

## Introduction

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The emerging practice of economic development within Aboriginal communities is resulting in the development of formal processes of planning that can be used to consider and weigh the economic and social needs of local communities and for constructing and entering into relationships of mutual benefit.

David Natcher, Tom Allen and Trian Schmid, all of the University of Saskatchewan, examine the challenges facing 14 Saskatchewan First Nations and the approaches they've taken to balance economic and social needs. Their research illustrates the need for local institutions that support local community needs, desires and ways of doing things. Their findings echo those of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development in the need for separation of political and business decision making, the creation of an entity separate from Chief and Council for economic development and clear and transparent governance processes that support political stability.

David Millette from the First Nations Land Management Resource Centre examines the community planning process of the Tsawwassen First Nation in British Columbia. The paper focuses on the land use planning process that has occurred since the signing of the Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement, the first urban treaty in Canada. First Nations land use planning in urban environments requires a high degree of cultural sensitivity, an understanding of municipal and government land use planning and decision making processes, as well as a keen understanding of one's own values, priorities and objectives.

Janice Tulk of University of Cape Breton describes and analyzes the Unamak'ki Economic Development Model, a collaborative approach to economic development among five Unamak'ki communities in Nova Scotia. Her paper illustrates this approach using the Sydney Tar Ponds

Clean Up Project. The partnership model is one that could be used as an approach to economic development in other areas of the country.

These papers illustrate that Aboriginal economic development is developing into a community of practice that is finding its foundation in Aboriginal cultural values and mainstream community economic development processes.