

Huu-ay-aht First Nations

Huu-ay-aht Group of Businesses

Economic/Business Development Model

Presentation to:
Land Claims Agreements Coalition
Making Modern Treaties Work

Building Today: Modern Treaty Organizations and Economic Development

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Hilton Lac-Leamy – Gatineau, Quebec

Presented by Angela Wesley

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Angela Wesley

- Huu-ay-aht citizen
- Pre-treaty: modern-day treaty negotiations, citizen engagement, policy and law development, constitution committee chair
- Post-Treaty: Maa-nulth Tripartite Implementation Committee member since 2011; Speaker (legislative chair) Huu-ay-aht Legislature and People's Assemblies
- Chair Huu-ay-aht Group of Businesses since 2012 (Forestry, Fisheries, Gravel, Hospitality, Lands, Management, Market)
- BC Treaty Commissioner since 2018
- Worked with BC First Nations since 1992 – Wes-Can Advisory Services

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Huu-ay-aht First Nations

- Signatory to the Maa-nulth Treaty with 4 other First Nations
 - 70% of total eligible voters approved
 - 90% of those who voted approved
- Barclay Sound, Vancouver Island
- Approx. 800 citizens (80-90% reside away from home)
- Self-governing as of April 1, 2011
- Operate under Huu-ay-aht Constitution, Huu-ay-aht Laws!

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Huu-ay-aht Group of Businesses

(Forestry, Fisheries, Gravel, Hospitality, Lands, Management, Market limited partnerships)

- Market and Café
- Pachena Bay Campground
- Fuel facilities
- Motel and Pub
- Lodge and B&B facilities
- Gravel operations
- Forestry operations
- Fishing licences






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Our Vision

The Huu-ay-aht envision a strong, self-governing and self-reliant Nation. *lisaak* will guide us as we work together to foster a safe, healthy and sustainable community where our culture, language, spirituality and economy flourish for all.




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Why treaty?

The Maa-nulth Nations participating faced many common challenges:

- Lack of jobs, opportunities, and services
- Remote locations
- Language and culture threatened
- Resources being over-harvested by others
- Lands and environment threatened
- Substance abuse and other social concerns
- Dependency on the First Nation to "do it all"




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Choosing Change

- Huu-ay-aht First Nations could not remain under the Indian Act and achieve our goals
- Using the Courts provided for some victories, but it proved too costly, both in time and money
- Treaty negotiation was a logical next step, and it was the route that was chosen by our citizens

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Treaty Tools

- Land
- Governance authorities
- Financial resources
- Natural Resources
- New relationship with our neighbours in our homelands

With these treaty tools, Huu-ay-aht First Nations are proceeding to rebuild our nations and we aim to close the socio-economic gaps and achieve our vision for a bright future.

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Foundations for successful economic development post-treaty

- **Guiding principles** to support good decision making throughout
- Comprehensive **economic development plan** that establishes priorities
- Strong and reliable **leadership** supporting implementation of the plan
- **Arms-length civil service** implements laws, regulations, policies and procedures free of political influence

Include everyone in these discussions

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Communications and community engagement are critical

- Ask the questions, get input and answers
- Build consensus to ensure success (from both business and political perspectives)
- Communicate the values that guide decision making and expectations for profits (and employment, training and other benefits)



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**Guiding Principles:
Ancient Spirit; Modern Mind**

lisaak
"RESPECT"! ... Greater Respect; Greatest Respect. Personal, collective ... respect for self, for each other, and for all that surrounds us and takes care of us

Uu-a-thluk
"Taking care of" ... taking care of everything ... present and future generations

Hishuk Tsa'walk
"Everything is one" Everything is interconnected and one thing affects the other and the other ...



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Triple Sustainability

When Huu-ay-aht undertakes an initiative to improve the conditions of our people and community, we must take into consideration the trade-offs, balance and acceptability of that activity. It measures and attempts to create a balance based on 3 criteria:

- 1) Economic Sustainability
- 2) Social Sustainability
- 3) Environmental Sustainability



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1) Economic Sustainability

- Profitable businesses create long-term jobs and careers necessary for nation-building
- Awareness of our comparative advantages
- Keep politics out of business management to the highest degree possible



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2) Social Sustainability

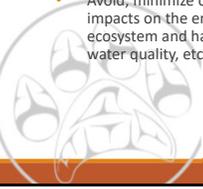
- Acceptable to the community (as determined by elected and hereditary leadership and citizens)
- Fair, direct and realistic opportunities for Huu-ay-aht citizens to find employment or otherwise benefit



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3) Environmental Sustainability

- Health and safety requirements
- Minimize ecological footprint
- Avoid, minimize or mitigate harmful impacts on the environment: ecosystem and habitat systems, air and water quality, etc



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Creating the environment for stable economic development

- Land use and zoning
- Resource management and environmental stewardship
- Infrastructure and community planning
- Business licensing and entrepreneurial incentives
- Training and education



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Create environment for balance

Policies and plans, especially economic development plans and land use plans need to be balanced with the requirements of triple sustainability:

- Environmental and social protections
- Traditional uses – harvesting or access to sacred spaces
- Requirements for community spaces
- General enjoyment of community

The generation of profit as a priority must be balanced with:

- Individual and collective rights
- 'Social enterprise' requirements of the community – citizen employment, training requirements, capacity building



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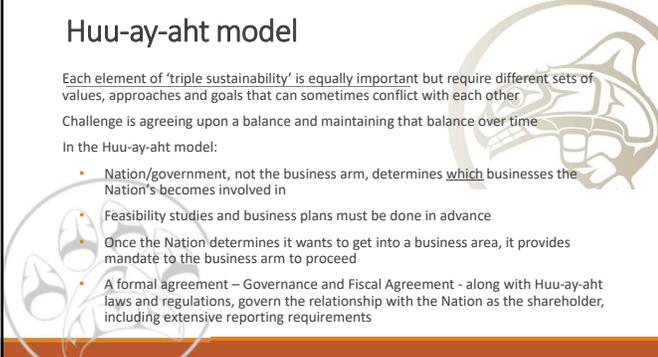
Huu-ay-aht model

Each element of 'triple sustainability' is equally important but require different sets of values, approaches and goals that can sometimes conflict with each other

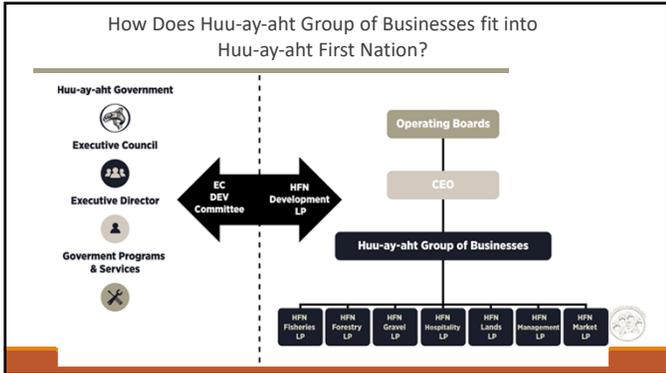
Challenge is agreeing upon a balance and maintaining that balance over time

In the Huu-ay-aht model:

- Nation/government, not the business arm, determines which businesses the Nation's becomes involved in
- Feasibility studies and business plans must be done in advance
- Once the Nation determines it wants to get into a business area, it provides mandate to the business arm to proceed
- A formal agreement – Governance and Fiscal Agreement - along with Huu-ay-aht laws and regulations, govern the relationship with the Nation as the shareholder, including extensive reporting requirements



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The Huu-ay-aht (business) structure

The structure is meant to allow businesses to operate independently (not separate) from government

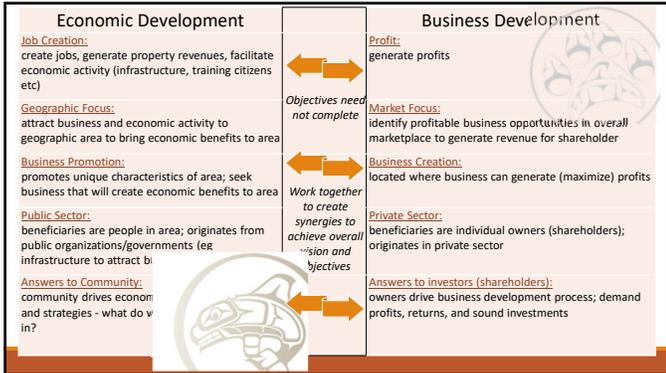
- government creates the overall strategic approach of economic development
- business structure makes management decisions about the businesses

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Challenges with implementing the structure:

- Extensive process and reporting requirements focuses energy on process rather than profit
- Regulatory and procedural matters (laws/policies) are not all in place to allow for growth timely decisions making – opportunities lost!
- Expectations that businesses are responsible for achieving social goals of the nation (employment, training, housing ...)
- Citizens continue raise 'complaints' about businesses with political leadership

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Moving towards success for the people

- Colonial history has left us with many economic disadvantages from lack of vital infrastructure to the damage to the hearts and souls of our people in residential schools, to the loss of our lands
- When we have overcome (at least to a large degree) the cycle of dependency among our people that resulted from those damages we can consider that a large part of our continued success

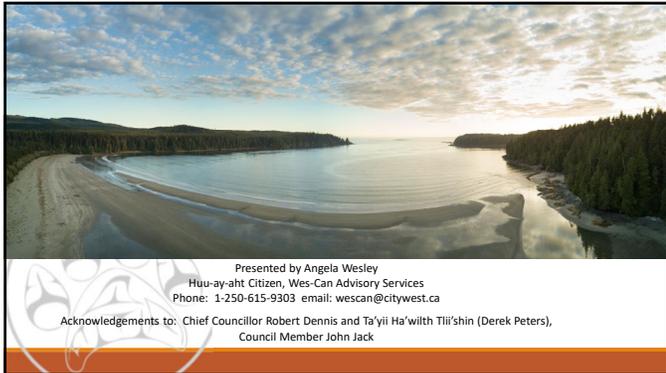
Our measure of success is not only profitability from businesses, it is also measured in the betterment of the lives of our citizens

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Moving towards success for the people

- We continue to do what we can to stoke the fires of self-reliance, industriousness and the importance of taking back control of our lives ... these are universal values across mankind, and indeed the lessons of our ancestors
- Our communities had active and vibrant economies before contact and despite the damages done, we can and will rekindle that same passion in our people to once again not only survive, but to thrive and prosper in our homelands
- We have a lot of work to do ... and we're doing it!

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Presented by Angela Wesley
Huu-ay-aht Citizen, Wes-Can Advisory Services
Phone: 1-250-615-9303 email: wescan@citywest.ca
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