



# Our Community, Our Future.

2024 COMMUNITY REPORT





# Introduction

The Strategic Plan for We'koqma'q L'nue'kati has continued to drive significant progress across various sectors within our community. This report highlights the key achievements and ongoing initiatives that align with our long-term goals of sustainable development, cultural preservation, and enhanced community welfare. Below are the major milestones reached in the past 4 years.

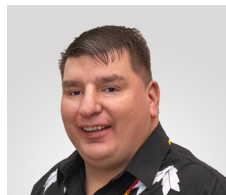
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# Community Update



## SETTLEMENT OF WE'KOQMA'Q'S SPECIFIC LAND CLAIM

After decades in the works, we are incredibly proud to have **received the \$125M** offer from Canada in April of this year. This is being brought to you on September 27th for a vote.

This settlement is to reconcile for the improper sale of 411 acres of reserve lands in 1862.

Chief and Council would like to thank the community for their patience and support throughout this long and difficult process. Your voices have been heard and we are confident that we have presented you with the best possible offer.



Prime Minister Trudeau with Cassandra Googoo and Lucinda Googoo (sisters) who are local beaders that crafted the medallion that the PM was presented with (shown above)



Prime Minister Trudeau with Interim Chief John Leonard Bernard.



Prime Minister Trudeau with Chief and Council, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Gary Anandasangaree and local MPs Mike Kelloway and Jaime Battiste.



# Housing

## NEW CONSTRUCTION:

In response to the ongoing housing crisis, we committed to building 20 new homes per year to match community growth. Since 2020, we have successfully built 55 housing units which have housed over 100 people, with 10 units currently under construction.

## RAPID HOUSING:

Our ability to build so many new units over the past years was thanks to We’koqma’q being the successful recipient of the both Phase 1 (Funding received \$2,142,937) and Phase 2 (Funding received \$892,430) of the Rapid Housing Initiative funding offered through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

## CMHC REPAIR FUNDING RECEIVED:

In 2024, we were the recipient of \$840,000 of funding from CMHC to do significant structural repairs to homes over the next four years. This has begun in the Community starting with roofs, then gutters on a specific list of inspected homes.

## NATIVE WOMEN’S TINY HOME:

Successful recipient of the Native Women’s Tiny Home. Currently being built and brought on site.



# Covid Support

During the pandemic, no employees were laid off to ensure Community members has access to funds required to keep them and their families safe.

**In addition, \$1,449,787 of covid relief payments were issued to the Community.**

We are pleased to have had such a positive response to the pandemic and extend our gratitude to our team at Theresa Cremo Memorial Health Center.







## Wekoqma'q Trout Farm



### Community Channel

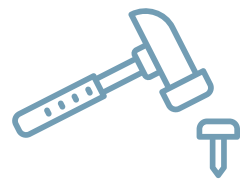
The acquisition of our own broadband network, Skye Communications, is a major step toward controlling and showcasing cultural content. Over the next five years, our goal is to develop a community channel that highlights our rich heritage and contemporary culture.

Currently, test internet hookups (called “friendlies”) are installed and in-use with customer connections to begin after the trial phase.



### Mi'kmaq Immersion Program at Camp Rod

We have successfully secured funding to support this important educational initiative, ensuring that our language and traditions are passed down to future generations. A Needs Assessment is underway with funding from ISC to assess the property and its potential.



### Construction of Youth Centre

The design phase for the Youth Centre is currently in progress. This facility will serve as a crucial hub for intergenerational activities, fostering a strong sense of community.

Thanks to the Children's Prevention flowing from the government, this is a fully funded project and will be the first of its kind in the area.



### Bylaws

The following bylaws were passed by Council

- Dog Bylaw
- Safer Communities Bylaw
- Dangerous Persons Bylaw

These bylaws are now fully operational, contributing to a safer and more regulated community.



### Cultural Initiatives

We have secured funding to support the preservation of our cultural heritage. This includes:

- **Videography Project:** Documenting the stories of the late Grand Chief Gabriel Sylliboy.
- **Support for Pow Wow/Mowiomi:** Continuation of funding to ensure the success of this important cultural event.
- **Established a Ribbon Shirt & Skirt Bank:** where Community members can borrow traditional skirts and shirts to attend ceremony regardless of income
- **In progress of opening the Amkwesowa'q Kisitutitl Gift Shop**

## Rendering of Amkwesowa'q Kisitutitl Gift Shop



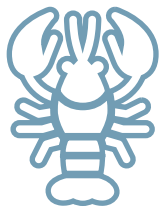


# Economic Development

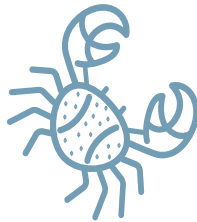
## Fisheries Update:



**CLEARWATER REVENUES:**  
F2022 \$1,086,923, F2023 \$1,073,310.38 (Note that this is We'koqma'q's share of revenue from our ownership which automatically pays down the debt associated with it). When we are at a point where this debt is paid off, this money will be coming directly to the Community.



**LOBSTER LICENSE:**  
Purchased a lobster license for \$1.2M.



**SNOW CRAB LICENSE**  
Purchased Area 12F snow crab license for \$12.5M.



## Redesign and Restructure of Daycare

- Completely renovated
- New playground being installed
- New policies and procedures
- Now open 12 months of the year

We'koqma'q Early Learning Centre 

## Awards



WFN Fish Farm Limited Partnership was the recipient of the Cape Breton Partnership's Cape Breton Partnership's Economic Impact Award 2022



Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award 2022





# Infrastructure

We've completed several critical studies to advance our land use and infrastructure planning. These include:



**ATLANTIC FIRST NATIONS WATER AUTHORITY:**

In 2024, We'koqma'q become a Member with the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority where we are assured that our infrastructure is being maintained by professionals and that Chief and Council are committed to providing safe, reliable drinking water to all its residents.



**EMERGENCY RESPONSE:**

Backup generator installed for the One Stop and Band Office to be prepared for significant weather events by having Warming Centers.



**LAND ACQUISITION:**

Under contract to purchase our first two parcels of land outside the community to expand residential and or commercial development.



**SUBDIVISION FEASIBILITY STUDY:**

A comprehensive analysis ensuring the viability of future residential subdivisions.



**WATER RUN-OFF STUDY:**

To address potential environmental impacts and inform the design of sustainable drainage systems.



**GOING GREEN:**

Waste Management project for roll-out bins. The remainder of the County uses black bags, but We'koqma'q now has separate systems for all types of waste. This was funded fully by Indigenous Services Canada. We also received funding for an electric vehicle used in Public Works.

These foundational studies are crucial as we plan for long-term growth and sustainability and serve as a basis for funding to repair roads and supporting infrastructure.



## Playground Facilities in Residential Areas

Three playgrounds are currently under construction:

- Daycare Playground
- Gabriel Sylliboy Road Playground
- Diane's Lane Playground

These facilities will provide safe and engaging spaces for our children to play and develop. These are fully funded through Children's Prevention

## New Fitness Facilities

We secured a \$60,000 grant to retrofit the interior of Johnny's Gym, ensuring that community members have access to improved fitness resources.

## Green Energy Investments

We are actively pursuing green energy opportunities, including:

**WIND ENERGY PARTNERSHIP:**

Collaboration with ABO Wind on a prospective wind energy project.

**SOLAR NET METERING PROJECT:**

In partnership with Ulnooweg and Natural Forces, this project is currently underway. With a focus on sustainable energy solutions for our community, this project involves the installation of solar panels on the Band office and Community Hall to help offset the Community's carbon footprint.







 The new Tobacco Shop and Food Bank

## New Business and Partnerships

### Inverness Partnership

We have partnered with Inverness County on a waste management project for waste hauling, aligning with our goal of becoming a greener community.

### Investment in IT Infrastructure

We have made significant strides in modernizing our IT infrastructure:



#### **FIBER OPTIC NETWORK:**

A 100% Band-owned fiber optic network has been implemented, providing fast and reliable internet access.

#### **SOFTWARE REVAMP:**

The IT systems within the Band office have been updated to improve communication and staff efficiency.

### Opened Community Member-only Smoke Shop

## Building Communications Capacity

- We established a Communications Department to ensure that important information flows efficiently between the administration and community members.
- Transparency with Community by hosting the first Annual General Assemblies in many years
- New branding and signage project – digital signs and directional signs.
- We've held two consecutive Annual General Assemblies to increase transparency between Council and Community Members

## Support for Social Clients

- Chief and Council motioned to increase the social rates based on rate parity proposed by Ta'n Etli-tpi'tmk.
- C&C have supported the foodbank by contribution approximately \$90,000 a year for food purchases.

## Support for Local Contractors

With the goal of stopping leakage and supporting Mi'kmaw business first, we used local contractors used for new construction and snow plowing tenders where possible. This includes the establishment of We'koqma'q Contracting.





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