

# Statement of Reconciliation

## *Preamble*

The work of Reconciliation falls to all segments of Canadian society. The Capital Regional District (CRD) is committed to Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. It is understood that a commitment alone is not enough and that action is needed to show that the CRD is taking measurable steps towards a better relationship with Indigenous peoples.

This statement of commitment to Reconciliation can guide decision making for the organization for many years to come. It is understood that Reconciliation is a long term goal with no defined end point. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is the reference framework for the CRD's commitment to Reconciliation, which aims to address activities within the scope of the CRD's authority. This statement is a work in progress which acknowledges that mistakes will be made and provides for adjustments to accommodate emergent practices.

## *Statement*

The CRD's boundaries span the Traditional Territories of over 20 First Nations, whose ancestors have been taking care of the land since time immemorial. The CRD believes that a positive working relationship with First Nations is good for the whole region. For the CRD to have a positive relationship with First Nations we need to acknowledge, respect and complement their Indigenous laws, customs and systems of governance.

The CRD is part of a national movement towards Reconciliation with Canada's Indigenous peoples, informed by:

- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Sec. 35 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- The Douglas Treaties and the BC Modern Treaty process

The CRD's path to Reconciliation focuses on three recurring themes:

1. **Self-Determination**

The CRD acknowledges the fundamental right of self-determination to Indigenous peoples. In the spirit and intent of inclusivity, the CRD is committed to working with First Nations through the governance systems they choose. When First Nations wish to participate in our decision-making process then we will support them. The CRD will look to First Nations for leadership in understanding how to create new decision-making systems together on their Traditional Territories.

2. **Shared Prosperity**

The CRD recognizes the gap in wealth between First Nations and settler governments. The CRD will work towards a prosperous economic future for all of its residents and believes that improving the lives of the most vulnerable citizens creates a stronger and more resilient region for everyone. The CRD will seek partnerships, share information and deliver fair and equitable services in working with First Nations on achieving their economic goals.

3. **Relationship with the Land and Water**

The CRD recognizes the integral relationship First Nations have with the land; often the names for the people of the land and the land itself were one and the same. The CRD will work with First Nations on taking care of the land while providing space for cultural and ceremonial use, food and medicine harvesting, traditional management practices and reclaiming Indigenous place names.

