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## REPORT TO THE FIRST NATIONS RELATIONS STANDING COMMITTEE

MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2019

**SUBJECT** Government of Canada Budget 2019 - *Chapter 3: Advancing Reconciliation*

### **ISSUE**

This report is to provide the First Nations Relations Standing Committee with an overview of *Chapter 3: Advancing Reconciliation* in the Government of Canada's Budget 2019 and identify areas of alignment between the CRD Board priority of First Nations Reconciliation and the Government of Canada initiatives under advancing reconciliation.

### **BACKGROUND**

On March 19, 2019, the Government of Canada released *Budget 2019 - Investing in the Middle Class to Grow Canada's Economy*. At the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board meeting of April 10, 2019 the Chief Financial Officer provided Directors with a high-level overview of the Government of Canada's Budget 2019.

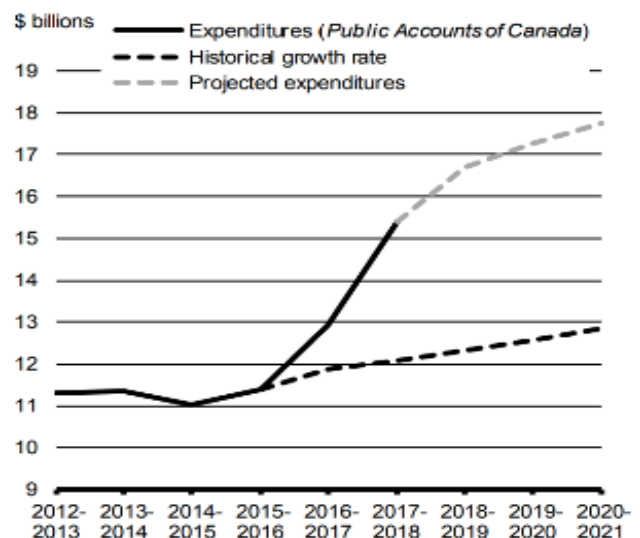
This report will complement the update provided to the Board and will focus in on *Chapter 3 – Advancing Reconciliation* of *Budget 2019* to provide greater insight to the First Nations Relations Standing Committee into the direction the Government of Canada is going regarding federal investment into issues directly related to ongoing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

The Government of Canada states that, “*Budget 2019* represents the next step in the ongoing path toward reconciliation and a better future for Indigenous Peoples – and all Canadians” (Budget 2019, 128). *Budget 2019* proposes to invest an additional \$4.5B over five years to continue to work on closing the gap between the living conditions of Indigenous Peoples and the non-Indigenous population.

Chart One shows the total funding into Indigenous initiatives, which has gone from just over \$11B in 2015/16 to a projected total of just over \$17B by 2021/22.

The general trend 2012/13 – 2020/21 is one of increased federal investment into Indigenous priorities and programs.

**Chart 1: Indigenous Investment**



## **ALTERNATIVES**

That the First Nations Standing Committee recommend to the Board:

Alternative 1:

This report be received for information.

Alternative 2:

This report be referred back to staff for more information.

## **DISCUSSION**

Resources identified in *Budget 2019* are allocated across eight federal departments and through 33 separate initiatives. Please see Appendix A: National Level Analysis for more detail regarding the range of initiatives underway and the proposed funding rollout. The majority of these funds are designed to directly support First Nations, Inuit and Métis. A review of available program criteria has identified limited opportunities for the CRD to directly access funds:

1. **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation** – Through Canadian Heritage's Celebration and Commemoration Program, Canadian municipal government or other municipal, provincial/territorial institutions can apply for funds to celebrate and appreciate Canada's cultural, ethnic, linguistic and geographic diversity.
2. **Supporting Indigenous Business Development** – Through the Community Opportunity Readiness Program, non-Aboriginal organizations and associations who plan to provide economic development services for the benefit of First Nation communities can access project-based funding for a range of activities to support communities' pursuit of economic opportunities.<sup>1</sup>

The CRD's Special Task Force on First Nations Relations Final Report identified limited resources as a challenge impacting the ability of First Nations to engage with referral requests, build capacity and engage elders, knowledge keepers or technical experts to support dialogue on regional projects or processes. Though there are few opportunities for the CRD to access federal funds directly from the *Budget 2019* related to reconciliation, many of the initiatives proposed present good opportunities to partner with, and support, First Nations in pursuing funds to action their projects and initiatives. CRD staff will continue to engage First Nations to identify opportunities for the CRD to support First Nations-led work as this continues to be an important role for the CRD. This includes CRD staff building an understanding of the range of funding programs eligible to First Nations and offering support and/or capacity to advance First Nations projects.

## **ALIGNMENT WITH CRD INITIATIVES**

The following areas of alignment have been identified between First Nations' priorities at a national-level, federal funding through *Budget 2019* and ongoing work across the region:

Federal Initiative/Area of Investment	CRD's Ongoing Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advancing Reconciliation by Settling Claims.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CRD Directors and staff participate in the Te'meux Treaty Advisory Association</li></ul>

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<sup>1</sup> Non-Aboriginal organizations or associations require approval from the National Aboriginal Economic Board, prior to Government of Canada approval.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forgiving and Reimbursing Loans for Comprehensive Claim Negotiations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (TTAC) and staff attend the Te'meux Treaty Association Meetings (TTA).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On Track to Eliminate Boil Water Advisories on Reserve</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CRD has a number of wastewater and water service arrangements and agreements in place with First Nations and is in the process of negotiating new ones and/or updating as necessary.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving Emergency Response On-Reserve</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CRD has a Fire Protection and Emergency Response Agreement with Pacheedaht First Nation.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting Indigenous Business Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CRD has committed to obtaining a feasibility study to help identify opportunities for CRD to support reconciliation through economic development.</li> </ul>

Going forward, staff will continue to monitor how increased federal funding supports the development of First Nations governments in our region and how this may impact CRD's strategic approach to advancing the Task Force recommendations. Staff do not want to duplicate work being done by other levels of government at the expense of initiatives that can only be done by CRD. The new funding and initiatives at the federal and provincial level, alongside the work being done by FCM and UBCM to advance local government reconciliation, may allow CRD staff, with direction from the First Nations Relations Standing Committee, to scale its approach to reconciliation by focusing efforts on key operational initiatives that have been flagged as priorities by the First Nations in our region.

### **CONCLUSION**

Across Canada, Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples are working alongside municipal and provincial governments as well as the Government of Canada to improve the quality of life for First Nations, Inuit and Metis Peoples. Progress is being made through advancing reconciliation efforts and building new relationships based on a recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnerships.

*Budget 2019* helps to map out the continued direction of the new federal approach while also working to establish a foundation for provincial and municipal work and as implementation moves forward. *Budget 2019* also outlines how the federal programs and resources can support and enhance ongoing and upcoming regional initiatives.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the First Nations Relations Standing Committee recommends to the Board:

This report be received for information.

Submitted by:	Don Elliott, MUP, Manager, First Nations Relations
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Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer