



**FORT MCKAY**  
FIRST NATION



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# Land Code Initiative

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## What is a Land Code?

A Land Code sets out the basic rules for land and resource management on First Nation reserve land as determined by the First Nation. Fort McKay First Nation is in the process of developing a Land Code.

Currently, the use, occupation, and protection of Fort McKay reserve land is determined by the Indian Act and policies set by officials from Indigenous Services Canada.

Under the Land Code, 44 sections of the Indian Act will no longer apply to Fort McKay First Nation's land and resources. Instead, Fort McKay First Nation will manage reserve land and resources under its own Land Code and laws, and the Government of Canada will no longer have any say in how Fort McKay chooses to use, occupy, and protect its reserve land.



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## How does a Land Code get developed?

Developing Fort McKay's own Land Code takes a lot of time and effort and involves Fort McKay members, administrative staff and leadership. Over the past year, a committee of 13 Fort McKay First Nation members worked on developing a Land Code that reflects the unique needs of Fort McKay First Nation.

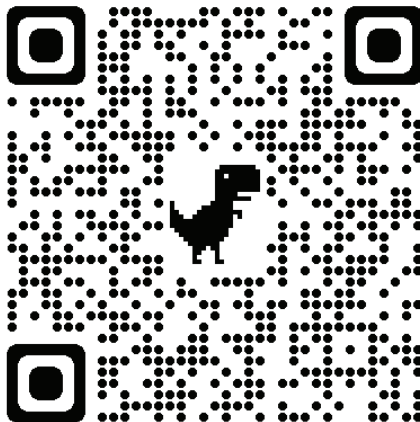
The Land Code Committee has recommended a draft Land Code to Chief and Council for consideration and the final draft will be presented to Fort McKay First Nation members for approval.

## Membership Approval

Fort McKay First Nation will hold a community ratification vote to approve the Land Code and Individual Agreement later this year, with exact dates to be confirmed. All Fort McKay Members who are 18+ years old as of the vote date will be eligible to vote.

Traditional in-person polling stations in Fort McKay, Fort McMurray, and Edmonton will be used for the vote, and NEW this year members will have the option to vote online through the OneFeather secure e-voting platform.

Scan the QR code below to go to Fort McKay First Nation's exclusive OneFeather landing page where you can confirm your own unique account.



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## What does the Land Code mean to Fort McKay First Nation?

### Member-led decision-making

- Land and resource management decisions made by Fort McKay, not Canada.
- Member involvement in the development of laws and regulations.
- Members approve important land and resource projects and initiatives such as land and resource plans, voluntary land exchange, developments on Namur Lake and Namur River reserves, etc.

### Accountability to members

- Financial transparency is required for all land and resource income and expenditures.
- Mandatory reporting on land and resource activities.
- Conflict of interest rules for all decision-makers and committees.
- Access to information for members guaranteed.

### Environmental protection

- Environmental review and decisions made by Fort McKay, not Canada.
- Authority to enact environmental protection and conservation laws.
- Ability to enforce laws and charge fines to polluters on Fort McKay reserve land.

### Strengthening traditions and culture

- Protection of historical and cultural sites through restrictions on development in sensitive areas.
- Traditional law enforcement and restorative justice options.
- Cree and Dene languages used to describe land and resources.

### Self efficacy

- Sovereignty over lands and resources – no longer under Canada's watch.
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- Informed, confident, and engaged membership.
- Building skills and knowledge in the community.

### **Want more Information on the Land Code?**

In-person and online community information sessions to support the community ratification process will be held over the coming months. Please watch for meeting notices on the Fort McKay App, in your home mailbox, and on Fort McKay First Nation's social media pages.

For more information on the Fort McKay First Nation draft Land Code please contact any member of the Land Code Committee listed on later in this handout or email/call:

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## Land Code Frequently Asked Questions

### **Does enacting a Land Code “overwrite” First Nation Treaty history or obligations?**

**No.** Treaty and Indigenous rights are not impacted by the Land Code. Canada is not off the hook for any past or ongoing obligations relating to Treaty if a Land Code is enacted.

### **Do First Nations become “Municipalities” once they enact a Land Code?**

**No.** Land Code does not change Fort McKay First Nation’s status as a First Nation or Band as defined by the Indian Act.

### **Does Land Code impact taxation on reserve?**

**No.** The parts of the Indian Act that apply to taxation will still be in place, including tax exemptions on property and income for people with status.

### **Will the Land Code impact how housing is allocated and managed by Fort McKay First Nation?**

**No.** The policies and bylaws that are currently used to allocate and manage housing in Fort McKay will still apply. The Land Code does not replace those.

### **Are there other First Nations that have Land Codes?**

**Yes!** There are over 100 First Nations that have enacted their own land codes, and about 60 more that are in the process of developing a land code for their community. That is almost two-thirds of all First Nations in Canada that are opting out of the Indian Act by putting a land code in place.

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## Fort McKay Land Code Committee



Special thanks to the following Fort McKay First Nation members who have dedicated their time and effort to the Land Code Committee in 2021-22:

Eleanor Steinhauer  
Dennis Shott  
Raymond Powder  
Rebecca Fabian  
Chris Wilson  
Amber Cardinal  
Justice Grandjamb

Peggy Lacorde  
Stuart Tourangeau  
Melinda Stewart  
Audrey Redcrow  
Monika Wilson  
Richelle Stewart

We would like to give thanks and appreciation to the following Community members for being part of the Land Code Language Sub-Committee:

Eunice Hunter  
Myrna McClure  
Jean L'Homme-court  
Raymond Powder

Eleanor Steinhauer  
Marie Boucher  
Gabriel Desjarlais

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## Land Code key terms

### “Land”

Ní (knee)

Askiy (us-key)

### “Community; Members of Fort McKay First Nation”

Des cha (dez chai)

meehko seepee eyinowak (me-ko see-pee e-no-wak)

### “Our lands; Our Territory”

Nu Ne’nea (new-eh neh neh)

Kitaskeenaw (Gee-dusk-ee-naw)

### “Land Law”

Hunt too ʔerehttis thela (hunt too ere-cl-is hala)

Askee weeyasowewin (Us-key we-ya-so-we-win)



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