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**For Immediate Release**

**Esquimalt Nation and T'Sou-ke Nation join South Island Prosperity Partnership**

**Victoria, B.C.** – The South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP) is proud to announce two additional First Nations have joined seven other Nations as members and partners of the organization.

Esquimalt Nation and T'Sou-ke Nation join Tsawout, Tsartlip, Songhees, Pauquachin, Tseycum, Sc'ianew and Malahat Nations as the nine First Nations within SIPP membership.

As the economic development partnership for Greater Victoria, First Nations economic growth is one of SIPP'S key focus areas.

"We are honored and humbled to be working with these South Island Nations. One of SIPP's priorities is to support First Nations-driven economic development activities by engaging with Nations and following their direction to creating inclusive, sustainable economic prosperity for their people," said Bruce Williams, SIPP Interim CEO.

"This territory has been our ancestral home for thousands of years. Our culture has always been and will always be tied to and sustained by our lands, and we must find new ways to give it voice. We look forward to working within the South Island Prosperity Partnership to advance our economic progress," said Chief Rob Thomas, Esquimalt Nation.

"We have to come together and agree that we need to lessen the burden on Mother Earth by working together to create a more sustainable economic structure than the one we have today. To become less dependent on fossil fuels, we need to make some hard choices for our children and our children not born yet. Let's go to work. We're running out of time. We are looking forward to collaborating with SIPP and the other SIPP Nation members to create a sustainable future," said Chief Gordon Planes, T'Sou-ke Nation.

“It’s very encouraging to see more First Nations joining SIPP and recognizing the incredible opportunity to come together to collaborate on joint projects and initiatives,” said Christina Clarke, Corporate Executive Officer for Songhees Development Corporation and SIPP Board member. “The potential for what we can achieve together through collaboration and shared knowledge is limitless. We’re thrilled to have Esquimalt Nation and T’Sou-ke Nation on board with SIPP.”

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### **ABOUT SOUTH ISLAND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP**

The South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP) is the economic development organization for Greater Victoria, B.C. Comprised of 50+ members, including 10 local governments, nine First Nations, three post-secondary institutions, nine industry associations and nonprofits, and more than 30 major employers. SIPP works to bolster our region’s economic and social prosperity. This will happen by catalyzing the creation of high-quality, household-sustaining jobs, so that more families can afford to live, work and build a life here. [www.southislandprosperity.ca](http://www.southislandprosperity.ca)