



Strategic Plan

2019-2024

SAA'MEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LP

CARING FOR THE FUTURE AND HONORING THE PAST THROUGH BUSINESS SUCCESS TODAY

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Message from the CEO



ANGELA VAN DEN HOUT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT SAA'MEN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LP

It is an honour to present you with the Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024 for Saa'men Economic Development LP. Saa'men is grateful for the hard work of the Saa'men Board of Directors, the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) and Chief and Council of the Qualicum First Nation (QFN) in putting together this comprehensive plan.

The process was lengthy and challenging, and in the end the greatest reward was to see the energy among all participants as hopeful, optimistic, revitalized and excited for the future of Saa'men and its stakeholders.

Although the strategic planning process is over, the collaborative energy which resulted from the process will serve as the foundation for the success of Saa'men, long-term.

The Strategic Plan provides clear direction and goals for Saa'men for the next one to five years. I am confident that with Saa'men's current operations and Board leadership, the supporting role of BAC, and Saa'men's positive relationship with Chief and Council, Saa'men is going to bring abundant success which will benefit the community it serves greatly.

I look forward to working with community members, and surrounding nations and business partners, as Saa'men grows a number of exciting new projects.

Thank you to everyone who took part in this valuable process. I very much look forward to leading Saa'men towards achieving the goals identified in the plan.

Angela van den Hout, CEO

Message from the Chair of the Board

I am honoured to currently serve as the Chair of the Board of Directors of Saa'men GP Ltd and of the Saa'men Economic Development Limited Partnership. Our board is tasked with pursuing and building on economic development opportunities on behalf of the members of the Qualicum First Nation. Recently, in conjunction with the Chief and Council of the QFN and the Business Advisory Committee, a strategic plan was developed for Saa'men. In traditional First Nation societies, every member played a part in the community and we encourage all members of the QFN to actively participate in the plan to continue the cultural practices of their ancestors.

Saa'men is currently working in partnership with K'omoks First Nation on a forestry initiative that is taking place in an area that is shared within the traditional territories of K'omoks and the QFN. This has been a successful first venture for the Board and for the QFN. Now we are undertaking a second project that will bring to fruition an idea that was first formulated by the membership some 10 plus years ago.

I, and my fellow board members, are taking great pride in championing the efforts of QFN as they strive to obtain economic independence. Our efforts will challenge and inspire the membership as they explore potential opportunities and enter the economic stream of our community, our province and our country. And who knows, one day it might even lead to a global opportunity!

Debra Nixon, Chair of the Board



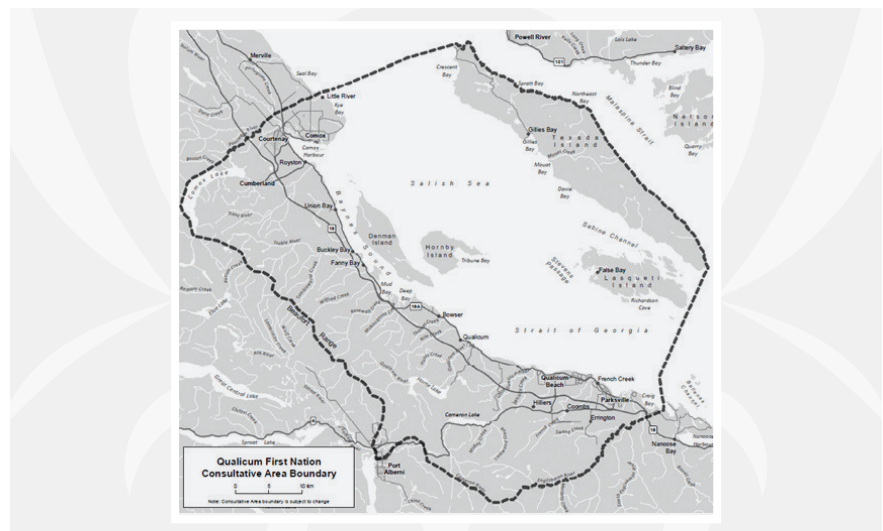
SAA'MEN DIRECTORS
DOUG REID, DEBRA NIXON (CHAIR),
AND SAM STEVENS.
NOT PICTURED: MARK RECALMA



About Qualicum First Nation

Qualicum, meaning "Where The Dog Salmon Run," is a First Nations band located in Qualicum Bay at the mouth of the Big Qualicum River, 15 minutes north of Qualicum Beach on Vancouver Island.

QFN is part of the broader Coast Salish Family, with some family ties to nations to the north. QFN has 128 members, with 74 individuals living on the reserve.





Enterprising Spirit

Saa'men is building on a strong legacy. The QFN currently runs several businesses, including a popular campground and a daycare centre. It has also managed fish processing operations and owns its own processing plant.

In times past, members of the QFN supported travellers who ran trade routes between Nuu-chah-nulth and Coast Salish territories. The Nation also entered into partnerships to benefit from its resources, including aquaculture projects with Japanese people on the river over a century ago. It is with these forward-thinking initiatives in mind that Saa'men is working with the QFN community to usher in a new era of economic development and prosperity for the nation.



About Saa'men Economic Development LP

OUR PURPOSE

Saa'men is a First Nations Economic Development Limited Partnership created in 2016 to manage business interests of the Qualicum First Nation (QFN) and to solicit and negotiate new business opportunities for the benefit of the band.

Saa'men was set-up as a limited partnership to ensure the independence of the business assets of the QFN; while Chief and Council nominate Saa'men Board directors, they are not involved in the operations of the Board and CEO, which act independently.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

Saa'men - pronounced SAY' MIN - refers to a winter village in the main settlement of the Qualicum First Nation people in Qualicum Beach. The name Saa'men was chosen to highlight the strong connection between Saa'men and the QFN, and how the endeavour aims to involve and benefit the community..

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Saa'men Economic Development LP currently administers a forestry agreement with the Provincial Government in partnership with the K'ómoks First Nation. Saa'men is also exploring multiple business projects that will help contribute to the QFN, including creating employment and education opportunities and building entrepreneurial capacity for members and the nation.

About Our Logo

The Saa'men logo was designed by community member Mathew Adreatta.

In Mathew's words:

"My design is in the style of a Coast Salish spindle whorl in order to reflect one of the most ancient and significant forms of art in our history. The human figure at the top of the design represents the people of Qualicum as a whole.

Surrounding the people are two salmon and one human who has learned the salmon's songs. This represents the most important natural resource to Qualicum, our salmon, and more specifically, the dog salmon from whom we receive our name. The design represents the circular, reciprocal relationship with one another as the salmon form the foundation of our community, and the people in turn hold up and revere the salmon for the wealth and nourishment they have provided for us since time immemorial."



Mission Statement, Vision & Our Values

MISSION STATEMENT

To pursue forward-thinking business ventures that contribute to the well-being and economic independence of the qualicum first nation community.

VISION

Caring for the future and honoring the past through business success today.

OUR VALUES

Saa'men Economic Development LP is driven to succeed by doing business in alignment with the Qualicum First Nation's values and culture. These are based on a kinship system rooted in deep respect for elders, children, families, and future generations.

The values that will help Saa'men honour this living legacy and run a successful organization are:

RESPECT: Honor ancestors, traditions, and all our relations on our journey to business success.

INTEGRITY: Be trustworthy partners.

PURPOSEFULNESS: Conduct economic development activities honourably and efficiently to achieve goals of the community.

FAMILY-ORIENTED: Be customer-oriented, exemplifying the hospitality and generous spirit of Qualicum First Nation peoples.

SUSTAINABILITY: Consider and mitigate the ecological impacts of our business decisions and protect the integrity of Qualicum First Nation lands and resources.

About the Business Advisory Committee

The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) acts as a liaison to the Qualicum First Nation Community in matters of Economic Development, providing advice to Saa'men. Current members of the Business Advisory Committee (as of September 2019) include: Dawn Weir, Jessie Recalma, Joanna Recalma, Darlene Wells (Elder representative), Tyleen Bell (Youth representative).



BAC MEMBERS
DARLENE WELLS, DAWN WEIR,
JESSIE RECALMA, TYLEEN BELL
NOT PICTURED: JOANNA RECALMA

Environmental Scan, The Opportunity

INTRODUCTION

The current social, political, economic and environmental landscape across Canada is in a state of transformation with respect to Government and First Nations relationships. Much of this evolving landscape can be attributed to the “awakening” of non-Indigenous governments and corporate Canada to the benefits of working collaboratively with First Nations communities.

The status quo is no longer acceptable and, in fact, impedes business development opportunities and ultimately the bottom line – profits.

There is an emerging awareness of the negative consequences of excluding Indigenous peoples from economic development.



Some companies are responding to this new reality by taking action to better include and communicate with Indigenous communities and their economic development corporations. This is of great benefit to Saa'men and other First Nations across Canada including the Qualicum First Nation (QFN).

A clear example of this changing landscape is the strong support expressed by The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN), which has signed a cooperation protocol with the QFN to support community services, protect heritage sites and promote economic development as part of its commitment to reconciliation (Nanaimo Regional District, O.C.P., 2017).

Several guiding documents have informed this environmental scan. While some plans and studies date BACK to 2010, much of the information remains relevant. The environmental scan was also informed by two facilitated sessions in the Spring of 2019 involving Saa'men's Board and CEO, as well as the QFN Chief and Council, and members of the Business Advisory Committee.

A NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS SHAPED THIS PLAN INCLUDING:

“The Regional District of Nanaimo encourages economic development initiatives of the Qualicum First Nation to advance the process of reconciliation at the local level.”

STUART MCLEAN
RDN ELECTORAL AREA H DIRECTOR



Trends and Issue Analysis

High-level review of research, reports and information provided by key informants suggests that Saa'men's investment strategy will be impacted by a number of key factors including the following trends and emerging issues:

RECONCILIATION: Increasing awareness of non-Indigenous governments of the value of working with First Nations.

ECONOMY: Strong Vancouver Island economy with low unemployment rate.

DESTINATION OF CHOICE: with direct beach access, low crime rates and an abundance of outdoor and recreation options, the Qualicum Beach area is a highly attractive place to live, work, study and visit with a growing population. Strong accessibility with land, water and air transportation routes enables residents to commute to larger urban centres.

CONTINUED SECTOR GROWTH: several existing and new sectors are experiencing growth such as Indigenous Tourism, agri-foods, and the knowledge-based economy (e.g. high-tech, creative).

BUSINESS CLIMATE: local governments, First Nations and business communities are open to sharing information and working collaboratively.

DEMOGRAPHICS: Parksville-Qualicum Beach has one of the wealthiest (average income) and oldest populations in BC – many retirees with disposable income are looking for investment opportunities.

COLLABORATION: there is growing desire among members of the QFN to work together as one nation to achieve economic, social, cultural and environmental goals. This is illustrated in a recent process to develop a Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) in collaboration with the University of British Columbia (UBC), to be completed in 2020.



Some factors that are lacking and may impact economic opportunities in the Parksville-Qualicum Beach, and Oceanside region include:

LOCAL PROMOTION: lack of awareness of products and services that are available locally, which is a significant contributor to economic leakage.

AVAILABILITY OF RENTAL PROPERTY: there is a gap in availability of rental options and land leases, both residentially and commercially, in the region.

LACK OF DIVERSITY: the Oceanside region lacks business and cultural diversity, which First Nations can help fill.

ENTERTAINMENT GAP: limited entertainment options exist.

AGING POPULATION AND LIMITED CAREER OPPORTUNITIES: many younger people leave the community to pursue professional careers (and higher income jobs) in larger urban centres.

SAA'MEN SWOT ANALYSIS

Below is a summary of Saa'men's position based on current environmental and organizational factors and its position in relation to these:

STRENGTHS

- Motivated and qualified governing Board and CEO.
- Financial position to build upon provided by revenue of Forestry agreement.
- Independence of Saa'men from Chief and Council allowing it to operate free from political interference in the best interest of the community and investors.

WEAKNESSES

- Limited economic development planning, collaboration and land management processes within the QFN.
- Size of business portfolio and partnerships.
- Impacts of colonization and residential schools continue to affect members of the QFN who are vital sources of employment and entrepreneurship for Saa'men.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Strong local economy with continued growth projections including emerging sectors such as Indigenous tourism.
- Support from the Nanaimo Regional District for QFN economic development.
- QFN assets to draw upon such as community members with work experience, land, and existing infrastructure.
- High vehicle traffic as a north-south Island corridor with few amenities including fuel/EV charging, accommodations, food and beverage, and entertainment.

THREATS

- Uncertain supply of timber and market conditions in forestry sector.
- Aging population and limited opportunities for younger families and professionals reduces availability of qualified workforce.
- Competition from surrounding Nations, other communities as members leave the reserve to follow opportunities elsewhere and businesses with more advanced economic development.

Economic Development Opportunities (2019-2024)

The 2010 Qualicum First Nation Economic Development Plan report highlighted several on-site economic development opportunities. These assets included:

- Unrealized potential of working age community members
- Land Mass within one of the most desirable environments in North America
- The river which flows through the land and has sustained the band in the past
- Existing community infrastructure such as the band hall and a fish processing plant which could support economic development

These assets offer diverse economic development opportunities for Saa'men and the QFN to consider over the next five years. Other opportunities identified in the Economic Development Strategy: Parksville Qualicum Beach Region Report (2015) that may be of interest include:

- Healthcare
- Clean technology (e.g. renewable energy)
- Aquaculture (shellfish)
- Green manufacturing
- Home-based entrepreneurs
- Education
- Medical marijuana
- Retirement community entertainment
- Agriculture and farming (e.g. niche food products)
- Childcare (QFN currently operates a successful daycare)

Many of the above opportunities align strongly with the desire of the QFN to achieve economic independence by pursuing forward thinking business opportunities that align with its culture and values. Some of the opportunities identified by members who participated in the planning session include:

“Indeed, in some areas... First Nations are the main drivers in the economy, creating opportunities for all whilst providing much needed revenues and jobs for the members of their own communities.”

VANCOUVER ISLAND ECONOMIC ALLIANCE,
2017, P.6

- Fuel station with EV charging and convenience store
- Artist studio and food options - near or at fuel station
- Care facility for seniors/elders
- Hotel accommodations
- Aquaculture (river and ocean)
- Tours and Indigenous tourism
- Marine fuel station

“Indigenous tourism plays a significant role in the Canadian economy, and is outpacing the growth of other tourism sectors... there is an incredible amount of opportunity created through tourism for Indigenous peoples and businesses across the country.”

HONOURABLE SEAMUS O'REGAN
MINISTER OF INDIGENOUS SERVICES



INDIGENOUS TOURISM

Saa'men and QFN are well positioned to offer a wide range of activities under the Indigenous Tourism umbrella. All six assets identified in the 2010 report could be utilized to create a unique visitor experience where Qualicum members could showcase their community, lands, resources and culture. Qualicum First Nation also boasts a highly attractive undeveloped coastline.

The Indigenous Tourism industry has demonstrated strong and steady growth over the past nine years. On the national level, BC ranks second to Ontario for the highest amount of Indigenous people employed in the sector with a total of 6,957 jobs in 2018. BC also places second to Ontario in terms of revenue and direct economic footprint coming in at 260.3 million in 2018 (Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada and The Conference Board of Canada, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Many economic development opportunities exist for Saa'men and the QFN. More detailed analysis and a comprehensive engagement strategy with QFN members and external partners will support bringing these ideas to fruition. Best practice research for First Nations Economic Development Corporations highlights the importance of strategic planning and community consultation (Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, 2013). Community engagement will also promote unity and cohesion, as well as conversations that lead to new ideas and novel approaches that can strengthen the nation as a whole.

Community engagement at an early stage about Saa'men's role will foster an atmosphere of trust that can subsequently support significant investments by the nation. This may be vital when attracting potential investors, especially if Saa'men and QFN need to consider a referendum process to inform decision-making related to major investments and projects. In this regard a communication strategy will help advance prospective initiatives and long-term success. Members, potential business partners and other stakeholders will need information to answer the questions: What's in it for me? What's in it for my family? What's in it for our community?

The value of timely, relevant and easy to read information cannot be underestimated. When people can see themselves and the potential benefits within the proposed opportunities there will be enthusiasm, support and often more hands to help build the desired future. And many hands make light work. In addition, the more stakeholders and participants get involved, the more relationships and opportunities continue to expand.



Goals, Objectives and Key Results

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, WE WILL ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING:

GOAL ONE · SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSES

OBJECTIVES	KEY RESULTS	TIMELINE
1.1. Fuel Station and Store Design, build and launch fuel station (gas/electric) and convenience store based on results of the feasibility study. Project may also include a café, artist studio and retail space.	Project Manager hired.	2019
	Master project plan developed and approved by Chief and Council.	2019
	Funding applications for the development of the fuel station and store submitted (Note: This will occur in stages as funds are needed).	2019 2020 2021 2022
	Loan to develop fuel station and convenience store secured.	2020
	Joint venture agreement(s) and leases (as appropriate) on fuel station property and store finalized.	2020
	Fuel station (and store) design completed.	2020
	Fuel station construction finalized.	2021
	Staffing and operations plan completed.	2021
	Grand opening celebration.	2022
	Fuel station and store in operation.	2022
1.2 New Businesses Identify viable business opportunities with community input and launch new businesses.	Secure funding for (pre-)feasibility studies and carry-out as appropriate for Elder care facility, café/food truck, aqua culture (ocean and river), hotel, tours, and marine fuel station.	2020 (ongoing)
	Results of pre-feasibility are presented to community members for input.	2020
	Business opportunities to pursue are identified and Band Council support and resolution is obtained.	2020
	Business plans and partnerships as appropriate are developed to support implementation of new businesses.	2021
1.3 Forestry Business Continue to oversee operations and ensure favourable outcomes for Saa'men and QFN community.	Continue to serve on the Rosewall Board.	Ongoing
	Work to ensure favourable returns and long-term economic and environmental sustainability of the project.	Ongoing

GOAL TWO · EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

OBJECTIVES	KEY RESULTS	TIMELINE
2.1 Saa'men Governance and Accountability Oversee compliance and necessary updates to Saa'men governance agreement.	All requirements of Governance Agreement including AGM, notices, and reporting are followed and carried out.	Ongoing (AGM yearly) (Meetings quarterly)
	Board operations are carried out effectively.	Ongoing
	5-year Strategic Plan (the long-term plan) is completed and regularly monitored.	Launch plan in September 2019. Ongoing monitoring; Yearly review of measures/ targets.
	Update Governance Agreement and Saa'men structure to ensure it reflects and supports operational needs.	2020
2.2. Policy Development Create required policy for Saa'men and affiliated companies.	Director's Expense Policy developed and approved. Director's Expense Policy developed and approved.	2019
	Human Resource Policy developed and approved.	2019
	Financial Policy developed and approved.	2019

GOAL THREE - STRONG COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

OBJECTIVES	KEY RESULTS	TIMELINE
3.1 Corporate Branding Develop visual and online presence to promote organization and fuel station project.	Logo is finalized and launched.	2019
	Website is completed and launched (and regularly maintained)	2019 and ongoing (maintained)
	Develop marketing strategy and develop assets to promote Saa'men and attract investors (i.e. explore options including print, video, online and signage).	Strategy by December 2019 Assets created as needed.
3.2 Community Engagement Solicit input from QFN and build trusting relationship with BAC, Chief and Council and all members.	In-person engagement activities are carried out for community members to meet the Saa'men Board and CEO in person (e.g. community BBQs).	2019
	Community engagement meeting(s) are carried out to solicit input and advance Fuel Station and store project.	2019
	Community engagement meetings are carried out to solicit input and advance other viable businesses (with online participation option).	2020
	Regularly inform and participate in other community engagement processes (website, social events, newsletter updates, etc.) to build community awareness and trust in Saa'men and its business activities.	2019 and Ongoing
3.3. Partnership Strategy Develop effective marketing and relationship development to attract partners and investors.	Partner engagement strategy developed, outlining potential partners in the private (e.g. venture partners, funders, suppliers) and public (e.g. Town of Qualicum Beach, Nanaimo Regional District, provincial and federal government) sectors.	2019 and Ongoing
	Carry out engagement strategy to build relationships that will support future business ventures and operations.	2018 and ongoing

GOAL FOUR · ENHANCED CAPACITY OF QFN MEMBERS TO DO BUSINESS

OBJECTIVES	KEY RESULTS	TIMELINE
4.1 Economic Development Governance Foster strong relationships with QFN BAC and Chief and Council to help advance Saa'men projects and build capacity for economic development.	Saa'men develops and maintains strong relationships with BAC and Chief and Council.	2019 and ongoing
	BAC has strengthened community presence and ability to fulfill its function as per Saa'men's Governance Agreement.	2021
	There are clear processes for Saa'men engaging with BAC, Chief and Council and community to advance economic interests of QFN.	2021
	Support QFN economic development planning (including as part of Comprehensive Community Planning).	2020 for CCP and ongoing
4.2 Entrepreneur and Management Workshops and Recruitment Build capacity of QFN members and nation to participate in businesses and fill key positions.	Educational workshops are sponsored by Saa'men– e.g. developing business plans, marketing your business, etc.	2021
	Support QFN economic development planning (including as part of Comprehensive Community Planning).	2021
4.3 Education Funding Provide funding for youth and other members to pursue education programs.	Education fund is created by Saa'men to enable members to pursue education not currently funded through existing streams.	2020
	Work experience program created to provide QFN members, notably youth, job opportunities in Saa'men businesses.	2023

Saa'men is committed to making smart business decisions that will generate revenue and connect families and communities. Our achievements will give hope to the youth and opportunities to all members of the Qualicum First Nation.

Spotlight on the Fuel Station

Saa'men has purchased land in the Qualicum Bay area along Highway 19 and is currently completing the planning phase for the fuel station project. Current assessments include geotechnical work, hydrology and environmental studies, a traffic study and site planning that will ultimately lead to applying for permits and rezoning of the site to allow for the business, as proposed.

The project now includes a number of potential components, including:



A MULTI-ENERGY FUEL STATION, INCLUDING GASOLINE, DIESEL, ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING BAYS



A LOCALLY-SOURCED, FRESH FOOD CAFÉ



A QFN ARTISTS' STUDIO

“Parkville Qualicum Beach Tourism Association's Board of Directors wishes Saa'men and the Qualicum First Nation all the best with this [fuel station and Artists' Studio] project. We look forward to partnering with you when it is scheduled to be completed in late 2021.”

PATRICK JIGGINS
CHAIR OF THE BOARD, PARKVILLE QUALICUM BEACH TOURISM ASSOCIATION

A 2010 report identified that a gas station held strong potential for economic development, highlighting long-term employment and training opportunities and an increase in revenues earned as a direct result of commercial activities associated with a gas station. A 2016 feasibility study also supported this conclusion.

- Despite high levels of vehicle traffic, there is only one gas station with limited service between Buckley Bay and Qualicum Beach.
- There is no commercial development for a 75 Km stretch between Parkville and Courtenay, and according to the OCP the only commercial development allowed is by the QFN.
- There are no EV charging stations between Courtney and Qualicum Beach, along the Highway.

Urban Systems, a local planning company with a track record of successful First Nations business project development, is working with Saa'men throughout the planning stage to prepare us for the construction phase of the project. Stay connected to WWW.SAAMENEDC.COM for the latest project updates.

Performance Measures

WE WILL USE THE FOLLOWING PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS TO ASSESS OUR PROGRESS AND IMPACTS:

MEASURE	BASELINE 2019	TARGET 2022	TARGET 2024
Number of operating affiliated businesses	1 (Forestry)	3 (Add Fuel Station, Artists' Studio Café, at minimum)	4 Add Food Truck, Hotel or Health Centre
Revenue	\$200,000	\$ 2M ¹	\$ 4M
Number of employees of Saa'men	1	2	3
Number of QFN members employed in Saa'men businesses and affiliates	0	2	6-10
Value of funding contributed QFN to support programs (such as education and training for members)	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$50,000
Revenue re-distributed to QFN for events	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$20,000

¹ FORESTRY TENURES ARE BEING NEGOTIATED AND UNCERTAINTY IN FORESTRY MARKETS MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO PROJECT EARNING AT THIS TIME. TARGETS WILL BE UPDATED AS INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE.

Partnership Opportunities

// “If we could get your business leaders thinking about where the puck will be in two years, it's going to be more of an UNDRIP world and a reconciliatory world, and it'll be all about our relationships with Indigenous Peoples. So if you're looking for great opportunity and to do things that are rewarding personally and for the firm, then go out and build those relationships.”

BOB JOSEPH

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Saa'men and the Qualicum First Nation are seeking business partners and projects in alignment with our values and mission. If you are interested in working collaboratively for our mutual benefit and have an idea or venture that we could pursue together, please reach out to Saa'men. We would love to hear from you.

SAA'MEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LP

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