



December 3, 2020

xʷtatəlləm ʔə kʷ šxʷəlməxʷaʔ syəθ ʔiʔ snəwəyəl ʔi ʔə tə ʔi nə staləw  
ya:yəstəl ʔiʔ qʷaltəl ct ceʔ

**A Place of Learning About the Indigenous Heritage and Teachings of the River**  
*We will work together and forget our differences*

**si:yém nə siyéyeʔ (*Respected friends and relations*),**

We, Musqueam (MIB), have been here since the beginning. Our ancestors spoke of a time when the delta was only water and Point Roberts was just an island. We have witnessed the growth of the delta. To us, all that we steward are more than simply resources. They are entry points to aspects of our language, territory, health, technology, and our society and the respect and responsibilities that accompany them. They are part of a larger web of mutually dependent knowledge.

Our heritage resources are understood as the tangible (physical) and intangible (intellectual - e.g. knowledge, teachings, language) aspects of Musqueam’s culture, including those passed down from our ancestors, and to which there is an onus to protect and maintain for future generations. Heritage resources include, but are not limited to: transformer sites, sʔeləqəm (fierce being) sites, named sites, “archaeological” sites, burial sites, ancestral remains, ancestral belongings, spiritual use sites (e.g. bath sites), aspects of the landscape, resources, and all associated hənqəminəm language and knowledge.

**čhi:ya:yəstəl ʔiʔ čəwčəwitəl (*Working together in partnership to help each other*)**

From time immemorial, our natural and cultural resources have drawn other nations to our territory. Marriages were established, creating kinship relationships to provide the potential to access resources. These were continuously re-established and reinforced in successive generations to maintain ties. Since colonization we have shifted from families predicated on marriage to include families predicated on practice – both carrying mutual responsibilities.

In order to ensure meaningful and respectful collaboration in the representation of Musqueam history in relation to the staləw (*Fraser River*) and our ancestral territory, and to create a new family of practice, MIB and the Fraser River Discovery Centre Society (FRDC Society)) entered into a šxʷqʷaltəltən (*Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)*). The šxʷqʷaltəltən (*MOU*) will allow a more formal working partnership in order to educate the public and present the stories of the Fraser River and their contribution to the life, history and future of British Columbia.



### **x<sup>w</sup>tatəlləm (A Place of Learning)**

ni? ʔamət tə FRDC ʔi ʔə tə n̄a šx<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəmaʔl təməx<sup>w</sup>, tə šx<sup>w</sup>ʔaməts tə shənqəminəmqən  
(The FRDC is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded lands of the hənqəminəm  
speaking Musqueam people).

A key aspect of this new šx<sup>w</sup>q<sup>w</sup>altəltən (MOU) is č̄hi:ya:yəstəl (working together in partnership), which includes expanding the role of the FRDC in New Westminster as a x<sup>w</sup>tatəlləm (Place of Learning) for the understanding of x<sup>w</sup>əlməx<sup>w</sup>aʔl syəθ (Indigenous heritage) and ongoing connection to the staləw (River).

The concept of x<sup>w</sup>tatəlləm (a Place of Learning) related to the history of the staləw (River) is consistent with MIB's approach to learning and being sʔi:wəsənəq (instructors) by q<sup>w</sup>i:lq<sup>w</sup>əl' ʔə k<sup>w</sup>θə snəweyəl ct, (sharing information about our teachings) with all of those in the community of our traditional territory. This is captured in our concept of nəcaʔmat ct (we are all one).

It will also build on existing First Nations exhibits and programming at the FRDC and its role as a šx<sup>w</sup>q<sup>w</sup>iq<sup>w</sup>el (speaker) or "Voice of the Fraser".

### **nəcim? (Why?)**

The staləw (River) was critical to the development and success of New Westminster, BC and Canada, and today remains a key economic engine of our province. But while the MIB and other First Nations have lived, worked and taken care of the River from time immemorial, there is no place that allows people to come and gain an understanding of the Indigenous history of the Fraser River watershed.

x<sup>w</sup>tatəlləm (A Place of Learning) will help address this by being a place where historic information can be shared. This can be approached in many different ways so it will be important to work together with First Nations, other levels of government, industry, educational institutions and the FRDC.

The development of x<sup>w</sup>tatəlləm (a Place of Learning) will also help governments, industry and society continue to meet their commitments to Reconciliation and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

### **What the Place of Learning will look like**

The goal is a permanent exhibit and programming at the FRDC, but what it includes and how it is presented will need to be developed between the MIB, the FRDC and other partners in the community that come on board.

Key to this will be ensuring that whatever is developed is consistent with the MIB's "learn/teach/share" approach and that the stories are told from a First Nations' perspective.



### **čłsʔiwəsənəq (Co-instructors)**

The first steps in pursuing the new Place of Learning will be na:nətəl' (*talking together and having a discussion*). na:nətəl' will involve identifying and meeting with all those in the community who might want to support and be involved in its development.

A core Musqueam teaching underpinning all our work is that there are no shortcuts to do something properly. With this guiding principle, it is expected to be long term initiative requiring multiple partners, with planning, development and implementation taking from 3 – 5 years.

### **For more information:**

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### **hənqəminəm Glossary:**

- ya:yəstəl' ʔiʔ q'wəltəl' ct ceʔ – We will work together and forget our differences
- čłhi:ya:yəstəl' - *Working together in partnership*
- snəwəyəl – teachings received since childhood
- nəcaʔmat ct – we are all one
- ya:yəstəl' – working together
- q'wəltəl' – putting aside our differences
- siyéyeʔ – friends and relations
- cəwəcəwitəl' – helping each other on repeated occasions.
- na:nətəl' - talking together and having a discussion
- sʔi:wəsənəq – Instructor
- čłsʔiwəsənəq - Co-instructor
- šx'q'wəltəltən – an agreement (“the tool by which we reach a mutual understanding”)
- x'wətətləm – place of learning
- staləw – river, here referring to the Fraser.