Agenda - Executive Policy Committee - September 23, 2003

REPORTS

Item No. 2 First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways
File CR-4.1

The document *First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways* is submitted in response to the February 19, 2003 directive from the Executive Policy Committee for the development of an Urban Aboriginal Agenda.

Agenda - Executive Policy Committee - September 23, 2003

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 18, 2003, the Executive Policy Committee laid over consideration of the matter for ninety (90) days.

On May 21, 2003, the Executive Policy Committee granted an extension of time of thirty (30) days for submission of a report, with final plan and recommendations, for an Urban Aboriginal Agenda coordinating the City of Winnipeg's efforts until 2006 focusing on quality of life, employment and education, safety, economic development and housing.

On February 19, 2003, the Executive Policy Committee authorized Councillors Vandal and Gerbasi to develop an Urban Aboriginal Agenda, which will coordinate the City of Winnipeg's efforts until 2006 that focus on the following areas:

- Quality of Life
- Employment and Education
- Safety
- Economic Development
- Housing

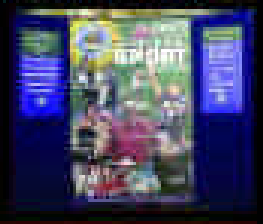
and that a report, with the final plan and recommendations be provided to the Executive Policy Committee by May 21, 2003.

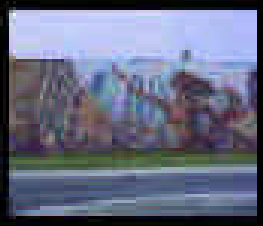
Winnipeg

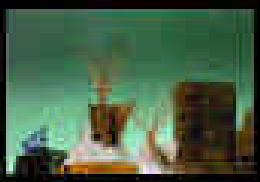
first steps:

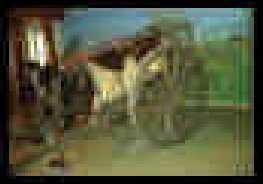
municipal aboriginal pathways







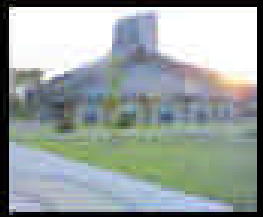












municipal aboriginal pathways

map

"The new partnership we envision is much more than a political or institutional one. It must be a heartfelt commitment among peoples to live together in peace, harmony and mutual support."
Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

FOREWORD

Of the many perceptions of Winnipeg's Aboriginal community, two images stand out. The first image relates to the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) which Winnipeg hosted in 2002. More than just a sporting event, NAIG emerged as a powerful symbol of the renaissance occurring in Aboriginal communities across the continent. For Winnipeg's Aboriginal citizens, NAIG was not only an organizational success but also an inspirational sign of cultural rebirth and renewal.

The second image stands in stark contrast to the first. It relates to the grim reality in Winnipeg's core area where members of the city's Aboriginal community struggle with the consequences of addiction, poverty, and homelessness. If the image of NAIG represents a future filled with hope and promise, then the desperate face of despair on the streets of downtown Winnipeg offers a sad reminder of past wrongs and missed opportunities.

That these two images can exist side by side in 2003 indicates that economic challenges still exist for Winnipeg's Aboriginal citizens. We are, however, not without hope and inspiration. The success of NAIG demonstrates what can happen when Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals work together toward a shared goal.

Fortunately, we have a solid foundation upon which to build. Over the years, the City has developed a broad range of services and programs that promote public safety, housing, community health, sport and recreation, and cultural heritage activities for Winnipeg's Aboriginal citizens. To a degree all have met their objectives but the relative success of each initiative simply reinforces the need for more concerted effort. Moreover, the evidence suggests the needs of Winnipeg's Aboriginal community will continue to evolve. As recent Census of Canada data suggests, Winnipeg's Aboriginal population has grown by almost 9,000 people (or 21 per cent) since 1996. Projections indicate that this upward trend will continue into the future so that by 2020, Winnipeg's Aboriginal population may well exceed 100,000 people.

First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways represents the City of Winnipeg's explicit commitment to address these challenges. It defines a policy framework - based on a number of key principles - to open the door to a new era of co-operation between the City and Winnipeg's Aboriginal community. The report argues that through effective partnerships and the creative use of municipal tools and levers the City can identify pathways to promote sustainable community development to build a better future for Winnipeg's Aboriginal citizens.

The timing is right. The growth of the city's Aboriginal population is only one component of a dramatic demographic shift that will transform Winnipeg's workforce within a generation. Over the next few decades Winnipeg will need more people with highly developed skills and abilities in order to compete in the global marketplace and maintain our standard of living. At this critical juncture in our history, we have been presented with a tremendous opportunity to create a progressive new partnership with our Aboriginal community to secure and enhance the quality of civic life for all our citizens.

This report presents a policy framework for generating a new era of sustained commitment by the City of Winnipeg to Aboriginal issues so that we may truly, as the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples observed, "live together in peace, harmony, and mutual support."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	1
Policy Framework	4
Promising Practices	5
Pathways	6
Employment	8
Safety	10
Economic Development	12
Quality of Life	14
Education and Outreach	16
Next Steps	18

"To be a vibrant and healthy city which places its highest priority on quality of life for all its citizens."

Plan Winnipeg 2020 Vision

THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

PLAN WINNIPEG

Plan Winnipeg 2020 Vision is the City's long range policy document, a guide to decision-making, and the foundation from which all civic activities - from budgeting to programming – flow. It identifies a vision of Winnipeg's civic future and provides specific policy directions to achieve that end.

Under Plan Winnipeg 2020 Vision, the City's obligation toward our Aboriginal community is specific and unequivocal. Policy Statement 2A-03 requires the City to **Promote Self-Reliant Aboriginal Communities** by:

i. Supporting the creation of links between the City of Winnipeg and Aboriginal Communities to ensure appropriateness of services and to increase participation in City affairs;
ii. Identifying and pursuing joint ventures between the City and the private sector or non-governmental organizations that increase or enhance job opportunities and economic development for Aboriginal people in Winnipeg; and
iii. Increasing awareness among Winnipeggers and visitors about the richness of the city's Aboriginal communities.

COMPLEMENTARY PLANS

Complementary plans provide strategies for implementing the policy directions set out in Plan Winnipeg. Over the past few years the City has developed a Corporate Plan, ***Serving Citizens: An Action Plan for the City of Winnipeg 2000-2002***, in addition to a variety of other secondary plans aimed at specific issues including financial planning, economic development, downtown renewal, and human resource planning.

Like Plan Winnipeg, many of the City's complementary plans emphasize the need for a new partnership between the municipality and the Aboriginal community. In emphasizing the importance of a community-based approach to local economic development, for example, the ***Homegrown Economic Development Strategy*** notes that "A renewed spirit of partnership is…fundamental to the development of Winnipeg's Aboriginal Community." Likewise, ***CentrePlan*** acknowledges the importance of highlighting Aboriginal culture in promoting downtown development while the ***Mayor's Task Force on Diversity*** observes that the "City of Winnipeg needs to continue to work with members and leaders from the Aboriginal community to identify needed resources, supports and opportunities." In addition, the City is also a signatory to the ***Maskwachees Declaration*** which committed the City to "partner with the Aboriginal Community to reinforce traditional, cultural and spiritual values while addressing issues related to poverty, unemployment, training and education."

First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways 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***.

PROMISING PRACTICES

A recent publication from the Canada West Foundation, ***Shared Responsibility: Final Report and Recommendations of the Urban***

Aboriginal Initiative identified a series of promising practices – or guiding principles – that should be used by governments when developing an urban Aboriginal policy. The promising practices outlined in ***First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways*** have been identified for the same purpose. By identifying a Vision based on the guiding principles of Co-operation, Trust, Value, Sustainability, and Flexibility, the City of Winnipeg will have a solid foundation upon which to develop its municipal Aboriginal policy framework.

PATHWAYS

First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways identifies a series of "pathways" which are essentially policy platforms that commit the City of Winnipeg to concrete action in five specific areas: Employment, Economic Development, Safety, Quality of Life, and Outreach and Education. Each area contains a specific "pathway commitment" through which targeted strategic initiatives can be developed. The pathway commitments also constitute a tool of accountability through which civic actions can be measured and evaluated.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Each pathway platform in ***First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways*** contains a series of strategic initiatives that the City of Winnipeg will implement. These initiatives represent exactly what the title of this report suggests: they are the ***first steps*** toward building a comprehensive Urban Aboriginal Agenda for the City of Winnipeg. The specific initiatives outlined in this report are intended to complement existing City programs and services in some areas while breaking new ground in others. Taken together, these initiatives are meant to build a solid foundation for future action.

ACTION PLANS

The strategic initiatives identified in ***First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways*** will need to be operationalized through specific action plans to define priorities, identify resources, address governance issues, and establish mechanisms for administrative support. This report identifies who has corporate responsibility for generating the action plan, the mechanism required for implementation, and a target date for completion.

FINANCING

Though some of the strategic initiatives identified in this report may be self-financed by the City of Winnipeg, others will require the full participation of the other levels of government, community groups, and the Aboriginal community. The creation of a new Tri-lateral agreement among the three levels of government will certainly be an important tool in this regard. In essence, the completion of certain initiatives will be contingent on the very partnerships that constitute the foundation of this report. The City of Winnipeg will, however, pursue partnerships in good faith and will work to facilitate, support, and encourage the creation of successful working relationships throughout the community.

NEXT STEPS

As the title of this report makes clear, these are the City's "First Steps" toward a new era of co-operation with Winnipeg's Aboriginal community. We anticipate there will be many more steps to be taken in the future. By opening the door to more dialogue and new ideas, the City is committing to an ongoing process of continuous improvement toward an ever better future.

"The City must recognize that issues and elements concerning and embracing the growing Aboriginal population are of paramount importance to the City's future economic development prospects, and must be dealt with concretely, genuinely and collaboratively"
A Homegrown Economic Development Strategy for Winnipeg

PROMISING PRACTICES

VISION

To enhance the well-being of Winnipeg's Aboriginal communities through the development of a new civic partnership that promotes the full participation of Aboriginal citizens in the social, economic and cultural life of the community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Co-operation

History teaches that Aboriginal issues can never be addressed in political isolation. Jurisdictional responsibilities between the three levels of government and the diversity within Winnipeg's Aboriginal community means that our vision can only be reached through the establishment of effective partnerships rooted in a spirit of co-operation and good-will.

Trust

The failure of governments to act responsibly - to ensure that actions match intentions – is for Aboriginal citizens an enduring grievance. In addressing Aboriginal issues, it is imperative that governments live up to their responsibilities and follows through on commitments and obligations. By adhering to the principle of co-operation we can establish a relationship built on trust and good faith.

Value

Since the responsibility for delivering meaningful programs and services to Aboriginal citizens crosses jurisdictional lines, administrative overlap and redundancy must be avoided so that finite resources are used efficiently and effectively. By fostering a climate of cooperation built on mutual trust, jurisdictional obstacles must be minimized so that the value of the programs and services government provides can be maximized.

Sustainability

Few terms have more currency in government lately than "sustainability." The reason for the popularity of the term is simple enough: too often in the past short-term thinking rather than long-term planning dictated policy choices. Consequently initiatives designed to enhance the well-being of Aboriginal citizens were undermined by the failure of decision-makers to make sustainability a key item in the planning process. Henceforth, the value of specific initiatives needs to be measured not only by its immediate impact but also by ensuring that it is sustainable over time.

Flexibility

The diverse interests involved in addressing Aboriginal issues suggests that flexibility is an important guiding principle. Flexibility encourages creative thinking and avoids decisions which impose one solution on different problems. Moreover, flexibility implies that all initiatives will be subject to performance measurement review so that programs and services can be adapted to changing circumstances or needs.

"Relations between municipal governments and Aboriginal peoples have developed in spite of legislative and constitutional limitations. Aboriginal authorities are creating practical solutions when providing services and political representation. Similarly, municipal governments are investing in the development of cooperative arrangements with Aboriginal authorities to deliver municipal services.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities

PATHWAYS

Employment: The City of Winnipeg will undertake initiatives to enhance the participation of Aboriginal people in both the civic and community workforce.

Strategic Initiatives:
- Aboriginal Internships
- Youth in Community Services Program
- Aboriginal Employment Network

Safety: The City of Winnipeg will build on current public safety programs and services to promote the personal and collective security of Winnipeg's Aboriginal community

Strategic Initiatives:
- Aboriginal Youth Ambassador Program
- Aboriginal Liaison Office
- National Law Enforcement Aboriginal and Diversity Network

Economic Development: The City of Winnipeg will utilize municipal tools to develop partnerships that promote economic development projects.

Strategic Initiatives:
- Aboriginal Economic Development Partnerships
- Municipal Services and Development Agreements
- Aboriginal Culture and Heritage Tourism

Quality of Life: The City of Winnipeg will enhance programming and services to support Aboriginal recreational and wellness activities.

Strategic Initiatives:
- Multi-Purpose Community Facility
- Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre
- Aboriginal Housing

Outreach and Education: The City of Winnipeg will develop outreach and education initiatives that promote cross-cultural understanding and improve access to information about civic services.

Strategic Initiatives:
- Aboriginal Pathways Community Consultation
- Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training
- Urban Aboriginal Transition Network

"It is important to acknowledge that Aboriginal people are an increasingly important human resource to the City of Winnipeg. This is a relatively young group of people who must be encouraged to become our employees and leaders of the future. It will require strong proactive measures to make this happen by removing the barriers that prevent people from fulfilling these roles. We must also work to teach the young people in the Aboriginal community that they are not just welcome but needed."

Mayor's Task Force on Diversity

EMPLOYMENT

Recent Census of Canada data indicate that not only is Winnipeg's Aboriginal population growing at a significantly faster rate than the non-Aboriginal population but that the median age of Aboriginal citizens (24.8) is significantly lower than non-Aboriginal (38.4). Interestingly, the next decade promises to be a period of substantial transition for Winnipeg's workforce. Statistical analysis suggests, for example, that 30 per cent of the City of Winnipeg workforce will be eligible to retire by 2005 and 50 per cent by 2010.

The connection between these statistics is obvious. In order to replenish its workforce, employers across the city -including the City of Winnipeg - will increasingly need to rely on young Aboriginal people to fill clerical, labour, and professional positions. Indeed, one study suggests that in 10 years, 25 per cent of the labour pool in Winnipeg will be of Aboriginal descent.

These circumstances underline the mutually beneficial opportunities that exist in Winnipeg. Through the development of creative and inclusive employment programs for our Aboriginal citizens we can nurture a prosperous community for generations to come.

The time for action, however, is now. Recent census data indicate that Aboriginal youth require more opportunities for education and training to meet current employment standards. Consequently, steps must be taken immediately to prepare for the coming demographic transition. If Winnipeg is to thrive in the future then the community must rally together to ensure that our future workforce has the proper training, skills, and experience to remain competitive in the global marketplace.

The City of Winnipeg has already taken steps to meet this challenge. **The Human Resource Strategic Plan** and other planning tools such as the Workforce Planning Guide (succession planning) provides the foundation for additional new initiatives. The strategic initiatives outlined here are part of the City of Winnipeg's **Action Plan for Creating a Diverse Workforce.** Endorsed by Senior Management in September 2002, the Action Plan is responding to the recommendations in the Mayor's Task Force on Diversity report.

PATHWAY COMMITMENT:
The City of Winnipeg will undertake initiatives to enhance the participation of Aboriginal people in both the civic and community workforce.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Aboriginal Internships

- Using the model already established by Winnipeg Police Service, the City of Winnipeg will work with its Union and Association partners to implement an Aboriginal Internship Program that can be utilized by all civic departments.
    - **Corporate Responsibility**: Corporate Services Department
    - **Implementation Mechanism:** Action Plan
    - **Timeline for Action Plan:** December 2003

Youth in Community Services Program

- The City of Winnipeg will develop partnerships to re-establish the Youth in Community Services Program.
    - **Corporate Responsibility**: Community Services Department
    - **Implementation Mechanism:** Action Plan
    - **Timeline for Action Plan:** September 2003

Aboriginal Employment Network

- Working with Aboriginal organizations, the Federal and Provincial Governments and the private sector, the City of Winnipeg will encourage and facilitate the development of a Civic Aboriginal Employment Network, with an emphasis on Aboriginal student employment, to identify opportunities for casual or full time employment throughout the city.
    - **Corporate Responsibility**: Corporate Services Department
    - **Implementation Mechanism:** Action Plan
    - **Timeline for Action Plan:** December 2003

Aboriginal cultures and the values they represent have not disappeared. Instead, they have adapted to new times and new situations. They remain vibrant and dynamic today.

Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba

SAFETY

Few Aboriginal issues are as sensitive as those relating to safety and security. It is a historical fact that Aboriginal citizens have not always been well-served by either Canada's justice or law enforcement systems. Likewise there is a perception among many non-Aboriginals that the inner-city, where most Aboriginal people live, is unsafe. The result is a longstanding history of suspicion and mistrust between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people that has only served to complicate an already sensitive relationship.

Our knowledge of these issues has often been borne of tragic circumstances. Both the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry and the 911 Inquest identified critical systemic issues that the City needs to address when dealing with safety-related issues in the Aboriginal community. The City of Winnipeg has acknowledged these issues and has begun to take actions to deal with them. While Winnipeg's Aboriginal community and Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) still struggle to find a common understanding, significant measures have been taken to establish open lines of communication and a shared sense of mutual trust.

WPS has recently started or enhanced a number of community outreach, employment equity, domestic abuse and cultural awareness initiatives to integrate both Aboriginal issues and people into law enforcement activities. These measures have been taken with a view to improving the personal safety of Aboriginal people and the public safety of the larger Winnipeg community.

While acknowledging the progress that has been made in these areas, the programs and services delivered by the City for Aboriginal People for the purposes of public safety should be enhanced and extended.

One of the keys to the promotion of safety and security is to emphasize the importance of prevention, profile, and information. The strategic initiatives outlined below are proactive measures intended to raise the profile of Aboriginal participation in maintaining safe city neighbourhoods. Aboriginal groups have rightly identified that the City needs to be more inclusive when addressing safety issues. Initiatives such as the "Ambassadors" program are designed for this purpose.

Moreover, the City recognizes that it must be more proactive in providing information concerning justice and justice-related matters to Winnipeg's Aboriginal community. The purpose of creating a Liaison Office is to close this information gap and bridge the cultural divide on justice issues.

PATHWAY COMMITMENT:
The City of Winnipeg will build on current public safety programs and services to promote the personal and collective security of Winnipeg's Aboriginal community.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Aboriginal Youth Ambassadors

- The City of Winnipeg will co-operate with community partners to establish an Aboriginal Youth Ambassador Program to promote Aboriginal issues and culture for tourists to Winnipeg.
    - **Corporate Responsibility**: Winnipeg Police Service
    - **Implementation Mechanism:** Action Plan
    - **Timeline for Action Plan:** April 2004

Winnipeg Police Service Aboriginal Liaison Office

- The City of Winnipeg will establish an Aboriginal Liaison Office within Winnipeg Police Service to promote open dialogue with the Aboriginal community on justice related issues, provide assistance to Aboriginal citizens, and share information on law enforcement matters.
    - **Corporate Responsibility**: Winnipeg Police Service
    - **Implementation Mechanism:** Action Plan
    - **Timeline for Action Plan:** October 2004

National Law Enforcement Aboriginal and Diversity Network

- The City of Winnipeg will participate in the National Law Enforcement Aboriginal and Diversity network (LEAD), an initiative of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP). The network will provide police officers at the national, provincial/territorial, regional, municipal, and Aboriginal community levels with the infrastructure to share best practices, establish links in the community, devise a Canadian training program, set up a Web site and an electronic newsletter, and to conduct research.
    - **Corporate Responsibility**: Winnipeg Police Service
    - **Implementation Mechanism:** Resolution of the CACP
    - **Timeline for Action Plan:** September 2003

While there have been some improvements, persistent gaps remain in the quality of life experienced by Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Social, economic, and health indicators in Aboriginal communities are far below those of their non-Aboriginal neighbours…These statistics reveal an increased need for employment and economic development opportunities in the Aboriginal community."
Municipal-Aboriginal Adjacent Community Co-operation Project

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Using statistics from the 1996 Census, the report ***Partnerships in Practice: Case Studies in Municipal and First Nations' Economic Development Co-operation*** noted that:

- The average employment income of Aboriginal citizens ($17,382) was 34 per cent below the national average ($26,474).
- Only 54 percent of working age Aboriginal citizens were employed compared to 71 per cent of non-Aboriginal working-age people.
- 60 per cent of Aboriginal earners had completed high school, compared to 75 per cent of earners in the general population.

Such statistics serve as a stark reminder that when combined with recent demographic trends, more emphasis must be placed on creating economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people.

Municipal governments, obviously, cannot act alone to promote Aboriginal economic development. They possess neither the authority nor the resources to initiate stand-alone development projects.

In the past, however, this reality has too often been used as an excuse for inaction and a way of avoiding taking measures which might produce positive economic results for Aboriginal people living in urban settings.

In truth, municipal governments do possess a variety of levers to advance the cause of Aboriginal economic development but only if these tools are used ***in partnership*** with the other two levels of government, the private sector, and, most importantly, the Aboriginal community.

The concept of Aboriginal economic development partnerships is not intended to imply preference but merely to encourage Aboriginal participation in such initiatives. In the same manner that the City of Winnipeg promotes partnerships with a wide variety of community groups, the City wants to ensure that Winnipeg's Aboriginal community feels welcome to participate in partnership ventures. Needless to say, all partnerships will be built on the principle that full property rights encompass full property responsibility.

In building economic development partnerships, the City's primary objective is simply to promote the inclusion of Winnipeg's Aboriginal citizens within the wider circle of the city's economic development community.

PATHWAY COMMITMENT:
The City of Winnipeg will utilize municipal tools to develop partnerships that promote economic development projects.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Aboriginal Economic Development Partnerships

- The City of Winnipeg will utilize municipal levers including its property development function and other financial tools to facilitate the creation of partnerships which encourage the participation of Winnipeg's Aboriginal community in economic development opportunities.
    - **Corporate Responsibility**: Planning, Property and Development Department
    - **Implementation Mechanism:** Project Specific
    - **Timeline for Action Plan:** Project Specific

Municipal Development and Services Agreements

- The City of Winnipeg will live up to its Plan Winnipeg commitment to encourage "Self-Reliant Aboriginal Communities" by participating, as mandated by the Federal government, in the Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) process. Though the TLE process is primarily a Federal responsibility, the City will work responsibly to facilitate the fair and equitable resolution of the process by negotiating comprehensive Municipal Development and Services Agreements with eligible First Nations. All Municipal Development and Service Agreements will build a framework for the provision of municipal services including payments equivalent to City taxes and utility charges, adherence to all City by-laws, adherence to the authority of City planning and zoning regulations, adherence to eligibility requirements for City programs, and general alignment with all City policies.
    - **Corporate Responsibility:** CAO Secretariat
    - **Implementation Mechanism:** Municipal Development and Services Agreement
    - **Timeline for Action Plan:** Project Specific

Aboriginal Culture and Heritage Tourism

The City of Winnipeg will work with Aboriginal organizations, Destination Winnipeg, the other levels of government and interested heritage groups to promote Winnipeg's Aboriginal Culture and Heritage Tourism.

- **Corporate Responsibility**: Planning, Property and Development Department
- **Implementation Mechanism:** Action Plan
- **Timeline for Action Plan:** Project Specific

"That sustainable and committed investment in active living, physical activity, physical education, recreation and sport are essential to promote health and address social issues facing Aboriginal/Indigenous Peoples in communities across Canada and therefore we call on all Governments, Non-Governmental Organizations, communities and individuals to endorse this Declaration."

The Maskwachees Declaration

QUALITY OF LIFE

When the City of Winnipeg endorsed the Maskwachees Declaration in July 2000 it made both a political and moral commitment to improving the quality of life of Winnipeg's Aboriginal citizens through "physical activity, physical education, recreation and sport." In making a direct connection with the difficult social conditions facing many of Winnipeg's Aboriginal citizens, Council's support for the Maskwachees Declaration committed the City to developing a "multi-partnership" to enhance the "participation of Aboriginal/Indigenous citizens in recreation and sport."

The inspiration behind the Maskwachees Declaration reflected a very clear reality: Though Winnipeg's Aboriginal community is "the most rapidly growing segment of the population," it was also apparent that only a small percentage of Aboriginal citizens were participating in sport and recreation activities. The challenge for the City, therefore, was to build community alliances that would develop meaningful programs and services to encourage more Aboriginal participation.

The Maskwachees Declaration focused community attention and produced immediate results. The most impressive of these was the creation of the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre (WASAC), a multi-partner initiative that exposed Aboriginal youth to both entry level and high performance sport and recreation activities.

WASAC has since become one of the most outstanding and tangible examples of concentrated community effort to improve the quality of life for Winnipeg's Aboriginal community. Indeed, not only has the initiative directly promoted personal health and fitness activities for youth, but it has also resulted in providing invaluable employment experience for adults. Consequently, the key by-products of WASAC include developing role models, providing job experience and promoting leadership development in the Aboriginal community.

The success of WASAC indicates that the City and its partners can work together to create successful quality of life initiatives. This kind of co-operation needs to be extended beyond programs and services to include infrastructure as well. Through such initiatives as the Public Use Facility Study and the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative the City is committed to working with its community partners to provide improved housing and recreational facilities for Aboriginal citizens. The primary goal of these "first steps" is to work toward the main objective of the Maskwachees Declaration to promote the "healthy growth and development" of Winnipeg's Aboriginal community.

PATHWAY COMMITMENT:
The City of Winnipeg will enhance programming and services to support Aboriginal recreational and wellness activities.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Multi-Purpose Community Facility

- The City of Winnipeg's Public Use Facility study – which is currently reviewing the state of Winnipeg's recreation facilities – has been requested to consider the feasibility of establishing a Multi-Purpose Community Facility among other potential community enhancements for the North End of Winnipeg.
    - **Corporate Responsibility**: Community Services Department
    - **Implementation Mechanism:** Community Consultation and Action Plan
    - **Timeline for Action Plan:** January 2005

Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre (Program)

- The City of Winnipeg will continue to support the ongoing development of the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre program. The City will work with the Aboriginal community and relevant funding partners to explore additional opportunities to expand program capacity to enable higher participation rates in the program and other city venues.
    - **Corporate Responsibility**: Community Services Department
    - **Implementation Mechanism:** Action Plan
    - **Timeline for Action Plan:** Ongoing

Aboriginal Housing

The City of Winnipeg will work with its partners to ensure that existing and future municipal housing initiatives include a focus on providing safe and affordable accommodation for Winnipeg's Aboriginal citizens.

- **Corporate Responsibility**: Planning, Property and Development Department
- **Implementation Mechanism:** Action Plan as Required
- **Timeline for Action Plan:** Ongoing

"Although generalizations can and do occur, the Aboriginal community in Winnipeg should not be mistaken for a homogeneous or monolithic group. The urban Aboriginal community offers a diversity of culture, language, opinion and vision, with some 70 different organizations providing for or representing Aboriginal interests."

Manitoba Round Table on Environment and Economy

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

The phrase "two solitudes" typically relates to English-French relations in Canada, but it could just as easily apply to Aboriginal-Non Aboriginal relations as well. Despite having lived together for centuries, a cultural divide still exists that must be bridged in order to build a new partnership fit for the 21st century.

Part of the problem has been the failure of non-Aboriginals to appreciate the diversity of Winnipeg's Aboriginal communities and respect the traditions that constitute the foundation of Aboriginal cultures in Canada. Learning to appreciate fully the complexity of Aboriginal heritage is particularly challenging in an urban setting like Winnipeg where the realities of modern city-life tend to blur the differences and distinctions among us.

Similarly, the transition to life in the city is often very difficult for Aboriginal people who arrive in Winnipeg in search of a better future but without the resources necessary to adapt to urban living. In some cases it may simply be a case of having appropriate financial resources, but the successful adjustment to city life for Aboriginal people may just as easily depend on something as straightforward as having a personal reference easily available to secure employment or decent accommodation.

The Aboriginal community has made it clear that the provision of urban transition services is a key element in building a better future for Aboriginal people living in Winnipeg. Often new arrivals from rural locations and various reserves simply do not know where to go for information or for assistance in making the transition to urban life. It is at this singular point, when individuals are at their most vulnerable, where the provision of assistance may help to avoid other social challenges.

The need for building awareness both as a tool of cultural understanding and as a means to easing the transition to urban life represents a key challenge to improving civic life for Aboriginal people in Winnipeg. By enhancing partnerships with key service providers in the Aboriginal community the City of Winnipeg can play an even greater role in promoting tolerance and ensuring access to civic resources and services.

PATHWAY COMMITMENT:
The City of Winnipeg will develop outreach and education initiatives that promote cross-cultural understanding and improve access to information about civic services.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Aboriginal Pathways Community Consultation

- The City of Winnipeg will work with its Aboriginal and community partners to organize ongoing Aboriginal Pathways Community Consultation forums to promote dialogue, identify next steps in identifying future pathways, and highlight the positive achievements and progressive accomplishments of Winnipeg's Aboriginal citizens.
  - **Corporate Responsibility**: CAO Secretariat
  - **Implementation Mechanism:** Community Consultation
  - **Timeline for Action Plan:** Ongoing (beginning September 6, 2003)

Aboriginal Cultural Awareness

- The City of Winnipeg will develop Aboriginal Cultural Awareness programs to sensitize civic staff to the needs and aspirations of Winnipeg's Aboriginal community.
  - **Corporate Responsibility**: Corporate Services
  - **Implementation Mechanism:** Action Plan
  - **Timeline for Action Plan:** December 2003

Urban Aboriginal Transition Network

- The City of Winnipeg will work in partnership with Aboriginal and identified community partners to establish an Urban Aboriginal Transition Network to enable new Aboriginal residents to acquaint themselves with civic and other services in Winnipeg.
  - **Corporate Responsibility**: Community Services Department
  - **Implementation Mechanism:** Community Consultation and Action Plan
  - **Timeline for Action Plan:** April 2004

"This is a great day. It is so exciting, it's a new beginning!"
Evaluation Form Comment
MAP Forum
September 6, 2003

NEXT STEPS

On September 6, 2003, more than 300 people gathered at R.B. Russell school to attend the inaugural Municipal Aboriginal Pathways Forum. The purpose of the meeting, co-Chaired by Mayor Glen Murray and Councillors Dan Vandal and Jenny Gerbasi was to review ***First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways*** and to promote an open community dialogue on the "necessary steps" that must be taken in the future to promote the full participation of Aboriginal people in the economic, social and cultural life of Winnipeg.

The views expressed at the MAP Forum generated both an enormous sense of goodwill and a genuine feeling of optimism. Most of those who spoke at the Forum praised City Council for finally developing an action-oriented policy document that addresses fundamental urban Aboriginal issues. There was also a general consensus among the speakers that the policy pathways outlined in the report reflected real areas of need and that the strategic initiatives related to each pathway were well worth pursuing. In short, the discussion at the Forum suggested that the City's had taken a positive "first step" toward establishing a progressive new partnership with Winnipeg's Aboriginal citizens.

Having said that, there was also a frank acknowledgement among Forum participants that the challenges ahead required concerted effort and full community participation or risk almost certain failure. As the emotionally compelling testimony of one speaker after another made clear, the City must act on the call for empowerment by including the Aboriginal community in the strategic planning process, enabling Aboriginal service providers, and build sustainable community capacity through effective partnerships. In sum, the consensus view expressed at the Forum was that the City must take many "more steps" so that we, as a community can take our "next steps" together.

The City of Winnipeg agrees. **In the months ahead, the City has resolved to make the Municipal Aboriginal Pathways consultation process its first priority.** This consultation process will be directed toward the preparation of the action plans for the strategic initiatives outlined in this report as well as in planning new strategic directions in the future. In addition the City further commits that as a result of this ongoing Municipal Aboriginal Pathways consultation process, the City will produce a "Next Steps" report in 2006 to review the success of the "First Steps" initiatives and to guide the City's urban Aboriginal agenda during the next term of Council.