

Eagle Feather

Celebrating First Nation Achievers in Manitoba

Volume Four, Issue Two, Spring 2005

PREPARED
BY INDIAN
AND
NORTHERN
AFFAIRS
CANADA

WE ARE ALL ACCOUNTABLE



Working together to implement modern systems of governance, citizens of Dakota Tipi First Nation are looking forward to a brighter future. (for details, see page 4.)

The Government of Canada is working together with Aboriginal Canadians and provincial and territorial governments to close the gap in quality of living conditions for Aboriginal people compared to the rest of Canada.

Those living conditions include learning, access to economic opportunities, and modern institutions of Aboriginal governance, while respecting historical rights and agreements.

One of the cornerstones of First Nation development and self-sufficiency will be accountability. The Government of Canada has committed to work with Aboriginal people and together develop specific quality-of-life indicators and a "Report Card" to hold all to account for results and to drive progress.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada is proud to share a few of the ways accountability is moving First Nations toward greater self-sufficiency and a quality of life comparable to that of neighbouring communities.

Canada

“We’re on the verge of

Capacity Development initiatives help Brokenhead

A new hotel/casino under construction and several other community projects...



Creating a fair and responsible framework to govern is a huge challenge, but Brokenhead First Nation has become an optimistic example to others in recent years.

The progress has been achieved through the hard work of Chief and Council, its consultants, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada - and most importantly the First Nation members who make up the community.

“It’s very exciting. I see a lot more business activity and political stability in the future,” says Chief Tina Leveque. “I think we’re on the verge of an economic boom.”

Chief Leveque says a lot has been accomplished but there’s still a lot left to do. Brokenhead First Nation, located off Highway 59 a few kilometres south of Grand Beach, is now entering its third year of capacity development. The process began with everyone identifying

areas that needed attention.

The first step was to fine tune and formalize council’s administrative and personnel policies. That was followed last year by the hiring of a full-time human resources manager. Before that, council had been kept busy with staff and administrative issues two and sometimes three days a week, leaving them much less time to set policy and actually govern.

“We’ve also really stabilized the internal housing department. It’s much more structured and organized, and we’re utilizing a software package to keep track of each unit, all its data,” Chief Leveque says.

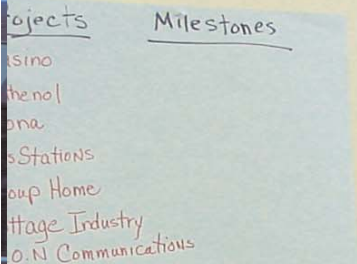
Three housing program policies are currently in the community consultation phase; a general housing policy, home ownership policy and a rent arrears policy.

“No more musical homes, and we’re able to plan, to budget policy. We’re going to have more

f an economic boom”

Ojibway Nation get ready for near-future opportunities

...are giving Chief Tina Leveque and Brokenhead Ojibaway Nation reason to feel optimistic



Projects	Milestones
Casino	
Ethanol	
Bona	
Stations	
Camp Home	
Thage Industry	
O.N Communications	



housing in future, not less, so if we don't have our act together it's not good for anybody," Chief Leveque says.

Also as part of the capacity development, Brokenhead First Nation is developing a constitution. An election code is in the consultation process. The goal is to have the three housing policies and the election code completed by March 2005, then begin community consultations on the rest of the constitution. Chief Leveque says the constitution, among other things, will make for smoother transitions of power.

"The constitution will do a lot to stabilize the political arena in Brokenhead. No matter who is in council there won't be drastic changes, we'll have stability and continuity, which is what we want," she says, adding that's key to the First Nation's economic development.

"It's important to stabilize ourselves internally, so we can present to the world that we're here to do business, we're a safe place for our own

people, entrepreneurs and investors."

Brokenhead has also taken the first step towards acquiring an International Standards Organization designation. A badge of honour in the corporate world, Chief Leveque says an ISO designation would go a long way to reassuring people that the First Nation is able and willing to do business with the rest of the world.

She says greater internal stability will only add to the optimism already created by exciting economic development projects such as the proposed ethanol plant and the planned casino.

Questions?

Fill out the business reply card
or contact us by e-mail:
eaglefeather@inac-ainc.gc.ca

Or Call

1 800 O-Canada

(1 800 622-6232)

“A New Way of

Members of Dakota Tipi First Nation rebuild

Dakota Tipi First Nation has had a reputation as a small community with big problems - but now it's a community on the road to recovery.

Dakota Tipi First Nation was in disarray two-and-a-half years ago, torn apart by political tensions among the community of 126 on-reserve members (243 in total). Tensions flared, distrust and accusations ran rampant, and the band's financial affairs were in chaos.

The situation had deteriorated so much by summer 2002 that Indian and Northern Affairs Canada stepped in and placed the First Nation under third-party management. Elections were held and a new Chief, Cornell Pashe, was elected. Pashe said laying the groundwork for transparent, accountable government has not been easy, but the First Nation has made significant progress.

“As a community we had to heal. We had to heal both as individuals and as a community,” Chief Pashe says.

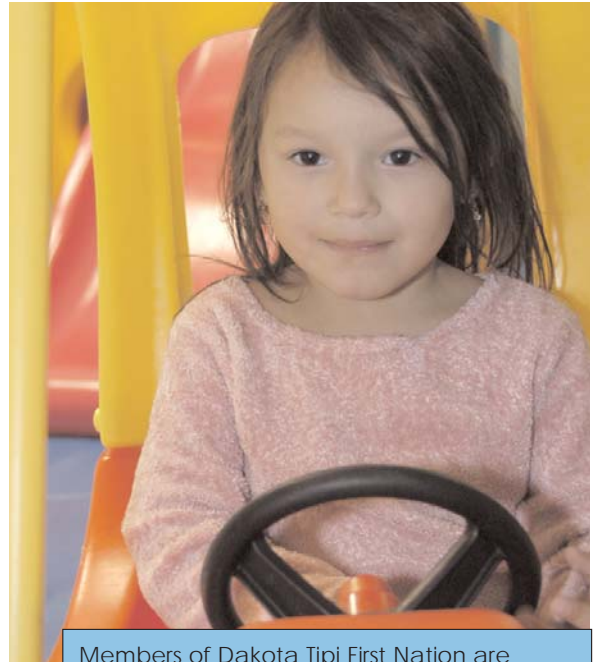
“It's been a struggle, especially the first six months. This whole thing was new to us, it was

reinventing the wheel, a new way of doing things,” he says.

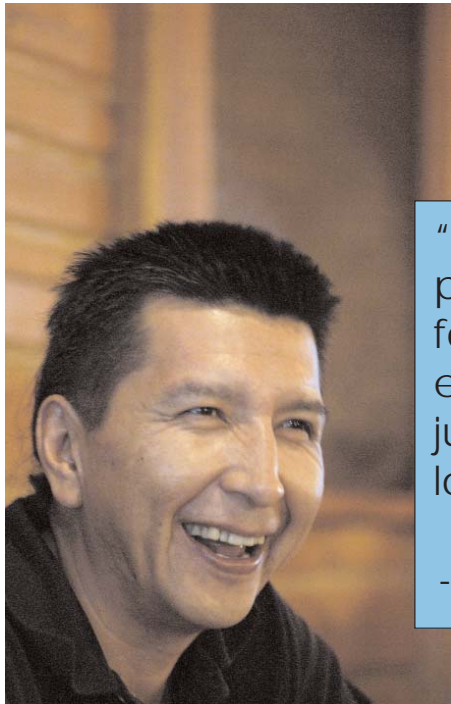
Council began by sitting down and agreeing that the bitter fighting wasn't doing anything but making things negative and unstable. While some of the rifts might still exist, tensions have eased considerably.

“I think that's the most rewarding thing for me is that we can sleep at night with both eyes closed,” says Chief Pashe.

Working with INAC, Dakota Tipi First Nation then began creating the permanent building blocks - the policies and procedures - of an accountable government.



Members of Dakota Tipi First Nation are steering the community to a brighter future with advice and assistance from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.



“We have to give people hope: hope for training and employability and just something to look forward to.”

- Chief Cornell Pashe

Doing Things”

their community with the help of good governance

Its success so far resulted in the First Nation gaining co-managed status in April 2004, which means Chief and Council administers funding for INAC programs and services, but an independent co-manager must give approval. The band hopes to become self-managed again as early as this spring.

Together, the community has worked to set the path for future growth, created a pilot project to develop important governance codes and procedures, and are building the capacity to govern themselves.

Chief Pashe says the community has lots of untapped economic potential, especially given its location just a few minutes from the urban centre of Portage la Prairie, but to take advantage of that potential requires a stable and secure governing structure.

“We need a structure that benefits everybody. If we want to survive in the future, we have to find a way to function outside the department (INAC), to prepare to look after ourselves through economic development,” he says.

Prem Kaushal is a funding services officer with INAC and has been working with the community since it was placed in third-party management. He said First Nation members have shown an impressive commitment and desire to change the old status quo.

“It’s been difficult, but very encouraging,” he says. “The people have been able to shift from distrust and fear to collectively improving their lifestyles.”

Dakota Tipi First Nation is currently in its third phase of improving governance. The first, a path-making exercise, identified the community’s strengths and challenges, the people who must be involved in change, and the first steps to take. The second phase, a



governance pilot project, involved deciding important policies and procedures. The third phase, capacity development, is more administrative, concentrating on developing things such as budget planning and hiring procedures.

There is still a long way to go, but a strong, accountable government and economic development can give Dakota Tipi First Nation what Chief Pashe says it needs most - hope.

“We have to give people hope: hope for training and employability and just something to look forward to,” he says.

Did you know?

Traditionally, First Nations people have held the highest regard for eagles. It is an honour to be awarded an eagle’s feather. It recognizes an accomplishment that serves one’s community.

Making Our Future

"Within two generations many First Nations and Inuit communities will be healthy and safe models of sustainability"

This is the vision set out in *On the Right Path Together: A Sustainable Future for First Nations, Inuit and Northern Communities*, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's strategy for sustainable development. Tabled in Parliament last year, this strategy commits the Government of Canada to taking a more holistic approach to its everyday activities.

This strategy will support community development by addressing cornerstones of sustainability that have been directed by First Nations. This is INAC's third Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) and

this time around the goals are more focused and the deliverables are clear.

The current strategy lays out specific goals for the Manitoba region and progress is being made to achieve these. The first was to establish regional INAC-First Nations priority setting processes in the region. At the beginning of January, members of First Nation organizations met with INAC Manitoba Region executives to establish a shared vision of their

The department's sustainable development strategies for 1997 and 2001 were built on a strong foundation of consultation and resulted in the adoption of eight sustainable development principles. These principles have formed the basis on which the 2004-2006 strategy was developed. The principles are:

- full consideration of economic viability, social implications and cultural and environmental values in decision making and policy and program development,
- open, inclusive and accountable decision-making,
- honouring treaty and fiduciary obligations as well as land claim, self-government and international agreements,
- engagement of interested local communities and organizations,
- respect for diverse cultures and traditional values as well as the land and its diversity as the foundation for healthy communities,
- fair and equitable opportunities for First Nations, Inuit and northern peoples to share in the benefits, risks and drawbacks of development,
- decisions based on the best available, scientific, traditional and local knowledge, and
- efficient use of natural resources and minimization of pollution in INAC's internal operations.

SDinfo is the Government of Canada's gateway to sustainable development information. Sustainable development is about decision making that takes into account the economy, society and the environment in an integrated way. All Canadians have a role to play in advancing sustainable development, including all levels of government, business and industry, civil society, community groups and citizens.

www.sdinfo.gc.ca

Sustainable

priorities for the upcoming year. This session was the beginning of an annual exercise to ensure that Manitoba First Nations have direct input into the work INAC does.

Also to fulfill INAC's objective of working more cooperatively with its partners, a sub-committee on Aboriginal Affairs is being established as part of the Manitoba Federal Council, which represents all of the Government of Canada in Manitoba. This subcommittee will create better links between all federal departments and agencies operating in Manitoba.

Also part of the strategy is the establishment of a strategic plan and framework for achieving sustainable First Nations here in Manitoba. To guide this work, a Chiefs' committee was established in August, 2004 and terms of reference developed. This committee will soon begin work towards an overall strategy that supports Manitoba First Nations to focus activities on selected community issues.

The principles of sustainable development were created in 1972 through the United Nations and those principles are followed around the world. The Government of Canada is participating through 29 different federal departments and agencies.

Work is divided into five themes within INAC's Sustainable Development Strategy: consultation



and joint decisionmaking, long-term planning, water management, climate change and energy management, and integrating sustainable development into departmental policies and procedures. INAC is committed to putting in place the policies, processes and programs and services needed to realize the vision set out in the Sustainable Development Strategy. This strategy is another step towards ensuring that First Nations, Inuit and Northerners are able to achieve their particular visions for a more sustainable future.

For more information on INAC's Sustainable Development Strategy, check out:

www.inac.gc.ca/sd

or call toll-free:

1-800-567-9604

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2004-2006

**On the Right Path Together:
A Sustainable Future for First Nations,
Inuit and Northern Communities**



www.alnc-inac.gc.ca/sd/index_e.html

Canada

How Funding Works

Building capacity, creating opportunity, transforming communities

First Nations and First Nation organizations receive about \$5.5 billion annually from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) for essential services like housing, water/sewer infrastructure, education and social services.

The fiscal relationship between the Government of Canada and First Nations is an opportunity for First Nations to enhance their administrative capacity, which leads to greater self-sufficiency on the path to self-government.

The bulk of First Nations funding is delivered through funding agreements. The two main types are Comprehensive Funding Arrangements (CFA) and Canada/First Nations Funding Agreements (CFNFA).

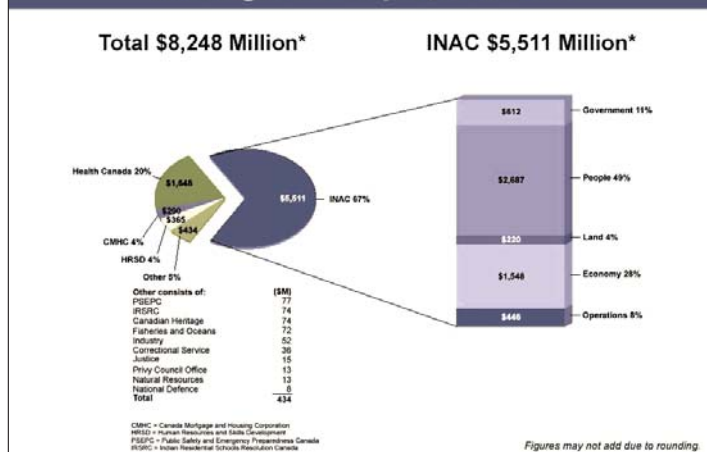
"Financial agreements are a partnership aimed at equipping First Nations with the tools to improve the quality of life for residents and the community as a whole," says Rod Graham, a Funding Services Zone Manager with INAC Manitoba Region.

A CFA is a one-year, program-budgeted agreement between the Government of Canada and individual First Nations. CFA funding is directed to specific programs and activities and may be spent only on the identified programs or activities. However, some CFA funds come in the form of unconditional grants and Flexible Transfer Payments, which give First Nations leaders some discretion in how the funds are spent.

A CFNFA is a block funding agreement between INAC, other federal departments and a First Nation, for a period of up to five years. Containing a common set of federal government funding terms and conditions, a CFNFA defines minimum standards for local accountability. These minimum standards empower First Nations with greater authority and creativity over program design and delivery and management of funds.

"A CFNFA allows a First Nation to be more flexible in adjusting community programs and

Federal Programs Directed to Aboriginal People, 2003–04



activities. In doing so, a First Nation can be more responsive in meeting changing needs within the community," Graham says. "Knowing what your revenues will be for the next five years supports First Nations moving towards long-term community planning."

"It is not a case of one type of agreement being better than the other, but rather, working with the First Nation to decide on the one that best meets its needs and capacity," he says.

Both types of agreements contain a thorough set of requirements that ensure transparency, disclosure and accountability, in particular local accountability for local decision-making. INAC, primarily through its Funding Services Directorate, works with First Nations directly to ensure compliance with the funding arrangements.

"While reporting requirements and monitoring compliance with the terms and conditions of these arrangements are important, our focus remains on ensuring these agreements work for everyone," Graham adds.

The fiscal relationship between the Government of Canada and First Nations has evolved significantly over the past 50 years. The driving force behind this on-going evolution remains a partnership and joint commitment to improve the quality of life for people in First Nation communities.