

**March 11, 2008 Public Hearing Speaking Notes for Chief Campbell
Presentation to Richmond City Council – March 11, 2008**

- The name Musqueam means “people of the river grass” which spreads over the Fraser River estuary’s tidal flats and marsh lands, including present day Richmond. Our people have been present here, in our traditional territory, for over 9,000 years.
- Although we have been living together for more than a century, the historical significance of our people is still widely unknown by many in this region now known as Metro Vancouver.
- From the time of our ancestors to our life today, we have proudly maintained our traditional culture and our strong ties to the lands and waters. And despite the challenges and pains of post-colonial life, our modern day history is a proud one.
- Then as now, we are a fishing people whose rhythms, stories and culture created by our close relationship with the river.
- Currently, about 610 Musqueam members live on 65 hectares of the main reserve, the remaining hectares are leased out for other uses. Another 760 (or 55% of our membership) live off-Reserve.
- We are in a unique situation. We are an urban First Nation whose position presents us with many opportunities other First Nations throughout Canada do not have:
 - Access to services
 - Educational opportunities, and
 - Jobs
- However, this proximity has given us many more challenges including urban social problems and land limitations.
- Musqueam are burdened with the same unfortunate legacy and suffering as other First Nations. It is this legacy that we are working hard to break free from as we move through our nation-rebuilding process.
- As Chief, my job is to ensure the people I represent have opportunities. It means working to provide hope and a better quality of life for our people and our children through:
 - Improving health and wellness
 - Improving current living conditions that undermine morale and well-being

- Imparting the skills needed to participate in the social, political and economic life of Canada
- Today we are working to rebuild our nation as we ready ourselves to return to self-government.
- As part of this process, we are building our capacity to realize our own economic, educational, cultural, and political objectives through actions and programs of our own design and implementation.
- This, in part, is what the Garden City Lands in Richmond represents – a chance for our people to derive opportunity from the very land that has supported us for millennia.
- Our involvement in Garden City Lands comes by way of an honourable agreement reached in March 2005 with the City of Richmond and the Canada Lands Company.
- Garden City Lands will provide the foundation to support community based programs that our people need such as:
 - New housing;
 - New infrastructure;
 - New community and cultural facilities;
 - New sports and recreation facilities;
 - Improved drug and alcohol counseling program;
 - Children health and education programs;
 - Employment and training programs;
 - Youth recreational services; and,
 - Language education programs.
- Garden City Lands hold the key to our future and, given the past and all that we have lost, nothing is more important to us than securing future opportunities for our people.
- Mayor and Concillors, it is important for all of us to remember that the Musqueam was forced by the Crown off much of our traditional territory.
- We never relinquished our rights to the Garden City Lands, or any of our territory, which for generation after generation, gave our people sustenance. Courts, including the Supreme Court of Canada, have consistently recognized our rights and provided protection.

- As many know, the Musqueam went to court to defend our rights and the Federal Court granted us an injunction to prevent the transfer of the Garden City lands without our consent.
- Following this litigation, the Crown accepted the rightful place of the Musqueam as a partner in helping to determine an appropriate future for the Garden City Lands. Together with the City of Richmond and Canada Lands, we reached a precedent-setting agreement.
- Everyone involved knows that, under the agreement, the Musqueam have agreed that the project must fully integrate with the City of Richmond's Official Community Plan and comply with all city zoning bylaws. And, further, we will ensure the public has opportunities to comment and engage at key stages throughout.
- The Garden City Lands agreement is partnership over acrimony. It's reconciliation over litigation. It's reaching an agreement that rights the wrongs of the past in a manner that's fair to all and upholds the rule of law.
- As the Supreme Court of Canada has said, we are all here to stay. Certainly, the Musqueam have no other home and nor do the people of this community.
- Collectively, we have an opportunity to embrace that vision and show leadership for the benefit, not just of the Musqueam, but for all citizens.
- Before I close, I want to say that we recognize that agriculture is an important issue in this discussion. And we recognize the concerns that people rightly have about the future of agriculture in this community and beyond. The Musqueam people understand the value and importance of land. We believe, as a people, that we belong to the land. The land has provided us sustenance for thousands of years because we have a deep and abiding respect for it.
- We value the agricultural benefits and opportunities that the agreement provides and that is why we will be a significant contributor to the Agricultural Endowment Fund. This is an important value for us as a people.
- We also recognize we must all live in concert and harmony with the land and sustainable development principles will guide us through this project. The people who will live in the Garden City Lands project, will live in a community that is environmentally and socially sustainable and supports our shared goals for stronger, healthier communities.

- Mayor and Councillors. I speak to you as a partner. In the spirit of pursuing our common interests, I ask that we continue our work together—the work that we started nearly three years ago tonight. On behalf of the Musqueam people I ask that we move forward with this important agreement and make the Garden City Lands a cherished part of both the City of Richmond and the Musqueam people's future.
- We worked hard with you and Canada Lands Company as partners, along with the Government of Canada. We worked hard together to make this agreement. You are part of history because this agreement made history. It demonstrated that a government of a city and the Government of Canada could together make honourable agreements with First Nations. In this endeavour the City of Richmond led.
- I ask you to continue your leadership. To date, you have fulfilled all the terms of this honourable agreement and we expect that you will continue to do so because the City of Richmond acts honourably. Richmond stands by its commitments and it stands by its word. All of us together as partners, living up to our commitments is essential to reconciliation. This is an agreement about reconciliation. This is an agreement about which the Musqueam are proud, Canada Lands Company is proud and the City of Richmond can be proud.