



Vancouver, British Columbia
February 18-20

Our Gathering • kexwkexwntsút chet
• tə sǫǫǫip ct • 2026

SUMMARY REPORT



BC Assembly of First Nations



First Nations Summit



Union of BC Indian Chiefs

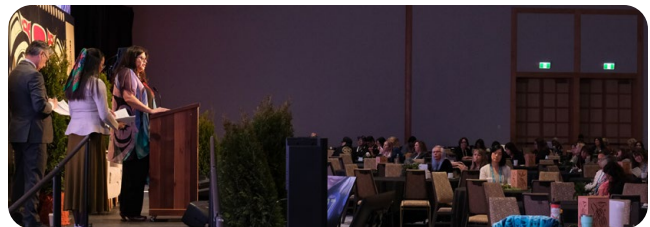
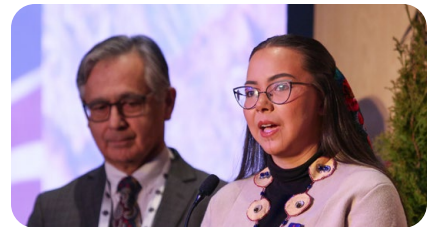
Canada



Our Gathering 2026, *kexwkexwntsút chet, tə sǫǫǫip ct*, was held February 18th-20th, 2026, on the unceded, traditional, ancestral territories of the Coast Salish peoples, the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations at the Westin Bayshore Hotel in Vancouver, British Columbia.

This year marked the 12th gathering, co-hosted by the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), comprised of the First Nations Summit, the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs and the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations, together with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC). The event was planned with event management support from Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council.

Approximately 700 participants attended the three-day event in person. Virtual sessions allowed for additional participation of over 100 remote attendees. Among the participants were First Nations Chiefs, Councillors, administrators, Elders and youth representing 135 First Nation communities, 8 Tribal Councils, delegates from various Indigenous organizations and other government departments.





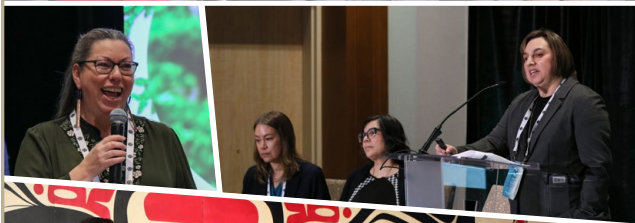
Highlights

Agenda

- » Co-developed with FNLC, ISC and CIRNAC, and informed by participant input obtained through surveys, the agenda included eight plenary sessions and 19 interactive breakout sessions.
- » Some of the key topics covered were: second generation cutoff, financing Indigenous-led infrastructure, housing, specific claims, transfer payments, Jordan's Principle, education jurisdiction, residential schools and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

Ministerial Attendance

- » The Honourable Mandy Gull-Masty, Minister of Indigenous Services, joined virtually to engage in conversations on priority issues and respond to First Nations' request for increased collaborative action between all levels of government.
- » The Honourable Rebecca Alty, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, attended in person. Discussion points included specific claims, redesigning the Additions to Reserve policy, improving access to capital, and supporting alternatives for First Nations seeking pathways outside the BC Treaty process.



Elders and Youth Participation

- » Elders and Youth were invited to participate in plenary and breakout sessions and provide their input.
- » Art and food workshops provided opportunities to engage and share.



Cultural Presentations

- » Each day began with a grounding prayer by Elder Mahara Allbrett (Tsleil-Waututh) on Day 1, Elder Bob Baker (Squamish Nation) on Day 2, and Elder Larry Grant (Musqueam Indian Band) on Day 3.
- » After workshops and networking on Day 1, participants were treated to a 45-minute comedy show by Comedian Keith Nahanee of Squamish Nation.
- » The next day, Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week partnered with Canadian Heritage to present a vibrant fashion show featuring new and established Indigenous designers, as well as artist LOV.
- » Throughout the Gathering, attendees were treated to drumming by Elder Sam George, Knowledge Keeper Les George, and his son Kalip George of Musqueam Indian Band. Singers Chesha7 iy Iha Mens Mother and her daughter of Squamish Nation also captivated the audience with their beautiful songs.
- » The Gathering also included an Indigenous artisans market showcasing jewelry, arts and crafts.



Exhibitors

- » Over 40 partners from Indigenous organizations and other government departments hosted information booths, providing attendees with opportunities to connect with potential partners and learn about the different directorates within ISC and CIRNAC.



Speakers Corner

- » Over 20 participants, including Chiefs, Elders, and the Deputy Minister of CIRNAC paused to reflect on their experiences. The interviews were compiled into a short video.



Cultural Supports

- » A dedicated, private space was provided on site for staff from the Indian Residential School Survivors Society to provide emotional support and cultural brushings for attendees.



Agenda At-a-glance

DAY 1 Wed, Feb 18 (7:30 AM – 5:00 PM)

- 7:30^{AM} Registration/ Hot Buffet Breakfast
- 8:30^{AM} **Welcome to Our Gathering 2026: Day 1** @ Grand Ballroom
- 9:00^{AM} **Plenary: Opening Remarks from Deputy Ministers of CIRNAC and ISC and Q&A** @ Grand Ballroom
- 9:45^{AM} **Plenary: Implementation of the United Nations Declaration Act and Action Plan** @ Grand Ballroom
- 10:15^{AM} Networking Break and Refreshments
- 10:30^{AM} **Plenary: Specific Claims Update** @ Grand Ballroom
- 11:50^{AM} **Cultural Presentation: Drumming** @ Grand Ballroom
- 12:00^{PM} Buffet Lunch
- 1:00^{PM} **Concurrent Session:**
 - A Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act @ Grand Ballroom
 - B Education Jurisdiction Initiative in BC @ Salon 1
 - C Residential Schools Session @ Salon 2 and 3
 - D Transfer Payments 101: Lifecycle, Budget, Reporting and Financial Obligations/ Connecting with your Funding Services Officer @ Cypress 1 and 2

DAY 1 ▲ CONTINUED

- 2:15^{PM} Networking Break and Refreshments
- 2:30^{PM} **Concurrent Sessions:**
 - A Successes and Lessons Learned from Community Engagement – Recent Treaty Ratifications @ Grand Ballroom
 - B First Peoples Cultural Council: Steering the Canoe – Planning Tools for Indigenous Arts, Heritage and Language Revitalization @ Salon 1
 - C Federal Consultation Guidelines – Engagement Renewal Process and Progress to Date @ Salon 2 and 3
- 3:45^{PM} Move to Grand Ballroom
- 4:00^{PM} **Day 1 Closing** @ Grand Ballroom
- 4:15^{PM} **Cultural Presentation: Comedian Keith Nahanee** @ Grand Ballroom

DAY 2 Thu, Feb 19 (7:30 AM – 5:00 PM)

- 7:30^{AM} Registration
Hot Buffet Breakfast (8:00 AM - 9:00 AM)
Networking and Booth Exploration
- 9:00^{AM} **Welcome to Our Gathering 2026: Day 2** @ Grand Ballroom
- 9:30^{AM} **Plenary: Major Projects – The Role of the Major Projects Office** @ Grand Ballroom

10:45 _{AM}	Networking Break and Refreshments
11:10 _{AM}	Cultural Presentation: Singing @ Grand Ballroom
11:30 _{AM}	Plenary: A Conversation with the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations @ Grand Ballroom
12:00 _{PM}	Buffet Lunch
1:00 _{PM}	Concurrent Sessions: A First Nations Leadership Council: Indigenous Data Sovereignty – Practical Tools and Supports @ Salon 1 B Strengthening the Future of First Nations Emergency Management in British Columbia @ Salon 2 and 3 C Jordan's Principle – National Overview and Request Process @ Cypress 1 D Model Local Education Agreement (LEA) @ Cypress 2
2:15 _{PM}	Networking Break and Refreshments
2:30 _{PM}	Concurrent Sessions: A Redesigning the Additions to Reserve Policy @ Salon 1 B Continuing the Conversation on Infrastructure Modernization and Housing @ Salon 2 and 3 C Toxic Drug Public Health Emergency Response: Advancing First Nations-led Responses @ Cypress 1 D Nisga'a Lisims Government: Major Projects Discussion – An Overview of the Ksi Lisims LNG Project @ Cypress 2
3:45 _{PM}	Move to Grand Ballroom
4:00 _{PM}	Day 2 Closing @ Grand Ballroom
4:10 _{PM}	Cultural Presentation: Indigenous Fashion Show @ Grand Ballroom

DAY 3 **Fri, Feb 20 (7:30_{AM} – 2:15_{PM})**

7:30 _{AM}	Registration/ Hot Buffet Breakfast
8:15 _{AM}	Welcome to Our Gathering 2026: Day 3 @ Grand Ballroom
8:30 _{AM}	Plenary: Build Canada Homes Presentation @ Grand Ballroom
9:10 _{AM}	Plenary: Collaborative Process on the Second Generation Cutoff and Section 10 Voting Thresholds @ Grand Ballroom
10:00 _{AM}	Plenary: A Conversation with the Minister of Indigenous Services – An Interactive Virtual Session @ Grand Ballroom
10:45 _{AM}	Concurrent Sessions: A Financing Indigenous-led Infrastructure: Partnering with the Canada Infrastructure Bank @ Grand Ballroom B The Convergence of First Nations-led Climate Action and Emergency Management @ Salon 1 C Breathing Life into Indigenous Child and Family Services Laws: Nation Experiences @ Salon 2 and 3 D Toxic Drug Public Health Emergency Response: Youth and Young Adults Focus, With Open Arms @ Cypress 1
12:00 _{PM}	Buffet Lunch
1:00 _{PM}	Reflections on Our Gathering 2026 / Day 3 Closing Remarks @ Grand Ballroom



Post Event Survey

The post event survey yielded positive feedback:

- » Plenary sessions were highly valued and consistently well rated, demonstrating that each topic was important and drew strong attendance.
- » Breakout sessions were very well attended. Participants noted they were unable to attend all sessions of interest because the sessions were scheduled concurrently, and suggested duplicating some sessions to address this challenge.
- » Attendees said that they would appreciate more opportunities to share ideas and ask questions within sessions.
- » Guests appreciated the venue, meals, session content and easy registration process.
- » Overall satisfaction rating of 4.29/5



Thank you | huy chexw a | huy ch q'u

On behalf of the First Nations Leadership Council, ISC and CIRNAC, thank you for your participation in Our Gathering 2026 kexwkexwntsút chet, tə sǫǫǫip ct. Also, we wish to thank Masters of Ceremony, Katisha Paul and Harold Tarbell for moderating the event, and Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council for providing event support and logistics. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity to come together to create new relationships, strengthen existing ones, share best practices, and engage in dialogue to advance the interests of First Nations in British Columbia.