

Cherie Brant

Partner and National Co-Leader, Indigenous Law

T 416.367.6570
F 416.367.6749
Toronto
CBrant@blg.com
LinkedIn

Indigenous Law
Corporate Commercial
Energy – Power
Commercial Real Estate
Public Policy & Government Relations
Storage
Indigenous Power
Renewable Energy
Data Centres & Digital Infrastructure

Cherie has an Indigenous law and commercial practice across a wide variety of sectors, including major energy infrastructure, transmission and mining projects. She also works directly with First Nations organizations to advise on economic development activities including project development and financing for major projects. She is also a trusted advisor to developers, borrowers, lenders and governments as they navigate complex permitting and approvals where projects may impact aboriginal rights and interests. Always pushing boundaries, Cherie will often provide strategic advice to governments and other authorities seeking to address barriers to participation faced by First Nations communities in the broader economy.

Industry clients in the natural resource, energy and infrastructure sectors will seek Cherie's counsel when developing projects or partnerships with Indigenous groups and addressing constitutionally protected interests of the Indigenous nations with which Canada shares its land and jurisdiction.

As lead counsel to the First Nations Energy Alliance (a consortium of twenty First Nations) on the Integrated Power System Plan review before the Ontario Energy Board, her counsel was instrumental in raising Crown consultation requirements on the provincial energy plan and promoting Aboriginal participation models for renewable energy procurement.

In 2016, Cherie was retained as lead counsel by the regional government for all First Nations in Ontario to lead on multiple transactions arising out of the privatization of Hydro One Limited. One of the largest limited partnerships among First Nations in Canada was created in 2018 and the entity, through its subsidiary is still considered one of the top shareholders to the company.

She is both Mohawk from Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte and Ojibway from Wikwemkoong Unceded Indian Reserve.

In 2017, Cherie received the Lexpert Zenith Award, a national award recognizing women's contributions in the law. In 2012, she was named one of Lexpert's "Rising Stars: Leading Lawyers Under 40."

Cherie is a member of the firm's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) initiative.

Experience

- Co-counsel on behalf of a 10 member Indigenous-led consortium for up to 72 Indigenous communities proposing to partner on existing major infrastructure in the natural gas space for assets principally located in Alberta.
- Acting on behalf of a government owned entity that is proposing to facilitate equity participation for up to 120 First Nations (including Metis groups) in British Columbia and Alberta on a major linear pipeline project that is currently in operation.
- Acting for a leading Canadian power producer on Canada's largest battery storage project (250MW/10000 MWh lithium- ion) currently under construction, involving a First Nation in southern Ontario and other commercial partners.
- Lead Counsel on behalf of a commercial partnership involving up to 7 First Nations on proposed equity participation for Ontario's first small modular reactor project proposed to be located in southern Ontario.
- Counsel on the development of the lending program for the Indigenous Community Infrastructure Initiative (ICII) with the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) and have since completed due diligence and duty to consult advisory on multiple projects in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Québec, Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Lead Counsel to Ontario Chiefs-in-Assembly on the creation of Ontario First Nation Sovereign Wealth LP, a partnership among 129 First Nations in Ontario, on the negotiation to acquire 2.4 per cent of Hydro One Limited from the Province of Ontario and obtain a significant seed capital contribution for long-term wealth creation.
- Special Counsel to a major transmission developer in the U.S. on a proposed 1000 MW transmission line for Canada/U.S. on all aspects of the duty to consult process including equity participation and financing.
- Completed more than 3000 MW of limited partnerships for or on behalf of First Nations in Ontario and Alberta and more than 680 MW of installed capacity for First Nations.
- Represented multiple developers and Ontario First Nations (Walpole Island First Nation, Alderville First Nation) in the structuring of Indigenous held entities to bid into the Ontario Independent Electricity Systems Operator (“IESO”) expedited battery storage facility RFP (E-LTI) in February 2023 resulting in multiple bids in excess of 900 MW of proposed storage projects.
- Counsel to developers, municipalities and Indigenous groups across Canada on renewable energy, electricity and transmission projects, among other construction projects and advise on duty to consult and strategic partnerships.
- Counsel to First Nations intervenors on East-West Tie proceeding to develop a 450 km transmission line in Northern Ontario.

- Counsel on joint venture agreements among Indigenous groups and infrastructure companies for competitive procurement processes in mining, construction and infrastructure.
- Counsel to First Nations on land and retail development projects involving leasing, financing and establishing franchises on First Nations lands.
- Counsel to an Aboriginal Housing Fund that administers multi-residential development loans for Indigenous projects in the Greater Toronto Area.
- Counsel on several commercial financings for multi-residential, industrial and commercial properties ($5M to $50M).
- Borrower counsel on several loan refinancing ranging for industrial and commercial properties across Ontario ($5M to $80M).

Insights & Events

- Author, "Ontario moves ahead on subsea Toronto Third Line", BLG Article, January 2026
- Author, "Federal Budget 2025: Energy, infrastructure, and Indigenous funding initiatives", BLG Article, November 2025
- Author, "Top 10 issues for First Nation councils when considering per capita distribution (PCD) processes", BLG Article, April 2025
- Author, "ESG at BLG: Lessons learned from inside the ESG journey at Canada’s law firm", BLG Article, April 2024
- Author, "Energy planning and energy transition: 5 perspectives on Ontario's clean energy opportunity", BLG Article, February 2024
- Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Trends: Why it’s important and what you need to know, BLG Perspective, June 2023
- Author, "Leading at the crossroads: Indigenous women leaders on the fight for an equitable future", BLG Article, May 2022
- Author, "Indigenous-led Clean Fuels Program", BLG Article, April 2022
- Co-presenter, "Practical Insights on Indigenous Law & Integrating Indigenous Matters into ESG ," May 2021.
- Speaker, "Perspectives on First Nations Issues and Canadian Energy Projects, " BLG presentation, April 2, 2020.
- Presenter, "Building Blocks for Establishing Governance, Jurisdiction and Band Policy," National Indigenous Cannabis & Hemp Conference, November 2019.
- Presenter, “Preparing for Economic Development & Renewable Energy,” G4 Stoney-Nakoda & Tsuut-ina Tribal Council, October 2019.
- Presenter, “Catalyst 20/20 Legal Aspects of Project Financing For Aboriginal Groups,” July 2019.
- Moderator, “Managing Community Policy, Removing Risk,” National Indigenous Cannabis and Hemp Conference, February 2019
- Presenter, “Creating Lasting Working Relationships with Indigenous People,” Wadell Phillips CLE 2019, February, 2019
- Presenter, “Preparing First Nations lands for Energy Development,” Energizing Atlantic First Nations Clean Energy Conference, February 2019
- Presenter, “Preparing for Energy Partnerships,” Integrated Electricity System Operator (IESO) annual conference, October 2018
- Presenter, Legal Aspects of Project Financing for Indigenous groups, Catalyst 20/20, July 2018
- Presenter, “First Nations Land Tenure Matters,” Ontario Bar Association, Indigenous Law Issues Conference, November 2017
- Presenter, “Legal Aspects of Project Financing for Indigenous groups,” Catalyst 20/20, July 2017

- Presenter, “Commercial Development and Financing Projects on First Nations Lands,” CANDO 2016 Conference, October 2016
- Presenter, “Economic Development Corporations Legal Review,” Iroquois Caucus Economic Summit, October 2016
- Presenter, “Legal Aspects of Project Financing for Indigenous Groups,” Catalyst 20/20, September 2016
- Presenter, “Franchise Opportunities on First Nations Lands,” Canadian Franchise Association Conference, April 2016
- Presenter, “Nipissing First Nation Energy Development,” AFOA Canada Nation Conference, February 2016

Beyond Our Walls

Professional Involvement

- Member, Board of Directors, Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR)
- Independent Director of Hydro One Limited/Hydro One Networks Inc.
- Independent Director of TD Toronto-Dominion Bank (TD Bank)
- Member, Canadian Bar Association

Community Involvement

- Volunteer Member, Indigenous Clean Energy Network
- Volunteer Member, Canadian Club of Toronto
- Volunteer Member, Indigenous Advisory Board, Centennial College

Awards & Recognition

- Recognized in the 2027 edition (and since 2021) of *The Best Lawyers in Canada* (Aboriginal Law/Indigenous Law, Corporate and Commercial Litigation, Energy Law and Real Estate Law).
- Recognized in the 2027 edition (and since 2025) of *Chambers Canada – Canada's Leading Lawyers for Business* (Aboriginal Law (Nationwide - Canada)).
- Recognized in the 2027 edition (and since 2026) of *The Legal 500* (Indigenous Law).
- Recognized in the 2026 edition (and since 2024) of *Chambers Global – The World's Leading Lawyers for Business* (Aboriginal Law).
- *Distinguished Alumni Award,* University of Toronto, 2023
- Lexpert Zenith Award, a national award recognizing women's contributions in the law
- Lexpert's "Rising Stars: Leading Lawyers Under 40.
- Recognized in the 2024 edition of *Lexpert Special Edition: Energy and Mining*
- Selected as an "Excellence Awardee" for Female Trailblazer of the Year (Private Practice) at the 2023 Canadian Law Awards
- *The Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory* for Indigenous Law and Corporate Commercial Law (since 2021)
- *Lexpert Special Edition: M&A* (since 2026)
- *Lexpert Special Edition: Infrastructure* (since 2022)
- *Lexpert Special Edition: Energy,* (since 2022)
- *Lexpert Special Edition: Agribusiness and Cannabis 2020*
- *Lexpert Special Edition: Energy 2020*
- *Lexpert Leading Lawyer for Aboriginal Law* (since 2013)
- *Lexpert Leading Lawyer for Energy Law* (since 2015)

- *Lexpert Zenith Award Winner*, 2017
- *Lexpert Rising Stars*, Leading Lawyers Under 40, 2012

Bar Admission & Education

- Ontario, 2003

- JD, University of Toronto, 2002
- BA, Environmental Studies, Urban and Regional Planning Program, University of Waterloo, 1998

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