



ZIBI (OTTAWA/GATINEAU)

—Development and Implementation of a Community and First Nations Engagement Program for Zibi, a Redevelopment Project on the former Domtar Industrial Lands—



PACE
PUBLIC AFFAIRS
& COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PACE was initially retained by the Windmill Development Group in the fall of 2013 to assist with public consultations in support of an application to redevelop the former Domtar industrial properties on the Outaouais River.

The objective was to introduce the redevelopment project to the broader public and to stakeholders in Ottawa, Ontario and Gatineau, Quebec, and to solicit ideas for how to create a vibrant, sustainable development while respecting the culture of the three founding peoples: First Nations, the French, the English.

The strategy focused on creating a positive “social contract” on the projects with members of the public, by encouraging as much participation in the development's visioning process as possible, leading up to a community engagement event in December 2013. The event was positively received and well attended, with over 880 participants representing residents and businesses from both sides of the River; community groups; Indigenous Peoples; heritage and conservation organizations; environmental groups; municipal councillors and other elected officials.

The December 2013 event served to highlight the need for a distinct program to engage with Indigenous Peoples, as this was the first time a private developer had ever actively collaborated with Algonquin Anishinabe communities within Traditional Unceded Territories in Ottawa and Gatineau. PACE was retained to help develop and implement an innovative First Nations Engagement Program that proactively reached out to regional Algonquin communities (such as the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation) to seek out their involvement in various aspects of Zibi, and invite them as direct partners in long-term benefits from the project.

While complex and at times controversial, the program has resulted in a number of precedent-setting accomplishments with the Algonquin Anishinabe community, including partnerships with Pikwàkanagàn and other Algonquin communities, Algonquin private companies, individuals and First Nations organizations.