

Yekooche First Nation Agreement-in-Principle Intergovernmental Relations

Building relations with local governments

All parties agree that relations between the Yekooche First Nation and the local governments play a critical role in creating and sustaining a workable treaty. The Yekooche First Nation and the local governments are committed to working co-operatively and collaboratively. Between Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) and Final Agreement, a Governance Agreement will be negotiated. Provisions in the Governance Agreement will set out matters involving the respective roles of local governments and Yekooche First Nation. These include:

- The relationship that the Yekooche government will have with the Bulkley-Nechako Regional District and the Municipality of Fort St. James on the delivery and payment of services;
- Provisions to co-ordinate activities between governments in common areas of interest;
- The participation of the Yekooche government and representation for residents on First Nation treaty lands in the Bulkley-Nechako Regional District; and
- Opportunities to co-ordinate official community plans for Yekooche treaty lands with local government land-use plans.

To address local interests in a wide range of matters, including land-use planning and servicing, provincial negotiators are working closely with the Prince George Treaty Advisory Committee, the Municipality of Fort St. James and the Bulkley-Nechako Regional District. Meetings with these bodies have been held during AIP negotiations and will continue to be held during Final Agreement negotiations. Local government representatives participate as members of the provincial negotiating team.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are local and regional governments involved in treaty negotiations with Yekooche First Nation?

Yes. Provincial negotiators work closely with local & regional governments to address their interests on a wide range of matters, including land-use planning and servicing. Regular meetings have been held with affected local governments and will continue through Final Agreement negotiations.

Will Yekooche First Nation pay for services they receive from local government?

The AIP provides for the negotiation of a Governance Agreement. The Governance Agreement will address matters such as the cost and delivery of services that Yekooche First Nation may receive from local or regional governments.

Will Yekooche First Nation become a member of the Bulkley-Nechako Regional District?

Details with respect to Yekooche First Nation's participation on the Bulkley-Nechako Regional District will be negotiated as part of the Governance Agreement. It is the intention of the parties that the Yekooche government may participate on the board of the Bulkley-Nechako Regional District as a government and in accordance with provincial legislation.

Will Yekooche First Nation co-ordinate land-use planning with local governments?

The AIP provides for Yekooche First Nation to discuss opportunities to develop and co-ordinate land-use planning such as official community plans with the Fort St. James Municipality and the Bulkley-Nechako Regional District. It also provides for the Yekooche government and local and regional governments to enter into agreements coordinating activities in common areas of responsibility. Yekooche First Nation and local & regional governments are committed to working cooperatively and collaboratively. These ongoing relationships will be governed by agreements and processes established under the Governance Agreement.

Will Yekooche First Nation pay property taxes for local services such as fire protection and garbage disposal?

These types of details have yet to be negotiated. It is expected that Yekooche First Nation will pay for services provided, which will be set out in separate agreements with local and regional governments.

What is the nature and scope of the Governance Agreement?

The AIP provides for a Governance Agreement to be negotiated and concluded at the same time as the Final Agreement. The Governance Agreement will not be constitutionally protected. It will set out the nature and scope of the law-making authorities of the Yekooche First Nation government. These may include matters such as business licensing, emergency preparedness, and traffic and transportation. The authorities will not include criminal law or criminal procedures. Authorities related to land and resource rights will be set out in the Final Agreement.