**Community Ratification Process (CRP) Summary**

Section 7 of the Framework Agreement makes it mandatory that the First Nations' land code and Individual Agreement require community approval. The Framework Agreement in section 7.3 sets out three different ways to consider on how a First Nation can carry out their community approval and voting process.

The First Nation must determine which voting process they wish to go with. The chosen process is described in the Community Ratification Process document. T’ít’q’et Land Code Committee recommended that T’ít’q’et Council select the Registered Voter method. T’ít’q’et sends its Community Ratification Process document to the Verifier to ensure that it meets the requirements set out in the Framework Agreement, once it is approved it becomes instructions for the Lands Officer and the Ratification Officer.

The procedures and rules of the community approval process are set out in the Community Ratification Procedure document as follows:

* The rules of the community approval process.
* The procedure by which a First Nation will decide whether to approve its land code and Individual Agreement as required under the Framework Agreement and First Nations Land Management Act.
* How the vote is to be conducted and who is eligible to vote.
* The rules and tasks that T'it'q'et, the Verifier and Ratification Officer must follow in the conduct of the land code vote.

The CRP's underlying requirement is that each Eligible Voter needs the opportunity to become informed and the opportunity for a free vote. In general, this is what the Verifier is required to confirm.

* T’ít’q’et is required to appoint an independent Verifier, and T’ít’q’et Council has appointed Hugh Taylor (from an approved list of qualified Verifiers provided by the Land Advisory Board FNLM Resource Centre).
* T’ít’q’et is required to inform its membership and Third Parties who have an interest in T’ít’q’et land about the land code process.
* T’ít’q’et is required to assist the Verifier and Ratification Officer.

The Ratification Officer's Role is to

* Ensure that the vote is conducted in accordance with the terms as set out in the CRP.
* Ensure the secrecy of the ballot.
* Ensure that any elector who may want to participate in the vote is provided with an equal opportunity to do so.
* Maintain an impeccable paper trail of all voting related activities.
* Be responsible for all information and documents related to the actual conduct of the vote.

The Ratification Officer gets appointed during the Community Ratification Process development phase.

PreVote Tasks:

* Appoint a Ratification Officer
* Community Ratification Process document, Land Code text and Individual Agreement approvals and legal review of these documents.
* Confirm initial list of Eligible Voters and develop a List of Voters.
* Designate Vote Date and confirm Ballot wording.
* Notice of Vote developed and sent out to T’ít’q’et members.
* Ballot wording finalized, ballot boxes and other related items secured.
* Appoint Council representative to deal with procedural amendments.
* Information packages developed and sent to T’ít’q’et members.

Information packages will be developed and sent to all members current addresses to ensure that

* All on-reserve and off-reserve Eligible Voters have the opportunity to make an informed decision, by becoming knowledgeable, on whether to approve or reject the T’ít’q’et Land Code and Individual Agreement.
* Third Parties who have an interest in T’ít’q’et land feel secure in their interest and are aware of the change in reserve land governance and are provided a copy of the proposed land code.

T’ít’q’et must create and provide the following information packages:

* Eligible Voters information package
* Eligible Voters Registration Package
* Third Parties (non-members) who have an interest in T’ít’q’et land
* Canada

Each T’ít’q’et Eligible Voter should be informed about the land code and Individual Agreement. Information packages can be hand delivered or mailed out to on reserve T’ít’q’et members and mailed out to off-reserve members.

Any T’ít’q’et member can request a copy of the Ratification documents and the background documents (Framework Agreement, First Nations Land Management Act) at the P'egp'ig'lha Community Centre.

The Verifier needs to confirm that Third Parties have been notified. Third Parties are individuals or organizations that have leases or right of ways or other types of agreements regarding T’ít’q’et land. For example, Aspen Planers (veneer plant on IR #1), Telus has a phone line running through IR #5.

Ratification Officer duties include

* Appointing Assistant Ratification Officer
* Post notice of votes
* Prepares ballots
* Designates polling places

Voting procedures overseen by the Ratification Officer are as follows

* Opening the polling stations and seals ballot box
* Ensures voters are registered, if not, the RO can register them on vote day
* Gives Registered Voters a ballot
* If online voting is used, keeps up to date on members who have voted
* Declared poll is closed at designated time
* Opens all ballot boxes including mail-in ballots.
* Counts the ballots and rejects ballots if they are spoiled

The Verifier Hugh Taylor completes the post vote work as follows

* Deal with any objection to the vote ( i.e. irregularity)
* Provide a written report on the conduct of the vote
* Confirms approval of Individual Agreement and Land Code if the members vote 'yes'

The Verifier, Ratification Officer, T’ít’q’et and Indigenous Services Canada sign a Declaration of the Land Code and Individual Agreement.

If the vote is yes, T’ít’q’et needs to be prepared for referrals from ISC and has to keep a signed copy of the Land Code and the Individual Agreement.

If the vote is no, then T’ít’q’et will remain under the Indian Act and Indigenous Services Canada will retain control over land affairs on reserve. T’ít’q’et may choose to have a second vote.

The Ratification Officer provides T’ít’q’et Council with a final report on voting summary. Then (s)he sends an original Form 12 to Verifier so the Verifier can complete their report. The Ratification Officer makes the community vote results public for the information of Eligible Voters.

If the Land Code is approved, then T’ít’q’et moves out of the Development Phase into the Operational Phase.