

Building Positive Relations with First Nations Neighbours: The Story of Lake County and the Okanagan Indian Band




Mayor James Baker, District of Lake Country
 Ken McGregor, Okanagan Indian Band
 Mark Koch, District of Lake Country

Local Government Leadership Academy
 Kelowna, British Columbia
 January 22, 2015


The Municipal Staff Perspective:

Mark Koch, Director of Community Services
 District of Lake Country



Who We Are: Lake Country

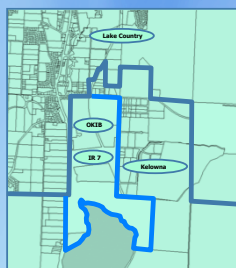
- Incorporated in 1995
- Situated Between Kelowna and Vernon
- Only Ward LG in BC
- Residential Tax Base
- 12,000 Residents
- Rapid Growth
- Town Centre
- Arts Community
- Highway 97 Corridor
- UBCO, YLW



Where We Are: Lake Country



Where We Are: Lake Country



Current Collaboration

- OCP → Recognizes the Importance of Local FN's
- OCP → Call's for FN Collaboration (Environment)
- Historic Site Markers
- Fire Assistance
- Water Supply (Condo)
- Policing
- Planning Referrals
- Major Plan Referrals
- Pelmewash Parkway
- Protocol Agreement



Other Agreements

- UBCM First Nations Relations Committee
- Servicing Protocols Fairly Common
- Mostly Sewer, Water and Fire Protection
- Walk a Mile in My Shoes Program (LGMA)
- Multiple Agreements More Complex



The Political Perspective:

James Baker, Mayor
District of Lake Country



OKIB-DLC Protocol Agreement :

- First Signed November 29, 2005
- Community to Community Funding (UBCM)
- Resigned agreement on January 27, 2011
- Head of the Lake Site
- Trust, Honesty and Mutual Respect
- Traditional Territory
- Title and Rights
- Communication Protocol
- Government to Government



The Benefits:

- Joint Servicing for OKIB Projects (Water)
- Shared Issue Response (Boundary Issue)
- Participation in DLC Branding Project
- Involvement in Website Marketing Initiative
- Leverage Funding Opportunities
- OKIB-DLC Staff CommUnity Working Group
- Meet Monthly at Alternating Locations
- Now Implementing Detailed Work Plan

Our Water Shed:



Upland Lakes:




Province Moves to Sell Lakefront

Vernon Morning Star
July 6, 2012



Province Retracts Effort to Sell Lakefront

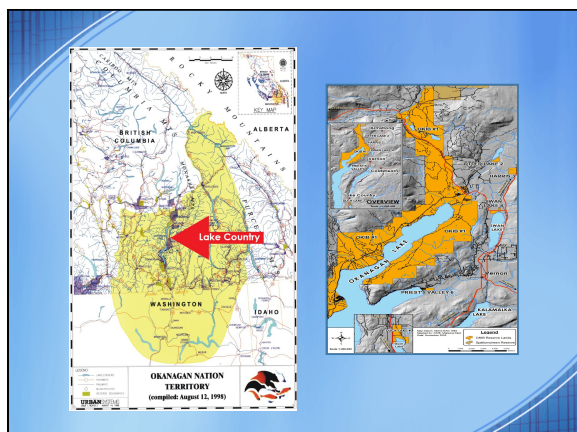
Vernon Morning Star
July 6, 2012



The Band Perspective:

Ken McGregor, Executive Director
Okanagan Indian Band





Who We Are: OKIB

- 6 Reserves
- 11,282 Hectares (27,878 acres)
- 1954 Members
46% On Reserve
54% Off Reserve
- Election on April 2nd



Mission Statement and Vision

Vision Statement:
"Ensuring the Future through Cultural, Social and Economic Development."

Mission Statement:
"To ensure the OKIB membership will endure and prosper, we will develop strong individual, family and community self sufficiency by balancing economic activities with cultural values and progressive social and community enhancement."

The Relationship:

- Based on Respect
- Joint Press Releases on Shared Issues
- Shared Benefit
- Open Communication
- Regionally Inclusive
- Working Group



Shared Objectives:

- Effective and Efficient Communications
- Joint Land Use and Community Servicing
- Development of policies concerning Watershed Protection and protection of cultural resources and archaeological work.
- Co-operation regarding Okanagan inclusion in tourism Visitors Centre

Success in Partnering ...

- Service Agreements
- OKIB Apartment Building receives water from Lake Country and sewer service from Kelowna.
- Technical Working Group with reps from District of Lake Country, Kelowna and OKIB jointly planning further infrastructure and road upgrades.
- Opportunities for water, sewer upgrades, emergency services, transit, industrial and local traffic management (Hwy97 to Jim Bailey Rd)

Jim Bailey Road Band Housing:

- I.R. #7
- OKIB Band Housing
- Lake Country Water
- Kelowna Sewer



Building Positive Relationships:

- Acknowledge History, Heritage and Culture
- Respect Shown by Both Sides
- Build Trust
- Regular Meetings
- Communicate Regularly at all Levels
- Appropriate Consultations
- Cooperative Planning
- Formalize and Implement Agreements
- Commitment to Long Term Relationship
- Upland Reservoir Lakes Joint Response

The Challenges: OKIB

- Elections Every 2 Years
- Indian Act – example Land Designation
- Broad Stakeholder Interests
- Employee Retention
- Resources
- Government Funding
- Commonage Reserve/
CN Rail corridor.



Commonage Reserve

- Established in 1877 by Joint Reserve Commission
- 28,000 acres in size
- JRC stated that if they didn't have authority to create a reserve to be shared between First Nations and non-FN, the reserve was to be set aside for First Nations
- Reserve status revoked without consult in 1891

okib.ca/commonage

The Future: OKIB

- Leadership – 4 year terms
- Identify Common Interests
- Communication and Collaboration Increasing
- Strategic Planning with Partners
- Land Use Planning
- Promote Okanagan Culture and language
- Nurture Economic Development partnerships
- Create Opportunities and Events for OKIB and DLC to Publicly Work Together
- Celebrate Successes
- Mutual Respect, Cooperation, Collaboration and Community

The Challenges: Lake Country

- Uncertainty of Regular Elections
- Early CommUnity Working Group Purpose
- Staff Turn Over and Role Changes
- Everyone has a Busy Schedule
- Need Buy-In from Both Sides

The Future: Lake Country

- Even Stronger Collaboration
- Joint Okanagan Cultural-Visitor Centre
- Partnership Mentality
- A New Way of Thinking
- Need a Dedicated Champion for Both Parties
- Greater Collaboration on Land Use Planning
- Improved GIS and Archeological Site Tracking
- Explore Economic Development Opportunities
- Shared Benefits for OKIB and DLC

The Future: Lake Country



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Thank You

