

# K'ay 'awet we'izdut'ë'n

LET'S START NOW



## Witset First Nation Comprehensive Community Plan

NOVEMBER 2018



**WITSET First Nation**

**Band Council Resolution**

No. 0001-\_\_\_\_\_

2018 - 08

**BAND COUNCIL RESOLUTION OF**  
**WITSET FIRST NATION**

**Date of duly convened meeting:**

**DO HEREBY RESOLVE THAT:** A Quorum of 5 (minimum) or more; WITSET Band Council met on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of November, 2018.

**WHEREAS:**

- A. Witset First Nation Council is empowered to act on behalf of Witset First Nation; and
- B. **K'ay'awet we'izdut'ë'n** (Let's get started), Witset First Nation's Comprehensive Community Land Use Plan was:
  - a. Developed through a community and member-driven participatory planning approach;
  - b. Received broad community support at community outreach activities; and
  - c. Incorporated guiding policy and community feedback from the 2017 Phase 1 Land Use Plan project.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Council, for and on behalf WITSET First Nation, hereby:

- 1. Accepts and endorses **K'ay'awet we'izdut'ë'n** as the Witset First Nation's guiding community plan
- 2. Will proceed with its recommendations, including the identified Foundation Actions;
- 3. Commit to conducting regular plan monitoring and evaluation as identified in the Plan.

## QUORUM: 5 (FIVE)

*(Only to be used when others are not available and have sent regrets, but are fully informed of the BCR)*

---

Victor Jim, *Chief Councilor*

---

Sandra George, *Councilor*

---

Gary Naziel, *Councilor*

---

Sheri Green, *Councilor*

---

Warner William, *Councilor*

---

Freda Huson, *Councilor*

---

Lillian Lewis, *Councilor*

---

Desmond McKinnon, *Councilor*

---

Margaret LaRose, *Councilor*

---

Russel Lewis Jr., *Councilor*

---

Archie Joseph, *Councilor*

---

Clement Mitchell, *Councilor*

*" The Witset First Nation practices Wiguus<sup>1</sup> by engaging, understanding, inspiring, and empowering our ski ze', revitalizing our roots and cultural systems, integrating traditional knowledge with the knowledge of today through building capacity and resources, celebrating our successes, and adapting to meet the needs and interests of ski ze', and future generations.*

#3 – 205 Beaver Road, Smithers, BC V0J 2N1



# Contents

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Witset Community Vision	2
Witset Community Goals	3
Witset CCP Actions	3
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>6</b>
CCP Overview	7
How We Did It	8
CCP Research and Reports	10
<b>WHERE ARE WE NOW? .....</b>	<b>11</b>
A Short History	12
Witset Today	13
Our People	18
Our Lands	19
<b>WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO? .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Our Vision	21
Our Community Goals	21
<b>HOW DO WE GET THERE? .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Witset Planning Principles	24
CCP Actions	25
<b>HAVE WE ARRIVED?.....</b>	<b>35</b>
CCP Monitoring and Evaluation	36
Process Monitoring	36
Outcome Monitoring	37
Evaluation	38
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>39</b>
Foundation Actions Work Plan Briefs	40
Community Action Ideas	48

# Acknowledgements

This Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) was created by and for Witset First Nation members. From three open houses in Witset to special workshops with Elders and youth, our community was deeply involved in its development over the past 10 months. This is our plan. Thank you to every member who participated in creating it. We could not have done it without you!

The creation of our CCP also involved considerable input from Witset leadership (Chief Victor Jim; Deputy Chief Sheri Green; Councillor Archie Joseph; Councillor Warner William; Councillor Sandra George; Councillor Des McKinnon; Councillor Lillian Lewis; Councillor Freda Huson; Councillor Gary Nazeil; Councillor Clement Mitchell; Councillor Russel Lewis, Jr.; Councillor Margaret Larose) and Witset staff. Thank you.

A special thanks to those individuals who were directly involved on a more day-to-day basis. Our CCP Project Team met regularly over the course of the project and reviewed all materials and helped out at community events (Lucy Gagnon, Monica Michelle, Lacey Nazeil, Norma Stumborg). Christine Bruce also provided a large number of photographs and invaluable proofreading and editing help. Thank you.

Witset Elders and board members at the Witsuwit'en Language and Culture Society provided input on our CCP and helped us come up with the name of our CCP, *K'ay 'awet we'izdut'ë'n* and provided other oversight and input on our CCP. Thank you.

Students from Witset Elementary Secondary School and ICount Secondary School also contributed valuable input along with staff from Kyah Wiget Education Society. Thank you. A special thank you to Diane Mattson for her input and feedback on the plan.

We would also like to thank our project consultants, EcoPlan (EPI), who provided technical planning support for the project. Thank you.

# Executive Summary

In our Witsuwit'en language, *K'ay 'awet we'izdut'ë'n* means "Let's start now." As our guiding Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP), it marks a new beginning for Witset, and the start of our journey to achieve our community vision.

As illustrated, our CCP is organized around and guided by our vision. Within the vision are our community goals, which represent the major community development areas we need to work on as we progress towards our vision. Under each of our community goals, we have identified actions (programs, projects, plans) that, once developed and implemented, will help us achieve the CCP goal(s) they are associated with.

## WITSET COMMUNITY VISION

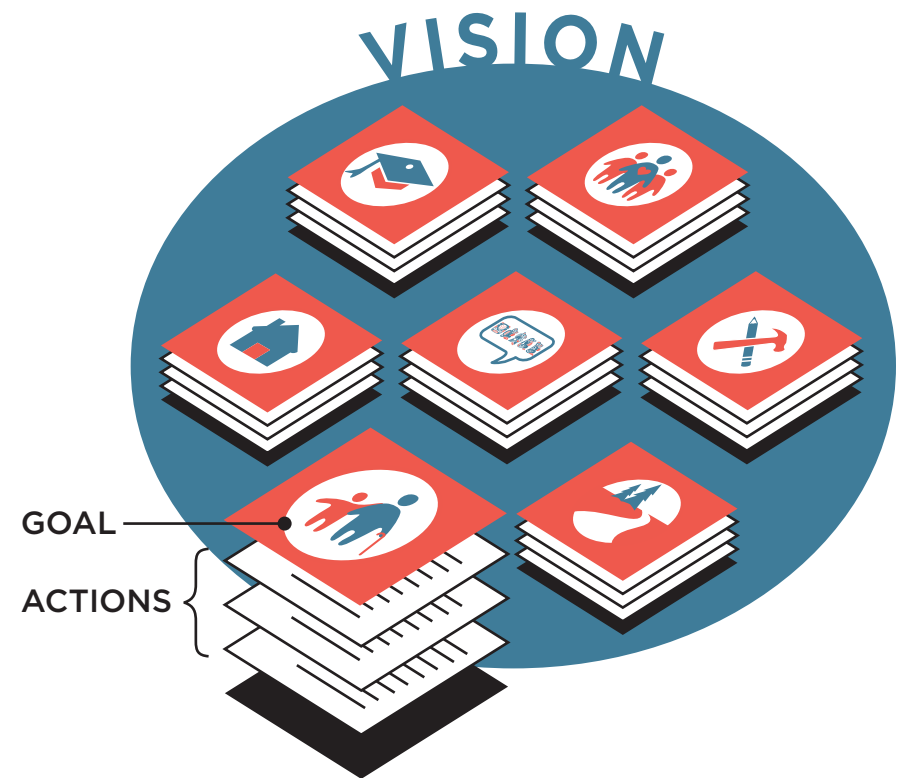
Our community vision was first developed by leadership and confirmed with members through the CCP process as a future they would like to work towards.

---

Witset First Nation is a vibrant, healthy, self-sufficient community that enjoys a high quality of life, and practices good governance according to a'nuk'nuwet'en<sup>1</sup>

---

**FIGURE:** Our CCP is organized around and guided by our vision.



<sup>1</sup> The traditional laws of our people

## WITSET COMMUNITY GOALS

With members' help, we prioritized our community goals so we can tackle the ones that matter most first. Although members agreed with the order listed below, they also felt that priorities could change over time and should be reviewed regularly.



### **Support Elders and youth**

Support our future leaders, while caring for those that came before them.



### **Protect and promote our culture and language**

Preserve our roots by teaching our traditional ways and language to future generations.



### **Improve community health and wellbeing**

Keep members healthy, with a focus on prevention.



### **Address our housing needs**

Improve existing homes and provide a range of healthy, housing options.



### **Improve education and learning resources**

Provide education and skills development for all members through all life stages.



### **Strengthen our local economy**

Support member- and Witset-owned businesses to create employment opportunities and generate revenues for our community.



### **Manage our lands and protect the environment**

Protect and manage our reserve lands and steward our environment for future generations.

## WITSET CCP ACTIONS

Over the course of developing our CCP, members, leadership and staff generated almost 100 different action ideas. These ideas were for projects, policies and programs we could undertake that would help us achieve our community goals and move us towards our vision.

Because we don't have the capacity (staff time, money, expertise) to undertake all of the actions, we evaluated and organized them to create a list of priority actions to undertake over the next several years.

### **Quick Start Actions**

These are simple, relatively inexpensive actions that will demonstrate that the CCP is being put into action and build momentum for undertaking other actions.

#### **Road Paving**

- **Why?** Road paving was consistently identified as a priority action for Witset and has already been discussed at the staff level. Paving key roads in the community will improve access to Witset facilities and will improve air quality, public safety and community aesthetics.
- **What?** Beaver Road has already been identified as one of the first roads to be paved.

#### **Lake improvements**

- **Why?** Improving access to and into Takiga Lake was consistently identified as a priority action for Witset, particularly with young members, youth and recreation providers in Witset administration.
- **What?** Improving access to the lake will improve recreation opportunities in Witset.



## Foundation Actions

These are more detailed actions that provide a foundation for others. They should be implemented following adoption of the CCP and completed within one to two years.

### *Witset Communications Strategy*

- **Why?** Members, staff, and leadership all value respectful, timely and clear communications. Communications between staff, leadership, and members is also a critical component of effective decision-making.
- **What?** We have been steadily working on improving and expanding our communications and our Communications Coordinator has already developed a draft plan. The strategy will build on this work and outline communications and engagement procedures for staff and leadership, and for members.

### *Witset Records and Information Management Framework*

- **Why?** Effective and efficient records management is an important contributor to the success of any organization.
- **What?** The framework would establish records and information management responsibilities to ensure that critical records and information are organized, secure, and maintained. This action would include Identifying a digital file management system that could be used by Witset administration and leadership.

### *Witset Community Economic Development Strategy*

- **Why?** A strong, stable and sustainable local economy is the foundation of a successful, independent community. While Witset has an active Economic Development Department and a number of successful ventures underway, there is no high-level strategy in place to guide work.

- **What?** The strategy will build on economic development work completed and underway, prioritize community economic development goals and create a roadmap to achieve them.

### *Witset Community Land Use Plan*

- **Why?** Clear, transparent land management policy provide the foundation for community development initiatives, including housing, transportation systems, utilities, and community facilities.
- **What?** The Witset Community Land Use Plan (now completed) provides a framework to guide future development and land uses on our seven reserves. Its development was closely linked to the CCP process.

### *Witset Education Facility Plan*

- **Why?** Improving and expanding educational facilities was consistently identified as one of our most important community needs. Engaging members in these discussions and other education planning is key.
- **What?** Led by Kyah Wiget Education Society, the project would review existing programs and current facility needs for school-aged and adult learners and create a plan to develop new facilities and resources for Witset members.



### Medium-Term Actions:

These are actions to be undertaken after Foundation Actions have been implemented. Two of the Medium-Term Actions are planning projects which, when completed, will likely include additional actions to be undertaken. These additional actions should be prioritized and phased in a similar manner to CCP actions to ensure Witset administration has the capacity (financial, human resources, time) to implement them.

#### *Witset Housing Plan*

---

- **Why?** Safe, healthy housing that provides a range of options for all ages and economic abilities is a cornerstone of strong communities.
- **What?** The plan will provide guidance on developing new housing types (apartments, supported living units), a potential new subdivision in the community, and policies around new housing opportunities off-reserve, including in Smithers.

#### *Witset Lands Department*

---

- **Why?** Implementation of the Witset Community Land Use Plan and ongoing management of our reserve lands will be more effective with a new Lands Department.
- **What?** A Lands Department will consolidate and coordinate land use planning activities into a single department. This department would collaborate across departments, with Council, and coordinate with the Office of the Wet'suwet'en on lands-related issues in our larger territory.

# Introduction

*This section introduces our CCP and explains how it will be used.*



## CCP OVERVIEW

*K'ay 'awet we 'izdut'ë'n* is a roadmap to help guide community development in Witset. As a high-level plan, it will help guide the development of future plans and strategies outlined in this CCP.

Staff and Council will use this document to organize and track progress on plan implementation.

Members can also use this CCP along with our Community Land Use Plan to better understand how planning decisions are made, and their role in making them happen.

*K'ay 'awet we 'izdut'ë'n* is organized into four sections, which each asks a key question.

- **Where are we now?** This is a brief summary of how we created this plan, and of the key historical events that have shaped our community. This section also includes some statistical highlights to provide a snapshot of Witset today.
- **Where do we want to go?** This section describes where Witset wants to go in the future. That future is described in a community vision and supported by member-prioritized community goals that will help guide us toward our vision.
- **How do we get there?** This describes the specific steps we will take on our journey towards our vision. Here we identify CCP actions (plans, projects, programs) and who is responsible at Witset for making them happen.
- **Have we arrived?** This section provides an example of a monitoring and evaluation framework we will use in measuring the success of our CCP as we implement it. Evaluating our progress and making adjustments and revisions where necessary will be a critical part of our CCP journey.

## WITSET COMMUNITY LAND USE PLAN

As part of our CCP planning process, we developed a Community Land Use Plan. The plan outlines a clear and transparent land management policy to guide future development in Witset village and our other reserves. As a planning tool, the Community Land Use Plan:

- Describes what can be built and where;
- Establishes basic guidelines for on-reserve construction and development designed to minimize the negative impacts associated with development; and
- Provides a simple development review process that will help ensure that future development projects conform to Land Use Plan policies and guidelines.

The plan's development was closely linked to, and coordinated with, the Witset Comprehensive Community Plan process. It also includes directions from our 2018 – 2020 Strategic Plan, and builds on what was heard during the preliminary phase of land use planning work that occurred in Witset in 2017.

## HOW WE DID IT

Our CCP was developed through a participatory, community-based process that also involved staff and leadership. To respect and honour past community input, the planning team was careful to include member feedback from previous planning initiatives, including *Witset Community Land Use Plan Framework Phase 1*.

We established a project team that included our Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director, Housing Manager, and Economic Development Coordinator. They worked with leadership, Elders and other members on the project. Community, staff and leadership engagement events included the following.

### **Round One Engagement - March 2018, Witset**

- Council presentation
- Staff session
- Community Open House
- Elders session

### **Round Two Engagement - June 2018, Witset**

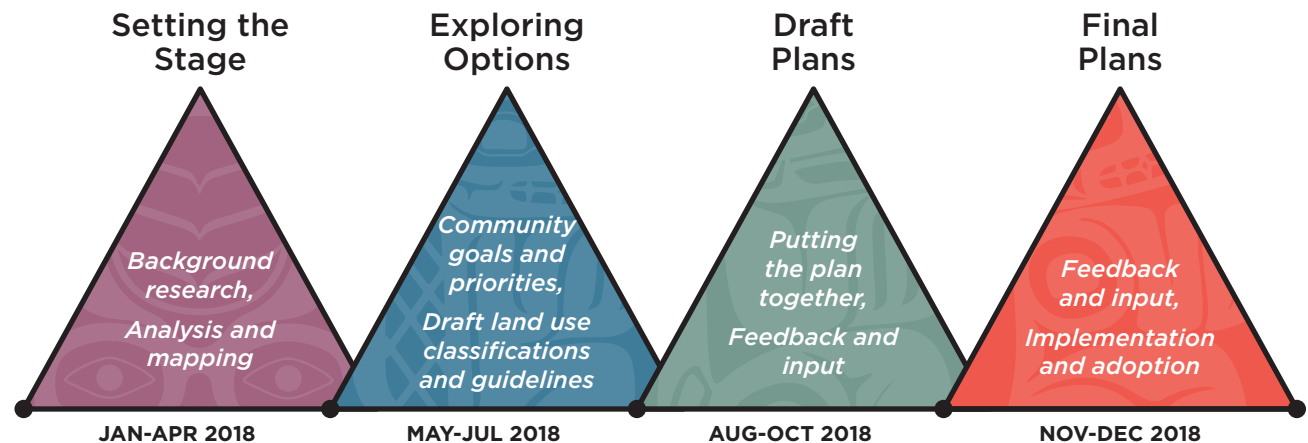
- Staff session
- Community Open House
- Witsuwit'en Language and Culture Society (WLCS)
- Kyah Wiget Education Society (KWES)
- Youth sessions (Witset Elementary Secondary School, ICount)

### **Round Three Engagement - October 2018, Witset**

- Staff session
- Community Open House
- Elders session
- Witsuwit'en Language and Culture Society (WLCS)
- Kyah Wiget Education Society (KWES)
- Youth sessions (Witset Elementary Secondary School, ICount)
- Witset Annual General Meeting (AGM) presentation

Other community outreach included articles in the Beaver Slap News, project updates and information materials on the Witset's website, and project updates on Witset social media.

The project itself was completed over 11 months, as illustrated in the project timeline.



**FIGURE:** K'ay 'awet we 'izdut'ë'n project timeline



**FIGURE:** Community engagement was an important part of the project and included engagement with youth from ICount



Photos by Christine Bruce

## CCP RESEARCH AND REPORTS

We created a number of supporting documents and outreach materials as part of our CCP. This section summarizes some of the main ones.

- **Community Profile:** Community Profile: Before we began planning for our future, we needed to clearly understand our current conditions. To do this, we completed a Community Profile that provided a snapshot of Witset today. In addition to looking at what's happening in Witset village, the profile provided direction on areas to which we paid special attention in our CCP, like language and culture, and Elders and youth. The profile also provides important information we needed for our Land Use Plan and CCP, like how our population will grow in the future and our members' projected housing needs.
- **Open House Reports:** Getting members involved in the development of our CCP was a priority. We held three community open houses that each attracted a lot of members and their families from Witset village and beyond. The events generated a lot of valuable feedback, which we recorded and summarized in three reports. The information summarized in these reports played a very large part in our CCP.
- **Beaver Slap News and Witset Social Media:** We worked with our Communications Coordinator to produce project updates that were carried in the Beaver Slap News and in regular social media updates.



**FIGURE:** *Our Community Profile looked for trends in our community, so we could start thinking about how we can build on our strengths (the positive trends) and address our weaknesses (the negative trends)*

# Where are we now?

*This section provides a summary of the key historical events that have helped shape who we are, along with some of the relevant statistics that provide a snap shot of our community today.*





*Witset's largest annual event is the Return of the Salmon. Normally held in July, Return of the Salmon is a celebration and welcoming back of the salmon, marking the opening of the fishing season. (Photo by Christine Bruce)*

## A SHORT HISTORY

Originally named Kyah Wiget, Witset is a Witsuwit'en village in the heart of northwest British Columbia, located on the shores of the Widzin Kwah (also known as the Bulkley River). Witset means "the people of the first village."

Our current village was built during the early 1900s, but has served as the Witsuwit'en fishing grounds for thousands of years. Radiocarbon dating identifies archaeological evidence of settlement from 3,400 BC and the canyon has served as a traditional Witsuwit'en fishing place for thousands of years.

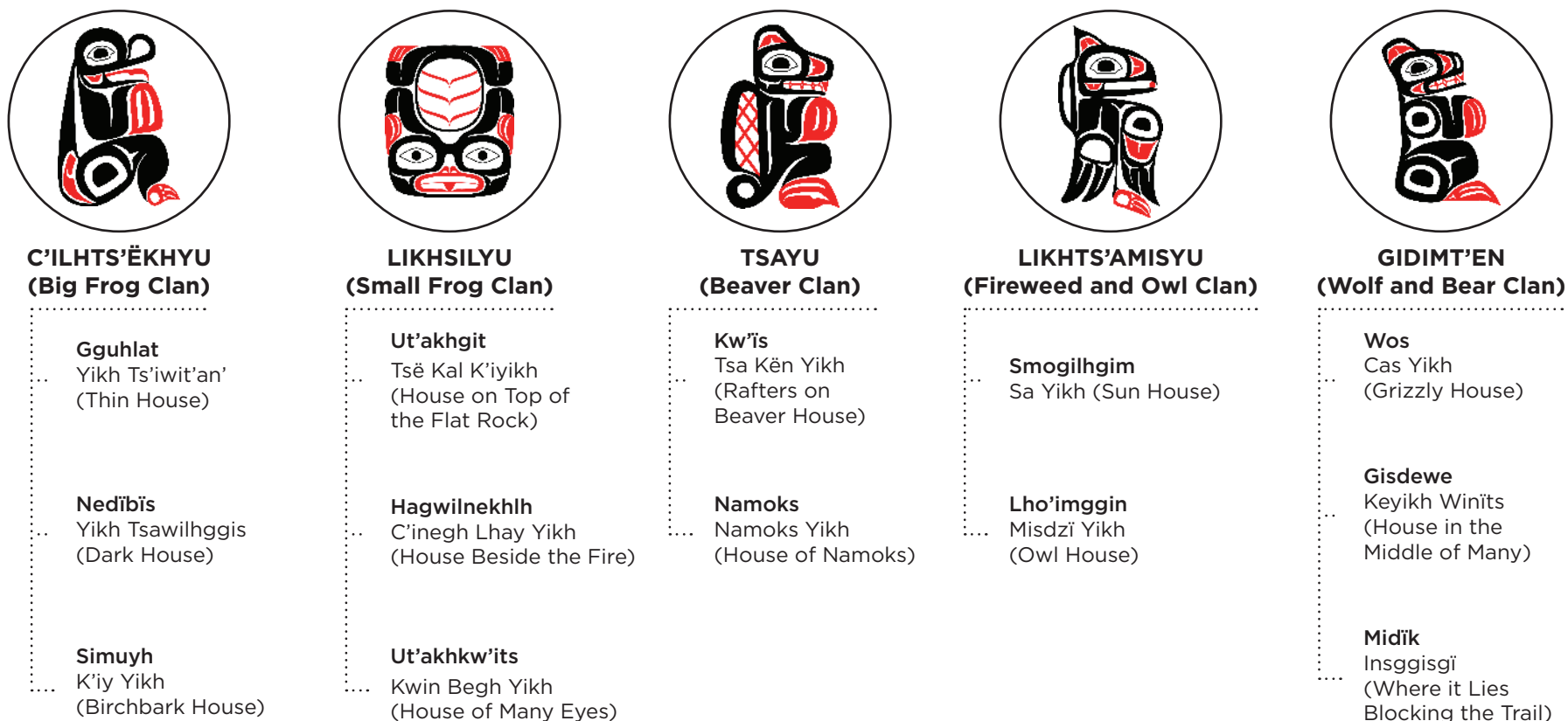
---

*Witset used to be called Moricetown, named after a Catholic missionary, but we recently officially reinstated our traditional name, Witset.*

---

Witset was one of nine traditional Witsuwit'en Villages located within the traditional territory of the Likhsilyu Clan, and more specifically, the Tsë Kal K'iyikh (House on Top of the Flat Rock). Clans are largely made up of several families who work together on the land and share common ancestors and history, whereas houses are smaller family groups who lived together in one house.

Prior to the reserve being established in 1891, the Witsuwit'en people were solely governed by a hereditary Clan system. Witsuwit'en peoples who are members of Witset follow a matrilineal system, where a house is closely related to the mother's side. Traditionally, clans and houses made their decisions during the summer when they gathered in the fishing villages to harvest salmon and hold feasts called Balhats. Balhats are a continued tradition, and significant to our culture and decision-making processes.

**FIGURE:** *Witset Clans and Houses***WITSET TODAY**

Our 2018 Witset Community Profile provides a snap shot of current conditions in the Witset village area, while also considering members living in other parts of BC. In addition to looking at what's happening in Witset village, the profile provided direction on areas we paid special attention to in our CCP, like language and culture, and Elders and youth. The profile also provided important information we needed for our Land Use Plan and CCP, like how our population will grow in the future and our members' projected housing needs.





Photo by Christine Bruce

## ELDERS AND YOUTH

Together, our youth and Elders represent our future and the cultural traditions we must carry forward. We must support our future leaders, while caring for those that came before them.

### **Current situation:**

We are in a period of growth and rediscovery. Witset Elementary Secondary School and ICount Secondary School have expanded their cultural and language teachings and programs. After generations of living apart, older and younger members are reconnecting with each other and their roots.



### **Status:**

Getting better

## CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

We are committed to teaching our culture and language to all age groups, especially our youth.

### **Current Situation:**

Kyah Wiget Education Society (KWES) is the independent organization that oversees education in Witset and encourages the integration of Witsuwit'en culture in our educational programs, while the Witsuwit'en Culture and Language Society (WCLS) works to promote the Witsuwit'en language and culture to ensure the survival of our ways for future generations. We have some culture and language programs (language programs for youth), but opportunities are limited. We know that we are losing our fluent speakers and that more must be done to steward and, in time, revitalize our Witsuwit'en language.



### **Status:**

Mixed



Photo by EcoPlan



## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Healthy minds and healthy bodies for all members will make us stronger as a community and a Nation.

### **Current Situation:**

We are facing considerable health and related social challenges – diabetes, obesity, drug and alcohol use, lateral violence – that require continued work to manage and overcome. Our new Health Centre is helping to provide members with an increasing range of support services close to home. We are also working with the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) to expand home-based care and support services. While these programs and services are making an impact, challenges remain. There are also opportunities to better coordinate health programming with Kyah Wiget Education Society (KWES), Witsuwit'en Culture and Language Society (WCLS) and others to make good health and wellbeing a part of everyday life at Witset.



**Status:**  
Mixed



## HOUSING

Improving our existing homes, while providing a range of healthy housing options and tenures at Witset is an important objective for all members.

### **Current Situation:**

Currently, there are 229 homes in Witset. Most were built prior to 1991 and about half of them are in need of major repairs. Currently there are about 120 members on the waitlist for a new house. In the future, Witset will need more housing suited to families with children, as well as housing that will allow Elders to stay in the community as they age. We also know that we will need to build somewhere between 150 and 240 homes over the next 20 years (between seven and 12 new units a year).



**Status:**  
Mixed





## EDUCATION

We understand that better education and continued skills development for all members will help Witset achieve a better tomorrow.

### **Current situation:**

Education outcomes in Witset are improving. Between 2006 to 2016, high school graduation rates increased significantly, as did the number of members with college and university certificates, diplomas or degrees. However, gaps remain between education levels achieved by Witset members and the rest of British Columbians. Kyah Wiget Education Society (KWES) is working on developing and delivering new and expanded education programs for all groups.



**Status:**  
Getting Better

## JOBS AND ECONOMY

We recognize that a strong, sustainable economy is the foundation of a successful, independent community. Because of this, community economic development is top priority for Witset.

### **Current situation:**

Witset has invested in the Witset Health Centre, the Kyah Wiget Education Society (KWES), Kyahwood Mill, and tourism businesses that have created significant employment for our community. However, our unemployment rate (20%) remains too high.



**Status:**  
Mixed



## **LANDS AND ENVIRONMENT**

---

Protecting and managing our reserves lands, while improving community infrastructure and stewarding our environment for future generations is critically important to Witset.

### ***Current Situation:***

With the development of a Draft Land Use Plan and with one staff member getting their Professional Land Management certification, the potential for improving land management on our reserves is strong.



### ***Status:***

Getting Better



OUR PEOPLE

As of February 2018, Witset’s total population is 2,040 members. Approximately 32% of Witset members live on Witset reserves, with the rest living on other reserves or off-reserve throughout BC and Canada. Our membership has also been growing slowly, up from 1,787 members in 2006.

Looking at the big picture, there are two notable population trends for Witset:

- **More of our members live outside of Witset:** This will likely continue depending on a number of factors, including availability of housing and employment opportunities.
- **Witset is an aging community:** 11% of members living in Witset are over the age of 65, which is up from 5% in 2010, and 3% in 2006. This means that 70 of our members living on-reserve are over 60 years of age.

TABLE: Witset Population and Projections

	2006	2011	2018	2028 forecast	2038 forecast
Total registered membership	1787	1921	2,040	2281- 2550	2550 - 3188
% members living on-reserve	37%	36%	33%	33% (assumed)	33% (assumed)
On-reserve members	660	693	660	753-842	842 -1052
Off-reserve members	1127	1228	1380	1528-1709	1708-2136

The table provides a breakdown of population growth and projections.

As illustrated, about two thirds of our members live off-reserve and the number is going up. Some of the main reasons for this trend likely include:

- Lack of adequate housing for a growing population
- Lack of employment opportunities in or near Witset
- Members working or going to school in places located far from Witset

To address this trend, we know that there is a need to not only provide additional housing, but also to develop additional employment and entrepreneurial opportunities to accommodate, attract and employ off-reserve members.



Photo by EcoPlan

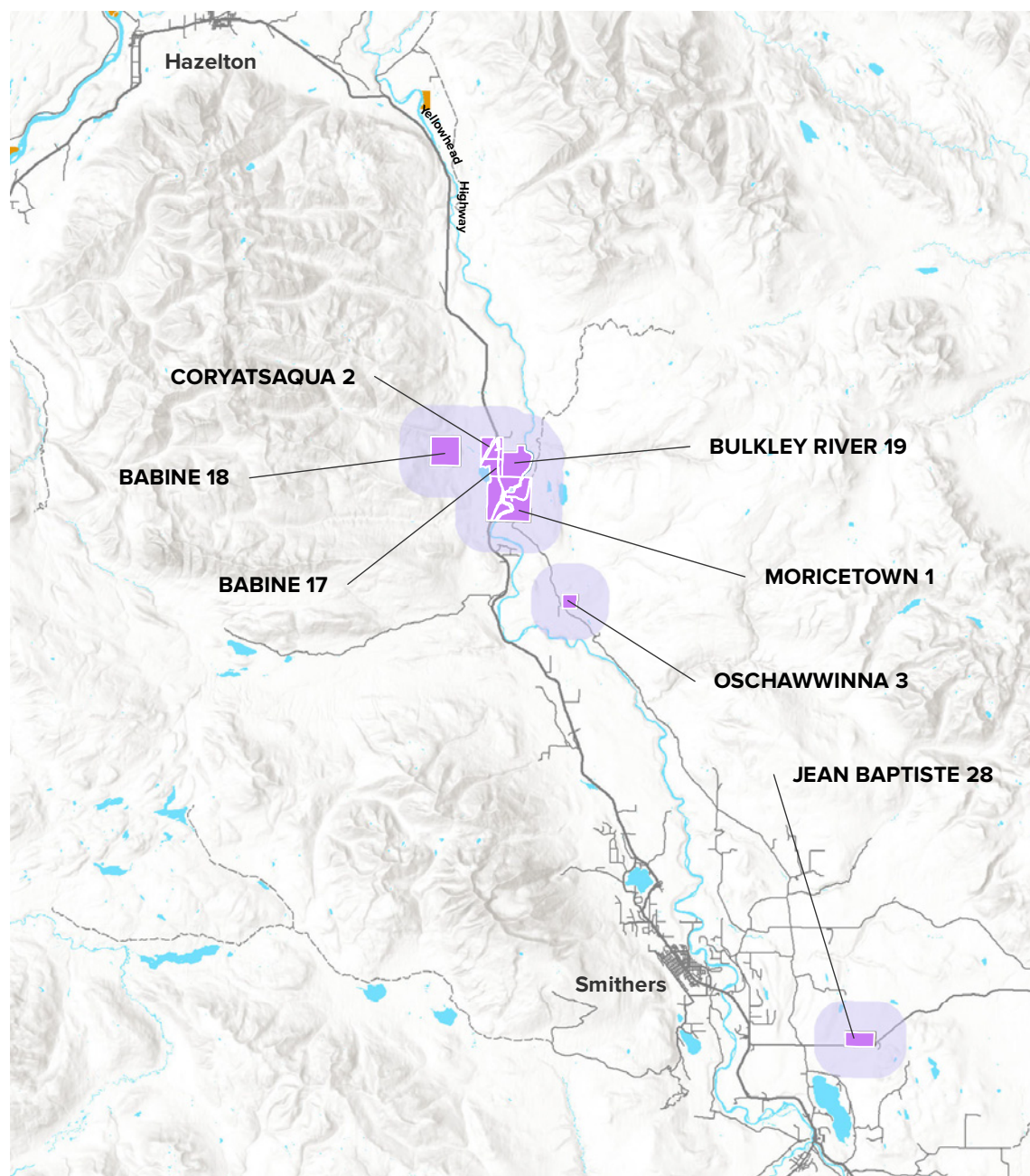


## OUR LANDS

Witset is comprised of seven reserves totaling approximately 14 square kilometres: Moricetown 1, Jean Baptiste 28, Coryatsaqua (Moricetown) 2, Bulkley River 19, Babine 17, Babine 18, and Oschawwinna 3. The village of Witset, where the Band office and services are located, sits along Highway 16 in the Bulkley River Valley, in Moricetown 1. The community is located approximately 32 kilometres northwest of Smithers along the Yellowhead Highway No. 16 in northwestern BC. The Widzin Kwah runs through the community, and the canyon where the river narrows has long been an important community gathering area.

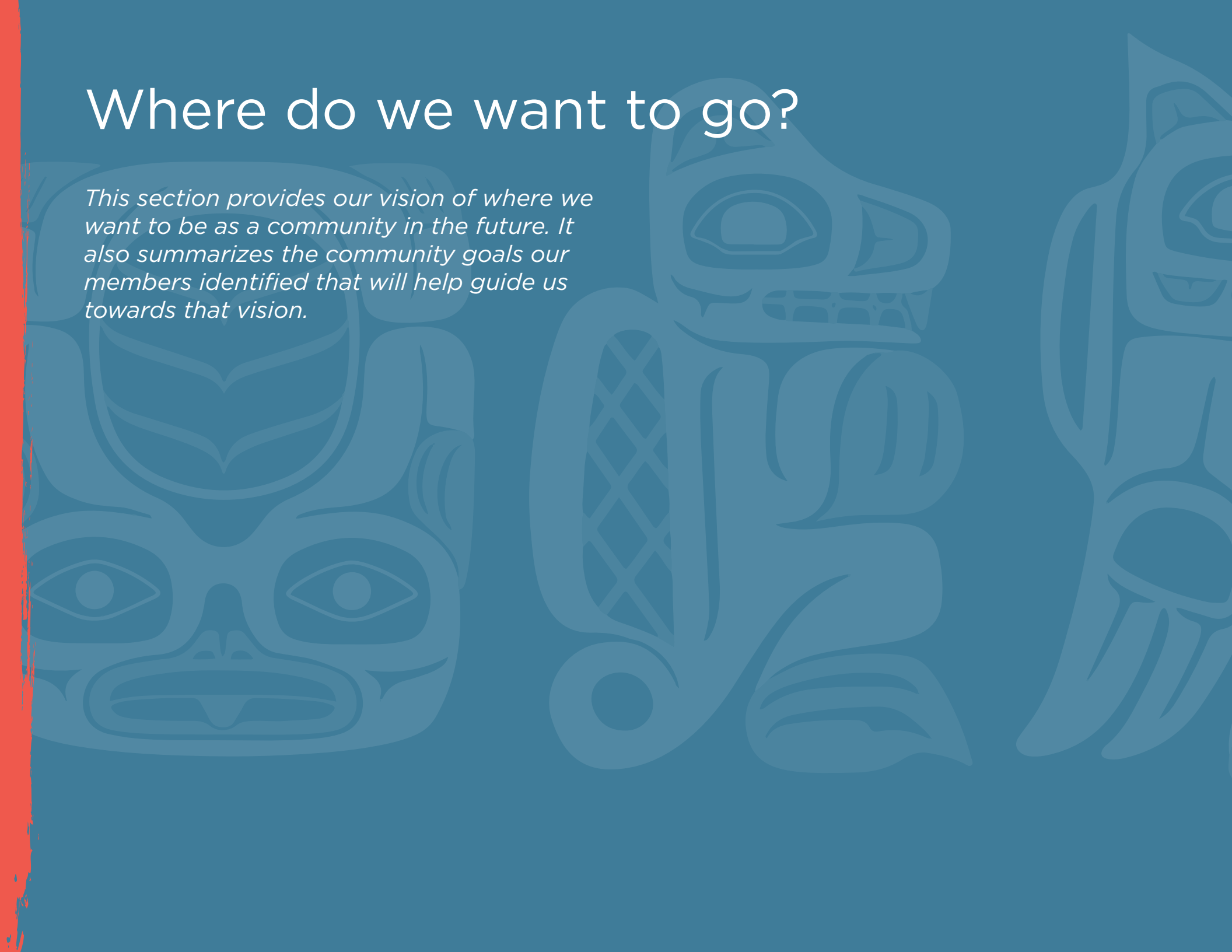
As shown on the map, the majority of Witset reserves are centered around Witset village, where most commercial services and spaces are located (on Moricetown 1). Oshawwinna 3 and Jean Baptiste 28 are more geographically removed from the main community area.

**MAP:** *Witset reserves*



# Where do we want to go?

*This section provides our vision of where we want to be as a community in the future. It also summarizes the community goals our members identified that will help guide us towards that vision.*





## OUR VISION

Our vision statement describes the kind of future we want for Witset First Nation. We view it as a long-term goal that our CCP will help move us towards.

Throughout community engagement, we asked members to tell us what a successful future for Witset would look like. We also asked members if they liked a vision statement that Witset Council had developed. From this feedback we created the following vision statement.

---

Witset First Nation is a vibrant, healthy, self-sufficient community that enjoys a high quality of life, and practices good governance according to a'nuk'nuwet'en<sup>2</sup>

---

## OUR COMMUNITY GOALS

Developed over the course of our CCP project by Witset members, staff and leadership, our community goals are the heart of our CCP.

With members' help, we identified seven community goals during our CCP process. We worked with members to prioritize them, so we can tackle immediately the ones that matter most. It is important to note that the range of support for each of the community goals was very close (i.e., no one goal received a lot more support than the others). Members also understand that they are all closely inter-related (e.g., improving community health and wellbeing is linked to addressing our housing needs, supporting our elders and youth, and even protecting and promoting our culture and language).

<sup>2</sup> The traditional laws of our people





**Support ELDERS and YOUTH:** Support our future leaders, while caring for those that came before them.



**Protect and promote our CULTURE and LANGUAGE:** Preserve our roots by teaching our traditional ways and language to future generations.



**Improve COMMUNITY HEALTH and WELLBEING:** Keep members healthy, with a focus on prevention.



**Address our HOUSING needs:** Improve existing homes and provide a range of healthy, housing options.



**Improve EDUCATION and LEARNING RESOURCES:** Provide education and skills development for all members through all life stages.



**Strengthen our LOCAL ECONOMY:** Support member- and Witset-owned businesses to create employment opportunities and generate revenues for our community.



**Manage our lands and protect the ENVIRONMENT:** Protect and manage our reserves lands and steward our environment for future generations.

We understand that as we put our CCP into action and as our community continues to grow and change, the order of our community goals may change, or new ones may be identified. This is why we will be reviewing them regularly using the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework that's included in this plan.

# How do we get there?

*This section provides an overview of the guiding principles our CCP recommends applying to future Witset planning projects. It also identifies the projects we will need to undertake to reach our community goals and vision.*



Photo by Christine Bruce

## WITSET PLANNING PRINCIPLES

These are the principles we want to apply to our current and future community development projects in Witset. They describe how Witset should carry out community planning and development projects in Witset, including CCP action implementation.

Our principles will be reviewed periodically as part of general CCP monitoring and evaluation.

- **Witset community values should be incorporated in all community planning.**
  - All Witset planning activities should be guided by the Witset community vision.
- **Witset community planning should be transparent and engage members, staff and leadership.**
  - Witset should engage members in community planning initiatives, including members living off-reserve.

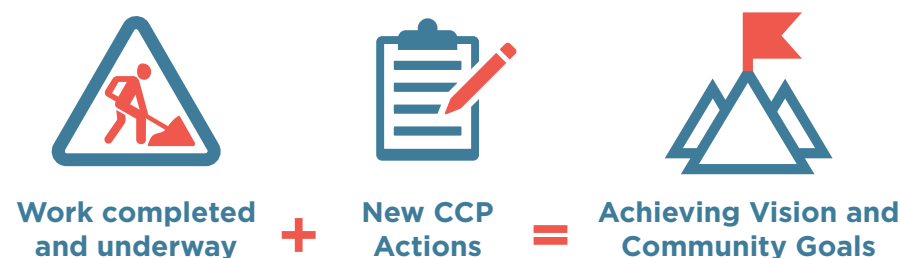
- All Witset planning should be open and share project information (purpose, timeline, results, feedback) with Witset members for review and comment.
- Witset community planning should involve department managers and leadership.
- **Witset community planning should be consistent with the principles and community goals identified in the Witset CCP.**
  - Witset department work plans should incorporate and consider CCP goals and principles.
  - Future development and growth should be consistent with the Witset Community Land Use Plan and Witset CCP.

## CCP ACTIONS

Over the course of the year that we developed our CCP, members, staff and leadership generated over 100 different ideas for projects we could undertake to help us towards our vision.

Before identifying the actions for the final CCP, it was recognized that a lot of work is already being done to address community goals. It is hoped that new actions will build on the work already completed and/or underway.

**FIGURE:** *Witset CCP Actions - Building on work completed and underway*



Because we don't have the capacity (staff time, money, expertise) to undertake all of the actions, we organized them to create a list of priority actions that best support our community goals. We organized into three categories.

### Quick Start Actions

These are simple, relatively inexpensive actions that can help:

- Build momentum for undertaking Foundation Actions.
- Provide a learning-by-doing opportunity that will help the implementation of other actions.

### Foundation Actions

These actions are considered the groundwork for Short-term Actions. Foundation Actions should be implemented following adoption of the CCP and be completed within one to two years.

### Medium-Term Actions

These are actions to be undertaken after Quick Start Actions and Foundation Actions have been implemented. It is anticipated that Medium-Term Actions would be undertaken within two to three years of adopting this CCP and will be completed within one to two years after starting them.

The phasing of any action may change should new or unexpected program funding become available for a particular action. Changing community demographics, resources and needs may also require some changes to action phasing.



# Quick Start Actions

Two Quick Start Actions were identified. Additional information and work plans are provided in the Appendices.

## *Road Paving*

Road paving in the Witset village area was consistently identified as a priority action for Witset and has already been discussed at the staff level. Paving key roads in the community will:

- Improve access to Witset facilities, including Witset Elementary Secondary School, Witset Health Centre, Witset Community Safety Building (Fire Hall) and Witset administration.
- Reduce dust and air quality issues in the summer months.
- Improve public safety (if sidewalks and bike improvements are also made).
- Improve community aesthetics.

Beaver Road has already been identified as a road to be paved. Surveying is underway for Beaver Road with paving expected to start in the 2019 construction season. Seaton View Road, Park Road and Russell Avenue could also be paved in future years, while Sawmill Road could also be paved all the way to the mill.



*Beaver Rd. Photo by EcoPlan.*

### ***Takiga Lake Access Improvements and Dock***

Improving access to and into Takiga Lake was consistently identified as a priority action for Witset, particularly with young members, youth and recreation providers in Witset administration. Improving access to the lake will:

- Improve summer recreation opportunities for Witset members (i.e., swimming, boating, canoeing) and potentially winter recreation opportunities (hockey, curling, ice fishing).
- Permit expanded recreational programming at the lake.

Administration has already considered making improvements by putting in a dock at the lake.



*Takiga Lake. Photo by EcoPlan.*

# Foundation Actions

Five Foundation Actions were identified. One of them, the Witset Community Land Use Plan, was completed as part of this CCP project. A second, Witset Communications Strategy, has been substantively completed. Additional information and preliminary work plans for Foundation Actions are provided in the Appendices.

## *Witset Communications Strategy*

---

Our members, staff, and leadership all value respectful, timely and clear communications. Good, clear, and transparent communication between staff, leadership, and members is also a critical component of effective decision-making and implementing our ideas effectively. We have been steadily working on improving and expanding our communications and have already developed a preliminary document. The strategy will build this work completed and outline communications and engagement procedures for both internal (staff and leadership) and external (members) communications and engagement. The final strategy will outline a number of engagement and communications activities, including how information is shared and when with members, and how and when members should be engaged with community projects and CCP Actions. It will also outline internal communication procedures for staff and Council.

The need for such a plan was highlighted in the development of this CCP and in the development of our Land Use Plan. While the open house events were very well attended and appreciated by members, community notification and information updates were difficult, particularly for off-reserve members. Information sharing between departments also proved to be challenging at times.

The communications strategy will build on work already completed by our Communications Coordinator and outline the following activities.

- Outreach, communications and engagement methods and procedures for all members (on- and off-reserve), staff and leadership.
- Outreach and communication protocols, processes, and methods by which information will be shared and made available and how engagement with the community, both on- and off-reserve, will be conducted.
- Simple day-to-day administrative activities to improve communication and information sharing, like carrying out regular staff meetings, keeping our website updated, social media procedures, and better sharing of department information with members.



### *Witset Records and Information Management Framework*

Effective and efficient records management is an important contributor to the success of any organization, including Witset First Nation. Records and information management issues were frequently encountered during the development of the both the Witset Community Land Use Plan and CCP, as there was sometimes difficulty tracking down past plans, policies, maps, statistics and studies to support project planning. The purpose of this framework would be to:

- Establish the responsibilities necessary for effectively managing the records and information of Witset First Nation.
- Ensure that records and information are organized, secure, retrievable, maintained under appropriate conditions, and managed throughout their life cycle.
- Identify a shared digital file management system for records and information management that could be used by Witset administration and leadership.

The framework and any resulting policies would apply to all staff and leadership and would need to be supported by a document for staff on standard procedures and practices for maintaining records and information.



*Witset Multiplex. Photo by Christine Bruce.*

## Community Economic Development Strategy

A strong, stable and sustainable local economy is the foundation of a successful, independent community. While Witset has an active Economic Development Department and a number of successful ventures underway, there is no overarching, community-driven strategy in place. The Witset First Nation Strategic Plan 2018 - 2020 (February 2018) and the Witset First Nation Economic Research and Priorities document (February 2018) both identify the need for a long-term economic development strategy for the community.

This strategy will build on and incorporate and consolidate economic development work completed and underway, prioritize community economic development goals (jobs, revenue, capacity building), and create a roadmap to achieve them. Its development would also be clearly linked to both the CCP and the Witset Community Land Use Plan to ensure that strategy actions are consistent with both plans. The completed plan will greatly support future funding applications and support interdepartmental collaboration.

The strategy would:

- Identify gaps and opportunities in current economic development programs and initiatives.
- Identify and prioritize community economic development objectives (e.g., job creation, business support, member capacity development, revenue generation) with members, staff and leadership.
- Identify and prioritize new economic opportunities that would support economic development objectives.

- Identify and prioritize opportunities for interdepartmental and interorganizational (KWES, WCLS) economic development.



*Smokehouse and trail to store. Photo by EcoPlan.*

## *Witset Community Land Use Plan*

The Witset Community Land Use Plan outlines a clear and transparent land management policy to guide future development and land uses on our seven reserves. Our reserves include: Babine 17, Babine 18, Bulkley River 19, Coryatsaqua (Moricetown) 2, Jean Baptiste 28, Moricetown 1, and Oschawwinna 3. Its development was closely linked with the Witset CCP process. The includes the following main policy sections.

- **Land Use Classifications** describe what can be built where. Each of the five classifications (Community, Housing, Commercial, Industrial, Cultural Tourism, Forest/Undeveloped) were developed based on current land uses, physical attributes and constraints, and community input (members, staff, leadership).
- **Development Guidelines** provide a clear set of standards to minimize any impacts associated with development, such as damage to environmentally or culturally sensitive areas. The Community Land Use Plan includes four kinds of guidelines: Environmental Protection, Cultural Protection, New Housing and Renovation, and Flood Hazard Protection.
- **A Development Review Framework** outlines a step-by-step process for reviewing development proposals on Witset reserves to help ensure that future developments meet the standards as outlined in the Community Land Use Plan. While Council remains the final approving authority, their review and approval (or denial) is based on the information and recommendations provided by staff (Housing Department, Public Works, Executive Director, Economic

Development). In time, it is the intention of Witset to establish a Lands Office, which, once set up, would be responsible for development review on all Witset lands.



*Witset Community Land Use Plan*



## *Witset Education Facility Plan*

---

A well-educated membership is the foundation of a successful community and will help support a better quality of life for all members. Education also has a positive impact on many areas considered vital to the future of our community including economic development, community health and wellbeing, and the protection and promotion of our culture and language.

Currently, Kyah Wiget Education Society provides a range of educational programs and services from daycare through to adult education and is our community's largest employer. Over the past several years, Kyah Wiget Education Society has experienced rapid growth. There has been an increase in both community programs offered and in enrollment in existing programs. Now, to accommodate this growth and to continue supporting education in our community, the Kyah Wiget Education Society is in need of additional space. Moreover, improving and expanding educational facilities was frequently identified as one of our most important community needs. Some of the and improved facilities identified by members and others included a new ICount facility, upgrades to Centennial Hall and/or development of a new, multipurpose adult education facility. In order to meet community needs, it will be vital to engage community members in these discussions and any additional education planning.

Led by Kyah Wiget Education Society working in close coordination and collaboration with Witset Administration, this plan would include the following components.

- Review existing programs and current facility needs for school-aged and adult learners.
- Engage community members, leadership, Witset First Nation staff, and Kyah Wiget Education staff around their visions, goals and needs for Witset education and educational facilities and programming.
- Create a plan to develop new, improved and expanded educational facilities and resources for Witset members.



*Photo by Christine Bruce.*



# Medium-Term Actions

These are actions to be undertaken after Foundation and Quick Start Actions have been implemented. Two Medium-Term Actions were identified through our CCP and briefly summarized in this section.

## *Witset Housing Plan*

Safe, healthy housing that provides a range of options for all ages and economic abilities is a cornerstone of strong communities. Witset First Nation's Housing Department has been active in developing a full suite of new housing policies, including a housing arrears policy and rental standards. The plan will consolidate work completed and include the following items.

- Guidance on developing new housing types (e.g., apartments) and tenures in the Witset village area.
- Guidance on additional planning and feasibility assessments around a potential new housing subdivision identified in the Community Land Use Plan.
- Policies and guidance on the development of new housing opportunities off-reserve in Smithers.
- Guidance and policies on new housing programs and initiatives, including a basic home maintenance training program.



*Proposed multi-family apartment building. Cornerstone Architecture.*

### ***Witset Lands Department***

Effectively managing development in Witset village and our other reserves requires a department tasked with the implementation of the Witset Community Land Plan. Currently, land use development and review activities are managed in a relatively ad-hoc fashion between multiple departments, including Economic Development, Housing, and Public Works. A Lands Department will consolidate and coordinate land use planning activities into a single department. This department would collaborate across departments, with Council, and coordinate with the Office of the Wet'suwet'en on lands related issues in our larger territory.

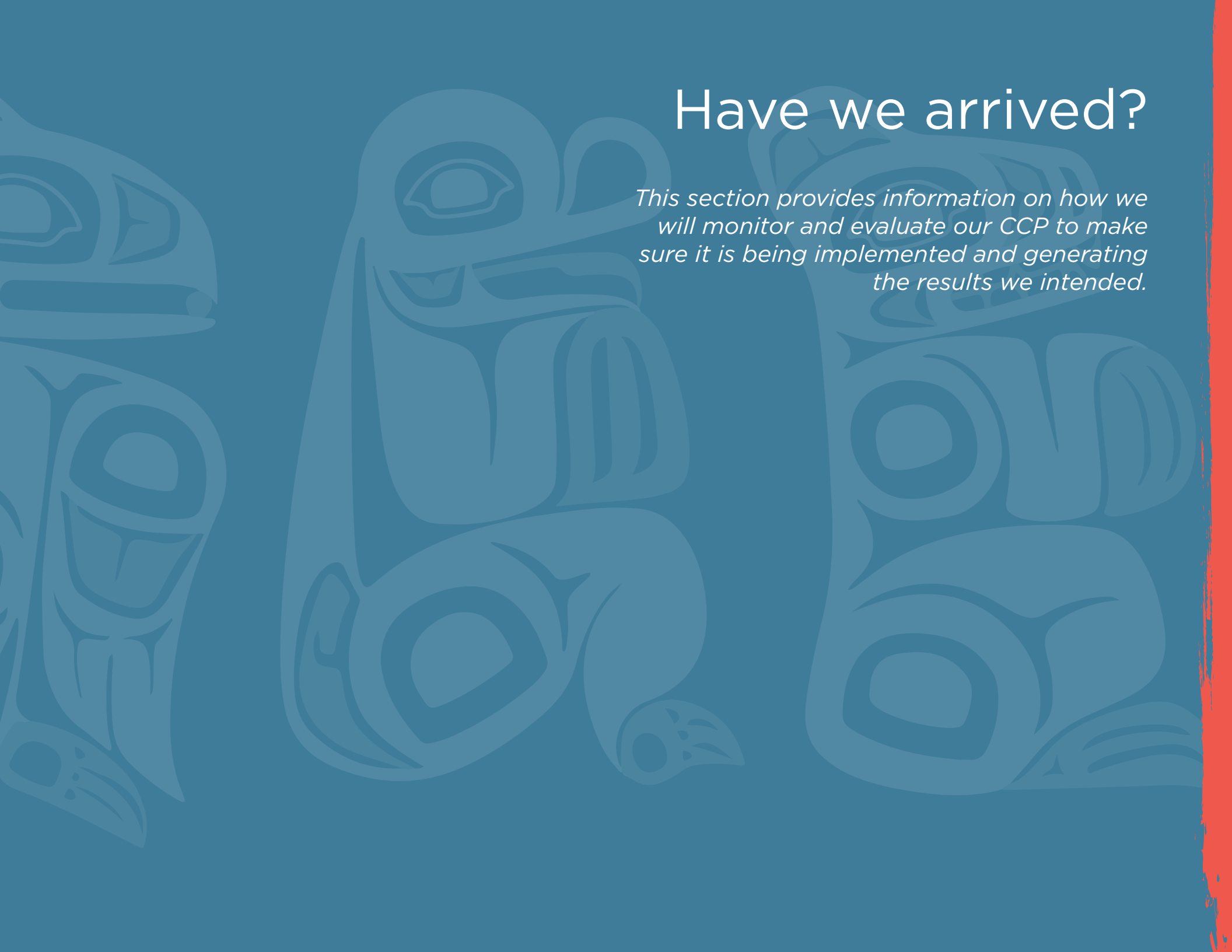
Currently, Witset has developed staff capacity to manage such a department with a senior staff member who has been certified through the Professional Land Management Certification Program.



*Looking towards Widzin Kwah Canyon House Museum. Photo by EcoPlan.*

# Have we arrived?

*This section provides information on how we will monitor and evaluate our CCP to make sure it is being implemented and generating the results we intended.*





## CCP MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We know that the future is uncertain and will bring unexpected changes, opportunities and challenges. We also recognize that our actions might not work the way we thought they would, or we might have new, better ideas about how to accomplish our objectives.

To stay relevant and effective, our CCP will have to adapt and grow over time. While the plan is implemented, we will use a system for monitoring and evaluation so that we can watch the plan's progress, and adapt it as needed.

Our monitoring and evaluation system will help us answer the following important questions while the plan is being implemented:

- *Are the CCP principles being followed?*
- *Are the CCP Actions getting done?*
- *Is our CCP generating the results we intended?*

## PROCESS MONITORING

Process monitoring helps us make sure that we are doing what we said we would do. Process monitoring also allows members to take part in the plan's implementation and is a part of supporting our CCP planning principles around increasing accountability and transparency. It will also help staff and leadership identify any challenges or obstacles experienced with Quick-Start and Foundation Actions and focus efforts accordingly.

Each Foundation Action and Quick Start Action is accompanied by a work plan that includes the individuals (staff, leadership, external groups) responsible for the action and a general schedule for its implementation.








Regular progress reports on the CCP should be made available through Beaver Slap News, reports to Council, and updates on our website.



## OUTCOME MONITORING

Outcome monitoring will help us make sure our CCP is generating the results we intended. To do this, we will need to develop simple indicators for each of our community goals. With these indicators, we will then be able track how well community goals are being achieved by CCP Actions.

Some potential indicators are outlined in the table. We will need to revisit these and refine them as one of the first tasks when we undertake CCP monitoring. For each indicator, we will also need to identify the current conditions, or a baseline measure, that we can use to track progress against. It is important that we try to choose indicators that we are already tracking, so we don't create additional work for staff or partners.

CCP OBJECTIVE	POTENTIAL INDICATOR(s)	INFORMATION SOURCE(s)
 <b>Support Elders and youth</b> Support our future leaders, while caring for those that came before them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Elders and youth programs</li> <li>• Number of Elders and youth program participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WLCS</li> <li>• KWES</li> <li>• Witset First Nation</li> </ul>
 <b>Protect and promote our culture and language</b> Preserve our roots by teaching our traditional ways and language to future generations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of fluent Witsuwit'en speakers</li> <li>• Number of members enrolled in language classes</li> <li>• Number of language programs offered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WLCS</li> <li>• KWES</li> </ul>
 <b>Improve community health and wellbeing</b> Keep members healthy, with a focus on prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General health outcomes (diabetes rates, obesity rates)</li> <li>• Number of members in drug or alcohol programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Centre</li> <li>• Witset Social Development</li> </ul>
 <b>Address our housing needs</b> Improve existing homes and provide a range of healthy, housing options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of members on housing waitlist</li> <li>• Number of new homes constructed</li> <li>• Percentage of homes requiring renovations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Witset Housing</li> </ul>
 <b>Improve education and learning resources</b> Provide education and skills development for all members through all life stages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational attainment rates/numbers (high school graduation, post-secondary or trade school enrollment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KWES</li> </ul>
 <b>Strengthen our local economy</b> Support member- and Witset-owned businesses to create employment opportunities and generate revenues for our community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unemployment rate</li> <li>• Participation rate</li> <li>• Income</li> <li>• Witset business revenues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Economic Development</li> </ul>
 <b>Manage our lands and protect the environment</b> Protect and manage our reserve lands and steward our environment for future generations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of development applications reviewed through Witset Land Use Plan procedures</li> <li>• Number of traditional and cultural use programs offered on the land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Witset Housing</li> <li>• Community Economic Development</li> </ul>



## EVALUATION

Based on the information from CCP monitoring, we can evaluate what is working well and what might need to be changed. A formal evaluation process should be conducted annually, with a more comprehensive evaluation taking place every three or four years.

CCP evaluation will use the results of our process and outcome monitoring to answer the following questions.

- *What principles or actions need to be refined or changed?*
- *Do we need change the phasing of actions or timelines around them (for example, moving a Foundation Action back to become a Medium-term Action)?*
- *Are we missing any new CCP Actions?*

Process monitoring results will help CCP evaluation identify organizational issues or challenges to implementing our CCP. This will help our leadership and administration make decisions about resource allocation or may help identify if some critical problem is not being addressed.

Outcome monitoring results will help CCP evaluation determine whether we have chosen the right CCP Actions, or if we need to try something else. We will be able to see where CCP actions may need to be adjusted, or even replaced with new CCP Actions.

### WITSET COMMUNITY SURVEY: A POTENTIAL MONITORING TOOL

CCP monitoring and evaluations could be supported by a Witset Community Survey to get a sense of how conditions and priorities in the community have changed (or not), and to collect feedback on CCP Actions.

A Witset Community Survey could occur at Annual General Meetings and be supplemented by an online version, or even a door-to-door survey for members living on reserve.

A survey could also include survey questions from other Witset departments who are interested in getting feedback on their projects.

# Appendices

## **Foundation Actions Work Plan Briefs**

*These work plan briefs provide further details on Foundation Actions. They include information on each action's purpose, the personnel responsible for implementation, and a preliminary schedule detailing associated tasks and timelines.*

## **Community Action Ideas**

*These action ideas were suggested by the community during the first Community Open House, held in March of 2018. Some of these actions may not be feasible at this time due to timing, capacity, funding or support at the community, staff or Council level. Others may be more useful for consideration during Foundation actions (for example, Witset Community Economic Development Strategy).*

## FOUNDATION ACTIONS WORK PLAN BRIEFS

### *Witset Communications Strategy*

---

#### **What is it?**

We have been steadily working on improving and expanding our communications and have already developed a draft document. The strategy will build this work completed and outline communications and engagement procedures for both internal (staff and leadership) and external (members) communications and engagement. The final strategy will outline a number of engagement and communications activities, including how information is shared and when with members, and how and when members should be engaged with community projects and CCP Actions. It will also outline internal communication procedures for staff and Council.

The final strategy will include the following components and activities:

- Assess communications needs, challenges, and opportunities amongst and between staff, leadership, and the community.
- Clarify communications channels and procedures between staff and Council.
- Outline the communications and engagement methods and procedures to be used by Witset First Nation for all members (on- and off-reserve), staff and leadership.
- Outline the communication protocols, processes, and methods by which information will be shared and made available and detail standards for how engagement with the community, both on- and off-reserve, will be conducted.
- Outline simple day-to-day administrative activities to improve communication and information sharing, like carrying out regular staff meetings, keeping our website updated, better sharing of department information with members, managing social media.

#### **Why do it?**

We all value respectful, open, and transparent communication. Good, clear, and transparent communication within and among staff, leadership, and members is also a critical component of effective decision-making and implementing our ideas effectively.

Good communications will also help everyone stay up to date on new developments in our community, like new programs being offered, changes to community services, and updates on our CCP's progress.

#### **What CCP planning principles does the action address?**

- Witset community planning should be transparent and engage members, staff and leadership.
- Witset community planning should be consistent with the principles and community goals identified in the Witset CCP.

#### **Who will work on it?**

The work will be carried out by a project team made up of the Communications Coordinator, Executive Director and the Assistant Executive Director. Other Witset departments will be consulted and engaged. Council will be involved through regular updates and plan approval. Members can provide input at scheduled community meetings, on-line, and through other methods.

#### **How will we do it?**

Internally. Could involve external partners and consultants for project funding and technical support (Professional and Institutional Development Fund, ISC).

## Work Plan

TASKS	SUMMARY	DELIVERABLE	MEMBER ENGAGEMENT
<b>Review</b>	Meet with staff and Council to review existing draft document. Meeting could also review current communication procedures and methods to get feedback on what works well, what doesn't.		
<b>Engagement and Review</b>	This step will build off of the first task and could include limited staff and member engagement (focus group meetings) to review existing communications document.		✓
<b>Revised Draft</b>	Building on the findings of the needs assessment, update and revise existing draft. Revisions should include linking the strategy to the CCP and plan monitoring.	✓	
<b>Review and Communications</b>	Finalize and lay out Draft Communications Strategy. Lay out short summary as member-friendly community information poster and/or include in newsletter and social media communications.		✓
<b>Present and Finalize Strategy</b>	Present strategy to community through website, newsletter and other outreach where necessary and practical (open house). Finalize and adopt.	✓	✓

## Time Line

	MONTH:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<b>Review</b>															
<b>Engagement and Review</b>															
<b>Revised Draft</b>										X					
<b>Review and Communications</b>															
<b>Present and Finalize Strategy</b>															X

X = Deliverable

## ***Witset Records and Information Management Plan***

---

### ***What is it?***

Our Records and Information Management Plan will describe:

- How important information and records are protected and managed.
- How they can be shared.
- Where they can be found.

The plan will:

- Establish the responsibilities necessary for effectively managing the records and information of Witset First Nation.
- Ensure that records and information are organized, secure, retrievable, maintained under appropriate conditions, and managed throughout their life cycle.
- Identify a shared digital file management system for records and information management that could be used by Witset administration and leadership.

The framework and any resulting policies would apply to all staff and leadership and would need to be supported by a document for staff on standard procedures and practices for maintaining records and information.

### ***Why do it?***

Effective and efficient records management is an important contributor to the success of any organization, including Witset First Nation. Records and information management issues were frequently encountered during the development of the both the Witset Community Land Use Plan and CCP, as there was sometimes difficulty tracking down past plans, policies, maps, statistics and studies to support project planning.

Good information management will support other community planning and development projects in our community. It will mean our past work is easy to share and retrieve, and as a result, build upon and support funding for new planning and development projects. Over time, as baseline data is collected and managed, improved records and data management will also help support longer-term CCP monitoring and evaluation.

### ***What CCP planning principles does the action address?***

- Witset community planning should be transparent and engage members, staff and leadership.
- Witset community planning should be consistent with the principles and community goals identified in the Witset CCP.

### ***Who will work on it?***

The Executive Director and the Assistant Executive Director should lead the project with support from an information management consultant. Given that information management is a responsibility of all departments, all Witset departments and organizations should be actively involved in the project. Council, who will be a key beneficiary from the project, should be involved through regular updates and plan approval.

### ***How will we do it?***

Internally. Given the technical systems and IT likely involved, consultant support will likely be needed and could be funded through grants and other opportunities (for example, Professional and Institutional Development Fund, ISC).



## Work Plan

TASKS	SUMMARY	DELIVERABLE	MEMBER ENGAGEMENT
<b>Research</b>	Meet with staff and Council to review existing data and records management policies, procedures and methods (what works well, what doesn't).		✓
<b>Needs Assessment and System Review</b>	This step will build off of research done in the first task and include limited member engagement (for example, focus group meetings) to determine specific data and records management needs for Witset departments.  Following the needs assessment, off-the-shelf systems and custom IT should be identified and assessed for meeting Witset records and data management. Likely both software and hardware (server) will be reviewed.	✓	✓
<b>Procedures &amp; Methods</b>	Building on the findings of the needs assessment and system review, develop policies, procedures and methods to address data management needs.		✓
<b>Draft Plan</b>	Development of procurement and training plan for the data and records management system.	✓	✓
<b>Set-up and Training</b>	Procure and set up system (hardware and software). Organize staff training and procedures document.	✓	✓

## Time Line

	MONTH:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Research</b>								
<b>Needs and Systems Review</b>								
<b>Procedures and Methods</b>								
<b>Draft Plan</b>					X			
<b>Set-up and Training</b>								X

X = Deliverable

## ***Witset Community Economic Development Strategy***

---

### ***What is it?***

Our Community Economic Development Strategy will describe:

- Our community economic development goals.
- Projects and actions we are undertaking, or plan to undertake, to reach our economic development goals.
- Who is responsible (departments, organizations) for undertaking specific community economic development projects.

The strategy will:

- Identify gaps and opportunities in current economic development programs and initiatives.
- Identify and prioritize community economic development goals, or objectives (for example, job creation, business support, member capacity development, revenue generation) with members, staff and leadership.
- Identify and prioritize new economic opportunities (and the continued development of existing initiatives) that would support economic development goals with members, staff and leadership.
- Identify and prioritize opportunities for interdepartmental and interorganizational (KWES, WCLS) economic development.
- Include a roadmap with phased economic development projects and activities.
- Identify criteria to support the assessment of future community economic development opportunities.

This strategy will build on, and incorporate and consolidate, economic development work completed and underway, prioritize community economic development goals (jobs, revenue, capacity building), and create a roadmap to achieve them. Its development would also be clearly linked to both the CCP and the Witset Community Land Use Plan to ensure that strategy actions are consistent with both plans.

### ***Why do it?***

A strong, stable and sustainable local economy is the foundation of a successful, independent community. While Witset has an active Economic Development Department and a number of successful ventures underway, there is no overarching, community-driven strategy in place. The Witset First Nation Strategic Plan 2018 - 2020 (February 2018) and the Witset First Nation Economic Research and Priorities document (February 2018) both identify the need for a long-term economic development strategy for the community.

The completed plan will greatly support future funding applications and support interdepartmental collaboration.

### ***What CCP planning principles does the action address?***

- Witset community values should be incorporated in all community planning.
- Witset community planning should be transparent and engage members, staff and leadership.
- Witset community planning should be consistent with principles and community goals identified in the Witset CCP.

### ***Who will work on it?***

The Community Economic Development Coordinator should lead the project with support from the Executive Director and the Assistant Executive Director. Consultant support may also be required. Given the crossovers between current economic development activities and other Witset departments and organizations (KWES, Public Works, Housing), all Witset departments and organizations should be actively involved in the project. Council, who will be a key beneficiary from the project, should be involved through regular updates and strategy approval.

### ***How will we do it?***

As a major strategy initiative, the project may require grant support and, potentially, the support of an external advisor or consultant.

## Work Plan

TASKS	SUMMARY	DELIVERABLE	MEMBER ENGAGEMENT
<b>Develop Economic Development Strategy Workplan</b>	A detailed workplan that includes timeline, deliverables and a staffing and funding plan for the development of the strategy.	✓	
<b>Background Review and Research</b>	Develop a community economic development profile that identifies current economic development initiatives, including businesses, ventures, relevant demographic trends, opportunities, threats.		
<b>Economic Development Vision and Objectives</b>	Working with Council, staff and the broader community, develop a vision and supporting objectives for Witset economic development. Develop economic development options (actions, programs, policies).	✓	✓
<b>Options Analysis</b>	Review, assess and evaluate economic development options (actions, programs, policies).		
<b>Draft Strategy</b>	Based on options analysis, compile information gathered into a draft strategy. Include a summary of information gathered in previous tasks and identify a roadmap for implementing options.	✓	
<b>Community Review</b>	Present draft Economic Development Strategy to community for review via website, Beaver Slaps News and a community meeting. Revise Strategy as necessary.		✓
<b>Final Strategy</b>	Final draft strategy. Present to Council and to community.	✓	✓

## Time Line

MONTH:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Workplan</b>	X									
<b>Background Review and Research</b>										
<b>Vision and Objectives</b>				X						
<b>Options Analysis</b>										
<b>Draft Strategy</b>									X	
<b>Community Review</b>										
<b>Final Strategy</b>										X

X = Deliverable

## **Witset Education Facility Plan**

---

### **What is it?**

Our Education Facility Plan will describe:

- Our community vision, goals and priorities for education at Witset's and its facilities.
- Existing programs and current facility needs for school-aged and adult learners.
- A plan for expanding, improving, or developing new educational facilities to accommodate the growing programs and services offered by the Kyah Wiget Education Society.

The plan will:

- Identify gaps in current educational facilities at Witset.
- Identify and prioritize community goals for education in Witset and any corresponding facility needs.
- Consider existing and future funding opportunities to support facility expansion, renewal, or redevelopment.
- Align with the Witset Community Land Use Plan when considering the location and siting of educational facilities.
- Consider ways in which educational facilities may also accommodate other community needs, such as housing for Elders, a community kitchen, an Elders Centre, or a youth centre.
- Consider the condition of existing education facilities and the ongoing maintenance and life cycle of both existing and new education facilities.
- Identify a phased approach to facility expansion, renewal, or redevelopment.

This strategy will build on, and incorporate and consolidate, economic development work completed and underway, prioritize community economic development goals (jobs, revenue, capacity building), and create a roadmap to achieve them. Its development would also be clearly linked to both the CCP and the Witset Community Land Use Plan to ensure that strategy actions are consistent with both plans.

### **Why do it?**

A well-educated membership is the foundation of a successful community and will help support a better quality of life for all members. Education also has a positive impact on many areas considered vital to the future of our community including economic development, community health and wellbeing, and the protection and promotion of our culture and language. Planning for the appropriate educational facilities will support education in the community and ensure that, as much as possible, Witset's future educational needs will be accommodated.

### **What CCP planning principles does the action address?**

- Witset community values should be incorporated in all community planning.
- Witset community planning should be transparent and engage members, staff and leadership.
- Witset community planning should be consistent with principles and community goals identified in the Witset CCP.

### **Who will work on it?**

Kyah Wiget Education Society will lead the project, with support from Council and the Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director. In developing the Plan, sessions should be held with other key departments and organizations to consider how their needs may fit into any new spaces and buildings and how they will be impacted, including Community Economic Development, Housing, and Witset Language and Culture Society (WLCS). Council should be involved through regular updates and plan review and approval. Community consultation should also take place to engage members in the review of current and future educational needs and how any new, expanded or renewed spaces could accommodate these needs. The Witset Community Land Use Plan should serve as a reference for



any site planning. If a Lands Department is established (a Medium-Term Action identified in this CCP), they should be deeply involved in site planning and the review and approval of any proposed any new facility/facilities.

### How will we do it?

Internally. Will likely involve external partners and consultants for technical support around facility programming, design, and site planning).

### Work Plan

TASKS	SUMMARY	DELIVERABLE	MEMBER ENGAGEMENT
<b>Education Facility Plan Workplan</b>	A detailed workplan that includes timeline, deliverables, community consultation and staffing and funding considerations.	✓	
<b>Facility Review</b>	A review of existing educational facilities, their current condition, upkeep requirements and lifecycle considerations.	✓	
<b>Needs Assessment</b>	A review of existing and planned education programs and their current and projected space needs. Considerations should include the potential for multi-purpose or co-located facilities that could address other community needs and priorities.	✓	
<b>Community Consultation</b>	Community engagement and outreach to present the Facility Review and Needs Assessment, and to gather member feedback on educational programming priorities and any associated facility needs.		✓
<b>Options Analysis</b>	Review, evaluate and assess education facility options. Seek community input regarding preferred options.		✓
<b>Draft Plan</b>	A prioritized and phased facility expansion, renewal, or redevelopment plan.	✓	
<b>Community Review</b>	Present draft plan to the community for review.		✓
<b>Final Plan</b>	A final draft of the Witset Education Facility Plan, including a workplan and timeline for implementation. Present to Council and the community.	✓	✓

### Time Line

MONTH:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Education Facility Plan Workplan</b>	X									
<b>Facility Review</b>			X							
<b>Needs Assessment</b>					X					
<b>Community Consultation</b>										
<b>Options Analysis</b>										
<b>Draft Plan</b>									X	
<b>Community Review</b>										
<b>Final Plan</b>										X

X = Deliverable

## COMMUNITY ACTION IDEAS

The following appendix includes action ideas suggested by the community during the first Community Open House, held in March of 2018. Some of these actions may not be feasible at this time due to timing, capacity, funding or support at the community, staff or Council level. Others may be more useful for consideration during Foundation actions (for example, Witset Community Economic Development Strategy).

COMMUNITY ISSUE	ACTION IDEAS
<b>Elders &amp; Youth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture Camps</li> <li>• Dirt Park (like in Smithers for Dirt Bikes)</li> <li>• Elder's Lodge with craft sewing</li> <li>• Water Park for children</li> <li>• Elder's Lodge - Looming, Sewing, Crafts</li> <li>• Have Youth visit (Youth Lodge-Combine)</li> <li>• Group home for Youth in Care (Ages 13-18)</li> <li>• Create a place for our Youth like a Rec Center for drop-Ins</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elders Lodge</li> <li>• Old age home</li> <li>• Upgrade all housing</li> <li>• Housing workshop on home repair. Plumbing and roof repairs</li> <li>• More housing for large families (4 bedroom+)</li> <li>• Build more rentals for families and bachelors</li> <li>• Duplex for Young families</li> <li>• Rental Complex</li> <li>• Housing in Smithers</li> <li>• Expand reserve (north and west)</li> </ul>
<b>Tourism &amp; Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More ways for people to start small businesses</li> <li>• Dog walking business</li> <li>• On-reserve businesses tapping into tourism</li> <li>• Lake should have an office and new docks</li> <li>• Industrial park</li> <li>• Retail stores</li> <li>• Strengthen our local economy – we are very dependent on Smithers</li> <li>• Practice the sharing economy</li> </ul>
<b>Natural Hazards (e.g., fire, flood)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency contacts posted everywhere for afterhours contacts</li> <li>• Addition emergency planning</li> <li>• Support members be prepared (food &amp; water)</li> </ul>
<b>Archaeological &amp; Cultural Sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain graveyard (cut grass, keep plowed)</li> </ul>

COMMUNITY ISSUE	ACTION IDEAS
<b>Community Health and Wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New daycare</li> <li>• More workshops- traditional skills</li> <li>• Create more walking trails</li> <li>• Better maintenance on trails</li> <li>• More workshops or information and highlight towards individual Health Issues (e.g. disability)</li> <li>• Community garden and permaculture centre</li> <li>• Permaculture development for cultural resource management</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home studies for people who want to upgrade + are working</li> <li>• More language education</li> <li>• Education is priority to gain control of business endeavors within our community and surrounding traditional lands/resources</li> <li>• Training centre with commercial kitchen, computer room and a multipurpose room with retracting walls for trainings and events</li> <li>• After school program for youth</li> <li>• More carpenters</li> </ul>
<b>Community Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New buildings should be energy efficient</li> <li>• Language Center – Elders/Youth/Adults</li> <li>• Sidewalks and streetlighting</li> <li>• Improve road maintenance</li> <li>• Youth addition center – Help our youth</li> <li>• New hall for feasts</li> </ul>
<b>Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community clean-up</li> <li>• Improved garbage &amp; recycling services</li> <li>• Clean up the lake for our kids</li> </ul>
<b>Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision-Future: Settle aboriginal title and rights. Amendment of Crown Land to stewardship of our Traditional Territories with all clans/generations</li> </ul>



WITSET First Nation



Prepared with the assistance of:  
EcoPlan, 208-131 Water Street, Vancouver BC, V6M4B3  
[info@ecoplan.ca](mailto:info@ecoplan.ca) • [www.ecoplan.ca](http://www.ecoplan.ca)