

MUSHKEGOWUK GOVERNANCE PROJECT



7/8/2010

Community Governance Strategic Planning
Process

The following contains information on the Mushkegowuk Governance Project and the description of phase two – *Strategic Planning Process*.

Mushkegowuk Governance Project

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Mushkegowuk Community Governance Assessment Project took place during the months of November 2009 – April 2010. At project completion two communities are ready to move forward into the next phase (Strategic Planning Process). Phase two has been approved by INAC through the Professional & Institutional Development Program.

Upon completion of the assessment project surveys and community checklists are outstanding in three communities. It is our hope to have these communities ready to move on by the end of July. Work on the strategic planning process will commence with the two communities that have completed the process.

INAC has stated that those communities that have not completed the assessment phase will not be able to move on to the next phase. This does not mean that you will never be able to complete the process it just means that the community will have to find funds elsewhere to complete the process.

INAC has also stated that there will be conditions on next year's funding for community governance development. The condition is that you must utilize a governance assessment toolkit such as the UCCM toolkit we are now using, for assessments and developing strategic plans for governance before you will be eligible for further funding.

Where we are at today, is we have two communities that will be in a good position by the end of this fiscal year to access the next round of funding from INAC through the P&ID Program.

NAN PROCESS

The NAN process has been ongoing since 1997 and the goal of this process is to create agreements with the Government of Canada to implement self-government and education jurisdiction. The process has fulfilled phase one and two reaching an Agreement in Principle signed in 2009. The AIP allows for the process to continue into phase three; the negotiation of a Final Agreement. Support is required from all First Nations within the NAN Territory by way of BCR.

Once the final agreement has been drafted each community member will vote whether to ratify or not to ratify the agreement. Those communities that sign the agreement will be bound by the Final Agreement and will not operate under certain sections of the Indian Act.

Those communities that do not sign the agreements will continue to be governed by the Indian Act or other federal legislation in place at that time.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE PROCESS

The community governance process is processes developed to assist each community of the Mushkegowuk Council develop governance tools to meet the requirements for a self-government deal with Canada. Funding is made available through the Professional & Institutional Development (P&ID) program for this purpose. In 2008/2009 Mushkegowuk secured funding to begin the process which was supported by the Board of Chiefs as part of Nation Building initiatives that have been ongoing since the nineties.

Several communities in the NAN territory are engaged in the process with some of them completing the strategic planning process and have now moved into developing the governance tools required to meet the minimum requirements for a self-government agreement with the government of Canada.

This coming year will determine whether all communities of the Mushkegowuk Council will be ready to move into the development of governance tools to meet the minimum requirement for a self-government agreement with Canada.

PHASE TWO STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Strategic Planning Process is an extension of the Community Assessment Project; because of the late start in the project last year this year's project focuses on the completion of the assessment process by developing strategic plans for each community involved. Before a community can move on surveys and community checklists must be completed. The surveys and checklists will be the information used to begin the development of strategic plans. If First Nations have done an organizational review then this information would enhance the process.

The involvement of off-reserve populations would be desired. The assessment process showed a low rating of response from off-reserve members in all communities. The postal system was utilized in one of the communities in which rendered a large return on surveys.

The Mushkegowuk website will also be considered for members living far and wide to access information on the work being carried out at the community level. Newsletters of each community, community channels, radio and other means of communication will be utilized to encourage participation.

It is our hope to have all communities complete a strategic plan by next spring and be ready to move into the development of governance tools that would enhance the systems of government within each community with the goal of meeting the requirements of a self-government deal with Canada.

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