



This is a time of learning, questioning, listening, and considering. It is a time to understand what is in the Final Agreement, and what it means for our future. It is a time to think carefully and decide—as a unified Lheidli T'enneh Nation—the best path forward for our future.

OUR GOVERNMENT

Today, we are governed by rules set out in the *Indian Act* and are bound by the rules and policies of other governments.

However, as an Aboriginal people, we have a right to govern ourselves. A key part of the Final Agreement sets the foundation for a Lheidli T'enneh government which will be steered by our own Constitution. Our democratically-elected government will set the rules on our lands and represent us in negotiations with other governments. It will collect taxes and other revenue and from those, programs and services will flow for the Lheidli T'enneh people.



What will the Lheidli T'enneh government be responsible for?

The Lheidli T'enneh government will be able to make laws about things governing the affairs of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation including matters such as:

- Lheidli T'enneh citizenship
- Lheidli T'enneh language and culture
- Lheidli T'enneh lands
- public order
- peace and safety
- employment
- traffic and transportation
- marriages
- child and family services
- social and health services
- child custody
- adoption
- education



What will the Lheidli T'enneh Constitution do?

The Lheidli T'enneh Constitution sets out the rules for the government and creates the rights and freedoms of Lheidli T'enneh citizens.

The Constitution will be Lheidli T'enneh's highest law and any other Lheidli T'enneh laws that are inconsistent with it will have no force. The Lheidli T'enneh government will be elected by the members. Our Constitution will result in a government that is democratically and financially accountable to Lheidli T'enneh members. The Constitution also sets out checks and balances to control government conduct, and protect Lheidli T'enneh assets and lands.

When we vote on the Final Agreement, we will also vote on the Constitution. Both of these legal documents need to be approved by our members.



How will we work with other governments?

A Lheidli T'enneh government will represent its people together with the governments of British Columbia and Canada in all matters. It will also represent us in relationships with the governments of other First Nations. The Lheidli T'enneh government may participate on the Board of the Regional District of Fort George just as other municipal governments do. A separate agreement will be reached with local municipal governments to deal with land-use planning, and harmonizing taxes, and costs for services, and environmental protections.



Will we be able to appeal decisions our government makes?

The Lheidli T'enneh government will maintain a public registry of Lheidli T'enneh laws for all to see. It will set up a process for appeal or review of decisions. If an issue cannot be resolved within those processes, the appeal may be heard by the Supreme Court of British Columbia.



Will non-members living on Lheidli T'enneh lands have any say in the Lheidli Government?

The Lheidli T'enneh government will include at least one elected non-member representative who lives on Lheidli T'enneh lands. If a non-Lheidli T'enneh member is affected by a Lheidli T'enneh law, they will have the same rights of appeal as Lheidli T'enneh citizens.



When will elections for a Lheidli T'enneh government be held?

The first elections for the Lheidli T'enneh government will be held within six months of the date the Final Agreement comes into effect. Until that election happens, the Chief and Councillors of the Lheidli T'enneh Band Council will continue to manage Lheidli T'enneh affairs. After the first election, elections would be held at least every five years.



Will there be limits on our law-making abilities?

Lheidli T'enneh law-making jurisdiction is set out in the Final Agreement. In some areas Lheidli T'enneh laws will take priority over federal and provincial laws; in other specified areas, federal and provincial laws will have priority if Lheidli T'enneh laws are in conflict. In most matters Lheidli T'enneh will make laws independently, but the Lheidli T'enneh government will need to give at least six months' written notice before it makes any law about adoption, child protection services, health services, family and social services, child care services, or education. In a limited number of other areas, including criminal law and intellectual property, we will have no law-making abilities.



A government of the people

The Lheidli T'enneh government will be elected by our members and will be recognized under federal and provincial law. It will operate under the protection of the Constitution of Canada including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and be guided by our own Lheidli T'enneh Constitution. With this, and the rights afforded to our government from the Final Agreement, the Lheidli T'enneh government will have the power and the tools to better the future of its people.

your Voice. your Choice.
our Future

We are the Lheidli T'enneh. We have many voices. But we are one proud people We will move forward together. To make a better future.

Whatever the outcome, this vote will be historic. As we walk this path, as we talk about and consider our future together, our people will become stronger. We will hold the conversations about our choices in an open and respectful way, where all thoughts and opinions will be valued; where we respect and learn from each other; where we decide our future together.

