

# Wolastoqiyik of Kingsclear First Nation

## A Community Driven Economic Development Strategy



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Kingsclear is a small Wolastoqiyik (wah-lew-stook-gey-ick) community situated about 20 minutes west outside the city of Fredericton. Wolastoqiyik in English means “people of the beautiful or bountiful river.” Wolastoqey (wah-lew-stook-gay) refers to the Nation itself.

Wolastoqiyik or Wulastuk have been wrongly referred to as Maliseet. The word Maliseet derives from the Mi’kmaq word Mali’suet or Mali’sit (muh-lee-set), which translated into English means “calm river flow” or “calm flowing dialect”. Mali’suet or Mali’sit comes from the words Male’k (muh-leg) and Malei (muh-lay). Male’k in English means “he/she is lazy” or “he/she is calm flowing”. For First Nations people, language is born from the reality we live in. We use words that describe what we experience around us and from our environment. In today’s context we try to find similar words in modern English to define words in our language such as the word lazy. As such, in today’s language we would define the word Maliseet as slow lazy speakers since their dialect is slower than Mi’kmaq dialect.

Kingsclear is considered to be the third largest Wolastoqey community with a total population around 1100 Band members and a on reserve population presently around 700. Over the last few years, Kingsclear has grown significantly in their areas of economic development. Much of this is due to the Taxing and Gaming Agreement the Wolastoqey have signed with the Province of New Brunswick. This agreement remained the same for quite some time until the New Brunswick Department of Finance stepped in and felt there should be limits.

A new Taxing and Gaming agreement was drafted, which created limits on how much a Band could profit without effecting how much of the collected GST the Band is able to keep.

Previously the under the Gaming and Taxing agreements Kingsclear was able to set gas prices to the lowest within the area as compared to other local gas stations. In time many travelers driving through that part of New Brunswick became aware of the fact that the lowest gas prices could be found at the Kingsclear gas station. As word spread, Kingsclear became the destination stop for any travelers driving through that part of New Brunswick. According to Kingsclear's Economic Development Officer, Sydney Paul, the original gas station sold an estimated five point eight (5.8) million liters per year. The original gas station had only two pumps and sat in the heart of the community off the beaten track. However, the new gas station that recently opened in the summer of 2017 boasts eight (8) pumps and is sitting alongside Route 102 Highway. The new station is averaging 780,000 liters a month in fuel sales since opening in July 25, 2017.



The new gas station was named Wulastukw Convenience. During its construction, the Band made room for a drive through coffee shop that it plans on opening in summer of 2018.



The Community also has plans on building a new gaming facility next to the new gas station. The new gaming facility will also have a liquor license attached with it in hopes of attracting more business from prospected gamblers. Construction on the new gaming facility is expected to begin during the summer of 2018.

At this present time, Kingsclear is developing and implementig a community driven Economic Development Strategy. This was done through the use of facilitating community engagement and information sessions. As a result of these sessions the band will establish an Economic

Development Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will be made up of community members and business experts.

The Steering Committee will work along side Chief and Council in the Economic Development planning process. The Steering Committee will also make recommendations to Chief and Council, the Director of Operations and the Economic Development Officer(s). These recommendations will be on matters that will enhance business development, retention and expansion for Kingsclear First Nation. The Steering Committee will also liase with existing business ventures at Kingsclear and facilitate the development of new enterprises through strategic economic development planning. With community input and support, the ultimate goal of the Steering Committee is to enhance the quality of life and wealth for Kingslear First Nation.

As part of achieveing this goal, the Band is exploring a fee simple parcel of land on a 1.6 acrea lot on Handwell Road within the c\City of Fredricton. A Request for Proposals on a feasibility study was released and now the Band is looking into executing the study. Many of these development strategies will be community driven, allowing full community engagement in any Economic Development projects on the Handwell Road parcel. Since the land is a fee simple land, the Band is still engaging with the community as to what type of businesses the community would like to develop on the Handwell Road parcel. In keeping with the community driven Economic Development Strategy, any further economic development projects considered for the Handwell Road parcel will first be discussed during community information sessions.



Over the next few years, the Band plans to develop the land on the opposite side of the highway from their present gas bar. A blue print was drawn up to illustrate future Band businesses. Many of these ideas are still in the planning stage and nothing concrete has yet been decided. There are talks, however, of building a farmers' market and grocery store. The Band is also considering building a tourist facility similar to the one seen in Milbrook First Nation along side the Trans Canada Highway in hopes of bringing tourist dollars into the community.

Whatever business ventures the Band does decide on over the next few years will definitely be profitable. One thing is for sure, the economic impact this small Wolastoqey community will have on the province makes you realize the Wolastoqey are not that calm flowing after all.

