



huu ay aht

ANCIENT SPIRIT, MODERN MIND

November 20, 2018

Re: AFOA Best Practices Submission

Huu-ay-aht First Nations is a self-governing, modern treaty Nation whose lands are located in the Barkley Sound region on the west coast of Vancouver Island, at the entrance to Alberni Inlet. The lands and waters making up our traditional territories (ḥahuuḥi, pronounced “ha-houlthee”) have been occupied by us since time immemorial. Today, Huu-ay-aht citizens number close to 820 and primarily reside around the village of Anacla, the Nation’s principal community close to Bamfield, as well as in Port Alberni, the closest population centre. The balance of our citizens live across Vancouver Island, in the Vancouver area, and beyond.

The Huu-ay-aht First Nations has a mission to create certainty for its people and generate wealth for financial independence by providing economic opportunities, social, cultural, and recreational programs for all Huu-ay-aht people. We envision a strong, self-governing and self-reliant Nation. The Huu-ay-aht First Nations Constitution Act (HFNA, 2011) enumerates the rights of Huu-ay-aht Citizens, including “the right to enter, remain in and leave Huu-ay-aht Lands,” “the freedom to pursue a livelihood within Huu-ay-aht Lands,” and “the right to a healthy life, and environment.”

In the seven years since the effective date, The Huu-ay-aht First Nations has made remarkable steps towards the goal of financial independence and self-reliance. Key financial indicators include:

Fiscal Year Ending	March 31, 2011	March 31, 2018
Accumulated Surplus	\$2,489,201	\$63,047,136
Tangible Capital Assets	\$11,902,911	\$22,999,712
Revenue	\$5,051,825	\$25,965,358

I believe one of the key factors in the success of Huu-ay-aht First Nations is our thorough budgeting process that integrates strategic planning as the core building block to each years Budget Act. This practice helps the elected and administrative leaders of the Nation focus on taking practical steps towards fulfilling the goals in the strategic plan.

The Huu-ay-aht budgeting process starts 5 months before the ultimate Budget Act is due to be passed for the next fiscal year. Our Executive Council (elected leaders) works with Ha’wiih Council (hereditary leaders), Huu-ay-aht citizens and the senior managers in the administration to review the prior year’s strategic plan, adjust and reprioritize. Having this level of input from the members of the community and its leaders before any dollar amounts are even discussed is a vital step in ensuring the annual Budget Act reflects the will of the community.

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Executive Council is required to approve the changes to the strategic plan 4 months before Budget Act is due. This gives enough time for the management, Finance Committee and Executive Council to translate the strategic plan in program budgets.

This process has contributed to producing self-generated revenues totaling over \$40 million in the past 3 years and investing the following into the community:

- \$200,000 for an Elders support program to ensure the safety and support of our Elders.
- \$3,000,000 to create a new subdivision and pave community roads.
- \$1,500,000 for new housing and the creation of a social housing program.
- \$2,732,00 for a new waste treatment facility in partnership with the Bamfield Marine Science Centre.
- \$905,000 to fully implement fisheries provisions in our Treaty. Including training our young citizens to fish, enhance the Nation's commercial fishing program and to catch 100% of our domestic allocation.
- \$105,000 to expand our language and history program with the goal of bringing language learning activities to citizens living in urban areas.
- \$700,000 to develop Kiiḡin (the traditional capital village of the Huu-ay-aht) as a premier cultural tourism destination.
- \$9,625,128 over 5 years to implement the recommendations made in a special report by the Social Services Task Force. This report was a Huu-ay-aht initiative borne out of a strong desire in the Huu-ay-aht community and government to "bring our children home".
- \$6,000,000 over 3 years to restore the Sarita Watershed in the ḡahuḡi, the first of many steps to reduce the impact of over logging.

Thank you for your consideration,

Paul Rokeby-Thomas, CPA, CA
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