

Engagement – Summary & Next Steps

1. Background

- a. When we agreed to purchase the subdivided lot that is adjacent to the Charles Camsell hospital, we knew there was a lot of history around the site. The discussion around how we would handle our role and presence as a neighbour was always going to be needed, but the scope and context to those discussions hadn't been explored yet.
- b. Last May, with the discovery of unmarked burials in Kamloops, the nationwide discussion about the Canadian history of residential schools was brought back into focus.
- c. The Charles Camsell hospital is not a residential school, but the treatment of patients at Indian hospitals in Canada is an extension of the same discussion as the residential schools.
- d. There is so much that is not known or fully understood. What is known, though, is that there is a deep Indigenous connection to the Camsell's history, and a lot of hurt.

2. Commentary

Knowing that we would need to do something, as a Society, to establish the right foundation for our presence in the Inglewood community was always in the back of my mind. The 'how' and 'who' of that work was unknown.

Tim Coghlan, president of Keller Construction, and I had a number of conversations last year about the construction project. Our presence on the site could have some unintended consequences, and there were significant risks to the project itself if things went sideways. We agreed that we should take on the work of engagement together, prior to construction starting, to set the best direction for the project and mitigate the risks as much as possible.

Keller Construction is a reputable company and I really value the relationship that's been formed. In addition to mitigating the risks, we both strongly felt that honestly and humbly engaging with First Nations stakeholders was simply the right thing to, even though we didn't know where this would take us. There was a concern that we would unintentionally open a 'Pandora's box'. However, the alternative of doing nothing and hoping that things work out wasn't acceptable to us, either.

As the work with Ballard Consulting started, we laid out the understanding that the partnership between the Society and Keller was the reason to present a sense of unity and teamwork. However, we also were very clear that we are both coming from different angles on this project and our long term goals would be different. Keller was concerned about its long-term outlook as a General Contractor that genuinely wants to build community and be successful. Our Society, though, has a long-term outlook on this specific project, how we would be good neighbours in the Inglewood community, and how we would respond to future issues that may arise. Of course, all of our motivations are spurred by our calling to be Christians in this world and a light to the community.

These dynamics were all laid out, and Ballard initiated conversations with a number of potential First Nations leaders who would be key in leading the discussions. Ballard also spent time with Tim and me, working through our goals, parameters, and expectations for this engagement.

3. Work to Date

- a. A Discovery Protocol has been drafted and is close to complete.
 - i. Although we have completed a ground scan of the area, there is always a risk that something is found during excavation. It is critical that we be prepared for this situation, because the first few hours of how a discovery is handled will set the entire stage for how it is perceived and discussed.
- b. A Communications plan is being drafted for potential answers to media questions/inquiries
- c. Contact has been made with First Nations groups to introduce the Society and Keller Construction.

- d. Engagement session is being planned for later in February. (Darren, Tim, Ballard, and ~12 First Nations representatives)
- e. ideas for demonstrating our desire to build a relationship and potential expressions of reconciliation are being discussed.

4. What Have I Learned?

- a. The work so far has educated me in so many ways! First and foremost, I believe this is not just a risk mitigation exercise. Yes, there are business risks that we want to avoid. **However, I believe this is an opportunity to demonstrate a spirit of humility and be a light.**
- b. This exercise of engagement should not be scary. There is a genuine willingness on both sides to engage, and an appreciation for consideration.
 - i. There may be parts of this process that we have to say 'no' to, and we need to be clear and willing to do that.
- c. The responses to our initiation of discussions have been extremely positive.
 - i. "They actually want to talk to us before they build?" – Hearing that this is their reaction has been convicting for me, personally. It speaks to the complete lack of a relationship and dialogue, as well as the power dynamic that is in place.
 - ii. The ideas that have been discussed have not given me any sense of an opportunistic spirit or vengeful approach. I was expecting this to be a challenge we would have to navigate, but my expectations came from an uneducated and ignorant place, if I'm honest!
 - iii. No one has said that we should not build.

5. Tentative Plan to Proceed:

- a. Virtual Engagement Session – late Feb
 - i. Meant to be an intimate setting, not a widely publicized event. A time of introductions, sharing, and discussion
- b. 24 hour Sacred Fire – March 5/6
 - i. A tradition in First Nations culture, meant to be a ceremony to honor the memories of loved ones and move towards forgiveness and healing.
 - ii. This is not a PR stunt, by any means. There would be no pictures or videos allowed and no media presence.
 - iii. A firekeeper would be on site for the 24 hours, responsible for the ceremony and process
 - iv. Tim and I would be present at the beginning and end of the fire, as would a few key First Nations leaders. Ballard would also be involved.
 - 1. I've asked about other participants, and your participation as Board members would be welcome. I'm not sure what that looks like exactly, and it wouldn't be mandatory. But, I will keep you posted.
- c. Conversation around Green Space/Garden
 - i. Would we consider involving one or two First Nations leaders in planning a garden area somewhere on site? I know there are logistics involved in this, but we can navigate those, I think. If the Board is ok with pursuing this, I can explore further.
- d. Contribution to artwork in the main common area
 - i. Once we get to the stage of interior planning and coordinating, I would like to extend the offer to include some First Nations art work in the space. It would not be, by any means, a full blown monument or theme throughout the entire building. But, I think it could be a fantastic addition to the common area (ie. think along the lines of one of the Jim Visser paintings we have in the North Wing)

6. Next Steps – Board Discussion

1. Is the Board comfortable with the approach so far?
2. Does the Board endorse the plan outlined above?
 - a. If yes, I will proceed as per the outlined points, and keep the Board in front of any future asks/requests
 - b. If no, we will need to discuss an alternative approach that I can present to the group.