

Shovel Ready Heritage: First Nations Community Gallery Town of Meadows, Bay of Islands Nfld

Submitted by: Aaron Brake (operator of the Ole Brake House museum)

Recommendations:

1. We recommend that the government provide at least 1.7 million in stimulus funding to create this worthy First Nations Community Gallery in the Town of Meadows.

I am writing on behalf of the First Nations Community Gallery which will be located in the Bay of Islands in Meadows, Newfoundland. The purpose of the Community Gallery is for study, education, and healing. The First Nation's Community Gallery that I am proposing is an extension to the existing Olde Brake House Museum.

The original Brake house, wood and plank, was built in the 1800s by Cornelius and Eliza Brake. Cornelius Brake was a descendant from a First Nations Mi'kmaq family, Edward Matthews Brake and Caroline Humber. Edward Brake is a descendant of Ralph Brake and Elizabeth Matthews. The descendants of Edward Brake still reside on the property of the Olde Brake house.

The Olde Brake House is significant because it is post and beam in design which was characteristic for the time period it was constructed. The pine wood used to construct the house was grown on the property and sawed by pit saw. The blend of integration and design of wood and plank is unique to the Mi'kmaq community.

The Mi'kmaq Community Gallery will be a living memorial to the unique Indigenous history of the Bay of Islands and the surrounding First Nation Communities. The Community Gallery will stand on the North Shore of the Humber Arm in the Bay of islands in the Town of Meadows. The Community Gallery provides a view of the Blow-Me-Down Mountains/Long Range Mountains and the outer Bay of islands. It is located 20 kms from Corner Brook. It will also overlook the proposed Geopark on the Southside of the Bay of islands.

The First Nations Community Gallery will enhance and renew cultural infrastructure and social purpose in the long term for the Indigenous Communities in the Bay of Islands, Newfoundland. The Mi'kmaq Community Gallery will document and house oral history, artifacts, works of culture, and art from the Mi'kmaq Communities. There is no other Indigenous Community Centre or Gallery that focuses on the First Nation Mi'kmaq culture and diversity in the Bay of Islands area.

This worthy community project will contribute to 10 full-time positions and 5 part-time positions both in the construction of the gallery and the operational side of the gallery in the long term. The design of the building will be adopted from First Nations architectural design and will use environmentally friendly measures and materials for construction and the operation of the gallery. The gallery will help provide a much-needed infrastructure to the Mi'kmaq communities for healing and reconciliation and will be multi purpose in design.

We recommend that the government provide at least 1.7 million in stimulus funding to create this worthy First Nations Community Gallery in the town of Meadows.

This First Nation worthy project is timely given the economic downturn in the Mi'kmaq Communities in the Bay of Islands and provide new employment opportunities both in the construction industry and tourism sectors.

Attached below is a copy of a letter of support from Keith Cormier, Western Vice Chief, Qalipu First Nation.

Aaron Brake

August 7, 2020



August 5, 2020

Minister Hon. Derrick Bragg

Department of Municipal Affairs and Environment
West Block, Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Re Aaron Brake, , Shovel Ready Project, Meadows NL

Kwe Minister Bragg;

June 21st is an important day for Qalipu First Nation as it is for all Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island. We are the people of the dawn, the eastern door to Turtle Island. On that day, June 21st, there was an invitation from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, to develop community projects that reflects our cultural history and differences.

Mr. Aaron Brake a founding member of Qalipu First Nation, has written the Prime Minister recommending for consideration under the Shovel Ready Program, a First Nations Community Gallery in Meadows Newfoundland. Mr. Brake has been notified by Minister McKennas office that here in the province your department is responsible for administrating the funding for these projects.

Meadows in Mi'Kmaq is M'skikue'kue'kati , (Place of many Fields). The European explorer Capitan Cook named the bay, The Bay of Islands, the Mi'kmaq knew it as Elmastukek, (Away from the River). The Mi'kmaq from Nova Scotia have always referred to our island as Ktaqmkuk, (across the Waters) which you would know as the island of Newfoundland. The L'nu have been here for centuries and long before the Europeans arrived.

This initiative is a very worthy project and a significant step towards reconciliation and a positive contribution to social change. We are witnessing a groundswell of interest in Museum and Galleries that are more sensitive to Indigenous peoples across Canada.

Elmastukek (Bay of Islands) and the Qalipu Community has its own oral histories, traditions, and stories. The Bay of Islands has its own interpretations of its culture as manifested through

environmental design and this has truly expressed itself in the plank and beam/post architecture of the Olde Brake House in Meadows, Newfoundland and Labrador.

A Community First Nations Gallery in M'sikue'kue'kati (Place with many fields), known now as Meadows is an extremely worthy project, from many angles. It will be a way for many members of the Qalipu First Nation community, to maintain its traditions and culture.

This Community First Nations Museum and Gallery is a Shovel Ready Project in Meadows NL. This project is a manifestation of our culture's desire to exist and share the Indigenous history of this place. It is to be located on his historical land in Meadows and adjacent to his family home. Aaron's family home showcases some of his family's history that flows through the Brake and Matthews families. His family line is one of the oldest known Mikmaw family lines in Elmastukek, (Bay of Islands).

His design is unique in that it will be a blend of traditional and modern architectural designs and materials. The space will showcase many local traditional Mi'kmaw artifacts as well as showcasing items from across Turtle island. The Community Museum and Gallery will also have spaces for cultural interaction, as well as traditional practices, including the process of healing as outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report and its many recommendations.

I have given my full support to Mr. Aaron Brake and his vision to create this Community First Nations Museum and Gallery in M'sikue'kue'kati, (Meadows). This Community Museum and Gallery will clearly express itself in indigenous architecture. The infrastructure funding is administered by Minister Catherine McKenna who is the Governments and Infrastructure Communities Minister.

I would like to draw your attention to a paragraph from the Nov 2019 Mandate Letter from Prime Minister Trudeau, to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities. *"As Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, you will lead work to implement the Government's historic Investing in Canada Plan. This includes working directly with provincial, territorial and municipal governments, as well as **Indigenous communities**, as federal investments in social, green and public transit infrastructure move forward"*.

Minister Bragg, you are a community builder. Your municipal history demonstrates such a commitment to communities. As such, I invite you to support this worthy project. A project that is so very important as a sense of empowerment for our people. The project also advances the unique and historically special Qalipu cultural experience to not only the 23,400 members of Qalipu First Nation but the community at large as well.

My contact information is noted below should you require additional information.

Wela'lin

Keith Cormier

Western Vice Chief, Qalipu First Nation

Cc: Chief Brendan Mitchell Qalipu First Nation