

2015 COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNER

Penticton Indian Band, BC



As the for-profit business investment and development division for the Penticton Indian Band, the Penticton Indian Band Development Corporation (PIBDC) was formed to manage the band's business portfolio and to foster the development of a sustainable economy. The PIBDC has had many great achievements in less than a decade of operation; from the modest beginnings of a river tubing business, they are now leading the development of Penticton's only resort-style planned community and involved in a large-scale collaborative project with the City of Penticton. Focusing on responsible and sustainable business practices, PIBDC's businesses have led to successful job creation, training opportunities, and wealth generation for the Penticton Indian Band. PIBDC currently oversees a number of diverse businesses:

- Skaha Hills is an award-winning, seven-phase "resort-style" community.

It is designed to be the most energy efficient housing in all of BC, and will be situated on a spectacular 550-acre site along the south Okanagan hillside. The first phases of this development are already sold out.

- Westhills Aggregate LP specializes in construction sand and gravel services; in addition to trucking and delivering construction products for customers, Westhills Aggregates also employs excavation equipment that allows for both small and large construction jobs.
- Coyote Cruises LP is home of the South Okanagan's hottest summer attraction, providing tube rentals and transportation to visitors along Penticton's River Channel. Operating during the summer months, Coyote Cruises services over 100,000 people per year from around the globe.
- Sn'pink'tn Forestry LP manages the Penticton Indian Band's forest resources, addressing forest health issues and managing interface fire hazards.

The PIBDC has recently completed a health care centre and a cultural school. In addition, they are currently finalizing an official Comprehensive Community Plan, which identifies lands to be protected and lands to be designated for development such as residential, industrial, commercial, recreational, etc. The PIBDC strives to form relationships and lines of communication with outside partners, including communities, government, and corporations. These relationships have provided the PIBDC with invaluable advice and expertise, and have created development opportunities. They are currently partnering with the City of Penticton on Satikw Crossing, a major development project that will connect the economies of the two communities. With the construction of a bridge across the Okanagan River Parkway Channel, an intersection feeding onto the proposed bridge, and a potable and fire protection water distribution line, the long-term goal for this project is to open up Penticton Indian Band lands for development of a hotel, retail space, and a business park.

The Penticton Indian Band and the PIBDC are distinguished by the relationships they have forged with communities and external partners. Their innovative and successful development ventures have won them numerous awards while transforming their economic prospects. The PIBDC has achieved outstanding business success in less than ten years using a combination of traditional values, collective community vision, relationship building, and strong leadership, paving the path to a future of self-determination.