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For Immediate Release

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Epekwitk Assembly of Councils Building – A New Island Landmark

The PEI Mi'kmaq leadership is proud to announce the new Epekwitk Assembly of Councils building is nearing completion on the Charlottetown waterfront. The first tenants are anticipated to move into the office space in early January 2021.

This state-of-the-art structure will house the Assembly Chamber for the PEI Mi'kmaq leadership, as well as provide office space for L'nuey (the Epekwitk Mi'kmaq rights initiative) and the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of P.E.I. – sister organizations under the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils.

This stunning landmark is an important stepping-stone towards reconciliation and is a long overdue presence for the Mi'kmaq leadership in Prince Edward Island's capital city. The Epekwitk Assembly of Councils building is the first foray into real estate development by the First Nations in the Charlottetown area. The building is owned jointly through a shared economic development corporation and the revenue generated will provide own source revenue for PEI's First Nations.

The building will also serve as an economic driver for the PEI First Nations. The ground floor is planned to serve as a business start-up centre serving Indigenous entrepreneurs. The main purpose of the ground floor is to assist in the incubation and development of Indigenous businesses and to support Indigenous entrepreneurs and showcase artisans. It is anticipated that once the First Nations economic development branch is fully operationalized in the next few months, it will generate more capital investment and economic spin-offs for the First Nations across the Island.

"The Epekwitk Mi'kmaq can be proud of this new landmark that will serve as an economic hub for our people for generations to come," said Chief Junior Gould of Abegweit First Nation.

The Epekwitk Assembly of Councils building will also be a focal point of Mi'kmaq history and culture, with artwork and artisan design being reflected on the interior and exterior. "Our ancestors have been here in Epekwitk (PEI) for 12,000 years, but our visual presence in the Island's capital has been long overdue. This will provide our people with a space to show and share our beautiful culture and history, as well as an opportunity for our Indigenous entrepreneurs to flourish," added Chief Gould.

In addition to the new building, the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils also has a new logo. This crest has been designed, in shape and elements, to display unity with the new logos of the Abegweit First Nation and the Lennox Island First Nation as well as L'nuey. "This crest will be seen as a proud symbol and serve as visual identifier of the Epekwitk Mi'kmaq leadership," said Chief Darlene Bernard of Lennox Island First Nation.

L'nuey is an initiative focused on protecting, preserving, and implementing the constitutionally entrenched rights of the Mi'kmaq of Prince Edward Island.

This environmentally friendly building was designed with colours and materials that symbolize the red earth, blending in with adjacent buildings and incorporating circles and curves that feature prominently in Mi'kmaq culture. Funding for the building was provided by various federal government departments and the province of PEI. Coast Design Inc Architects is the firm responsible for the building design. The Epekwitk Assembly of Councils hopes to have many more such projects in the coming years.

“This building represents a pivotal moment for the PEI Mi'kmaq and is something in which all Islanders can take pride,” declared Chief Bernard. “True commitment towards reconciliation has been demonstrated by our federal and provincial governments in partnership to bring this building to life.”

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Note: Epekwitk Assembly of Councils' crest design and description attached