

CRD  
First Nation Economic  
Development Partnership Model  
Feasibility Study Report

May 2020

By The Indigenomics Institute

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## 1.0 Introduction

This Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model Feasibility Study Report sets the stage for building a strong understanding of the economic opportunities and interests of First Nations within the Capital Regional District's (CRD) spectrum of services. This work is intended to focus on existing services but also includes a recognition of longer-term opportunities that may require new services to be established or for legislative amendments at a provincial-level. It is important to note that innovative economic opportunities are constantly emerging, grounded in new and existing provincial legislation, some of which is not yet fully implemented or detailed. With this in mind, it is also important to consider this work as a living document. The model put forth should be revisited regularly to both measure impact and progress, as well as determine the need for revising the model as senior levels of government continue to evolve their approach to modern treaty and to reconciliation activities more broadly.

***'Economic reconciliation is a form of reconciliation in action. It encourages material prosperity within the context of a holistic approach that is consistent with the notion of 'Namwayut – We Are All One.' The work of reconciliation is multifaceted and ultimately influences every aspect of life.'***  
- Reconciliation Canada

The capital region spans the territories of approximately 20 First Nations, of which 11 have Reserve lands and 9 have settlement populations made up of over 5,000 members. For the purpose of this report, the focus has been on engaging those Nations with settlement populations contained within the capital region.

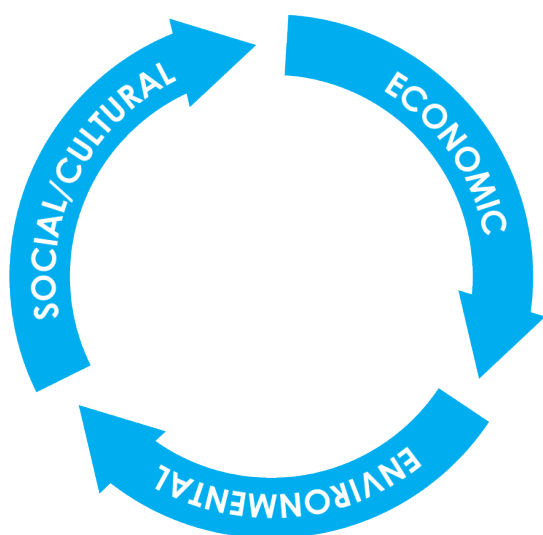
This report identifies specific opportunities for the CRD to establish enhanced partnership opportunities with First Nations that will support these Nations in moving towards their desired economic development outcomes. The CRD must first examine its own services and core activities and establish a clear pathway toward economic reconciliation in areas that are of particular interest to First Nations.

The Indigenomics Institute defines economic reconciliation as the space between the lived realities of Indigenous Peoples, the need to build understanding of the importance of the Indigenous relationship, and the requirement for progressive actions for economic inclusion. In an environment of economic reconciliation, this Partnership Model must consider the lived realities of Indigenous Peoples while building an understanding and process to facilitate a positive relationship between First Nations' economic interests and clear actions for economic inclusion.

This report sets the foundation for developing an initial understanding of a CRD Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model that supports the engagement, planning, participation, and evaluation of results that can be used to establish the necessary structure for First Nations economic inclusion going forward. This project aims

to detail goals and objectives and maps the necessary preconditions for organizational change and the implementation of positive actions to establish a framework for the process and structure for Indigenous economic inclusion. This report identifies some immediate opportunities and highlights significant considerations for a coordinated CRD approach to more actively support First Nations economic inclusion.

The CRD is committed to a 'community focused approach' which means building First Nation economic development processes within the organization and setting the foundation for facilitating opportunities in partnership with the communities. Understanding the community's social and environmental context is important to consider in terms of the economic development process. By engaging with the Nations directly, this project highlights the interconnections between the social, economic, and environmental aspects of this emerging economic development model. It is important to draw particular attention to these areas of high-potential that can support the development of a reconciliation-focused economic model for First Nations.



**Figure 1 - Interconnections within a CRD First Nation Economic Model**

Critical to exploring an Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model is the recognition of the interplay between economic opportunities, environmental considerations and social/cultural interests. This interplay is foundational and will help to create the space for exploring ideas and opportunities while also working to empower First Nations in all aspects of advancing their economic interest. These three facets underpinning the model are not static in nature and First Nations will likely need the space to explore the connections between these themes in order to better detail what type of partnerships and resources would support moving an opportunity forward with the CRD.

There are considerable economic opportunities for First Nations and it is timely for the CRD to examine its own spectrum of services and activities and establish the structure and process to support economic reconciliation. In establishing a foundational model, it can help the CRD to have a better understanding of the key economic interests of First Nations and how it can support working towards eliminating barriers and build on existing strengths to better support and work alongside First Nations.

## 2.0 Project Core Objectives

This project aims to support relationship building between the Nations and CRD in its delivery of programs and services with an economic focus. Further, it looks to support the development of strategic objectives that provides the CRD with a clear direction on First Nations economic reconciliation. The projects core objectives include:

- 1) Establish processes for organizational alignment with strategic inclusive planning;
- 2) Develop understanding for the need for education content relevant to reconciliation, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP), local protocols with Nations, the Douglas Treaties, and the Nations governance systems;
- 3) Establish Indigenous economic planning processes within the CRD;
- 4) Establish clear mechanisms and processes for First Nation's economic inclusion within CRD; and,
- 5) Focus on metrics to identify key outcomes for First Nation economic growth activities within the CRD's existing slate of services and deliverable areas.

## 3.0 Understanding the CRD and the UNDRIP Context

The broader national and provincial context informing reconciliation and the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the Crown shapes the role of local government. Significant recent developments include new provincial negotiation practices that are shifting mindsets for reconciliation, new agreement models called "Comprehensive Reconciliation Agreements", the Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy for treaty negotiations in British Columbia, and the passage of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA)*.

At the center of this shifting context is the **Truth and Reconciliation Report** on the Calls to Action. Specifically, #92 on Business and Reconciliation which states,

*"We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous Peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:*

- *Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.*

- *Ensure that Aboriginal Peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.*
- *Provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal Peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism."*

This shift in approach is occurring at a much more rapid pace through UNDRIP becoming embedded within BC law. With these ongoing developments also comes a shift in narratives. Organizations are now asking questions like, 'What does change look like?', 'How do we do things differently?', and 'What is our role and responsibility in reconciliation?' As the CRD undertakes framing economic development through its relationship with First Nations and its existing services, it will also see a clear shift in narrative. The CRD will move away from a common narrative of 'This is how we have always done things' or 'That's not our responsibility' towards a stronger understanding of operating in a new environment of First Nations economic reconciliation.

### **3.1 The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a Framework for Economic Reconciliation.**

We are in a moment of significant transformation in the work of reconciliation in Canada. A further examination provides important insight into key factors and approaches the CRD and local First Nations may wish to pursue through economic reconciliation.

Since 2015 with the release of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, governments of all levels have been called to adopt and implement the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** as the "framework for reconciliation". Call to Action 43 states:

*We call upon Federal, Provincial, Territorial, and Municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.*

Placing the focus on the UN Declaration as a framework for reconciliation – and calling on governments, including local governments to adopt it – is a reflection of growing public awareness of Canada's long history of colonialism, its enduring impacts, and the slow pace of progress in addressing urgent social, cultural, and economic issues that relate to reconciliation. Through the process of reconciliation, it is increasingly being

recognized that all Canadians have a role to play in building a renewed future between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples, and that much of the vital work that must occur is between individuals, families, neighbours, within our communities, and in how we live amongst each other in new ways.

The UN Declaration does not create or identify new rights. Rather, it was a co-operative effort by States and Indigenous Peoples to articulate long-standing and globally accepted human rights norms, including those in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, in the particular context of Indigenous Peoples. These are international human rights norms that Canadians have been in the forefront of advancing, and which are at the foundation of Canada's legacy of protecting human rights including our Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

There are two aspects of the UN Declaration that are particularly relevant to the CRD's initiative to advance economic reconciliation with local First Nations:

- The economic rights of Indigenous Peoples are emphasized throughout the UN Declaration. Examples include: the right of Indigenous Peoples to pursue economic development (Article 3), to determine and develop economic priorities (Article 23), to maintain and strengthen their own economic institutions (Article 5), and to improve their economic and social conditions (Article 21). In addition, numerous articles of the UN Declaration affirm the right of Indigenous Peoples to the "lands, territories, and resources", including to redress where these may have been used or taken without their consent, and to determine and develop priorities for their development (Article 28; Article 32)
- The right of self-determination (Article 3) and the inherent right of self-government (Article 4; Article 5) are cornerstones of the UN Declaration, and are expressed in many articles that uphold the jurisdiction of Indigenous Peoples, and the requirement of free, prior, and informed consent (Article 19; Article 28; Article 32)

What these elements of the UN Declaration emphasize is a vision of reconciliation within which First Nations are increasingly self-governing, with clear structures and mechanisms in place for meaningful decision-making, and not merely as a relationship of stakeholders, consultation, or engagement.

### **3.2 Actions Taken by Federal, Provincial, and Local Governments**

Since the Calls to Action were established, a number of steps have been taken by governments at all levels. The overarching and on-going trend is towards ever more concrete and meaningful steps to adopt and implement the UN Declaration.

The Federal Government formally endorsed the UN Declaration in 2016. Subsequently it adopted the **Principles respecting the Government of Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples** to help guide the government as it re-shapes its laws, policies, and practices to align with the UN Declaration and the recognition and implementation of Indigenous rights. One expression of this shift is a change in litigation practices, and an explicit effort to accelerate building more co-operative relations and less adversarial and conflict-oriented ones. This was codified in the **Attorney General of Canada's Directive on Civil Litigation Involving Indigenous Peoples**. The Federal Government has also promised legislation related to the implementation of the UN Declaration, and more broadly re-shaping relations with Indigenous Peoples.

Even more directly relevant for the CRD is the steps that have been taken by the Provincial Government. In addition to taking similar steps as the Federal Government, such as adopting the Draft Principles that guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples, the Provincial Government recently adopted the **Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA)** the first legislation to enshrine the UN Declaration in law. Almost a year has passed since that Act and the Province has completed its first [Annual Report](#) and [Concrete Actions Document](#). There are a number of aspects of DRIPA which are of particular relevance to CRD and how it further builds relations with local First Nations, including through economic reconciliation initiatives:

1. Section 3 of DRIPA requires the Provincial Government, in consultation and co-operation with Indigenous Peoples, to align its laws – both new and existing – with the UN Declaration. This means that in the upcoming years there will be reviews conducted of legislation under which the CRD operates, including the *Local Government Act*, as well as other statutes through which economic relations and opportunities are impacted.
2. Section 4 of DRIPA requires the Provincial Government, in consultation and co-operation with Indigenous Peoples, to develop an action plan to meet the objectives of the UN Declaration. This means that a comprehensive plan must be developed and implemented to end discrimination, ensure the human rights of Indigenous Peoples are upheld, the impacts of colonialism addressed, and more just, equal, and harmonious relations advanced. It can be expected the action plan will ultimately require new policies, practices, investments, public education and other initiatives. The Provincial Government has made clear that local governments and stakeholders will have roles to play in shaping the action plan, and it should be expected that the action plan will require certain action by local government.



3. Sections 6 and 7 of DRIPA create the space and expectation that agreements will be entered into between the Province and “Indigenous governing bodies” that implement consent based decision-making. While the decision to enter into such agreements is discretionary, it is important to note that the range of topics that could be the subject of such agreements is not limited, and certainly there is an expectation that they could include economic, planning, land use, and stewardship matters. Relatedly, it should be noted that some steps have already been taken by the Provincial Government to broadly re-shape its approach to negotiations, and to make agreements more open, flexible, living, and expansive.

There are also other Provincial Government developments that align with the directions that DRIPA further advances:

- The **Shishalh Foundation Agreement** is typically held up as a model for new agreements and has a number of implications for local government planning and relations.
- A new **Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy for Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia** was adopted in September that is intended to accelerate treaty negotiations and align them with the UN Declaration. It should be expected by the CRD that local First Nations will pursue, and in some instances complete, agreements in the near to medium-term that reflect these new models and policy directions.
- DRIPA states that agreements may be with “Indigenous governing bodies”, a definition that is broader than *Indian Act* Bands, and societies (such as those formed as Tribal Councils). This could mean, over time, change and clarification in the Indigenous governments that the CRD must work with.

Furthermore, it should also be expected that local First Nations will increasingly view DRIPA and the UN Declaration, as the legally required lens through which relations with all governments, including the CRD, must be structured.

Alongside these efforts by the Federal and Provincial Governments, local governments have also been making strides in their reconciliation efforts. Historically, agreements around services have been the primary vehicle for economic relationships, however in recent years there has been an increasing diversification and expansion of models of relations. Across British Columbia one can find examples of these new types of relationships including: land transfers and joint land development; the sharing of revenue streams; employment and training; joint economic development structures and initiatives; shared planning processes for regional growth; cooperation on specific

resources; and broad protocols and commitments to principled approaches to reconciliation including through the UN Declaration. In addition, there are numerous examples of tripartite arrangements between the Provincial Government, local government, and First Nations that address particular land, economic development, cultural heritage, or other matters.

### **3.3 Setting the Stage for Economic Reconciliation**

As the CRD sets out to revitalize its economic reconciliation efforts with local First Nations, it will be critical to maintain a clear view and understanding of the transitions which have been occurring, and the directions of change the future will continue to advance. It should be expected that the next five to ten years will witness a number of significant developments that may influence CRD activities including:

- 1) The adoption of more legislation federally and provincially related to Indigenous rights, including the UN Declaration;
- 2) The acceleration of negotiations between the Provincial Government and First Nations, including new agreement models;
- 3) The implementation of consent-based decision making models including, for example, through joint boards that have decision-making authority;
- 4) A decreasing reliance on the Courts to resolve matters, and a greater expectation that co-operative, alternative forms of dispute resolution will be more readily used to address matters;
- 5) Greater expectations, and actual levels of economic sharing between all levels of government and First Nations;
- 6) Significant increases in investments by Federal and Provincial Governments in supporting the rebuilding of Indigenous governments and Nations;
- 7) Formal pathways for First Nations to move out of the *Indian Act* and be governed by structured they have determined, including with clarified jurisdictions and applications of their own laws;
- 8) An increased ethic of "co-development" between First Nations and governments, where matters (including laws and policies) that may impact First Nations are addressed collectively from the earliest stages; and

- 9) A focus on structured regular, formal, mechanisms of interaction between Indigenous governments and Federal, Provincial, and local governments, and a reduced focus on how First Nations may be within or a part of already established government structures or processes.

## **4.0 Underpinning Principles of the CRD Economic Development Partnership Model**

Understanding the characteristics of First Nations economic reconciliation within the context of the CRD requires the ability to draw on leadership, develop consistency and pursue planning objectives. The underpinning principles of the CRD's Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model will help guide its development and implementation moving forward:

### **1. Appropriate Role for the CRD**

- The CRD can work within its service structure to both take a leadership position and work to support First Nations in advancing their own economic interests in pursuit of economic reconciliation, but does not have all levers, responsibility and resources.
- A collaborative partnership approach will be critical to the CRD in working with First Nations, including their economic development corporations, municipalities, electoral areas and other organizations and entities that are active in economic development and intersect with First Nations economic interests.

### **2. Flexible Approach to Supporting First Nations Economic Development Opportunities.**

- CRD focus should reflect the unique opportunities within the context of the specific conditions of each First Nation. This will prevent a one size fits all approach and will better position the CRD as a partner working in support of First Nations' economic activities.
- The CRD must employ a 'whole-of-CRD' approach to acknowledge and support the diverse interests of First Nations. This will consider both regional and sub-regional services and will be critical in achieving the greatest benefit for First Nations and the CRD.

### **3. Focus On Action**

- Strengthened and more inclusive governance structures across First Nations and CRD political leadership that is rooted in the recognition and

implementation of Indigenous rights, incorporates UNDRIP/DRIPA within an economic framework and incorporates the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action will support enhanced collaboration, coordination and accountability.

- o Ongoing engagement at a staff level with First Nations, Provincial/Federal partners as appropriate and other potential partner organizations will help to ensure CRD actions and activities are in-step with a dynamic and changing environment.

## **5.0 Defining the Problem- Issues and Challenges in First Nation Economic Development**

In a National context, the emerging **100 billion dollar National annual Indigenous economy agenda** is framing the potential of Indigenous economic growth and this growth is a key outcome of reconciliation.

It is in this context of the emerging potential of Indigenous economic growth, that the need to examine the current barriers and challenges in advancing the identified recommendations becomes important. Identifying the internal strengths and weaknesses to mobilize CRD economic resources, creating appropriate policies, understanding the business development needs and decision-making systems are all important outcomes in establishing feasibility for a CRD First Nations Economic Development Partnership Model.

Of particular note, the following identifies some of the current overarching challenges Nations experience both within their own economic development process and within the relationship to the CRD:

- a) The absence of First Nation inclusion in plans and strategies within the CRD and the municipalities, and no direct connection or structure between regional planning processes for economic growth and First Nations.
- b) The absence of the requirement for consent for the CRD's delivery of activities affecting the land/resource base.
- c) Costs of water services are a barrier to First Nations. For reasons outside of control of First Nations, many are only able to access water at a retail rate and not the more affordable wholesale rate. This limits the Nations from being able to turn water provision to an economic activity with the possibility of generating own-source revenue through charging 'lift' to on-reserve residential, commercial, and/or industrial activities.
- d) There is a need for increased advocacy from CRD in engaging in tri-lateral level discussions with First Nations, the Province and the Federal Government on joint

issues of which the CRD also has a part. The CRD can play an advocacy role in some areas in collaboration with the First Nation communities.

- e) Modern treaties have a strong economic component that can and will affect the CRD. Opportunities for enhanced communication to the CRD on upcoming modern treaty negotiation developments that may have impact on lands, parks and other structures is important to consider.
- f) The communication and engagement process to First Nations in regard to the CRD's land acquisition activities and process has not met their expectations.
- g) Lack of First Nation specific focused land or resource policies within the CRD.
- h) Lack of transportation systems to/from some of the community's reserves is a significant barrier to economic development and employment.
- i) Need to establish a process to connect CRD's economic opportunities with First Nation skilled employees as well as ensuring education and training programs to support skills development that can match CRD opportunities.
- j) Need to develop understanding of the existing CRD infrastructure such as docks, moorage, parks etc. and how this has impacted First Nations ways of being, access, and treaty rights.

## **6.0 CRD First Nation Economic Opportunity Scan**

This report identifies overarching economic themes within services that reflect the current situation, strengths, and weaknesses of both First Nations and the CRD, and serves to help identify specific areas, activities or services where the CRD can focus on supporting the economic interests of First Nations.

It is important to note that in order for the economic development potential of the CRD's various services to be fully explored, the enabling corporate infrastructure including the development or amendment of various policies, strategies, training programs and governance initiatives would also need to be examined. It was not within the scope of this report to undertake these pieces of work, but rather to highlight the connection between areas of economic development potential for First Nations and CRD specific tools and processes. The recommendations detailed further in the report include the specific CRD-wide components that will help to create additional economic development potential through CRD services and activities.

The specific CRD services identified reflect expressed interests by First Nations and will help CRD staff to focus efforts where they align with First Nations' capacity and where there is opportunity for follow-up and action. In the existing services and programs that the CRD delivers, this project identifies focus areas that establish a structure or process for First Nation economic inclusion.

It is important to consider that this report provides a high-level overview of the potential intersections between CRD activities and services and First Nations' economic interests. As First Nations continue to develop their own specialties and economic areas of focus, the CRD will need flexibility to explore various opportunities alongside First Nations.

An important component to consider is the relationship between broader corporate activities such as legal services, human resources, communications, etc. and how those services play a critical role in supporting the identification of an economic opportunity for First Nations in a specific service. In other words, in some instances the tools needed to create opportunities within a specific division are better utilized at a corporate-level, which can then help to support additional actions or activities within a particular division. The following figure details the relationship between the corporate infrastructure and support required to enable maximizing the opportunities for First Nations at the service level.

Within the service areas identified in Figure 2, the Nations have expressed interest in opportunities that establish training and education programs and employment readiness. Core CRD service areas such as site maintenance, resource/system management, site expansions and preparation, clearing in restoration areas, connecting research with Indigenous knowledge, cultural monitoring, recreation activities, security, driving, horticultural areas, sewer, watershed stewardship roles, cultural tours, fire prevention/management and cultural activities all offer areas for relationship and process development.

## CRD SERVICES AND PROGRAMS WITH FIRST NATIONS ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

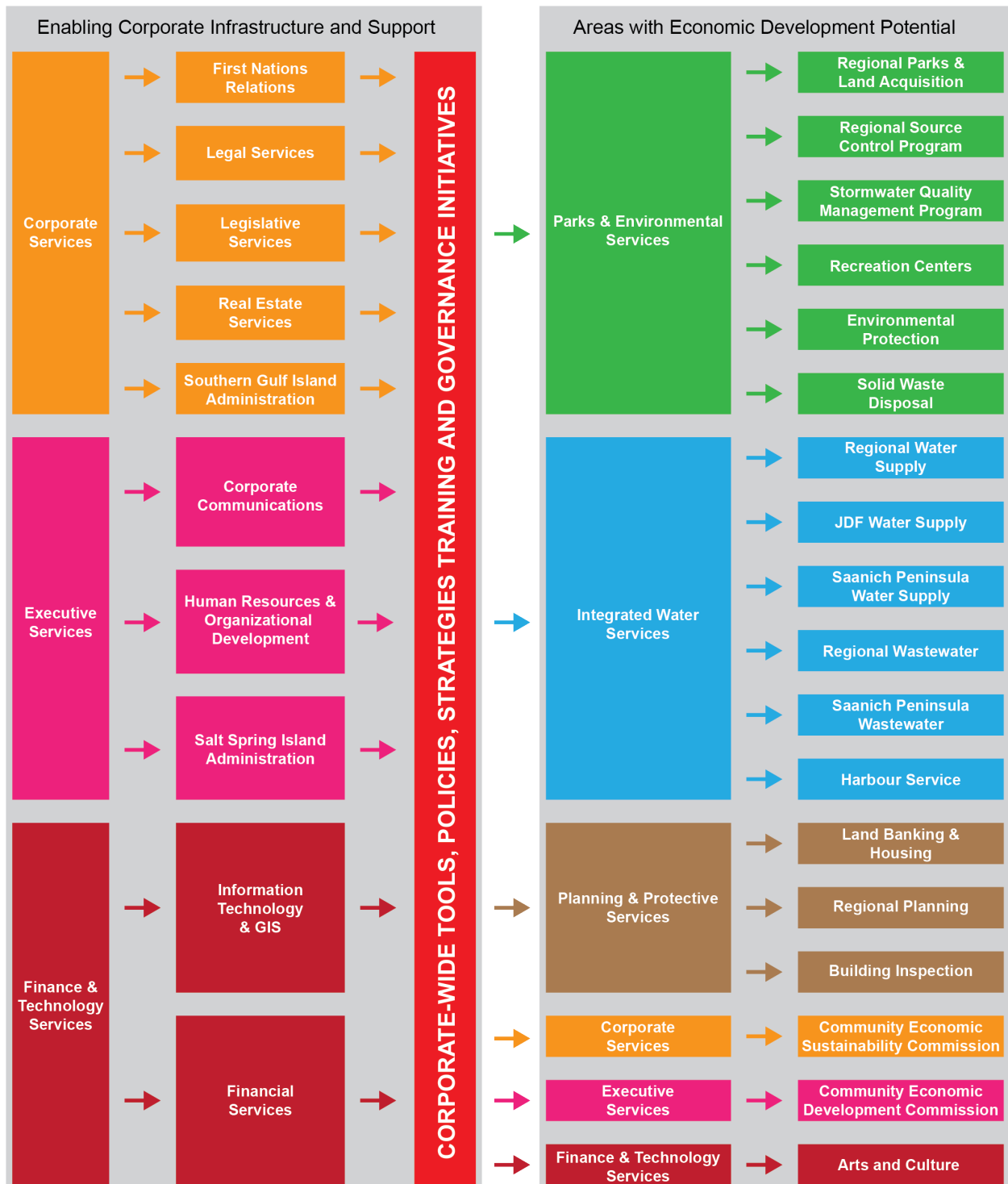


Figure 2 – Strategic Opportunities within current CRD Services

## 6.1 Enabling Corporate Infrastructure and Support

Three CRD departments have been identified as critical to building various tools, policies, strategies, training programs and governance initiatives that will provide a more robust foundation from which CRD staff will better be able to engage First Nations to examine economic development potential within specific service or activity areas.

### Corporate Services

Corporate Services plays a critical role in providing professional advice and expertise related to a variety of services and functions of the CRD. In total, there are five divisions within Corporate Services that will have an important role in supporting the development and implementation of a First Nations Economic Development Partnership Model.

First Nations Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advance CRD Board Priorities</li><li>• Support other CRD departments in advancing economic reconciliation or related works</li><li>• Directly engage and support other departments in engaging First Nations</li><li>• Build capacity within CRD of working effectively with First Nations</li></ul>
Legal Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and support development of contracts and service agreements</li><li>• Support amendments to or development of policies, procedures, and bylaws related to engaging First Nations on economic opportunities</li><li>• Enhance or update CRD Procurement Policy as needed to better support awarding of CRD works to First Nations</li></ul>
Legislative Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support efforts towards more inclusive governance</li><li>• Support amendments to bylaws or committee and commission terms of reference as needed</li></ul>
Real Estate Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support and/or manage the appraisal, acquisition, and disposal of property interests</li><li>• Develop and manage leases with First Nations where applicable</li></ul>



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|---|--|
| Southern Gulf Island (SGI) Administration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate and coordinate actions and activities on SGI where these activities interest with First Nations' interests</li> <li>• Support the exploration and identification of collaborations and partnerships with First Nations as they may relate to the ongoing work of the SGI Economic Sustainability Commission</li> </ul> |
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## **Executive Services**

In addition to those divisions within Corporate Services, Executive Services will also play an important role in supporting the CRD to implement a First Nations Economic Development Partnership Model through providing professional advice to other departments and division across the organization.

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|--|--|
| Corporate Communications                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the CRD in working to share information and opportunities through various channels that aligns with First Nations' interests</li> </ul>   |
| Human Resources and Organizational Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide leadership, consultation, guidance, and professional support to corporate efforts to better recruit and retain Indigenous Peoples</li> </ul>  |
| Salt Spring Island Administration              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate and coordinate actions and activities taking place on Salt Spring Island where these activities interest with First Nations' interests</li> <li>• Support the exploration and identification of collaborations and partnerships with First Nations as they may relate to the ongoing work of the Salt Spring Island Community Economic Development Commission</li> </ul> |

## **Finance and Technology Services**

Finance and Technology Services also plays an important role in working to develop enhanced infrastructure that will enable other departments to effectively identify and engage First Nations in various economic development initiatives.

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|--------------------|--|
| IT & GIS           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage and support efforts to develop Information Technology tools and strategies in line with economic reconciliation activities and projects</li> </ul> |
| Financial Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in support of identifying more effective procurement and contracting approaches with First Nations</li> </ul>  |

## 6.2 Areas with Economic Development Potential

The following areas were identified as core elements within the economic reconciliation model that the CRD can jointly develop with First Nations. Each of these planning areas has an interconnection between the social, economic, and environmental aspects within the development of the CRD First Nation economic model.

### Parks and Environmental Services

Interests in Parks and Environmental Services was expressed by almost every First Nation engaged through this project. One of the challenging aspects of identifying the intersections between First Nations economic interests and CRD programs and services is the fact that First Nations interests are rooted in the significant social, cultural, and economic ties to the land that stretches back to time immemorial. Often an interest articulated by a First Nation stretches across multiple services or extends beyond any particular jurisdiction. With this in mind, this project has identified the following areas of opportunity that are within the purview of regional government:

Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parks and natural assets management</li><li>• Land acquisition process engagement</li></ul>
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employment opportunities within Regional Parks</li><li>• Affirmative action for hiring and contracting opportunities</li><li>• Cultural Monitors engaged on CRD works</li><li>• Employment opportunities at Hartland</li><li>• Guardian Stewardship Initiative</li></ul>
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhanced/additional recognition of territories</li><li>• Connect CRD and parks users to First Nations' presence and cultural importance of areas</li><li>• Share land acquisition process and/or areas of interest with First Nations</li></ul>
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invasive species management and monitoring activities</li><li>• Better processes for notification of First Nations' hunting activities on CRD lands</li></ul>
Resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with First Nations on the creation of an Ecosystem Service Fee</li><li>• Explore benefits to Nations from operations at Hartland</li></ul>

## Integrated Water Services

First Nations have indicated that water and wastewater service provision could provide a considerable economic development opportunity, provided they are able to access these services at a wholesale rate. It is important to note that there are ongoing conversations with a number of Nations relating to water and wastewater servicing and the potential for working with the Nations to leverage these services into Nation-led economic opportunities. It is the intention of this Economic Development Partnership Model to build on this established work, develop a replicable corporate approach to negotiating with each Nation and provide a timeline to develop a more thorough review of the CRD's services with the intention of supporting greater equity in the Nations' ability to access services and the resulting economic opportunities.

Two other elements have been identified by the Nations that touch on aspects of Integrated Water Services. First, additional employment or contracting opportunities relating to watershed operations including cultural monitoring works or the procurement of services is an area where there may be considerable potential to support First Nations' economic interests. Though not raised by First Nations through this specific project, CRD staff have signaled that First Nations have previously expressed an interest in interisland transportation activities. It is understood that there is no current CRD service that could support this work, and there would likely need to be significant upfront investment to explore this type of economic opportunity. However, there may be potential partnerships that could be explored or considered where First Nations could lead a business planning process, and this may be an area of further opportunity for the CRD.

Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employment opportunities within watersheds</li><li>• Affirmative action for hiring and contracting opportunities</li><li>• Cultural Monitors engaged on CRD works</li><li>• Guardian Stewardship Initiative</li></ul>
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhanced/additional recognition of territories</li></ul>
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additional inclusion on infrastructure planning, construction activities and docks maintenance</li><li>• Interisland transportation<sup>1</sup></li><li>• Training on wastewater treatment plant and water infrastructure operations</li></ul>
Resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water and wastewater connectivity and rates</li></ul>

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<sup>1</sup> Please note this was not raised by the Nations through this work. However, CRD staff wish to acknowledge that First Nations have identified this as a possible opportunity in previous discussions.

## **Planning and Protective Services**

- First Nation focused Fire Service Agreements with municipalities- align CRD activities with these agreements
- Lands and land use/management within the CRD

## **Finance and Technology Services**

- Tourism – there is a strong interest in Indigenous culture and arts
- CRD/First Nation annual economic development planning and prioritization

## **CRD-Wide**

- CRD procurement policy- increase access to contracting opportunities for First Nations
- CRD First Nation focused hiring policies to increase employment opportunities for First Nations
- Develop a CRD lands profile of traditional territories- maps of CRD lands in First Nation territories, parks, assets and designations
- Roads issues with Nations access for hunting/fishing
- Acknowledging and bringing visibility to the former villages sites within CRD
- Cultural monitoring and archeological activities- joint collaboration protocols
- CRD and First Nations shared decision- making frameworks in relation to CRD lands.

## **Other – Non CRD**

- Foreshore jurisdiction issues
- First Nation's participation in spill response systems
- Transportation linking First Nations to urban centers and across Southern Gulf Islands and Salt Spring Island

# **7.0 Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model**

The following model has been developed looking specifically at the relationship between:

- Social/cultural, environmental and economic characteristics of each First Nation;
- Identified principles underpinning model development; and,
- Consideration of strategic opportunities with CRD programs and services.

The heart of the model includes the CRD, First Nations and other partners working collaboratively. This acknowledges that at the core of advancing First Nation economic

opportunities, the interests of multiple parties should be considered equitably and in ways that support a clear understanding of each potential partner's inputs towards a specific opportunity. Inputs from all potential partners may include the following as a baseline:

1. **Financial Contributions** that could include loans and/or grants for capital or operational expenditures;
2. **Capacity Development** within the workforce for both First Nations and CRD staff;
3. **Information Technology** infrastructure development;
4. **Service or Opportunity Demand** that aligns or reflects First Nations capacity and interest; and,
5. **Advocacy and Lobbying** in support of First Nations - led projects.

Having multiple participants at the core of the Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model allows for clear expectations around anticipated inputs and outcomes within the context of each economic development opportunity and each First Nation's social/cultural, environmental and economic context.

It is important to reflect on the identified inputs from potential partners within the context of the underpinning principles detailed earlier in this report. Fundamentally, this model expresses a need for partnerships to be at the core of identifying initiatives in support of economic reconciliation. It is within that context that the CRD can then determine its appropriate role in supporting inputs. Capacity development is a critical area where the CRD can, and should, look to meaningfully support economic reconciliation. Generally speaking, capacity development contains two key components. First, the CRD can establish an approach to systematically working to reduce unintended barriers to First Nations recruitment and retention through examining its own processes through the lenses of equity, diversity, and inclusion. It is understood there is an ongoing process to begin this important work, but the specific context surrounding Indigenous employment and capacity should be explored.

Service and/or opportunity demand is another area where the CRD can play an important role as a partner in advancing economic reconciliation. The CRD provides critical regional, sub-regional and local services to more than 418,000 residents across the capital region. This presents an opportunity for the CRD to examine its existing approaches and identify where it can engage First Nations through its procurement process, or by working to understand where it could indicate a commitment of a certain volume of service demand in those areas that align it First Nations' interests and/or capacity.

The final area where the CRD can provide critical input into a potential economic reconciliation partnership is related to advocacy and lobbying. The CRD has an

advocacy strategy designed to support the organization in clearly committing its priorities, and using its collective voice to leverage change where and when needed to support the advancement of the approved 2019-2022 Board Priorities. As First Nations Reconciliation has been identified as a Board Priority, there is considerable space to engage external stakeholders through any combination of primary, secondary, or operational level advocacy that supports First Nations in working with the CRD and others to advance their economic interests.

The next section of the model includes the following key components that are outlined so as to support greater focus in taking a CRD-wide and an action-oriented approach:

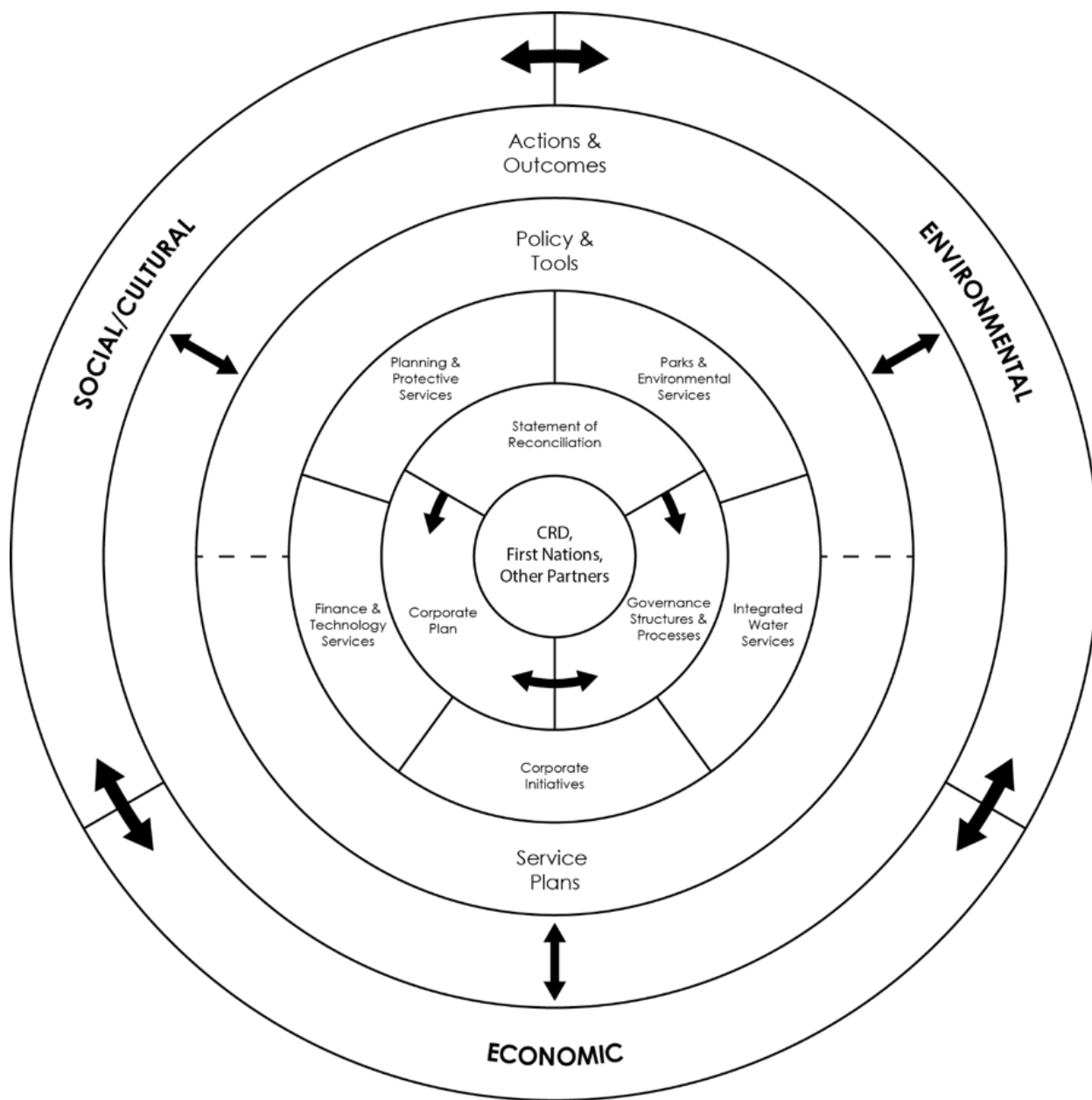
1. The CRD's Statement of Reconciliation simultaneously informs and guides activities related to inclusive governance and project processes, as well as the development and interpretation of specific initiatives detailed within the CRD's Corporate Plan;
2. Governance structures and project processes provide opportunities for more inclusive discussions regarding areas of opportunity, and further refinement of partner inputs and expectations; and,
3. The CRD's Corporate Plan identifies services and strategies to support the organization's four year vision. The document serves as a road map to enable staff to align work with the corporate vision of achieving exemplary environmental stewardship, a dynamic and vibrant economy, and an inclusive, caring society.

The core elements of the Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model, based on input from First Nations and the intersection of these interests and CRD services, include:

- Parks and Environmental Services;
- Planning and Protective Services;
- Finance and Technology Services;
- Integrated Water Services; and,
- Corporate-wide initiatives that, in addition to supporting the services identified above, advance specific projects and activities.

Having the appropriate policies in place, along with an implementation strategy that identifies the necessary tools, is essential to supporting the CRD in working to realize opportunities for partnership in support of Indigenous economic development. These must work in conjunction with the divisional Service Plans and the related Initiative Business Cases that will map out annual allocation of resources on projects/activities, and the relationship to the CRD's Corporate Plan.

Actions and outcomes are established based on the contents of the Service Plans and the available policy and tools, and are informed on the consideration of the three underpinning principles: appropriate role of the CRD, flexibility in approach, and action-orientation. This component of the model reinforces the importance of this work taking place in a way that acknowledges the interconnectedness of the social/cultural, environmental, and economic characteristics of each First Nation and the interplay of those characteristics with various CRD services, activities, and initiatives.



**Figure 3 – Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model**

In a practical sense, the development of this model has supported the identification of both priorities for action within the corporate CRD context, as well as a range of short, medium, and long-term actions intended to support enhanced advancement in working to support the economic interests of First Nations.

The model itself, places CRD, First Nations, and other potential partners at the core, and then maps out how specific areas of opportunity can be explored, and actions identified that consider the uniqueness of each Nation and of each opportunity.

It is important to note that this model sets out a series of actions that seek to establish additional CRD capacity to support First Nations' economic interests, while simultaneously creating the flexibility to explore emerging opportunities as they come forward. Building CRD capacity while also allowing for exploration and adaptation moving forward, will be critical in the effective implementation of this model in the years to come.

## 8.0 Planning Priorities within The CRD's Management/ Operation/Governance Structure and Approach

The following actions and their corresponding timeline targets begin to set the CRD on a path towards meaningful economic reconciliation with First Nations. One of the important pieces to consider as the CRD looks to begin implementing the Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model is that this work will require a multi-pronged and corporate-wide approach. In other words, many of the identified actions are interconnected, and successful implementation will require the identified suite of actions forward in an incremental way.

<b>Goal 1: Increased opportunities for First Nations employment across CRD</b>				
	<b>Objective 1a:</b>	<b>Increase opportunities for Indigenous employment</b>		
		Action 1a(1):	Partner on supporting mentorship/shadow short-term employment opportunities	2020
		Action 1a(2):	Engage in Indigenous Internship Program	2021
		Action 1a(3):	Develop a CRD Indigenous Employment Strategy that is complementary to the Diversity and Inclusion Framework to specifically increase the participation of Indigenous Peoples	2022
		Action 1a(4):	Adopt Indigenous Employment Target(s) based on Indigenous Employment Strategy	2022
	<b>Objective 1b:</b>	<b>Support a more inclusive employment environment</b>		
		Action 1b(1):	Develop and implement a Cultural Confidence Program for all CRD Staff	2021
		Action 1b(2):	Explore opportunities for tailored training for those CRD staff in management roles	2022



<b>Goal 2:</b>	<b>Support First Nations in having a better awareness of CRD opportunities and activities</b>			
	<b>Objective 2a</b>	<b>Streamline communications to First Nations</b>		
		Action 2a(1):	Develop First Nations Communications Plan	2020
		Action 2a(2):	Prepare enhanced communication materials tailored to First Nations interests	2021
		Action 2a(3):	Build First Nations Economic Opportunity portal to highlight CRD procurements	2021
	<b>Objective 2b</b>	<b>Establish more robust communication channels with First Nations</b>		
		Action 1b(1):	Engage First Nations to identify interest in developing a Community Engagement Hub	2023
<b>Goal 3:</b>	<b>Work towards greater inclusivity of First Nations in CRD governance and decision-making</b>			
	<b>Objective 3a:</b>	<b>Increase engagement of First Nations in CRD decision-making</b>		
		Action 3a(1):	Allow for First Nations representation at the CRD Board, CRD Board Committees and Commissions	2020
		Action 3a(2):	Identify opportunities to support First Nation's staff capacity to receive referrals and support leadership in participating at CRD tables	2021
	<b>Objective 3b:</b>	<b>Work more collaboratively with First Nations</b>		
		Action 3b(1):	Establish a joint annual Economic Development planning process	2022
<b>Goal 4:</b>	<b>Support greater equity for First Nations in participating in and accessing services and resources across the region</b>			
	<b>Objective 4a:</b>	<b>Establish updated Service Agreements with First Nations for water and wastewater</b>		
		Action 4a(1):	Identify inequity in First Nations access to water at a wholesale rate	2020
		Action 4a(2):	Engage municipal partners, where needed, to review the feasibility of providing water to First Nations through the Regional Water Supply Service or at a rate equivalent to that service's wholesale rate.	2021
		Action 4a(3):	Engage Nations and prioritize efforts to enter into service agreements for water and/or wastewater	2022
	<b>Objective 4b:</b>	<b>Increase proportion of economic opportunities that go to First Nations</b>		
		Action 4b(1):	Amend CRD Procurement Policy to include Social Procurement Values	2021
		Action 4b(2):	Develop First Nations Skills Index and Service Database	2022
	<b>Objective 4c:</b>	<b>Increase First Nation's role in stewardship of land and water</b>		
		Action 4c(1):	Establish Cultural Interpretation Program	2022
		Action 4c(2):	Work with First Nations to identify interest in and support for establishing a CRD-wide Guardian Program	2023
	<b>Objective 4d:</b>	<b>Express support and/or endorsement of First Nations-led initiatives and activities</b>		
		Action 4d(1):	Develop a First Nations Initiative Endorsement Policy	2021
	<b>Objective 4e:</b>	<b>Establish partnership focused on land and/or water transportation</b>		

		Action 4e(1):	Undertake assessment of partnership potential for supporting an interisland transportation operation	2023
		Action 4e(2):	Undertake assessment for partnership potential for on-demand bussing service with First Nations	2024

## 9.0 Conclusion

This is a time of economic reconciliation. As the CRD goes through an exercise of locating its leadership in the economic reconciliation process, new opportunities are emerging that support the development of the structures, processes, and outcomes to substantiate First Nation economic outcomes.

The intention of this report is to lay the foundation for the CRD to move forward on the development of a structure and process to move the Indigenous economic reconciliation relationship forward with constructive, progressive actions. Determining the strength of actions for Indigenous inclusion within the CRD will require addressing the existing current structure and processes, understanding the need for engagement, and strategic design to ensure the targeted economic outcomes are achieved. Another important purpose is to help the CRD planning process to focus on economic priorities.

Furthermore, identifying the strategic pivot towards economic inclusion within the current practices and programs allows the space for new actions/processes as foundational to this model.

## Appendix A- Resources

The following are important resources in consideration in the further development of a CRD First Nation Economic Model

- CRD Statement of Reconciliation: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/about/what-is-crd/statement-of-reconciliation>
- Special Task Force on First Nations Relations Final Report: [https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/crd-document-library/plans-reports/first-Nations/stf-finalreport2018.pdf?sfvrsn=dd11f0ca\\_6](https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/crd-document-library/plans-reports/first-Nations/stf-finalreport2018.pdf?sfvrsn=dd11f0ca_6)
- Bill 41: <https://www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/legislation-debates-proceedings/41st-parliament/4th-session/bills/first-reading/gov41-1>
- New BC Treaty Policy: [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-Peoples-documents/recognition\\_and\\_reconciliation\\_of\\_rights\\_policy\\_for\\_treaty\\_negotiations\\_in\\_bc\\_aug\\_28\\_002.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-Peoples-documents/recognition_and_reconciliation_of_rights_policy_for_treaty_negotiations_in_bc_aug_28_002.pdf)

## Appendix B- Project Process

This project builds upon the work of the Capital Regional District's (CRD) Special Task Force on First Nations Relations which was established to recommend more inclusive models of governance and decision-making between the CRD and First Nations governments. The work of the Task Force's term was extended to 2018 with a broadened mandate to explore ways the CRD can engage in reconciliation. The Task Force recommended that the Board direct staff to undertake a feasibility study for an Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model to be considered by the incoming Board.

This project set out to engage the nine First Nations within the capital region with populated reserve lands to consider feasibility options and strategies for economic reconciliation and inclusion.

This specific project scope includes the following deliverables:

1. Establish an initial scan of current regional, sub-regional, and local-level CRD services and identify specific areas of opportunity.
2. Meeting with Nations within the CRD to assess opportunities and identify feasibility for the development of an Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model
3. Undertake an initial feasibility for the development of an Indigenous Economic Development Partnership Model.
4. Conduct analysis to develop initial recommendations to establish an environment of economic reconciliation to reduce barriers and challenges that support a corporate environment more open to Indigenous inclusion.
5. Provide a written report with findings and recommendations that includes concrete actions and approaches in supporting reconciliation through economic development

The project team was able to meet with eight out of the nine Nations and listened to the current barriers around economic development, current relationship with the CRD, and the potential for actions for First Nation economic inclusion within the existing management/governance practices.

## **Appendix C Economic Reconciliation**

Economic reconciliation aims to create meaningful partnerships and mutually beneficial opportunities based on a holistic, values-driven approach to attaining community economic prosperity. This shared prosperity approach draws on the values of the community to inform the structures, processes, and environments to stimulate action towards community resilience.

Traditional economic development tends to emphasize individual material wealth, often at the expense of community relationships or the health of the physical environment. This contradicts notions of oneness as expressed by Indigenous Peoples through the concept of 'Namwayut – We Are All One.

As a community-led and community defined process, economic reconciliation in any particular community will reflect the values of that community. Reconciliation Canada is piloting a process in which it serves as a facilitator, partnering with communities to coordinate various threads supporting economic reconciliation.

### **What is Economic Reconciliation?**

Economic reconciliation is for all Peoples in Canada. It seeks to engage an entire community in an inclusive process of developing shared understanding and agreed-upon values. All people have an opportunity to learn from each other.

Economic reconciliation stimulates concrete action. Although the specific goals and outcomes will be unique to each community, economic reconciliation aims for concrete actions such as creating businesses, modifying the built environment, and strengthening institutional capacity to enhance shared prosperity. It is not merely a theoretical exercise.

Economic reconciliation builds upon local heritage and positions communities within broader contexts. The benefits of economic trade at regional and international levels are widely recognized. Economic reconciliation builds on local strengths to forge strong paths within a larger community.

Economic reconciliation employs a holistic view of prosperity. Material prosperity is an important dimension of prosperity. However, material wealth, including how it is generated and spent, is placed within the context of community wellbeing and values.

### **Structure and Process**

Engage in dialogue to revitalize relationships, increase understanding of shared histories, and explore the meaning of reconciliation.

In the first step, a Reconciliation Dialogue Workshop, participants engage within their community to gain a deeper understanding of personal stories and shared histories. This allows participants to build resilient and mutually beneficial relationships, explore shared pathways to reconciliation, and to develop reconciliation action plans.

**Develop plans in line with community values.**

Participants deeply reflect on their values, consider their practical implications, and take steps to implement change. Plans and progress harmonize with local values such that they meaningfully and holistically contribute to community wellbeing.

**Strengthen local institutions and develop entrepreneurial capacity.**

By expanding the capacity of local institutions to function effectively, and the ability of individuals to identify opportunities, design and execute business plans, communities are better able to mobilize their energies towards desired, effective ends.

**Maintain ongoing reflection of plans and progress.**

Ongoing reflection on plans and progress allows the community to reinforce inclusive participation from many community members in order to forge a New Way Forward.

**Outcomes**

Economic reconciliation is a form of reconciliation in action. It encourages material prosperity within the context of a holistic approach that is consistent with the notion of 'Namwayut – We Are All One.' The work of reconciliation is multifaceted and ultimately influences every aspect of life. Economic reconciliation works towards building opportunities for all Peoples to achieve their full potential and shared prosperity.

Source: <https://reconciliationcanada.ca/programs-initiatives/economic-reconciliation/>