

# Inclusive Regional Governance

Electoral Area Services Committee - December 11, 2025

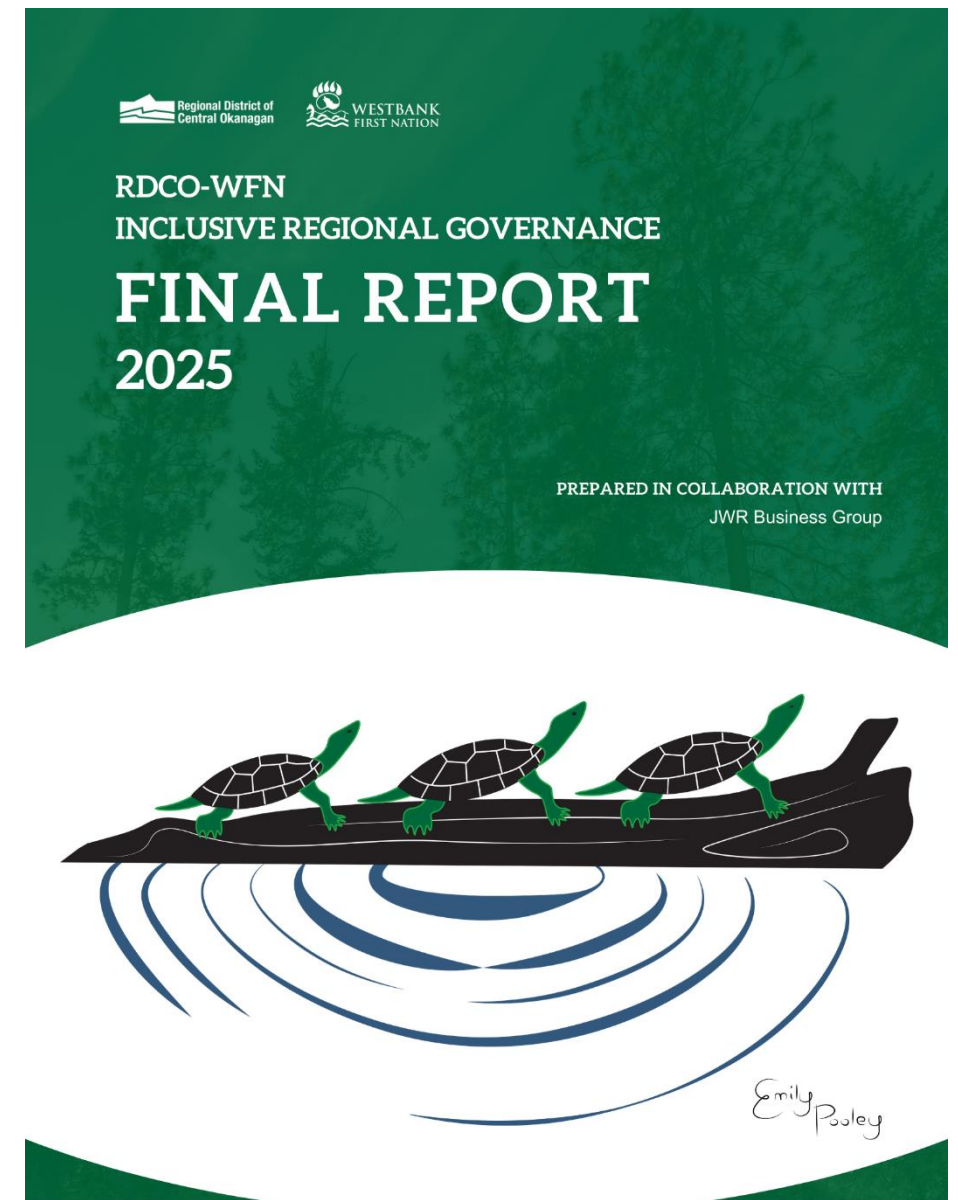
Final Report

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# Purpose

Present the Electoral Area Services Committee with the Regional District of Central Okanagan / Westbank First Nation Inclusive Regional Governance Initiative Final Report prepared by the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) and seek endorsement.



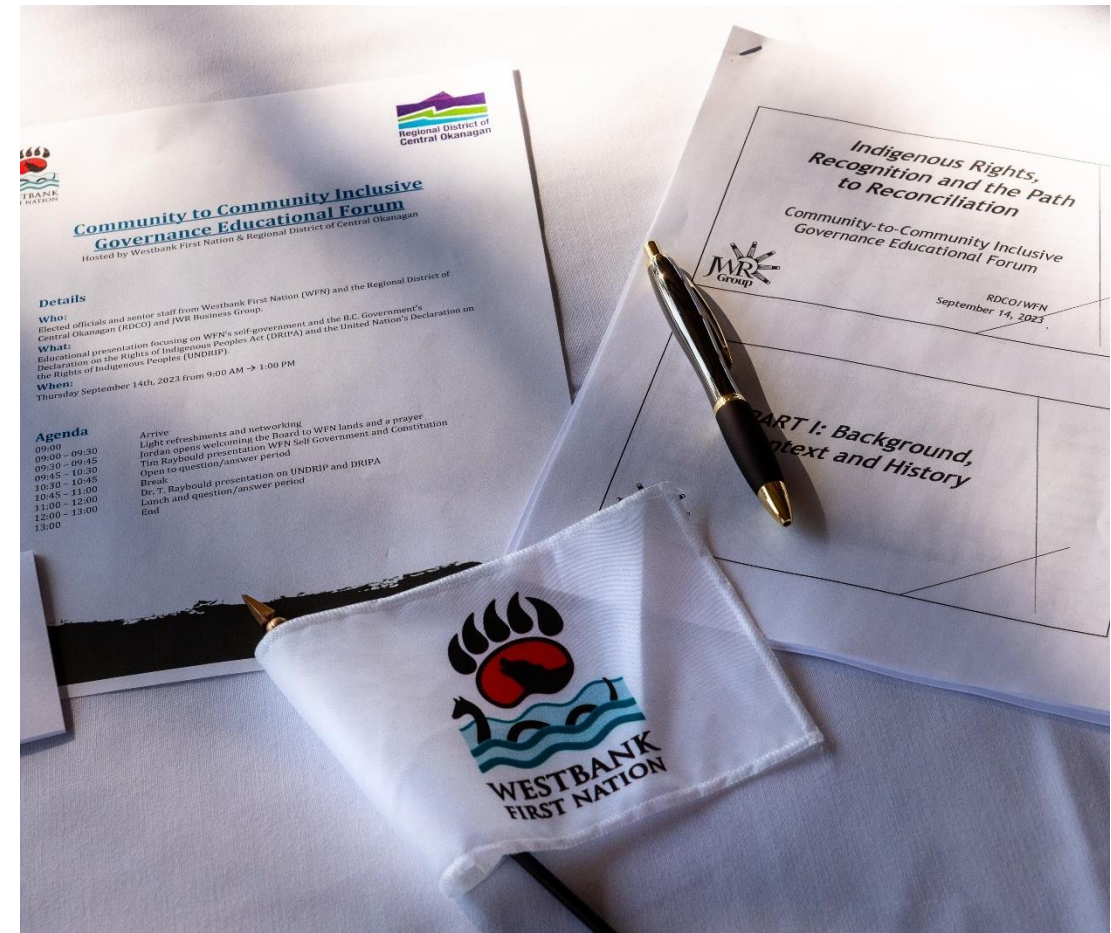
# Foundation



- DRIPA Action Plan
- RDCO Truth & Reconciliation
- WFN Request
- Funding from Ministry of Housing and Housing Affairs

# Key Aspects

- Inclusive Regional Governance
- Model Five Selected
- Inclusive Governance Considerations
- Inclusive Governance Roadmap
- Policy and Gap Analysis
- Strategic Considerations and Next Steps



# Inclusive Governance Considerations

- **Governance Structure**
- **Voting Structure and Representation**
- **Service Participation**
- **Financial Considerations**
- **Planning Frameworks**
- **Emergency Management**



# INCLUSIVE REGIONAL GOVERNANCE ROADMAP - SUMMARY

## 2022 - 2023

- WFN CCP defined a goal to formalize voting relationship with RDCO (2022).
- JWR Business Group (JWR) contracted to develop Inclusive Regional Governance. Initiative Report for RDCO / WFN
- RDCO Strategic Priorities (2023-26) included include Truth and Reconciliation and exploring full representation for WFN.
- Community-to-Community Forum between RDCO and WFN Leadership.

## Jun - Sep 2024

- Special RDCO Board Meeting: Presentation on IWG Session Summary and Recommendations.
- RDCO / WFN formally endorsed the decision making framework and the composition of the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG).
- Joint Presentation on Inclusive Regional Governance by RDCO / WFN at UBCM Convention.

## Nov - Dec 2024

- IWG Terms of Reference developed and approved.
- Current legislation requires a regional context statement for Regional Growth Strategy (RGS); provincial input is required to determine if a Regional Context Statement (RCS) is required within a Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP).
- IWG created a tracking mechanism to document and summarize approaches for addressing key governance considerations.

## Feb - Apr 2025

- Ministry may support temporarily stepping aside from a "one size fits all" policy approach; provincial representatives to meet with IWG for a policy session.
- Provincial staff to clarify if electoral assent is required to change boundaries of electoral area (removing IR#9 and IR#10); including implications on voting structure and representation for non-members.
- Reviewed Letters Patent and service agreement appendix against mandatory regional services; assessed alignment with WFN autonomy and liability; updates to *WFN Constitution* may be needed. Mandatory services not included in the current master agreement would need to be included in *WFN Constitution*.
- Undetermined whether a boundary adjustment will be required for Electoral Area West; need provincial input.

## Sep - Dec 2025

- RDCO initiating RGS renewal (last updated in 2014) which must meet LGA requirements; WFN has historically participated in RGS planning groups, but further integration is needed; planning gaps identified between CCP and OCP; analysis prepared for provincial review and consideration.
- Ministry to determine voting units (currently 1.98 votes for IR#9 and IR#10) based on census data.
- IWG prepared an Inclusive Governance Final Report for WFN Chief and Council, the Electoral Area Services Committee, and the RDCO Board.
- Submitted the Final Report to the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs.



## Jan - Mar 2024

- RDCO Board Meeting: Presentation of the Inclusive Regional Governance Discussion Paper completed by JWR Business Group.
- JWR Completed and Presented Inclusive Regional Governance Summary Report.

## October 2024

- RDCO / WFN Staff identified mandatory services provided by RDCO service establishment bylaw or by agreement.
- WFN / RDCO staff confirmed mandatory services; refer to s. 338 LGA.
- Discussion on amending the LGA to include Self-Governing First Nations; DRIPA-LGA conflicts noted; legislative change identified as one pathway. (to read Self-Governing and Treaty First Nations in the LGA).

## January 2025

- Reviewed the *WFN Constitution* for amendment to enable WFN Council member to sit at RDCO Board via delegated authority.
- Joint presentation to Electoral Area Services Committee.
- Assessed implications of voting rights for non-Members on WFN Lands; reviewed Electoral Area West Director vote distribution and potential WFN voting unit strength if WFN becomes a voting member of the RDCO Board; requires further review by provincial policy team.
- CFOs addressed RDCO and WFN requisitions and implications on taxes.
- Deferred to the Ministry to explore language changes in LGA to include Self-Governing First Nations.

## May - Aug 2025

- Ministry considered WFN Advisory Council broadly consistent with treaty requirements for non-Member engagement but recommended further analysis and consultation.
- The Ministry confirmed current legislation does not address removing Westbank reserve lands from Electoral Area West. Such a change would likely require amending the Regional District's Letters Patent, but the process and implications (representation, engagement, and governance models) need further policy work and consultation.
- Confirmed MFA legislation does not permit Self-Governing First Nations; additionally, the question of liability for debt was examined; direction from the Ministry is required in developing **Model Five**.
- WFN presented the Initiative to WFN Advisory Council.

## 2026 - 2027

- Continue to champion the principles of Inclusive Regional Governance Initiative to support equitable participation.
- Maintain dialogue with the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs to advance legislative reform.
- Track and respond to provincial efforts to amend legislation enabling self-governing First Nations to participate in regional governance.
- Prepare for Integration of **Model Five**.

***This roadmap summarizes key actions and considerations undertaken to better understand the implications for implementing Model Five. Please refer to Appendix H for more detail.***

# Provincial Direction and Legislative Pathways

- **Direction and policy alignment needed for:**
  - **Legislative approach**
  - **Voting Structure and Representation**
  - **Service Participation**
  - **Financial Considerations**
  - **Planning Frameworks**



# Next Steps



- **Submit Final Report:** Deliver to the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs and the Province.
- **Advocate for Support:** Lobby for continued commitment to the Inclusive Governance mandate under BC's DRIPA Action Plan.
- **Maintain Provincial Engagement:** Continue ongoing dialogue with the Ministry.
- **Prepare for Implementation:** Develop readiness plans for governance integration.

# Recommendation



**THAT** the Electoral Area Services Committee endorses the Inclusive Regional Governance Final Report as attached to the report from the Chief Administrative Officer dated December 11, 2025.



Questions?