



## **NEWS RELEASE**

# **Community Accord Released**

### ***Municipalities and First Nations join forces to streamline treaty land entitlement process***

**March 29, 2016** – Over a year ago, three parties - the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM), the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM), and the Treaty Land Entitlement Committee (TLEC) - signed a Memorandum of Understanding to review the current Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) process and come up with recommendations on how to improve it. One of the first steps was to form a working group consisting of representatives from municipalities, First Nations representatives and other orders of government in an effort to move forward on land-related issues.

Today marked another important step in the process, with the release of the Community Accord.

“Thanks to the outstanding leadership of Commissioner James Wilson and Chief Nelson Genaille, municipalities and First Nations in Manitoba are working together more than ever before,” said AMM President, Chris Goertzen. “In many cases a First Nations community is a municipality’s closest neighbor so both benefit from a cooperative working relationship. But, as we all know, the Treaty Land Entitlement process can be complicated and sometimes difficult.”

The Community Accord is a volunteer agreement which could be signed between a First Nation government and a municipal government, based on respect for and appreciation of each other’s diverse backgrounds. It acknowledges that recognition, respect, co-operation, partnership and reconciliation are the foundation of both communities’ common good.

“This Community Accord is an important step in creating the kinds of partnerships that can grow economic opportunities for all partners,” said Treaty Commissioner, James Wilson. “Our ability to work cooperatively together will reap benefits for us all.”

"First off, I commend Treaty Commissioner James Wilson for his instrumental role in bringing First Nations and municipalities together in this trilateral education process," said Chief Nelson Genaille, President of the Treaty Land Entitlement Committee of Manitoba. "The outcome of this 1st phase is this draft optional Accord that municipalities and First Nations can consider utilizing as they begin their potential relationship building process. Moving forward, I am in full support of continuing the work of this committee, which Commissioner Wilson helped facilitate and create."

The working group's next steps will include finalizing an information package which will help municipalities and First Nations deal with the TLE process.

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