



**NORTHWEST TRIBAL TREATY NATIONS  
EASTERN REGION THINK-TANK  
Prince George, British Columbia**

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SEVEN KEY ISSUES AND QUESTIONS WERE THE FOCUS OF DISCUSSIONS DURING THE THINK TANK PROCEEDING. THE FOLLOWING REPORT NOTES:

1. EACH OF THE SEVEN KEY ISSUES DISCUSSED
2. MAJOR QUESTIONS GUIDING THE DISCUSSIONS
3. MAJOR COMMENTS IDEAS FROM THE DISCUSSIONS

**1. KEY ISSUES:**

- I. GOVERNANCE
- II. LEADERSHIP

**MAJOR QUESTIONS:**

- What must happen for First Nation's communities to achieve self-Governance?
- What are some "best practises" to deal with the host of DIA rules, hoops, onerous processes, and regulations?
- What concrete steps can be taken to deal with the onerous reporting and bureaucracy?
- What can outside agencies (Federal, Provincial and Funding agencies) do to help us with the issues of red tape and onerous bureaucracy?
- What steps can be taken to improve leadership skills and abilities within our communities?

**COMMENTS AND IDEAS:**

- Settle the land question
- Self-government will come from the land
- Land planning is part of economic development
- Need larger land base
- Need trust with others
- Band receives \$1 million for welfare and only \$80,000 for economic development. This needs to be turned around. To build capacity, need to change DIA policy
- Five-year agreements allow freedom to set own policies and room for discretionary spending
- Have to reconcile our place with the Province and source industries
- Need to blend two systems the hereditary chiefs system and Canada gov't system
- Fundamental cultural values need to be part of governance
- Need interactions between leaders of different Nations
- Need to get involved with large business sectors
- East-West Aboriginal people need to talk
- Fight collectively and fight big. Choose a fight but have to do it hard and collectively

- Be productive in ways to benefit from what is going on. The reality ie: New mill in Houston. Timber has to come from somewhere; sit down with our neighbours to see how both can benefit from the current situation.

## 2. KEY ISSUES:

- I. PLANNING
- II. EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE
- III. EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS ADVISORY & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

### MAJOR QUESTIONS:

- What prevents us from developing our vision, goals and a comprehensive strategy of on-going activities, in contrast to individual economic development projects or other isolated attempts at community betterment?
- What steps must we take to develop our vision, goals and a comprehensive strategy of on-going activities?
- What steps need to be taken to develop and effective professional public service to support community economic planning?
- What steps need to be taken to develop effective professional business advisory and development services?

### COMMENTS AND IDEAS:

- How do you do it?
- Do the business planning organizations work?
- Need business planning organization or development corporation to do planning for each community - take it out of the hands of the band council
- CFDC's - how can these service providers work together. Fill in the gaps this way - talk about what each can offer and work together to provide full services
- Development Corporations need to be at arms length from band council and controlled by a First Nation
- Members need to lead the planning - land use planning given to the members. Too often they are not communicated with in regards to where we want to go
- Find out what you want to do, and then leadership should follow. This long term vision that transcends government - something the community can get behind
- Land use planning will show where the opportunities are
- Joint ventures will help us in getting business plans together
- Work has been done on the public service. "Hayes report " sent out to each community

### 3. KEY ISSUES:

#### I. ACCESS TO OUR RESOURCES

##### **MAJOR QUESTIONS:**

- What additional steps must First Nations take to ensure that their communities have control over their resources?
- What is meant by compensation and accommodation and what processes are in place so others address these requirements?
- How can we ensure our rights are exercised and appropriate consultation and accommodation occurs?
- Are there any “best practises” or “models” available to give us direction in this area?

##### **COMMENTS AND IDEAS:**

- Best Practices in this area?
  - Litigation
  - Treaty - Land use planning
  - Going out and doing business
  - To many divisions in communities
- Get involved in jurisdiction - land use planning
- IFA's - revenue sharing - getting access
- Can you find alliances?

#### 4. KEY ISSUES:

##### I. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

###### **MAJOR QUESTIONS:**

- Why doesn't the array of economic development and finance programs work for us?
- What are our biggest needs or priorities and what would the programs or services look like that would best meet these needs?
- What successful models for funding support are there?
- What do we propose to provide access to both debt and equity capital?

###### **COMMENTS AND IDEAS:**

- Money for planning but no money for implementation
- Feds are fragmented in the way they provide money or approach funding issues. Until Feds/provincial government see the benefit in working with First Nations things will go nowhere.
- \$30,000 for feasibility study but no common approach
- No matter how many pools of money you find, you cannot mix them
- Province will not help unless attached to treaty somehow; money is always a federal thing
- Basics of Economic Development should be consistent - you go to different organizations for funding they all have different rules and regulations - this needs to be consistent among them
- Develop a trust - need money to implement this trust
- Need a central nucleus to administer/develop and implement - take bits of money into a central place
- Where does \$ come from? From the Government. As long as we are dependent on government we will never get enough \$. Must find another source of funds before we can move forward

## 5. KEY ISSUE

- I. EDUCATION
- II. ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### **MAJOR QUESTIONS:**

- What positive steps can we take to ensure improved success in our 1) Public education? 2) Employment training? 3) Entrepreneurship development?

### **COMMENTS AND IDEAS:**

- Leave this to the educators
- People get educated come back but would rather work for the band rather than start business of their own
- Job training without a job is dysfunctional - need to create the jobs
- Don't have the money to support the educated people coming back
- Training/capacity building in the business area they are interested in.

## 6. KEY ISSUES:

I. SEPARATION

II. RECOGNITION OF FIRST NATIONS AS COMMUNITY PARTNERS

### MAJOR QUESTIONS:

- What effective steps can we take to build trust with our surrounding communities and be involved in meaningful economic development efforts in the region and in our surrounding Non- First Nation's communities?
- What activities might help build increased trust and cooperation?
- What structures or organizations might we belong to get involved in meaningful economic development efforts in the region and in our surrounding communities?
- What structures or organizations might we develop to ensure we have meaningful involvement in economic development efforts in the region and in our surrounding communities?

### COMMENTS AND IDEAS:

- Look at the boarder picture than just chief and council
- If we do partner with outside people then must not duplicated ventures
- Model that works - Cheslatta - joint venture between First Nations, non First Nations and business
- Nechako/Kitimat development fund
- Columbia Fund
- The trust is not there, they look at First Nations as radical political bodies.
- Need financial and professional services

## 7. KEY ISSUES:

- I. TRUST
- II. COOPERATION

### MAJOR QUESTIONS:

- What effective steps can we take to build trust with our surrounding First Nation's communities and cooperate in meaningful economic development efforts in the region?
- What cooperative structures might help us to develop sustainable economic growth within our communities?

### COMMENTS AND IDEAS:

- Many of the comments from item # 1 were reviewed
- Need trust with others
- Have to reconcile our place with the Province and resource industries
- Need interactions between leaders of different Nations
- Need to get involved with large business sectors
- East-West Aboriginal people need to talk
- Fight collectively. Fight big, choose a fight but have to do it hard and collectively
- Be productive in ways to benefit from. What is going on...the reality ie: New mill in Houston. Timber has to come from somewhere - sit down with our neighbours to see how both can benefit from the current situation.

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