



The Future of Canada's Economy Lies in Indigenous Partnership

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As I reflect on our journey at Des Nedhe Group, I see the growing role Indigenous businesses are playing in shaping Canada's economy. We're not only contributing to its development but actively guiding it in new, forward-looking directions. Our commitment to long-term economic success, rooted in our connection to the land and our people, sets us apart and positions us to make an even greater impact in the years ahead.

“This is a crucial part of what self-determination means for us—building businesses that don't just thrive in the present but are set up for sustainable success for generations to come.”

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At Des Nedhe, our mission has always been about more than just creating jobs; it's about building a future that ensures the long-term economic independence of the English River First Nation (ERFN). Across the 20+ companies in the Des Nedhe Group, over 60% of our workforce is Indigenous, a reflection of our dedication to ensuring that our people are active participants in our economic growth. This is a crucial part of what self-determination means for us—building businesses that don't just thrive in the present but are set up for sustainable success for generations to come.

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Empowering Indigenous Communities Through Economic Independence



One of our most impactful developments is Grasswood Junction, a 137 acre Reserve property just outside of Saskatoon. English River saw the potential of this land early on, and the vision was to create an economic hub that could serve not only our businesses but the surrounding region as well. We knew, however, that in order to unlock its full potential, it would require investment in key infrastructure.

That's why we moved forward with the development of a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment facility at Grasswood Junction. This utility is a regional solution, designed to support the growing neighborhoods and rural communities around us. We worked in close partnership with the Rural Municipality of Corman Park to make this vision a reality.

The facility uses a membrane bioreactor (MBR) system, which is not only highly efficient but also environmentally sustainable. This advanced technology allows us to treat wastewater in a way that meets strict environmental standards, using less space and energy compared to traditional systems. It's an essential service that supports the continued growth of the region south of Saskatoon, providing the infrastructure needed for sustainable development.

The Broader Impact of Indigenous-Led Development Across Canada



At Des Nedhe, our approach to economic development is always informed by our responsibility to the land. Indigenous stewardship means that every decision we make is considered through the lens of environmental responsibility and long-term impact. It's this balance—between fostering growth and protecting our resources—that defines how we do business. The wastewater facility at Grasswood Junction is a prime example of how we can create value for the broader community while upholding our commitment to sustainability.

“When Indigenous businesses are given the tools and partnerships to thrive, the positive effects ripple far beyond our immediate circle.”

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The development at Grasswood is more than just a business project; it's a demonstration of how Indigenous-led initiatives can lead the way in regional development. This isn't simply about driving revenue—it's about creating a foundation for future growth that will benefit everyone. Our success with this facility has already shown that when Indigenous businesses are given the tools and partnerships to thrive, the positive effects ripple far beyond our immediate circle.

Indigenous-led projects are making a significant impact across Canada. In British Columbia, the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, and Squamish Nations are driving urban development projects that are reshaping Vancouver. In Manitoba, the Treaty One Nations are leading the redevelopment of the Kapyong Barracks in Winnipeg. The Enoch Cree Nation in Alberta is spearheading major infrastructure developments near Edmonton, and in Montreal, the James Bay Cree are transforming areas of the city with their urban projects. In Ontario, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Six Nations of the Grand River are playing pivotal roles in development efforts. These projects are not only transforming local economies but also contributing to the broader economic strength of Canada.

Des Nedhe is proud to be part of this movement. Our work at Grasswood Junction is just one example of how Indigenous businesses can create lasting value, not just for ourselves but for the wider communities in which we operate. We are proving that Indigenous-led development isn't just possible—it's essential for the future of Canada's economy.

Challenges and Opportunities for Indigenous Economic Development

That said, there are still challenges. The Indian Act and its outdated regulations continue to hinder the full potential of Indigenous-led businesses. But at Des Nedhe, we've learned how to navigate these obstacles and create value despite these barriers. By leveraging our land and resources, and staying true to our values of partnership and stewardship, we've built a strong foundation for long-term success.

“The Indian Act and its outdated regulations continue to hinder the full potential of Indigenous-led businesses.”

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As we move forward, our focus will remain on creating opportunities that last. Indigenous businesses, like Des Nedhe, are a vital part of the Canadian economy today, and we're positioned to be a driving force in the future. Our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and collaboration ensures that we will continue to lead the way in building an economy that works for all Canadians.

The future of Canada's economy will be shaped by partnerships—partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses, between communities and governments, and between economic development and environmental stewardship. Des Nedhe is excited to be at the forefront of this new era, and we are committed to stewardship that benefits everyone.

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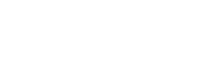
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