportunities for partnership</p> <p>Develop protocol/process around the Miller Bay property given sensitive history</p> <p>Opportunity for cleansing/repatriation work related to archaeological sites disturbed by industrial growth (current container facility property)</p> <p>Consider lowering the flag at the family's request for the passing of significant hereditary leaders</p> <p>Learn from residential school survivors about how best to acknowledge harm done and how to move forward, advocate for supports</p> <p>Seek opportunities to resolve conflict through ceremony</p>

Specific Comments/Opportunities

Topic	Comment/Opportunity
Helpful Resources/ Community Assets	Wayi Wah! Indigenous Pedagogies—anti-racist education resource (book by Jo Chrona) Tsimshian Arts + Cultural Society (Joanne Finlay) UVIC indigenous legal department/Dr. Val Napoleon has transcriptions of adaawx (would require permission)

*****Please note**—this is by no means an exhaustive list of available community resources in relation to indigenous topics. These were just some helpful notes/resources suggested in our group settings.*

Establishment of the Committee

Specific recommendations for the Committee captured during the roundtables are noted below:

'Elders should be represented'

'Reflect people's values'

'Progression is key'

'Reflect principles of co-management/mutual respect'

'Go with people with energy, and invite new people when you need a refresh'

Proposed Terms of Reference:

(To be formally adopted by the Committee following establishment, and subject to City Council approval).

Committee Membership

The committee is proposed to be comprised of 7 people total, with two spaces designated for elders, and one youth position. Four of the 7 positions are proposed to be filled by representatives from local indigenous service agencies, if capacity is available, with those spaces being opened to the broader community if organizations are unable to provide members. City Council will be responsible for appointing to the committee, with the following criteria for selection:

- Ts'msyen representation
- Cultural/traditional knowledge
- Interest and connection to community

Each participant will be provided a \$50 stipend per meeting, which will occur monthly.

Purpose of the Committee

Key objectives for the Committee will be as follows—noting that these may be amended by the Committee once established.

- To identify barriers and opportunities to improve City services for indigenous residents and make relevant policy recommendations to City Council;
- To improve the City's understanding of local indigenous priorities and issues;
- To collaborate with the City on a project that celebrates indigenous culture and identity to be determined by the Committee;

Meetings

Meetings will be held monthly at City Hall on a day/time agreed upon by the majority of the Committee members

Quorum shall be a majority of the Committee's voting members. If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes following the time at which the meeting was to commence, the recording secretary shall record the names of the members present at the meeting, and the meeting shall stand adjourned.

Reporting

The Committee will report to Prince Rupert City Council, and the Board of the Prince Rupert Aboriginal Community Services Society. All Reports and recommendations will be forwarded to participating organizations, with specific requests or recommendations relevant to each being forwarded to the appropriate Board or Council meetings.

City staff are responsible for taking meeting minutes. Draft minutes will be approved by the Committee at the next meeting and forwarded to Councils and Boards for information.

Recommendations from the Committee to Councils or Boards must be adopted by a Committee resolution prior to presentation to Councils or Boards.

Review

Any changes to the Terms of Reference must be approved by a majority vote of the Committee, and will be subject to Council approval.

Next Steps

1. Receive direction from City Council re: establishment of Committee
2. If approved to proceed, advertise for committee membership and conduct outreach to potentially interested parties
3. Establish schedule for committee for the year
4. Work towards community event participation and project
5. Regularly report to Council and PRACSS Board on Committee Activities
6. Evaluate Committee effectiveness + impacts after the first year of operations
7. Seek out grant opportunities to fund potential committee projects/initiatives in partnership with community organizations