

Update: Indigenous Peoples Strategy

Initiative Title:	Indigenous Peoples Strategy
City Council Lead(s):	Mayor Mandel, Councillor Henderson and Councillor Caterina
Department Lead(s):	Lyll Brenneis, Community Services

Objective:

The Indigenous People of Edmonton contribute to the cultural, social and economic spirit that is felt each day in the capital city. Council's Vision 2040 speaks of all "Edmontonians linked by a common purpose – to learn, to prosper to celebrate."

"We are fortunate to share in the diverse cultural, social and economic contributions [Indigenous] Peoples bring to our city each day. The Aboriginal communities of today are re-claiming and nurturing their cultural identities and striving to achieve prosperity." (Edmonton City Council Declaration, August 30, 2005)

Key Outcomes, Projects or Activities and their Status as of May 2013:

- 1) Improved economic participation of Aboriginal businesses in the Edmonton and Capital Region economy and improved Aboriginal participation in the Edmonton job market.
 - In fall 2012, the Edmonton Aboriginal Business and Professionals Association presented a finalized business case to City Council. Administration completed the funding agreement needed to release approved start-up funds beginning the 1st year operations of the organization in January 2013.
 - The Edmonton Aboriginal Business and Professionals Association conducted a soft-launch of their organization at the signing ceremony of between the Government of Alberta Aboriginal Relations and the City of Edmonton entering into a Memorandum of Cooperation and Collaboration, May 2013.

- 2) Increased direct City Council engagement with urban indigenous community in matters and in ways that benefit achievement of the community's economic, social and cultural goals.
 - In summer of 2012, The Mayor on behalf of City Council attended the Alexis First Nations' Annual Pow-Pow to sign a Memorandum of Cooperation and Dialogue with the Confederacy of Treaty No. 6 First Nations establishing a formal relationship between the City and a First Nation Treaty Umbrella Organization.
 - In spring of 2013 the Edmonton Catholic School District in partnership with the City of Edmonton hosted the 32nd Annual Ben Calf Robe School Traditional Pow-Wow at the Commonwealth Stadium Recreation Centre field house with an estimated 5000 visitors to the facility in one day.

- Beginning in the fall of 2012, the Community Services Department assigned a staff position in the Aboriginal Relations Office to advance the urban Aboriginal communities efforts on the Monto: Spirit of Edmonton River Valley Initiative, this project includes as well, support to the Kihciy Askiy (Fox Farms) Aboriginal Spiritual space project.
 - In summer the Aboriginal Relations Office in partnership with Edmonton Transit, the Edmonton Arts Council, a local Francophone Youth Group and the urban Aboriginal community successfully received funds from the National Reconciliation and Healing Commission to advance on a reinterpretation of the Grandin LRT Station Mural. Anticipation of the completion of the project will be in mid-2014.
- 3) Increased engagement of urban indigenous youth in skill development and experience building that result in more prominent and effective leadership roles for them within the indigenous community and within the broader Edmonton community.
- The Aboriginal Relations Office is helping distribute information on the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce's Aboriginal Workshop series where the topic of youth engagement in the Aboriginal Community for the purposes of training and employment is offered to its membership. Topics offered to Chamber Members are being developed such as, how member business can be more accessible to the Aboriginal community and youth.
 - Nikanew Aquatics Leadership Program continues its 10th season and is an innovative endeavour where aquatic lifeguard, leadership skills and indigenous cultural activities are taught to Aboriginal Youth. The program hosted their annual year end feast and graduation this past spring. The program demand and enrolment has exceeded funded placements and alternative options and partnerships continue to be explored.
- 4) City of Edmonton collaboration with other municipalities and provincial (AUMA) and national (FCM) organizations, that results in increased federal and provincial attention and resource allocations to urban indigenous issues and opportunities.
- The City of Edmonton (Mayor Mandel) and the Government of Alberta's Aboriginal Relations Ministry (Minster Robin Campbell) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation and Collaboration, May 2013 in which the two administrations committed to work together to advance on creating better socio-economic outcomes to enhance the lives of urban Aboriginal living in Edmonton. A resultant Action Plan is under development and anticipated to be released in fall 2013.
 - The City of Edmonton's Waltherdale Bridge Project Team was directed by the Government of Alberta's Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation to consult with 21 different First Nation's across the province around the traditional land uses of the Waltherdale Bridge development location. The Aboriginal Relations Office supported the Transportation Department through these various consultations and built relationships throughout the Alberta's First Nation communities.

- 5) Continued improvement in the City's hiring and retention of indigenous employees, delivery of City-mandated services to the indigenous community, and collaborative initiatives that meet commitments in Council's Aboriginal Declaration, the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord and Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative Agreement.
- The Flying Eagles Summer Playground Program continues to provide Aboriginal cultural teachings and focus for participants; expansion of this program to other geographical areas within the city and beyond the summer period was realized in 2012 and extended the educational impacts and positive profiling of Aboriginal Cultures for youth.
 - Aboriginal Awareness/Protocol Training continues to be an ongoing function and request from Business Units within the City of Edmonton. Quarterly training workshops are coordinated and delivered by the Aboriginal Relations Office for City Employees, as well as upon request. Over 150 people were trained in the May 2012-May 2013 time period.
 - Human Resources Outreach Consultants with expertise in working with Aboriginal communities lead employment-related initiatives to meet the City of Edmonton's workforce diversification strategy to create a workforce that is reflective of the community we serve. Some examples of the Outreach Consultants and their successes are:
 - a) Bridge to Transit Information
 - b) Enoch Cree Nation Green Shack Partnership
 - c) Assembly of Treaty Chiefs Meetings
 - d) Aboriginal Summer Student Program
 - e) Aboriginal Practicum Placement Program
 - f) Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation Presentations
 - g) Edmonton Aboriginal Employees Resource Network (EAERN)

Future Steps:

- Continue to engage with the urban Aboriginal community to examine and explore celebrating and refreshing the Declaration and Accord with the incoming City Council after Fall 2013.
- Continue to re-establish the Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee as another conduit of information and advisement to Council and Administration on issues and concerns that impact Edmonton's Urban Aboriginal Community.
- Under the auspices of the Memorandum of Cooperation and Collaboration work with province and community to develop an Action Plan that improves socio-economic well-being factors in the targeted areas of; 1) Youth leadership and development, 2) Economic development, 3) Transitions, 4) Aboriginal women, and 5) Safe and secure communities. Both parties will continue to engage the Federal Government to participate in ongoing discussions and action plan implementation wherever possible.

- Explore the development of enhancing relationships with the Métis Nation of Alberta, which may lead towards the development of a document such as a Memorandum of Understanding or an Accord between both parties.