



Assembly of First Nations (AFN)

Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET)

First Nations Agreement Holders' National Annual Meeting

September 1-3, 2026 • Calgary, AB

MEETING PROGRAM





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MEETING INFORMATION

Welcome Reception – September 1, 2026, 6:00PM – 9:00PM MDT

Please join us for our Welcome Reception taking place in the Oak Room at the Fairmont Palliser. The reception will feature music by Double Rider Band, a rock trio from Siksika Nation, Alberta (<https://www.doublerider.rocks/>). Enjoy some refreshments, greet old friends, meet new friends and obtain your registration badge on-site at the Reception.

Meeting Venue: Fairmont Palliser

The Fairmont Palliser is located at 133 9 Ave SW, Calgary, Alberta. To view floor maps of meeting spaces at this venue, please refer to Appendix A of this document.

Delegate Breakfast, Lunch and Breaks

Please join us in the Oval Room for breakfast, lunch and breaks each day of the meeting.

Recommended Guidelines for COVID-19 and Other Illnesses

To help minimize the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses during the meeting and to limit exposure to our Elders and communities when we return home, please refrain from attending any meeting activity if you are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms. As good practice in large groups, we recommend that you wash your hands frequently and/or use hand sanitizer.

Meeting Evaluation Surveys

At the end of every day, the AFN will provide a QR Code link or an Email Link to an evaluation forum for all attendees. Your feedback will help to improve the planning of our future events, so please keep an eye out for a QR Code on the Mainstage or an email after the meeting.



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Day 1 – September 1, 2026

Time	Activity	Location
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Registration Open	Fairmont Palliser Lobby – 1 st Floor
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Welcome Reception	Oak Room

Day 2 – September 2, 2026

Time	Activity	Location
8:00 a.m.	Registration Open	Fairmont Palliser Lobby – 1 st Floor
7:30 a.m.	Breakfast	Oval Room
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Wellness Room	Birch Room
8:00 a.m.	Welcoming Remarks - National Chief Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak - Chief Aaron Young, <i>Chiniki First Nation (Stoney Nakoda)</i> - Chief Clifford Poucette, <i>Goodstoney First Nation (Stoney Nakoda)</i> - Chief Darcy Dixon, <i>Bearspaw First Nation (Stoney Nakoda)</i> - Chief Ellery Starlight, <i>Tsuut'ina Nation (Dene)</i> - Chief Samuel Crowfoot, <i>Siksika Nation (Blackfoot)</i> - Chief Troy "Bossman" Knowlton, <i>Piikani Nation, President, Blackfoot Confederacy</i>	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
9:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	AFN Update Presenter: Benjamin Green-Stacey, <i>Director, AFN Economic Development</i>	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom



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Day 2 – September 2, 2026

Time	Activity	Location
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Disability and GBA+ <i>Presenter:</i> Marie Frawley-Henry, Sr. Policy Analyst, AFN Executive	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
10:30 am	Health Break	Oval Room
10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Overview of Concurrent Breakout Sessions <i>Facilitator: Bob Chamberlin</i> - Meaningful Industry Partnerships and Opportunities - FNHRDCQ Presents ALMASS - Inspector in a Box - Construction Workforce Outlook	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Concurrent Breakout Sessions	
	Session A Meaningful Industry Partnerships and Opportunities <i>Presenter:</i> Tribal Chiefs Employment & Training Services Association (TCETSA)	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
	Session B FNHRDCQ Presents ALMASS <i>Presenter:</i> First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Quebec (FNHRDCQ)	Lake Louis Ballroom
	Session C Inspector in a Box: Building Indigenous Workforce, Business Development, and Community Wealth Through Skills Training <i>Presenter:</i> Stan Knight	Oak Room



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Day 2 – September 2, 2026

Time	Activity	Location
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Concurrent Breakout Sessions	
	Session D Construction Workforce Outlook: Labour Demand, Major Projects, and Indigenous Participation <i>Presenter:</i> • Build Force Canada	Banff Room
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	Oval Room
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	CFT7 – Eliminating excuses in job creation and partnerships <i>Presenter:</i> • Community Futures Treaty Seven	Crystal Ballroom
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	KKETS Carpentry 403A TDA Status training and the KKETS Mindfulness Program <i>Presenter:</i> • KKETS	Crystal Ballroom
3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.	Health Break	
3:15 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.	Networking Event: ISET World Café <i>Facilitator: SITAG</i> <i>Participants: All ISETs</i> • How is this applicable to you? • How will this inform your work?	Crystal Ballroom
4:15 p.m.	Closing Remarks <i>Facilitator: Bob Chamberlin</i>	Crystal Ballroom
4:30 p.m.	Day 2 Adjourns	



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Day 3 – September 3, 2026

Time	Activity	Location
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Registration Open	Fairmont Palliser Lobby – 1 st Floor
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast	Oval Room
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Wellness Room	Birch Room
8:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Recap of Day 1 and Overview of Day 2 <i>Facilitator:</i> • Bob Chamberlin	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	ESDC Update <i>Description:</i> ESDC will share overall updates from their department that pertain to ISETs. <i>Presenter:</i> • Gerald Gosselin, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Partnership Connection Roundtable <i>Description:</i> Funder-recipient roundtable to highlight collaboration and mutual connection. <i>Facilitator:</i> • Bob Chamberlin	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
10:30 am	Health Break	Oval Room
10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	ISET Evaluation Report <i>Description:</i> ESDC's Evaluation Directorate will share their findings from the Main ISET Evaluation Report and the Distinctions-based ISET Evaluation Report. <i>Presenter:</i> • Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) • Evaluation Directorate ◦ Lynne Lapointe ◦ KC Boismier ◦ Francois Leferriere	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom



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Day 3 – September 3, 2026

Time	Activity	Location
11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Partnership Connection Roundtable <i>Description:</i> Evaluators and Participants' roundtable to highlight collaboration and mutual connection. <i>Facilitator:</i> Bob Chamberlin	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	Oval Room
1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Concurrent Breakout Sessions	
	Session A Aligning Workforce Development with Major Project Opportunities <i>Presenter:</i> Mokwateh	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
	Session B Cultural Humility and the Inclusion Journey (Indigenous Inclusion in the Workplace) <i>Presenter:</i> I-Works	Lake Louis Ballroom
	Session C Building Indigenous Workforce Pathways: Community-Based Employment & Skills Training Solutions <i>Presenter:</i> JEDI	Oak Room
	Session D Growing Green Careers: How BEAHR is Building Indigenous Environmental Leadership Across Canada <i>Presenter:</i> ECO Canada	Banff Room
2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Health Break	Oval Room



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Day 3 – September 3, 2026

Time	Activity	Location
2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Plenary – From Data to Action: How Saskatchewan's ILMI Project is Strengthening First Nations Workforce Development <i>Presenter:</i> • SITAG	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Plenary – Indigenous Regional Workforce Development Roundtables: Ontario Mining and Healthcare Sectors <i>Presenter:</i> • AETS	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
4:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	Closing Remarks • Benjamin Green-Stacey, <i>AFN Economic Development</i>	Main Plenary Crystal Ballroom
4:45 p.m.	Day 3 Adjourns	



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INVITED GUESTS AND SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES



Double Rider Band

Double Rider is a rock trio from Siksika Nation, Alberta. They've played notable venues, such as the Rose and Crown in Banff, AB, and the Ship and Anchor in Calgary, AB, and have been a frequent band in the Annual Run as One Festival in Siksika Nation. In early 2020, Double Rider set out on their first tour – The First Nations Music Tour – alongside notable Indigenous Artists. In 2023, Double Rider released their long-awaited debut album, "Times of the Day," including songs written by their grandfather and original music.



Facilitator

Bob "Gyala'gameh" Chamberlin is a highly respected Indigenous leader, facilitator, and engagement professional with over two decades of experience designing and leading complex dialogue processes involving First Nations, governments, and diverse stakeholder groups. A citizen of the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis First Nation, he served as its elected Chief Councillor for fourteen years, spent ten years as Vice-President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and excels at fostering respectful, culturally safe environments that bridge diverse perspectives.

Known for a collaborative, participant-centred approach, Bob excels at navigating sensitive, high-level discussions and translating dialogue into practical, actionable recommendations. His extensive background spans critical initiatives in Indigenous rights, reconciliation, and environmental stewardship, ensuring productive engagement for initiatives.



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Welcoming Remarks

- Chief Aaron Young, *Chiniki First Nation (Stoney Nakoda)*
- Chief Clifford Poucette, *Goodstoney First Nation (Stoney Nakoda)*
- Chief Darcy Dixon, *Bearspaw First Nation (Stoney Nakoda)*
- Chief Ellery Starlight, *Tsuut'ina Nation (Dene)*
- Chief Samuel Crowfoot, *Siksika Nation (Blackfoot)*
- Chief Troy "Bossman" Knowlton, *Piikani Nation, President, Blackfoot Confederacy*

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Disability, and GBA+

- Marie Frawley-Henry, Sr. Policy Analyst, AFN

Meaningful Industry Partnerships and Opportunities

- **Rennie Houle**, Program Manager, *Tribal Chiefs Employment and Training Services Association (TCETSA)*
Rennie Houle is the Program Manager for the ISETS Department at Whitefish Lake First Nation #128, one of the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ISETS) sub-agreement holders under Tribal Chiefs Employment & Training Services Association (TCETSA). With more than 40 years of experience in employment and training, economic development, emergency management, and recreation, Rennie has dedicated his career to creating opportunities for First Nations people. He is recognized for building strong partnerships with industry, government, and community organizations that create meaningful employment opportunities and strengthen local economies. Passionate about mentorship and community development, Rennie is committed to advancing Indigenous workforce success through collaboration, innovation, and culturally grounded leadership

FNHRDCQ Presents ALMASS

- **Pierre Jalbert**, *IT Coordinator, FNHRDCQ*
Main presenter and host: Pierre Jalbert is the IT Coordinator at the FNHRDCQ and a member of the Micmac First Nation of Gespeg. Born in the easternmost coastal region of the Gaspé Peninsula in Quebec, he completed formal training at Laval University in Québec City. Pierre has worked in information technology for more than 25 years, has taught at the college level, and has been with the FNHRDCQ for the past 16 years.



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- **Ofelia Morales-Rodriguez**, *IT Support, FNHRDCQ*

Presenter: Ofelia Morales-Rodriguez has worked in IT support at the FNHRDCQ for five years. Passionate about technology, she holds a bachelor's degree in anthropology, which deepened her understanding of cultural dynamics, and has also pursued studies in information technology to strengthen her knowledge of virtualization. Ofelia brings together technical expertise and a strong focus on human relations.

- **Annie Cyr**, *Executive Committee Member, FNHRDCQ*

Presenter: Annie Cyr has worked in employability support and human resources within Indigenous communities for more than 25 years. She represents her Innu community, Innu Takuaikan Uashat mak Mani-utenam, at the FNHRDCQ and currently serves on the executive committee, contributing extensive administrative knowledge and experience as an ALMASS super user.

- **Wanda Lafontaine**, *Interim Executive Director, FNHRDCQ*

Presenter: **Wanda Lafontaine** — *Interim Executive Director, FNHRDCQ*

A member of the Anishinabeg Nation of Lac Simon, Wanda Lafontaine has worked with the First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Quebec (FNHRDCQ) for more than 20 years. She applies her expertise in workforce development, strategic partnerships, and organizational governance to support employability and socioeconomic development for First Nations in Quebec. Recognized for her mobilizing leadership and deep understanding of Indigenous realities, she fosters collaboration among communities, governments, and employers with a focus on self-determination and sustainable development.

Inspector in a Box: Building Indigenous Workforce, Business Development, and Community Wealth Through Skills Training

- **Stan Knight**, *Founder & Principle Consultant, Zachary Knight Enterprises*

Stan Knight is the Founder and Principal Consultant of Zachary Knight Enterprises and the creator of Inspector in a Box (IIAB), an Indigenous-developed workforce and capacity-building program. A member of Opaskwayak Cree Nation, he has more than 25 years of experience in housing inspections, insurance claims, construction estimating, and Indigenous housing and infrastructure consulting. Stan is also the Founder of the Knight Myers Memorial Foundation, which supports Indigenous scholarships, business incubation, and access to capital for Indigenous entrepreneurs. His work focuses on creating Indigenous-owned solutions that strengthen local economies through employment, entrepreneurship, capacity building, and community wealth creation.



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Construction Workforce Outlook: Labour Demand, Major Projects, and Indigenous Participation

- **Shaily Allison**, *Manager, Marketing & Engagement, Build Force Canada*

Shaily Allison is Manager, Marketing and Engagement at BuildForce Canada. She helps lead engagement, marketing, knowledge mobilization, and the promotion of BuildForce Canada's labour market information and workforce development tools. In 2026, she presented at the ISET National Conference in Ottawa and participated in the ISET Symposium in Vancouver, engaging with First Nations and Indigenous workforce development leaders and organizations.

- **James Raiswell**, *Director of Communications, Build Force Canada*

James Raiswell is Director of Communications at BuildForce Canada. He has more than two decades of experience as a writer, editor, and communications professional serving the construction industry in Canada and the United States. He leads communications related to BuildForce Canada's labour market intelligence program, helping translate complex labour market and economic data into accessible insights for industry, government, workforce organizations, and training partners.

CFT7 – Eliminating excuses in job creation and partnerships

- **Rob St. Denis, Sr. Labor Market Relations Consultant, CFT7**

Rob St Denis is a registered member of Beardys & Okemasis Cree Nation. Rob has been living and working in Treaty 7 since 1998 working with CFT7, PriariesCan and recently came back to CFT7. Rob completed a bachelors in Business Administration from the U of Lethbridge and a Masters in Public

KKETS Carpentry 403A TDA Status training and the KKETS Mindfulness Program

- **Roxann Sapwaykeesic**, *ISET Manager, KKETS*

Roxann Shapwaykeesic was born and raised in Thunder Bay Ontario and is a member of Eabametoong First Nation. She's worked with Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services (KKETS) serving the Matawa communities since August 2020 and has been managing the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program since July 2022.

Her career path has always served the Nishnawbe Aski Nation communities of Northwestern Ontario through supportive roles in education and training, skilled trades, communications, and sports and wellness.

- **David Neegan**, *Executive Director, KKETS*

Dave Neegan is a member of Constance Lake First Nation and was raised in his family's traditional territory along the Missinaibi River in Northern Ontario. In addition to his traditional upbringing, David pursued higher education at Lakehead University, the University of Guelph, and the University of



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Fredericton, where he is currently completing his Master of Business Administration (MBA) and is expected to graduate in early 2027. Throughout his educational and professional journey, he has had the privilege of learning from many highly respected Cree and Ojibway Elders across Northern Ontario. Their teachings have profoundly influenced his leadership philosophy and are now integrated into the programs, organizational culture, and staff development practices of Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment & Training Services (KKETS), where he serves as Executive Director in Thunder Bay.

ISET World Café

- **Allison Bear**, *Vice-President, SITAG*

A nêhiyaw (Plains Cree) member of the Ochapowace Nation on Treaty 4 territory, Allison Bear lives in Saskatoon.

As a residential school survivor, Allison brings powerful lived experience and a profound understanding of the systemic, personal and intergenerational barriers that First Nations continue to navigate. This lived knowledge shapes her leadership with authenticity, empathy and a deep commitment to shifting systems from simply addressing barriers to actively creating spaces of belonging.

Supporting a regional co-ordination team as Vice-president of the Saskatchewan Indian Training Assessment Group (SITAG), Allison brings a strong Nation-based, community-centred perspective to her transformational leadership. Grounded in relationship-building, accountability and a long-term vision for generational impact, she provides oversight to a dedicated team supporting 39 sub-agreement holders across Saskatchewan's First Nation–distinction Indigenous Skills and Employment

ESDC Update

- **Gerald Gosselin**, *Directeur General, Indigenous Affairs Directorate, ESDC*

ISET Evaluation Reporting

- **Francois Laferriere**, *Lead Evaluator, ESDC*
- **Lynn Lapointe**, *Evaluator, ESDC*

From Data to Action: How Saskatchewan's ILMI Project is Strengthening First Nations Workforce Development

- **Yildiray Sahin**, *Data Analyst Manager, SITAG*

Yildiray Sahin is a Data Analyst Manager with the Saskatchewan Indian Training Assessment Group (SITAG), where he leads data collection, analysis, and reporting for the Indigenous Labour Market Information (ILMI) project. He holds an MA in Economics from the University of Saskatchewan, with a specialization in data analysis and labour economics. Prior to SITAG, he conducted research at the



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Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy on labour supply, youth employment, and behavioural policy, and worked as an economic research analyst on fiscal and trade policy. His work at SITAG spans survey design, quantitative analysis, and community-level workforce reporting

Building Indigenous Workforce Pathways: Community-Based Employment & Skills Training Solutions

- **Nisa Kennedy**, *Workforce Development Manager, JEDI*

The Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI) is an Indigenous, non-profit organization that advances Indigenous participation in New Brunswick's economy through partnerships with Indigenous communities, governments, and industry. Nisa Kennedy, a proud Wolastoqey woman from Sitsansisk First Nation, serves as Workforce Development Manager. With experience as Provincial Indigenous Employment Coordinator and Acting Chief Executive Officer, she is dedicated to advancing Indigenous workforce and economic development. Nisa is known for her collaborative, community-focused leadership, building strong partnerships and supporting initiatives that create meaningful, long-term opportunities for Indigenous communities across New Brunswick.

Cultural Humility and the Inclusion Journey (Indigenous Inclusion in the Workplace)

- **Kathleen Sawdo**, *Executive Director, I-Works*

Kathleen Sawdo, CIHRP, THRP, is Executive Director of Indigenous Works HRD and Kocihta, national Indigenous-led organizations advancing workforce inclusion and economic reconciliation across Canada. Anishinaabe from Lac Des Mille Lacs First Nation in Treaty 3 territory, she brings over 20 years of experience in Indigenous workforce inclusion and HR/Business leadership and has developed cultural safety training programs for health and academic institutions. Kathleen holds a mini-MBA from Schulich School of Business. She is a knowledge keeper within her own family and community, and grounds her work in Anishinaabe ways of knowing and being.

Aligning Workforce Development with Major Project Opportunities

- **Jesse McCormick**, *Senior Advisor, Mokwateh*

Jesse McCormick is a Senior Advisor at Mokwateh, an Indigenous-led national consultancy supporting Indigenous groups, corporations, and governments in building successful relationships. He has advised on First Nations participation in major project development, Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, federal environmental assessment reform, and the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. Jesse also practices law with Pape Salter Teillet LLP, supporting First Nations on major project matters. A proud citizen of the Anishinabek Nation and Oneida Nation (Wolf Clan), Jesse is committed to advancing reconciliation through the implementation of rights, treaties, and responsibilities.



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Growing Green Careers: How BEAHR is Building Indigenous Environmental Leadership Across Canada

- **Devant Maharaj**, *Director of Professional Services, ECO Canada*

Dr. Devant Maharaj is Director of Professional Services & ESG at ECO Canada, where he leads national Indigenous environmental training initiatives, including the BEAHR program, alongside ESG strategy, blue economy partnerships, international developmental projects and workforce development. He holds a PhD in Leadership, Entrepreneurship & Innovation (University of Trinidad and Tobago), an MBA (Anglia Ruskin University, UK), and a BComm (University of Calgary). With over two decades of senior public- and private-sector leadership experience, including service as a Cabinet Minister in Trinidad and Tobago, he brings deep expertise in program design, cross-sector partnerships, and building inclusive career pathways for Indigenous communities.

Indigenous Regional Workforce Development Roundtables: Ontario Mining and Healthcare Sectors

- **John DeGiacomo**, *Executive Director, AETS*

Over thirty years of management experience in the education and training sector, has served him well in the private, public and not for profit sector. As Executive Director, John manages human resource development programs and services to on and off reserve First Nation Citizens of nine participating First Nations Communities. Prior to working at AETS, John led successful career services and new partnership initiatives at post-secondary institutions. John remains active as a volunteer on several boards and has completed a certificate of Indigenous Leadership, Governance and Management as well as Mental Health First Aid and Personality Dimensions.

- **Austin Hracs**, *Director, Strategic Partnerships and Accounts, Signal 49 Research*

Austin Hracs is the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Accounts at Signal49 Research. He works with leaders across government, post-secondary institutions, and industry to unlock the value of high-frequency labour market data. By combining emerging datasets with forecasts and traditional analysis, Austin helps decision-makers develop better tools, generate sharper insights, and strengthen Canada's workforce system.



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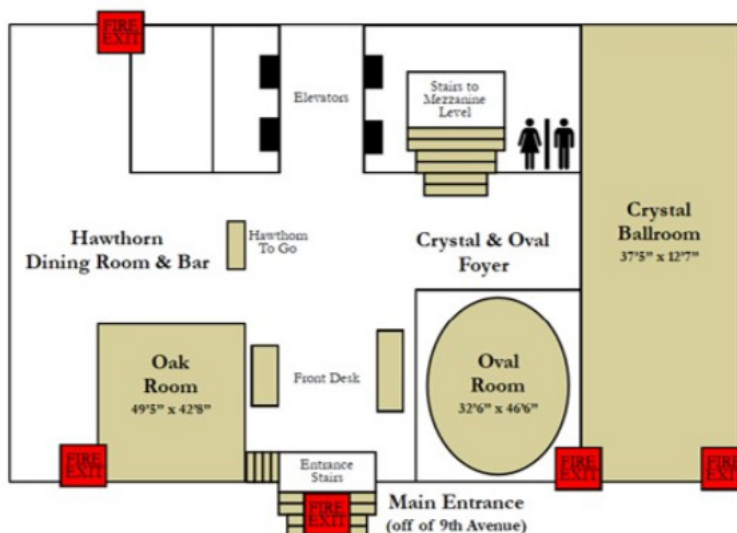


APPENDIX A: FLOOR PLANS

Room Designations:

Sept. 1	Sept. 2-3	Sept. 2-3	Sept. 2-3	Sept. 2-3	Sept. 2-3
Opening Reception – Oak Room	ISET Main Meeting – Crystal Ballroom	Breakout 1 – Lake Louis Room	Breakout 2 – Oak Room	Breakout 3 – Banff Room	Wellness Room – Birch Room

Lobby Level



Mezzanine Level

