

**MUNICIPAL ENGAGEMENT WITH URBAN ABORIGINAL  
COMMUNITIES IN EIGHT CANADIAN CITIES: LESSONS FOR METRO  
VANCOUVER REGION**

by

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We accept this project as conforming  
to the required standard

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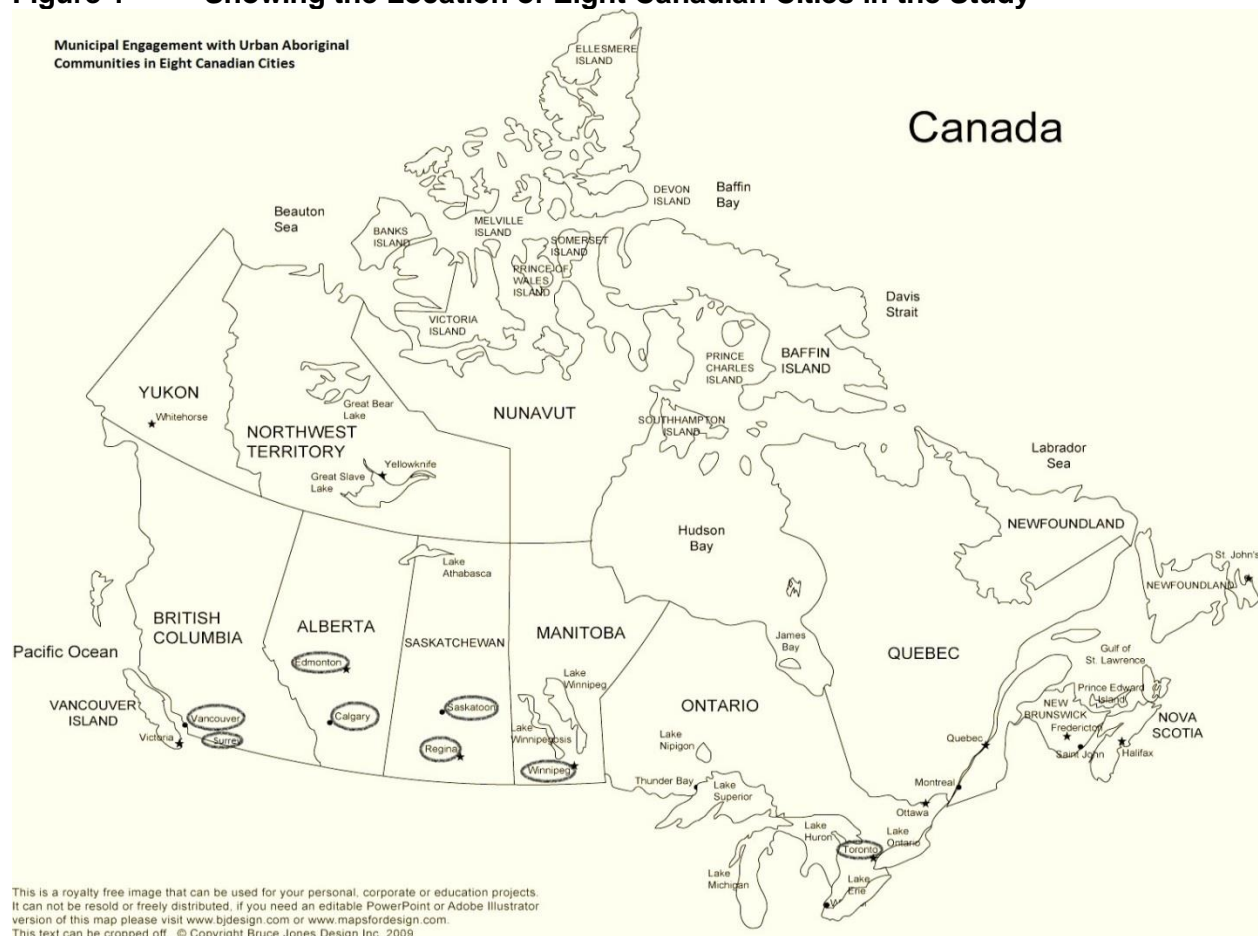
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## I. Introduction

This project examines municipal engagement initiatives in eight Canadian municipalities – Vancouver and Surrey, British Columbia, Edmonton and Calgary, Alberta, Saskatoon and Regina, Saskatchewan, Winnipeg, Manitoba and Toronto, Ontario (see Figure 1) – with their respective urban Aboriginal communities. Research was conducted through document review and key informant interviews with 12 municipal staff. The overarching goal of this study is two-fold – one objective is to provide examples of municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities for local governments considering how or where to begin the process of

**Figure 1** Showing the Location of Eight Canadian Cities in the Study



Source: Brock University Map Library<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Modified from: St. Catharines Downtown [computer file]. (no date). St. Catharines, Ontario: Brock University Map Library. Available: Brock University Map Library Controlled Access  
<http://www.brocku.ca/maplibrary/maps/outline/local/stcathDT.jpg>

engagement with their urban Aboriginal community and the second objective is to make recommendations for Metro Vancouver to provide leadership for its member municipalities on the issue of municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities.

This project began its life as a research contract for the Social Policy Division of the Community Services Group (City of Vancouver) in 2011. The objective of the research contract was to update an existing policy document through contacting municipal staff in seven<sup>2</sup> Canadian municipalities and to review publicly available documents and information. This professional planning project connected to that original research contract and has updated the information collected in 2011 and aims to identify forms of municipal engagement practices with urban Aboriginal communities in eight Canadian cities, to highlight various municipal engagements and to make recommendations for Metro Vancouver to support member municipalities to develop or enhance their municipal engagement plans with urban Aboriginal communities and to actively collaborate or cooperate when municipal boundaries are not the same as community boundaries..

It is hoped that the information and analysis in this report will assist municipalities across Canada as they develop their community engagement plans for their urban Aboriginal community and contribute to the transformation of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relationships through local government initiatives.

## **A. Context of the Project Problem**

Canada is highly urbanized country. In 2011, more than 27 million Canadians (81%) lived in urban areas, a reversal from over a century ago. Similarly, the urban Aboriginal population has increased. In the 1940s, almost all Aboriginal people lived on reserves or in rural areas. By 2006, the Canadian census showed that over 54 percent lived in urban centres that were home to more than 100,000 residents.

The Aboriginal population now accounts for almost 4 per cent of the total population of Canada. The highest concentration of Aboriginal peoples is in Nunavut (85%); Northwest Territories (50.3%); Yukon Territory (25.1%); Manitoba (15.5%) and Saskatchewan (14.9%). The largest

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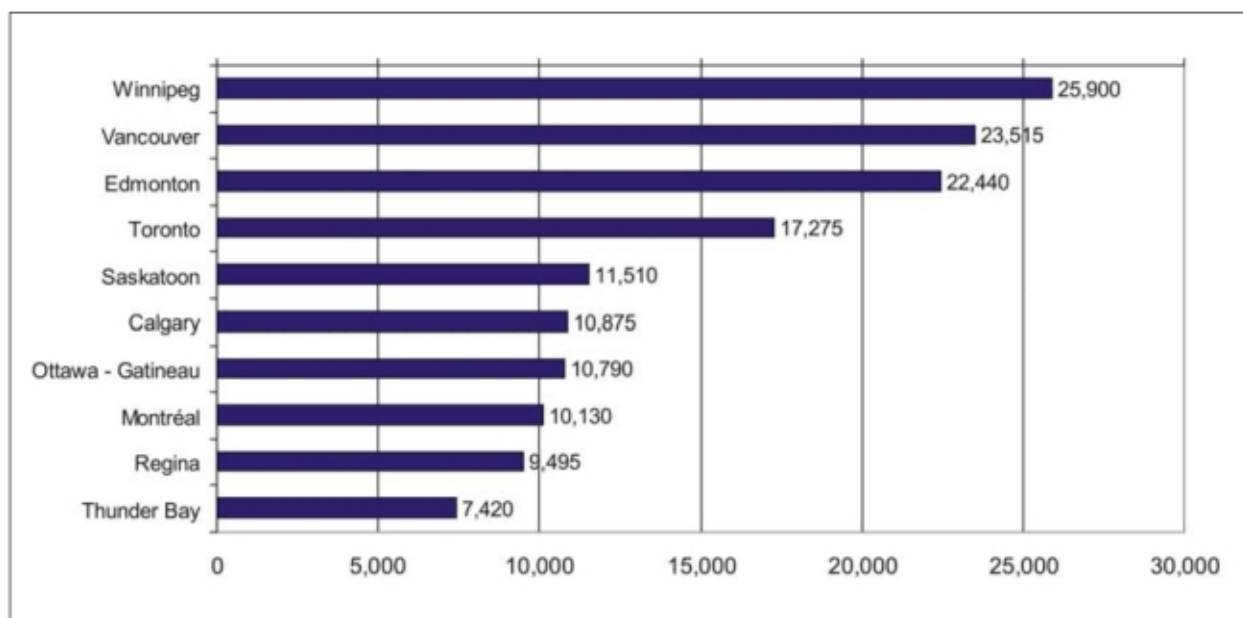
<sup>2</sup> As the City of Vancouver was the client for the research contract, there was no need to collect information about the City's municipal engagement with the urban Aboriginal community. This city was added during the development of the professional project.



numbers of Aboriginal people lived in Ontario and the western provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia).

The cities chosen for the study are in the five provinces that together, have the majority of the Aboriginal population in Canada. As shown in Figure 2, the cities selected for the study are also those with the highest percentage of urban aboriginal populations.

**Figure 2 Top 10 census metropolitan areas (1) with the largest number of First Nations people, 2006**



**Note:**

1. A census metropolitan area (CMA) has a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Unlike other 'newer' communities (immigrants/refugees) that make cities their home very little attention has been paid to urban aboriginal communities. In 2010, Environics Institute for Survey Research completed the second major study of urban aboriginal peoples in Canada. One finding of importance to municipalities is that urban Aboriginal people are not new in cities and that they report themselves to be residents of their city, it is 'home', although they may maintain a connection to their 'home community' (p. 8). This connection to the city in which they are resident also means that they wish to participate fully by accessing municipal government and services and by providing their input about areas of concern. But many

municipalities in Canada have not given thought to community-specific engagement or implemented any community engagement initiatives with and/or for the urban Aboriginal community.

## **B. Statement of the Research Problem**

In-migration of residents is often regarded by cities, of any size, as positive. It adds to the population, stimulates economic activity, increases the tax base and adds the diversity of the community. Provincial and Federal governments provide funding for programs and services for new residents from other countries or for refugees they resettle and funding for education, health care or other social services is available for residents from other provinces. However, no similar funding is available from the federal government for programs and services for the increasing number of Aboriginal people who live off reserve.

Despite the growing numbers of urban Aboriginal people residing in their cities, municipalities are unsure how to engage with this population of residents. Often Aboriginal people are referenced within engagement activities with 'diverse communities' or 'cultural diversity committee or programs'. This perspective of Aboriginal people as just another 'ethnic' group to support or celebrate does not understand the unique historical context of Aboriginal people within Canadian society (Peters, 2005, 331). Aboriginal people have not come from away, like so many Canadian residents. When Aboriginal people migrate to the city, often they are still on the traditional lands of their First Nation or they recognize that they are entering the traditional lands of another First Nation.

When municipal governments do engage with the urban Aboriginal community they do so individually – municipality by municipality – despite having a shared history with the First Nations in the region or province. In provinces where land claims are unresolved, the traditional territory of neighbouring First Nations may overlap the boundaries of many neighbouring municipalities. Two of the municipalities included in this project are in Metro Vancouver – a regional body representing 24 local authorities in the southwestern part of British Columbia – a region which is home to 11 First Nations:

Tsawwassen First Nation (a treaty First Nation member of Metro Vancouver)

Hwiltsum First Nation

Katzie First Nation

Kwantlen First Nation

Kwikwetlem First Nation

Matsqui First Nation

Musqueam Indian Band

Qayqayt First Nation

Semiahmoo First Nation

Squamish Nation

Tsleil-Waututh Nation

Metro Vancouver municipalities encounter similar issues and questions with regards to engagement with their growing urban Aboriginal populations. Some municipalities in the region have no engagement plan for this community despite having robust engagement plans for their increasingly diverse immigrant populations. Metro Vancouver can play a leadership role, at a regional level, and provide the support and impetus required for the region's municipalities to begin to transform relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents and the relationship between the municipal governments, regional authorities and the urban Aboriginal community.

### **C. Project Goals and Objectives**

The project's main goal is to contribute to a transformation of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relationships through improved strategies of municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities. The more specific project objectives are:

1. To provide examples of municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities for local governments as they design their community engagement plans with/for their urban Aboriginal community and
2. To make recommendations for Metro Vancouver to support member municipalities to develop or enhance their municipal engagement plans with urban Aboriginal communities and to actively collaborate or cooperate when municipal boundaries are not the same as community boundaries.

It is hoped that by fulfilling these objectives, this project could lead to more municipalities in Metro Vancouver choosing to begin engagement efforts with their urban Aboriginal communities and to a new initiative by Metro Vancouver to explore the need potential and possibilities of taking a regional approach to supporting municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities. The project is also of broader significance to other Canadian municipalities that want to develop or enhance their urban Aboriginal community engagement policy/strategy/plan.

## **D. Terminology**

Canada's Constitution Act (1982) recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples: Indian, Inuit, and Métis. In this report, the terms Aboriginal and First Nations will be used interchangeably to mirror common usage. It is recognized that the two terms do not have the same definition and may not represent how the community would name itself.

The term "First Nations" has been widely used since the 1970s, replacing the word "Indian" as the preferred terms used by many First Nations in Canada. (Province of British Columbia, 2007, p. 13) First Nations also refers to the current legal term applied to Native people within the legislative and jurisdictional arenas of contemporary Canada. The phrase First Nations seems to be an active effort by the federal government to correct historical wrongs in terms of legislative terminology recognizing the chronological existence of peoples in Canada. (Dumbrill, Lee & Sammon 2005, pp.1-2)

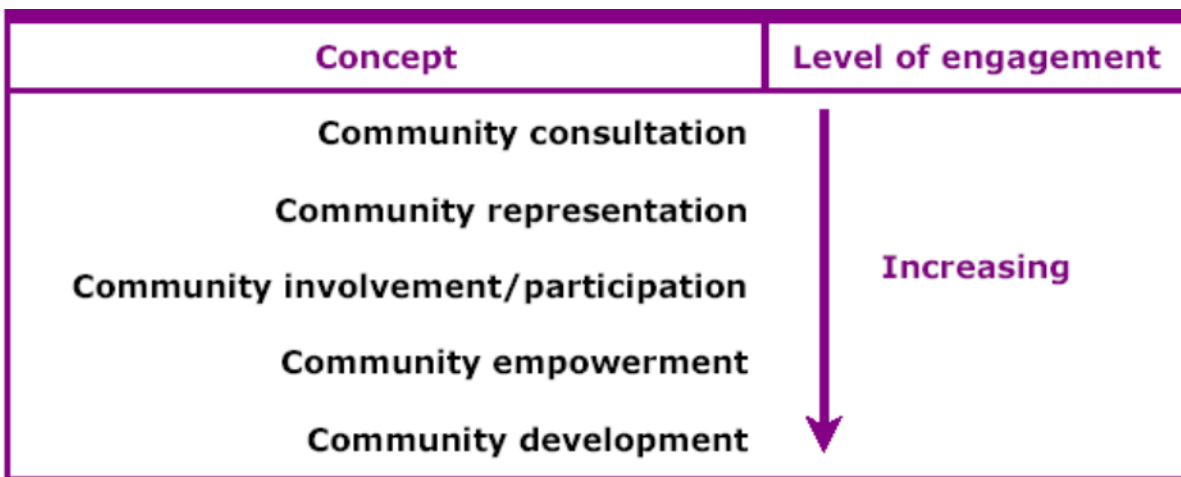
The Métis are people of mixed First Nation and European ancestry who identify themselves as distinct from other Aboriginal people. Métis history dates back to the arrival of the Europeans to the North American continent approximately 500 years ago. Currently, the federal government has supported the establishment of Métis citizenship registries in the provinces of Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. The Métis Nation in each of these provinces, known as Métis Nation Governing Members, have formalized a national citizenship definition that is defined as a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples, and is accepted by the Métis Nation. According to the 2006 Census, the Métis population is evenly distributed throughout these provinces. (Province of British Columbia, 2007, p. 13)

The Inuit/Inuk are a distinct population of Aboriginal people who live mostly in the northern parts of Canada. Although not considered Status Indians, in a 1939 ruling, "the Supreme Court stated that, constitutionally, Inuit were classified as Indians in Canada. The decision was based on the historical description of "Esquimaux" (Inuit) as an "Indian tribe" in numerous documents dating from 1760 to Confederation. Through this decision, the Canadian government became legally responsible for Inuit. Ultimately, however, no comprehensive Inuit policy was developed and the departments responsible for northern affairs also managed Inuit affairs. (Bonesteel, S., 2006, p.6)

For the purpose of this research, municipal engagement is used in the study to refer to all public participation activities designed to engage individuals, groups or whole communities to take part in their city. The term is often used interchangeably with the term community engagement, although there is a difference in the two concepts. One definition for community engagement is “people working collaboratively, through inspired action and learning, to create and realize bold visions for their common future.” (Tamarack, 2003)

The term “community engagement” encompasses a wide variety of activities each with a different level of participation, engagement or decision-making power. Community engagement frameworks are used to illustrate the different levels of participation, power and/or influence and are often represented by a continuum or a spectrum. One such framework is illustrated in Figure 3.

**Figure 3      Community Engagement Framework**



Source: Effective Interventions Unit, 2002, p. 8.

Although the Community Engagement Framework is tiered, there is no additional intrinsic value to one end of the tier or the other. Each ‘concept’ or level of engagement is useful in engaging with communities. However, if community engagement activities/initiatives are stalled at ‘Community consultation’ or ‘Community Representation’ it may be difficult to forge the ‘common future’ as envisioned in Tamarack’s definition of community engagement.

## **E. Organization of the Project Report**

The rest of the project report is organized as follows: Chapter II Research Process will describe methods, limitations and ethical considerations to the research. Chapter III Context of Urban Aboriginal Engagement in Canadian Municipalities will explore the challenges of Canadian municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities, growing urban Aboriginal population in Canada and some of the social, economic, political and cultural challenges facing urban Aboriginal communities in Canada. There are two Findings chapters – Chapter IV will look at the municipal engagement initiatives with urban Aboriginal communities and Chapter V will focus on municipal engagement initiatives with urban Aboriginal communities in Metro Vancouver. The report concludes with Chapter VI Conclusions and Recommendations.

## II. Research Process

This chapter will describe the process taken throughout the collection of information for the research and professional project and any limitations or ethical considerations.

### A. Methods

The research was conducted by reviewing resources on the internet, reviewing documents and telephone conversations with key informants in each municipality. Contact information for key informants was obtained from the previous policy document or from Baldwin Wong, Social Planner, City of Vancouver. The key informants names and contact information is in this document (Appendix A).

The information was gathered utilizing publicly available documents and reviewing the municipal websites. Key informant interviews were conducted on the phone (or using Skype) during working hours with paid staff of the municipalities. Interviewees were provided with the transcript of the interview to allow them to make changes or correct omissions. In 2013 a similar process was undertaken to update the information – document review, review of municipal and program websites and key informant interviews.

The eight municipalities were chosen for their location; their population and their urban Aboriginal community (see Table 1).

**Table 1**                      **Population Figures for Eight Canadian Cities**

Municipality	Total Population	Aboriginal Population	Percentage of Population
Vancouver	578,041	11,145	1.9
Surrey	394,980	7,800	1.9
Edmonton	730,372	38,170	5.2
Calgary	988,193	24,425	2.5
Saskatoon	202,340	19,820	9.7
Regina	179,246	16,535	9.3
Winnipeg	625,600	63,740	10.2
Toronto	2,503,281	13,605	0.5

Statistics Canada, 2006, *Data presented is based on the City, not the Metropolitan Area*

Six of the municipalities were selected by virtue of having been included in a past policy paper shared with me in confidence by a municipal staff in Vancouver. One municipality was added during the duration of the research contract in 2011. However, in choosing to utilize the research conducted for the City of Vancouver, an assessment was done to ensure the municipalities selected were the 'most likely candidates': they are located in five of Canada's provinces where a majority of the urban Aboriginal population resides; they are the largest and/or second largest municipalities in the province; they have a growing non-Aboriginal and urban Aboriginal population.

Information was gathered in five areas: initiatives, programs and services for urban Aboriginal communities; if there were staff or a dedicated unit within the municipal government that was responsible for urban Aboriginal issues/community or for acting as a bridge for urban Aboriginal communities to access other municipal initiatives or departments; committees of council - Aboriginal Advisory Committees – that advise Mayor and Council about the urban Aboriginal community or issues of interest; if Mayor and Council had made any Statement, Declaration or Accord regarding the municipal relationship with the urban Aboriginal community and lastly if the municipal government, through Mayor and Council, had entered into Memorandums of Understanding or Protocol Agreements with neighbouring First Nations' communities.

One goal of the original research was to update the original policy document. In 2008, information about municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities had been gathered and compiled for the Vancouver Social Policy Department. In 2011, key informants were asked how the situation had changed or stayed the same.

The Senior Planner at Social Policy at the City of Vancouver, who had requested the work, had provided the key informant information. All were municipal staff or consultants responsible for various levels of work with urban Aboriginal communities. The existing Aboriginal Policy document provided key informant information and many of these same informants were interviewed during the 2011 research project. If the individual contacted was no longer involved with the urban Aboriginal community, they were requested to put this researcher in contact with an appropriate staff member.

In 2011, twelve interviews were conducted – one informant in Surrey, Edmonton, Calgary and Saskatoon; two informants in Toronto and three informants each in Regina and Winnipeg. The interviews ranged from 20 minutes to 40 minutes and were conducted on the phone. One interview was conducted using Skype.



In 2013, four interviews were conducted with the same key informants in Surrey, Calgary and Regina.

In 2011 and 2013, key informants were contacted first by email offering to contact them in a way that suited them best – email, phone or Skype interview. A majority of the interviews were conducted by phone. An attachment to the email included the information that had been collected in 2008 or 2011.

Once a contact was made and an interview scheduled, I familiarized myself with the information that had been gathered in 2008. In the interview key informant would be asked about the data and requested to update, suggest anything for deletion or provide new data about programs, staff, committee, declarations or memorandums of understanding with/for urban Aboriginal communities.

The objective was to provide for Vancouver a ‘snapshot’ of the range of municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities of each case city. This was not possible in 2011 but in 2013, the snapshot of municipal engagement initiatives with urban Aboriginal communities will be shared with each key informant.

The information provided was validated with a concurrent web-based information search. No other stakeholders were contacted although if more than one municipal staff were contacted, it was possible to verify information through the second or third interview. The information compiled was sent back to the key informants to review and validate the document. The city-specific information included in this report has all been validated by each key informant (in 2011).

## **B. Limitations**

The selection of the municipalities was not based on criteria I set as part of this project research but was rather pre-determined by the original research contract with the City of Vancouver. The original research contract required that the information for seven municipalities be reviewed and updated. By not reviewing initiatives in other provinces or territories, it is possible that innovative, sustained and/or important municipal engagements with urban Aboriginal communities have been missed.

The interviews with the eight municipalities were superficial and focused on information available to the public. Future research may wish to focus on more in-depth interviews that

allow the story of municipal engagement with the urban Aboriginal community to be developed and shared.

Only eight municipalities were surveyed and only their websites and documents were reviewed and only the municipal staff of these seven cities was interviewed. By not reviewing the websites and other documents of Aboriginal organizations and not interviewing staff of Aboriginal organizations or persons from the urban Aboriginal community in each municipality or the partner organizations involved with the municipality, important perspectives were not accessed.

Between the original research for the City of Vancouver and at the time of the writing of this report, there have been many changes in municipal policy setting that could not be captured in this report. As with all governments, policies are in a constant state of flux due to new priorities of the administration and elected councils or emerging issues that present challenges not accommodated in the existing policy.

### **C. Ethical Considerations**

There were few ethical considerations for this project. The information was gathered utilizing publicly available documents and reviewing municipal websites. Interviews were conducted on the phone (or using Skype) during working hours with paid staff of the municipalities. They were given the ability to review the information compiled for their municipality.

Although the project did not go through the regular behavioural research ethics at UBC, standard research ethics were observed. Key informants were contacted at work and in the contact email were given information about the research project, how the information would be used and given explicit permission to decline to participate. Key informants were requested to provide the names and contact information for other informants who might be useful to interview for the purposes of the research. The information provided, that was not publicly available, was held in confidence. Permission to share any information was requested from each key informant.

### III. Context of Urban Aboriginal Engagement in Canadian Municipalities

In 2002, the Federal Court in *Canada v. Misquadis* defined off-reserve Aboriginal peoples as “self-organized, self-determining, and distinct communities” (Belanger 2013, 68). According to Belanger:

*“Canada v. Misquadis proclaims urban Aboriginal communities to be political communities and, in the process, establishes a legal framework to guide urban and First Nations community leaders, Canadian policy makers, and federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal officials to better determine what an urban Aboriginal community is and what it represents to the various agencies drawn into its orbit” (2013, 85).*

#### Box A 2006 Canadian Population

Total Canadian Population:  
31, 241,030 persons

Total Aboriginal Population:  
1,172,785 persons (3.8%)

*Statistics Canada, 2006*

The legislative responsibility of municipalities, as it pertains to Aboriginal people, is less than either the Provincial or Federal governments but there is a clear need for municipalities to acknowledge and create relationships with their urban Aboriginal communities and neighbouring First Nations.

This chapter will provide context to municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities by looking at the growth of the urban Aboriginal communities across Canada, the socio-economic, political and cultural challenges faced by urban Aboriginal communities; and the challenges municipalities face when engaging with urban Aboriginal communities.

#### A. Growing Urban Aboriginal Population in Canada

*“Canada is about to become a whole lot different in the next couple of generations – the Aboriginal population is growing faster than any other group of people.”*

*Waubgeshig Rice (Environics, 2010, 23)*

Although there are indicators that the Aboriginal population in Canada is increasing, these increases need to be viewed with an understanding that the census has been a crude

instrument in Canada over the decades and the results are often inaccurate when it comes to Aboriginal people.

Results from the 2006 Census of Population indicate that the number of people who identified as Aboriginal (including First Nations, Métis or Inuit) in Canada surpassed the one-million mark. Given decades of population decline after the Europeans colonized the country now known as Canada and the subsequent waves of arrivals until the present-day, this one million mark is cause for celebration. The growth of Aboriginal populations – both on and off-reserve – in Canada has been phenomenal. The Aboriginal population now accounts for almost 4 per cent of the total population of Canada. The highest concentration of Aboriginal peoples is in Nunavut (85%); Northwest Territories (50.3%); Yukon Territory (25.1%); Manitoba (15.5%) and Saskatchewan (14.9%).

In the 1940s, almost all Aboriginal people lived on reserves or in rural areas but after the Second World War, this began to change. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples estimated that in 1991, over 44 per cent of the individuals who identified as Aboriginal lived in urban areas (1996, 602). By 2006, the Canadian census over 54 per cent of the Aboriginal population lived in urban centres (100,000 or more residents). Aboriginal peoples were urban dwellers.

According to the census, the Aboriginal population in Canada grew, between 2001 and 2006 by 196,475 persons, a 20.1 per cent rate of growth. Between 1996 and 2006 census there was an increase of 45 per cent, nearly six times the rate of growth (8%) for the non-Aboriginal population in the same time frame. Despite the growth, the urbanization rate for Aboriginal people is lower than that of non-Aboriginal people – 81 per cent of them live in urban areas (2006).

The most urbanized Aboriginal peoples are non-status First Nations and Metis with 74 per cent and 66 per cent, respectively, living in urban areas. Inuit are the least urbanized, with less than 30 per cent residing in urban area (Environics, 2010, p.25).

As shown in Table 1, the eight Canadian municipalities included in the study are urban centres that have the highest percentage of urban Aboriginal population. The growth of the urban Aboriginal population should not be interpreted to mean that migration from rural and reserve is

the main contributor (Graham & Peters, 2002, p.13). The increase in Aboriginal people residing in urban areas is partially explained by a higher fertility rate, better census implementation, legislative changes and an increase in self-reporting Aboriginal identity (Graham & Peters, 2002).

Aboriginal women have a higher fertility rate than non-Aboriginal women (1.5 times higher). There are fewer incompletely enumerated reserves (incomplete enumerated areas are not included in the census count) than in the past and legislative changes (such as Bill C-31 which reinstated individuals who lost their status) contribute to the overall increase in the Aboriginal population. In addition, there is an increased tendency for people to indicate their Aboriginal identity on the census (with Metis being the most common choice of label). The 2010 Environics study found that almost 8 in 10 respondents reported being “very proud” of their Aboriginal identity (p.9). Despite the sustained gains in the population, there is continued concern that the Aboriginal population may be under-counted by the census (and if true, the actual Aboriginal population is higher than census results reveal).

## **B. Socio-economic, Political and Cultural Challenges Facing Urban Aboriginal Communities**

*“We believe that the conversation about aboriginal issues in Canada can only advance meaningfully if contemporary, urban realities are considered alongside the legacy of colonialism and the urgent challenges facing many reserves and rural communities.”*

*(Adams & Gosnell-Myers, 2013)*

The current socio-economic, political and cultural challenges facing urban Aboriginal communities rest on an unresolved history of oppression, land dispossession and theft and genocide. It is not a history, like the War of 1812, which can be acknowledged and then forgotten<sup>3</sup>. It is a history that lives in the Aboriginal people and communities who share this country with the rest of us. The ‘historic’ apology on behalf of the Government of Canada by Prime Minister Stephen Harper on June 11, 2008 is only the beginning of the journey for non-Aboriginals towards remaking a relationship with Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

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<sup>3</sup> With due apologies to military history enthusiasts.

The effects of this legacy of oppression can be heard in the stories of elders as they recount their experiences at residential schools, in the difference in life span between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men and women and the persistent wage gap between educated Aboriginal people and similarly educated non-Aboriginal people. The effects of this legacy are the foundation of many of the challenges faced by urban Aboriginal communities. This history must be considered by municipalities when planning to engage with the urban Aboriginal community.

There are a number of socio-economic, cultural and political challenges facing urban-based Aboriginal people. Pervasive poverty in Aboriginal community is one of the biggest challenges. Poverty is due to a number of inter-related factors that result in unemployment and low paying jobs. Aboriginal people are over-represented among the urban poor in Canadian cities and are more likely than the non-Aboriginal population to live in poor urban neighbourhood (Heisz and McLeod, 2004, Cooke and Bèlanger 2006). Aboriginal unemployment rates are more than double those of the non-Aboriginal population in most cities and Aboriginal people are under-represented in managerial and professional occupations. In 2006, two-thirds (65.8%) of Aboriginal people of working age (25-54 years) were employed compared to 81.6 per cent of non-Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people are less likely to have a university degree. Many more Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal individuals in private households have incomes below the poverty line (Peters, 2011, 7). It is important to note that socioeconomic statuses vary substantially in the urban Aboriginal population (see Table 2) and for the purposes of designing an engagement strategy it is necessary to recognize that diversity.

Parriag & Chaulk (2013) used data from the 2006 Aboriginal Peoples Survey<sup>4</sup> and data from the 2006 census to examine the economic status of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities (see Table 2 for Aboriginal data and Table 3 for non-Aboriginal data). Recognized the caveats about the accuracy of any census or survey, especially how well they represent low income people, Parriag & Chaulk's analysis does provide some interesting insights into the economic status of urban Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=3250&lang=en&db=imdb&adm=8&dis=2>

**Table 2 Household Incomes for Aboriginal Peoples**

	<b>Location*</b>	<b>Lower Income</b> <i>Less than \$20,000-\$40,225</i>	<b>Middle Income</b> <i>\$40,226 - \$80,451</i>	<b>High Income</b> <i>Above \$80,451</i>
<b>Aboriginal</b>	Canada	34%	34%	31%
	Toronto	28.5%	28.2%	43.3%
	Winnipeg	40.1%	33.4%	26.5%
	Regina	46.5%	28.7%	24.8%
	Saskatoon	47.4%	34%	18.6%
	Calgary	24.3%	37%	38.7%
	Edmonton	30.1%	33%	36.9%
	Vancouver	34%	33.2%	32.8%

Source: Parriag & Chaulk, 2013, p.42 & 47

\*Location is based on the Census Metropolitan Area, not only the City (Surrey is subsumed into the Vancouver CMA)

**Table 3 Household Incomes for Non-Aboriginal People**

	<b>Location*</b>	<b>Lower Income</b> <i>Less than \$20,000-\$40,225</i>	<b>Middle Income</b> <i>\$40,226 - \$80,451</i>	<b>High Income</b> <i>Above \$80,451</i>
<b>Non-Aboriginal</b>	Canada	26%	34%	39%
	Toronto	22.9%	30%	47.1%
	Winnipeg	26.3%	36.5%	37.1%
	Regina	22.3%	34.4%	42.8%
	Saskatoon	26.8%	35.1%	38.1%
	Calgary	18.4%	31.2%	50.4%
	Edmonton	20.9%	31.9%	47.2%
	Vancouver	26.8%	32.2%	40.9%

Source: Parriag & Chaulk, 2013, 42 & 48

\*Location is based on the Census Metropolitan Area, not just the City (Surrey is subsumed into the Vancouver CMA)

Based on the information in these graphs, Aboriginal people are more likely than non-Aboriginal people to be in the lower income group and less likely than their non-Aboriginal counterparts to be in the high income group. There also seems to be some evidence of a middle class within the Aboriginal population in Canada. Their research illustrates the idea that socio-economic diversity can be found in urban Aboriginal communities across Canada.

Across larger urban centres, in Canada there is no pattern of settlement, no concentrations of urban Aboriginal peoples in a few neighbourhoods to the exclusion of others. Contrary to popular belief, the urban Aboriginal population “is neither ghettoized nor uniformly disadvantaged” (Graham & Peters, 2002, p.iii). Although Aboriginal people are disproportionately affected by poverty and thus more likely to live in lower-income neighbourhoods, urban Aboriginal populations are not homogenous and their socioeconomic statuses do vary. There are instances in which concentrations of Aboriginal people are found in inner-city neighbourhoods, but for the most part, across Canada, Aboriginal people reside in many different neighbourhoods within cities (Peters, 2004).

Women account for a higher percentage of the urban Aboriginal population than they do in the non-Aboriginal population (Graham & Peters, 2002). Some Aboriginal women may move to the city to escape violence and abusive situations at home (Native Women’s Association of Canada, 2007). These women are more likely to have low incomes and to be lone parents.

Politically, there is not an organization that advocates for the concerns and issues of the urban Aboriginal communities across Canada. In 2000, a Supreme Court decision, *Corbiere v Canada* (Canada, 2000) reinstated their rights to have a voice in their home communities in activities outlined in the Indian Act (band elections, for example) but if the City is home, having a voice at a municipal, regional or provincial level is missing. Political involvement is important because urban Aboriginal people with greater Aboriginal political involvement are more likely to vote in Canadian elections (EnviroNics, 2010, p.10).

Aboriginal people may choose to move to an urban area for accessing greater educational and employment opportunities or for the services available (school, health, housing) but they may find they experience racism, poverty and problems finding housing (Peters, 2002). One of the main findings in the EnviroNics (2010) research was that Aboriginal people across the country found discrimination to be pervasive, negative stereotypes about Aboriginal people to be alive in



the cities around them and majorities (of respondents) reported negative behavior from non-Aboriginal people or being treated unfairly by others because they are Aboriginal (p.72).

### **C. Challenges of Canadian Municipal Engagement with Aboriginal Communities**

*“The role of planning at City Hall is defined as ‘managing our co-existence in shared space.’”  
(Sandercock, 2000,13)*

When an Aboriginal person moves to the city, they may still be on their traditional territory or the traditional territory of another First Nation – this makes their migration to the city different from the arrival of new immigrants/refugees (Peters, 2005). They may face similar challenges and create similar opportunities as new immigrants but unlike the new arrival, many may also have expectations that their Aboriginal rights and identities will make a difference to the way they can live their lives and create a future. These expectations present a challenge for municipalities as they work to engage with the urban Aboriginal community.

Canadian municipalities may not engage with their urban Aboriginal communities because they may perceive all Aboriginal peoples to be the responsibility of the federal government. The federal government maintains its responsibility is only to Aboriginal people living on-reserve. The changing legislative and jurisdictional frameworks have created a situation where “no level of Canadian government seems to want to assume the responsibility for urban Aboriginal peoples, creating a jurisdictional vacuum in which each level of government tries to avoid responsibility. (Hanselmann & Gibbins, 2003; Graham & Peters, 2002, Peters, 2011). This situation can be maintained as long as the population of urban Aboriginal people remains small (in relation to the general population) but there are many indicators that Aboriginal population growth will continue to outstrip the population growth of non-Aboriginal people.

Jurisdictional and legislative issues aside, the small size of the urban Aboriginal community relative to the total population of an urban centre may inhibit municipalities from dedicating resources to community engagement with the urban Aboriginal community. A lack of understanding and recognition of the special place Aboriginal residents occupy by virtue of being the original inhabitants of Canada may hinder the development of respectful relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents and between the urban Aboriginal community and the municipality.

If the urban Aboriginal community is recognized by the municipality, it is often “viewed solely as a marginal population in need of assistance, not as a valued asset or productive contributors” to the City. (Horak, 2012, 148). This perspective may result in the community receiving information about available programs and services but in no other way engaged with the municipal government.

Municipalities may be hampered by the “lack of understanding non-Aboriginal peoples have of Aboriginal issues (Moore, Walker & Skelton, 2011, 28). This may lead to the urban Aboriginal community being seen as just another ‘visible minority’ or ‘ethnic’ community to be engaged through multicultural or social integration initiatives, which do not recognize the unique place Aboriginal people occupy in Canada with specific rights and claims to land and recognition. As Dr. Ted Jojola (2012) explains “First Nations are not ‘minorities’ on their traditional territory.”

If municipalities do recognize the urban Aboriginal community and efforts are made to engage with them, it may be from a pan-Aboriginal perspective with no recognition of the make-up of the Aboriginal community and a “lack of understanding that all the Aboriginal groups are different, with different cultures and histories” (Moore, Walker & Skelton, 2011, p.28). The urban Aboriginal community in any given urban centres is not always from ‘home communities’ in the same province, sometimes not even in Canada. The urban Aboriginal community living in each municipality is as heterogeneous internally as they are from the non-Aboriginal community.

Despite the challenges discussed here, Aboriginal people living off reserve are also residents of municipalities and regional districts and, like all other residents, pay their appropriate share of costs for the delivery of community programs and services. According to the Environics study (2010), urban Aboriginal residents of cities think of their city as their home and want to make a positive impact. As residents of the city, this population has the right to expect that their municipal government will find ways to engage with them towards the development of a shared future.

#### **IV. Findings I: Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Communities in Six Canadian Cities**

*“Aboriginal people represent an important constituency in the attempt to build vibrant and attractive cities, and cities are increasingly important to the economic, social and cultural life of Aboriginal peoples.” (Newhouse & Peters, 2003, p.284)*

The Aboriginal population in Canada is increasing at a rate that exceeds that of the non-Aboriginal population. The population of Aboriginal people, in 2006, exceeded the one million mark, for the first time in census history and is concentrated in the five western provinces. Aboriginal people all over Canada are choosing to live in cities – in 2006 over 50 per cent of Aboriginal people lived in urban centres (population greater than 100,000). The Aboriginal population is relatively young when compared to the non-Aboriginal population. All of this indicates that meaningful engagement with urban Aboriginal communities is becoming increasingly necessary for more municipalities across Canada.

This study has focused on gathering information about municipal engagement initiatives with urban Aboriginal communities in eight Canadian cities. As discussed in earlier chapters, the municipalities were chosen for this study for their location (they are located in the five provinces that have the highest Aboriginal populations), their population (they are largest and/or second largest municipality in the province) and their urban Aboriginal community (they have a growing non-Aboriginal and urban Aboriginal population). The eight cities are: Vancouver and Surrey, BC, Edmonton and Calgary, AB, Saskatoon and Regina, SK, Winnipeg MB and Toronto, ON.

This chapter will begin with a summary of the municipal engagement initiatives in the eight cities; then an overview, in more detail, of the urban Aboriginal population and the municipal engagement initiatives with urban Aboriginal communities of six cities – Edmonton and Calgary, AB, Saskatoon and Regina, SK, Winnipeg, MB and Toronto, ON (Vancouver and Surrey, BC are discussed in Chapter V) and closing with a short summary of the information presented from the cities about municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities.

The information collected from key informants and the document review focused on municipal engagement initiatives undertaken by the municipality for and with the urban Aboriginal

community. Table 4 provides a visual summary of the municipal engagement initiatives in the eight Canadian cities.

**Table 4      Municipal Engagement with Urban Aboriginal Communities**

	Memorandum of Understanding/Agreements with First Nations	Urban Aboriginal Statement/Declaration/ Accord	Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Staff/ Dedicated Unit	Initiatives/ Programs/ Services for Urban Aboriginal Community
Vancouver	X		X		X
Surrey					X
Edmonton		X	X	X	X
Calgary			X	X	X
Saskatoon	X			X	X
Regina	X			X	X
Winnipeg	X	X	X	X	X
Toronto		X	X	X	X

The table is organized to display various levels of community engagement with urban Aboriginal communities. The levels represent degrees of involvement or participation by the urban Aboriginal community and the relative relationship to municipal decision-making. The terms used (in Table IV) to identify the levels of engagement used are further explained in brief below.

- A. Memorandums of Understanding/Agreements with First Nations are community to community arrangements – to create a more meaningful, long term relationship, establish protocols for information sharing, consultation, planning for shared concerns.

- B. Urban Aboriginal Statement/Declaration/Accord is an initiative undertaken by the municipality to recognize the unique history of Aboriginal people in Canada and to commit to creating a new relationship to plan for a common future. The Statement/Declaration/Accord is aspirational – the beginning of a journey for the municipality to operate differently and to create a new relationship with Aboriginal communities.
- C. Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committees are a commitment by the municipality's Council to seek representative citizen involvement and guidance on urban Aboriginal issues.
- D. Staff/Dedicated Unit indicates a commitment by the municipality to the urban Aboriginal community through the hiring of staff (one or more) dedicated to urban Aboriginal community issues or the establishment of a dedicated office responsible for increasing access for the urban Aboriginal community to connect with the municipal government and for the municipal government to increase their knowledge and expertise about the urban Aboriginal community or Aboriginal issues, in general.
- E. Initiatives/Programs/Services for Urban Aboriginal Communities include activities that are offered to the community, that provide opportunities for input or feedback but may or may not be developed collaboratively with the community.

These last two levels of engagement strategy (D & E) correspond to 'Community Consultation' and 'Community Representation' on the Community Engagement Framework (Figure 3). Within these two levels of engagement there may be opportunities to provide input or feedback but the majority of the decision-making power rests with the municipality.

Each municipality in this study demonstrates a commitment to actively engaging with their urban aboriginal community. The following section will present each city, from west to east, first providing an overview of their urban Aboriginal community and then an overview of their municipal engagement initiatives.

## Edmonton

### Urban Aboriginal Community in Edmonton

In 2006, Aboriginal peoples accounted for 5.6 per cent of the total population in the City of Edmonton. The Métis population represents 53 per cent of the Aboriginal population and First Nations make up 43 per cent. Aboriginal peoples in Edmonton report that they move to Edmonton for family reasons, education and employment opportunities (Environics, 2010, 16).

The median age for Edmonton's Aboriginal population is 25 years compared to 37 years for the non-Aboriginal population and a greater proportion of the Aboriginal population living in private households is less than 15 years of age compared to the non-Aboriginal population.

In addition to being younger than the non-Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal community in Edmonton is less likely to have completed post-secondary education, have lower incomes and have higher unemployment rates and Aboriginal youth are more likely, than non-Aboriginal children, to live in single parent households (Environics, 2010, 17).

The Environics study found that Aboriginal peoples in Edmonton consider the city their home and feel a strong sense of empowerment about their ability to make a difference. They have a strong pride in their Indigenous identity. More than any other city in this study, Aboriginal Edmontonians believe they are viewed negatively by non-Aboriginal people. They report that discrimination is pervasive and they personally have been negatively impacted (2010, 10-11).

### Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community in Edmonton

**Table 4**      **Municipal Engagement with Urban Aboriginal Communities (edited)**

	Memorandum of Understanding/ Agreements with First Nations	Urban Aboriginal Statement/ Declaration/ Accord	Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Staff/ Dedicated Unit	Initiatives/ Programs/ Services for Urban Aboriginal Community
Edmonton		X	X	X	X

In Edmonton, the municipal engagement initiatives span the community engagement framework. The city in August 2005 adopted a declaration – “Strengthening Relations between the City of Edmonton and Urban Aboriginal People” that states the City’s commitment to work in partnership to foster a better future with Aboriginal people in Edmonton.

In 1994, Edmonton established an Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee. It’s most current mandate is to work “toward an equal and positive partnership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal citizens of Edmonton.”

The City of Edmonton opened its Aboriginal Relations Office in 2007, a direct result of the declaration “Strengthening Relations between the City of Edmonton and Urban Aboriginal People.” The Office is resident within the City’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) and establishes a coordinated municipal approach to relations with Aboriginal people and organizations.

Edmonton has developed and supported a myriad of Initiatives, Programs and Services designed to engage and serve the urban Aboriginal community and bring together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents. The Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord, the Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative and the Aboriginal Community Dialogues Process are some examples of these programs and services. See Appendix D for more details about Edmonton’s urban Aboriginal population and municipal engagement initiatives.

## Calgary

### Urban Aboriginal Community in Calgary

In 2006, Calgary's Aboriginal population was 24,425 persons in 2006 – representing 2.5 per cent of the city's population. Of this number, 56 per cent identified as Métis and 41 per cent as First Nations. Aboriginal peoples report that they move to Calgary primarily for work opportunities, family and education (Environics, 2012, 11).

The urban Aboriginal population in Calgary is relatively young compared to the non-Aboriginal population. In 2006, the median age of Aboriginal peoples was 27 years, compared to 36 years for the non-Aboriginal population.

In addition to being younger than the non-Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal community in Calgary is less likely to have completed post-secondary education, have lower incomes and have higher unemployment rates and Aboriginal youth are more likely, than non-Aboriginal children, to live in single parent households (Environics, 2012, 11).

The Environics study found that Aboriginal peoples in Calgary consider the city their home, they like living in Calgary and believe they can make a positive difference in their city. They have a strong pride in their Indigenous identity. As was similar across all the cities Environics surveyed, Aboriginal peoples reported that discrimination is pervasive and they personally have been negatively impacted (2012, pp 16-17)

### Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community in Calgary

**Table 4      Municipal Engagement with Urban Aboriginal Communities (edited)**

	Memorandum of Understanding/Agreements with First Nations	Urban Aboriginal Statement/Declaration/ Accord	Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Staff/ Dedicated Unit	Initiatives/ Programs/ Services for Urban Aboriginal Community
Calgary			X	X	X



In Calgary, their municipal engagement initiatives with the urban Aboriginal community are less driven by an explicit city wide policy. What does exist in Calgary is a clear demonstration of a commitment to sustained municipal engagement with their urban Aboriginal community.

Calgary established the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUC) in 1979 and is authorized, on behalf of City Council, to investigate areas of concern to Aboriginal people and to make recommendations on policies and resolutions which give urban Aboriginal people a more meaningful role within the City.

Although Calgary does not have a dedicated staff person or dedicated unit within the municipality, they have created a hybrid that maximizes trust with the community and benefit to the municipality. The Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative (CUAI) came out of a community-based research initiative that took place in Calgary in 1999. Its mission is: "To provide a home for ongoing discussion, coordination, and informed action in support of Calgary urban Aboriginal issues and initiatives"

The Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative is an entity separate from the municipality but the City provides office space, acts as the fiscal agent and provides a staff person to continue linkages with CUAI. The staff at the CUAI is organized under Community and Neighbourhood Services.

Calgary has developed and supported a myriad of Initiatives, Programs and Services designed to engage and serve the urban Aboriginal community and bring together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents. Human Resources at the city regularly offers Aboriginal Awareness Training opportunities to all City Employees. The city continues to produce a "Calgary Aboriginal Agencies and Services Booklet" yearly and, with assistance from CUAI, they support an Aboriginal Participatory Video Project that links Aboriginal youth and Elders in the pursuit of oral storytelling.

See Appendix E for more details about Calgary's urban Aboriginal population and municipal engagement initiatives.

## Saskatoon

### Urban Aboriginal Community in Saskatoon

In Saskatoon, the Aboriginal population numbered 19,820 persons, 9.7 per cent of the total population of 202,340. That population is made up for 53 per cent First Nations people, 45 per cent Metis identified and less than one per cent reported Inuit ancestry. Aboriginal people report that they moved to Saskatoon to be closer to family, to pursue education or employment (Environics, 2011, 17).

The urban Aboriginal population in Saskatoon is younger when compared to the non-Aboriginal population – the median age of Aboriginal peoples was 23 years, compared to 37 years for the non-Aboriginal population. In addition to being younger than the non-Aboriginal population, the Aboriginal population is less likely to have completed a post-secondary education, has lower incomes, experiences higher rates of unemployment and Aboriginal youth are more likely than non-Aboriginal children to live in single parent households (Environics, 2011, 17).

The Environics study found that Aboriginal peoples in Saskatoon consider the city their home, they like living in their city and believe they can make a positive difference in the development of Saskatoon. There is strong Indigenous pride among Aboriginal peoples in Saskatoon. In Saskatoon, Aboriginal peoples reported the highest perception of a lack of social acceptance. They reported that discrimination is pervasive and they are individually impacted by negative stereotypes (2011, 10).

### Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community in Saskatoon

**Table 4      Municipal Engagement with Urban Aboriginal Communities (edited)**

	Memorandum of Understanding/Agreements with First Nations	Urban Aboriginal Statement/Declaration/ Accord	Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Staff/ Dedicated Unit	Initiatives/ Programs/ Services for Urban Aboriginal Community
Saskatoon	X			X	X

In Saskatoon the municipal engagement initiatives are scattered at either end of the community engagement framework. The City of Saskatoon has entered into Municipal Agreements with Muskeg Lake Cree Nation and the One Arrow First Nation for three urban reserves created in between 1988 and 2011. The City has also developed agreements with Treaty Land Entitlement First Nations for proposed reserve lands.

Saskatoon does not have a specific policy relating to their urban Aboriginal community. There is a Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Policy that was adopted in 2004. It is a general commitment to eliminating racism and eliminating barriers to create a more inclusive community. In 2004, the Community Services Department completed a Community Development and Leisure Services Aboriginal Program Plan in order to increase the participation of urban aboriginal peoples in the sports and recreation programs offered by the City.

The City formed a Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee in 1999. The function of the Committee is to monitor and provide advice to City Council on issues relating to the Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Policy. The Committee consists of 18 members including a representative from the Métis community and a representative from the First Nations community.

Saskatoon has established a Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Office that is positioned in the Community Development Branch of the Community Services Department of the City. Their work is guided by the Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Policy.

Saskatoon has developed and supported a myriad of Initiatives, Programs and Services designed to engage and serve the urban Aboriginal community and bring together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents. The City of Saskatoon Employment Equity Program is part of the City's commitment to breaking down barriers and actively working to recruit and support Aboriginal employees. The Urban Aboriginal Leadership Program, launched in 1999, in partnership with Saskatoon Regional Health and the University of Saskatchewan is meant to encourage more urban Aboriginals to become leaders in sports, culture, and recreation activities. See Appendix F for more details about Saskatoon's urban Aboriginal population and municipal engagement initiatives.

## Regina

### Urban Aboriginal Community in Regina

In 2006, over 9 per cent of Regina city residents or 16,530 residents stated that they were Aboriginal. The Aboriginal community was comprised primarily of those who identified as First Nations (55%), with Metis making up 42 per cent of the population and less than one percent reporting Inuit ancestry. Aboriginal people in Regina report that they moved to the city for family reasons, to pursue education and/or work opportunities (Environics, 2011, 10).

The Aboriginal population is concentrated in the younger age groups. The median age of the Aboriginal population was 22 years, compared to 39 years for the non-Aboriginal population.

In addition to being a younger population than the non-Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal community is less likely to have a post-secondary education, have lower incomes and higher unemployment rates and Aboriginal youth are more likely than non-Aboriginal children to live in single parent households (Environics, 2011, 17).

The Environics study found that Aboriginal peoples in Regina consider the city to be their home and believe they can make Regina a better place to live. There is a strong pride in their Indigenous heritage but they feel less accepted by the broader population, they report that discrimination is pervasive and are impacted negatively by stereotypes (2011, 10).

### Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community in Regina

**Table 4      Municipal Engagement with Urban Aboriginal Communities (edited)**

	Memorandum of Understanding/Agreements with First Nations	Urban Aboriginal Statement/Declaration/ Accord	Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Staff/ Dedicated Unit	Initiatives/ Programs/ Services for Urban Aboriginal Community
Regina	X			X	X

In Regina, the municipal engagement initiatives are concentrated on either end of the community engagement framework. Compared to the other cities studied, the City of Regina has taken a much more strategic approach to building and maintaining relationships with Aboriginal communities focused more on an integrated response, rather than on solely targeted policy or programming.

The City of Regina has entered into agreements or memorandums of understanding with three First Nations groups – File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council (2007), Piapot First Nation (2007) and Star Blanket Cree Nation. They are primarily Declarations of Understanding to formalize an ongoing working relationship or Municipal Services Agreements with regard to what municipal services can be provided.

There is no specific Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee to Council but the City of Regina City Council is advised through the Administration on the needs of Aboriginal people through its Community Development Branch. Specifically the Cultural Diversity & Aboriginal Relations Advisor and the Program Specialist, Youth and Cultural Diversity have key roles in Aboriginal services, programs and cultural activities.

Saskatoon has developed and supported a myriad of Initiatives, Programs and Services designed to engage and serve the urban Aboriginal community and bring together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents. Two of these initiatives are: The City of Regina's Employment Equity Program is part of the City's commitment to breaking down barriers and actively working to recruit and support Aboriginal employees and in 2014, Saskatoon will play host to the North American Indigenous Games for over 6,000 athletes, support staff/volunteers, family/friends and spectators.

See Appendix G for more details about Regina's urban Aboriginal population and municipal engagement initiatives.

## Winnipeg

### Urban Aboriginal Community in Winnipeg

In 2006, Winnipeg's Aboriginal population was 63,740 persons, representing 10.2 per cent of the total population of 625,600 persons. Sixty per cent of Winnipeg's Aboriginal population identified as Métis and 38 per cent as First Nations. The Aboriginal community reports that they moved to Winnipeg for work opportunities, family reasons and education opportunities (Environics, 2011, 16).

The Aboriginal population of Winnipeg is younger than the non-Aboriginal population. In 2006, the median age of the Aboriginal population in Winnipeg was 26 years compared to 40 years for the non-Aboriginal population.

In addition to being younger than the non-Aboriginal population, Aboriginal peoples are less likely to have completed post-secondary education, have lower incomes and higher unemployment rates.

The Environics study found that Aboriginal peoples in Winnipeg consider the city their home although a majority reported being concerned about the crime in their city. There is a strong Indigenous pride among Aboriginal people although they report that discrimination is pervasive and they personally experienced the impact of negative stereotypes (2011, 10).

### Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community in Winnipeg

**Table 4      Municipal Engagement with Urban Aboriginal Communities (edited)**

	Memorandum of Understanding/ Agreements with First Nations	Urban Aboriginal Statement/ Declaration/ Accord	Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Staff/ Dedicated Unit	Initiatives/ Programs/ Services for Urban Aboriginal Community
Winnipeg	X	X	X	X	X

Winnipeg is the only municipality, out of the eight study cities, that was engaged in each of the five levels of municipal engagement. They have several policy streams focused on the urban Aboriginal community.

In July 2010, Winnipeg entered into an Agreement in support of the first Urban Reserve (in Winnipeg) was developed with the Long Plain First Nations (an agreement between the First Nation and the federal government). In May 2013, the urban reserve was officially opened with ceremony on a parcel of land purchased by the First Nation.

In 2000 Winnipeg endorsed the Maskwachees Declaration. This provided a commitment by the City to be a “partner with the Aboriginal community to reinforce traditional, cultural and spiritual values while addressing issues related to poverty, unemployment, training and education.”

The Urban Aboriginal Opportunities Committee is responsible for advising Mayor and Council. In 2008, and maintained to present day, the Mayor took the responsibility of Secretary of the Urban Aboriginal Opportunities in 2008. This was a strong signal to the Aboriginal community that the Mayor (and Council) is prioritizing the urban Aboriginal community.

In 2003, in support of the City Plan, First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways (MAP) was adopted by the City of Winnipeg. It is Council’s foundational Aboriginal policy. MAP sets out guiding principles that define the working relationship between the City and the Aboriginal community: co-operation, trust, value (i.e. efficient programs and services that maximize the value to Aboriginal people), sustainability, and flexibility.

Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak (Aboriginal Young People Leading) (previously known as the Aboriginal Youth Strategy) was adopted by Council in 2008. The key priorities, as identified with the community, are: Building and supporting health families; economic development and employment development opportunities; education and keeping children in school; comprehensive communication strategy (internal/external); and performance and evaluation (the last two are priorities for the City).

See Appendix H for more details about Winnipeg’s urban Aboriginal population and municipal engagement initiatives.

## **Toronto**

### **Urban Aboriginal Community in Toronto**

In Toronto, the Aboriginal population is 13,605 persons, just over 0.5 per cent of the total population (2,503,281 persons)<sup>5</sup>. Over 65 per cent of the Toronto Aboriginal population identifies as First Nations and 29 per cent as Métis. Aboriginal peoples report that they move to Toronto for work opportunities, education opportunities and the amenities and services available (Environics, 2010, 16).

The Toronto Aboriginal population is younger and has a much lower percentage of seniors than the non-Aboriginal population. The median age in the Aboriginal community is 32 years, compared to 37 years in the non-Aboriginal community.

The 2006 census showed that, in addition to being younger than the non-Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal community in Toronto is higher unemployment rates, lower incomes and Aboriginal youth are more likely than non-Aboriginal children to live in a single parent household (Environics, 2010, 18).

The Environics study found that most Aboriginal peoples in Toronto consider the city their home and experience a sense of social acceptance by the broader community (a viewpoint not shared by Aboriginal people in other cities). They are more likely than Aboriginal peoples in the other study cities to be very proud of their First Nations, Metis and Aboriginal identities. Despite the feeling of social acceptance, they report that discrimination is pervasive and are personally impacted by negative stereotypes (2010, 10).

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<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada, 2006



## Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community in Toronto

**Table 4 Municipal Engagement with Urban Aboriginal Communities (edited)**

	Memorandum of Understanding/Agreements with First Nations	Urban Aboriginal Statement/Declaration/ Accord	Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Staff/ Dedicated Unit	Initiatives/ Programs/ Services for Urban Aboriginal Community
Toronto		X	X	X	X

In Toronto, the municipal engagement initiatives span the community engagement framework, except for the final level involving community to community agreements (usually with First Nations. In May 2010 Council passed a Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities in Toronto<sup>6</sup>. The Statement of Commitment was developed together with the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee, community members and city staff.

The Statement of Commitment is meant to guide the City in its continuing relationships and ongoing work with Aboriginal communities, its discussions with other municipalities and to inform the development of policy, planning and service delivery throughout the municipal public service. It will also provide a foundation for the development of an Urban Aboriginal policy framework.

In 1999, the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee was established. The committee's role is to use their knowledge and expertise to provide advice to Mayor and Council. The Committee is leading the development and implementation of the Action Plan (see Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities).

The City of Toronto has developed and/or supported a myriad of Initiatives, Programs and Services designed to engage and serve the urban Aboriginal community and bring together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents. They are active in supporting the development of housing options for Aboriginal people through the Shelter Housing and Support Division. June is Aboriginal History month in the City of Toronto and the city is actively involved in organizing

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-30867.pdf>

and promoting a number of events leading up to and on National Aboriginal Day. The City of Toronto (with partners) has been developing best practices in working with First Nations communities in the area of Heritage Preservation.

See Appendix J for more details about Toronto's urban Aboriginal population and municipal engagement initiatives.

## **Summary**

Each of the eight municipalities is engaged in some level of engagement with the urban Aboriginal community. Cities with larger urban Aboriginal communities were involved in more and varied types of engagement activities. Only one municipality, Winnipeg, was engaged in each of the five levels of municipal engagement as discussed here.

What was evident across the cities was that the length of time of involvement (when the first committee was formed or program started) corresponds to a present situation where there is a great diversity of municipal engagement built upon a solid foundation of trust and understanding between the municipality and the urban Aboriginal government. This speaks to the necessity of relationship building with urban Aboriginal residents, organizations that work with and serve the urban Aboriginal communities and others.

Only three of the eight cities had adopted a declaration or statement of commitment to creating a shared future with the urban Aboriginal community. Each of these declarations or statements explicitly recognized the unique status of Aboriginal people as the original inhabitants of this country unresolved history of oppression, land dispossession and theft and genocide that is continuing to impact Aboriginal communities today. These three cities, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Toronto, are also those that have the most varied and nuanced municipal engagement of the study cities.

## **V. Findings II: Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Communities in Metro Vancouver**

When municipalities share geo-political boundaries, land claims are unresolved and the traditional territory claimed by neighbouring First Nations overlaps, many times over, the land occupied by any number of municipalities, would there be a role to be played by a regional organization? This chapter pursues the idea that Metro Vancouver is well-positioned to provide leadership for its member municipalities on the issue of municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities.

Two of the eight cities surveyed for this report are also member municipalities of Metro Vancouver. This chapter will present the region's demographics vis a vis the urban Aboriginal population and provide an overview of Metro Vancouver, the functions it serves for its member municipalities and the role it plays in Aboriginal relations at a regional level. Information about the municipal engagement initiatives of Vancouver and Surrey is reviewed, followed by a discussion of the role Metro Vancouver is well-positioned to play – to support member municipalities to develop or enhance their municipal engagement plans with urban Aboriginal communities and to actively collaborate or cooperate when municipal boundaries are not the same as community boundaries.

Metro Vancouver is a regional body made up of 24 local authorities: 22 municipalities, one electoral area and one treaty First Nations (Appendix B & C). Metro Vancouver has the third largest Aboriginal population in Canada. In 2006, there were 40,310 Aboriginals living in Metro Vancouver (or 1.9 per cent of the region's population), the third largest Aboriginal population in Canadian urban centres behind Winnipeg (68,380) and Edmonton (52,100).

For Metro Vancouver, the 2006 Aboriginal population represents an increase of 9.4 per cent over the 2001 figure (35,855) – compared to a 6.5 per cent increase for the region's population as a whole. The Aboriginal population is younger, on average, than the non-Aboriginal population. In 2006, the median age for the Aboriginal population was 28 years, compared to 41 years

### **Box B In Metro Vancouver:**

- **8% of Aboriginal people have a university degree compared to 25% of non-Aboriginal people.**
- **The unemployment rate for the Aboriginal population is 7% compared to 3.6% for non-Aboriginal.**
- **35% of Aboriginal households were at or below low income levels compared to 20% for non-Aboriginals and**
- **The median income for Aboriginal households was \$18,203. This was \$6,946 less than the non-Aboriginal population at \$25,149.**

for the non-Aboriginal population. In Metro Vancouver, Aboriginal people face challenges similar to those discussed for the communities across Canada – they are less likely to have a university degree, their unemployment rate is higher and more households live at or below the poverty line.

Metro Vancouver “serves as the main political forum for discussion of significant community issues at the regional level. It acts as a facilitator, convener, partner, advocate and a significant instrument for providing information and education to the community.” It also has responsibility for three main areas of planning:

- Regional growth (land use through municipalities and transportation through Translink)
- Waste management (solid and liquid waste) and
- Air quality management (delegated responsibility by the Province).

Metro Vancouver’s core services, provided to municipalities, are the provision of drinking water, sewerage and drainage and solid waste management. In addition to these utility services, Metro Vancouver provides emergency services – access to fire, police and ambulance services through the regional 9-1-1 call centre. Regional parks and affordable housing are services provided directly to the public.

There are 11 First Nations in the Metro Vancouver region; including two without lands (Box C). Their traditional territory is represented within several, if not all member municipalities. A large number of First Nations outside the region (e.g. including those in the Fraser Valley and on Vancouver Island) also have traditional territories and asserted claims involving lands within the region.

Metro Vancouver maintains an Aboriginal Relations program which facilitates staff and Metro Vancouver board involvement

### **Box C: First Nations in Metro Vancouver**

**Hwlitsum First Nation** (without lands)

**Katzie First Nation**

**Kwantlen First Nation** (a member First Nation of the Sto:lo Tribal Council)

**Kwikwetlem First Nation**

**Matsqui First Nation** (a member First Nation of the Sto:lo Nation)

**Musqueam Indian Band**

**Qayqayt First Nation** (without lands; also known as the New Westminster Indian Band)

**Semiahmoo First Nation** (a member First Nation of the Sencó'ten Alliance)

**Squamish Nation**

**Tsawwassen First Nation** (a treaty First Nation member of Metro Vancouver, the GVRD and GVWD)

**Tsleil-Waututh Nation** (also known as the Burrard Indian Band)

on policies and projects related to aboriginal relations and treaty negotiation issues. Aboriginal Relations is involved with the following:

“Responding to specific issues arising from direct relations with First Nations with respect to Metro Vancouver’s corporate interests (e.g. plans, programs, processes, policies, services, lands, facilities, and infrastructure);

Developing policies and projects in support of Metro Vancouver’s First Nations Strategy (e.g. Board liaisons to First Nations) and emerging corporate interests;

Maintaining pertinent information on First Nations communities;

Supporting the Board’s involvement in the BC treaty negotiations process and the province’s New Relationship agreements; and

Responding to related issues raised by Metro Vancouver staff, the provincial and federal governments, and other organizations and agencies.”<sup>7</sup>

In 2005, the board of Metro Vancouver (made up of member municipalities) adopted the Metro Vancouver First Nations Strategy. According to the document posted on their website, the Strategy is in pursuit of Metro Vancouver’s interests by:

“developing better relationships with First Nations...;

developing better informational exchange networks with other governments...;

developing communications materials to assist in creating a better understanding of Metro Vancouver interests by First Nations...; and

continuing efforts to reach pragmatic resolutions to specific pressing issues.”<sup>8</sup>

The Aboriginal Relations program and the Metro Vancouver First Nations Strategy are both focused on government to government relationship building, communications and issue resolution. Neither addresses the growing urban Aboriginal population in the region, nor the pressing need for leadership, at a regional level, on the issue of municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.metrovancouver.org/region/aboriginal/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>8</sup>

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/region/aboriginal/Aboriginal%20Affairs%20documents/FirstNationsStrategy.pdf>

Two of the cities included in this study are part of Metro Vancouver – Vancouver and Surrey. They are the two largest municipalities in the region, together being home to almost one million residents (973,029). These cities have 18,945 residents who are Aboriginal, 1.9% of the total population (Statistics Canada, 2006). This reported population of urban Aboriginal people is seen as a dramatic undercount of the community. Anecdotally, service providers in both municipalities report to the City that the urban Aboriginal population is two to four times the official numbers provided by the federal government. Both cities have recognized the importance of engaging with their respective urban Aboriginal communities.

The edited table below provides an overview of the municipal engagement initiatives with urban Aboriginal communities in each of the two municipalities.

**Table 4      Municipal Engagement with Urban Aboriginal Communities (edited)**

	Memorandum of Understanding/Agreements with First Nations	Urban Aboriginal Statement/Declaration/Accord	Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Staff/Dedicated Unit	Initiatives/Programs/Services for Urban Aboriginal Communities
Vancouver	X		X		X
Surrey					X

In Vancouver, the municipal engagement initiatives span the community engagement framework (Figure 3). The city has entered into two Memorandums of Understanding and Protocol Agreements with neighbouring First Nations - Xwmethkwyiem (Musqueam) First Nations (2005) and Squamish Nation (2010). These agreements create a foundation upon which to continue relationship building towards a common future. The agreements include language that recognizes the First Nations title, rights and responsibilities.

Vancouver recently established an Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee that provides support and guidance to Mayor and Council about urban Aboriginal issues and concerns.

The City of Vancouver has developed and/or supported a myriad of Initiatives, Programs and Services designed to engage and serve the urban Aboriginal community and bring together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents. The Dialogues Project and the Year of Reconciliation are programs highlighted here for their explicit recognition of the history of occupation and oppression experienced by Aboriginal people and their focus on transforming relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents. See Appendix J for more details about Vancouver's municipal engagement initiatives.

In Surrey, the range of community engagement is more limited (Table 4A) but the focus on developing robust relationships and partnerships with community organizations as a way to engage with the urban Aboriginal community has laid a strong foundation for future municipal engagement.

Surrey does not have any policies or statements specific to the urban Aboriginal community. There is a Diversity Advisory Committee that reports to Mayor and Council. The urban Aboriginal community is explicitly included through the appointment of two members to the Committee from the Aboriginal community – one is First Nations and the other Metis. Issues of concern to the urban Aboriginal community are often discussed at the Social Policy Advisory Committee which is concerned with the well-being of all Surrey residents.

Surrey's municipal engagement efforts specific to the urban Aboriginal community are concentrated in the area of Initiatives, Programs and Services. A highlight is the sustained and strong partnership with the Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association. Through this community organization the City of Surrey has supported educational and cultural events for the urban Aboriginal community and to create opportunities for non-Aboriginal residents to increase their knowledge about and exposure to Aboriginal history, culture and people. See Appendix K for more details about Surrey's municipal engagement initiatives.

Of the 24 local authorities that are in Metro Vancouver, only Vancouver and Surrey were involved in this study. Both municipalities have demonstrated their commitment to their urban Aboriginal communities through sustained municipal engagement taking a variety of forms and utilizing different public participation methods. Their experience and expertise could be harnessed by Metro Vancouver to support other member municipalities to begin engaging with their urban Aboriginal communities.



Although some municipalities may not be prioritizing this policy area for a variety of reasons, all of them would agree that engaging with all members of their municipalities ensures a more involved and cohesive community (Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation, 2009). Given anecdotal observations that the urban Aboriginal population of Metro Vancouver may be higher than the official numbers indicate, it would be strategic for all Metro Vancouver municipalities to assess and strengthen their municipal engagement initiatives with their urban Aboriginal community.

As a regional body, Metro Vancouver could play a leadership role to support member municipalities to develop or enhance their municipal engagement plans with urban Aboriginal communities and to actively collaborate or cooperate urban Aboriginal issues clearly spill over geo-political municipal boundaries. A current example is The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's BC National Event that will be held in Vancouver from September 18 – 21, 2013. This is an issue that resonates for most, if not all, urban Aboriginal residents of Metro Vancouver. The Commission believes it is an issue that is of importance to all those living in Canada. Vancouver declared a Year of Reconciliation. If Metro Vancouver was able to play a leadership role in the area of municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities, the region could have explicitly welcomed the opportunity that this National Event offers to begin transforming Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relationships.

## VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

*“Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.”*  
(Arundhati Roy)

This chapter will provide ‘concluding insights’ on municipal engagement initiatives with urban Aboriginal communities in eight Canadian cities and provide recommendations for Metro Vancouver about the increased role it can play, with its member municipalities, in supporting municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities and by extension, help improve Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relationships in the metropolitan region.

### A. Observations on Municipal Engagement with Urban Aboriginal Communities

Municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities has been long delayed. Aboriginal peoples began moving to urban centres in the 1940s and today over almost 600,000 Aboriginal people live in small and large urban centres across the country. Despite their growing numbers they have been a community of people overlooked by most municipal governments or if acknowledged within the municipal landscape these communities are “...viewed solely as marginalized populations in need of assistance, not as valued assets or productive contributors to urban localities.” (Horak, 2012, 148).

Part of the reason for the reluctance of municipal governments may be the legislative and jurisdictional frameworks that have given no clear guidance to the role local governments can play in the lives of urban aboriginal people. While the role of the federal government in supporting First Nations communities on-reserve is clear, no level of Canadian government seems to want to assume the responsibility for urban Aboriginal peoples (Hanselmann & Gibbins, 2003; Graham & Peters, 2002, Peters, 2011). Despite the lack of explicit ‘responsibility’, there is a clear need for municipalities to acknowledge and create relationships with their urban Aboriginal communities and neighbouring First Nations.

It is important for municipal governments and regional bodies to not subsume the urban Aboriginal community into the general ‘ethnic communities’ job portfolio, committee or “social integration of immigrants”, multiculturalism or cultural integration agendas. Such generic engagement strategies with so-called ‘visible’ or ‘ethnic’ communities may be implemented in good faith but they do not recognize the unique place Aboriginal people occupy in Canada with specific rights (and for some, ongoing land claims for traditional territory never ceded to

Canada). As Peters (2005) notes, it is important to recognize that “Aboriginal peoples in Canadian cities do not simply comprise another ethnic group contending for cultural preservation if and when it does not conflict with mainstream institutions.” (p.331)

There are others who argue “that colonialism, and the racism and power imbalances that inevitably accompany it, is acting behind the scenes of urban Aboriginal policy development.” (Moore, Walker & Skelton. 2011. 17). As discussed earlier, municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities must begin with a recognition of how the past informs the present and with an explicit acceptance of responsibility for the history and the harm it caused then and the intergenerational impacts of that oppression. The City of Edmonton’s Declaration aimed at “Strengthening Relationships between the City of Edmonton and Urban Aboriginal People” and the City of Toronto’s Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities in Toronto provide examples of how present day municipal governments are moving forward to transform relationships with Aboriginal communities.

Municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities must employ a variety of community engagement strategies and sustain their commitment to the strategy over time. There is no value in signing Memorandums of Understanding and Protocol Agreements or adopting Statements and Declarations if there are no initiatives, programs or services implemented to support the realization of the goals in these aspirational documents. The cities in this study demonstrate the many forms that municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities can take and municipalities looking to begin or enhance the process of engagement may use the examples presented here for inspiration. For example, in Vancouver, the Dialogues Project has been recognized as an innovative and impactful program that is changing how First Nations, urban Aboriginal communities and immigrant communities understand each other and find ways to build bridges over historical and present day injustices.

The municipal staff and consultants contacted for this study each have expertise and experience to share. Each key informant was enthusiastic about sharing information and motivated in using this research report so that they may connect with colleagues across Canada who are involved in this area of community engagement and policy development. This enthusiasm and commitment to addressing the issues facing urban Aboriginal communities can be accessed by interested staff and community members in municipalities across Canada.

Urban Aboriginal peoples have a desire to be involved in their community. “Urban Aboriginal peoples are seeking to become a visible part of the urban landscape. They like living in cities and majorities feel they can make a positive difference in their urban homes.” (Environics, 2010, p.8) Municipalities can access this community by providing opportunities for genuine engagement with the government or the larger community. These efforts must be sustained and begin with relationship building but any efforts made to begin the engagement process will contribute to transforming Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relationships.

## **B. Metro Vancouver – A Regional Commitment to Urban Aboriginal Engagement?**

Metro Vancouver is a regional entity in southwestern British Columbia that represents the interests of 24 local authorities. As an organization it is cognizant that the region occupies traditional territory claimed by eleven First Nations resident in the region and numerous First Nations resident in neighbouring municipalities or regions. Through its Aboriginal Relations program Metro Vancouver represents the region’s interests with provincial, federal and First Nations governments.

As a regional body Metro Vancouver is well positioned to play a role in supporting and enhancing its member municipalities’ municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities and to actively collaborate or cooperate in these engagement plans with municipal boundaries do not correspond to community boundaries.

Community engagement is best conducted in each municipality or town. A regional commitment to municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities may provide impetus for member municipalities to develop their own community engagement strategies for working with this population. In addition, explicit support for collaboration or cooperation across municipal boundaries in engagement and planning initiatives may help to ensure efficiency, seamless response and increased impact when expertise and resources are combined towards a common goal.

If this leadership role on the issue of municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities is embraced, it may be useful for Metro Vancouver to work with member municipalities to develop a regional Statement of Commitment to Urban Aboriginal Engagement. The region is already involved in three other areas of regional significance: affordable housing, the regional food system and ecological health. Taking on a similar role with regards to municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities would seem appropriate.

.It is not possible to say what the current situation is regarding urban Aboriginal municipal engagement across Metro Vancouver. This study only examined the municipal engagement initiatives of Vancouver and Surrey and it would be impossible to use their information to extrapolate about the activities of other member municipalities. Recommendation 1 suggests research to look at municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities in all the municipalities in Metro Vancouver.

### **C. Recommendations for Metro Vancouver**

Recommendation 1: That Metro Vancouver conduct or commission an in-depth research study to look at municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities in all the municipalities in Metro Vancouver in order to illuminate the present situation before moving towards the future. This research should be done in a participatory manner and in collaboration with the 11 First Nations communities in the region (see Box C), as well as various urban-based Aboriginal organizations operating in Metro Vancouver.

Recommendation 2: That Metro Vancouver, through its Aboriginal Relations program, and following the above research study's completion, work with member municipalities, in cooperation with local First Nations and urban Aboriginal organizations to review, and where possible recommend areas for coordination of municipal efforts in their work with urban Aboriginal communities and to develop a guiding statement of commitment to the value of municipal engagement with urban Aboriginal communities across the region.

Recommendation 5: That Metro Vancouver, when conducting its periodic reviews of its current regional programs and policies – from land use, transportation, parks and recreational facilities, among others, -- encourage all pertinent regional bodies and stakeholders to incorporate in their review and recommendations the perspectives and needs of urban aboriginal residents and users of these services and how they might be able to see urban aboriginal communities, not just as service users, but also as partners and assets in their service and program development.

### **D. Recommendations for Further Research**

This study of eight Canadian municipalities and their municipal engagement initiatives with urban Aboriginal communities was cursory and superficial. Very useful information was uncovered and compiled and discussed in this study but there is potential for future research to delve under the surface of urban Aboriginal municipal engagement to uncover or create new

stories about the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents and between the urban Aboriginal communities and Canadian municipalities.

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## **Appendices**

- A. Key Informants
- B. Metro Vancouver Membership
- C. Map: Local Governments in Metro Vancouver
- D. Edmonton, AB Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community
- E. Calgary AB Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community
- F. Saskatoon, SK Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community
- G. Regina, SK Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community
- H. Winnipeg, MB Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community
- I. Toronto, ON Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community
- J. Vancouver, B.C. Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community
- K. Surrey, B.C. Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community

## **Appendix A**

### **Key Informants**

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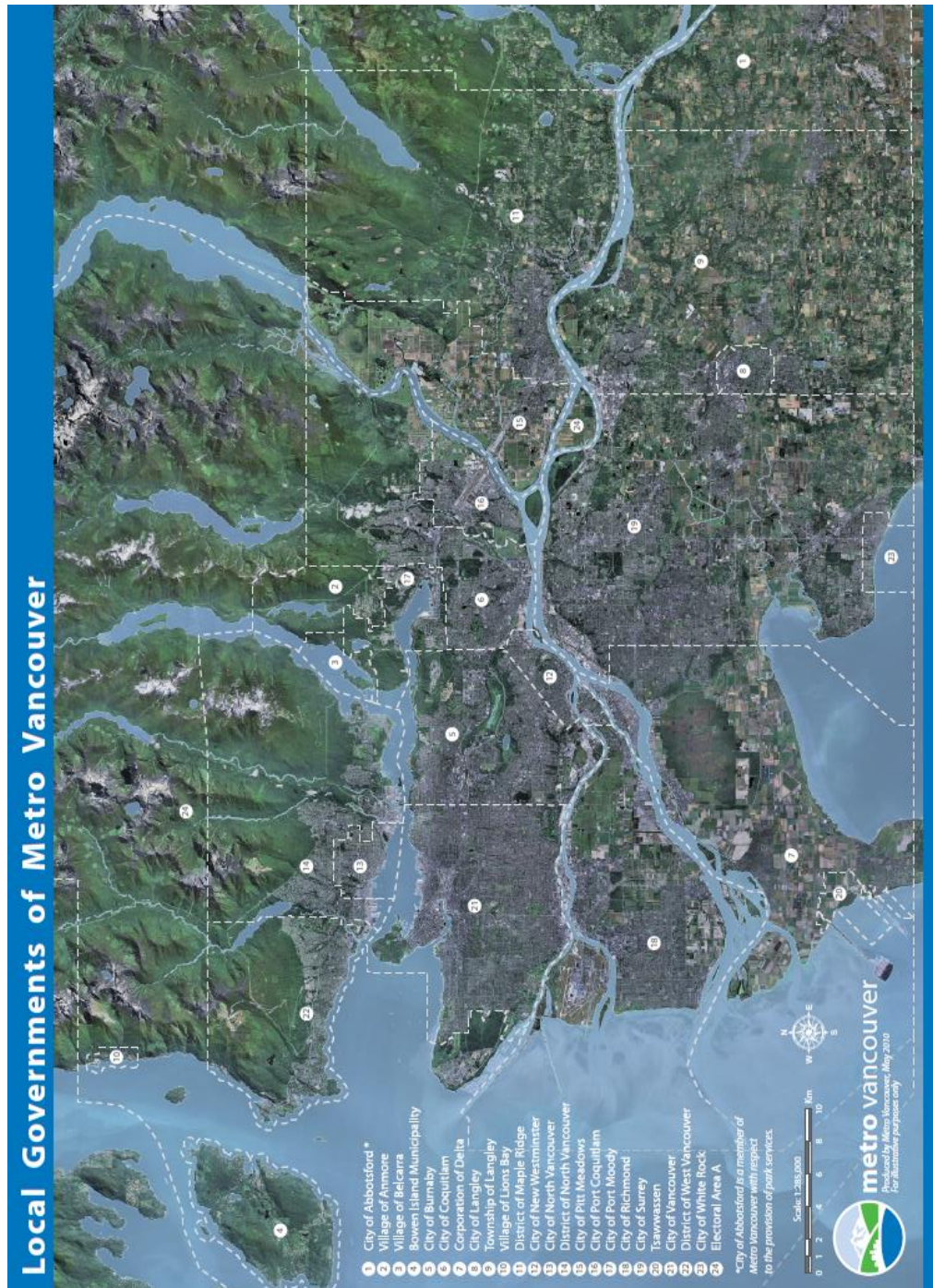
## **Appendix B**

### **Metro Vancouver Membership**

Electoral Area A  
Village of Lions Bay  
Bowen Island Municipality  
District of West Vancouver  
District of North Vancouver  
City of North Vancouver  
Village of Belcarra  
Village of Anmore  
City of Port Moody  
City of Coquitlam  
City of Port Coquitlam  
City of Pitt Meadows  
District of Maple Ridge  
Township of Langley  
City of Langley  
City of Surrey  
City of White Rock  
Corporation of Delta  
Tsawwassen First Nation  
City of Richmond  
City of New Westminster  
City of Burnaby  
City of Vancouver  
City of Abbotsford

## Appendix C

### Map: Local Governments of Metro Vancouver





## **Appendix D**

### **Edmonton**

#### **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community**

##### **Urban Aboriginal Community in Edmonton**

In 2006, Edmonton had the second largest Aboriginal population of any city in Canada (after Winnipeg). Aboriginal peoples accounted for 5.6 per cent of the total population in the City of Edmonton. The Aboriginal Identity population in the City of Edmonton was at 30,365 residents in 2001 growing to 38,170 residents by 2006. This represents a population increase of 25.7 per cent during the five year Census cycle. The Métis population is the fastest growing Aboriginal group in the City of Edmonton representing 53 per cent of the Aboriginal population; First Nations make up 43 per cent. Aboriginal peoples in Edmonton report that they move to Edmonton for family reasons, education and employment opportunities (Environics, 2010, 16).

The median age for the Edmonton's Aboriginal population is 25 years compared to 37 years for the non-Aboriginal population and a greater proportion of the Aboriginal population living in private households is less than 15 years of age compared to the non-Aboriginal population.

In addition to being younger than the non-Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal community in Edmonton is less likely to have completed post-secondary education, have lower incomes and have higher unemployment rates and Aboriginal youth are more likely, than non-Aboriginal children, to live in single parent households (Environics, 2010, 17).

The Environics study found that Aboriginal peoples in Edmonton consider the city their home and feel a strong sense of empowerment about their ability to make a difference. They have a strong pride in their Indigenous identity, are less familiar with their ancestry than Aboriginal peoples in other cities in the study but a majority are not concerned that they will lose their cultural identity. More than any other city in this study, Aboriginal Edmontonians believe they are viewed negatively by non-Aboriginal people. They report that discrimination is pervasive and they personally have been negatively impacted. Their top life aspirations are to complete their education, to raise a family and to own a home (2010, 10-11).

## **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community<sup>9</sup>**

### **Strengthening Relations between the City of Edmonton and Urban Aboriginal People**

In August 2005, Edmonton City Council adopted a declaration aimed at “Strengthening Relationships between the City of Edmonton and Urban Aboriginal People”. The declaration addressed the following themes:

- celebrating past Aboriginal contributions;
- recognizing past injustices;
- acknowledging unique challenges faced by Aboriginal people;
- valuing Aboriginal contributions;
- appreciating Aboriginal autonomy; and
- the role of Aboriginal people in the City’s future.

Two of the results of this declaration are the production of the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord and the establishment of the Aboriginal Relations Office.

### **Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord Initiative Project**

The Accord Initiative was created by the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee in response to the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal Peoples residing in Edmonton. The project produced several historic documents and the first-of-its-kind Urban Aboriginal Accord

### **Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee**

The Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (EAUAC) was established in 1994. Its mission is to work “toward an equal and positive partnership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal citizens of Edmonton.”

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<sup>9</sup> This information was collected by reviewing publicly available documents (2011 and 2013), the City website (2011 and 2013) and a conversation with the key informant (2011).

According to the website, the Committee is non-operational at the moment (2011) but members continue to work with city officials and staff to renew and refine their mandate.

### **Aboriginal Relations Office**

The City of Edmonton's Aboriginal Relations office was established in 2007. The Aboriginal Relations Office works to:

- Build and support good relations between the City of Edmonton, Aboriginal people and organizations that serve Aboriginal people.
- Increase Aboriginal participation in the City of Edmonton workforce.
- Ensure City-mandated services address the needs of Aboriginal people.
- Coordinate City participation in Aboriginal community-led initiatives.
- Help the City of Edmonton fulfill the intentions of City Council's Aboriginal Declaration
- Provide leadership and support in the renewal of the Accord.
- Provide support to the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Affairs Committee

The Office is resident within the City's Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) and establishes a coordinated municipal approach to relations with Aboriginal people and organizations. The Aboriginal Relations Office reports through the Aboriginal Relations Director to the Manager of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion in Corporate Services Department.

Through the Aboriginal Relations Office, the City has completed two reports in 2010 that will help City departments, staff, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agencies identify service gaps related to the Aboriginal population. The studies are: Aboriginal Edmonton - A Statistical Story and Urban Aboriginal Population: A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Peoples Living in the City of Edmonton.

The ARO also updates and maintains the Aboriginal Edmonton Welcome Guide meant for aboriginal people who have moved or are considering moving to Edmonton. It is available online.

## **Initiatives, Programs & Services**

### **Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Strategy**

In partnership with the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta, Edmonton continues its commitment to the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS).

The UAS community priorities for Edmonton are:

- Shelter and Housing
- Preserving Aboriginal histories, languages and cultures
- Employment
- Health and Wellness
- Education
- Justice
- Economic Development
- Services for Newcomers

In 2008, Wicahitowin agreed to become the Steering Committee for the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Strategy.

### **Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative**

Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative (AWPI) is a tripartite agreement signed in March 2007. An Aboriginal Human Resources Consultant was hired and works with Aboriginal communities and city departments. For example, the Transportation Department has done a great deal of work to hire, train and retain more Aboriginal bus drivers. The Summer Student Program (since 2006) has targeted placing Aboriginal youth across many city departments.

### **Aboriginal Community Dialogue Process**

The Dialogue process was guided by the belief that strengthening relationships between the City of Edmonton and First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Non-Status People, is essential

to creating long-term improvements in Aboriginal Edmonton. Throughout the process, the Elders Circle provided guidance to ensure that proper cultural and spiritual protocols were followed. Community members also participated in the formation and design of the Dialogue process. To this end, a variety of Indigenous methods were used to facilitate the listening and the building of relations in a good way. Over 1800 people were engaged between July 2005 and December 2005. Three main themes emerged:

- Acknowledgement that there needs to be new ways of working together
- Collaborations already exist concerning Aboriginal Edmonton, but further collaborations need to be explored
- Action on key priorities identified by the Aboriginal community

### **Wicihitowin<sup>10</sup>**

Wicihitowin - Circle of Shared Responsibility & Stewardship is a community-driven model of an urban governance process that is inclusive of the many Aboriginal peoples and the agencies that serve them in Edmonton. The City of Edmonton is a partner in this initiative.

Collaborative Granting Process (CGP): The objective of CGP is to prioritize investment in community-driven projects that build on existing strengths or address high-priority needs and service gaps in Edmonton's urban Aboriginal community. Wicihitowin is not a funder; it facilitates bringing potential funders together with applicants for the benefit of Edmonton's Aboriginal community.

In 2008, Wicihitowin became the Steering Committee for the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Strategy.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://wicihitowin.ca/>

## **Appendix E**

### **Calgary**

#### **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community**

##### **Aboriginal Community in Calgary**

Aboriginal population of Calgary region is growing faster than that of any other urban region in Canada. Between 1996 and 2006 Calgary's Aboriginal population grew by 75 per cent. In 2006, Calgary's Aboriginal population was 24,425 persons in 2006 – representing 2.5 per cent of the city's population. Of this number, 56 per cent identified as Métis and 41 per cent as First Nations. Aboriginal peoples report that they move to Calgary primarily for work opportunities, family and education (Environics, 2012, 11).

The urban Aboriginal population in Calgary is relatively young compared to the non-Aboriginal population – almost half (46%) were under 25 (compared to 33 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population) and only 3 per cent were seniors (compared to 9 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population). In 2006, the median age of Aboriginal peoples was 27 years, compared to 36 years for the non-Aboriginal population.

In addition to being younger than the non-Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal community in Calgary is less likely to have completed post-secondary education, have lower incomes and have higher unemployment rates and Aboriginal youth are more likely, than non-Aboriginal children, to live in single parent households (Environics, 2012, 11).

The Environics study found that Aboriginal peoples in Calgary consider the city their home, they like living in Calgary and believe they can make a positive difference in their city. They have a strong pride in their Indigenous identity and yet report being concerned about their ability to retain their cultural identity. As was similar across all the cities Environics surveyed, Aboriginal peoples reported that discrimination is pervasive and they personally have been negatively impacted. Their top life aspirations are to complete their education and to raise a family (2012, pp 16-17)

## **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community<sup>11</sup>**

### **Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee<sup>12</sup>**

The Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUC) was formed in 1979 and is authorized, on behalf of City Council, to investigate areas of concern to Aboriginal people and to make recommendations on policies and resolutions which give urban Aboriginal people a more meaningful role within the City. The membership of the Committee includes both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. A city staff person is assigned to the Committee.

### **Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative**

The Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative (CUAI) came out of a community-based research initiative that took place in Calgary in 1999. CUAI is a partnership initiative focused on real and sustainable advances for urban Aboriginal people in Calgary. Its mission is: “To provide a home for ongoing discussion, coordination, and informed action in support of Calgary urban Aboriginal issues and initiatives”<sup>13</sup>

The Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative is an entity separate from the municipality but the City provides office space, acts as the fiscal agent for the agency and provides a staff person to continue linkage with CUAI on their Committee. The staff at the CUAI is organized under Community and Neighbourhood Services (under the umbrella of Social Policy and Planning) and ‘report’ to the Team Lead of Social Policy and Planning.

The Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative works hard to have a presence in Calgary. They focus on demystifying the city for the urban Aboriginal community and feed information from the communities to the City. City departments commonly consult with staff at the CUAI if they are planning a consultation process, want to do outreach with the urban Aboriginal communities or are planning programming that focuses or touches on First Nations cultures.

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<sup>11</sup> This information was collected by reviewing publicly available documents (2011 and 2013), the City website (2011 and 2013) and a conversation with the key informant (2011 and 2013).

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.calgary.ca/CSPS/CNS/Pages/First-Nations-Métis-and-Inuit-Peoples/Calgary-Aboriginal-Urban-Affairs-Committee/Calgary-Aboriginal-Urban-Affairs-Committee.aspx>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.cuai.ca/about/default.asp>

## Initiatives, Programs & Services

In 2002, the Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative (CUAI) agreed to partner with the Government of Canada in order to deliver the **Urban Aboriginal Strategy** (UAS) in Calgary and still continues work in this partnership.

The City of Calgary Human Resources also offers **Aboriginal Awareness Training** opportunities to all City Employees.

The City of Calgary continues to produce a “**Calgary Aboriginal Agencies and Services Booklet**” yearly (it is updated and reprinted).

**Chief David Crowchild Memorial Award** to recognize an individual or group of individuals in Calgary who create bridges of understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures and/or create an understanding of the uniqueness and value of Aboriginal culture.

**Youth Achievement Award** is an annual award to recognize exceptional Aboriginal youth living in Calgary.

**Aboriginal Participatory Video Project** links Aboriginal youth and Elders in the pursuit of oral storytelling via various events (with assistance from CUAI).

The City of Calgary provides support for an **Aboriginal Youth Outreach Worker** at the Calgary Youth Employment Centre and offers supports through Youth Probation that is run by the City of Calgary.

**Aboriginal Portfolio, Calgary Police Services** has one specific Officer assigned to this area, but another officer is also connected to the Aboriginal community through recruitment targeting. The Aboriginal portfolio officer focuses on community engagement, community relations, training opportunities, preparing Aboriginal Camps for officers, etc. They report to different supervisors. The officer involved in Employment Recruitment goes to job fairs all over the province, encourages youth and adults to apply for summer jobs and assists in arranging job shadowing opportunities.



## **Appendix F**

### **Saskatoon**

#### **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community**

##### **Urban Aboriginal Community in Saskatoon**

In 2006, Aboriginal people represented 15 per cent of the total Saskatchewan population. Saskatoon had the second highest per capita Aboriginal population of all the cities in this study. In Saskatoon, the Aboriginal population numbered 19,820 persons, 9.7 per cent of the total population of 202,340. That population is made up for 53 per cent First Nations people, 45 per cent Metis identified and less than one per cent reported Inuit ancestry. Aboriginal people report that they moved to Saskatoon to be closer to family, to pursue education or employment (Environics, 2011, 17).

The urban Aboriginal population in Saskatoon is younger when compared to the non-Aboriginal population – the median age of Aboriginal peoples was 23 years, compared to 37 years for the non-Aboriginal population. In addition to being younger than the non-Aboriginal population, the Aboriginal population is less likely to have completed a post-secondary education, has lower incomes, experiences higher rates of unemployment and Aboriginal youth are more likely than non-Aboriginal children to live in single parent households (Environics, 2011, 17).

The Environics study found that Aboriginal peoples in Saskatoon consider the city their home, they like living in their city and believe they can make a positive difference in the development of Saskatoon. There is strong Indigenous pride among Aboriginal peoples in Saskatoon but they were the most concerned (of the cities surveyed by Environics) about their ability to retain their cultural identity. In Saskatoon, Aboriginal peoples reported the highest perception of a lack of social acceptance. They reported that discrimination is pervasive and they are individually impacted by negative stereotypes. The life aspirations of Aboriginal peoples in Saskatoon are similar to those expressed in other cities – pursuing higher education and a good job or career (2011, 10).

## **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community<sup>14</sup>**

### **Municipal Agreements and Urban Reserves**

The City has developed municipal agreements with the Musket Lake Cree Nation and the One Arrow First Nation for three urban reserves: the “Asimakaniseekan Askiy Reserve” (Sutherland urban reserve), of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, created in 1988; the urban reserve at 20th Street and Avenue P, “Fire Creek Gas and Grill”, of the One Arrow First Nation, created in 2005; and the urban reserve at 22nd Street and Witney Avenue, “Cree Way Gas West”, of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation (commercial Development), created in 2011.

The City has also developed agreements with Treaty Land Entitlement First Nations for proposed reserve lands.

### **Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Policy**

In 2004, the Saskatoon City Council passed a Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Policy<sup>15</sup>. This policy is not specific to Aboriginal communities. It is a general commitment to eliminating racism and eliminating barriers to create a more inclusive community.

### **Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee**

The Committee was formed in 1999. The function of the Committee is to monitor and provide advice to City Council on issues relating to the Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Policy. The Committee consists of 18 members including a representative from the Métis community and a representative from the First Nations community.

### **Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Office**

The Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Office is positioned in the Community Development Branch of the Community Services Department of the City.

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<sup>14</sup> This information was collected by reviewing publicly available documents (2011 and 2013), the City website (2011 and 2013) and a conversation with the key informant (2011).

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.saskatoon.ca/DEPARTMENTS/City%20Clerks%20Office/Civic%20Policies/Documents/C10-023.pdf>

## **Saskatoon Urban Aboriginal Strategy<sup>16</sup>**

Vision Statement: Through respectful collaboration and building upon Aboriginal history, language and culture we will create measurable and sustained improvement in the quality of life for the urban Aboriginal community of Saskatoon.

Saskatoon Urban Aboriginal Strategy Steering Committee<sup>17</sup>

The Cultural Diversity & Race Relations Coordinator sits on this committee as a community representative. The City's Community Development Department provides the municipal representative.

## **Aboriginal Program Plan**

In 2004 the Community Services Department completed a Community Development and Leisure Services Aboriginal Program Plan in order to increase the participation of urban aboriginal peoples in the sports and recreation programs offered by the City.

## **City of Saskatoon Employment Equity Program**

In 1979 the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (SHRC) received the Legislative mandate through the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code to promote equality through Affirmative Action, or equity programs. All municipal governments in the province developed and implemented programs in support of workforce equality and representativeness.

The City of Saskatoon began addressing the implementation of Affirmative Action in 1980. In 1986 the Affirmative Action Program was approved by City Council. The Affirmative Action Program was designed as a long and short-term organizational strategy that will ensure equality of opportunity exists at all employment levels. The City of Saskatoon's Employment Equity Program was approved by the SHRC in 1986 and is monitored on an annual basis.

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.saskatoonuas.ca/index.html>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.saskatoonuas.ca/committee.html>

The City of Saskatoon's Aboriginal employee population increased to 8.0% in 2011. There has been a steady increase in the employment of this equity group over the past five years.

In 2011 the City of Saskatoon received an award that recognized the City of Saskatoon as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers.

## **Initiatives, Programs & Services**

### **Pre-Employment Training Programs**

Since 2010 the City of Saskatoon has partnered with the Gabriel Dumont Institute, Saskatoon Tribal Council and Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology to support the Aboriginal Heavy Equipment Operator and 1A License Pre-Employment Training Program. The program is designed to train Aboriginal men and women to prepare them for employment opportunities in the Saskatchewan labour market.

### **MÈ TA WÈ TÈN (Let's Play) Program**

Provides a gathering place for youth to learn healthy lifestyles through sport, recreation and cultural activities. Celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> year of operations in 2012.

### **Urban Aboriginal Leadership Program**

Launched in 1999 as a partnership with Saskatoon Regional Health, City of Saskatoon, the University of Saskatchewan and ParticACTION. The objectives of the program are:

- To encourage more urban Aboriginals to become leaders in sports, culture, and recreation activities.
- To see additional Aboriginal residents on community boards and committees.
- To increase awareness of opportunities and resources for leadership development, and increase awareness of the help that's available to access these opportunities.
- To recruit and hire summer program staff for the City of Saskatoon.
- To create new leadership development opportunities within the Urban Aboriginal community.

- To collaborate and partner with community based organizations and businesses.

Leadership Development Workshop Series is to enhance individual leadership skills (for adults) and promote Aboriginal representation on community and civic boards and committees.

Annual Urban Aboriginal Youth Leadership Summit is a partnership between the City and various youth serving agencies.

Atoske Youth Summer Leadership Program (since 2008) is offered in partnership with the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the Saskatoon Tribal Council Urban Services Inc. The program focuses on pre-employment skills and job training for Aboriginal youth.

### **Urban Aboriginal Grant Program**

The Urban Aboriginal Grant Program is administered by the City. Its purpose is to assist in the development of sport, culture and recreation programs, and leadership opportunities in sport, culture and recreation for Aboriginal residents of Saskatoon through non-profit community organizations.

### **Unified Minds: Youth Action Network**

In 2011 the Unified Minds: Youth Action Network was launched at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Summit. It is an initiative in partnership with the Urban Aboriginal Leadership office. It was developed with assistance with the national Centre for Excellence for Youth Engagement.

The purpose of the network is to provide an open forum for people aged 13 to 18 to come together and share ideas on the subjects of racism and discrimination, youth engagement and civic participation.

## **Appendix G**

### **Regina**

#### **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community**

##### **Urban Aboriginal Community in Regina**

Regina has one of the smallest Aboriginal populations in terms of relative numbers. Yet Aboriginal peoples account for 9 per cent of the total population, similar to Winnipeg (10%) and Saskatoon (9.3%). In 2006, over 9 per cent of Regina city residents or 16,530 residents stated that they were Aboriginal. This compares with 8.7 per cent in 2001 and 7.5 per cent in 1996 so the proportion of the city's population who are Aboriginal is increasing. The Aboriginal community was comprised primarily of those who identified as First Nations (55%), with Metis making up 42 per cent of the population and less than one percent reporting Inuit ancestry. Aboriginal people in Regina report that they moved to the city for family reasons, to pursue education and/or work opportunities (Environics, 2011, 10).

The Aboriginal population is concentrated in the younger age groups. The median age of the Aboriginal population was 22 years, compared to 39 years for the non-Aboriginal population.

In addition to being a younger population than the non-Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal community is less likely to have a post-secondary education, have lower incomes and higher unemployment rates and Aboriginal youth are more likely than non-Aboriginal children to live in single parent households (Environics, 2011, 17).

The Environics study found that Aboriginal peoples in Regina consider the city to be their home and believe they can make Regina a better place to live. There is a strong pride in their Indigenous heritage but they feel less accepted by the broader population, they report that discrimination is pervasive and are impacted negatively by stereotypes. Aboriginal people in Regina report their top life aspirations to be completing their education and securing a good job or career (2011, 10).

## **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community<sup>18</sup>**

Compared to the other cities studied, the City of Regina has taken a much more strategic approach to building and maintaining relationships with Aboriginal communities focused more on an integrated response, rather than on solely targeted policy or programming.

City of Regina City Council is advised through the Administration on the needs of Aboriginal people through its Community Development Branch. Specifically the Cultural Diversity and Aboriginal Relations Advisor and the Program Specialist, Youth and Cultural Diversity have key roles in Aboriginal services, programs and cultural activities.

The City is committed to developing and maintaining positive government relations with First Nations and Métis government organizations. The City's Manager, Government Relations position is situated within the Strategy Management office and reports directly to the Mayor. This position works directly with First Nations and Métis government elected representatives and their officials. The City Manager is seen as spearheading a wholesale shift in the corporate environment towards an integrated response by the City.

### **Memorandums of Understanding with First Nations**

The City of Regina has entered into agreements or memorandums of understanding with three First Nations groups – File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council, Piapot First Nation and Star Blanket Cree Nation.

Declaration of Understanding with the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council (June 5, 2007).

This formalizes the ongoing working relationship whose goal is to improve the quality of life for urban First Nations people living in Regina. The original declaration was entered into in 1998. This new one renews this commitment and increases the scope to address emerging issues such as urban reserves, cooperation on service delivery and enhancing communication and consultations.

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<sup>18</sup> This information was collected by reviewing publicly available documents (2011 and 2013), the City website (2011 and 2013) and a conversation with key informants (2011 and 2013).

Municipal Services and Compatibility Agreement with the Piapot First Nation (January 23, 2007).

This sets out the relationship between the City and the Piapot First Nation for a vacant commercial property that the nation plans to develop and apply to the federal government for reserve status.

The Star Blanket Cree Nation and the City entered into a Municipal Services and Compatibility Agreement with regard to the First Nations University land being designated as an urban reserve. The agreement sets out the relationship between the City and the Nation. Municipal services (including fire) will continue to be provided. A separate agreement with the Regina Police Service ensures policing is provided to the property as well.

### **Regina Urban Aboriginal Strategy**

Regina Urban Aboriginal Strategy (RUAS): a federal government initiative designed to create partnerships between the federal, provincial, and municipal governments and Regina's Aboriginal community.

The RUAS Steering Committee makes strategic investments based on community priorities, builds sustainable partnerships, and facilitates leveraging opportunities. The RUAS Steering Committee also makes funding recommendations and provides strategic advice to the Regional Operations Branch of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. There are 12 volunteer board members including representatives from three levels of government. Bev Cardinal (Cultural Diversity & Aboriginal Relations Advisor) is a city representative on the Urban Aboriginal Strategy Steering Committee. The majority of committee members are community residents. This steering committee provides the City a conduit for sharing information, networking and discussing future initiatives.

The Steering Committee has established (through a community consultative process) three priorities: homelessness and housing; family healing and wellness and prevention and exit strategies for those involved in gangs or the sex trade.



## **City of Regina's Employment Equity Program**

In 1979 the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (SHRC) received the Legislative mandate through the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code to promote equality through Affirmative Action, or equity programs. All municipal governments in the province developed and implemented programs in support of workforce equality and representativeness

## **Initiatives, Programs & Services**

### **The 2014 North American Indigenous Games**

The City of Regina and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations have been awarded the 2014 North American Indigenous Games (July 19-26, 2014). In addition to financial resources, the City of Regina will provide full access to its sports and recreational facilities and venues, one full-time Facilities staff (secondment), as well as program staff to assist throughout the ten day event.

### **Atoskata Program**

A restorative justice project funded through the City of Regina's operating budget. The Atoskata Program helps young offenders involved in auto theft to take responsibility for their offences by cleaning back alleys in inner-city neighborhoods. This program is delivered in partnership with Regina Treaty/ Status Indian Services Inc.

### **Scholarships**

The City of Regina awards a maximum of 13 scholarships through the Henry Baker Scholarship Program. Some of the scholarships are targeted at Aboriginal youth attending post-secondary institutions.<sup>19</sup>

### **Affordable Fun Program**

The Affordable Fun Program (AFP) is an opportunity for Regina residents facing

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.regina.ca/Page186.aspx>

financial barriers in accessing arts, culture, recreation and leisure programs and services to participate in City of Regina programs. With the AFP, individuals and families can purchase a leisure pass at City of Regina facilities for half-price, and participate in City of Regina registered programs for 80 per cent off the original price.

## **Recreation Programs**

### **Warriors of the Water (Aboriginal Swim Program)**

This program, provided in partnership with Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services (RTSIS), is designed to provide participants with the training, skills and knowledge required to learn how to swim and become a certified lifeguard. The program focuses on staying active, learning leadership skills, cooperation, responsibility and teamwork. Two lifeguards teach the program.

### **My Time**

This evening program (formerly known as Kids Crew) provides youth ages 10-14 an opportunity to experience various arts, crafts, sports, and recreational activities in a number of areas of the city. It runs during the school year (September – April) and is not limited to Aboriginal youth. However, there is an emphasis on introducing the youth to Aboriginal culture through contact with elders and arts and crafts.

### **PlayEscapes**

A free summer program offered for children entering kindergarten through Grade 7. The program offers leader-facilitated play opportunities that develop and foster life skills, creativity, imagination, positive self-image and promote a physically active lifestyle. Children engage in play they select by themselves and are encouraged to explore and discover activities they enjoy most. Cultural components are integrated into the program.

## **Appendix H**

### **Winnipeg**

#### **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community**

##### **Urban Aboriginal Community in Winnipeg**

Winnipeg has one of the fastest growing urban Aboriginal populations in the country and has the largest concentration of urban Aboriginal people in Canada on a per capita basis. “Winnipeg is unique as the birthplace of the Metis Nation and home to the largest Metis community in Canada” (Environics, 2011, 16). In 2006, Winnipeg’s Aboriginal population was 63,740 persons, representing 10.2 per cent of the total population of 625,600 persons. Sixty per cent of Winnipeg’s Aboriginal population identified as Métis and 38 per cent as First Nations. The Aboriginal community reports that they moved to Winnipeg for work opportunities, family reasons and education opportunities (Environics, 2011, 16).

The Aboriginal population of Winnipeg is younger than the non-Aboriginal population. In 2006, the median age of the Aboriginal population in Winnipeg was 26 years compared to 40 years for the non-Aboriginal population. 49 per cent of the Aboriginal population was under the age of 25, compared to 30 per cent of non-Aboriginal people. Only 4 per cent of Aboriginal people were 65 years and over, compared to 14 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population.

In addition to being younger than the non-Aboriginal population, Aboriginal peoples are less likely to have completed post-secondary education, have lower incomes and higher unemployment rates.

The Environics study found that Aboriginal peoples in Winnipeg consider the city their home although a majority reported being concerned about the crime in their city. There is a strong Indigenous pride among Aboriginal people although they report that discrimination is pervasive and they personally experienced the impact of negative stereotypes. The top life aspiration of Aboriginal residents in Winnipeg is a good job or career (2011, 10).

## **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community<sup>20</sup>**

### **Maskwachees Declaration**

In 2000 Winnipeg endorsed the Maskwachees Declaration. This provided a commitment by the City to be a “partner with the Aboriginal community to reinforce traditional, cultural and spiritual values while addressing issues related to poverty, unemployment, training and education.”

### **Municipal Aboriginal Pathways (MAP)**

First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways (MAP) is intended as a secondary plan which identifies key strategic challenges which the City must address to meet the policy direction set out in Plan Winnipeg 2020.

MAP was adopted in 2003. It is Council's foundational Aboriginal policy. MAP sets out guiding principles that define the working relationship between the City and the Aboriginal community: co-operation, trust, value (i.e. efficient programs and services that maximize the value to Aboriginal people), sustainability, and flexibility. This involved implementing 15 initiatives in 5 policy pathways (Employment, Safety, Economic Development, Quality of Life and Outreach and Education). The Aboriginal Youth Strategy has evolved out of MAP.

### **Aboriginal Partnership Committee**

Since 2004, the Aboriginal Partnership Committee has worked with the Aboriginal community, other stakeholders and different levels of government to deliver the Urban Aboriginal Strategy in Winnipeg. The committee identifies and recommends policies, programs, and funding to address short and long-term Aboriginal issues for the Urban Aboriginal Strategy and the other levels of government.

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<sup>20</sup> This information was collected by reviewing publicly available documents (2011 and 2013), the City website (2011 and 2013) and a conversation with the key informant (2011).

In 2010, the committee name changed to the Aboriginal Strategic Partnership Circle but maintained the vision of 'a healthy, vibrant, self-sufficient Aboriginal community that has equal opportunities for socio-economic and cultural well-being within the City of Winnipeg.'<sup>21</sup>

## **Aboriginal Youth Strategy**

In 2008 City Council passed a motion to adopt the Aboriginal Youth Strategy (AYS).

The key priorities, as identified with the community, are:

- Building and supporting health families
- Economic development and employment development opportunities
- Education and keeping children in school
- Comprehensive communication strategy (internal/external)
- Performance and evaluation

The last two priorities are primarily internal to the City. There are five working groups, one for each priority.

In 2009 the AYS was named Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak (Aboriginal Young People Leading) in a naming ceremony.

AYS is currently being implemented in 2 streams. The first stream focuses on the provision of funding and in-kind supports to community based organizations that provide youth focused programming and supports. Presently ten community based partnerships are being supported. These partnerships started as funding relationships but have blossomed into deeper relationships. The City works with these organizations to support youth (who have successfully completed training) with shadowing, coop and employment opportunities.

The second stream of the strategy focuses on enhancing current civic systems and processes to allow easier access for Aboriginal youth. Various initiatives are occurring across civic departments that focus on engaging Aboriginal youth in mentorship and training opportunities.

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<sup>21</sup> [http://www.winnipeg.ca/cms/ays/aboriginal\\_partnership\\_committee.stm](http://www.winnipeg.ca/cms/ays/aboriginal_partnership_committee.stm)

For example, a post-secondary scholarship is available for Aboriginal youth who will enroll at a recognized post-secondary institution (<http://winnipeg.ca/cms/ays/scholarship.stm>). Preference is given to students interested in careers with the City of Winnipeg.

AYS is the signature policy of the sitting Council. It has been funded at \$1,000,000 per year since 2008.

### **Urban Aboriginal Opportunities Committee**

Mayor took the responsibility of Secretary of Urban Aboriginal Opportunities in 2008 (maintained to 2013). This was a strong signal to the Aboriginal community that the Mayor (and Council) is prioritizing the urban Aboriginal community.

### **Memorandum of Collaboration**

In July 2010, the City signed a memorandum of collaboration (MOC) with the provincial and federal governments that calls for 'intergovernmental strategic alignment process to support the Aboriginal community in Winnipeg'<sup>22</sup>. The MOC calls for the three levels of government to work together to improve the economic participation of urban Aboriginal people in Winnipeg in order to close the social gaps that exist. A Strategic Plan is being developed and should be completed in 2011.

### **Urban Reserve**

In July 2010, the first Urban Reserve (in Winnipeg) was developed with the Long Plain First Nations (an agreement between the First Nation and the federal government). In May 2013, the urban reserve was officially opened with ceremony on a parcel of land purchased by the First Nation.

### **OurWinnipeg**

OurWinnipeg<sup>23</sup> replaces Plan Winnipeg 2020 Vision and went into effect August 2011. It is a 25

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015462/1100100015463>

<sup>23</sup> <http://winnipeg.ca/interhom/CityHall/OurWinnipeg/pdf/OurWinnipeg.Jul15.2010.pdf>

year vision for the City.

As in the plan that preceded it, there is an explicit commitment to the urban Aboriginal community in the city. In the plan, Direction 5 states the (City of Winnipeg will)

“acknowledge that Aboriginal Winnipeggers bring a diverse richness of cultures, traditions, languages, teaching, values, skills, and perspectives to our City.” (page 76)

Direction 6 says “Foster Opportunities, particularly for Aboriginal Winnipeggers, to obtain meaningful employment by building on current civic practices, processes and community partnerships.” (page 77)

In a companion document, Complete Communities<sup>24</sup>, which is one of four direction strategies supporting OurWinnipeg, Section 10 addresses ‘Aboriginal Economic Development Zones’ – speaking directly to the urban reserve recently opened in Winnipeg and in anticipation of others in the future.

Direction 1: “The City of Winnipeg will negotiate with Treaty Land Entitlement First Nations, Municipal Development and Services Agreements, to include arrangements for the provision of, and payment for, services, by-law application and enforcement on the Reserve, and a joint consultative process for matters of mutual concern, such as land use planning, a dispute resolution process and any additional relevant items.” (page 122)

## **Initiatives, Programs & Services**

Staff from the Aboriginal Services Branch is involved with municipal departments on over forty projects being implemented. For example, they are working with Human Resources on ensuring recruiting and job descriptions do not unduly exclude those from Aboriginal communities.

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<sup>24</sup> [http://winnipeg.ca/interhom/CityHall/OurWinnipeg/pdf/CompleteCommunities.Jul\\_12.2011.WEB\\_RGB.pdf](http://winnipeg.ca/interhom/CityHall/OurWinnipeg/pdf/CompleteCommunities.Jul_12.2011.WEB_RGB.pdf)

Using the 2006 Labour Market Availability statistics and customizing it for the occupations available at the city, the benchmark (2010) for Aboriginal representation is 8.4per cent. In 2008, it was 6.6per cent. The representation of Aboriginal people within the City is increasing each year.

The Aboriginal Employee Group (AEG) is a grassroots initiative that was established in 2002. It provides information and leadership to the organization and employees on Aboriginal issues and resources. First Nations, Métis and Inuit employees within the organization are invited to participate in the group. Non-Aboriginal persons are invited to join as a Friend of AEG.

The vision of the AEG is to “provide a foundation of supports and resources available to new and current City of Winnipeg Aboriginal employees” and the mission is to “partner with the City of Winnipeg employees to create a healthy work environment for all public servants.”

One of the recommendations they forwarded to the City was that Aboriginal employees may wish to access an elder instead of a counselor through the EAP. This was discussed, explored and eventually agreed to and implemented.

The City of Winnipeg provides Aboriginal Youth Scholarships to provide recognition to students in grades 6 – 12 for attendance and community involvement. In Grade 11 and 12, employment opportunities are possible for promising students. The City of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg School Division have established scholarships and service awards for junior and senior high school students – some of which are won by Aboriginal students<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.winnipeg.ca/hr/e&d/scholarships.stm>



## **Appendix I**

### **Toronto**

#### **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community**

##### **Urban Aboriginal Community in Toronto**

*“The City is an area that holds great historical significance in that it is a sacred place for cultural practices and a place where diverse Aboriginal nations came together to exchange goods.” (Environics, 2010, 17)*

In Toronto, the Aboriginal population is 13,605 persons, just over 0.5 per cent of the total population (2,503,281 persons)<sup>26</sup> and an increase of 20 per cent from the 2001 census. In the city of Toronto census under-reporting is considered a real concern. The City's Task Force on Community Access and Equity, in 1999, estimated that Toronto's Aboriginal community numbered between 65,000 and 100,000. Even with modest growth, the population numbers suggested by this estimate are far in excess of the 'official' count. Over 65 per cent of the Toronto Aboriginal population identifies as First Nations and 29 per cent as Métis. Aboriginal peoples report that they move to Toronto for work opportunities, education opportunities and the amenities and services available (Environics, 2010, 16).

The Toronto Aboriginal population is younger and has a much lower percentage of seniors than the non-Aboriginal population. The median age in the Aboriginal community is 32 years, compared to 37 years in the non-Aboriginal community.

The 2006 census showed that, in addition to being younger than the non-Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal community in Toronto is higher unemployment rates, lower incomes and Aboriginal youth are more likely than non-Aboriginal children to live in a single parent household (Environics, 2010, 18).

The Environics study found that most Aboriginal peoples in Toronto consider the city their home and experience a sense of social acceptance by the broader community (a viewpoint not shared

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<sup>26</sup> Statistics Canada, 2006

by Aboriginal people in other cities). They are more likely than Aboriginal peoples in the other study cities to be very proud of their First Nations, Metis and Aboriginal identities. Despite the feeling of social acceptance, they report that discrimination is pervasive and are personally impacted by negative stereotypes. Some of their top life aspirations are to complete their education and to raise a family (2010, 10).

## **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community<sup>27</sup>**

### **Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities in Toronto**

In May 2010 Council passed a Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities in Toronto<sup>28</sup>. The Statement of Commitment was developed together with the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee, community members and city staff.

The Statement will:

- recognise the unique status of Urban Aboriginal people in Toronto and their status as the original inhabitants;
- recognise that the Aboriginal population in Toronto is made up of richly diverse communities, including First Nations from across Canada, Métis, and Inuit people;
- recognise that many Aboriginal people living in Toronto are affected by historical and contemporary injustices which continue to have profound impacts on most, if not all, aspects of life;
- recognize the contributions of Aboriginal people to the success and vitality of the City;
- inform Council's decisions regarding City policies and programs relating to Urban Aboriginal Peoples of Toronto;
- provide a strategic platform for pro-active intergovernmental relations on Urban Aboriginal issues;
- inform responses from the City when issues related to urban Aboriginal people arise;

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<sup>27</sup> This information was collected by reviewing publicly available documents (2011 and 2013), the City website (2011 and 2013) and a conversation with key informants (2011).

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-30867.pdf>

- inform all aspects of departmental policy, planning and service delivery throughout the Toronto Public Service;
- inform human resource strategies aimed at increasing the representation of Aboriginal people at all occupational levels of the Toronto Public Service.

The Statement of Commitment is meant to guide the City in its continuing relationships and ongoing work with Aboriginal communities, its discussions with other municipalities and to inform the development of policy, planning and service delivery throughout the municipal public service. It will also provide a foundation for the development of an Urban Aboriginal policy framework.

The next phase is to work with Aboriginal communities through the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee to develop an Action Plan, consistent with the Statement of Commitment, towards an Urban Aboriginal Framework.

Towards the fulfillment of the Statement of Commitment, in July 2012, Toronto City Council adopted two reports: Toronto Public Service (TPS) Education Strategy on Aboriginal History and Culture and Aboriginal Representation on Agencies and Corporations both speaking to goals expressed in the Statement of Commitment.

The Office of Equity, Diversity and Human Rights reports annually to Council on the fulfillment of the goals within the Statement of Commitment.

### **Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee**

Established in 1999, the committee's role is to use their knowledge and expertise to provide advice to Mayor and Council. The City Manager's Office provides a staff person to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee which is chaired by a member of council. The City Clerk's office provides staff support to the Committee.

The Committee is leading the development and implementation of the Action Plan (see Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities).

## Initiatives, Programs & Services

**Shelter Housing and Support Division:** There are several housing options for Aboriginal people – one for male youth, one for female youth, one for women with children and a Native Men's Residence. There are also Out of the Cold program initiatives in the winter.

Toronto Public Health hosts an **Aboriginal Health Roundtable**. It is a collaborative group of people and organizations who want to promote and protect the health and well-being of Aboriginal people in the City of Toronto.

June is **Aboriginal History month** in the City of Toronto. The City of Toronto and the Toronto Aboriginal City Celebration Committee host a number of events leading up to and on **National Aboriginal Day**.

**Aboriginal Affairs Award** was established in 2003 and is awarded annually to an individual or an organization whose volunteer efforts have made a significant or on-going contribution to the well-being and advancement of the Aboriginal community in Toronto.

## Heritage Preservation

Since 2006, the province of Ontario, the City, along with a consultant team (Archaeological Services Inc.) has been developing best practices for working with First Nation communities. In January 2011 these best practices are integrated into the Standards and Guidelines for Archaeologists (Engaging Aboriginal Communities in Archaeology). This work was done in close consultation with the City's Aboriginal Affairs Committee.

The Master Plan of Archaeological Resources has been developed and an RFP has been issued (2011) to roll out the plan and develop an implementation framework over the next two years.

For the Bicentennial and the rehabilitation of Fort York National Historic Site, which includes a new Visitor Centre:

- "A War of 1812 Book of Remembrance" exhibit at the City of Toronto's Market Gallery will look at the four combatant groups at the battle - British, Canadians, Americans and First Nations - and a contemporary First Nations community will be consulted on the text and design of the First Nations content. Stacey LaForme, a poet/storyteller of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation will contribute a poem to help to tell the story of the battle and the fallen at the Battle of York (1813).
- New memorial plaque at Fort York National Historic Site commemorating the First Nations fallen at the Battle of York. Coordination of the plaque text and design among First Nations communities is being handled by a First Nations representative.
- Exhibits within the new Fort York Visitor Centre (opened in Fall 2012). A contemporary First Nations community is being consulted on the content and design of three exhibit areas: the Vault, the Exhibits Gallery, and the Time Tunnel. One of the three themes in this exhibit will look at the changing relationship between the Crown and the First Nations since the War of 1812. The Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation will be a case study in this exhibit, and are an integral part of its development. Another section of this exhibit, dealing with the evolution of Canadian identity, will feature historic and contemporary First Nations stories.

## **Appendix J**

### **Vancouver, B.C.**

#### **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community**

The city of Vancouver is situated on the traditional territories of the Xwmethkwyiem (Musqueam), Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations.

#### **Urban Aboriginal Community in Vancouver**

According to the 2006 Census, Vancouver has the third largest Aboriginal population of any city in Canada and yet Aboriginal people account for only 2% of the total population of Vancouver. In 2006, Vancouver city's Aboriginal population was 11,145 persons, representing 1.9 per cent of the total population of 578,041 persons. The Aboriginal population was made up those who identify as First Nations (58 %) and Metis (37%). The Aboriginal community was made up of residents from all over B.C. and Canada. Aboriginal peoples report that they move to Vancouver to pursue educational opportunities, as well as for family reasons and the city life/amenities that are available (Environics, 2011, 16).

The Vancouver Aboriginal population is younger than the non-Aboriginal population and has a lower percentage of seniors than the non-Aboriginal population. The median age in the Aboriginal community is 31 years, compared to 39 years in the non-Aboriginal community.

The 2006 census indicated that, in addition to being younger than the non-Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal community in Vancouver has higher unemployment rates, lower education and income levels and Aboriginal youth are more likely than non-Aboriginal children to live in a single parent household (Environics, 2011, 17).

The Environics study found that most Aboriginal peoples in Vancouver consider the city their home but this feeling is less widespread than in other study cities and there is a high degree of satisfaction about life in Vancouver. They are confident about their ability to make a positive impact in the city. Aboriginal peoples in Vancouver report a higher degree of social acceptance than in other cities even though they reported that discrimination is pervasive and a majority reported being personally impacted by negative stereotypes. They report a strong Indigenous

pride and have confidence in their ability to retain their cultural identity. Some of their top life aspirations are raising a family, completing higher education, travel and vacation and career/job satisfaction (Environics, 2011, 10, 17).

## **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community<sup>29</sup>**

### **Memorandum of Understanding and Protocol Agreement**

The City of Vancouver signed Memorandums of Understanding and Protocol Agreements with the Xwmethkwyiem (Musqueam) First Nations in 2005 and with the Squamish Nation in May 2010 as part of a commitment to:

“establish a cooperative government to government relationship for the purpose of sharing information, improving communications, addressing specific concerns, setting a solid foundation for future planning and raising awareness and understanding of the First Nations title, rights and responsibilities and the rights of the City under the Vancouver Charter.”

### **Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee**

Established in 2012, the mandate of the Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee is to:

- Coordinate Aboriginal consultation to the Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Communities
- Facilitate decision making on municipal matters, such as community services, planning, and design to regularize the consultation process
- Create a system of collaborative decision making
- Act as a catalyst to developments for Aboriginal Peoples in Vancouver
- Act as an advisory and support body to the City
- Provide advice and makes recommendation to Council on issues of concern to Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Communities<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> This information was collected by reviewing publicly available documents (2013) and the City website (2013) and a conversation with the key informant (2013).

<sup>30</sup> <http://vancouver.ca/your-government/urban-aboriginal-peoples-advisory-committee.aspx>

## **Initiatives, Programs and Services**

### **Year of Reconciliation**

The Mayor and City Council voted unanimously to proclaim June 21, 2013 to June 20, 2014 as a Year of Reconciliation in Vancouver. This year-long initiative will feature gatherings, inter-cultural story-telling, public education and cultural and arts programs with a goal to heal the past and build new relationships between Aboriginal peoples and all Vancouverites towards a common future.

Events are being planned with the Vancouver Public Library and in September, to coincide with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission<sup>31</sup> events in Vancouver.

### **Dialogues Project<sup>32</sup>**

Launched in 2010, the Dialogues Project is short-hand for *Dialogues between First Nations, Urban Aboriginal and Immigrant Communities in Vancouver*. The goal of the project is to build increased understanding and strengthened relations between Aboriginal and immigrant/non-Aboriginal community through dialogue circles, community research, cultural exchange visits, youth and elders programs and legacy projects.

### **Employment Opportunities for Aboriginal Residents**

In 2012, the City signed a memorandum of understanding with the Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society (ACCESS) to support the creation of training and employment opportunities for aboriginal residents. ACCESS guides and assists applicants through a nine-week training program that will teach clerical, administrative and library circulation skills. Following the training the students will be interviewed for positions at the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Public Libraries and the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation.

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<sup>31</sup> <http://www.myrobust.com/websites/vancouver/index.php?p=719>

<sup>32</sup> <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/dialoges-launch-program.pdf>



## **Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre**

Is a liaison agency between the Aboriginal community and the Vancouver Police Department (VPD). It provides a safe place for community members to gather to discuss justice and safety issues in Vancouver. Provides a variety of services and programs, in partnership with VPD – victim support services, sister watch, cultural awareness training/public education, cultural leadership for Aboriginal youth, healing project, community volunteering and outreach, community courage award, and community bridging gatherings.

## **Inventory of Aboriginal Services, Issues and Initiatives in Vancouver<sup>33</sup>**

Compiled in 2007, this resource is available for download or viewing on the City of Vancouver site<sup>34</sup>. The inventory gives details of activities, issues and organizations relevant to aboriginal communities, along with statistics, trends, and gaps.

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<sup>33</sup> <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/aboriginal-services-inventory.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> <http://vancouver.ca/people-programs/inventory-of-services-issues-and-initiatives.aspx>

## **Appendix K**

### **Surrey, B.C.**

#### **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with the Urban Aboriginal Community**

The city of Surrey is situated on the traditional territories of the Semyome (Semiahmoo) and Kwantlen First Nations.

#### **Urban Aboriginal Community in Surrey**

According to the 2006 census data, Surrey's Aboriginal population is 7,800 persons – about 2per cent of the total population of the city and a growth of 10.6per cent from the 2001 census. Surrey's Aboriginal peoples tend to be non-status, self-identified Aboriginal people and there is a large Métis population. The Aboriginal population in Surrey also has the largest number of children and youth in Metro Vancouver.

#### **Municipal Engagement Initiatives with Urban Aboriginal Community<sup>35</sup>**

##### **Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents**

In 2006 Surrey adopted a Social Plan<sup>36</sup> developed in conjunction with the community. The Plan focuses on five main issue areas:

- Housing and Homelessness
- Substance Abuse and Addiction
- Children and Youth
- Crime and Public Safety
- Community Development and Diversity

Although there are no specific policy initiatives for the urban Aboriginal communities in Surrey, specific needs like emergency and transitional housing, drug and alcohol treatment for

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<sup>35</sup> This information was collected by reviewing publicly available documents (2011 and 2013), the City website (2011 and 2013) and a conversation with the key informant (2011 and 2013).

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.surrey.ca/files/SummaryReportFinal1.pdf>

Aboriginal youth, child and youth friendly initiatives and inclusion programs are outlined in the Social Plan.

The Social Plan identified, under Community Development and Diversity, a need for making the city and staff environment more inclusive. Various initiatives have been undertaken, including cultural celebrations at City Hall (at lunch time), and participation in the Fusion Festival<sup>37</sup>.

The Social Plan is complemented by two policy documents: the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan<sup>38</sup> (adopted July 2012) and the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless<sup>39</sup> (adopted July 2013) both addressing issues of concern for the urban Aboriginal community (amongst others).

### **Committee of Council**

The Diversity Advisory Committee is a committee of Council. Its “purpose is to enhance and celebrate diversity and inclusion and to advance Surrey as a welcoming and inclusive community for all.”<sup>40</sup> Two of the members of the committee are Aboriginal – one First Nations member and one Métis member.

Social Policy Advisory Committee promotes the social well-being of Surrey residents. Issues specific to Surrey’s urban Aboriginal community are often presented, discussed and/or addressed in this forum.

### **Initiatives, Programs & Services**

#### **Employment Opportunities for Aboriginal Residents**

In 2012, the City signed a memorandum of understanding with the Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society (ACCESS) to support the creation of training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal residents. ACCESS guides and assists applicants through a nine-week training program that will teach clerical, administrative and library circulation skills. Following the training the students will be

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<sup>37</sup> <http://www.surrey.ca/fusionfestival/>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.surrey.ca/community/11554.aspx>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.surrey.ca/community/11209.aspx>

<sup>40</sup> [https://www.surrey.ca/bylawsandcouncillibrary/DCT\\_DAC\\_TOR\\_2012\\_09\\_18.pdf](https://www.surrey.ca/bylawsandcouncillibrary/DCT_DAC_TOR_2012_09_18.pdf)

interviewed for positions at the City of Surrey and Surrey Libraries. This is the second cohort of trainees supported by the City of Vancouver.

### **Partnership with Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association**

Surrey, in comparison to Vancouver, has a less developed social infrastructure to support its urban Aboriginal communities. The Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association (also known as Klah-How Eya Aboriginal Services<sup>41</sup>) is the main non-governmental agency in Surrey. It offers cultural activities, employment programs and family support programs. The City of Surrey has fostered a unique relationship with the Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association through various programs and services resulting in strengthened communication, cultural sharing and community involvement.

Awakening the Spirit, was a cross cultural community partnership – a carving project sponsored by Legacies Now, BC Gaming, the City of Surrey, Surrey Art Gallery and Klah-How-eya Aboriginal Services in support of youth at risk from the Aboriginal community (2007-2008). The community named the project “Awakening the Spirit” in relation to the energy felt when moving the old growth red cedar log from a temporary site in North Vancouver to the carving site at the Surrey Art Gallery.

There are project specific activities in the Parks and Recreation Department and the Surrey Public Library. Parks staff maintain an ongoing relationship with the Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association.

Surrey Public Library has a partnership with the Fraser Regional Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association in providing culturally appropriate programming.

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<sup>41</sup> <http://www.sacsbcc.org/>