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METLAKATLA, LAX KW'ALAAMS AND CITY SIGN RELATIONSHIP PROTOCOL

SEPTEMBER 16TH, 2019 – PRINCE RUPERT, B.C. – The Coast Tsimshian nations of Metlakatla and Lax Kw'alaams have now signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Prince Rupert aimed at strengthening the existing relationship between governments, and establishing a basis for working together on shared goals for the region. These objectives include common projects that will benefit the residents of Prince Rupert and the area as a whole – namely in developing affordable housing, regional transportation improvements, achieving aims developed in the ReDesign Rupert initiative, the redevelopment of Watson Island and associated employment opportunities, and support for Tsimshian culture – including art installations, poles, language, carving and traditional ceremony.



(Pictured from Left to Right) Mayor John Helin, Mayor Lee Brain and Chief Harold Leighton following the signing of the Agreement

“I think the MOU which we recently signed is a step forward and signifies the intention of the three communities to work together on the issues that we have in common. We have a large number of our members that reside in Prince Rupert and any way that we can improve the lives of our members, people in the city and the region benefits all of us. A fine example of that is a 60 unit housing complex that we are going to build in Prince Rupert and we are working closely with the City to identify a place that would suit this development,” said Lax Kw'alaams Mayor John Helin.

“The Metlakatla First Nation prides itself on having a strong relationship with our neighbours while ensuring that our Aboriginal Rights and Title are acknowledged and respected,” stated Harold Leighton, Metlakatla Chief Councillor. “This agreement not only works to create a healthy community and economy for those living in the territory we have called home for thousands of years, but further integrates Tsimshian culture into future planning as the region grows. We believe that working together is the best way to achieve success and look forward to continuing to work the Lax Kw'alaams and the City of Prince Rupert in the years ahead.”

“Although our communities have always worked together, it’s a step forward for us to formalize our relationship and commit to shared goals,” said City of Prince Rupert Mayor Lee Brain. “As our region develops over the next decade, we believe this list of shared interests will only grow, and that these key priorities are an excellent place to start.”

The parties have also agreed to meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of common interest and maintain regular communication.

MEDIA CONTACT(S)

Veronika Stewart, Communications Manager, City of Prince Rupert
250 627 0976
veronika.stewart@princerupert.ca

Shaun Thomas, Communications Manager, Metlakatla First Nation
(250) 628 3234
sthomas@metlakatla.ca