



**FOR DISTRIBUTION ON OCTOBER 2, 2020**

## SHUSWAP INDIAN BAND AND DISTRICT OF INVERMERE TO SIGN FRIENDSHIP AGREEMENT

**Invermere, BC, OCTOBER 2, 2020**— An exciting partnership between the communities of Shuswap Indian Band and District of Invermere will soon be formalized. On October 13<sup>th</sup> 2020, Shuswap Indian Band and District of Invermere Councils will sign a Friendship Agreement to build upon the existing community-to-community partnership. They share the following vision and understanding of the purpose of this Friendship Agreement.

**Vision:** as neighbouring communities, we commit to share our wisdom to build a better future for our children and generations to follow; two communities committed to building a friendship through trust, celebration and respect for one another, our ancestors and our environment.

### **Purpose**

- Provide the framework upon which the partners, including their respective governments and community members, will collaborate with one another;
- Strengthen the partners mutual intentions to pursue a lasting friendship based on mutual respect, honour and recognition;
- Develop mutual protocols and activities that engage transparent communications, trust, inclusion, belonging and community betterment;
- Collaborate on community economic and social development

In order to engage the communities in the design of this agreement, the Shuswap Indian Band and District of Invermere joint working group made a call for art submissions to accompany the written aspect of the agreement. Daniela Krtickova's art submission was selected and will be integrated into the Friendship Agreement.

The Friendship Agreement will be signed by Shuswap Indian Band and District of Invermere Councils on Tuesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020 on the shore of the Columbia River in a safe and physically-distanced way. The signing of the Friendship Agreement will be livestreamed on the communities' Facebook pages beginning at 12pmMST. The communities plan to host a celebration event in spring or summer 2021 when it is safe to bring community members together.

“The Friendship Agreement between Shuswap Indian Band and District of Invermere is what a friendship is, that is, built on trust, respect and recognition. We have certainly achieved that. Working together on this initiative of the active transportation route is only the beginning of a long term partnership that can



only make, not only our two communities, but the valley at large become more accessible for locals and visitors. We as a community are very proud to be working alongside the District of Invermere and look forward to leaving a legacy that our children, Grandchildren and those unborn can enjoy for many years to come.”, said Chief Barb Cote

“In 2019 the Shuswap Indian Band and the District of Invermere started down a path of relationship building and shared education. We were enabled with the help of a federally-funded program, the Community Economic Development Initiative, which we were one of nine partnerships selected across Canada. With this help we have gained a greater understanding, appreciation and respect of each other. We are neighbours working hard at creating a project that will connect our communities together with an active transportation route and more importantly a Friendship Agreement that will serve us well into the future. I am proud to be signing this agreement alongside Chief Barb Cote for the future of our communities.”, said Mayor Al Miller

Since 2019, Shuswap Indian Band and District of Invermere have participated in the First Nation – Municipal Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI), a national program delivered jointly by Cando (the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). With support of the program, the two communities are working to build and strengthen their inter-community relationships, and to build capacity for joint planning and community economic development. Utilizing the CEDI program supports, including third-party neutral facilitation, monthly meetings, bi-annual workshops, and joint strategic and work planning, Shuswap Indian Band and District of Invermere elected officials and staff identified several shared joint social and economic development priorities.

**For More Information:**

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