
Backgrounder

MEMORANDUM OF COLLABORATION SIGNED TO IMPROVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC OUTCOMES FOR URBAN ABORIGINAL POPULATION

Canada, Manitoba, and the City of Winnipeg have signed a Memorandum of Collaboration to better align work and resources to support Aboriginal people in the City of Winnipeg and improve their socio-economic circumstances.

During the next five years, all three levels of government will work together on activities which enable Aboriginal people to increase their participation in the economy of Winnipeg. Increased economic outcomes are achieved through a continuum of strategies which include education and training, employment and employment readiness, and economic development all of which have a determinant impact on the healthy lifestyles and safety of individuals.

The initial approach will focus on implementing changes that contribute to:

Healthy Lifestyles, Safety Practices and Coping Skills
Social Support and Community Participation, and
Healthy Environments

In working together, the three levels of government have agreed to:

- Seek to align activities, resources and efforts among themselves to achieve the best possible outcomes;
- Focus on activities and mechanisms that will contribute to agreed-upon outcomes;
- Support processes that will develop sustainable solutions;
- Focus on capacity-building to enable key sectors of the Aboriginal community in Winnipeg to take on more responsibility for service delivery;
- Build on approaches that have been successful to date;
- Involve key sectors of the Aboriginal community, Aboriginal organizations and other representatives of the Aboriginal community in the review and implementation of activities; and
- Involve representatives of the private and general community sectors in the activities under the Memorandum of Collaboration.

This Memorandum is an example of the successful partnerships which have been achieved through the Government of Canada's Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS).

To address the growing needs, in 2007, the Government of Canada made a long-term commitment on urban Aboriginal issues by investing \$68.5 million over five years in the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS). To date, 13 cities have adopted the UAS including the Cities of Winnipeg and Thompson in Manitoba.

Through the Urban Aboriginal Strategy, the Government of Canada partners with the Aboriginal community and local organizations, municipal and provincial governments and with the private sector. These partnerships support projects that respond to local priorities and advance the UAS national priority areas of: improving life skills, promoting job training, skills and entrepreneurship and supporting Aboriginal women, children and families.

This Memorandum is part of the Province of Manitoba's new Winnipeg Regeneration Strategy, announced on June 9, 2010, as a blueprint for provincial efforts to support urban development and revitalization priority needs in Winnipeg. A priority area of the new strategy is to close the economic and social gap between urban Aboriginal people and other Winnipeggers. It also provides a strategic alignment with the Province's ten year Closing the Gap Initiative, which is focused on the priorities of Aboriginal health and well-being, education and early childhood development, housing and infrastructure, and economic opportunities. Frameworks and provincial investments for these priority areas include the Aboriginal Education Employment Action Plan which is focused on improving high school graduation rates and access to adult learning opportunities while fostering family and community engagement.

The City of Winnipeg is an acknowledged leader among Canadian municipalities in Aboriginal programming and services having adopted the Maskwachees Declaration in 2000, First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways in 2003, and the Aboriginal Youth Strategy (AYS) in 2008. Phase 1 of the AYS - a three year, 3 million dollar program -provides funding to Aboriginal based community organizations to provide Aboriginal specific youth programs and services while phase 2 ensures that all City services are culturally relevant and accessible to Aboriginal Youth.

