



Economic Development Summit:  
*Partnering in Economic Development  
 for a Sustainable Future*

November 18, 2009  
 Royal Canadian Legion, 7:00 pm

**URBAN RESERVES:**  
**COMMUNITY DIALOGUE**



Lac Seul First Nation



**Sioux Lookout & Area Economic Development Summit**  
**Wednesday, November 18, 2009**  
**Community Dialogue on Urban Reserves (Evening Session)**

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Delegates from the 2009 Economic Development Summit were invited to attend a public Community Dialogue to discuss Urban Reserves.

The Community Dialogue was advertised by local radio, in both the Sioux Lookout Bulletin, Wawatay News, Chronicle Journal (Thunder Bay), and Kenora Daily Miner.

Participants were encouraged to pre-register for the event in order to receive background information on Urban Reserves (attached as Appendix A) and to assist the Conference Coordinators with seating and refreshments. The Dialogue was held at the Canadian Legion, Sioux Lookout.

To begin the evening's session, Louise Lariviere, Boreal Communications, was asked to open the discussion with a media presentation, *Take Me to the River*. Louise has spent the past year working on this documentary artistically depicting the Boreal Forest through photos, stories and videos of communities and people met along the way. The video, *Take Me to the River*, is one installment in a series entitled, *RESPECT*. The video poetically unites First Nation and non-First Nation cultures, celebrates diversity and encourages partnership development – all synonymous to the Municipality's efforts to encourage better relationships with our neighbours in the Far North (Boreal Communications website is referenced as Appendix B).

Following the video, Brian Strom and Don Degenova from the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution (CICR) facilitated the Community Dialogue (biographies attached as Appendix C).

Approximately 120 participants attended the session and were divided into nine groups, each facilitated by a community member having received extensive facilitation and conflict mediation training through CICR and the ReSolve Program piloted through the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee.

The participants were asked to answer three questions:

1. What do we like about the Urban Reserve concept?
2. What concerns do we have with the Urban Reserve concept?
3. Questions we have about the Urban Reserve concept.

The purpose of gathering the information is to assist the Economic Development Commission and the Urban Reserve sub-committee in developing a Communication's Strategy to provide detailed information to interested community members, First Nation communities and stakeholders as well as assisting with ensuring the Terms of Reference established to undertake a Feasibility Study is inclusive of the interests generated from the discussions.

## **Report from Table 1 – Facilitator: Dick MacKenzie**

### ***What do we like about the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Improves ties between Sioux Lookout and northern communities
- Opportunity for business partnerships
- Increase in government funding
- Job creation
- Economic strength – community survival – government directed cooperation for funding
- Opportunity to create new innovative industry
- Retention of existing native business and organizations
- Non-natives won't have to pay taxes

### ***What concerns do we have with the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Afraid it will separate two races because with segregation, prejudice will become stronger
- Clash among groups of young people
- Unfair competition due to different taxes
- Lac Seul residents may leave Lac Seul to come live in Sioux Lookout
- Perception of favouritism
- Economic disparity
- Preferential funding
- Jobs may not be created (trade off reserve job for Urban Reserve job)
- Urban Reserve uses resources needed by next generation
- Lac Seul reserve will be short changed
- Impact cost of living
- Equality
- Non-competitive – duplication of businesses
- Cost of Urban Reserve creation should be cost-shared equally among all 29 northern communities and other taxpayers
- Current native organizations may jump to Urban Reserve

### ***Questions we have about the Urban Reserve concept:***

- Will it be allowed for non-native to open business on Urban Reserve?
- What will the tax impact be?
- How does Hudson fit in?
- Will more federal money be available for policing?
- How will Municipality ensure value for money spent?
- How can Hudson supply housing and Lac Seul supply office buildings?
- Will non-natives be allowed to live on Urban Reserve?
- What guidelines will be used for land-use and development on the Urban Reserve? Who will develop and enforce these guidelines?
- Can an Urban Reserve be tailor-made for Sioux Lookout?
- What time frame are we looking at?
- Is an Urban Reserve only a tax dodge?
- How will far north communities contribute to process?
- Any effect because some communities are Treaty 3 and others are Treaty 9?

## Report from Table 2 – Facilitator: Terry-Lynne Jewell

### ***What do we like about the Urban Reserve concept?***

- It will be a method to bring investment into the community: jobs equal money and economic spinoffs
- It will be another tool in the economic toolbox
- Like the idea of building partnerships and bridges with First Nation and non-First Nation populations
- Self-sustaining wealth and job creating
- There is a roadmap and other successful examples of Urban Reserves
- Opportunity for jobs in Sioux Lookout

### ***What concerns do we have with the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Ensuring equal opportunity for all
- Competition: would an Urban Reserve be at an advantage
- Need to ensure that Municipal services are fully funded
- We need all information on existing Urban Reserves
- Lack of information can lead to bias
- Fear of unknown/misinformation; need unbiased information
- Potential negative impact on remote, Northern communities – economic and social
- Potential negative impact on residential and business tax base

### ***Questions we have about the Urban Reserve concept:***

- Who gets to live on the Urban Reserve?
- Is our community large enough to support an Urban Reserve?
- Will an Urban Reserve drain population and corresponding funding entitlements from existing First Nations communities to the North?
- How would it be politically managed (governance structure)?
- Who will make the decision on creating the Urban Reserve? Will the 28+ First Nations communities **and** the Municipality make the decision?
- What are the repercussions of a negative outcome?
- Can an Urban Reserve be reversed?

## **Report from Table 3 – Facilitator: Brian Strom**

### ***What do we like about the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Gives community the amenities and structure that we enjoy
- May increase First Nations investment
- Growth in housing
- Relationship building through joint ventures
- More employment
- Opportunities to increase cultural potential and creative capacity in youth
- More joint ventures / partnerships

### ***What Concerns do we have with the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Increased cost of living – assume tax base increase
- Who governs this area of land
- Will long-standing businesses and investments be threatened
- What changes will occur if traditional values of Sioux Lookout
- Lack of clarity on concept – what area, what businesses, etc.
- Could divide the community
- Could represent un-fair competition re: attracting best employees
- Might reduce current business community investment
- New level of competition among First Nations communities and also with Sioux Lookout re: new investment opportunities
- Is it reversible – (un-Urban Reserve)
- Lack of flexibility in selling a business that is part of an Urban Reserve
- How do provincial and federal laws apply?

### ***Questions we have about the Urban Reserve concept***

1. Who reaps the benefits of profits earned?
2. What flexibility is there in structure of an Urban Reserve – can the community input and decide?
3. Are there other Urban Reserves and what is their impact?
4. Can Urban Reserves be undone?
5. Who governs? Who owns? Who makes decisions and how?
6. What is the timeline on knowing if an Urban Reserve is feasible?
7. What is the timeline from decision to full implementation?
8. How will the decision be made – plebiscite or council vote?
9. How do we include social, cultural and environmental considerations? How do we factor in “healthy community” considerations?
10. How are all the levels of government – Federal, Provincial, Municipal, First Nations – involved in the decision?
11. What kind of economic development are we considering?
12. Is investment based on a business model or on achieving an Urban Reserve?

## **Report from Table 4 – Facilitator Monika Orzechowska**

### ***What do we like about the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Opportunities for young people from the North and for all young people
- Building a stronger economy for all people
- Has potential to stabilize our economy
- Sioux Lookout has always found a way to recover/prosper
- It will break down a lot of obstacles/barriers in the community
- Show commitment from both First Nation and non-First Nation to relationships and inclusion
- Like the message it sends about relationships and the kind of community we are
- More than just economic opportunity – it might be narrow to just look through economic lens
- The Aboriginal population is the fastest growing population in Canada and we need to include them in economic development partnerships. If we don't, the social safety net suffers.
- Makes inclusion in the dialogue accessible and in partnerships

### ***What concerns do we have with the Urban Reserve concept?***

- The issue can divide the community
- There are people that have strong feelings – mostly negative – and they are not here
- People who might have negative opinions feel that it's decided – can't do anything about it
- Even as a First Nations person, I don't know what it's all about – what are the benefits? If it helps the whole town that's good.
- Fear of segregation
- Even in pamphlet provided – promoted as primarily benefit to First Nations
- How do you get education and information out to people to facilitate understanding of what it's about?
- Some people might have come wanting to know what Urban Reserve model would look like but we don't know
- People need to be able to see the different models
- Don't want to force it on a community – don't want to displace people or the current community
- Would it be an Urban Reserve open for all the people from First Nations communities that come here?
- Will funding currently received by northern reserves be affected (i.e. by having fewer people living there)?

### ***Questions we have about the Urban Reserve concept:***

- What started the process?
- Financial implications for First Nations communities (Lac Seul and others), Municipality and everyone
- Timing: How long does process take – investigating UR? Creating Urban Reserve?
- Are we going to have information sessions from people who have experienced Urban Reserves?
- Could the Bulletin and Wawatay News have weekly information pieces – SHORT and IMPARTIAL pieces to provide factual information?
- How is it governed?
- Is there a relationship between the provincial and federal governments and should the northern communities be informed/included in the dialogue?

## **Report from Table 5 – Facilitator: Brenda Dovick**

### ***What do we like the about the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Job creation: more opportunities through funding and partnerships.
- Expand on “Hub of North” identity of Sioux Lookout through economic development opportunities to both the community and surrounding First Nations.
- It has been successful in other communities (i.e. Saskatchewan’s best practice model).
- It is in alignment with the government’s priorities regarding “growth” in the North (therefore more funding opportunities).
- Could provide more opportunities for training and keeping employees in the North, rather than having to import people from other areas who will likely leave in a few years.
- Partnerships between the private sector of business and First Nation communities.
- Opportunity to bring in First Nation strengths and culture into the community
- Celebrate our different cultures.
- Build on “the culture of Sioux Lookout”.
- Acknowledgment of First Nation people in our community/area (in regards to contribution to the economy and employment base).
- An increase in employment for First Nations people in remote communities.
- Beneficial to First Nation communities as the growth spreads outwards and beyond Sioux Lookout (in regards to accessibility and the exchange of business).
- Training opportunities: Sioux Lookout could become the “Hub” of training/education for the North.

### ***What concerns do we have with the Urban Reserve concept?***

- The influence of “non-supporters” on the rest of the community and the dynamics that will create within the community (not positive).
- Creating further division within the community (recognizing that there is already division with our community).
- It will be a long process. Can the initiative and people involved in the process last the duration?
- Will politics affect the outcome? (Change in leadership and/or government priorities).
- The concerns of a political structure vs. a business model. Which one will it be?
- Where will the resources come from? (To develop and sustain it).
- Resources are needed for dedicated staff throughout the process. A committee of volunteers is not enough.
- Quality of the education/sharing of information to the community regarding the concept of Urban Reserves is lacking. Citizens cannot rely on “Letters to the Editor” and “street talk” to make them informed.

- All the information might not get to all the people and only a chosen few will make the final decision.

***Questions we have about the Urban Reserve concept:***

- How will an Urban Reserve link to the identified benefits in relation to our community specifically?
- Where will the reserve be located? On vacant land? Land already being used? An expansion of Lac Seul First Nation?
- The town needs to provide adequate information to the entire community.
- How will business on an Urban Reserve be available to all consumers (i.e. gas station – who will be exempt of taxes)?
- How will the above affect competition between businesses? (this is also a concern)
- Is an Urban Reserve designated commercial or residential, or both?
- Is this a political structure or a business model in regards to its operation?
- What is the structure of the leadership?
- How will having an Urban Reserve in Sioux Lookout affect Lac Seul First Nation?
- Which treaty area would it be in?
- Whose Traditional Land will the Urban Reserve be on?
- How will hunting/fishing regulations be enforced? What about current by-laws? Will the Urban Reserve have to abide by these things?

## **Report from Table 6 – Facilitator: Aileen Urquhart**

### ***What do we like about the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Creates jobs
- Everyone can use the business; anyone can work there: level playing field - equality
- Economic stimulus
- Shop locally
- Encourages diversity (can support the goals of the truth and reconciliation commission)
- Could create culturally appropriate models for the younger generation
- Opportunities for young people
- Inspire people to stay in school and gain training and experience
- Contribute to the general local economy
- Could add to services that can only get living on the reserve
- Could provide stimulus to the northern reserves – partnerships
- Could create a sense of community for people coming in from the north and for people who live here and work in the north
- People could gain skills they could use in the north
- Let's give it a try!

### ***What concerns do we have with the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Would there be loss of taxes for the Municipality?
- Competition between businesses
- If Sioux Lookout doesn't develop an Urban Reserve, another community will
- Are there other First Nation Economic Development options in addition to/instead of Urban Reserve? (e.g. 6 Nations in Southern Ontario)

### ***Questions we have about the Urban Reserve concept:***

- What happens with taxes?
- Could Lac Seul purchase land and annex it to their reserve?
- Can we explore other options?
- Is there only potential for one Urban Reserve in North West Ontario?
- We would like more detailed information about some examples of Urban Reserves
- What about governance? Policing? Decision-making?
- How do the different levels of government work together in places where Urban Reserves are in place?
- What process will be followed to introduce all the different partners?

## **Report from Table 7 – Facilitator: Don DeGenova**

### ***What do we like about the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Bringing everybody together
- Challenging us to be creative – looking for solutions
- Opportunity for industrial development
- Opens market for First Nations development
- First Nation recapture some of the money
- Help keep money within the region
- The process is positive – dispel myths; deal with misinformation
- Opportunity for discussion and dialogue
- Opportunity for building relationships
- Opportunity to educate
- Collaborative investigation
- Hopeful for the young generation
- Opportunity to develop strong, healthy partnerships/relationships
- Opportunity for Municipality to increase funding; First Nations to benefit from increased funding – win/win
- More jobs and more money equals healthier communities; people are healthier

### ***What concerns do we have with the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Already have a reserve adjacent to Sioux Lookout (i.e. Lac Seul): this might result in loss of opportunity to provide service – people will go to Sioux Lookout because facilities are available to everyone (but it is 1.25 hr drive from Lac Seul)
- Limits us from developing our own services in Lac Seul
- Consideration will be given to Sioux Lookout before Lac Seul
- Money, time, energy spent on process will not equal the results
- Perception: not equal opportunity for everyone
- Lac Seul will continue to be left behind in infrastructure development
- Lac Seul's priorities will be overlooked
- Drain of First Nation youth from home communities to Sioux Lookout
- Lack of information on the concept and its implications hinders us from contributing to the discussion
- We don't know who to trust
- Blinded opportunity – could have negative impact on one or all
- First Nations communities could lose sense of identity/culture

### ***Questions we have about the Urban Reserve concept:***

- Lack of information on the concept and its implications hinders us from contributing to the discussion,
- This is Lac Seul traditional territory (Treaty 3); but we have Treaty 5 and 9 communities leading the process.

- Why didn't northern Chiefs approach Lac Seul re: Urban Reserve?
- Why not the Chief of Lac Seul?
- What are the Treaty implications?
- Why is the process not driven by Lac Seul?
- What are the protocols to deal with this situation?
- Has there been a socio/cultural/economic study on First Nations moving to urban communities?
- What are the socio/cultural/economic impacts on Sioux Lookout and the Northern Communities?
- Will there be any limit on other Treaties joining in?
- Will there be a series of referenda for the various stakeholders?
- Will there be a feasibility study to quantify/qualify the benefits/costs/risks for each of the stakeholders?

## **Report from Table 8 – Facilitator: George Hoggarth**

### ***What do we like about the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Potential future economic growth
- Economic growth leads to community growth
- Leading tourist attraction for Aboriginal culture
- Cultural tourism is in the infancy stage...the Urban Reserve concept could move it forward
- Preservation/affirmation/showcasing of Aboriginal culture
- Can include many cultural aspects such as Aboriginal music and art
- Will lead to learning more about each other and understanding -- Acceptance, tolerance and uniqueness
- Creates funding that benefits the whole community/greater opportunity for partnerships
- Strengthening the connection to the North

### ***What concerns do we have with the Urban Reserve concept?***

- How will this affect Lac Seul Heritage Centre?
- Misinformation
- Lack of understanding of the concept
- Limiting forum to start the discussion
- Feel threatened to start an Urban Reserve
- Will an Urban Reserve benefit or hurt Sioux Lookout/Lac Seul
- Dollars should be spent on Lac Seul, e.g. housing
- Where is the money to fund an Urban Reserve?
- Could it deplete Sioux Lookout's infrastructure dollars?
- Will taxes = expenses?
- What is the potential to bring in new business that will not compete with existing business?
- Creates an unlevel playing field
- Will there be more crime?
- Will all participating First Nations be able to sustain local and Urban Reserve spending?
- Successful Urban Reserves in the west have been developed by one First Nation – how will the interests of 30 First Nations be developed – how will it work with 30 partners?
- Depletion of limited financial resources for all communities
- Increased social issues

### ***Questions we have about the Urban Reserve concept:***

- What is an Urban Reserve?
- How do we evaluate success?
- Can Economic Development Partnerships happen without creating an Urban Reserve?
- What are the specific benefits to the First Nation and non-First Nation (Municipality)?
- Who will be our new neighbor? Different cultures

## **Report from Table 9 – Facilitator: Anna McKay**

### ***What do we like about the Urban Reserve concept?***

- Promotes language and culture
- Creation of jobs – employment bridge: Native and non-Native communities can learn from each other

### ***What concerns do we have about Urban Reserves?***

- Segregation and creating division between First Nations and non-First Nation
- What happens to the tax base –is there unfair competition
- Long term social impacts
- Caledonia effect-caused division/violence/disagreement over land
- Governance-new reserve or an extension of an existing reserve

### ***What questions do we have about Urban Reserves?***

- What makes the Urban Reserve a better option-why can't these economic development opportunities happen now?
- What kind of person lives there- an elder?
- What can happen now?
- Who will be responsible?
- Is it home? What is it? A business? People living on this reserve?
- How do treaty rights enter the picture?
- What would be the fallout if it failed?
- Would local people have a say in the development that would go on in an Urban Reserve?
- What kind of services will be on the Urban Reserve: Medical building? Education? Social services?
- Will there be duplication of services and what pressure will it have on existing services and businesses?
- Are they looking at alternatives to the Urban Reserve?
- Are we still able to retain our present status (band)?
- What is the interest of the Municipal Council for moving forward with establishing an Urban Reserve?