

Building Our Economy

The Carcross/Tagish Economy and the Resort at Millhaven Bay

Our history points to our future

For thousands of years, Carcross/Tagish First Nation people relied on our lands, waters and other resources for our economic well-being. We were self-sufficient.

Tlingits from the West Coast intermarried with Tagish people, together creating powerful trading lines that ran from the Pacific to the Yukon's interior. Skookum Jim's discovery of gold ignited an economic boom in the territory. Many of our people returned to their roots by working on the trails during the Gold Rush.

In the 1900s, trapping and outfitting provided land-based economic opportunities and mining also contributed to local employment.

Current economy

Today, economic opportunities for Carcross/Tagish people to work on our traditional lands and waters are very limited. Youth often have to leave the community to seek jobs elsewhere. Some Carcross/Tagish people are employed by our self-governing First Nation but we all know there needs to be more and different choices for people. We need to become more self-sufficient again.

Elders and other community members have often said that tourism can be a good trail to follow for a healthy economic future. People know that many tourism activities can touch lightly on the land, water and the community while providing training and job opportunities. Tourism can also provide a way of reconnecting to our traditional lands and ways.

New opportunities

Recently, CTFN and its Development Corporation (CTDC) have been looking at the idea of building a wilderness resort at Millhaven Bay on Bennett Lake. We have been discussing this idea with a group of experienced business people who

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Trip to Clayoquot Sound

Last summer, 15 Carcross/Tagish people went to visit the Clayoquot Wilderness Resort on Vancouver Island.



The Clayoquot resort is owned and run by the same business people interested in building a resort at Millhaven Bay in partnership with CTDC. The resort combines luxury with a more rustic wilderness feel.



People from the Ahousat First Nation welcomed CTFN to their territory. The Ahousat and the resort recently signed off on a master tourism plan for their traditional lands.



Who is involved?

A number of business people are involved in supporting the Resort at Millhaven Bay.

However, the efforts to work with CTDC are led by Rod and Martha Taylor, and John Caton.

Rod & Martha Taylor

Rod and Martha are the owners/operators of Uncommon Journeys, an adventure travel company specializing in remote wilderness canoeing, hiking and dogsledding trips in the Yukon.



Rod is currently the President of the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, a member of the Wilderness Tourism Association Marketing Committee, a member of the Senior Marketing Council for the Yukon. In 2008, Rod was appointed as a Director of the Board of the Canadian Tourism Commission, a Canadian agency responsible for marketing Canada to the world.

John Caton

John is the Managing Director and shareholder of Clayoquot Wilderness Resort. John and his wife Adele have created a proven business model that can be duplicated in remote wilderness areas around the world.



John is currently a director of the BC Wilderness Tourism Association and a founding member of the BC Sustainable Tourism Collective.

John brings the vision and a combination of valuable construction, international marketing, outdoor leadership skills and fund raising abilities to the project.

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are interested in partnering with CTFN to develop a world-class, very “green”, luxury resort.

The business people believe that Millhaven Bay and surrounding area has what it takes to attract people to stay at a high-end resort.

CTDC believes that a resort at Millhaven Bay presents an opportunity for Carcross/Tagish people to develop a strong, sustainable economy and community. It also appears that this resort could respect the environment, the local community and our culture.

The resort offers a chance for Carcross/Tagish people to benefit from different training and job opportunities both at the resort and in other businesses that could grow because of the building and running of the resort.

For example, the resort would offer an accredited sustainable tourism management program on site. This unique program would give some local people a great chance to develop highly marketable skills.

Additionally, people and businesses who can provide the type of services and work that a luxury resort needs will have a diversity of job and business opportunities (see page 3).

Wood carvers would also benefit as there is a proposal to build a wood carving studio. The resort would also provide an opportunity for local artists to sell their products.

Next steps

The proposed resort is still just in the early planning stages (see pages 5 & 6). There are many details still to be worked out.

However, the Carcross/Tagish Development Corporation wants to continue to explore the possibility of developing this sustainable wilderness resort in partnership with some very experienced business people.

It could be a tremendous opportunity to build our own economy. But we need to look at the pros and cons of the project closely before partnering on this project.

Building an Economy

CTFN knows it is important to strengthen economic opportunities in the region.

CTFN citizens, particularly our youth, need more job and business opportunities.

As a First Nation, we also need more ways to build our investments and businesses so that we can earn more money to support important services for our people.

To become more self-sufficient, it is important to expand our investments. We need to think of where we want our community to be in the long-term. Our

First Nation has some business ventures now, but they are too small to help us create a healthy, sustainable community.

The resort at Millhaven Bay has the potential to be one cornerstone of a sustainable local economy. It can offer a diversity of training, job and business opportunities if we are willing to step up to the plate.

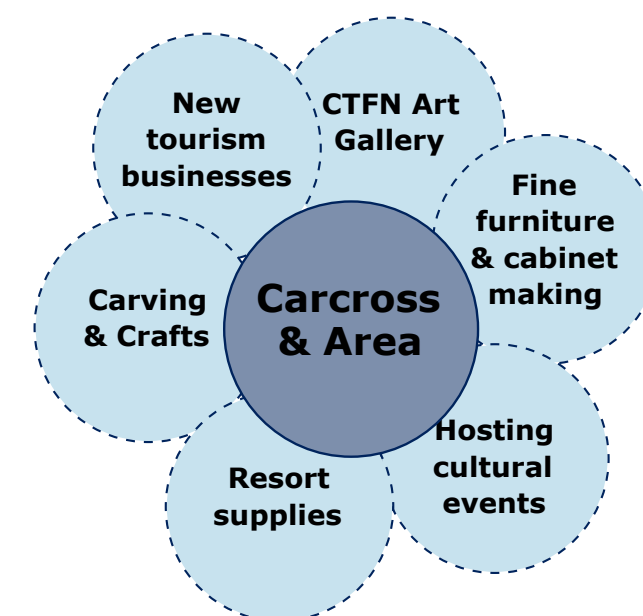
The people involved in the resort are committed to protecting the environment and are also very respectful of our culture and of CTFN’s rights in our traditional territory.

Without our support the project will not go ahead. But we also need the partnership of these experienced business people and their investors if this resort is to be built and become successful.

This partnership opportunity comes at a good time for our self-governing First Nation. It offers us a chance to take a strong step towards developing a self-sufficient economy and community. It is important for us to fully explore and understand the pros and cons of this unique proposal.

If the resort is built, many other opportunities could be created in Carcross.

Below is just an example of some things that might be available if people are interested in developing competitive businesses. It is also expected that the reputation and profile of the luxury resort would help make Carcross known as a place to visit. This could draw in non-resort visitors as well.





Resort Design

The resort will be the first true luxury wilderness resort in the Yukon. It will also be the first to use environmentally sound technology and sustainable practices in all parts of the business. Practices being considered include alternative power supplies, composting, greenhouses & local gardens, water recovery and recycled building materials.

There will be a main lodge with many services, a separate kitchen and dining area, a spa, and dock. Guests will stay in cabins year-round and in nicely furnished wall tents in the summer. Boardwalks will be built to protect the environment.

Nearby, there will also be an area for staff accommodations, horse corrals and barns, a dog yard and kennels, maintenance buildings and other service needs.

Working on the details

The idea of the resort at Millhaven Bay is still in the very early planning stages. CTDC has made no commitments to partnering on this resort. We like the idea, but there are more things to understand!

There are four main things that need to be worked on in more detail before a full commitment can be made.

1. Impacts on the environment

The plans for the resort need to be developed in more detail and go through an environmental review.

CTFN's Land Use Team will be involved in helping CTDC look at the ways the resort might impact the environment and if anything can be done about these impacts. The project will also have to be reviewed by the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment process (YESAA).

2. Land Tenure

The land at Millhaven Bay is owned by the Yukon government. We will need a commitment from the Yukon that they will transfer land tenure to the resort. CTFN will also have to look at how any Settlement Lands in the area might be affected.

3. Financing

There are a number of investors ready to support the project. However, more details on how much the resort will cost and how the money will be raised needs to be worked out.

4. Business Plan

An initial business plan was done last year but a new, updated plan is needed. CTDC will negotiate this plan which will provide more details on business side of the proposed resort. These negotiations will also define CTFN's role in the resort including current and future ownership opportunities.

Summer activities...



The resort will provide a five star experience that will be unique in North America. A full service spa and fine dining will complement exceptional experiences in and around the resort. Most wilderness operations focus on only one season of activities – the resort will offer both winter and summer activities.

Winter operations will provide experiences for up to 40 guests while summer operations will expand to a maximum of 80 guests.

Summer activities include horseback tours, wildlife viewing, rafting, river and lake canoeing and kayaking, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, boat tours, and helicopter supported activities.

Resort Activities

Winter activities include dogsledding, snowshoeing, wildlife viewing, cross country skiing, skating, ice fishing, horse drawn sleighs, horseback riding, snowmobiling and helicopter supported activities.

There are also plans to run a university accredited tourism resort management program in the off-season for CTFN members and others.

When there are no guests, the resort can be used for things like business retreats and healing workshops. The plan is to also offer a high school environmental ethics course and host an international Sustainability Forum. These activities demonstrate the resort's commitment to both education and sustainability.

... and winter activities



Dirk Groeger

Anders Agermark

Resort Timeline

PHASE I:
Initial discussions & planning.
(2009- March 2010)

We are here

A group of business people who were interested in developing a world class, sustainable wilderness Resort in the Yukon identified the Carcross area as a prime location.

Knowing CTFN had explored other resort possibilities in the area, they approached the Carcross Tagish Development Corporation to start discussions about partnership opportunities on a wilderness resort at Millhaven Bay as it had been identified as the best possible site for the resort (*see page 7*).

A draft business plan was developed and community meetings in Carcross have been started.

PHASE II:
Much more detailed planning happens. Environmental & social assessment must be done. Business plan must be negotiated with CTDC.
(2010-2012)

Before CTDC can commit to a business partnership on the resort, more details need to be worked out.

1. Resort plans must go through the YESAA assessment process to make sure it is environmentally and socially safe. CTFN's Land Use Team will be involved in reviewing the plans.
2. The Yukon government must agree to transfer the land where the Resort will be built. CTFN must look closely at possible impacts to Settlement Lands.
3. Financing details must be worked out.
4. A Business Plan between CTDC and the business group must be negotiated and agreed to.

If all of these things are successfully completed, CTDC can agree to a partnership on the resort. If they are not worked out, planning for the resort will stop.

PHASE III:
Construction & development of resort will happen.
(2012-13)

If the resort passes through the four steps outlined in Phase II, construction will start, providing many job opportunities. The resort will be built to meet very high environmental standards and it will use different leading edge "green" technologies (for example, to deal with waste and to create electricity).

People will also start to be hired for different jobs at the Resort. New staff people will receive training to help them learn more about the tourism business and what luxury clients need.

Marketing for the Resort will start so that people will start coming as soon as the Resort opens for business!

PHASE IV:
Resort opens and guests will start coming.
(2013 on)

The Resort would open in 2013 and guests would stay at the Resort in the summer and winter. There will be many different activities for them to do.

The Resort is also planning to set up an accredited sustainable tourism management program and offer an environmental education program to high school students. There are also plans to host an international Sustainability Forum.

Questions about the Resort

Why Millhaven Bay?

Millhaven Bay is a very special spot that was chosen after consideration of many other areas in the Yukon.

It offers a beautiful wilderness location that is close to a community, mountains, glaciers, lakes, and rivers. There are many different activities that guests can do around Millhaven.

There is also a strong local First Nation government and culture in the area. Many guests will be interested in learning more about the culture and history of the area.

The large protected bay at Millhaven also allows for planes to land in all types of weather in both winter and summer. This makes it easy for people coming from far distances to fly to Whitehorse and then to the lodge. It is critical that planes can access the resort year round.

Millhaven also has sun in the middle of winter!

Why doesn't CTFN build & run the resort on its own?

Our business partners have very strong experience in developing and running a resort. Their know-how is very important to the success of this project. They are also willing to invest money to build the resort and the time to help CTFN people learn how to manage the resort on their own.

What about our lands?

The land where the resort would be built is Yukon government land and we will need to get the Yukon government to agree to transfer this land. We believe they will be willing to do this to help support an important economic project. But they need more details first.

CTFN also needs more details. Although the resort will not be built on Settlement Land, our lands will be used by guests for activities like hiking, dogsledding, skiing, or horseback riding. CTFN needs to learn more so we can understand what impact there might be on our lands.

The investors understand that CTFN has lands in this area that the resort will need to use. They respect our rights. The partnership agreement that will be negotiated will reflect the fact our lands and traditional territory will be used.

What about the environment?

People are willing to pay money to come to a place that protects the environment. Potential guests for this type of resort are not interested in staying at a place that damages the environment.

Therefore, it makes good business sense for CTDC and its business partners to ensure the environment around the resort is protected.

The resort will be one of the most sustainable in North America. It will go out of its way to protect the local environment and minimize possible impacts of the resort and its guests on local fish and wildlife.

A portion of the fees that guests pay to stay at the resort will go into a sustainability fund. This fund could be used for projects like restocking fish, mine restoration or wildlife monitoring. CTFN would help identify what projects this fund should support.



Representatives from Carcross/Tagish First Nation, and the business people proposing the resort at Millhaven Bay, travelled to the Clayoquot Wilderness Resort last summer. They saw firsthand how a successful luxury wilderness resort can fit in with the environment and the local community.

Forward to the Future

The resort at Millhaven Bay can be an important step in Carcross' economic development.

We have a very special, world-class location for this resort.

We also have very experienced business people interested in working with us and investing in developing a resort that will become a jewel of the Yukon. They have done their research and will only put their money into something they think can pay off.

This resort could provide Carcross/Tagish people with many different types of jobs.

If the resort is developed, there will also be ongoing tourism management training opportunities for CTFN people and others. This will give people marketable skills and the know-how to develop and run other businesses.

It can also provide Carcross with a foundation to grow other businesses. Our youth will benefit now and in the future.

This type of sustainable, wilderness resort would be something that Carcross/Tagish people could be proud

of to have in our territory. It will showcase sustainable environmental practices that will become internationally known.

This type of resort could also give our First Nation more economic independence. This in turn would allow our government to invest in new social and community services.

A business investment like this could help us move forward and once again become self-sufficient in our traditional lands.

Amazing Yukon wilderness location + **"Greenest" resort in North America** + **Experts in the resort business** + **Strong culture and community support** = **Successful resort & strong local economy in Carcross**