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# EDMONTON COMMUNITY PLAN

## URBAN ABORIGINAL STRATEGY



**Prepared for:  
Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association**

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### Disclaimer

This document has been prepared as a result of a request for services. It is noted that the information presented herein is for the purposes of brevity and reflective of time limitations in collecting, analyzing, and summarizing the data available. Ideally, this type of investigative and strategic planning would require greater in-depth research however time and financial restraints were imposed.

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## Introduction and Methodology

The following provides context for the 2015/16 Urban Aboriginal Strategies (UAS) community engagement and planning event that took place on March 5, 2015 in Edmonton, AB at the Santa Maria Goretti Centre 11050 – 90 Street hosted by Canadian Native Friendship Centre (CNFC) Edmonton. The descriptors for the terminology below are provided by Government of Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (AANDC), with reference to additional detail contained in the relevant footnotes.

### Urban Partnerships<sup>1</sup>

The Urban Partnerships program encourages partnerships and community planning, and making investments in projects that increase the participation of urban Aboriginal people in the economy, so that other community stakeholders will also feel confident in investing their resources. It is a collaborative approach that brings together governments, Aboriginal communities and the private and not for profit sectors in partnership to address the barriers preventing urban Aboriginal people from participating fully in the economy.

Under the Urban Partnerships program, projects that would be considered for funding would include initiatives, research and approaches that support increasing the participation of urban Aboriginal individuals and communities in the economy.

AANDC has delivered a portion of Urban Partnerships funding to establish regional work plans. These work plans are being developed in partnerships with Aboriginal organizations, other levels of government, and other interested parties. Once established, the work plans will help guide the National Association of Friendship Centres' funding decisions starting in 2015-16.

### Community Strategic Plan<sup>2</sup>

This strategy provides a vision to strive toward, identifying priorities and targeting initiatives to help make progress to realize the community's vision. The strategic plan sets out the challenges the community faces, identifies opportunities to make a difference, provides scope and context, sets clear priorities, and describes a roadmap to achieve specific results.

Consultative Community Planning for urban centres, as well as a regional Alberta plan are funded through AANDC. In past years the planning process involved larger urban centres (Edmonton, Calgary, Grande Prairie). The geographic scope subsequently widened to include Lethbridge, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, and Red Deer. And in 2014 an additional 15 urban centres were added to the community consultation process.

Since the announcement of a new UAS on February 6, 2014; negotiation on scope for planning began through discussions between the ANFCA, AANDC, and the Province of Alberta's Aboriginal Relations department. Up until late February 2015 no host agency had been identified to carry out the community engagement process for Edmonton.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1391025637846/1391025764259>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1386530682712/1386530771640>

Because the Edmonton UAS did not form part of the aforementioned process and as a result of delayed timing the same methodology and progression of two community engagement sessions could not take place. A date to host the community engagement was finally agreed upon with a community plan deadline of March 31, 2015. ANFCA's commitment to ensure the process occurred despite the sluggishness of its sponsor is demonstrative of their commitment to ensure a grass-roots participatory process is realized.

An independent and professional consultant was engaged to facilitate the community engagement process for Edmonton and CNFC agreed to graciously host the event despite the late start in the process. The approach to hire an independent firm was taken for the following reasons:

**Transparency:** the working relationship between funder and those funded can become murky, particularly when attempting to undergo a consultative process. In an effort to find constructive, timely feedback on behalf of all stakeholders, transparency and accountability is necessary for the overall process, and helps build the connections between stakeholder's input and the final result.

**Independence:** Outcomes from this plan will have a direct and significant impact on future financial commitments in the UAS. Neutral and impartial facilitation is therefore warranted.

### Terminology

For the purposes of this plan the term "Aboriginal" has been used throughout. It is recognized that this is not always the most politically correct word, and many of those coined Aboriginal people do not have any affinity or use for terms such as "Indian," or "Aboriginal," which are derived from European sources and may be regarded as the impositions of an external and hostile system of authority. For the last few decades, the most inclusive term in general usage in Canada has been "Aboriginal," a term that gained significant currency with its use in the Canadian Constitution of 1982 (referring to section 35 rights of First Nation, Métis and Inuit).

More recently, those who are indigenous to what is now known as Canada prefer to refer to themselves in the context of their specific nation and/or communal rights, and/or traditional land base. Additionally, while community members and participants throughout the session may be preferential to the terminology "Indigenous", the financial resources affiliated with this consultative process are from AANDC, and as such, for the purposes of community plans under the umbrella Urban Aboriginal Strategies (UAS), the term "Aboriginal" has been used throughout. This in no way is intended to offend any of the participants and/or readers of this plan/report; rather it is a reality of reporting requirement(s).

## Planning Process

Research shows that the typical planning process takes six to twelve months to complete. This undertaking attempts to find a systematic technique that responds to today's rapidly changing environment. Due to funding restraints and lack of a timely financial commitment, this plan has been simplified yet attempts to still answer the following key planning objectives:

- ❖ **Where are we now?**
- ❖ **What do we have to work with?**
- ❖ **Where do we want to be in the future?**

The author/facilitator of this report is not a member of the ANFCA and/or any of the auxiliary friendship centres/associations in Alberta including the CNFC Edmonton; nor is the author/facilitator a contractor of AANDC or the Province of Alberta. In carrying out the duty of a professional facilitator, participants/stakeholders were assured that their involvement would:

- 1) Have an impact on future funding priorities with respect to the UAS, and
- 2) Be kept autonomous throughout the process.

A common thread in the consultative process often leads to levels of discomfort in speaking out for some participants, therefore a layered process was implemented in order to gain the information required in a very short period of time (3.5 hours).

**Layer 1:** A facilitated question and answer technique was utilized. Cohesive group dynamic formed in short order, however often only the voices of a few key stakeholders can be heard in a group discussion (to compensate, see layers 2-4).

The groups of 66+ participants were divided into 5 working tables. In groups, each question from the facilitator was discussed for 15-20 minutes. Notes from the group were collected by volunteers from the City of Edmonton. At the end of each question and discussion period one member of the group was given time to recap what the group answers were.

**Layer 2:** Priority categories were presented in a secret ballot format. The ballot was presented after the facilitated session had ended – much of the conversation was fresh in the participants minds, yet this offered a quiet moment to confer ones own thoughts on what should be the top priority without external interference. Participants were reminded NOT to include their personal information on the ballots so as to ensure confidentiality and privacy was intact.

**Layer 3:** Participants were provided with direct contact information for the facilitator (phone/fax/email). The facilitators indicated a willingness to hear afterthoughts; additional comments from participants / stakeholders to ensure an exhaustive attempt at hearing from those who are directly impacted by the UAS would feel their opinions had counted.

**Layer 4:** Those who could not attend and still expressed an interest in participating were provided with the facilitated session questions as well as the ballot sheet and given a deadline of no later than noon March 16, 2015 to feed the information back to the facilitator.

## Overview of Edmonton

Edmonton is the capital city of the province of Alberta, Canada. Sometimes called Canada's Gateway to the North, Edmonton is the farthest north of Canada's large cities and has important road, rail and air transportation links. From its beginnings as a Hudson's Bay Company fur trading fort, Edmonton has evolved into a city with a wide range of cultural, sporting and tourist attractions, and is the host of more than two-dozen festivals each year. Most of Edmonton's population works in the service and trade industries as well as in the municipal, provincial and federal governments. Edmonton is located on the North Saskatchewan River near the centre of the province of Alberta.

The following secondary information has been compiled to briefly describe the City of Edmonton.

Edmonton is the political and intellectual capital of Canada's province of Alberta.<sup>3</sup>

Greater Edmonton is a metropolitan centre with a population in excess of 1 million. It has one of the lowest population densities of any major North American city - about 67 times less than the population density of New York City!<sup>4</sup>

The City of Edmonton recognizes the importance of the Aboriginal people who call Edmonton their home. "I wish to begin by acknowledging that the City of Edmonton is on Treaty 6 territory, and that the city and all the people here are beneficiaries of this peace and friendship treaty. I also extend to the indigenous nations of the Cree, Nakota Sioux, Blackfoot, Tsuu T'ina, and Métis who have made Edmonton, and this region, their home before the coming of the forts — my respect and desire to build stronger relationships in the spirit and intent of Treaty 6."<sup>5</sup>

In September 2014 a prominent and historical Aboriginal citizen member of the city of Edmonton was honoured through the naming of a new park in downtown Edmonton. Alex Decoteau became the country's first Aboriginal police officer when he joined the Edmonton Police Service in 1909. He was renowned as a long-distance runner, and went to compete at the 1912 Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden. He later enlisted in the Canadian Army in 1916, and was killed in action at the Battle of Passchendaele in October 1917.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> albertacommunityprofiles.ca

<sup>4</sup> ibid

<sup>5</sup> Mayor Don Iveson's Swearing in October 29, 2013

[http://www.edmonton.ca/city\\_government/documents/Swearing\\_In\\_Speech\\_publicversion.pdf#search=mayor%20don%20iveson%20treaty%206](http://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/Swearing_In_Speech_publicversion.pdf#search=mayor%20don%20iveson%20treaty%206)

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.edmonton.ca/city\\_government/news/2014/new-downtown-park-named-after-alex-decoteau.aspx](http://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/news/2014/new-downtown-park-named-after-alex-decoteau.aspx)

## Edmonton Aboriginal Population – NHS 2011

The most recent data available for the Aboriginal population in Canada is from the 2011 National household Survey (NHS). Readers are cautioned that the information presented below is likely incomplete and/or incorrect because many were 'incompletely enumerated' in the NHS. "...those who rely on census Aboriginal data have expressed serious concerns about bias. Statistics Canada has done its best to eliminate potential bias but the Aboriginal response rate may well have been lower than in 2006"<sup>7</sup> Additionally, for several Canadian reserves or settlements, NHS enumeration was either not permitted or was interrupted before it could be completed, or was not possible because of natural events. For additional information, please refer to the Aboriginal Peoples Reference Guide, National Household Survey, 2011. The table below is provided to best estimate the Edmonton Aboriginal population.

**Table 1: Edmonton CMA National Household Survey 2011**

Age groups	Total Population	Aboriginal	First Nations	Métis	Inuk	% Aboriginal	Multiple Aboriginal identities	Aboriginal not included elsewhere	Non-Aboriginal identity	% Non-Aboriginal
Total - Age groups	1,139,580	61,770	26,950	31,780	1,115	5.42%	975	955	1,077,815	94.58%
Under 25 years	367,785	29,810	14,190	14,165	550	8.11%	420	485	337,970	91.89%
Under 15 years	204,300	17,530	8,740	7,890	260	8.58%	340	310	186,765	91.42%
0 to 4 years	73,735	6,395	3,265	2,855	90	8.67%	100	90	67,340	91.33%
5 to 9 years	64,780	5,670	3,105	2,235	65	8.75%	140	120	59,105	91.24%
10 to 14 years	65,780	5,465	2,375	2,790	105	8.31%	100	95	60,315	91.69%
15 to 24 years	163,485	12,280	5,445	6,275	290	7.51%	85	175	151,205	92.49%
15 to 19 years	73,610	6,180	2,670	3,235	160	8.40%	60	60	67,430	91.60%
20 to 24 years	89,875	6,100	2,780	3,050	130	6.79%	30	115	83,780	93.22%
25 years and over	771,800	31,960	12,760	17,615	565	4.14%	550	475	739,840	95.86%
25 to 64 years	653,420	29,625	12,115	16,070	515	4.53%	500	415	623,795	95.47%
25 to 54 years	521,650	25,675	10,760	13,725	440	4.92%	420	335	495,975	95.08%
25 to 34 years	184,975	9,730	4,280	4,935	155	5.26%	265	100	175,240	94.74%
35 to 44 years	161,250	8,245	3,570	4,335	165	5.11%	120	55	153,000	94.88%
45 to 54 years	175,430	7,695	2,905	4,455	125	4.39%	35	175	167,735	95.61%
55 to 64 years	131,765	3,950	1,360	2,345	70	3.00%	85	85	127,820	97.01%
65 years and over	118,380	2,335	640	1,545	50	1.97%	45	50	116,045	98.03%
65 to 74 years	68,855	1,750	455	1,180	45	2.54%	40	30	67,100	97.45%
75 years and over	49,530	585	185	365	-	1.18%	-	-	48,940	98.81%

The Edmonton CMA<sup>8</sup> population in 2011 was 1,139,580 with a Self-identified Aboriginal population of 61,770 representing 5.42% of the total population.

In addition to those calling Edmonton home, the City of Edmonton is the hub of goods and services for most of Northern Alberta and the NWT. Those geographic areas are heavily populated with Aboriginal people. Alberta AANDC registry documents for the same approximate time period indicate a total Alberta First Nation registry of 119,691. Attached as Appendix A is a listing of the registry. As well, Edmonton is located within the Métis Nation boundary of Region 4 with a 40,845 Non-settlement Métis population. Attached as Appendix B is the Métis Nation Registry Table.

<sup>7</sup> John Richards Simon Fraser University as quoted in Globe and Mail May 8, 2013

<sup>8</sup> Census Metropolitan Area

The last known compilation of statistical data on the Edmonton Aboriginal Population was done in 2009 and offered a summary of the Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Peoples living in the City of Edmonton as prepared by Chris Anderson on behalf of the City of Edmonton Aboriginal Relations Office. The work conducted referred to the population from 2006. Select and relevant comments from that report are provided here for reader context into understanding overall populace changes to the Urban Aboriginal Edmontonian:

2009 Edmonton Aboriginal Relations	2011 – NHS Data
We <sup>9</sup> made up 4.8% of Edmonton's total population in 2001 – In 2006 we make up 5.6%	In 2011 we made up 5.42% - The city is growing and Edmonton's Aboriginal population is keeping pace with that of a growing city <sup>10</sup> .
Métis Edmontonians are the largest Aboriginal group in the city: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They make up 55% of the total Aboriginal population of Edmonton</li> </ul>	In 2011 Métis Edmontonians made up 51% of the total Aboriginal population and 3% of the total Edmonton population
First Nations residents make up the second-largest Aboriginal group in the city: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They make up 40% of the Aboriginal population</li> </ul>	In 2011 First Nations made up 44% of the total Aboriginal population and 2% of the total Edmonton population
Inuit residents make up the smallest proportion of Aboriginal residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They make up 1.3% of the Aboriginal population and have more than doubled in size in the past five years.</li> </ul>	In 2011 Inuit made up 1.81 of the total Aboriginal population and 0.10 of the total Edmonton population

<sup>9</sup> "We" is directly quoted – refers to the Aboriginal Population

<sup>10</sup> Edmonton CMA's growth rate from 2006 to 2011 was 12.01%. The Aboriginal population as a percentage changed very minimally.

### Edmonton UAS Community Engagement Attendees 2014/15

There were 42 agencies with 69 participants who attended the March 5, 2015 session as presented in the table below.

**Table 2: Attendance March 15, 2015**

2014/15 UAS Community Engagement Attendance Sheet Date: March 5th 2015		
Count	Organization Name	No. of Attendees
1	Creating Hope Society	1
2	Bent Arrow	3
3	City of Edmonton	4
4	Edmonton Institution for Women	5
5	Aboriginal Education Consultation	1
6	Edmonton Parole (and Men's Insitution)	2
7	University of Alberta (ASSC)	1
8	Aboriginal Learning Services Edmonton Catholic Schools	1
9	Aboriginal Women's Professional Association	1
10	Aboriginal Head Start	2
11	Edmonton Public Library	1
12	DECSA - Distinctive Employment Counseling Services of Alberta	2
13	Edmonton Community Legal Center	2
14	EmployAbilities	2
15	Edmonton Aboriginal Disabilities	1
16	Canadian Native Friendship Center	2
17	Edmonton John Howard Society	2
18	Aboriginal Affairs & Northern Development Canada	1
19	Treaty Six	2
20	Aksis	2
21	Edmonton Police	1
22	City of Edmonton, Aboriginal Relations	3
23	Portage College (Lac La Biche)	1
24	Diocese of Edmonton	1
25	Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women	1
26	Oteenow Employment and Training Society	1
27	Norquest College	1
28	Jasper Place Child and Family Resource Centre	1
29	Wichitowin	1
30	iHuman	1
31	HIV Edmonton	1
32	Metis Child and Family Services	2
33	Poundmakers	1
34	Zebra Child Protection Centre	1
35	MP Central Constituency	2
36	First Nations Metis Inuit Education	1
37	CASA (Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health)	3
38	Yellowhead Tribal College	3
39	Lawyer at Youth Defence Community Office (Legal Aid)	1
40	Corrections Service of Canada (CSC)	1
41	Portage College	1
42	Reach Edmonton	1
43	No Affiliated Organization	1
<b>Total Attendees</b>		<b>69</b>

### Community Stakeholder Engagement Facilitated Session Outcomes

The information contained in this section answers the following basic strategic planning objectives and is a result of the Community Engagement Session held on March 5, 2015 in Edmonton.

- ❖ Where are we now?
- ❖ What do we have to work with?
- ❖ Where do we want to be in the future?

Facilitator questions included:

- ❖ In your sector of work, what programs are out there that are working to support our Aboriginal community?
- ❖ What isn't working/what are barriers?
- ❖ What demographic /cohort is perhaps not being served that ought to be? (document gaps in services)
- ❖ In your experience is there any duplication (or perceived duplication)?
- ❖ What would be some measurable actions that can be taken to make positive changes? How will we know we achieved success in these areas?
- ❖ What needs to change in order to see progress in this community?

The following represents the community engagement session outcomes and are the basis for the Edmonton Community Plan. Readers are reminded that the information presented is as a result of the facilitated session group discussion and are not necessarily the opinion of the ANFCA and/or the host agency CNFC.

## Current State

The points listed below indicate the stakeholder agencies that are currently delivering programs and services to the Urban Aboriginal people in and around the community of Edmonton. The list is not exhaustive, as consultation timing and resources do not permit the conducting of a collectively exhaustive list. This list however is a good indication of those interested stakeholders present as well as those observed to be offering services.<sup>11</sup>The points listed below indicate the agencies, programs and services that are desired for continued and ongoing funding.

- ❖ Institution, programs that are holistic,
- ❖ Targeted problematic behavior,
- ❖ Working with women,
- ❖ Housing is being addressed ,
- ❖ All other programs are quantitative,
- ❖ Community cultural activities can work with escorted tasks,
- ❖ Access to healthy community,
- ❖ Looking for cultural events,
- ❖ Limited access to programs,
- ❖ Have a look at communities that they came from,
- ❖ Blame being placed on past generations,
- ❖ To a large degree programs are not working to most respects,
- ❖ Have to have had experiences,
- ❖ Connecting to volunteers works,
- ❖ Culture works,
- ❖ Have to maintain connection,
- ❖ Many factors contribute to social ills,
- ❖ Nutrition program at seniors centre,
- ❖ Travel out to sites to pick,
- ❖ Homelessness is being addressed, housing first,
- ❖ Aboriginal art,
- ❖ Addressing life skills,
- ❖ Connecting to past knowledge,
- ❖ Schools – six social workers in schools 2 elementary, 4 Jr. High, 4 High Schools,
- ❖ Edmonton John Howard – outreach to victims of family violence,
- ❖ Programs with Aboriginal staff, delivering the programs,
- ❖ Aboriginal people with street people,
- ❖ “Red Road Healing Society”,
- ❖ “Bent Arrow” ,
- ❖ “Corrections”,
- ❖ “KARE Unit” – RCMP,
- ❖ Pathways programs,

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<sup>11</sup> Names have been redacted per Professional Market Research Society Code of Conduct).

- ❖ Bring education as a positive, what can be accomplished through education. Finishing high school;
  - Critical thinking skills – the factor of the education system vs. education,
  - No fail system vs. raising standards/lowering standards,
- ❖ Aboriginal Consulting Services – provision of cultural services,
- ❖ Treaty 6,
- ❖ Programs focused on women missing & murdered women,
- ❖ Metis child and family services,
- ❖ U school and University of Alberta – Gr. 5s come into the university & spend a week to generate interest;
  - Expanded to First Nations,
- ❖ WIEST program @ university of Alberta/ Women in Engineering Science & Technology ,
- ❖ EPS – Aboriginal Youth Police Academy;
  - 27 youth started & finished & left to build trust & perception,
  - Gain high school credit. Building upon community partners to advance work,
- ❖ Edmonton Parole Office to rely on community agencies to help reintegration of offender/inmates back into society,
- ❖ Bent Arrow new in town, pathways to journey,
- ❖ BGS Enterprises – resume writing, interview skills, etc.,
- ❖ Diverse Agencies,
- ❖ Transition programs,
- ❖ Braided Journeys program [REDACTED]
- ❖ Northern Students (Nora) transition to city,
- ❖ Diocese of Edmonton Anglican church to reconnect indigenous people back to spirituality,
- ❖ Diverse options for support those involved in community,
- ❖ Individuals with want to partner in one another,
- ❖ You have an Aboriginal community (very open) established,
- ❖ Having city (mayor/council) that supports the issues in Aboriginal community,
- ❖ Recognition of Aboriginals with disabilities,
- ❖ It's not working but is standing to work (openness to work together),
- ❖ Process in making positive changes in our organization,
- ❖ Non-Aboriginal organizations serving Aboriginal people are being trained to see the issues of the Aboriginal communities,
- ❖ There's a skewed answer – organizations are working to the best of their ability with the money they have. We need space not accommodation,
- ❖ Organizations are struggling because of two worldviews: 2 languages, cultures, etc. Spirit looks different,
- ❖ Are we going to be used?
- ❖ We have a huge over representation in our organizations & that doesn't,
- ❖ We're working with a lot of agencies & it is working (EPS/youth/etc.),
- ❖ Some partnerships do work but there still work to do,
- ❖ Is the purpose of the program working? Zebra is a good model,

- ❖ Our work in First Nation communities is working,
- ❖ Post-secondary at the educational institutions;
  - Aboriginal student services,
  - Transition program U of A,
  - NAIT – Elder Liaison,
  - Grant MacEwan,
- ❖ IAAW & Creating Hope Society – EMAP;
  - Empowering you,
- ❖ Programs run by healthy Aboriginal people;
  - Leadership/decision makers
- ❖ Boyle street,
- ❖ Bissel,
- ❖ Aboriginal Head Start – Amiskwaciy,
- ❖ Youcan – youth organization,
- ❖ iHuman,
- ❖ Decsa,
- ❖ Public Library in partnership,
- ❖ Alberta Health – cultural helpers,
- ❖ Metis Employment/Training,
- ❖ COE – City of Edmonton,
- ❖ CASA – Trauma work/families – (free);
  - Casa house – child and youth services,
- ❖ Education;
  - U of A – transition program milestone 40 years,
    - Advocacy – graduation Coach program ,
  - Other institutes – Centres for Aboriginal (NAIT/Grant MacEwan/Norquest),
  - Aboriginal Head Start – Amiskwaciy – 20 years all over city,
  - Amiskwaciy – culture/elder supports,
- ❖ Supports High Risk People;
  - Boyle Street – Health for two/Mental health/ Cultural Supports,
  - Bissel – Employment/Training/FASD,
  - iHuman,
  - Youcan,
- ❖ Family Supports;
  - CASA,
  - NCSA/Justice – employment,
  - Creating,
  - IAAW,
- ❖ Training/Education;
  - Decsa,
  - Metis Training,
- ❖ Health;

- Alberta Health Services,
- Cultural Supports,
- ❖ Funding/Students;
  - Freehouse,
  - Metis Training and Employment,
  - Belcourt,
  - Rupertsland Institute,
- ❖ HIV Edmonton – there is not strong Aboriginal HIV program, but there is some work being done by friendship centre, etc. All the funding goes to non-Aboriginal organizations – only a fraction of budget goes to Aboriginal people,
- ❖ Youth Defense/young offenders – RAP-ed program, lots of support workers – great for FASD kids, but they do need more NCSA is also doing good work,
- ❖ RAP-ed program, gang-related support program was good, but funding cut,
- ❖ Friendship centre – development of young leaders – working with schools – great model, great program,
- ❖ In-Motion Network – sports leadership for women & girls, working with Aboriginal organizations to engage women in physical activity, recreation, traditional dance programs – understand that wellness means culturally appropriate programs also certify judges, coaches – provide resources to help them gain certification,
- ❖ Poundmakers – young adult, adult programs – recently opened outpatient office in partnership with friendship centre, working well, able to bring people in to treatment if needed, Esquau lodge – for women, but funding is an issue, operating for now, but had to make it sustainable,
- ❖ Bent Arrow- Kahkiyaw program – partnership with children’s services – work as a team with family. No decisions made without family. Have cultural connectors, youth work, lot more files closing and staying closed. Working in partnership is beneficial – not duplicating,
- ❖ Nikki – T6 confederacy – bilateral Dept. – signed MOU with Fort Edmonton, developing an Elders council for Fort Edmonton,
- ❖ Chiefs – scrapped consultation levy act until more consultation,
- ❖ Children/Family services – working with province,
- ❖ Education Act – working with Treaty’s # 6,7,8 and province of Alberta,
- ❖ Health – NHB – navigators developing better programming for all communities, help everyone who comes to office,
- ❖ FNMI Education Unit – EPSB – consultants assigned to each school district - 200 schools each, Funding allocation and curriculum together, compiling/netting resources for educators,
- ❖ ECSB – Grad Coach Model – Braided Journeys,
- ❖ Aboriginal Head Start Program,
- ❖ Aksis Networking Events,
- ❖ HIV programming lacking Aboriginal focus,
- ❖ Aboriginal Head Start – staffing issues, need funding. Need staff- there is a high turnover. Need stability for staff. Sustainable funding to start initiatives and to pilot projects and find what works,

- ❖ Low funding cap – Band-Aid solutions, not enough sustained funding to produce well-functioning programs,
- ❖ Housing – low-income, affordable, even shelters. High-risk kids get kicked out of shelters, group homes, where can they go?
- ❖ More specialized programs for youth with addictions, etc.,
- ❖ Housing for women – where do you go after shelter? Non-traditional housing so they can move on from violent situations,
- ❖ There needs to be more bodies – people in the schools – need more liaisons in the schools to help kids,
- ❖ Court system not working – need more Aboriginals focused resources and more restorative justice (Gladue Court) judiciary needs to understand Gladue – system and culture needs to change. Restorative justice applies to urban Aboriginal people as well,
- ❖ Hospitals – need to incorporate traditional medicine, people can not smudge in hospital, must get security to let you in to cultural room,
- ❖ Cultural education/awareness needed for hospitals, courts, schools,
- ❖ Aboriginal health and wellness centre would be nice – to collaborate with hospitals. Winnipeg has an Aboriginal health and wellness centre where you can see elders as well as doctors, as well as naturopaths, etc.,
- ❖ Navigators need to help community members get through health care system – demand is so high, there are not enough navigators within organizations Treaty 6,7,8, and
- ❖ Helping people understand programs, navigators for all programs and services – getting treaty cards, etc.

## Barriers and Gaps in Service Delivery

The points listed below provide insights into the types of barriers that are encountered in the community of Edmonton.

- ❖ Low incomes housing, lack of,
- ❖ Lack of ID, no funds to get ID,
- ❖ Not sure,
- ❖ Legal sector not working very well,
- ❖ Silos of work taking place,
- ❖ Barriers in communication,
- ❖ Lacking volunteers,
- ❖ Preventative work,
- ❖ Not knowing where to find resources,
- ❖ A lot of things,
- ❖ Discrimination, systemic,
- ❖ Lack of self-esteem,
- ❖ Competition for dollars,
- ❖ Lack of co-operation,
- ❖ Funding and facilities ,
- ❖ Lack of space,
- ❖ Temporal funding,
- ❖ Programs work, then funding pulled,
- ❖ In-fighting in regards to community around Wicahitowin,
- ❖ Addiction, housing, barriers make people ineligible for programs,
- ❖ Silos,
- ❖ Addressing disabilities,
- ❖ Mental health issues not being addressed,
- ❖ Lack of Aboriginal training and knowledge,
- ❖ High incarceration rates,
- ❖ Hard to apply for funding when working in silos,
- ❖ Translation knowledge and access,
- ❖ Housing and finances for clients,
- ❖ Education cutbacks, support in schools,
- ❖ Accruing information,
- ❖ Funding for education;
  - Upgrading,
  - Qualification to pursue education,
- ❖ Focus on creation on jobs for forgiveness,
- ❖ Institutional racism and ignorance;
  - History of culture,
- ❖ Legislative policies and systematic issues,

- ❖ Funding cuts around supports to cultural programming and supports,
- ❖ Heavy reliance and downloading to community and volunteers,
- ❖ More people entering justice system,
- ❖ Collaborations between agency and clients within systems is need,
- ❖ Legacy of residential schools to be addressed (seven generations to get over legacy),
- ❖ Unique needs of Aboriginal peoples;
  - Example: housing and access to police information,
- ❖ Attitudes and perspectives on Indigenous peoples,
- ❖ Worldviews and compatibility with “mainstream” society need to be further explored,
- ❖ Transferred residential schools legacy;
  - To sixty’s scoop,
- ❖ Too many consultations, time for action. Understanding where people came from,
- ❖ Lack of hope,
- ❖ Miss-distributed funding e.g.. Building more “Aboriginal” jails vs. housing and perspective programs for Indigenous peoples,
- ❖ No sustainable funding, all project related funding (too much short-term),
- ❖ Project related funding driven by program outcome, what government wants versus what others want,
- ❖ Fragmentation and funders making agencies work alone (i.e. corrections/ schools/health/child care funding works in separate areas) – Band-Aid connecting,
- ❖ Funders restraints puts pressure on agencies,
- ❖ Limited dollars from the same pot of money,
- ❖ Definitions and areas of specialization mean different things (i.e. Parenting program doesn’t mean all things to all people),
- ❖ Ability of all levels of gov’t to bring sustainability to agencies on dollars,
- ❖ Sustainable funding for our programs,
- ❖ Community members that come to our program may not be ready to work – where do we send them? Knowledge of where to them a directory,
- ❖ Systemic issues [increase] in Indigenous Youth – they are getting to crisis level and getting worse. Trying the best we can to serve these youth; are we doing justice,
- ❖ Need to educate themselves what’s happening on reserve and their needs coming to the city,
- ❖ Education gap is increasing in remedial programs; not able to read or write,
- ❖ Definition of needs are different and not meeting the needs of clients,
- ❖ Definition of success and outcomes us the communities,
- ❖ Ability to build relationship between agencies,
- ❖ We are not acknowledgment of “where are you” from,
- ❖ Lack of community liaisons to build limits; no money for this,
- ❖ Access to ceremonies,
- ❖ Educating immigrants/new comers of Aboriginal history;
  - Women’s rights especially,
- ❖ Sustainable Continuous/funding;
  - No Aboriginal women leadership role (Jasper place child and family),

- Organization Aboriginal funding no Aboriginal employees (Red Cross),
- Racist funding Model (United Way),
- Aboriginal staff at library/Aboriginal people attending,
- Aboriginal people attend programming – lack relationships with Aboriginal community,
- Systemic racism/Aboriginal Awareness,
- Lack of Cultural Sensitivity,
- Stigma,
- Racism free Edmonton – useless/ no mechanism to act on it,
- Acknowledgement territory we are on moving for ward,
- ❖ Leadership roles more Aboriginal people/policies/decision;
  - Provincial structure – lack of employees none in higher senior position,
- ❖ Accessibility Housing,
- ❖ Places for healing,
- ❖ Accessibility to treatment (wait list 4-6 months) traditional means to healing,
- ❖ De-colonization – acknowledge Treaty 6, and
- ❖ Access training/staff/families – purpose/involvement.

Gaps in service delivery are occurring in the following areas and attention must focus on program and service delivery to these cohorts:

- ❖ Single parent men,
- ❖ Non-status individuals,
- ❖ Low-income,
- ❖ Persons with disabilities, Aboriginal,
- ❖ Homeless looking for employment, Aboriginal,
- ❖ Males in prostitution, transgender,
- ❖ Men in violent situation,
- ❖ Lack of Aboriginal reps on parole board and in corrections,
- ❖ New comers transitioning to the city, from corrections to other areas,
- ❖ Anyone who has to provide a criminal record check, police information check,
- ❖ Youth forced to leave home, fall out of CFS,
- ❖ Aboriginal youth who are out of CFS,
- ❖ Single moms and their children,
- ❖ Women leaving correctional system,
- ❖ Homeless people who had accessed programs before,
- ❖ Grandparents do not have rights,
- ❖ People battling mental illness,
- ❖ People with addictions, looking for homes,
- ❖ 18-42 in system,
- ❖ Youth leaving corrections,
- ❖ 15-30 with some post-secondary looking for work,
- ❖ Over 30,

- ❖ Groups that have some success,
- ❖ LGBTQ,
- ❖ Some two-spirited Indigenous people,
- ❖ Traditional parenting roles, courses,
- ❖ Family structure and relationship with others within the community can drive supports,
- ❖ Adult learning with low computer literacy skills;
  - Especially in remote areas,
- ❖ FASD, Indigenous people with mental health issues;
  - Assessment tool are to high costs,
- ❖ Family unit supports for youth/family violence,
- ❖ Grief and loss issues and support,
- ❖ Helping people before they get to court, meals,
- ❖ Hard to find housing for large family units,
- ❖ Housing for hard to help/people integrating but from prisons,
- ❖ Mental health access for homeless;
  - Not continued supports,
- ❖ Homeless women – access to limited shelters,
- ❖ Regional supports can be a huge barriers in a spread out,
- ❖ AISH and persons with disabilities little supports,
- ❖ Addictions facilities and access to addictions help (non-status peoples),
- ❖ Aboriginal people between birth and death, male and female,
- ❖ What point do people fall through?
- ❖ Single moms with multiple kids,
- ❖ Homelessness (no housing for single mom),
- ❖ Lack of housing,
- ❖ Single parents with multiple kids,
- ❖ People who are looking after our kids ;
  - Went to nation, province for help – nothing,
- ❖ If you're not from Treaty 6, Treaty 7, Treaty 8 (Alberta) it's hard to get money from your home territory/nation,
- ❖ If we don't care for our women, then who will care for our children?
- ❖ People who have not been properly diagnosed with mental health (missed and undiagnosed),
- ❖ FASD people are falling through the cracks,
- ❖ Transgender/two spirited people – no place to be safe; not being accepted (adults specifically – but youth too),
- ❖ Children in care – dying in care 6-18;
  - Chronic AWOL, don't fit into a system,
- ❖ Mental health,
- ❖ Teenage parents moms 17 years of age don't qualify and living on child tax. Parents have to give up legal status to get help,
- ❖ Aboriginal men in general. Aboriginal men is higher than women missing and murdered men,
- ❖ Young men single parents – lots parents,

- ❖ Inuit population lack resources not lots supports
- ❖ Transgendered women lack resources,
- ❖ Aboriginal women kids apprehended,
- ❖ Seniors,
- ❖ FASD – lack understanding/other disabilities as well;
  - Children special needs/ fall through gaps,
  - Assessment,
- ❖ Women from reserve – change doctors;
  - Illness disease never resolved due to complex medical issues,
- ❖ Women/Men coming out of correctional institutes,
- ❖ Aboriginal mentors – leadership roles Bissel/Boyle street – decision makers,
- ❖ People with no identification,
- ❖ Homeless people;
  - +50% youth group homes runaway,
  - Housing Aboriginal youth in care,
  - Early intervention,
- ❖ Female/Male/Youth/Elders/Families risk factors,
- ❖ Two spirited communities,
- ❖ Women 95% crisis – lack support after care,
- ❖ The entire Aboriginal population – falling through cracks,
- ❖ Children raised in white foster families,
- ❖ Kids with FASD – they are falling through cracks,
- ❖ The person with mental health issues that has become homeless,
- ❖ Youth 16-18, children services won't reopen file, but they don't qualify for adult services,
- ❖ Get the services before 16, otherwise it is so difficult to get them supports, there are kids who live under the bridge. We have to buy food, bus tickets for those kids. We'll even take them to classes, Dr. appointments – a law office should not be doing that!
- ❖ Young single moms that escape violence in home community, come to city and have no supports, no idea where to go,
- ❖ Moms who are starting to get successful, but then get cut off supports (i.e. Daycare, addictions support) if you get a job, you get cut off,
- ❖ Homeless seniors – lack of supports,
- ❖ Very difficult for seniors on a fixed income, no pension to make ends meet,
- ❖ There should be a way to know if someone was in care as a child, so when they are older and deal with child services, we are better equipped to deal with them,
- ❖ Child exploitation, young women engaging in survival sex to get basic needs met,
- ❖ LGBTQ community – supports for Aboriginal youth, etc. need to be aware of gender stereotypes and barriers in existing programs,
- ❖ Lack of supports for those who left gang life. People need to hide – a different city or province, need to be able to access support wherever they go. System just apprehends kids, gang member left on their own,
- ❖ Single parent families, need housing esp. if they have lots of kids,

- ❖ Suicide prevention needed – every week there is a suicide on reserve and in communities. Feels like we are too late,
- ❖ Blended family – one parent may not have kids but are paying child support to other parent. Budgeting is difficult, but can't access programs because technically they make too much money, and
- ❖ Lack of adequate medical services on reserve as well – there has to be ways to get physicians on reserve – newcomer doctors.

Before considering the desired future state clarity on duplication must be addressed. Participants were asked to consider programming and service delivery duplication (including perceptions of duplication.) The group statements on this subject are provided below, followed by a facilitator outcome commentary:

- ❖ What is wrong with duplication?
- ❖ People should have choice,
- ❖ All work is slightly different,
- ❖ Specificity of program allows for funding,
- ❖ People have to fit the program,
- ❖ Overlap in cultural,
- ❖ Youth services,
- ❖ Need for a broader base,
- ❖ Need for duplication,
- ❖ Increasing Aboriginal population in Edmonton and Canada,
- ❖ Organizations (Aboriginal) duplicate,
- ❖ Agencies should consult,
- ❖ Disabled services,
- ❖ Provide “wrap-around” services,
- ❖ Housing,
- ❖ Employment high demand from community,
- ❖ Siloing speaks to duplication,
- ❖ Shift funders knowledge,
- ❖ Should not be less funding to agencies that are providing services,
- ❖ Duplication could lead to cut in funding,
- ❖ Glad there is duplication,
- ❖ Education services,
- ❖ Funding level – there is duplication,
- ❖ Unneeded duplication at federal government level,
- ❖ Different agencies that support within schools, that look like duplication but it is not,
- ❖ Duplication vs. coordination,
- ❖ Defining duplications,
- ❖ Communication around continue of delivery,
- ❖ Requiring unique differences acknowledges that same services have impacts that we are able to reach community needs,
- ❖ Not a lot of services in certain areas (i.e. Millwoods),
- ❖ Ridiculous to think that one or two agencies can handle the demand – if you live out of the core you may be punished because of location,
- ❖ There needs to be duplication of services – where is the funding for preventative programs, there should be options for individuals,
- ❖ How can you have duplication where there is not enough,
- ❖ How can you duplicate a need (from an agency),
- ❖ Funding for programs that are for the same kind of money – the more the better for the needs of the community,
- ❖ There are organizations that are applying for funding that are out of scope to their mandate as an organization,
- ❖ There is duplication in employment and training,
- ❖ Changing the criteria of the funding is making agencies chase money,
- ❖ Funders dictating the needs, not a community driven process it is like pushing sand,

- ❖ Lack of money for pre-programs to keep people employed,
- ❖ Too many prisons,
- ❖ Perception that NCSA does work in all areas but the do not do victims services (strict guidelines),
- ❖ Victims services does not respond well to Aboriginal people. Victims told to read procedures to go to court,
- ❖ Foster care systems – the need of the clientele,
- ❖ The need is there – Bent Arrow/Ben Calfe Robe/ perceived duplication but is needed – biggest gap,
- ❖ Gaps everywhere, people still in care need supports,
- ❖ What is your definition of duplication?
- ❖ Criteria – how to match/meet needs and gaps,
- ❖ Diversity issues – diverse solution/huge gap,
- ❖ Aboriginal accessibility services,
- ❖ The funds don't match the needs,
- ❖ Not enough services for our people,
- ❖ Issue could be collaboration various areas issues different areas,
- ❖ Issue duplication federal level,
- ❖ Holistic vs. linear,
- ❖ The pendulum of funding chasing criteria's always,
- ❖ HIV Edmonton – most of your clientele are Aboriginal so you don't need any additional funding for Aboriginal supports and programs because you are already doing work in the community,
- ❖ There is a lack of understanding of history, culture, etc. funders think that what's good for one Aboriginal person is good for them all – belief that we are one size fits all,
- ❖ I don't see duplication because there is so much need. Thing about location, transportation, resources,
- ❖ Friendship centre – ask to run dance classes in Millwoods because people can't travel to access program downtown,
- ❖ Jurisdictional issues – a program may only be for First Nations or Métis people,
- ❖ Criteria is often so strict for proposal – programs will end up being very similar anyways. They make it so there will be “duplication”,
- ❖ Headstart programs – perception that they are all the same, same with diabetes programs, etc. They are not all the same,
- ❖ Solicitor general cut funding to Aboriginal support probation worker because there are “other” probation office positions,
- ❖ There is a difference with cultural awareness and cultural competency. Rather than funding an Aboriginal position, they just provide training and assume they will be competent to work with Aboriginal people with multiple barriers,
- ❖ Parole/officers – government tried to get them to write probation Gladu reports as a paragraph in their reports, so they could get away with not using someone trained in writing Gladue reports specifically,
- ❖ Perception of duplication – forced into a strict space of funding so it appears there is duplication,
- ❖ Is duplication a bad idea? Why not duplicate a program that is working? And how many organizations have the capacity to run a program around the whole city? Maybe historically to have several organizations duplicating, and
- ❖ Asset mapping with school communities understand what resources are out there and how they interface with what I am doing.

## Outcome – the myth of duplication

Upon listening to the outcomes of group conversations and reviewing the notes the facilitator has compiled the following, which represents the feedback summary and conclusion for the Edmonton UAS Community Plan.

In Edmonton there are numerous highly skilled and dedicated employees who are devoted and actively busy providing the Urban Aboriginal citizens with the programs and services that the Canadian government has an obligation to provide funding for (consistent with tenacious and constant broadening interpretations of section 35 of the *Constitution Act 1982*). The work that Edmonton's Urban Aboriginal Stakeholder employees provide to the Urban Aboriginal people in the City of Edmonton will still need to be done no matter the purported shortage of resources.

What the proponents of this myth do not realize is that the programs and services they expect to limit, decrease, decline, or outright deny are already at or beyond capacity. The long-term effect of this shortsighted policy is that the continued degeneration of a population will actually cost more as time unfolds. Moreover, the bureaucrats who examine, recommend or decide are often far removed from the actual users or affected persons, and are insouciant<sup>12</sup> to their concerns. Essentially, the Aboriginal Population continues to be the only growing population inside the borders, and the freeze or slash and cut of programs and services exacerbates years of inefficient supports. Even in the face of numerous duplicative efforts, the current demands for programming for a population riddled with multiple-barriers and social inequity will not be solved in this decade. In a city with an Urban Aboriginal population steadily growing the resources to support social programs will need to increase to keep with demand and although many programs and services are similar in nature or have similar outcomes, the need for duplication is necessary.

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<sup>12</sup> a lighthearted lack of concern

## Desired Future State

The previous information contained in “Current State” and “Barriers and Gaps” answer the question “where are we now?” The desired future state is where we need to go. First and foremost all stakeholders are encouraged to revisit their respective Vision and Mission Statements. The group statements on this subject are provided below, followed by the facilitator outcome commentary:

- ❖ Need to be smarter about how we fund Aboriginal programs and supports. Need to build capacity – stop using the “direct deliverables” model – quantitative methods. Build success by giving criteria that is more culturally appropriate. We are losing funding because measuring is wrong.
- ❖ Social return on investment model – look at reductions of harm model, fewer visits to the ER, etc. Government needs to do this will all preventative and support look at individuals.
- ❖ Education – we are successful when there are more grads, more going on to post-secondary, more parents coming to parent council, parent/teacher interviews.
- ❖ Assessment methods to support FNMI students – look at data more regularly and in smaller increments – identify what you want to measure for your community – not just student performance but also parent engagement, how impactful programming is people feedback, not just number feedback.
- ❖ How is elder being used in schools – segregated or involved in all aspects of school.
- ❖ Need multi-year funding, because that is the time it takes to make positive changes for you and your family and see some outcomes.
- ❖ Short term funding – its hard to see progress in six months, need to be able to benchmark progress over time.
- ❖ Factor in good changes that people make in their own lives and how it results in good changes for family members lives too i.e. reducing stress and barriers for moms and dads etc..
- ❖ Traditional elements need to be that into evaluation methods. Work with communities.
- ❖ Last federal statistics form 2006, 2011 – how has the community changed since then? How does that impact evaluation of success? Need better statistics.
- ❖ Organizations that are experts in service delivery should have a say in how programs and services are measured and evaluated.
- ❖ Outcomes don’t work results do.
- ❖ Feedback is best from the participants.
- ❖ Rates decline (incarceration).
- ❖ Idea of success are not compatible.
- ❖ Quality of life improves.
- ❖ More community follow-up.
- ❖ Increased numbers of ok people in the home, at school.
- ❖ Increased cultural competency.
- ❖ Long term studies and results.
- ❖ Programs exist longer than one year.
- ❖ Equality of Aboriginal people in society.
- ❖ More than one year results measured.
- ❖ Change is generational sometimes.
- ❖ Young people have to be succeeding.
- ❖ Measure against funding, long-term funding.
- ❖ UAS Funding has not increased.

- ❖ Less bigotry in systems.
- ❖ Parole board based on proportion in system.
- ❖ Parity of employed Aboriginals.
- ❖ Improved recruitment system.
- ❖ Increased cultural security.
- ❖ Affirmative action.
- ❖ Increased education, or adaptation of rules.
- ❖ Accommodation when required.
- ❖ Change in scales and measurement.
- ❖ Increased numbers of Aboriginal people participating in mainstream society.
- ❖ The iceberg – underneath is our cultural teachings etc. and our kids lack and identity when we implement the “underwater” stuff we would start to work together. If we have youth programs/moms/dads/grandparents to catch-up and to read to them we know we’re successful.
- ❖ The school system still needs to change the way our history is being taught.
- ❖ Need to start somewhere – learn our traditional values and teachings and how we are doing this in our homes our teachings tell us we need culture, language, identity and values system – outcome our kids will feel better about themselves.
- ❖ We are measuring success on a “western ideology” use a holistic one.
- ❖ How do you really measure success when there are so many cultures.
- ❖ Measurements mean different things to different people/agency/funders/etc..
- ❖ The person will evolve when we identify our basics/traditions.
- ❖ Increased graduation rates, decreased drop-out rates.
- ❖ Smaller communities break up school ages youth.
- ❖ Gap and provide supports after high school, more mentorship programs.
- ❖ Increasing vocational programs in schools.
- ❖ Increasing vocational programs in schools.
- ❖ Attainment of client goals as opposed to institutional goals.
- ❖ Reduction of Aboriginal women incarceration rates.
- ❖ Rates of family violence gone down in Aboriginal women.
- ❖ Change cycle of early parenthood and reduce teen pregnancy rates.
- ❖ Reductions in youth addictions.
- ❖ Have reduction model perceptions it works but is it valued.
- ❖ Euro-centre methods of evaluation. Paradigm shift needed.
- ❖ Make a change in one persons life.
- ❖ Fill quotas.
- ❖ Reporting needs to change.
- ❖ How do you define success in your criteria?
- ❖ Hire Aboriginal people higher-ranking positions decision-making roles. Aboriginal people in all levels of employment.
- ❖ When women/men stop being missing/murdered.
- ❖ Actually get results from forums like this.
- ❖ Someone needs to start putting thins into action. Connect the dots. How many times have we answered these questions!
- ❖ Acknowledge where they’re at, history and respect.
- ❖ When we keep attending this feel oppressed/victimized.
- ❖ When we don’t have to justify existence.
- ❖ When we don’t have any homelessness, not at the rate it is.
- ❖ Systems.

- ❖ Pilot project funded.
- ❖ The pendulum of funding becomes holistic vs linear.
- ❖ When Edmonton has Aboriginal centre. Gathering place.
- ❖ More social enterprises.
- ❖ Empowered oppressed.
- ❖ We do need more leaders in our community especially in the workplace and colleges and universities. Aboriginal people need to see themselves in these positions to have others strive for that - especially the younger ones. We also need leaders in areas where they can make an impact regarding polic..
- ❖ Adult learners have low work skills: The city needs to work with the outlying First Nation communities somehow, so that these people can have skills before they come to the city and end up being homeless, getting into trouble and make a living below poverty line. We know for a fact that the students that come here have lower abilities than their city counterparts so government needs to help in those areas. and
- ❖ We can't continue to invite Aboriginals and ask them what needs to change if municipal, provincial and federal government are not willing to assist in working towards change! We have been asked these same questions at Wicahitowin (the city has all the info we shared with the action circles) for the past 4 years while working with the city. We have explained the same questions with the province in a 2010 report, "Connect the dots". We are still waiting to see the results. Although they made recommendations not much has changed in Edmonton because the government changes every four years and no one follows up with the last groups work.

## Outcome – The value is in the “Eye of the Stakeholder”

Many who attended the session expressed frustration on the questions being asked of them; and appropriately so. The session was attended by a large number of agencies (demonstrating the commitment from Stakeholders) at the midnight hour and with only 3.5 hours was afforded to planning for the Edmonton UAS (demonstrating lack of concern for proper community engagement). Nonetheless, the members present have voiced their thoughts on measurable actions. In general many believe that the Eurocentric techniques for measurement are inappropriately applied by funders. Stakeholders believe that traditional and/or holistic measures are what ought to be considered.

Funders and business/commercial/industrial donators to social programs will unlikely be able to adapt their thinking to traditional/holistic ways of seeing success on a social sense. ***Although the Eurocentric viewpoint must continue to be challenged, stakeholders will likely have to continue to find innovative ways of demonstrating the importance of Social Investment.*** Therefore, a simplistic example of how funders/investors may see and understand (while still considering the need for social investment) has been prepared.

### Social Return on Investment Example

Most UAS stakeholders are already compiling statistics on intake or outreach. In the example provided the suggestion is that even at a very low direct-impact success rate (the example indicates only 3 people were directly impacted), a Social Return On Investment (SROI) of 676% is realized over five years. The same investment of \$51,000 will return \$395,770. The table on the next page will offer readers additional insights into assessing how the example is derived.

Many in economists use a five-year forecast with respect to analysis of return on investments. And many agencies attempt to justify the number of persons assisted in a one year (funding) period as follows:

- ❖ An investment of \$51,000 is considered the cost of the investment.
- ❖ In terms of outputs, this investment may cover the cost of a salaried person in the agency to deal with walk-ins.
- ❖ The intake over a year might see 110 people looking for any given assistance; this is considered the output.
- ❖ If only 5 people from that 110 start participating in the economy (get a job, start a business, get skills improved for better job, etc.). That is only a 4.55% ratio of assistance; and simply dividing \$51,000 by 5 = \$10,200 spent per person assisted.

Not necessarily a generating good value for the money spent. HOWEVER calculating as follows:

- ❖ Impact (as opposed to output) can be considered by determining, 2 of the 5 people who began participating in the economy maybe would have began participating anyway. Actual Impact = 3 people.
- ❖ Although not calculated in this example indirect benefits can be determined depending on the agency goals/mandate, etc. From an Aboriginal/Traditional/Holistic sense. Funders, investors may never actually consider this a true benefit, but internally and as Aboriginal stakeholders, these are important reasons and measurements to carry-on.

- ❖ It is fair to state then from the list of assumptions (at the bottom of the table) that the persons now participating in the economy are likely paying taxes, reducing the strain on social assistance programs and spending in the economy.
- ❖ Over a five year time (funders/investors understand linear), the investment of \$51,000 actually produces a return of \$395,770 or a total Social Return on Investment of 676%

**Table 3: Social Return on Investment example**

<b>Inputs</b>	51,000	Cost of investment - your funding budget
<b>Outputs</b>	110	Estimated clients assisted in the year
<b>Direct Outcomes</b>	5	Example - this number of people somehow participated in the economy
<b>Indirect Outcomes</b>	Lower crime, or lower social service pressures, lower EI claims, lower ER visits	
<b>Impacts</b>	3	2 people probably would have gotten a job anyway

SROI - 5 year projections where $SROI = (Gains - Cost)/Cost$						
Direct Impact on 3 people	year 1	year 2	year 3	year 4	year 5	
3 Client benefit (benefit to Government now receiving	36,000.00	36,504.00	37,015.06	37,533.27	38,058.73	↔ inflation applies here
Costs Avoided Benefit - 3 people no longer putting a strain on social systems	30,000.00	30,420.00	30,845.88	31,277.72	31,715.61	↔ inflation applies here too
3 People at modest rates are circulating \$ in Economy not from Government Support	56,400.00	57,189.60	57,990.25	58,802.12	59,625.35	↔ inflation applies here too
<b>Cost Benefit</b> (taxes received from 3 people + 3 people less strain on social system + 3 people spending earnings)	122,400.00	66,924.00	67,860.94	68,810.99	69,774.34	
<b>SROI</b>	<b>140%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>37%</b>	
<b>TOTAL RETURN</b>						<b>\$395,770.27</b>
<b>TOTAL SROI</b>						<b>676%</b>

ASSUMPTIONS	
Estimated entry level wage in Alberta=annual earnings 40,000. Taxes on that salary @ 30% (actual marginal tax rate is 39% - source January 2014 Alberta Facts on Alberta - living and doing business in Alberta)	
12,000.00	Taxes paid by 1 person
36,000.00	Taxes paid by 3 people
1.40%	Inflation rate
10,000.00	Estimated Income Support - this is just an example cost analysis are published for all service sectors. The cost of support workers is not factored - this is just what the client might receive.
30,000.00	Annual Income Support avoided by government for 3 people no longer on assistance.
11,200.00	To economy for rent paid (based on 40% of salary after taxes)
4,800.00	To economy for groceries (based on spending \$400/month)
2,800.00	To economy for other purchases (based on 10% of salary after taxes)
18,800.00	TOTAL funds spent in Alberta per person
56,400.00	Multiplied by 3 people Directly Impacted

These levels of return are what investors/funders can best understand and in this example we have discounted taxes collected and costs that the governments are avoiding and amounts people actually re-contribute to the economy once they participate in the economy, therefore it is not unreasonable.

The 51,000 investments gained a phenomenal amount of return in social returns, nearly \$400,000 in five years.

In attempting to replicate the suggested SROI it is recommended that stakeholders include the following:

- ❖ Collect walk-ins that have a touch point in the program you are delivering. Do regular follow-ups to determine who of the total walk-in has benefited directly.
- ❖ Adjust for reality that the total number of people directly impacted is likely reduced because some people would have found their way with or without your agency.
- ❖ Don't forget to account for inflation.
- ❖ Don't forget the costs avoided and well-articulated assumptions backed up by well-grounded statistical information sources.
- ❖ Success begets success – As Aboriginal people we are storytellers, and we need to tell the good stories backed up by what funders/investors understand. In order to get businesses and industry involved – we will not change their thinking (keep in mind, a century of oppression has injured yet not fully depleted Aboriginal people holistic and traditional ways of thinking) they only look at dollars and cents, so provide it to them in their language.
- ❖ Distinguish between outcomes and impacts. The truer picture of how the lives of 3 people change the course of history and put that into a dollar value that is defensible.

It may not be “right” to measure in linear terms; and again, there is still need to continue challenging the status quo; however, the measurements of funders/investors are an unfortunate necessity in today’s society.

## Urban Aboriginal Strategic Priorities

### Definitions

In many instances throughout this section reference is made to the “Aboriginal Community”. In this regard the author/facilitator is referring to both 1) the collective who identify or self-identify as an Aboriginal person, as well as 2) the whole -- a distinct people within the context of the country now known as Canada.

Before indulging in the definitions, a word on synergy and the holistic approach to community development. As depicted in the diagram to the right, the methodology of using existing processes and proven indicators advocate a holistic approach to the deployment of actionable goals in the Urban Aboriginal community. This approach considers that many aspects of wellness must be incorporated into all components of improved quality of life. Holistic planning is a multi-stakeholder service approach to acquiring the widest possible breadth of activities towards high quality outcomes. For example, those who aspire to improve employment may anchor their beliefs in “getting individuals jobs will improve the economy”. This position does in fact partly improve economic conditions; however, when approached from the silo rather than holistic viewpoint, this is only partially true and has little hope of addressing all problems.

Figure 1: Holistic Approach to Wellness



Truly more and/or better jobs is a wonderful goal to aim for; however, to attain and sustain employment, other basic needs emerges; and the detriments of keeping one's job is determined by a multiple of barriers the individual may then have to overcome. Therefore; health, childcare, transportation, employee self-worth, housing, etc. are all relative to the ability to succeed. This is but one example of the numerous and varied situations that arise in daily life. In essence, it's all relative, and it's all interrelated.

Although not scientific in nature, given the timelines, scope and financial constraints associated with the project the facilitator/author utilized a technique that quickly and succinctly identified a number of broad urban Aboriginal community priorities. Ten (10) categories were selected based on known information from prior UAS strategic planning initiatives. Participating stakeholders were asked to indicate their personal opinion on what they felt were the top three priorities in Edmonton, ranking each of the three as first, second and third. The following define and offer some framework for ascertaining these priorities.

**Culture:** refers to practices, traditions or customs which are integral to the distinctive culture of an Aboriginal society, and were practiced prior to European contact, meaning they are rooted in the pre-contact society (ancestral origins). Culture is diverse, complex, does not remain static (contemporary), and Aboriginal culture in particular is not homogeneous (many differences in linguistics, traditions, geography). As a priority this is interrelated with all other priorities; health, housing, homelessness, children and families, education, employment, economic development and justice. An investment in one's own culture is imperative to its preservation as is an investment in external community members to the success Aboriginal people in that it will help resolve matters of ethnocentricity, and dissolve racism, stereotypes, and discrimination. The priority for culture is therefore to preserve and share Aboriginal culture in today's context of the urban Aboriginal populace.

**Health:** is a field that concerns itself with the study and improvement of the health characteristics of Aboriginal communities. This incorporates promoting health, well-being and quality of life for Aboriginal people through culturally appropriate services including (but not limited to), diabetes initiatives, promoting healthy lifestyles (eating right, exercise). It also encompasses services that are easily and readily accessible, health prevention, pre-natal care, increased access to health services, targeted wellness projects, supporting holistic and culturally appropriate approaches to health, wellness and recovery, safety issues such as addiction, mental health needs and recovery from sexual abuse, intergenerational traumas.

**Housing:** this priority includes adequate and safe affordable housing, low-income housing, and understanding the rights as a tenant, reducing reluctant landlords to rent to Aboriginals, educating property owners and real estate agencies, obtaining adequate and affordable housing addressing inferior housing standards for low-rental units and the migration that can occur as a result of shortage of housing on-reserve/Metis settlements. Wage rates and low income assistance thresholds, the deinstitutionalization of individuals without adequate supports, and the release of individuals from various institutes (rehabilitation, shelter, etc.) without adequate supports are also incorporated.

**Homelessness:** is most accurately defined as those who are particularly vulnerable (often heavily interrelated to mental health initiatives), living on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation, staying in overnight emergency shelters, those whose accommodation is temporary or lacks security of tenure, including interim (or transitional) housing, people living temporarily with others (couch surfing), or living in institutional contexts (hospital, prison) without permanent housing arrangements.

**Child and Family Services:** pertains to a commitment to an inclusive process to establish child and family wellness based on mutual respect and the betterment of the well-being of individuals who come from unfortunate situations/circumstances. This may include programs aimed at prevention and intervention, creating and maintaining safe home environments, enhancing life skills, supports in transitioning to urban centers, supporting and advocating for practices in the social services sector that incorporate indigenous traditions and teachings, creating and celebrating balance and healing as a large part of the delivery.

**Education:** includes stay-in-school initiatives, upgrading and/or re-engaging individuals currently not enrolled in education programming. Also incorporates support systems to ensure success of students (counselors, housing, day care, role models, tutors, etc.), upgrading, literacy programs, student retention, initiatives to increase graduation rates, role modeling, mentorship and basic life skills, supporting collaborations between schools and the Aboriginal community in welcoming and working with all Aboriginal individuals who are pursuing education, skill development and support for Aboriginals to become successful learners. This focus area also requires efforts be made to more accurately understand historical perspectives that are not necessarily Eurocentric portrayals of the shaping of this country. The Aboriginal community as full partners in an education system that promotes a divergent opinion, the non-Aboriginal population will better reflect on the Aboriginal perspective as an equally important one.

**Employment:** relates to participation in occupations that address barriers to economic participation and/or meet labour market demand. Includes developing a framework to enable the urban Aboriginal population to gain meaningful long-term employment, learn job search skills, and obtain job skills training/job shadowing, promoting workforce development, developing bridges between employers and employees, mentorship programs, workplace readiness, and sustainable practices that steward culturally-safe employment and the promotion of Aboriginal people in the labour market.

**Economic Development:** pertains to participation in the market economy through businesses and job development, increasing opportunities for Aboriginal people to become business innovators and entrepreneurs, partnerships with industry/commercial stakeholders in the betterment of the local economy, social enterprises. In addition the initiative includes, assisting Aboriginal communities to build their economies and position themselves to take advantage of economic opportunities that are vital to addressing existing social challenges, and reshaping social outcomes by improving economic circumstances resulting in additional social revenue streams and volunteerism for the community at large (giving back).

**Justice:** Aboriginal peoples have always had governments, laws and some means of resolving disputes within their communities. Elders and other teachers have critical roles to play within the justice system that is centered on Aboriginal values and beliefs. Programs aiming to readdress the multitude of justice issues as a priority include crime reduction, reduction of gang activity, bullying, violence and abuse, varying approaches to creating fairness and equality, addressing perceived racism and discrimination. Additionally, the focus areas look at supports for those Aboriginals within and leaving the justice system, crime prevention programs that target at risk Aboriginal youth or Aboriginal youth in conflict with the law, Aboriginal offender's rehabilitation and successful integration into positive life patterns.

**Domestic Violence:** is described as a complex web of factors that create and sustain a system of family violence and the socio-environmental context within which they exist. A multi-factorial social syndrome and not simply an undesirable behavior, resides within social and political dynamics, typically manifested in domination that is established and enforced by one person over one or more others, through violence, fear and a variety of abuse strategies. This is not usually an isolated incidence or pattern, but is most often rooted in intergenerational abuse, and is often allowed to continue and flourish because of the presence of enabling community dynamics, which constitutes a serious breach of trust between the victims of violence and abuse and the whole community. This entire syndrome has its roots in Aboriginal historical experience, which must be adequately understood in order to be able to restore wholeness, trust and safety to the Aboriginal family and community life.

### Edmonton Priorities

The top priority for Edmonton is Culture, the second priority for Edmonton is Education, and the third priority for Edmonton is Housing. The full-tabulated results of the scores from the secret ballot are provided in the table presented below:

**Table 4: Edmonton Priority Ballot Outcomes**

Edmonton UAS - 51 Respondents (4 spoiled)		
Program Area	Total Score	Top Priorities
Culture	1525	Top Priority
Health	375	
Housing	1125	Third Priority
Homelessness	200	
Child and Family Services	750	
Education	1300	Second Priority
Employment	500	
Economic Development	325	
Justice	550	
Domestic Violence	400	

For comparative purposes, the results of the similar priority process for the UAS community engagement sessions that took place in the 15 additional urban centres is provided below:

**Table 5: Priorities - UAS across Alberta**

<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>PROGRAM AREA</b>	
<b>6,025</b>	<b>Culture</b>	<b>THIRD PRIORITY</b>
4,000	Health	
<b>7,950</b>	<b>Housing</b>	<b>TOP PRIORITY</b>
3,625	Homelessness	
3,525	Child and Family Services	
<b>6,350</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>SECOND PRIORITY</b>
3,100	Employment	
1,325	Economic Development	
825	Justice	
3,075	Domestic Violence	

Interestingly enough, the absolute top three priorities are the same, but the order of them is different for Edmonton as presented in the table below:

**Table 6: Compare Priorities**

<b>Edmonton Rank</b>	<b>Top 3 Priority Areas</b>	<b>UAS Alberta Ranked</b>
1	Culture	3
2	Education	2
3	Housing	1

## Conclusion

This plan should be viewed as the first step in a long-term process towards UAS community engagement. The Aboriginal people in the City of Edmonton are integral to the success of any of the initiatives identified. This first round of community engagement has resulted in the following learning's.

Effective community driven initiatives must include the following understandings:

- ❖ Community involvement requires time and resources to ensure all stakeholders are able to participate on a meaningful level.
- ❖ Stakeholder relationships are significant factors in driving success.
  - Caution must be paid to avoid personal agendas and ensure that politics does not get in the way of being effective.
  - Find ways to cooperate even in the face of adversity with institutions and government.
  - Reducing the silo of day-to-day operations amongst stakeholders and program/service delivery is necessary.
- ❖ Mobility/outreach is often required to meet the needs of individuals and families requiring programs and services. Availability of programs and services will see success for some, reaching out will see success for many.
- ❖ Stakeholder understanding, respecting and promoting various cultural backgrounds and honouring diversity will proliferate community sponsorship for initiatives.
- ❖ Professional expertise should be (re)defined to include wisdom that is not necessarily learned in post-secondary institutions.
- ❖ Early intervention is crucial in changing the needs associated with future community health.
- ❖ Accessibility, dedicated staff, and strong leadership are necessary to foster a healthy Urban Aboriginal community and leadership is not simply defined as elected officials.
- ❖ Holistic approaches and communication/dialogue must be woven into the fabric of all priorities.
- ❖ Aboriginal people must make decisions for themselves and about themselves.
- ❖ Focus on what we (stakeholder agencies) do best and provide a depth of services in that respect rather than broadening the suite delivery to lesser-known service areas.
- ❖ Government imposed relationships are less effective than grass-root driven partnerships.
- ❖ Shorter-term funding agreements tend to fail, as there is lack of momentum.
- ❖ Engagement of commercial/industry players will accelerate the shift in economic circumstances, which in turn will lead to betterment overall in the community. Therefore, their involvement in future rounds of community engagements/consultation must be a focused consideration.
- ❖ Aboriginal agency leaders, directors, and managers are often so preoccupied with immediate issues that they lose sight, or become frustrated with their ultimate objectives. This is not a recipe for success. Taking a proactive approach makes the preparation of a strategic plan essential and necessary and the funders' responsibility is to ensure those multi-stakeholder planning events are encouraged and fostered.