



ka kniłwi·tiyała (Our Thinking):
**Community Strategic Plan
2025 - 2035**

June 27, 2025

Message From Our *Nasu?kin*



We find ourselves in unique circumstances within a changing political and legal landscape. A strong strategic plan is needed now more than ever to stay focused and work toward implementing the priorities that have been identified by each of you, as members of aq'am. I want to acknowledge the contributions everyone has made toward the creation of our revised plan: the dedication and commitment of all who engaged in the planning sessions; our staff support, Bonnie Harvey and James Pratt, for leading us in these, and the Subcommittee for guiding the work - Corrie Walkley, Dallas Cardinal, Joe Pierre, Robert Williams, Vickie Thomas.

I was particularly impressed with the work that came out as a result of the GIT (Guardians in Training). The young people are the voices of the future, and we need to include them in everything we do. They will be the beneficiaries of this plan and should have a strong voice as they are the ones who are going to be left with that legacy.

It is so uplifting to see the level of involvement from community members participating in the engagement around our plan and the levels of compassion and caring. You only see this level of involvement in developing *ka kni#wi-tiyat* – Our Thinking. It is our collectivity that makes this work so important.

We are deeply committed to following this plan. It will guide all our work and partnerships for the next decade.

***Nasu?kin* Cheryl Casimer, 2025**

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Summary

ka kni#wi-tiya#a - Our Thinking - is the *?a#amnik* Community Strategic Plan which originated in 2009. *?a#amnik* (community members) continue to be guided by our shared vision, values, and goals. This living document provides an overview of our model, a Ktunaxa tipi structure. Each tipi pole represents an aspect of our plan. Each tipi pole has an accompanying work and activities plan that guides *?a#amnik* towards achieving our vision.¹

Vision

A vibrant, healthy community, speaking our language, governing effectively, and maximizing our lands and resources for the benefit of *?a-kxamis qapi qapsin* (all living things) and future generations, in a manner consistent with *qanikit#i*—our values and principles.



qanikit#i (Values)

We *?a#amnik* share the following 12 core values:

- Family
- Unity and co-operation
- Effective communication
- Love and kindness
- Respect
- Safety and security
- Inclusion
- Education and learning
- Healthy, balanced living
- Pride in our heritage, language and culture
- *?a-knumu#ti#i* (natural law)
- Ktunaxa rights and title

Goals

ka kni#wi-tiya#a is built around 12 goals identified by *?a#amnik*. These goals structure our activities much like how tipi poles provide structure to our ancestral dwelling - a Ktunaxa tipi. The following identifies each tipi pole and its corresponding goal.

?a-knumu#ti#i ?akik#u?nam - Community Government:

Govern ourselves as a self-determining, self-sufficient community within the Ktunaxa Nation.

¹ Ktunaxa words throughout this plan are in italics - Translations of how they are used here provided in Appendix 1.

ʔa·ktuqakwum ɛ ʔakikiʔ haqwum - Language and Culture:

Foster fluent Ktunaxa language speakers, with strong cultural skills and knowledge.

ʔa·kxamís ʔakiktuʔnam - Spirit of Community:

Foster a vibrant, healthy community, where everyone has a role to play.

ka ʔamaknaʔa ɛ ʔaɣuxaxniyam - Lands and Resources:

Steward ʔaɣam lands and resources, as well as other lands within Ktunaxa ʔamakʔis, for the benefit of all ʔaɣamniʔ and Ktunaxaninʔtik.

ʔa·knu·kak - Infrastructure:

Build high quality public buildings and other infrastructure essential for a healthy community and ecosystem.

ʔaqantʔaʔnam - Housing:

Design, build, and maintain sufficient housing that is durable, environmentally friendly, and suited to the needs of families and individuals.

ʔaqaʔxuniyam – Health and Wellness:

Support optimal, holistic health for all community members.

ɛmakqapmuʔ - Energy and Climate:

Address the climate crisis and lead in production and conservation of renewable energy.

kʔinɣuyam - Recreation:

Provide fun, healthy recreational activities for all community members.

ksukqawsaqwum ɛ ɛmakwiɣkniyam - Safety & Security:

Promote safety and security for all community members.

ʔitki·ɛamnam - Education & Learning:

Achieve excellence through lifelong learning, based on individual strengths, passions, and potential.

ʔitknikɣiyam qapsinam/niʔku - Economy:

Restore and build a profitable, sustainable, and self-sufficient community economy that optimizes our diverse skills.

The full version of *ka kniʔwi·tiyaʔa* includes objectives for each goal. Detailed tipi pole plans identify actions for each objective.

Implementation, Evaluation, and Updating

ka kniʔwi·tiyaʔa outlines implementation roles for community members, *ʔiʔtik ka·kin*, *nasuʔkin* and *ʔiʔwaʔnaʔis*, the Chief Administrative Officer, and community staff.

It is a living, breathing plan. To nourish and sustain it, we will pay attention to how we are implementing it, assess how well we are moving toward our community vision, and revise the plan based on what we learn and accomplish.

ʔaąam - Who We Are

We are the Ktunaxa people of ʔaąam, the People of the Dense Forest. Our Creation Story documents that, as Ktunaxa, we are the keepers of ka ʔamaknaʔa ǂ ka wuʔunaʔa—our land and waters.

We have times for hunting and times for eating and times for praying and times for going without. We have times for telling stories.

We have times for being born and times for dying. We have times for grieving, but our greatest times are times for laughter. We laugh when we celebrate, and we celebrate each other. We celebrate all that we have: our language, our people, our story, our thinking.

There have been changes for the ʔaąamniǂ people. Today there are other languages and other peoples, but you will continue to sense our spirit and our power. You will hear us and our language and know we are like no other, that we have always been here, that we will always be here.



We are all connected, as Ktunaxa people on Ktunaxa ʔamakʔis. We acknowledge and celebrate our roots, even across the border - ʔakiktuʔnam (our roots to each other).

Bertha Andrews, Pete Sanchez,
ʔaąam Pow Wow

Our spirit is strong within us, but sometimes it has been distant. This plan is our voices growing stronger together. This is all our thinking and stories moving as one. This is for our future.

This is our people together with one heart. This is our time. This is our story. This is 'Our Thinking'.

Impacts of Colonization and Residential School

The impact of colonization on ʔaąamniǂ continues to this day, necessitating healing and renewal of language, culture, governance, and all aspects of community life. This history has included systematic theft of land and use of colonial law in a failed attempt to eliminate Ktunaxa ways. It has left a painful, grim legacy of oppression and cultural harm.

Colonization has also left a legacy of resilience and survival.

Members of ʔaąam's Language Speakers and Knowledge Holders table spoke about the impacts of colonization in February 2025:

- *"We used to have a strong sense of community – we're not a collective society anymore, we have become more individualized."*
- *"It changed how we talk to each other and organize ourselves."*
- *"We're not working together as a Nation. The impact of colonization has been to divide us."*

Language Speakers and Knowledge Holders also spoke of how renewal of ka kniʔwi-tiyaʔa is part of reclaiming sovereignty and reversing the damage of colonization:

- *"This whole strategic planning is about bringing our sense of community back, and how we organize ourselves as a community, as families."*

- *"How to move forward is to focus on successes we have had. This is the map of how we want to move beyond the impacts."*

Residential School

ki?tik ka-kin gathered in the Chief David Room of St. Eugene Mission, the former chapel of the residential school, to discuss this evaluation and the renewal of *ka kni#wi-tiya#a* in December 2024. One spoke of the impact of 150 years of colonization, boldly opening the floodgates for sharing and witnessing by other residential school survivors in the room.

"In the residential school our people were always hungry. I remember Herbert Birdstone stealing some cans of food, bringing it to the barn and feeding the kids. They controlled us by shaming. They put a dress on him and sat him down in the middle of the dining area - and fed him water and bread.

Later on, his dad and his brothers were always feeding the people. Regardless of what we do, we always think about our family and try to feed them. I always have respect for him. Regardless of what we've been through, he was always a happy guy, he had a good heart. We are a resilient people despite the struggles we go through." - Marty Williams

"We are not healthy families because we don't deal with our grief, our trauma. Sweeping it under the carpet, we're hurting ourselves - and our families. I thought I lived a happy life until the age of 5 or 6. Still living in Grasmere, my Dad was working in a lumber mill, and my mom was pregnant with her 4th child.

My grandparents, aunts, and uncles were drinking at the bar in Wardner—Indians couldn't drink in the bar. It was late at

night, and the bar was closed. My Grandpa sat, waiting until he's not drunk anymore so we just sat there and slept. 5 or 6 in the morning, pounding on the window, the bar owners came out and told them that there had been a car accident, ...son-in-law pinned under the car, one other person died. My dad died in that car accident.

From there my life was just chaos. I don't even know when I came to the Mission school. That September I turned 6, I came down this road and my Grandpa was telling me life is going to change, you're not going to be able to speak your language anymore, you have to live in two worlds. You still have to remember your ?aq?smaknik. I was happy that I was coming here but it sure changed fast when I was taken by the nuns. Since I got in, I got stripped of my clothing ... and off my hair came. And then it just seemed my life went blank. We were always cold in this building, there was hardly any heat. Our food was scarce. One time, Mrs. x dropped a bar of soap in our porridge - and it tasted horrible, but we had to eat it.

I remember being responsible for my sisters. I was separated from my brother, couldn't even wave at him. My younger sister was a bed wetter, I would carry her laundry through the dining room. My aunt used to work in the kitchen, she would call us over. Even that was forbidden. She would give us a slice of bread or a carrot. It just seemed we couldn't get rid of this damn place. During the summer my aunts were responsible for cleaning the place.

They used to make us do the stairs from the top to bottom with toothbrushes. If some kid dirtied it, we had to do the whole thing again.

I have some good memories and bad memories.

When I got home for the summer, I'd just see my grandparents drinking. I used to be happy to get back here, but I missed them. I was responsible for making sure they ate, so I learned how to cook when I was 5 or 6, learned how to change diapers. We lived across there where the Band Hall is. We would sneak over to say hello to our family, the nuns were up there watching us – so we'd get a licking when we got back. We used to go around the corner there or in the bathroom and divvy up all our food. Those nuns were mean – would take our food away, oranges or whatever... until it was rotten – and then give it to us. 'Ok, you can have your food.'"

I've seen so much punishment, shame and guilt - passed on here. How do you get rid of that? No matter how many sessions you take, on grief counselling and trauma, it's visible all over the place if you know the signs. A lot of us kids came here for different reasons – my mom's husband passed and left her with us kids, she couldn't look after them. I was always grateful for the family because we had each other. But the shame was still there. They never taught us how to grieve. I never knew anything about death, I just knew they were put in this box and brought to the graveyard... I never knew you could cry, just kept it all bottled up. I never knew how to parent, because I never really had any parents. I don't even know how to be a grandparent. So, if I'm feeling like that, how is the rest of our community feeling? It seems like we have spurts – first came the drinking, and then it was the drugs – and as time goes on the drugs get even worse." - Kay Shottanana

"I was thinking about this place and how hungry we used to be. And being back home and not having that problem. And getting here and learning how to steal – the apples and the carrots –

leaving the good stuff for the priests because they would know if we had touched it. Andrew Thomas touched the cake... and made a plan to run away with JR Sebastian and Darryl Joseph. They ran up on the tracks and were heading toward Fort Steele. They got caught because Andrew went back for his books, even though they were running away from school. One thing I know about our people that came out of here, honest and hardworking." - Robert (Stubby) Williams

Even after the St. Eugene Mission School was closed, some of the abuse patterns continued:

"They were still doing that dress thing when we were being bussed to town (to the Catholic school). The nun did the same thing to one of the boys, put him on top of a desk and made us stand around him, and told us we had to laugh at him. That form of shame was used a lot on our little men." - Joe Pierre Jr.

Other sharing included these reflections:

- *"Creating a space for the sharing, that's where the healing starts."*
- *"It has saddened me, but I want to recognize the strength. It took a lot of strength. Each of us have our demons that shape and mold us forever. I don't know if we'll ever completely heal, but I hope that we will move forward in a positive and constructive manner..."*

?aǵamniċ are healing from residential school trauma and the violence of colonization. These multi-generational impacts include ongoing challenges as well as profound resiliency and strength.

Community Facts

ʔaqam, formerly known as the St Mary's Indian Band, is one of four reserve communities that make up the Ktunaxa Nation Council in Canada. It is located 8 km north of Cranbrook, BC.

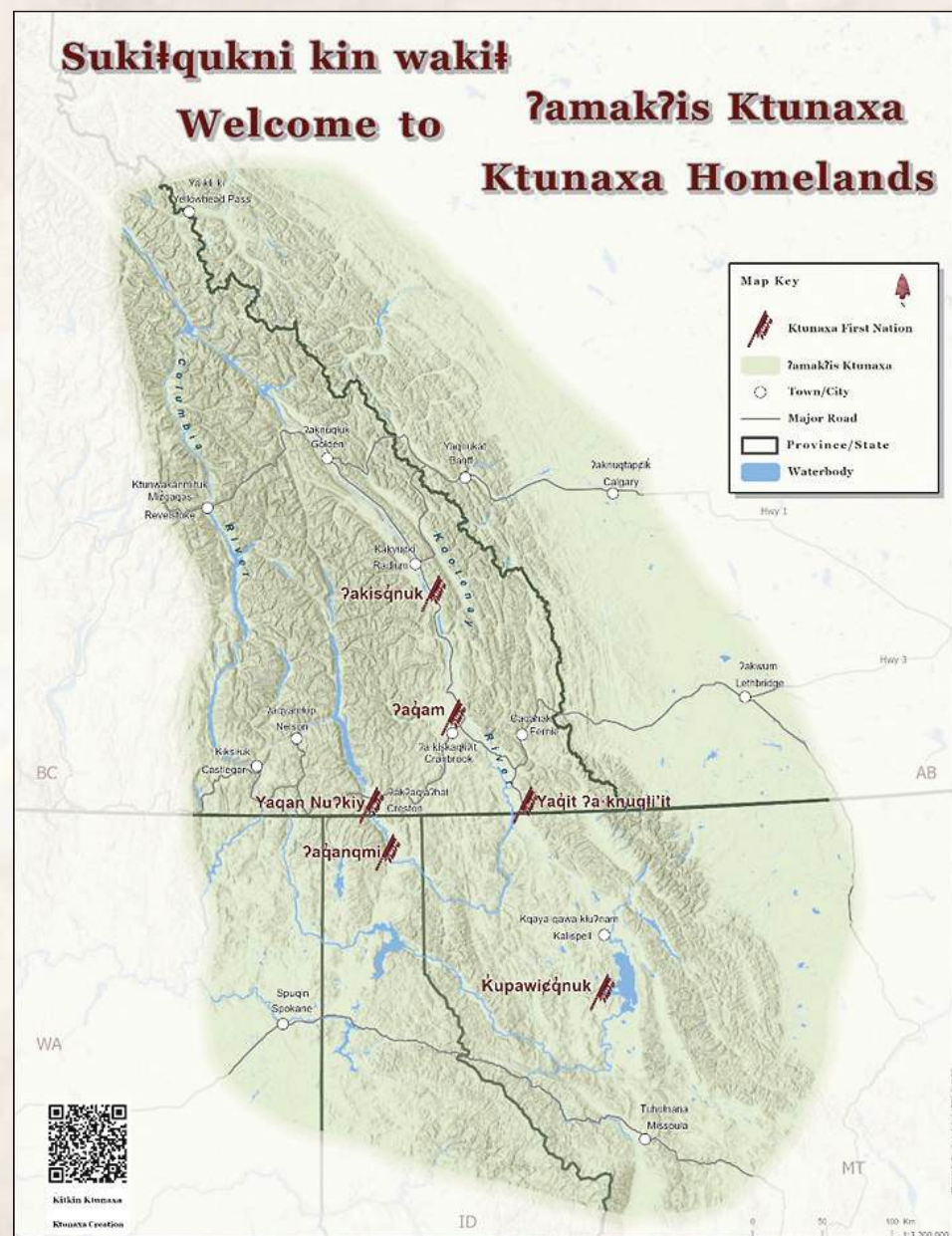
Number of members: 384²

Number of homes in the community: 64

Number of hectares of Reserve land: 7,863.5

- Kootenay Indian Reserve #1: 7,446 hectares
- Isadore's Ranch: 277 hectares
- Bummers Flat: 77.9 hectares
- Cassimayook: 62.6 hectares
- St Marys' Indian Reserve #1: 61.9 hectares

² These population numbers and community statistics are as of March 2025. The number of Band members does not include the many people who are considered as 'community members' because they married in or otherwise live in the ʔaqam community.





Leo Williams below Horseshoe. Photo by Troy Hunter.

Overview of Our Ktunaxa Tipi Model

Early in this planning process, our elder Leo Williams saw how our plan was like a tipi, with each topic being like a tipi pole. The tipi pole structure connects the parts of the plan according to Ktunaxa traditions.

The tipi also shows us that we are strong when we work together.

Ktunaxa tipi structure has 13 poles or *ʔa·kiq̓*; four of which form *ʔa·kinqu*—the foundation poles. These are tied together, when the poles are lying down. The rope, *ʔa·kukáq̓inqu*, represents *wuʔunaʔa*—our waters. The sticks that fasten the canvas front of the tipi are called *ʔapakintu·kuʔnaʔ*. These represent our youth, connecting our past and future in an active manner.

The 13th pole represents all of us. It pulls the tipi canvas that is tied to it around all the poles. It reminds us of how we are related, how important it is to gather, and how close we are to each other. It is the last pole to go up.

ʔa·kwiq̓aqaʔaʔku – Climate

The 14th and 15th tipi poles are for managing the ‘climate’ in the tipi by adjusting the top flaps, depending on wind, rain, and smoke.

In the 2024/25 renewal of *ka knitwi·tiyaʔa*, *ʔaq̓amniʔ* identified climate as an important theme. It is part of the renamed energy and climate tipi pole, as well as lands and resources and other tipi poles in this updated Community Strategic Plan.

wu?unaʔa – Our Waters

The importance of our collective waters is documented within the Ktunaxa Creation Story. Human beings were created from the body of the water monster *yawu?niʔ*. We human beings have a responsibility for the waters and lands, passed on by *naʔmuqʔin*, the land giant, as a result of our creation.

In recent years, the importance of water has become more and more visible to Indigenous Peoples worldwide. In 2015, ʔaʔam hosted our sister Ktunaxa communities for the Annual General Assembly, the theme was *ʔat su-kinkiʔ wuʔu*—Every Drop Counts. During that same fiscal year, ʔaʔam held tipi pole meetings and water was raised as a key concern at 5 meetings—Infrastructure; Lands and Resources; Energy; Housing; Language and Culture, even though there was not a stated water objective in any tipi pole yet! At the May 2017 Community Celebration, *ʔiʔtik ka-kin* announced that water is represented as a binding theme within our tipi model. As such *wuʔunaʔa* is represented as the rope that ties the *ʔa-kinqu*—foundation poles—together.

Our next steps include addressing our water needs and concerns, as well as continuing to reinvigorate our relationship with our waterways.

ʔapakiṇtu·kuʔnaʔ - Youth Network

ʔapakiṇtu·kuʔnaʔ is a youth network that originated from the tipi structure of *ka kniʔwi-tiyaʔa*. The word *ʔapakiṇtu·kuʔnaʔ* translates from Ktunaxa as the sticks that fasten the canvas together. These sticks connect the future and the past, which the young people represent in our strategic plan model.

This youth network, which includes the Guardians in Training program, provides opportunities for *ʔaʔamniʔ* youth to:

- Sustain and build social connection
- Identify and explore their interests
- Develop skills, including hands-on learning
- Connect with Ktunaxa language, culture and ways of being, doing, and knowing
- Give feedback and input on community matters
- Strengthen ʔaʔam self-governance, connecting with staff, *ʔiʔtik ka-kin*, and *nasuʔkin ʔiʔwaʔnaʔis*

ʔapakiṇtu·kuʔnaʔ is for youth ages 10-25 who are related, registered, affiliated, or associated with ʔaʔam. Adults over 25 years may participate in supporting or mentoring roles.

Vision

Our vision is our desired future state, the ultimate situation we are moving toward.

K̓itxma·kati ksuk̓utak̓ k̓itqaki̓ haqa ksi̓t̓x̓a kaʔak̓ukaqwaʔa, ksuki̓ haki̓wiq̓ki̓ ʔ ksuki̓ Ki̓knaʔa kqakxakini̓ ʔamak̓ k̓ ʔu·ki̓ ki̓kin ʔa·kxam̓is ʔapi qapsin ʔ ʔusmik kaʔaq̓smakni̓knaʔa ʔya·kxakinima̓ qanikit̓xi.



Joe Pierre Jr. & Dorothy Alpine, Dan Joe Memorial Gym.

A vibrant, healthy community, speaking our language, governing effectively, and maximizing our lands and resources for the benefit of *ʔa·kxam̓is ʔapi qapsin* (all living things) and future generations, in a manner consistent with *qanikit̓xi*—our values and principles.

qanikit̓xi (Values and Principles)

Our values are what we hold to be important; what we believe in.

Values

We *ʔaʔamni̓k* share the following 12 core values:

- Family
- Unity and co-operation
- Effective communication
- Love and kindness
- Respect
- Safety and security
- Inclusion
- Education and learning
- Healthy, balanced living
- Pride in our heritage, language and culture
- *ʔa·knumuq̓ti̓* (natural law)
- Ktunaxa rights and title

Principles

We *ʔaʔamni̓k* live by each of these values through the following principles and practices.

Family

- We put family first - and recognize the importance of our roles in the family.
- We share responsibility in raising children.
- We honour our elders and children.

Unity & Co-operation

- Our community comes together to provide support when a person or family is in need or is having a celebration.
- We value everyone's talents and unique place in the community.
- We visit each other and create dialogue.
- We work together, with everybody pitching in – like at the community wood days.
- We all contribute to our community – for example, bringing food to new year gatherings.
- We give without expecting anything back - from the goodness of our hearts.
- We come together as one Nation, with all other Ktunaxa communities.

Effective Communication

- We tell the truth, speak clearly, and use 'I' statements.
- We communicate about our emotions and what we are experiencing.
- We take time to really connect with one another.
- We listen intently, showing respect for what everyone has to say.

- We speak up when we do not understand or agree with what is being said.
- We communicate effectively using the Ktunaxa language.

Love & Kindness

- We are considerate of each other and of the needs of our community.
- We care for each other, and make sure that no one goes without food, clothing or shelter.
- We appreciate each other, honour each other's unique gifts, and celebrate successes.
- We gain strength through our love for each other.
- We recognize that our vision and values are made possible by love.
- We are kind when giving feedback to learners.

Respect

- We show respect for ourselves and each other.
- We come together to show respect for those who have passed away.
- We value our youth, recognizing their individual strengths and potential.
- We respect wildlife and *?a-kxamis qapi qapsin* in Ktunaxa *?amak?is*.

Safety & Security

- We maintain peace in our community.
- We protect our children, recognizing that 'it takes a village...'.- We do not tolerate abuse or bullying of any kind.

Inclusion

- We welcome new community members, staff, and visitors.
- We acknowledge and respect others' spiritual beliefs and practices.
- We plan inclusively, so that more people can participate.
- We acknowledge *ʔakikʔuʔnam* (our roots to each other), knowing we are all connected as Ktunaxa people on Ktunaxa *ʔamakʔis*.

Education & Learning

- We provide plenty of opportunity to learn our language, culture, spirituality, history and values.
- We encourage and value learning at all stages of life.
- We mentor and plan for succession, so that community members can fill roles.
- We support our educated community members by employing them.
- We utilize our language speakers and cultural Knowledge Holders in a respectful manner.

Healthy, Balanced Living

- We have active lifestyles.
- We take care of ourselves, our families, and our community - spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally.
- We come together, celebrate, and recognize - bridging tradition and the contemporary world.
- We share humour, laughter, and fun!

Pride in our Heritage, Language & Culture

- We know who we are and where we come from - our roots.
- We remember the knowledge from our ancestors and what they said.
- We protect our sacred sites.
- We speak, sing, and pray in Ktunaxa.
- We are grateful for teachers of the language and culture.
- We share traditional practices – and protect practices not to be shared with outsiders.
- We learn the history of Ktunaxa *ʔamakʔis* and place names.

ʔa·knumuʔtiʔ (Natural Law)

- We respect and take care of the land, water, animals, and plants – and consider how the climate crisis is affecting *ʔa·kxamis qapi qapsin*.
- We harvest and take only what we need, leaving enough for generations yet to come.
- We appreciate the sheer beauty and abundance of nature and life.

Ktunaxa Rights & Title

- We preserve and protect our rights and title for future generations.
- We use the entire Ktunaxa *ʔamakʔis*.
- We exercise our rights and title, as members of the Ktunaxa Nation.
- We oppose extinguishment of our rights and title.

Although more work lies in store
It's easier to move forward
To big challenges, an unknown destiny
Reaching for that ultimate goal

Shaped by a vision
Planted by the seeds of a dream
Nurtured through love
By the Ktunaxa in me
- Cheryl Casimer, *nasu?kin* 2011

It will take everyone, including community members, fellow councillors, employees, and partners to strive for the greater "benefit of all living things and future generations."

I am amazed by the amount of work that went into this Plan, and how it will continue to bring the community together in a positive way.

- Jim Whitehead, *nasu?kin* 2013

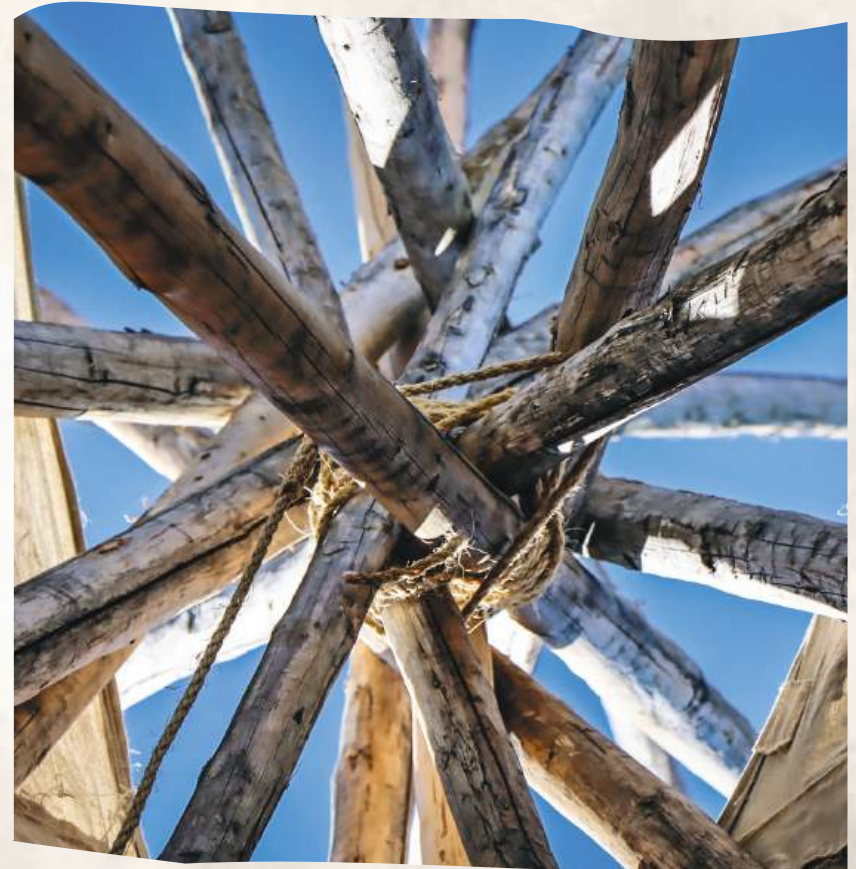
I am thankful to the entire community, especially those who have served as *ki?tik ka-kin* and mentees, for continued belief in *ka kni#wi-tiya?a*. I am very thankful to Bonnie Harvey, who has been so important to this process. I'm also very grateful to the *?i#watna?is* (Council) I was a part of that decided to pursue strategic planning, which was such a big move for our community. Planning has always been a part of who we are. It is so important to continue our planning for the grandchildren's grandchildren.

- Joe Pierre, *nasu?kin* 2017

Goals & Objectives

Our goals are broad areas of intended achievement.

Our objectives are specific, measurable areas of intended achievement for each goal.



ʔa·kinqu (4 Foundation Poles)

ʔa·knumuʔtił ʔakikʔnam - Community Government

Goal: Govern ourselves as a self-determining, self-sufficient community within the Ktunaxa Nation.

Objective 1: Transition to governing in Ktunaxa ways.

Objective 2: Reinvigorate and develop our constitution, laws, and policies that follow our ways of governing.

Objective 3: Develop and build leadership capabilities and skills from a young age and implement a system for selecting leadership based on *qanikitʔi*.

Objective 4: Develop the government and administration to maximize effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability, with strong communication among leadership, staff, *kiʔtik ka·kin*, and other *ʔaʔamnik*.

Objective 5: Build meaningful, respectful, functional, and transformative relationships with other governments and our neighbouring communities, organizations and businesses.

Objective 6: Create and sustain financial strength and independence as *ʔaʔam* Community Government, according to *qanikitʔi* and *ʔa·knumuʔtił*.



ʔa·kʷaqwum & ʔakikiʔ haqwum - Language and Culture

Goal: Foster fluent Ktunaxa language speakers, with strong cultural skills and knowledge.

Objective 1: Heal and learn through traditional food practices.

Objective 2: Celebrate and honour our unique culture through arts, dancing, singing, drumming, ceremonies, and other forms.

Objective 3: Rejuvenate, honour, and practice our traditions.

Objective 4: Create and honour a process and protocol for community research that respects and protects Ktunaxa knowledge systems.

Objective 5: Immerse ourselves in Ktunaxa language and culture.

Objective 6: Make language lessons and resources easily accessible to all learners.

Objective 7: Fully support and honour fluent speakers, learners, and teachers.



AGA Pow Wow 2025

ʔa·kxaʔmis ʔakikʔuʔnam - Spirit of Community

Goal: Foster a vibrant, healthy community, where everyone has a role to play.³

Objective 1: Celebrate, foster, and share our strengths as individuals, families, and community within Ktunaxa ʔamakʔis.

Objective 2: Celebrate and honour all community members, especially elders and children.

Objective 3: Encourage generational practices and tradition.

Objective 4: Mentor and encourage each other.

³ Our definition of "Community" includes all ʔaḡam Members, the greater ʔaḡamnik community living within and beyond Ktunaxa ʔamakʔis, as well as family of ʔaḡam Members who are accepted as community members and living in ʔaḡam.

ka ʔamaknaʔa & ʔaquxaxniyam - Lands and Resources

Goal: Steward ʔaʔam lands and resources, as well as other lands within Ktunaxa ʔamakʔis, for the benefit of all ʔaʔamnik and Ktunaxanin'tik.

Objective 1: Reconnect with the spirit of the land and all living things.

Objective 2: Strengthen our stewardship skills and knowledge of ka ʔamaknaʔa—our land.

Objective 3: Preserve and protect cultural resources and practices, sacred sites, and ancestral remains.

Objective 4: Use ka ʔamaknaʔa and resources for economic purposes in a respectful and sustainable manner.

Objective 5: Strengthen self-governing jurisdiction over our lands, ensuring our laws and the Land Code work for us.

Objective 6: Preserve, protect and exercise Ktunaxa rights and title.

Objective 7: Use and share our traditional knowledge and research to address land stewardship challenges, including climate change.

“Thinking about my students, my great grandchildren – how do we avoid taking from them?” – Juanita Eugene



ʔa·kiç (other tipi poles)

ʔa·knu·kak - Infrastructure

Goal: Build high quality public buildings and other infrastructure essential for a healthy community and ecosystem.

Objective 1: Envision our future sustainable ʔaąam village – including new and existing settlements.

Objective 2: Provide environmentally friendly servicing for new residential, commercial and community buildings.

Objective 3: Provide healthy, clean drinking water to all homes and community buildings.

Objective 4: Build and maintain an environmentally friendly community centre – located where the people live.

Objective 5: Expand local transportation options.

ʔaqantʔaʔnam - Housing

Goal: Design, build, and maintain sufficient housing that is durable, environmentally friendly, and suited to the needs of families and individuals.

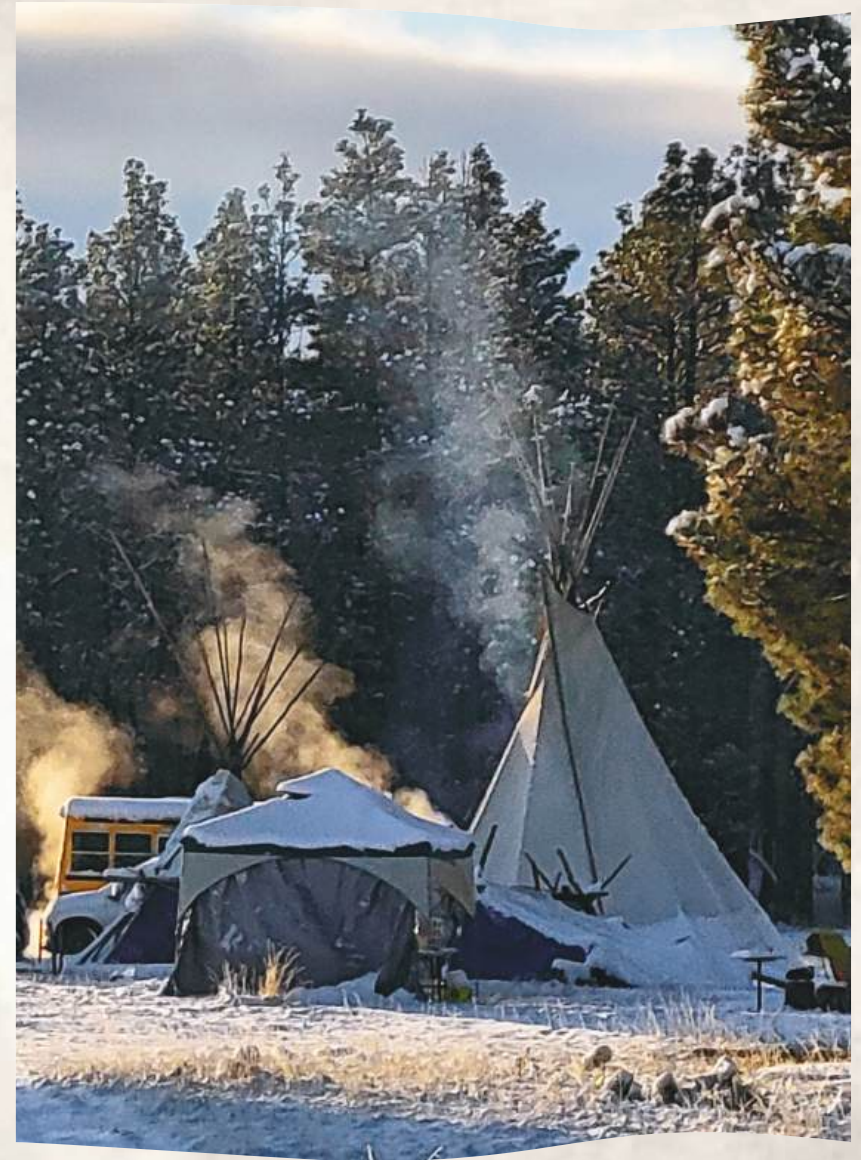
Objective 1: Create fair, equitable opportunities to gain ownership of housing and land.

Objective 2: Design, build, and ensure a variety of types of quality homes that are environmentally friendly, energy efficient, and water conserving, maximizing the use of local materials, skills and labour.

Objective 3: Develop community capacity and skills for home building, ownership, maintenance and repairs.

Objective 4: Manage community-owned housing in a way that is equitable, fair, and transparent.

Objective 5: Support young adults in finding housing, using a non-judgmental, low barrier approach.



?aḡamniḱ School Winter Camp at Francis Lake.



GIT Rafting Trip, ʔaḡam ʔa-kinmituk, July 2023.

ʔaḡaxuniyam – Health and Wellness

Goal: Support optimal, holistic health for all community members.

Objective 1: Promote and support physical activity and healthy eating, including a more traditional diet.

Objective 2: Prevent and heal from substance use, addiction, trauma, and mental health challenges.

Objective 3: Understand trauma in a healthy way and celebrate our successes in healing from colonized experiences.

Objective 4: Participate in and celebrate community health and wellness initiatives.

Objective 5: Provide access to a full range of quality health and wellness care, including physical and mental health services.

Objective 6: Prevent, heal from, and raise awareness of abuse in all its forms.



Pete Sanchez, Bertha Andrews, Yaqaan Nukiy Wetlands.

Ꞩmáqapmut - Energy and Climate

Goal: Address the climate crisis and lead in production and conservation of renewable energy.

Objective 1: Increase resilience to climate change.

Objective 2: Live in ways that conserve energy.

Objective 3: Generate green energy to meet community needs and mitigate climate change.

Objective 4: Build economic opportunities in energy conservation and green energy production.



Traditional Games, July 2025.

Kłínquyam - Recreation

Goal: Provide fun, healthy recreational activities for all community members.

Objective 1: Create opportunities for healthy recreation such as sports, outdoor recreation, cultural activities, performing arts and fine arts.

Objective 2: Increase participation in healthy recreational activities.

Objective 3: Encourage excellence and mastery of individuals' preferred forms of recreation.

Objective 4: Take responsibility for creating recreational opportunities.



ksukqawsaqwum ꝥ ꝥmakwiꝥkniyam - Safety & Security

Goal: Promote safety and security for all community members.

Objective 1: Create safe community environments.

Objective 2: Prepare for emergencies, wildfire, and natural disasters.

Objective 3: Create and enforce community laws related to safety.

Lydia Birdstone
Alizae George
Summer Hildebrand
Josiah Johnson
Brandon Petrik
Jude Pierre
Josh Sutherland
Kutenai Williams-S



Jude Pierre, Josh Sutherland, Brandon Petrik, Josiah Johnson. June 2024.

Íkitki·camnam - Education & Learning

Goal: Achieve excellence through lifelong learning, based on individual strengths, passions, and potential.

Objective 1: Support learners to increase participation in and completion of all levels of educational programs.

Objective 2: Teach using Ktunaxa methods, including land-based learning.

Objective 3: Develop and support Ktunaxa people as teachers and other educational professionals.

Objective 4: Develop excellence through lifelong learning offered in the community, including school and skill building programs.

Objective 5: Assert, reclaim, and use jurisdiction in education.

Objective 6: Expand grades and programs offered in the community.

Íkitknikçiyam qapsinam/nitku - Economy

Goal: Restore and build a profitable, sustainable, and self-sufficient community economy that optimizes our diverse skills.

Objective 1: Create and support local, responsible enterprises.

Objective 2: Expand food sovereignty and security - growing, processing, and storage.

Objective 3: Build employment and entrepreneurial skills and opportunities through training, mentorship, and partnerships.

Objective 4: Support an ʔaǰam economy, sustaining a revenue base for our community government and members.

Objective 5: Ensure that economic partnerships benefit our people, sustain future generations, and align with our *qanikitçi*.



Roles & Strategies for Implementation

Roles

ka kniʔwi·tiyaʔa is everyone's plan. We all have roles and responsibilities in implementing it.

All of us commit to:

- Practice respectful communication in keeping with *qanikitʔi*.
- Set positive boundaries and respect each others' boundaries.
- Ensure we are educating young people and raising good elders.

The following are some examples of what community members, *kiʔtik ka·kin*, *nasuʔkin* & *ʔiʔwaʔnaʔis*, the Chief Administrative Officer, and community staff will do.



Community members shall:

- Contribute energies based on individual passions and strengths.
- Participate in activities and events that bring the vision alive.
- Encourage and help each other to attend and participate.
- Commit to be informed, provide input, and share with family.
- Honour the work that has been done.
- Fulfill our individual responsibilities in stewardship and in supporting community.

kiʔtik ka·kin shall:

- Provide advice and encouragement to help develop action plans for each tipi pole, updated annually – highlighting current priorities.
- Hold knowledge in that topic area.
- Sit on, and participate in, relevant aq'am committees, meetings, and engagement sessions, supported by aq'am staff.
- Sit on, and participate in, relevant external committees – supported by *nasuʔkin* & *ʔiʔwaʔnaʔis* as appropriate.
- Connect and encourage community members to participate in plan implementation.
- Meet with other *kiʔtik ka·kin* to share information, coordinate among tipi poles, and review progress toward the vision.
- Lift up *nasuʔkin* & *ʔiʔwaʔnaʔis*.
- Communicate and collaborate with appropriate aq'am staff to ensure community advice and guidance is included in the work.
- Identify and mentor potential future *kiʔtik ka·kin*.

nasuʔkin & *ʔiʔwatnaʔis* shall:

- Champion the plan, and each tipi pole within it.
- Set organizational priorities for implementation of the plan.
- Approve, implement, and report on the plan.
- Work with *kiʔtik ka·kin* related to the various *ʔiʔwatnaʔis* portfolios.
- Liaise with and lobby other organizations and governments.

The Chief Administrative Officer shall:

- Ensure timely review and updating of this strategic plan.
- Ensure development and implementation of work plans / detailed plans for each tipi pole, updated annually – highlighting current priorities.
- Ensure that briefing notes to *ʔiʔwatnaʔis* link with tipi poles / action plans.
- Create opportunities for *kiʔtik ka·kin* and the CAO to connect as a group.
- Ensure that *kiʔtik ka·kin* and staff are communicating and collaborating to carry out our strategic plan and detailed tipi pole plans.
- Ensure that strategic activities for each tipi pole are developed and coordinated with each other.
- Support community staff who are organizing and collaborating in activities that will achieve the goals and objectives.
- Ensure the administration reports out to community on how the strategic plan is being implemented.
- Encourage a strong connection between all departmental plans and the strategic plan—to ensure it is all one plan.

Community staff, including all departments, shall:

- Work with *kiʔtik ka·kin* to develop and implement action plans for each tipi pole.
- Share work plans across all departments to support linkages and aligned learning.
- Invite *kiʔtik ka·kin* and other departments to meetings and events.
- Consistently reference this plan in reports.
- Use the plan objectives as a guide for ongoing work and development of proposals for new initiatives and funding.
- Ensure that briefing notes to *ʔiʔwatnaʔis* link with tipi poles / action plans.
- Engage community members and facilitate feedback and input.
- Communicate and collaborate with *kiʔtik ka·kin* at least quarterly, especially in preparation for reporting in May (regarding how community voices have been brought to action).

Implementation Strategies

To deliver on this strategic plan, we use the principle of ‘form follows function’. The CAO and directors shall take responsibility for the following implementation strategies:

1. Assess ability of our organizational structure to deliver on our strategic priorities – with a focus on cross-departmental collaboration and support for senior staff in making the necessary changes.
2. Build a new organization chart that identifies connections among *nasuʔkin* & *ʔiʔwatnaʔis*, staff, committees, and *kiʔtik ka·kin*.

3. Embrace innovation in a thoughtful, deliberate, analytical way – based on understanding of the challenges rather than in reaction.
4. Create systems that will help us learn and continue to innovate in meaningful ways.
5. Ensure processes and structures are in place so that work plans reflect what community and *?i?watna?is* have identified.
6. Gather all departments around specific tipi poles – quarterly / as needed.
7. Host open house events, including all ages.
8. Present to *?aqamni?k* youth, along with tipi pole holders.
9. Improve reciprocal communication systems – for example, clarifying what staff need from directors and having transparent communication.
10. Ensure staff capacity, allowing for professional development and budget to implement strategic plan priorities.

Ways to Monitor, Evaluate & Update This Plan

ka kni?wi-tiya?a is a living, breathing plan. To nourish and sustain it, we will pay attention to how we are implementing it (monitoring), assess how well we are moving toward our community vision (evaluating), and revise the plan based on what we learn and accomplish (updating).

Monitoring

We will document activities and achievements that contribute to the plan and its implementation on an ongoing basis. Once a year, we will celebrate what we have accomplished together. Recognition of steps toward the vision, both small and large, will help energize us to keep moving forward. We will report on progress annually, using this plan as a guide for communicating about what has been done and how.

Evaluating

We will assess the process and results of plan implementation every 5 years, or more often if needed. The Chief Administrative Officer will ensure that the evaluation of progress toward implementing the Community Strategic Plan occurs in a timely and inclusive way. *ki?tik ka-kin* and staff will carry out the evaluation and engage interested community members.

Updating

We will review our vision, values, principles, goals, and objectives following evaluation of progress toward plan implementation (every 10 years, or more often as needed). We will update the wording, based on the consensus achieved through broad community engagement. This updating will help us make sure we continue to grow and evolve as a community.

We must remain willing and able to respond to changes in the world, taking advantage of emerging opportunities and addressing external challenges.

The Chief Administrative Officer, in consultation with *nasu?kin* & *?i?watna?is*, will ensure that the updating of *ka kni?wi-tiya?a* happens

as part of the plan evaluation and renewal process. *nasu?kin* & *?i?wa?na?is*, *ki?tik ka-kin*, and community members will participate in this updating. As the highest-level plan guiding the renewal of *?a?am*, it is important that we all understand and support the changes.

Acknowledgements

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?a?am's Language Authority checked all uses of Ktunaxa language.

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- Dallas Cardinal-Clement
- Joe Pierre
- Robert (Stubby) Williams
- Vickie Thomas

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The subcommittee extends its sincere thanks to Troy Hunter and Nathan Taron for generously sharing their photographs, which vividly brought this plan to life.

Appendix 1: Translations

The Ktunaxa words in this plan are not necessarily literal, direct translations. **As we continue to learn and understand our Ktunaxa language these words/definitions may change.**

The following are tipi pole names, in Ktunaxa and English:

?a-knumu?ti?i? ?akik?u?nam –
Community Government

?a-k?uqakwum & ?akiki? haqwum –
Language and Culture

?a-kxar? is ?akik?u?nam –
Spirit of Community

ka ?amakna?a & ?aquaxniyam –
Lands and Resources

?a-knu-kak – Infrastructure

?aqant?a?nam – Housing

?aqatxuniyam – Health and Wellness

?mak?aqpmu? – Energy and Climate

k?in?uyam – Recreation

ksukqawsaqwum & ?mak wi?kniyam –
Safety & Security

kitki-?amnam – Education & Learning

kitknik?iyam qapsinam/ni?ku –
Economy

Other Ktunaxa terms in this plan are:

?akik?u?nam – our roots to each other

?a-knumu?ti?i? – natural law

?a-kxamis qapi qapsin – all living things

?a-kwi?aqa?a?ku – climate

?amak?is Ktunaxa –
Territory of the Ktunaxa people

?apaki?u-k u?na? – Youth Network

?a?am – our community

?a?amnik – people of *?a?am* –
People of the Dense Forest

?aq?smaknik – people

?awiya? – (Huckleberry) Circle

?i?wa?na?is – council

ka kni?wi-tiya?a – Our Thinking (name of
this Community Strategic Plan)

ki?tik ka-kin – Tipi Pole Holders

Ktunaxanin'tik – Ktunaxa person(s)

nasu?kin – chief

qanikit?i – values and principles (beliefs)

wu?u – water

wu?unata – our water



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