

MEGA JOBS COMING FROM TSAWWASSEN INDUSTRIAL LANDS

On April 3, 2009, during the Effective Day celebrations in the Tsawwassen First Nation longhouse, TFN's council gathered on the stage to enact 23 separate pieces of legislation.

Among them was an act creating the TFN Economic Development Corporation. Over the past eight months, the EDC has emerged as a real powerhouse in the sluggish economy on the Lower Mainland.



Chief Kim Baird

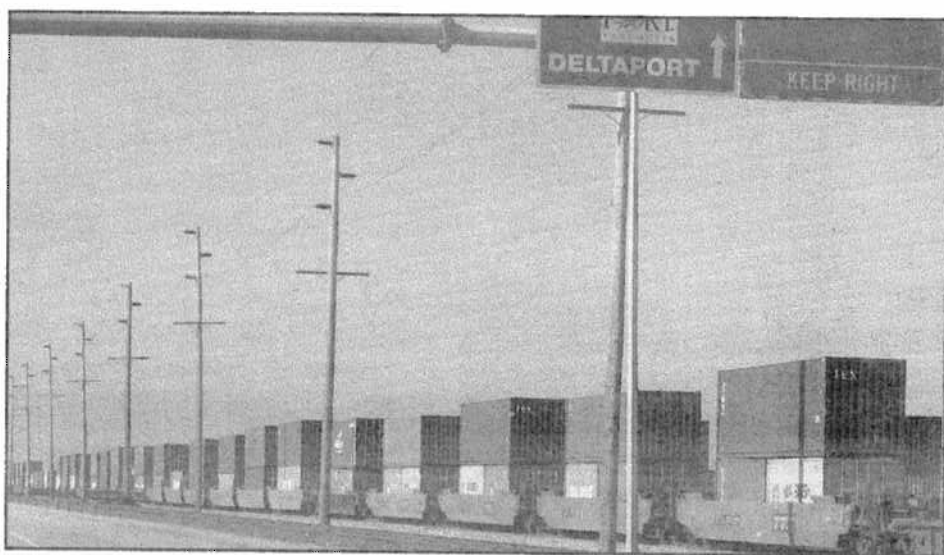
Today, the five-member EDC board is in place, working on plans that Chief Kim Baird says will make the corporation one of the biggest employers in the area.

"There will be thousands of jobs, far more than our community needs," she said. "There will be jobs for other First Nations and all our neighbours."

The heart of the massive project is the 135 hectares (333 acres) that are known as the Tsawwassen Industrial Lands, the former farmland that was turned over to TFN as part of its final treaty settlement. A state-of-the-art industrial park is being planned adjacent to DeltaPort.

In the next 5-10 years, the industrial park will be filled with warehouses, distribution centres, card-lock operations as well as container storage areas with road and rail links to DeltaPort, the rest of the Lower Mainland and hungry consumers throughout North America.

The huge project was given a kick-start in September with the announcement that \$9 million in stimulus funds would be coming from in equal amounts from TFN, the federal and provincial governments.



"We could have gone ahead without that money," said Kim. "But the stimulus funds adds to our ability to have a more timely development and boost our potential partners' confidence. I think we were the only First Nation in Canada to get it because we are equivalent, in many ways, to a municipality."

"This funding gets us moving to create a sustainable, self-sufficient future for our community." She said the funding "helps to ensure the success of our recently completed treaty. This truly is a win-win-win."

PARTNERSHIPS OR GOING IT ALONE

Baird said the range of opportunities stemming from the industrial park development has meant there has been no shortage of potential partners lining up to do business with the EDC.

"We are looking for potential business partners, but a lot is still up in the air as we structure our business arrangements. Will we just be the landlord? I don't know. There may be opportunities for 100 per cent ownership by TFN, but we just may be the landlord in others cases."

"This is such a large tract of land, the opportunities are endless. We might start by taking some of the 'lower-hanging fruit' such as container storage or a card lock."

She said TFN's industrial lands were unique in North America adjacent to a major port.

EDC BOARD A 'NICE TEAM'

Guiding the industrial park project, and other EDC opportunities, in the coming years will be a board of directors with some impressive credentials. Baird, with her typical understatement, calls it "a nice team".

She and Diane McElhinney will represent TFN on the board. The other three members come with broad business backgrounds.

Norman Stark, who Baird says is "a perfect fit" comes from TSI Terminal Systems, the largest container terminal in Canada, handling about 70 per cent of the containerized cargo that moves through Port Metro Vancouver. He is also the former head of the

Vancouver Port Authority.

Pat Hibbitts is currently the vice-president of finance at Simon Fraser University.

Carolyn Rogers ran Victoria-based Hydroxyl Systems and previously worked in management positions with banks and credit unions.

Baird said the team is working with Chris Hartman, chief executive officer of the EDC, on "finalizing the master plan for industrial lands".

TRAINING FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES

What sets TFN apart from any municipality is its EDC and its potential to create a long-lasting revenue stream for the Tsawwassen people. But before the first shovels hit the ground, an impressive training program is underway for the 1,000 construction jobs that will be starting soon. About 1,500 permanent jobs will also be created in 'supply chain sectors'.

"We have been working closely with the FNES



and VanAsep, going toward a partnership to develop curriculum, especially for training in operational jobs in supply chain sectors. We're developing a long-term neighbour strategy along with the physical development of the industrial lands."

FNES is the First Nations Employment Society and VanAsep is the Vancouver Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership.

A training centre is planned either within or near to the industrial park to train workers in things such as transportation logistics or inventory management.

CAREERS IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN

Already students are participating in construction-related courses such as heavy equipment operation and in a Supply Chain Careers program. The supply chain training is taking place at Tsawwassen as well as at FNES and Kwantlan University.

The deadline for entries in the first Parts and Warehousing Person program was on Oct. 23. This is a foundation program that will last for 20 weeks. The recommended educational level for entry for the program is either Grade 10 or its equivalent including English, math and science, but Grade 12 is preferred.

Similar requirements are need for the hands-on program. Only three weeks will be held in a classroom with 1,680 hours (the equivalent of 48 35-hour weeks) spent on the job.

Industrial Lands continued from page 4

Meanwhile, technicians are being trained in heavy equipment operator and asphalt paving programs through both FNES and VanAsep

TFN AND VANASEP

VanAsep is one of the 12 deliverers of the AHRDAs (Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreements) that exist in BC. There are 80 across the country.

Baird said that AHRDA funding is currently in transition. "There are new requirements for employment and training funding to be more client driven. Tsawwassen has an appropriate economic driver."

A MASTER PLAN FOR TSAWWASSEN LANDS

Chris Hartman has been chief executive officer of TFN's Economic Development Corporation since May.

He has been involved in developing master plans for communities throughout Canada, from a neighbourhood of 200,000 in Ottawa to resort developments in BC's Interior.

But his most recent work, with UniverCity on Burnaby Mountain for Simon Fraser University, is perhaps the most similar to what is happening at TFN.

"There are a lot of comparables between the two," he said. "With the EDC, there is only one shareholder and that is TFN. At UniverCity it was SFU. Everything that we do - from training and job creation to our business ventures - all the revenue goes back to the community.

In a nutshell, the mission of the EDC is to manage all TFN assets, and that includes all land not held by members under certificates of possession.

In July of 2008, TFN members approved an overall land use plan for the community once their treaty was implemented. Since coming on board this spring, Hartman has worked with the EDC board and partners to complete a detailed master plan for the industrial lands.

"We took the land use plan of last July and did a more extensive, detailed plan for the industrial lands," said Hartman. "But the original land use plan is still our guiding document."

Planning partners included Port Metro Vancouver, TSI Terminal Systems, BC Rail and the Ministry of Transportation.

He said that sustainability has been an important part of the forward-planning process.

"We have the added value of our location next to DeltaPort. Our plan will reduce truck traffic throughout the Lower Mainland. Instead of sending truck traffic to Richmond or Langley, we'll be able to put containers on rail cars right here."

