



Building Strong First Nations

NRT Strategic Plan 2010-2013





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New Relationship Trust

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VISION:

A British Columbia where First Nations have efficient and effective governments, vibrant cultures and languages, social justice, and economic prosperity.

MISSION:

Investing in First Nations in British Columbia to support their authority and jurisdiction.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

In providing resources to First Nations in BC, NRT will:

- Reflect the intent and purpose of the New Relationship vision
- Respect First Nations' decision-making authority
- Support Nation building
- Be guided by principles of fairness and equity
- Communicate effectively with BC First Nations
- Encourage First Nation participation in NRT's activities and initiatives
- Not replace or duplicate existing Government or First Nation programs
- Leverage NRT funds wherever possible
- Increase the investment fund in order to provide more benefit
- Be transparent and accountable

INTRODUCTION

The New Relationship Trust (NRT) was created in 2006 as a response to the call for a new relationship between First Nations and the government of BC. In its inaugural year, NRT set the stage for a future strategic direction by engaging with First Nation communities around the province regarding their needs and priorities. NRT's first Strategic Plan was directly based on the feedback received during that engagement process.

The 2006 engagement sessions established a clear mandate and strategic direction for NRT. In particular, NRT was directed to:

- Ensure the fund is available to support future generations by balancing spending with investment; and
- Support capacity building for First Nation communities in five priority areas: Governance, Education, Language & Culture, Youth & Elders, and Economic Development.

Each year, NRT continues to seek community input in order to refine and expand on the strategic direction established during the 2006 Regional Engagement process. Surveys are conducted annually, and in the fall of 2009, NRT conducted a second series of Regional Engagement Sessions, hosting meetings in 10 locations around BC.

Feedback received in 2009 and in 2008 surveys reaffirms NRT's overall mandate and strategic priorities:

- Governance (capacity-building);
- Education;
- Language & Culture
- Youth & Elders
- Economic Development

This Plan, based largely on feedback received in 2009, outlines a revised strategic direction, including a number of new initiatives that NRT will initiate in the next three years.

JOINT MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND CEO

In late 2009, NRT embarked on a second series of Regional Meetings – the first were held in 2006 – where we took the show on the road, visiting 10 communities in BC so we could share what we have been up to and get your input as to what we should do next.

In total, about 250 people attended the regional sessions. More than 400 submitted formal feedback through a survey we made available at meetings or online. We heard from First Nation leaders, management and staff, community members, youth and Elders – all sectors of the First Nations' community as well as numerous people who work peripherally with First Nations. We heard from all corners of the Province, with representation from all regions.

This Strategic Plan is the tangible result of the 2009 feedback gathering exercise. Early in 2010, on the heels of the regional meetings, the NRT Board met for its annual strategic planning session. We reviewed the results of the survey and revised this Plan based on what we heard. The NRT Board feels that the strategic directions contained in this Plan reflect the needs and priorities of First Nations for the next three years.

Some of the key directives that emerged from the feedback are as follows:

- The majority of people support NRT's existing spend/invest strategy based on previous years, whereby we spend some interest and some principal
- A large majority of people want to see the fund last in perpetuity, so support is available for future generations
- There is an overwhelming amount of support for NRT's existing five strategic priorities (Education, Governance, Language & Culture, Youth & Elders, and Economic Development)
- Responses of leadership generally reflected the feedback of all respondents

Given the degree of support for our existing direction, this Strategic Plan being presented is not dramatically different from the plans of previous years. Where you will see changes are within some of our specific initiatives under the five priority areas. Here we have refined our project support to better reflect the most pressing needs of your communities. For example, we have streamlined our Direct Support initiative.

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In addition, we are making subtle internal changes to reflect your feedback. In 2010 and beyond, for example, we will be looking more closely at which communities are not accessing NRT support. We'll try to determine why and ensure that those communities that need capacity support most are able to get it.

We thank all those who participated in this most recent round of feedback gathering. We hope to continue to hear from you and look forward to working with you over the next few years.

Respectfully,



Kathryn Teneese
Chair, Board of Directors



Cliff Fregin
CEO

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

NRT will continue its work toward building stronger First Nations throughout BC by supporting efforts in five key areas. In 2010-2013, NRT will support First Nation capacity building by:

- Enhancing capacity within First Nation **governance**
- Encouraging access to **education**
- Assisting BC First Nations to protect and revive their **languages and cultures**
- Supporting initiatives that engage **youth and Elders**
- Fostering and advancing **economic development** opportunities

GOVERNANCE

"Enhancing capacity within First Nation governments"

NRT defines capacity as the knowledge, abilities, skills, and processes First Nation governments require in order to create successful, vibrant, independent and self-sustaining communities.

NRT's governance capacity building strategy has the following components:

- Direct Support to First Nations
- Policy Development
- Tools and Resources

Direct Support to First Nations

NRT will provide direct support to First Nations and their communities for local capacity building and policy development. Preference may be given to initiatives that facilitate collaboration amongst communities where feasible, and therefore support Nation building.

Eligible projects include:

- Land use planning, including traditional use studies
- Comprehensive community planning, including economic development planning
- Governance capacity development, including support for human resources, knowledge and systems required to build strong governments

Policy Development

NRT will support First Nation organizations that operate at a provincial level as they further policy development initiatives that directly benefit BC First Nations and their communities.

Policy initiatives supported may include:

- Research and business case development to support policy and legislative initiatives
- Province-wide models / principles to organize First Nations, government and industry, and to support business partnerships, negotiation and revenue and benefit sharing

Tools and Resources

NRT will support the development and dissemination of tools and resources that help First Nations and their communities build governance capacity. Governance capacity building resources may include:

- A web portal that will act as online databank for capacity-building tools and resources
- Best Practices
- Negotiating tools and templates
- Case Studies
- Specific studies and research
- Workshops and information sessions

EDUCATION

“Encouraging access to education”

Education is a key to independence for First Nations. Assisting First Nation youth and individuals to pursue and complete secondary and post-secondary education is a high priority for NRT.

The NRT education strategy has three key components:

- Scholarships and bursaries for post-secondary students
- Employment incentives for the hiring of post-secondary students
- Support for First Nation communities for K-12 initiatives

NRT Scholarships and Bursaries

NRT will continue to provide scholarships and bursaries to assist First Nation students in achieving post-secondary education goals. This program awards funding based on qualification criteria and the student’s proposed contribution back to First Nation communities.

- Scholarships will be awarded for students pursuing undergraduate, Masters and PhD degrees.
- Bursaries will be awarded for certificate and trades programs.

NRT will continue to partner with First Nation, public and private scholarship organizations in the province to reach more First Nation students.

Post-Secondary Student Employment Incentive

NRT will provide grants to First Nation governments, communities, and/or organizations to hire First Nation post-secondary students into a capacity building employment opportunity.

This initiative has three objectives:

- To build capacity in First Nation communities and/or organizations
- To give First Nation post-secondary students an opportunity to gain experience relevant to their fields of study
- To assist First Nation students in financing their continuing education

Supporting k-12 initiatives

NRT will support initiatives that increase the First Nations high school graduation rate. Initiatives may include support for special projects, tutoring, school supplies and books. Emphasis will be placed on support in the areas of English, math and sciences within K-12 grades.

LANGUAGE & CULTURE

“Protecting and reviving languages and cultures”

Sixty percent of the First Nation languages in Canada are spoken in BC. With 10 First Nation language families and more than 30 dialects, BC is the most diverse province in the country. However, many of these indigenous dialects are in danger of being lost. Preservation of First Nation languages and cultures builds self-identity and enhances cultural pride. Under this strategic direction, NRT has prioritized language revitalization due to the current crisis facing BC First Nation languages.

NRT’s Language and Culture strategy will work toward:

- Preserving and reviving First Nation languages
- Supporting initiatives that promote and revive First Nations’ cultural and artistic traditions
- Increasing the number of teachers of First Nation languages in BC

Language

In partnership with First Peoples’ Heritage, Language and Culture Council (FPHLCC), NRT will offer Language and Culture project funding and support for the following:

- *FirstVoices*: An initiative that helps First Nation communities build language legacy by enabling members to record, archive and share their languages.
- *BC Language Initiative*: Community and regional projects that communicate, maintain, revitalize and promote First Nation languages.
- *Language Nests*: A program that generates new language speakers by creating language and cultural immersion environments for preschool children and their parents to become fluent in their original languages.
- *Language Authorities*: An initiative to develop language and culture authorities within Nations who can certify speakers, review curriculum, create new vocabulary, address language issues and develop long-term plans.

- *Master Apprentice*: Facilitates the development of fluent speakers of BC First Nation languages through a master apprentice program that partners Elders with committed learners in an immersion environment in the home and on the land.
- *Language & Culture Camps (Immersion)*: First Nation families, elders, youth and children are immersed in their languages and cultures through activities that facilitate the transmission of traditional knowledge and values and nurture relationships between youth, Elders, and the land.

Culture

NRT will support and promote First Nations' arts and culture. Types of initiatives may include:

- Apprenticeship and mentoring programs for artists and arts administrators
- Initiatives that promote First Nation arts and cultural activities

Language teachers certification

NRT will partner with public and private organizations that support the certification of BC First Nation language teachers in order to increase the number of First Nation language teachers within our communities and throughout the education system.

YOUTH & ELDERS

"Supporting initiatives that engage Youth and Elders"

The inclusion of youth and elders is essential to strong, healthy First Nations. Elders hold the wisdom of past generations; youth provide the key to a healthy and vital future.

Based on feedback received in 2008 and 2009, we will focus support for Youth and Elders toward community-based projects, activities and events.

Youth

NRT will continue to support projects for youth at the community level that:

- Strengthen youth leadership
- Build capacity for youth
- Promote mentorship for youth

Elders

NRT will continue to support projects for Elders that:

- Assist groups, communities and organizations representing First Nation Elders in British Columbia, including the annual Elders Gathering
- Develop and deliver projects at the First Nation community level
- Benefit and build capacity for Elders

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

"Fostering and advancing economic development opportunities"

Healthy First Nation communities require a sustainable level of prosperity to achieve their goals and support their programs. By taking advantage of economic development opportunities – both provincially and locally – First Nations can and are beginning to prosper.

In 2007, First Nations began work to develop a province-wide First Nations' Economic Development Strategy with input from First Nations, the Leadership Council, government, and industry. NRT is working within this framework to facilitate economic development opportunities for member communities.

NRT's Economic Development strategy has three focus areas:

- Participation in the BC First Nations Economic Development Working Group
- BC First Nations Equity Fund
- Entrepreneur Equity Matching

BC First Nations Economic Development Working Group

NRT will continue to participate in a Provincial working group tasked with overseeing the Action Plan for the BC First Nation Economic Development Strategy. NRT will support partnerships that increase the capacity of the BC First Nations in regards to economic development. Related work could include research, policy development, advocacy and gathering baseline information regarding First Nations' economic conditions.

BC First Nations Equity Fund

In March 2010, NRT will launch the BC First Nations Equity Fund Limited Partnership with partners All Nations Trust Company (ANTCO) and Nuu-chah-nulth Economic Development Corporation (NEDC). Initially, this equity fund will concentrate on providing financing to BC First Nations involved in alternative energy projects in British Columbia. NRT will continue to work on building a \$50M equity fund for BC First Nations to support partnerships and involvement in viable business projects.

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Entrepreneur Equity

NRT will support BC First Nation entrepreneurs by partnering with the five BC Aboriginal Capital Corporations (ACCs) to provide matching equity (up to a maximum of \$5,000 per entrepreneur) for new or expanding businesses in the province. This exciting opportunity will assist entrepreneurs in obtaining financing for their businesses, as well as assisting ACCs in identifying new lending opportunities in their service areas.

INVESTMENT

The recent 2009 Regional Engagements Sessions and 2009 feedback survey confirmed the original direction given by BC First Nations in 2006, which was NRT should maintain a sustainable investment fund so that future generations of First Nation people will benefit from it.

Investing

NRT's investment strategy consists of short-term and long-term investments. The short-term investment strategy preserves capital by investing in safe and liquid investments. This in turn allows for funding stability. The long-term investments are allocated according to the following target asset mix:

Asset Type	%
Fixed Income	40 %
Canadian Equities	30 %
Global Equities	30 %
	100 %

In 2010 – 2013, NRT will investigate the possibility of allocating up to 5% of its investment portfolio (Target Asset Mix) to invest directly into BC First Nation investment opportunities. NRT will be looking into the viability and logistics of this strategy in 2010.

Fund Growth

A key goal of NRT's financial strategy is growing the investment fund in order to support sustainable and ongoing Nation Building activities well into the future. Fund growth will be accomplished by establishing collaborative partnerships, leveraging program funds from government and other organizations, and other fundraising activities.

Spending

NRT's spending strategy is revised each year during the annual strategic planning session. Spending is dependent on returns on investment, leveraging and fund growth, which differ from year-to-year.

Balancing the needs of First Nations, and in recognition of the current economic challenges faced by all, NRT has decided to retain its project spending budget of

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\$7 million for 2010 and to set targets for 2011/12 and 2012/13 of the same annual amount. These targets will be reviewed each year. Accordingly, NRT's 2010-2013 program spending strategy is as follows:

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Governance	2.25	2.25	2.25
Education	1.75	1.75	1.75
Culture & Language	1.50	1.50	1.50
Youth & Elders	0.50	0.50	0.50
Economic Development	1.00	1.00	1.00
TOTAL	7.00	7.00	7.00

NRT's goal is to limit annual administrative costs to less than 2% of the investment portfolio.

Investment Governance

In order to demonstrate transparency and accountability, NRT established a governance framework for the investment of funds. Components of the framework are as follows:

- An independent, professional investment advisory firm was initially engaged to develop an investment policy and strategy and to assist in the selection of investment managers. The investment advisory firm is monitoring portfolio performance and Investment Manager changes and reporting to management and the directors quarterly
- A custodian firm has been engaged to hold the investments and provide independent accounting of portfolio transactions
- Expertise: three professional investment managers have been selected to manage the investment portfolio. Each Investment Manager manages one of the long-term components of the investment fund: either fixed income, global equities, or Canadian equities
- Diversification: the investments are diversified amongst companies, geographic regions, strategies, and Investment Managers
- Re-balancing: the long-term portfolio is re-balanced quarterly, if necessary, to maintain NRT's long-term target asset diversification mix

COMMUNICATIONS

Accountability is one of NRT's guiding principles. In keeping with this principle, we perform a number of key communication tasks throughout the year that maintain a high level of accountability to all BC First Nations and the Province.

NRT area of focus are the leaders and members of BC First Nations and their communities, and the leadership of the Province of BC.

NRT will draft a Communications Strategy that complements the Strategic Plan. The Communications Strategy will be updated annually.

Communication delivery

NRT employs a multi-faceted approach to communications to raise awareness and knowledge about NRT activities. Specifically, NRT:

- Publishes and distributes a three year strategic plan
- Prepares and publishes an annual report containing the audited financial statements, and a comparison of actual results achieved to the goals and performance measures set by the Directors
- Promotes and creates awareness of opportunities for First Nations to benefit from NRT initiatives and programs
- Informs and educates First Nation and Government leaders about NRT vision and strategy - what it means and what it does not mean
- Maintains a web site and uses technology to improve the overall effectiveness of NRT communications
- Publishes a quarterly newsletter

Feedback gathering

As part of its annual strategic planning activity, NRT solicits feedback from BC First Nations regarding funding priorities as well as management of the investment fund. Feedback is integrated into the Strategic Plan each year and is posted to the NRT web site for public information purposes.

Specific feedback gathering strategies are as follows:

- NRT will deliver an annual survey by mail, e-mail, and/or telephone regarding strategic priorities
- NRT will perform focused surveys about a specific area of programming or operations as required
- NRT will perform a province wide engagement process every three years

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

A number of NRT's guiding principles speak to the need for relationship building, both amongst First Nations and between First Nations and other agencies and governments. These principles include:

- Reflecting the intent and purpose of the New Relationship vision
- Supporting Nation building
- Not replacing or duplicating existing government or First Nation programs

Accordingly, NRT's strategy for relationship building includes the following tactics:

Partnering

NRT will establish and maintain partnerships with First Nations, public and private organizations that share common goals and values in order to leverage funds and minimize administrative costs. NRT's current partners are:

- First Peoples' Heritage Language and Culture Council (FPHLCC)
- First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC)
- First Nations Technology Council (FNTC)
- All Nations Trust Company (ANTCO)
- Nuuchahnulth Economic Development Corporation (NEDC)

Nation Building

In order to support Nation building and cooperation amongst BC First Nation communities, NRT will:

- Where possible within the existing strategic priorities, make support available to initiatives that foster cooperation between communities
- Where practical, ensure that information and outcomes of NRT funding support are shared amongst Nations

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New Relationship Vision

In order to reflect the intent of the NR vision, NRT will work at a Provincial level with other First Nation leadership organizations to effect legislative change in order that First Nations in BC can achieve sustainable self-governance.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

To ensure we are reaching our mandate and goals, NRT has established short, medium and long term measures to demonstrate success.

Short Term (1 – 3 years)

Governance

- Develop 5 Best Practice toolkits and facilitate training sessions to introduce them to BC First Nations;
- In partnership with interested parties, create a self-assessment tool to help BC First Nations to self-determine where and how they wish to focus on governance capacity development;
- Fund up to 8 projects per year in each of the following areas: Land Use Planning, Comprehensive Community Planning, Traditional Land Use Planning and Economic Development Planning;
- Fund up to 5 policy development projects per year for provincially mandated BC First Nation organizations;
- In partnership with the First Nations Technology Council, introduce a fully functional Resource Centre web portal that provides relevant examples of governance capacity building; and
- By the end of year 3, secure up to 75% of the administrative and maintenance costs associated with the Resource Centre web portal.

Education

- Create and distribute a brochure that showcases the NRT scholarships recipients;
- Assist up to 65 First Nation students with funding to attend post-secondary institutions, and up to 50 First Nation students per year in certificate and/or trades programs;
- Attract an additional \$1 million for scholarships and bursaries for BC First Nations through partnerships and leveraging; and
- Promote the hiring of First Nation graduates and post secondary students by establishing an NRT Education Database.

Language and Culture

- Leverage an additional \$5 million in capital for First Nation language and culture initiatives from public and private sources; and
- In partnership, support the digital archiving up to 20 BC First Nation language dialects.

Youth and Elders

- Provide funding up to 70 Youth projects per year;
- Provide funding up to 80 Elders projects per year; and
- Provide financial support to the annual Elders Gathering.

Economic Development

- In partnership with the BC Aboriginal Capital Corporations, support up to 100 BC First Nation entrepreneurs per year by matching equity for business start-ups and/or expansion of businesses within BC;
- Support the implementation of the BC First Nation Economic Development Strategic Plan for British Columbia; and
- Provide equity participation loans for up to 5 projects thru the BC First Nation Equity Fund.

Investments

- Leverage new project funding at a goal of 2:1;
- Maintain the investment fund at \$80 million by March 31, 2013; and
- Limit annual administrative costs to less than 2% of the investment portfolio.

Partnerships

- Develop and maintain at least six partnerships / protocols with other First Nation organizations in order to promote collaboration and prevent duplication of products and services; and
- Initiate a minimum of two new partnerships per year.

Medium Term (3 – 5 years)

- Support the BC First Nations leadership to development mechanisms that assist First Nations and the Government of BC to negotiate reform;
- Initiate a First Nations equity fund to support economic development initiatives, with a goal of building a \$50 million BC First Nations Equity Fund;
- Fundraise an additional \$50 million in capital for the capacity-building objectives of NRT and First Nations; and
- Maintain annual NRT project funding at a minimum of \$7 million.

Long Term (5 – 10 years)

- Grow the Investment Fund to \$150 million by 2025; and
- Grow annual project funding to \$12 million per year by 2025.



