

**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES – BRITISH COLUMBIA
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
FOR COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

BETWEEN:

The Government of the **Northwest Territories** (represented herein by the Premier) hereinafter referred to as the “NWT”,

And

The Government of the Province of **British Columbia** (represented by the Premier) hereinafter referred to as “BC”.

Whereas the NWT and BC, as well as specific communities within each jurisdiction, have a history of cooperation in a broad range of services, inter-jurisdictional commerce and other areas of human and economic development.

Whereas the NWT and BC agree that there is potential for development in northern communities which could enhance economic conditions in or affecting these communities.

Whereas through cooperation and a coordinated approach in addressing northern circumstances, governments can make more effective use of resources, develop and expand sources of opportunity and implement programs and joint means of fostering economic growth.

Whereas a cooperative approach to development could have a fundamental impact especially on the regional development of northern British Columbia and the Northwest Territories.

Whereas a blended developmental approach which considers both government programs and policies, as well as private sector activities, services and opportunities, is required if northern British Columbia and Northwest Territories residents are to share in the development of improved regional economies.

Whereas long term planning of cooperative development initiatives is essential if regional and inter-jurisdictional initiatives are to respond to emerging opportunities and the ongoing needs of regions, communities, and residents.

The NWT and BC therefore agree as follows:

PURPOSE:

1. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to confirm the commitments between the jurisdictions to develop cooperative measures and agreements to:
 - Develop communities, services and infrastructure of northern British Columbia and the Northwest Territories;
 - Jointly focus on increased participation by residents in the economic life of northern British Columbia and the Northwest Territories;
 - Maintain and improve cooperation, consultation and joint planning in areas of mutual concern and priority in northern British Columbia and the Northwest Territories;
 - Investigate the potential for joint initiatives directed at the strategic development of specific sectors, areas of joint endeavour and/or inter-jurisdictional cooperation; and,
 - Investigate the potential for and to develop options directed at economic partnerships with the private sector.

PRINCIPLES:

2. The NWT and BC agree that the following principles will guide the development of further measures and agreements:
 - a) Mutual respect and tolerance;
 - b) Recognition of the important role of Aboriginal communities;
 - c) Sound environmental and sustainable development approaches;
 - d) The need to utilize and develop existing infrastructure and elements of cooperation;
 - e) The need for transparency in all dealings;
 - f) The importance of flexibility in order to respond in an ongoing manner to changing Northwest Territories and northern British Columbia development circumstances; and,
 - g) The need for governments to be open and publicly accountable.

PRIORITIES FOR NWT AND BC COOPERATION:

3. It is recognized between the jurisdictions that programs and policies which affect the economic development of northern British Columbia and Northwest Territories residents and communities fall under the responsibility of many different Ministers of both the NWT and BC. Targeted policies and programs need to be reviewed in order to ensure maximum benefit and effectiveness to residents of the Northwest Territories and British Columbia and reflect changing economic circumstances.
4. The parties agree to incorporate environmental stewardship, based on the principles of sustainable development, as an integral part of economic activity.
5. The jurisdictions will work together and, where applicable, will coordinate initiatives through the Ministers responsible for various programs and policies affecting development in agreed upon priority areas. These priority areas represent sectors of common interest to the jurisdictions and will form the basis of their joint collaboration under this memorandum. Effort will be made to build on opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation and coordination, to analyze gaps and barriers in existing programs and services and to study potential areas of cooperation.

6. The NWT and BC agree to cooperate in the investigation of opportunities aimed at pursuing specific measures and preparing more detailed development agreements which may include but are not limited to the following sectors:
 - a) Oil and Gas;
 - b) Mining;
 - c) Transportation;
 - d) Forestry;
 - e) Tourism; and,
 - f) Economic Development Initiatives.

JOINT ACTION AND COOPERATION:

7. The NWT and BC will agree on programming responsibilities, overall resource levels and areas of common focus prior to the signing of any additional proposed agreements. The Governments will cooperate in the identification of areas of mutual priority and related areas of jurisdictional focus as well as sources of support which may be used in implementation strategies aimed at long term development.
8. The NWT and BC agree to pursue discussions with a view to signing more detailed agreements where appropriate.

COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION:

9. A NWT/BC Steering Committee, co-chaired by representatives, approved by the Premiers, will be responsible for ensuring the intent of the Memorandum of Understanding is fulfilled, and for recommending any subsequent agreements to Ministers and Premiers. Intergovernmental Affairs officials from both governments will be represented ex-officio on the Steering Committee.
10. The Steering Committee will recommend management procedures for the implementation of the agreement. The Steering Committee may establish working groups for mutually acceptable priority issues. A workplan, including objectives, timelines and reporting and review mechanisms, will be developed by each working group.
11. Prior to the expiry of this Memorandum of Understanding, an evaluation shall be conducted to determine if the intent/objectives have been met and what changes, if any, should be considered.
12. The term of this agreement is five years from the date of signing. The Agreement may be renewed or amended by mutual consent of the parties.

Signed

The Honourable Ujjal Dosanjh
Premier
Government of British Columbia

DATED

The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi
Premier
Government of the Northwest
Territories

DATED