



It's National Indigenous History Month and we asked some of the Canadian Chamber Network's Indigenous business leaders what economic reconciliation means to them.





Economic reconciliation is about restoring balance in financial dealings and relationships, as well as a recognition and understanding that past economic exploitation has led to a lack of access to economic success or ‘miyo-pimâtisiwin’ (the good life). A balanced economy means stable economic growth in the long term, across different sectors – but also inclusive of all Canadians.



Paula Adamitz

Owner, ADAMITZ FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS INC.

Board Director, Greater Parkland Regional Chamber of Commerce, Chair, Indigenous Business Committee





I'm optimistic about the future of reconciliation, especially when I witness Indigenous leaders excelling in various fields like business, politics and community leadership. It's inspiring to see their breakthroughs. My mother faced derogatory comments in her youth, being called a "half breed" – today, I proudly embrace my heritage and hope future generations will do the same.



Cody Desmerais

Owner/Founder, Limitless Gear Clothing

Motivational Speaking & Consulting

Board Director, Prince Albert Chamber of Commerce





To achieve economic reconciliation, the business community must actively seek and engage in **MEANINGFUL** partnerships with Indigenous entrepreneurs and businesses. Collaboration is key.



Moody Dan

Líl'wat7úl, Manager of Operations, Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre

Board Director, Whistler Chamber of Commerce





I love having hard conversations and I am seeing it more often and more openly in the workplace. If we continue to speak up and voice concerns, failures, mistakes and darkness, those will eventually become shared experiences, lessons, opportunities and light for those around us to continue down a path towards a better future.



Jessica Floresco

COO, The Forks North Portage Partnership

Board Director, The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce.





My view of economic reconciliation reflects the TRC's Recommendation #92: having meaningful consultation and education, training and employment opportunities and obtaining informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects. It's about the ability to prosper in all our communities and to live healthy and safe lifestyles. We are all treaty people.



Joel Pedersen

MMM CD, Founder of Fitness 2J2 & Security 2J2
Second Chair, Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce





By working with Indigenous business leaders, your organization can help to empower the growth of the Indigenous economy.



Thomas Benjoe

President & CEO of FHQ Developments,
Past Chair of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce,
Board Director, Canadian Chamber of Commerce





Society depends on businesses contributing to social and economic wellbeing for everyone. The business community must contribute to Indigenous reconciliation in Canada. Start to create Indigenous-related strategies that align with your corporate objectives - from procurement, hiring and relationship building there is much to contribute.



Kim Baird, CM, OBC, ICD.D

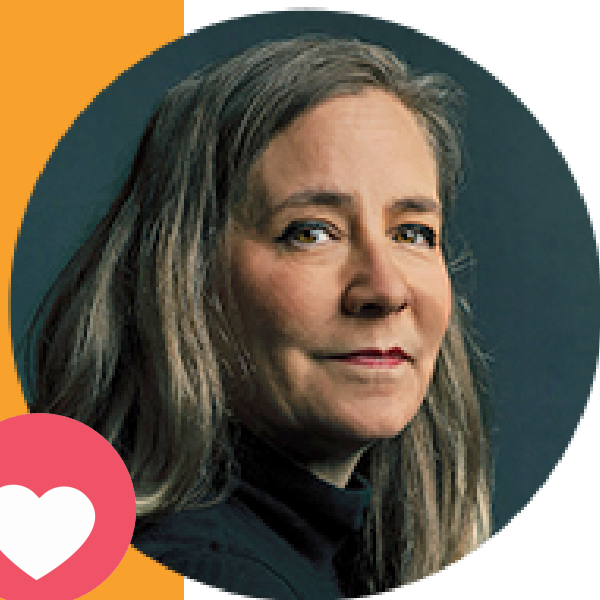
Kim Baird Strategic Consulting

Board Director, Greater Vancouver Board of Trade





Co-creating the conditions for Indigenous businesses to thrive is the most natural, swift and effective pathway to economic reconciliation in our country.



Teara Fraser

Founder, elibird aero and Iskwew Air
Board Director, Greater Vancouver Board of Trade,
Aerial Evolution Association of Canada





Economic reconciliation necessitates redressing historic injustices against Indigenous people, addressing their disadvantaged economic position. Honoring treaties and Crown-Indigenous relations, the foundations of Canada, and providing financial compensation for neglected commitments are crucial for fair and equitable Indigenous participation in the economy.



Jaimie Lickers

National Vice-President, Indigenous Markets CIBC
Chair, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce





To me, economic reconciliation means our people gaining our voices back to pre-treaty, to share our resources. It has always been our vision to see and share our Indigenous peoples' independence.



Tracy Benson

General Manager, BATC Community Development Corporation
Board Director, Battlefords Chamber of Commerce





Economic reconciliation is about addressing the historical and ongoing economic disparities faced by Indigenous peoples in addition to fostering equitable and inclusive economic opportunities. It recognizes the need to rectify the impacts of colonization, discrimination, and systemic barriers that have hindered Indigenous communities' economic development and self-determination and encourages/carries out community-driven planning and development that allow our people to articulate our own assets, aspirations and vision for the future.



Carolyn Hepburn

Dean, Indigenous Studies & Academic Upgrading, Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology

Board Director, Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce.





To me, economic reconciliation is acknowledging the true history of our Indigenous people, recognizing the barriers that we face and then creating opportunity for our people to generate wealth for our future generations while respecting our traditional values.



Stanley Barnaby

CEO, Joint Economic Development Initiative

Board Director, Fredericton Chamber of Commerce





In Greater Victoria, we are responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #92. We seek not only to include Indigenous people in the economy, but to transform the economy, as we incorporate Indigenous wisdom for a sustainable future and prosperity for all.



Christina Clarke

Executive Director, Indigenous Prosperity Centre
Vice Chair, Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce





Economic reconciliation is not waiting for the government to advance the economies of our Indigenous communities. It means that the corporate sector must adopt the TRC's Call to Action #92 by engaging in meaningful partnerships with Indigenous groups, supporting Indigenous entrepreneurship, embracing Indigenous cultures, prioritizing diversity in the supply chain and advocating for policy changes.



Michael Peters

CEO, Glooscap Ventures

Board Director, Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce





Economic reconciliation is a long-term commitment that requires ongoing effort and collaboration. Engaging in partnership agreements or community investment partnerships allows businesses to support Indigenous-led economic projects that align with their goals and aspirations. This collaboration fosters economic self-determination, strengthens community resilience, and builds trust and respect between Indigenous communities and the business sector.



Crystal Young

President & CEO, McKay Metis Group

Board Director, Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce





Community partnerships between First Nations communities, First Nations economic development companies and individual First Nations business owners continue to build the value added in each of these economic corridors. This shows that working together is the best way to strengthen our communities, provinces/territories and country, creating a positive future for our children.



Richard Ahenakew

General Manager, Northern Lights Casino (SIGA),
Chair, Indigenous Affairs Committee, Canadian Chamber of Commerce,
First Indigenous Chair, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce





Indigenous leaders are not only sharing stories of the past. Economic reconciliation means to honour Indigenous values in our present business communities while creating space to amplify Indigenous voices for a brighter future for all Canadians.



Shaina Lynden

Co-Owner, Ryde YXE Cycle Studio

Board Director, Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce





To engage meaningfully with First Nation communities, it's essential to understand the truth of the historical relationship between Canada's government and First Nations people. Non-Indigenous individuals must educate themselves about this history before pursuing reconciliation. Take time to learn through literature, workshops, and cultural sensitivity training before engaging with Indigenous community members for business interactions.



Steven McCoy, BBA

CEO & Founder, Gencity Inc.

Board Director, Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce





Superior Strategies offers a program in cultural sensitivity training that is going to be game-changing. It's going to hold people's feet to the fire and we've got a plan around inclusion and reconciliation that's very progressive.



Jason Thompson

President and CEO, Superior Strategies Inc.
Chair, Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce





We are facing complex economic times. It is important to continue our work of supporting businesses towards economic reconciliation. I am optimistic to see what new local business opportunities will be created within our communities as we move through the challenges ahead of us.



Tanya Tootoosis

Casino Shift Manager, Northern Lights Casino,
Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority
Board Director, Prince Albert Chamber of Commerce





Our ancestors were land guardians, respecting its resources and living in balance with all things. We continue to fulfill this role. The world heals daily, and we must do the same. Economic reconciliation demands rediscovering balance. We owe it to Mother Earth and have a moral duty to safeguard her. The business community and First Nations must collaborate, partner and stand united in this new economy for our people, by our people.



Harris Sutherland

Customer Experience Manager, Gold Eagle Casino

Board Member/Past Chair, Battlefords Chamber of Commerce

First-ever First Nations Chair, Battlefords Chamber of Commerce

