



# Grand Council Treaty #3

## Office of the Ogichidaa

P.O. BOX 1720  
Kenora, Ontario P9N 3X7  
Ph: (807) 788-1406  
Fax: (807) 548-4776

### MEDIA RELEASE

October 5, 2022



### Grand Council Treaty #3, Kenora District Services Board and Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board Sign Memorandum of Understanding

*(Lac Seul First Nation – October 4, 2022)* Grand Council Treaty #3 (GCT#3), the Kenora District Services Board (KDSB), and Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board (RRDSSAB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work together to improve affordable housing and Early Years, Child Care and Education programming for families throughout the Treaty #3 territory. Through the Treaty #3 traditional legal framework, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, GCT#3, KDSB, and RRDSSAB will jointly develop a pathway forward that benefits families and individuals to overcome both social and economic barriers throughout Treaty #3.



*Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh and Barry Baltessen*

The organizations jointly recognize that homelessness and lack of access to housing is a serious issue that directly causes poor health, premature deaths, missed economic opportunities, and puts children, youth and elders in vulnerable positions. Treaty #3 communities continue to face many pressing housing issues, including lack of affordable housing, homelessness, and inadequate housing that leads to energy deficiencies and health risks. These pressures, in turn add to the burden on the child welfare system, increase rates of mental health issues and suicide, contribute to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls epidemic, and provide opportunities for human trafficking.

“The signing of this Memorandum of Understanding is a significant step for all organizations because it supports the Nation’s inherent right to healthy and thriving communities, while implementing our traditional laws,” said Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh. “Treaty #3’s vision is to develop a more holistic approach towards addressing homelessness and housing barriers while taking into consideration not only social values, but also the cultural and economic needs of the Anishinaabe Nation.”

The Memorandum of Understanding outlines six key priority areas:

1. **Infrastructure:** Explore options to create, develop and improve infrastructure, so that is an adequate amount of housing.
2. **Finances:** Explore options to finance infrastructure efforts.
3. **Funding:** Explore partner options in order to leverage and secure funding for the infrastructure efforts.
4. **Communication:** Identify means and improve communication between Grand Council Treaty #3, the KDSB, and the RRDSSAB to streamline and expedite progress.
5. **Participation:** Strategies to encourage engagement from First Nations within Grand Council Treaty #3, KDSB, RRDSSAB, and all individuals involved.
6. **Exploration:** Identify where social services, child care and education play a role in creating barriers for affordable housing opportunities and establish strategic goals to address these factors to assist families and individuals.

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding acknowledges the organizations’ commitment and partnership to work towards safe and affordable housing, which is an essential right of all families and individuals in our communities, as well as supports the creation of a foundation to work towards a healthier and flourishing society overall.

“Through the Memorandum of Understanding, we are committing to meaningful relations and partnership that will work to improve the well-being of our communities and work for the betterment of all who live in the Territory,” says Barry Baltessen, Board Chair of the Kenora District Services Board. “Today’s event supports the KDSB’s vision to improve the lives of families through housing, early learning and care, paramedic and social services by bringing together our municipalities and first nation communities.”

-30-

**For more information please contact:** Daniel Morriseau, Political Advisor – (807) 464-2647 or by email [daniel.morriseau@treaty3.ca](mailto:daniel.morriseau@treaty3.ca)