

*“Scoping” Research
On Issues For Municipal Governments
And Aboriginal People
Living Within Their Boundaries*



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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	iv
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Study Methodology	2
3.0 Literature Review	4
3.1 Urban Aboriginal People in Canada: A Brief Demographic Analysis	4
3.1.1 Aboriginal Population Growth	4
3.1.2 Urbanization of the Aboriginal Population	4
3.1.3 High Mobility Levels	5
3.1.4 Age Composition of the Aboriginal Population	6
3.2 Issues and Needs of Aboriginal People in Urban Municipalities	7
3.2.1 Education	7
3.2.2 Unemployment	8
3.2.3 Poverty	8
3.2.4 Housing	9
3.2.5 Homelessness	10
3.2.6 Health	10
3.2.7 Violence	11
3.2.8 Crime and Incarceration	11
3.3 Summary of Needs and Service Gaps	12
4.0 Quality of Life	15
4.1 Unemployment and Participation Rates	16
4.2 Household Income	17
4.3 Poverty Levels	18
4.4 Housing Affordability	19
4.5 Summary	21
5.0 Interview Findings	23
5.1 The Arrival of Aboriginal People in Municipalities	23
5.1.1 Arrivals are a Mix of Ages and Household Types	23
5.1.2 Arrivals are Seeking a Range of Services and Improved Quality of Life	23
5.1.3 Upon Arrival Aboriginal People Face Barriers in Accessing Services	24
5.2 The Arrival of Aboriginal People is Placing Additional Demands on Municipal Services	25
5.2.1 There is a Lack of Appropriate Affordable Housing	25
5.2.2 Education	26
5.2.3 Policing	27
5.2.4 Public Health	27
5.2.5 Increasing Racial Tensions	27

Table of Contents (cont'd)

5.3	Municipal Governments are Providing Services to Address the Unique Needs of Aboriginal People	27
5.3.1	Some Municipal Governments Develop Their Own Urban Aboriginal Strategy	29
5.3.2	Some Municipal Governments Develop Race Relations or Social Equity Committees.....	29
5.3.3	Municipal Governments Require Adequate Data to Assess Aboriginal Service Needs.....	30
5.4	There are Cost Implications in the Delivery of Services to Aboriginal People.....	30
5.4.1	Municipal Governments Require More Resources to Adequately Assess Costs	31
5.4.2	Costs are Increasing and Funding is Limited	31
5.4.3	Municipal Governments Actively Seek Partners to Fund and Deliver Aboriginal Services	32
5.4.4	Enhanced Federal and Provincial Funding is Required in a Number of Areas	32
5.4.5	Summary of Cost Implications.....	33
5.5	An Infrastructure for Collaboration Exists Among Governments.....	34
5.5.1	Collaborative Initiatives Led by Municipal Governments	34
5.5.2	Collaborative Initiatives Led by the Provincial and Territorial Governments	35
5.5.3	Collaborative Initiatives Led by the Federal Government	35
5.5.4	Collaboration Among Governments can be Improved.....	36
5.6	Aboriginal Groups Play an Active Role in the Community.....	37
5.6.1	A Diverse Group of Aboriginal Organizations Provide a Variety of Services	37
5.6.2	Municipal Governments Experience Challenges Working with Aboriginal Service Organizations	38
5.6.3	Cooperation with Aboriginal Organizations can be Improved.....	38
5.7	Clarification of Roles and Responsibilities is Required.....	39
5.7.1	Municipal Governments Require Clarification on Specific Jurisdictional Issues.....	39
5.7.2	There is Ambiguity on what Order of Government Should be Responsible for Funding and Delivering Programs and Services to Aboriginal People	40
5.7.3	New Processes are Required to Resolve Jurisdictional Issues	40
6.0	Suggestions for Further Research.....	41
7.0	Conclusion.....	42
	List of References.....	43

Table of Contents (cont’d)

Appendix A	
Selection of Municipalities for the Project	46
Appendix B	
Research Discussion Guide	
Research on Issues for Municipal Governments and Aboriginal People	51
Appendix C	
The Federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy:	
Status of the Pilot Projects.....	55
Appendix D	
Aboriginal Organizations and the Services They Provide.....	57

List of Tables

Table 1. Unemployment and Participation Rates for Selected Urban Areas.....	16
Table 2. Average Household Income for Selected Urban Centres.....	17
Table 3. Incidence of Low Income in Private Households in Selected Urban Centres.....	19
Table 4. Percentage of Households Paying 30% or More of Their Income on Shelter Costs.....	20
Table 5. Percentage of Households Paying 50% or More of Their Income on Shelter Costs.....	21

List of Tables for Appendices

Table A1. Aboriginal Identity Population in Canadian Provinces	46
Table A2. Top 25 Urban Municipalities with Largest Aboriginal Population	47
Table A3. Top 25 Urban Municipalities with Largest Percentage of Aboriginal Population	48
Table A4. Aboriginal Absolute Population Figures for 25 Major Metropolitan Areas.....	49
Table A5. Selected Urban Municipalities by Absolute Number and Percentage of Aboriginal Identity Population.....	50

Executive Summary

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) initiated this study in an effort to understand how municipal governments are implicated in programs and services for Aboriginal people living within their boundaries. This report derives information from a literature review, analysis of Aboriginal data within the FCM Quality of Life Reporting System (QOLRS), and a series of interviews with municipal service providers.

The work undertaken in this study highlights a number of important findings for municipal governments. Some of the key findings are summarized below.

The Arrival of the Aboriginal Population in Urban Municipalities Dictates a High Need for Services

The Aboriginal population is one of the most rapidly growing sectors of society and an increasing proportion of Aboriginal people live in urban municipalities. They are a young population with a high but declining birth rate. With one-third of the population under the age of 14 years, they represent a large proportion of the labour force of the future in many municipalities. Their general socio-economic characteristics highlight a high level of marginalization and poverty, dictating a need for a wide range of services. Their high mobility rates makes service and program delivery difficult.

Service needs that have to be addressed include: education and training; family services and childcare; health care; addictions, abuse-rehabilitation programs, mental health disabilities; housing that is available, adequate, and affordable; services for youth and children; and, services to reduce crime and incarceration.

The growing number of Aboriginal people places pressure on the housing market, health and educational systems and policing. In some program areas the pressure is not a function of space or numbers but a need for culturally appropriate programs and service delivery. Dealing with the pressure of a rising number of Aboriginal people and ensuring they receive the services they require in municipalities will be an important challenge for all orders of government in the coming decades.

The Arrival Process is Difficult

Key reasons for moving to urban centres include the desire to access employment, education, health care, better housing, a range of other services, and in general to experience a better quality of life than they experience on reserves. Aboriginal people are not always successful in accessing the services they seek; some come with too few skills; they cannot access adequate or affordable housing; they lack the necessary information to access services; they often face discrimination; jurisdictional confusion over who is responsible for certain services leaves many needs unanswered; and there are more needs than agencies can address given the level of funding available. Municipal governments also lack adequate data to plan effectively to respond to service needs.

Municipal Governments are Providing Services to Address the Unique Needs of Aboriginal People

Municipal governments provide and support a wide range of services for Aboriginal people. The majority of these services fall into three general categories: traditional municipal services such as sewer, water, transportation and policing; sport recreational and cultural services and programs; and, business development and entrepreneurial support and skills development. Some larger municipal governments have developed their own urban Aboriginal strategies focusing on how cities provide services, what services are needed, how they should be provided, and what partnership arrangements can be developed. Many municipal governments also have race, ethnic or social equity committees that provide a framework for discussion and networking, helping to reduce community tensions.

Municipal governments felt a number of services should be enhanced by federal or provincial funding. These included housing, education, health care, funding for family programs, sports recreation, business development and entrepreneurial skills. Other programs municipal governments would like to introduce if there was more funding available include seniors services; detox centres, head start programs, awareness and liaison programs in the police force, job training and community and non-profit capacity building.

There are Cost Implications in the Delivery of Services to Aboriginal People

Costs are increasing but difficult to assess because municipal governments do not separate the costs associated with providing services to Aboriginal people from general budget line items. Most municipal governments provide some level of support in a variety of areas, some is in-kind (staff and facilities) but direct funding is also provided. Most direct funding goes to sports, recreation and cultural events but funds are also provided for policing, support for Aboriginal business development, building entrepreneurial skills, Aboriginal job creation and, in Ontario, housing and social assistance. The costs of other traditional services such as water, sewer, fire protection and transportation also increase with an increasing population. Whenever possible municipal governments use funds from other sources to address Aboriginal service needs and participate extensively in programs that are cost shared with other orders of government. They also seek funds from foundations, the private sector and community fund raising. However, the level of support provided by municipal governments cannot even come close to addressing the needs of Aboriginal people. Without additional sources of revenue it will be difficult for municipal governments to provide higher levels of support.

Aboriginal Organizations Play an Active Role in the Community

The range of services provided by Aboriginal organizations is impressive: housing, education, skills development, transportation, counselling, alternative schools, health care and support services, entrepreneurial development and early prevention programs to name a few. The nature of the clients served span the entire range of household types and ages in the larger communities, although smaller communities focus more on youth, pregnant mothers and children. Most of the funding for these programs comes from the other orders of government, although municipal governments make significant contributions. Long-term, sustainable funding is rarely guaranteed for the organizations.

Although there are a significant number of Aboriginal organizations providing a range of services, municipal governments feel that frequently the services are not coordinated and the organizations often compete instead of cooperating. Aboriginal organizations, unless they are Pan-Aboriginal organizations, sometimes serve only a specific client group, for example status Indians or Métis. This often leaves some Aboriginal people without services and reduces efficiency and coordination. There is some conflict and competition between Aboriginal organizations for funding and the client base. The competitive, as opposed to coordinated, approach often slows implementation of projects. Municipal governments often end up playing the role of facilitator, trying to forge partnerships, negotiate disputes, and move initiatives forward.

An Infrastructure of Collaboration Exists Among Governments

Municipal governments use a wide range of options to improve collaboration including tri-partite agreements, Aboriginal Liaison Officers, inter-sectoral committees, the local MLA and MP, FCM and provincial and territorial municipal organizations, and the Big City Mayor’s Caucus. Eight of the municipal governments surveyed work within the guidelines of the Federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy. They spoke positively of the thrust of the initiative but would like the strategy to be better organized and more transparent, provide more opportunities for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service agencies to participate in planning and program development, and be less driven by the political constituencies in the Aboriginal community and the federal government. They also expressed concern that fragmentation in the Aboriginal community was slowing progress, and they find themselves spending time and resources playing the role of facilitator in an attempt to move the process forward.

To improve communication, municipal governments would like to see more federal, provincial and territorial involvement and transparency on Aboriginal issues at the municipal level. They would also like to see Aboriginal organizations involved in all discussions as an equal partner. Several centres suggested the need for more inter-governmental discussion and several suggested there should be more tri-partite agreements such as they have in Winnipeg.

Most municipal governments reported there was not enough collaboration and communication with Aboriginal organizations. Municipal governments need funding to support a sustained dialogue. Building partnerships and promoting dialogue is just as time and resource consuming as delivering programs.

There is a Need to Clarify Jurisdictional Issues

There was a great deal of confusion surrounding jurisdictional responsibility. Respondents identified a need to clarify who is responsible for funding and delivering a range of services including housing, health, social assistance, and a range of other support services. Key questions raised included: who is responsible for funding services for non-status and Métis and off reserve Aboriginals in general? What should be the role of municipal governments? What is the nature and extent of the federal responsibility? What are the Bands and Band Councils responsible for? What is the role of the provinces? What does Aboriginal self-government really mean? There appeared to be consensus that jurisdictional issues will not be resolved through constitutional change. It would be better to work through agreements like the tri-partite approaches.

Three major points of view prevailed with respect to the funding and delivery of programs and Services to Aboriginal people. The first favoured partnership approaches to service funding and delivery with municipal governments certainly playing a role. The second opinion was that the federal government should be solely responsible for delivering programs and services to Aboriginal people, for providing funding to satisfy operational costs and enable program development. This view was much more prevalent amongst smaller municipal governments. The third theme focused on the role of the Aboriginal community. Improved inclusion of Aboriginal leaders and residents in terms of the program development and service delivery was stressed. While municipal governments should certainly play a role in planning and delivery, it should be done in partnership with Aboriginal groups.

Opportunities for Further Work

Many municipal governments made a number of suggestions that may begin to address municipal issues in providing programs and services for Aboriginal people living off reserve. These included: expanding the data base available to municipal governments; development of financial case studies of selected municipal governments to provide a better idea of the nature and amount of funding going to Aboriginal people; work to resolve jurisdictional issues; promoting more dialogue between municipal governments and Aboriginal organizations; providing stronger representation at the federal table to obtain more resources for municipal governments, specifically helping to structure a “new deal”; helping municipal governments develop urban Aboriginal strategies; and, promoting more inter-sectoral and inter-governmental discussion on Aboriginal issues.

1.0 Introduction

Studies indicate that barriers to employment, programs and services often impede the success of Aboriginal people moving from reserves to urban centres. It is often unclear which order of government is responsible for providing services to Aboriginal people living off reserve. As a result, government action is not always coordinated. This produces overlapping policies with services in some sectors and gaps in others. Consequently, services are sometimes not delivered effectively.

Although studies exist on the challenges experienced by urban Aboriginal people, information on the key issues municipal governments face in accommodating Aboriginal people is not readily available. This research is designed to improve our understanding of the implications and challenges that confront municipal governments serving Aboriginal people living off reserve within their boundaries. The data collected will be used as a basis for discussion with other orders of government and Aboriginal organizations with the aim of improving coordination of programs and services to Aboriginal people.

A number of trends and factors make this work timely:

- The number of Aboriginal people is increasing rapidly in many municipalities;
- Aboriginal people are, in general, a group who have high service needs;
- Despite initiatives by other orders of government, municipal governments are becoming more engaged in Aboriginal issues and taking steps to accommodate Aboriginal people within their boundaries;
- There will be increased demands on municipal governments to provide services directly and work with other organizations, including Aboriginal organizations, to provide services to Aboriginal people;
- The resource implications for municipal governments will continue to grow; and,
- With the fiscal pressures municipal governments face and their efforts to structure a “new deal” to address their fiscal position, it is important to understand the service needs of Aboriginal people and the resource implications facing municipal governments.

Municipal governments need the information and knowledge base to identify the key issues they will face in accommodating Aboriginal people within their boundaries. This report represents one step in building this information and knowledge base.

2.0 Study Methodology

The basic tasks undertaken to complete the research in this project included a review of relevant literature, analysis of appropriate statistical information and interviews of municipal officials. The specific components are described below:

a) Literature Review

A brief review of literature and relevant government documents and reports is provided to help highlight the issues and their implications. This includes a review of data from Statistics Canada to provide a brief overview of the magnitude of the issue: population numbers, demographic and socio-economic characteristics, and migration trends. This section provides contextual material to help frame and explain many of the issues as well as identify appropriate municipal governments for the interview sample.

b) Quality of Life Indicators

A review of selected Aboriginal indicators within the FCM Quality of Life Reporting System (QOLRS) is provided. This analysis helps identify and inform the issues and illustrate the quality of life circumstances of Aboriginal people.

c) Interviews

The sample municipalities for the interviews included the eight municipalities currently involved in the Federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy: Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Regina, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, and Toronto. Another six mid-sized municipalities: Kitimat, Kamsack, Dawson Creek, Red Deer, Lethbridge, and Thompson were also included in the study. Selection of the municipalities was based on a number of factors: their proportion and number of Aboriginal Identity populations (see Appendix A); their involvement in the Federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy; and recommendations from FCM. In addition, the municipalities were chosen to ensure the sample included both large and small municipalities, some from the north as well as southern Canada, municipalities in every region of Canada with a significant number of Aboriginal people (Ontario, the Prairies, British Columbia, and the North), and the global cities of Vancouver and Toronto where Aboriginals are only one group within a population that is very ethnically diverse.

The telephone interview involved municipal participants familiar with Aboriginal issues and the services provided in the sample centres. The interview was designed to collect information and opinions on:

- general Aboriginal issues;
- service issues;
- resource implications, direct and indirect;
- partnering organizations and the nature of the partnership and service(s) involved; and,
- jurisdictional issues.

A discussion guide was sent to the respondents prior to the interview. As well as providing the rationale and reasons for the interview, the discussion guide (see Appendix B) identified the key questions around which the interviews were structured.

3.0 Literature Review

This literature review identifies the needs, issues and service gaps facing Aboriginal people living in, or moving to, municipalities, and helps municipal governments develop strategies to address these needs, forge the proper partnerships, and identify resource requirements. The discussion also identifies the complexity and magnitude of the problems, suggesting the resources that are required are well beyond the current capacity of municipal governments. The complex and varied nature of programs and services for Aboriginal people dictate the need for a strong partnership consisting of all orders of government and the Aboriginal community. The same complexity will also require a good definition of roles and responsibilities but with sufficient program flexibility to adapt to unique needs in particular municipalities.

3.1 Urban Aboriginal People in Canada: A Brief Demographic Analysis

3.1.1 Aboriginal Population Growth

According to the 2001 Census over 1.3 million people, or 4.4 percent of Canada’s total population, reported having Aboriginal ancestry. This represents a 22 percent increase compared to the 1996 Census figures. About 62 percent of Canada’s Aboriginal people are North American Indian, 30 percent Métis, 5 percent Inuit, the remaining 3 percent identifying with more than one group or as band members not identifying as Aboriginal¹.

3.1.2 Urbanization of the Aboriginal Population

Aboriginal people are attracted to the opportunities offered by urban centres and the urbanization of the Aboriginal population continues to increase. The 2001 Census shows that nearly half of the Aboriginal population (49%) lives in cities, up from 47 percent in 1996. At the same time, the proportion of Aboriginal people who lived on reserves and settlements declined from 33 percent to 31 percent. The overall proportion of the population who lived in rural non-reserve areas declined slightly from 20.4 percent to 19.5 percent². One-quarter of Aboriginal people live in just ten Canadian cities (in order): Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Saskatoon, Regina, Ottawa-Gatineau, Montreal, and Victoria.

Statistics Canada’s demographic profile of Aboriginal people indicates that the highest concentrations of Aboriginal population in 2001 were in the North and on the Prairies. The 56,000 Aboriginal people in Winnipeg represent eight percent of the city’s total population. The highest concentration of Aboriginal people was in Saskatoon, whose 20,275 Aboriginals comprised nine percent of its population³. Aboriginal people accounted for less than one percent of the population in Canada’s two largest census metropolitan areas: Toronto (0.4%) and Montréal (0.3%).

The 22,720 Aboriginal people in Nunavut represent 85 percent of the territory’s total population, the highest concentration in the country. Aboriginal people represented more than one-half (51%) of the population of the Northwest Territories, and almost one-quarter (23%) of the

¹ Statistics Canada. 2001 Census.

² Statistics Canada (2003) Aboriginal Peoples of Canada: A Demographic Profile.

³ Ibid.

population of the Yukon. The top five communities with the largest proportion of the population reporting an Inuit identity in 2001 were Iqaluit, Baker Lake, Kuujjuaq, Arviat and Rankin Inlet. The proportion of Inuit population in these centres ranges from 58 to 94 percent.

Among small municipalities, the concentration of Aboriginal people was the greatest in the Saskatchewan city of Prince Albert, where 11,640 Aboriginal people accounted for 29 percent of Prince Albert’s total population. Prince George, B.C., was second, with nine percent of its population identifying itself as Aboriginal⁴.

3.1.3 High Mobility Levels

A high mobility level is one of the most important characteristics of Aboriginal people. This high mobility increases the already significant barriers to program and service delivery, posing challenges in reaching, maintaining contact and delivering housing and health care, social services, training, and education.

Statistic’s Canada reports that one in five Aboriginal people moved in the 12 months before the 2001 Census was taken, compared to one in seven for the general Canadian population⁵. There was a net gain of about 1,145 Aboriginal people to census metropolitan areas: 14,375 Aboriginal people moved into one of the 27 census metropolitan areas, while 13,230 moved out. This net gain represented only 0.4 percent of the 274,235 Aboriginal people who lived in these large urban areas. Conversely, more Aboriginal people moved out of the smaller, non-metropolitan urban areas than moved in. A total of 15,475 Aboriginal people moved into these areas in the year prior to the 2001 census, while 16,270 moved out. This net loss of 795 also represented 0.4 percent of the total Aboriginal population of 209,770 who lived in these mid-sized municipalities. The pattern in 2001 of small net increases in the movement to reserves and larger urban centres is a continuation of a trend that has been observed since 1981.

According to the Caledon Institute of Social Policy 30 percent (or 12,630 people) of the Aboriginal identity population in Winnipeg changed its address at least once in the year previous to the 2001 Census⁶; of this 30 percent about 7 percent (or 3,645 people) came from a different Census subdivision. Of this latter group, probably a substantial number came from a reserve either directly, or indirectly through an intermediary smaller city or town. An Institute of Urban Studies report focusing on recent arrivals to Winnipeg noted that mobility remained high, even after households arrived in the City⁷. Approximately 400 recently arrived households were surveyed three times with the surveys four months apart. Between the first and second surveys 31 percent of the households moved once, 58 percent twice and 11 percent three times. Between the second and third surveys 77 percent moved once, 20 percent twice and 3 percent three times. Mobility remains high even after arriving in major urban centres but it does decline with the length of time in the centre.

⁴ Statistics Canada 2003

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Mendelson M. (2004) Aboriginal People in Canada’s Labour Market: Work and Unemployment, Today and Tomorrow. The Caledon Institute of Social Policy.

⁷ Institute of Urban Studies (2004) First Nations/Métis/Inuit Mobility Study. Final Report. In Collaboration with Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Manitoba Métis Federation.

The fact that Aboriginal Canadians relocate more frequently than other Canadians is indicative that their needs are not addressed and that vital programs and services are not in place or are not being effectively delivered. Aboriginal Canadians move and migrate for family motives, in the search for better jobs, housing, health care, training and education, creating numerous difficulties in the provision of vital programs and services.

3.1.4 Age Composition of the Aboriginal Population

The Aboriginal population of Canada is not only growing faster, but it is much younger than the general Canadian population. As a result of the higher birth rate among Aboriginal people (about 1.5 times that of the non-Aboriginal birth rate), the median age of Canada’s Aboriginal population in 2001 was 13 years younger than that of the non-Aboriginal population (24.7 and 37.7 years old respectively)⁸. For example, in Saskatchewan the median age of the non-Aboriginal population is over 20 years older than the median age of Saskatchewan Aboriginal people⁹.

Aboriginal children represented 5.6 percent of all children in Canada although Aboriginal people only represent 4.4 percent of the total population. One-third of the Aboriginal population in 2001 were children aged 14 and under, far higher than the corresponding share of 19 percent in the non-Aboriginal population¹⁰. In contrast, the share of seniors only accounted for about four percent of the Aboriginal population. Seniors represented 13 percent of the non-Aboriginal population. Although Aboriginal people have shorter life expectancies, experience more violent and accidental deaths, and have higher infant mortality rates, Aboriginal people are living longer and there is a growing number of seniors in the Aboriginal population.

Due to the proportionately younger Aboriginal population, some of the most crucial needs relate to Aboriginal youth. The greatest challenges young Aboriginal people face include poverty, violence and racism, cultural and social alienation. Other common problems include¹¹:

- Low levels of education, poor school attendance, high unemployment and poor job prospects;
- Lack of parental involvement and support;
- Being young single parents with poor parenting skills;
- Loss of identity, language and culture;
- Substance abuse;
- Difficulties obtaining accommodation; and
- Difficulties accessing services.

The Aboriginal youth suicide rate in Canada is five to six times higher than that of non-Aboriginal youth¹². Many young Aboriginal urban people are homeless, involved in prostitution,

⁸ Statistics Canada 2003

⁹ Chalifoux T. and Johnson J.G. (2003) Urban Aboriginal Youth: An Action Plan for Change. The Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples. Sixth Report.

¹⁰ Statistics Canada 2003

¹¹ Chalifoux and Johnson 2003

¹² Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1995) Choosing Life: Special Report On Suicide Among Aboriginal People. Ottawa: Canada Communication Group Publishing.

drugs and violence. The lack of recreational facilities and programs are often the primary reason for addictive and criminal activity.

While representing the fastest growing segment of Canada’s youth population, Aboriginal children continue to have higher rates of infant mortality and disability, and incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome¹³. Aboriginal children’s over-representation in the child welfare system and disproportionate rates of school dropout are growing.

The issues affecting children and youth require the provision of both long- and short-term assistance. Long-term solutions should be based on job skills development, education, recreation programs, sound parenting skills, as well as strong community, cultural and family supports. Short-term solutions include rehabilitation for addictions, prevention from disease through needle exchange, and safe places to meet the needs of young prostitutes. Aboriginal youth moving to urban centres are in need of transition services: housing supports and referrals; employment and training services; English literacy skills; counselling services; advocacy and liaison; education and career planning; and, information on programs and services available.

As Aboriginal children and youth move through the education system and into the labour market in coming years, they will account for an increasing proportion of the growth of the working-age population, particularly in the provinces where concentrations of Aboriginal people are the highest. It will be a major challenge for young Aboriginal people to obtain the necessary skills to enter the labour market. Ensuring that education, housing and employment are available for this group will be a major requirement over the coming decades.

3.2 Issues and Needs of Aboriginal People in Urban Municipalities

Several studies emphasize the social and economic marginalization of urban Aboriginal populations¹⁴. The situation of Aboriginal people is considerably worse on nearly every social and economic indicator compared to non-Aboriginal. These include high rates of homelessness, unemployment, poverty, crime, lower levels of education and a higher number of health related problems. With the increasing urbanization of Aboriginals, the well being of Aboriginal people in cities has a direct impact on the well being of the cities themselves, especially in Western Canada and the North.

3.2.1 Education

Extensive research is available on educational outcomes for Aboriginal youth¹⁵. For Aboriginal people rates of high school graduation and attendance are well below the rest of Canada. In 2001 69.2 percent of non-Aboriginal Canadians 15 years of age and older have graduated from high school compared to 52.0 percent of the analogous Aboriginal-identity population, representing a

¹³ Longfield J. and Godfrey J. (2003) Building a Brighter Future for Urban Aboriginal Children. Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

¹⁴ Beavis et al. 1997, Hanselmann 2001, Lee 2000, Richards 2001, Graham and Peters 2002, LaPrairie 1994.

¹⁵ Silver and Mallett 2002, Wotherspoon and Schissel 1998, Cowley and Easton 2004, Statistics Canada and Council of Ministers of Education 2000.

gap of 17.2 percentage points¹⁶. Nationally, eight out ten Aboriginal youth dropped out of high school in 2001. Only eight percent of Aboriginal people in the 25-34 age group had completed a university degree compared to 28 percent of all Canadians.

The reasons for this poor educational performance include racism; lack of parental involvement and guidance; resentment and embarrassment caused by feeling less successful scholastically than other students; high rates of residential mobility; inability to afford text books, sporting equipment, and excursion fees; unstable home life; and poverty.

These complex reasons suggest a need for a wide range of services. The Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples presents the key needs¹⁷:

- To recruit and train more Aboriginal teachers and staff;
- To promote culturally-sensitive learning environments, including cross cultural sensitivity training for non-Aboriginal teachers and staff;
- The need for culturally-appropriate curriculum development;
- The need for increased parental involvement;
- The development of urban Aboriginal schools; and,
- Secondary school supports and guidance for Aboriginal youth.

3.2.2 Unemployment

According to The Caledon Institute of Social Policy in 14 major Canadian cities (those with Aboriginal identity populations of more than 5,000), unemployment rates of Aboriginal people in some cities are more than three times greater than the overall unemployment rate¹⁸. Regina and Saskatoon have the highest rates of Aboriginal unemployment.

Aboriginal people face discrimination in hiring and employment. They earn about one-third less in wages. Aboriginals are less likely to have full-time, year-round jobs and are much more likely to be employed in manual trades such as construction than in white collar jobs as professionals, administrators, managers or clerks. The major barrier to increased Aboriginal participation in the labour force continues to be lower education levels and a lack of marketable skills. Also, in many urban areas there are not enough jobs for the Aboriginal people entering the work force. With the rapidly growing population, the challenge will be to substantially increase employment opportunities for Aboriginal people over the next several years.

3.2.3 Poverty

Aboriginal people living in cities are more than twice as likely to live in poverty as non-Aboriginal people. In 1996, 55.6 percent of Aboriginal people in cities were living in poverty, compared to 24 percent of non-Aboriginal people¹⁹. The incidence of poverty is greatest in western urban centres. In 2001, 55 percent of urban Aboriginal youth in Canada’s largest cities,

¹⁶ Statistics Canada. 2001 Census.

¹⁷ Chalifoux and Johnson 2003

¹⁸ Mendelson 2004

¹⁹ Lee K.K. (2000) Urban Poverty in Canada: A Statistical Profile. Canadian Council on Social Development.

and 42 percent of Aboriginal youth in Canada’s other towns and cities, lived below the low-income cut-off²⁰.

The First Nations/Métis/Inuit Mobility Study conducted in Winnipeg indicates that 75 percent of the Aboriginal single parent families in the study group had an annual family income under \$15,000²¹. The Aboriginal poor tend to be spatially concentrated within the poorest areas, predominantly inner city neighbourhoods. The residential clustering of Aboriginal people in core areas of the cities can result in neighbourhoods characterized by the negative concentration effects of poverty²².

3.2.4 Housing

Housing remains a major problem. Aboriginal people are more likely than the non-Aboriginal population to live in crowded apartments and to face eviction. The difficulties associated with obtaining and remaining satisfied with housing are related to housing access, quality, and adequacy²³.

Aboriginal people’s access to housing is limited by the shortage of housing, discrimination by landlords, limited finances, and information about housing availability. Housing shortages or poor quality housing are particular problems for Aboriginal elders, lone-parent families, transients, people in crisis, and students.

There is a significant demand for rent geared to income housing for urban Aboriginal families. Collectively, the urban Aboriginal housing groups in Winnipeg have over 2,400 people on waiting lists for the 800 units of housing they manage. The Manitoba Housing Authority has over 3,000 people on a waiting list for the housing authority’s 8,000 rent subsidized housing units in Winnipeg²⁴. The wait time for a unit may be two to three years in Winnipeg and even longer in larger urban centres such as Toronto. The unavailability of housing, coupled with low average incomes, contributes to the spatial concentration of Aboriginal population within the inner city boundaries where the older, poor quality rented stock is concentrated.

The Institute of Urban Studies report recommends that Aboriginal people should have access to a range of suitable housing choices – public housing, non-profit and rent subsidized units as well as increased access to market rental options, located in a variety of neighbourhoods²⁵. Any expansion of housing must ensure good proximity to the services households are most likely to access.

²⁰ Chalifoux and Johnson 2003

²¹ Institute of Urban Studies 2004

²² Lee 2000, Hatfield 1997, Richards 2001.

²³ Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1993, Norris and Clatworthy 2003, Norris and Siggner 2003, Institute of Urban Studies 2004.

²⁴ Social Planning Council of Winnipeg (2004) Urban Aboriginal Housing. Canadian Housing & Renewal Corporation 36 Annual Congress. Sustainable Communities: Building the New Urban Landscape.

²⁵ Institute of Urban Studies 2004

3.2.5 Homelessness

Little research has focused specifically on Aboriginal homelessness. Although Aboriginal homelessness has many features in common with homelessness in the general population, the literature indicates that the Aboriginal homeless have special needs that should be addressed²⁶.

Risk factors in Aboriginal homelessness include²⁷:

- High unemployment, welfare dependency and cuts to welfare rates, extreme poverty, with single-parent families, large families, elders and women hardest hit by these adverse economic circumstances;
- The absence of affordable housing and emergency shelters for families, women and children, insufficient supportive and transitional housing;
- Poor housing and severely depressed conditions on reserves and in remote communities lead to rural-urban migration, and leave Aboriginals vulnerable to poverty, depression, addiction and crime;
- Racism and discrimination;
- Substance, domestic, and sexual abuse;
- Physical and mental health problems;
- Limited access to services due to lack of transportation, childcare needs, lack of resources, lack of knowledge, and fear of reprisal; and,
- Uncoordinated services, program and policy gaps.

Solutions to the Aboriginal homeless problem have to be multi-dimensional. More affordable housing, community development initiatives that provide jobs, self-government that may assist Aboriginals to address their own needs, reduced discrimination in the housing and labour markets, and culturally appropriate programs and services must all be part of the solution²⁸.

3.2.6 Health

Urban Aboriginal people face serious challenges in health. Statistics Canada’s report looking into the health status of the off reserve Aboriginal population found that Aboriginal people were more likely to have chronic health conditions, long-term activity restrictions and depression than their non-Aboriginal counterparts²⁹. The off reserve Aboriginal population was 1.5 times more likely than the non-Aboriginal population to report fair or poor health. Nationally, the proportion of Canada’s total AIDS cases contracted by Aboriginal people climbed from 1.0 percent in 1990 to 7.2 percent in 2001. Over that same period, the tuberculosis rate among First Nations people remained 8 to 10 times higher than the rate in the Canadian population as a whole.

The study *Sharing Our Stories on Promoting Health and Community Healing* indicates that the top three concerns for Aboriginal women are family violence, diabetes, and mental health issues

²⁶ Beavis M.A., Klos N., Carter T. and Douchant C. (1997) Literature Review: Aboriginal Peoples and Homelessness. Institute of Urban Studies, The University of Winnipeg.

²⁷ Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies 2000, Beavis et al. 1997.

²⁸ Beavis et al. 1997

²⁹ Tjepkema M. (2002) The Health of the Off-reserve Aboriginal Population. Statistics Canada, Catalogue, 82-003 1 Supplement to Health Reports, Volume 13.

followed closely by cancer and hypertension³⁰. Other concerns include depression, substance abuse, environmental issues, liver disease, obesity, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV and HEP C. The health needs identified by women included increased funding for non-insured benefits, shortage of mental health resources, lack of resources for proper nutritional diet, inadequate access to medical facilities, and long waiting lists to see doctors.

Aboriginal people with disabilities face special problems: accessible housing is scarce, adequate home care is difficult to find, transportation to services is not always available, lack of social interaction isolates people, educational and training programs are not designed to accommodate people with disabilities, and employment opportunities are limited³¹.

3.2.7 Violence

Violence in many forms – family violence, sexual abuse, child and elder abuse, and wife battering – is prevalent throughout Aboriginal communities. Poverty, lack of work, alcohol abuse, hopelessness, and fear prevent people from breaking this cycle. Violence is often a means of venting frustration and a signal of despair.

There is a lack of facilities for abuse victims in urban Aboriginal communities. More shelters for battered women are needed, more counselling for children victimized by violence, and counselling for men as victimizers. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal People recommended the establishment of a 24-hour hot line in friendship centres with trained counsellors to work as crisis intervention workers and to help people recover from the trauma of violence³². Aboriginal people need more information about how to get out of abusive situations through counselling, safe homes and legal sanctions. As well, there must be greater efforts to inform Aboriginal people about violence and its consequences.

There are significant demographic and socio-economic differences among non-movers, residential movers and migrants, with consequent different needs and required services for each of these groups³³. Characteristics of migrants moving to urban areas also vary according to their residence of origin creating different population sub-groups, with accordingly different needs and required services. First time movers appear to be most in need of temporary housing units and additional supports and services, especially education and training³⁴.

3.2.8 Crime and Incarceration

Although Aboriginal people accounted for only 4.4 percent of the total Canadian population 18 years and over, they accounted for 16 percent of the total provincial/territorial sentenced

³⁰ Deiter C. and Otway L. (2001) Sharing Our Stories on Promoting Health and Community Healing: An Aboriginal Women’s Health Project. Project #31 of the Prairie Women’s Health Centre of Excellence.

³¹ Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1993) Aboriginal Peoples in Urban Centres: Report of the National Round Table on Aboriginal Urban Issues.

³² Ibid.

³³ Clatworthy 2000, Chalifoux and Johnson 2003

³⁴ Institute of Urban Studies 2004

admissions to penitentiaries in 1996/97³⁵. An estimated 70 percent of all Aboriginal people sentenced to penitentiaries are either residents of municipalities, or committed their offences while off reserve.

The reasons for this over-representation are complex: it is possible that Aboriginal people committing crimes in urban areas may be more likely to be reported, more likely to be detected because of greater police coverage in those areas, or because they commit crimes which are more likely to be reported or detected (e.g. public disturbances)³⁶.

In her study *Seen But not Heard: Native People in the Inner City*, Carol LaPrairie distinguishes three distinct sub-groups among the inner city people that differ from one another both in terms of their involvement in the justice system, socio-economic circumstances, and lifestyles³⁷. LaPrairie contends that the method of approach to these different inner city Aboriginal groups must be different if they are to be helped through services. People, most involved in the justice system, are major users of street-level services, but these services tend to be for very basic needs and have no fundamental impact on their lives. What they most need and can benefit from is safety, periodic detoxification, and shelter. The next group, having somewhat better life circumstances than the first group, is more likely to benefit from education, vocational training, and job-entry opportunities for learning skills on the job. The group that has the least involvement in the justice system are the primary users of existing services and are more likely to seek out opportunities and services.

Services to eliminate crime and incarceration must address the root causes of crime and include recreational facilities; appropriate counselling programs; better delivery of services; housing/shelter; drop-in centres; community development and cultural opportunities; legal services; halfway houses and programs to help the Aboriginal offender re-enter the community³⁸.

3.3 Summary of Needs and Service Gaps

Urban Aboriginal people remain among the most disadvantaged groups in Canada. People experience poorer health, lower levels of education, lower average incomes, and higher rates of unemployment, compared with the non-Aboriginal population. High incarceration levels and increasing youth suicide rates indicate the presence of serious social difficulties as well. Intergovernmental collaboration is required to address these inequities and assist in the social and cultural healing processes. This marginalization, if left unaddressed, can result in emerging urban ghettos and risk undermining the stability of communities.

Urban Aboriginal people receive services from all orders of government, from mainstream service organizations as well as from non-profit Aboriginal organizations. In cities across Canada there are now housing projects, childcare agencies, education and training institutions, and other

³⁵ Aboriginal Corrections Policy Unit, Solicitor General Canada (1998) Issues in Urban Corrections for Aboriginal People. Report on a Focus Group and an Overview of the Literature and Experience. APC 17 CA (1998) Edited by Joan Nuffield. Ottawa, ON: Solicitor General Canada.

³⁶ LaPrairie 1992, Johnston 1997, Aboriginal Corrections Policy Unit 1998.

³⁷ LaPrairie C. (1994) *Seen But Not Heard: Native People in the Inner City*. Ottawa: Dept. of Justice, Canada.

³⁸ Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1993, LaPrairie 1994.

services available to Aboriginal people. However, existing resources are unable to satisfy the depth of need.

This literature review identified several key service delivery areas that have to be addressed:

- Education and training;
- Poverty reduction;
- Lack of family services and childcare;
- Health;
- Addictions, abuse-rehabilitation programs, mental health disabilities;
- Housing that is available, adequate, and affordable;
- Services for youth and children;
- Services to reduce crime and incarceration;
- Programming that is culturally-relevant; and,
- Volunteers and skilled workers and sufficient funding to deliver program services.

The studies reviewed have shown that Aboriginal women, children and youth in cities face particular challenges and are among the most vulnerable. This suggests that special consideration should be placed on developing services and coordinating efforts that respond to the circumstances of Aboriginal women, youth and children in urban municipalities.

In accessing programs or services Aboriginal people meet several barriers. They have multiple needs and often they are high-risk clientele, lacking support and resources. Public transportation systems must promote ease of access to essential community services and accommodate commuting outside of peak periods.

Many Aboriginal people do not use existing programs and services due to a lack of knowledge of available programs and services, and their discomfort in unfamiliar surroundings. This discomfort means that some people turn away before entering the doors of a particular program or agency. There is an acute need for information on services available, housing supports, advocacy, financing, and other resources for low-income people.

The level and quality, as well as accessibility of services have always been inadequate to deal with the problems of the Aboriginal urban population. Cutbacks to some areas of social programming over the last fifteen years as well confusion over jurisdictional responsibility have not helped to improve the situation.

As a result of the confusion and disagreements over jurisdiction, the needs of urban Aboriginal people have sometimes been over-looked by public policies and programs. The federal government has historically claimed responsibility for First Nations on reserves and Inuit in Inuit communities, but their responsibility for off reserve Aboriginal people is far less clear. With the exception of some education and health benefits, federal services are not always available once Aboriginals leave a reserve or Inuit and Aboriginals leave their northern communities. Métis and all others who are not Aboriginals as defined by the Indian Act receive no services under federal legislation³⁹. Many provincial governments have maintained that the federal government is responsible for all Aboriginal people, and, until recently, have largely limited their responsibility

³⁹ Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1993

for services and programs for off reserve Aboriginal population. Some municipal governments attempt to fill policy and program vacuums but they do not have the resources to deal with the many demands for services.

4.0 Quality of Life

The following discussion is based on Aboriginal data contained within the Quality of Life Reporting System (QOLRS) and is included to highlight the circumstances of Aboriginal people that exist in 20 of Canada’s metropolitan centres using indicators such as household incomes, poverty and unemployment rates, and housing affordability problems.

Developed by the FCM, the QOLRS measures, monitors and reports on the quality of life in Canadian urban municipalities using data from a variety of national and municipal sources⁴⁰. Starting with 16 municipalities in 1999, the QOLRS has grown to include 20 municipalities. With 40 percent of Canada’s total population, these municipalities comprise some of Canada’s largest urban centres, many of the suburban municipalities surrounding them, as well as small and medium-sized municipalities in seven provinces.

Participating Municipalities

- Calgary (City), Alberta
- Edmonton (City), Alberta
- Halifax (Regional Municipality), Nova Scotia
- Halton (Regional Municipality), Ontario
- Hamilton (City), Ontario
- Kingston (City), Ontario
- London (City), Ontario
- Niagara (Regional Municipality), Ontario
- Ottawa (City), Ontario
- Peel (Regional Municipality), Ontario
- Quebec (Metropolitan Community), Quebec
- Regina (City), Saskatchewan
- Saskatoon (City), Saskatchewan
- Sudbury (City of Greater), Ontario
- Toronto (City), Ontario
- Vancouver (City), British Columbia
- Waterloo (Regional Municipality), Ontario
- Windsor (City), Ontario
- Winnipeg (City), Manitoba
- York (Regional Municipality), Ontario

The Quality of Life Indicators specific to Aboriginal people within municipalities include unemployment and participation rates, household income, incidence of poverty and housing affordability. The data illustrates the marginalized position of Aboriginals living in the 20 municipalities.

⁴⁰ Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2004) *Quality of Life Reporting System*. Highlights Report 2004. Quality of Life in Canadian Municipalities <http://www.fcm.ca/qol3/qol2004.pdf>

4.1 Unemployment and Participation Rates

The low level of inclusion of the Aboriginal population in the Canadian urban labour force is a serious concern. Employment rates among the Aboriginal population fell between 1991 and 2001, moving to a full eight percentage points below the overall QOLRS average by 2001⁴¹.

The average unemployment rate among the Aboriginal identity population living in the QOLRS municipalities was more than twice the rate of the QOLRS average for the non-Aboriginal identity population in 2001 (13.3 and 6.2 percent respectively) (Table 1). This average represents an average of the averages in the 20 urban centres. Aboriginal unemployment rates were the highest in Saskatoon (23.2%), Vancouver (21.4%) and Regina (21.3%). They are lowest in Waterloo, Halton, Peel, York, Ottawa-Carleton and Niagara – below 10 percent. The largest gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal unemployment rates is in Regina and Saskatoon where Aboriginal unemployment is almost four times higher.

The average rates for these 20 centres, although high, is still some six percent below the national average for Aboriginal people of 19.1 percent, suggesting that moving to urban centres may improve employment opportunities for Aboriginal people. Aboriginal unemployment rates have dropped in the 20 urban centres since 1991 when the average was 15 percent. This may reflect the improvement in the economy that has occurred since the mid 1990s. However, the gap in unemployment rates between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal population in these 20 centres has not declined. It has increased by 0.6 percent. Nearly all centres illustrated an improvement in Aboriginal unemployment rates between 1991 and 2001. Only six centres: London, Sudbury, Halton, Halifax, Kingston and Québec City illustrated increases. Sudbury was the only centre to illustrate an increase in unemployment amongst non-Aboriginal people.

Table 1. Unemployment and Participation Rates (%) for Selected Urban Areas

Urban Area	2001						1991					
	Unemployment			Participation			Unemployment			Participation		
	Total	Abor.	Non-Abor.	Total	Abor.	Non-Abor.	Total	Abor.	Non-Abor.	Total	Abor.	Non-Abor.
CANADA	7.4	19.1	7.1	66.5	61.4	66.6	10.2	19.4	9.9	68.0	64.2	68.1
Vancouver	8.2	21.4	8.0	65.1	55.2	65.2	10.8	23.1	10.5	68.1	68.1	68.1
Calgary	5.0	10.0	4.9	74.9	75.3	74.9	8.1	13.3	8.0	75.7	74.6	75.7
Edmonton	6.0	14.0	5.7	70.4	66.5	70.6	9.1	21.2	8.6	72.4	67.8	72.6
Regina	6.2	21.3	5.4	70.1	57.9	71.0	7.6	26.2	6.8	71.9	55.1	72.8
Saskatoon	7.2	23.2	6.1	69.1	57.6	70.1	9.0	25.3	8.3	70.4	55.5	71.3
Winnipeg	5.7	14.4	5.1	68.1	63.8	68.4	8.7	19.6	8.1	68.2	59.4	68.7
Windsor	7.4	12.5	7.4	63.5	68.8	63.4	13.0	18.1	12.9	62.6	68.1	62.5
London	7.0	16.5	6.9	66.8	65.2	66.9	8.8	16.0	8.7	70.7	74.8	70.6
Waterloo	5.3	6.3	5.3	71.8	77.7	71.7	8.7	13.1	8.6	73.0	79.8	72.9
Sudbury	9.1	19.8	8.7	62.0	59.9	62.1	8.5	14.4	8.3	65.3	68.3	65.2
Toronto (Metro)	7.0	10.8	7.0	65.4	68.7	65.3	9.6	12.0	9.5	68.6	74.7	68.5
Hamilton-Wentworth	6.4	12.9	6.4	63.8	62.8	63.8	9.8	15.0	9.7	66.2	69.3	66.1
Halton	3.9	8.3	3.9	72.2	77.3	72.2	6.0	6.4	6.0	74.6	79.1	74.6
Peel	5.1	5.3	5.1	73.5	78.8	73.5	7.8	8.8	7.8	77.0	79.6	77.0
York	4.5	6.4	4.5	71.3	73.9	71.3	6.4	8.3	6.4	75.8	78.3	75.8

⁴¹ Federation of Canadian Municipalities 2004

Table 1. Unemployment and Participation Rates (%) for Selected Urban Areas

Urban Area	2001						1991					
	Unemployment			Participation			Unemployment			Participation		
	Total	Abor.	Non-Abor.	Total	Abor.	Non-Abor.	Total	Abor.	Non-Abor.	Total	Abor.	Non-Abor.
Ottawa-Carleton	5.8	7.0	5.8	70.1	72.9	70.1	7.0	10.4	6.9	73.1	78.9	72.9
Halifax County	7.2	14.8	7.1	67.8	72.0	67.8	9.4	13.0	9.3	70.4	76.7	70.3
Kingston	7.6	19.1	7.4	64.1	64.1	64.1	7.9	12.3	7.7	69.2	77.1	69.0
Niagara	5.8	9.8	5.7	63.8	66.9	63.8	9.2	14.8	9.1	64.9	70.3	64.8
Québec (Metro)	6.9	11.2	6.9	65.8	58.8	65.8	9.3	8.8	9.3	67.1	73.1	67.1
Average	6.4	13.3	6.2	68.0	67.2	68.1	8.7	15.0	8.5	70.3	71.4	70.3

Source: Statistics Canada Custom Cross Tabulation, 1991 and 2001, courtesy of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities

In 2001 the average Aboriginal participation rate for the 20 centres is approximately 67 percent, which represents a four percent decline compared to the 1991 level. The lowest participation rates for Aboriginal population are in Vancouver, Regina, Saskatoon, Sudbury, and Quebec (below 60%). Peel has the highest Aboriginal participation (above 78%) rate and lowest Aboriginal unemployment rate (5.3%) amongst the 20 cities. Only five cities – Calgary, Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg and Windsor illustrated improvements in participation rates over the 1991-2001 period.

4.2 Household Income

Income growth of the Aboriginal population was substantially lower than Canada’s general population during the period 1991-2001. Average household income for the non-Aboriginal population over 1991-2001 increased by 28.5 percent in the 20 cities while average incomes for Aboriginal people improved only by 15.5 percent (Table 2). In 2001 the average household income in Canada was approximately \$68,000; the Aboriginal average household income was \$45,000 lower by approximately \$23,000. Similarly, the incomes of non-Aboriginal households were 1.5 times higher than those of Aboriginal identity households in the 20 QOLRS municipalities. Over the decade improvements in Aboriginal household income was greatest in Edmonton (34%), Saskatoon (30%), Winnipeg (30%), Calgary (28%)and Windsor (28%). Centres illustrating little or no improvement included Vancouver (-1%), Halifax (2%) and Kingston (-3%).

Table 2. Average Household Income (\$) for Selected Urban Centres

Urban Area	2001			1991			1991-2001 Change, %		
	Total	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total	Ab	Non-Ab
CANADA	68,340	45,519	69,118	52,966	39,063	53,510	29.0	16.5	29.2
Vancouver	69,930	35,249	70,615	55,768	35,610	56,358	25.4	-1.0	25.3
Calgary	83,397	57,943	83,987	59,265	45,122	59,730	40.7	28.4	40.6
Edmonton	67,394	45,835	68,435	51,434	34,346	52,418	31.0	33.5	30.6
Regina	65,642	35,260	68,539	52,019	29,890	53,740	26.2	18.0	27.5
Saskatoon	60,974	35,921	63,697	47,947	27,716	49,555	27.2	29.6	28.5
Winnipeg	63,210	40,175	65,353	49,003	30,853	50,408	29.0	30.2	29.6
Windsor	67,939	52,743	68,153	49,536	41,115	49,790	37.2	28.3	36.9

Table 2. Average Household Income (\$) for Selected Urban Centres

Urban Area	2001			1991			1991-2001 Change, %		
	Total	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total	Ab	Non-Ab
London	68,078	43,520	68,422	54,146	41,208	54,431	25.7	5.6	25.7
Waterloo	76,314	57,045	76,464	57,294	49,449	57,422	33.2	15.4	33.2
Sudbury	64,933	51,413	65,585	56,324	45,710	56,821	15.3	12.5	15.4
Toronto (Metro)	80,421	55,691	80,535	63,669	51,809	63,787	26.3	7.5	26.3
Hamilton-Wentworth	68,600	45,561	68,902	54,104	41,631	54,375	26.8	9.4	26.7
Halton	106,635	73,212	106,797	76,978	64,309	77,129	38.5	13.8	38.5
Peel	89,349	76,793	89,400	69,911	64,640	69,967	27.8	18.8	27.8
York	101,784	76,906	101,872	81,163	68,781	81,298	25.4	11.8	25.3
Ottawa-Carleton	86,470	64,872	86,716	64,440	53,295	64,768	34.2	21.7	33.9
Halifax County	65,598	44,576	65,807	52,728	43,869	52,928	24.4	1.6	24.3
Kingston	67,719	44,783	68,089	54,096	46,243	54,369	25.2	-3.2	25.2
Niagara	66,400	52,272	66,584	52,264	43,635	52,478	27.0	19.8	26.9
Québec (Metro)	59,928	48,444	59,979	49,085	45,032	49,129	22.1	7.6	22.1
Average (Study Area)	74,036	51,607	74,431	57,340	44,920	57,829	28.5	15.5	28.5

Source: Statistics Canada Custom Cross Tabulation, 1991 and 2001, courtesy of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

A report prepared for FCM *Falling Behind: Our Growing Income Gap* indicates that the income gap between Canada’s wealthiest and poorest urban residents is growing⁴². One of the report’s main findings is that an increase in this gap ultimately diminishes quality of life for all residents at both ends of the income spectrum. The income gap in relation to individuals and families in all 20 QOLRS municipalities grew during the 10-year period and was widest among individuals. As the income gap widens, Aboriginal people are one of the groups most at risk of living in poverty.

4.3 Poverty Levels

In 2001 16.4 percent of all private households across the 20 centres fell below the poverty line. Poverty is defined by Statistics Canada’s Low-Income Cut Offs (LICO). Households that fall below a certain income level (LICO) considered necessary to support a satisfactory standard of living are considered to be in poverty. The poverty or LICO level varies with household size and size of centre and the cost of living in these centres. The poverty rate was lowest in Halton (around 7%) and highest in Vancouver (27%) (Table 3). The average percentage of Aboriginal households in poverty in the 20 QOLRS municipalities is approximately 35 percent. Peel has the lowest proportion of Aboriginal households in poverty (16%) with Vancouver the highest at about 60 percent. Other centres with high levels of household poverty among Aboriginal households include Regina, Saskatoon, and Winnipeg (54, 55, and 51 percent respectively). Poverty rates for non-Aboriginal households increased slightly during the 1991-2001 period, climbing from 15.4 percent to 15.7 percent of all households. For Aboriginal households, however, the rate climbed from 30.6 percent to 35.0 percent.

⁴² Arundel C. and Associates with Hemson Consulting Ltd. (2003) *Falling Behind: Our Growing Income Gap*. Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

Table 3. Incidence of Low Income in Private Households in Selected Urban Centres

Urban Area	2001			1991			(% Change) 1991-2001		
	Total	Ab	Non-Ab	Total	Ab	Non-Ab	Total	Ab	Non-Ab
CANADA	16.2	34.2	15.8	16.2	31.0	15.8	0.0	10.3	0.0
Vancouver	27.0	59.6	26.4	25.6	52.1	24.9	5.5	14.4	6.0
Calgary	14.9	31.8	14.5	18.3	34.3	17.7	-18.6	-7.3	-18.1
Edmonton	20.0	44.5	18.9	23.5	50.6	21.9	-14.9	-12.1	-13.7
Regina	16.4	53.9	12.8	16.4	53.2	13.6	0.0	1.3	-5.9
Saskatoon	19.7	54.6	15.9	20.0	57.1	17.1	-1.5	-4.4	-7.0
Winnipeg	20.3	50.7	17.5	21.7	53.6	19.3	-6.5	-5.4	-9.3
Windsor	16.8	27.3	16.7	18.2	30.4	17.8	-7.7	-10.2	-6.2
London	16.8	41.4	16.4	15.1	27.6	14.8	11.3	50.0	10.8
Waterloo	11.0	23.9	10.9	11.4	15.6	11.3	-3.5	53.2	-3.5
Sudbury	14.9	29.2	14.3	13.5	27.2	12.8	10.4	7.4	11.7
Toronto (Metro)	22.6	34.9	22.5	19.6	27.2	19.5	15.3	28.3	15.4
Hamilton-Wentworth	19.8	43.6	19.5	17.9	36.2	17.5	10.6	20.4	11.4
Halton	7.1	19.4	7.1	7.0	10.8	6.9	1.4	79.6	2.9
Peel	11.6	16.4	11.6	10.1	12.9	10.0	14.9	27.1	16.0
York	10.0	19.2	10.0	7.8	11.7	7.7	28.2	64.1	29.9
Ottawa-Carleton	15.0	24.9	14.9	14.6	20.3	14.4	2.7	22.7	3.5
Halifax County	15.5	35.2	15.4	14.1	20.8	14.0	9.9	69.2	10.0
Kingston	17.1	32.0	16.9	15.2	23.7	14.9	12.5	35.0	13.4
Niagara	12.7	25.2	12.5	12.4	21.7	12.2	2.4	16.1	2.5
Québec (Metro)	18.9	34.5	18.8	19.0	24.7	19.0	-0.5	39.7	-1.1
Average	16.4	35.1	15.7	16.1	30.6	15.4	3.4	23.8	3.3

Source: Statistics Canada Custom Cross-Tabulation, 1991 and 2001, courtesy of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

For half of the QOLRS cities, household poverty rates improved or remained unchanged between 1991 and 2001. LICO rates for Aboriginal households improved in only five cities over the same period of time: Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, and Windsor. The increase in poverty rates for Aboriginal households ranged from one percent in Regina to over 50 percent in several other centres. The proportion of poor Aboriginal households has doubled in London, Waterloo, York, and Halifax.

4.4 Housing Affordability

Between 1991 and 2001, the proportion of all renter households in the 20 QOLRS municipalities spending 30 percent or more of their income on shelter grew from 35 percent to 41 percent⁴³. During that same time, the proportion of renter households spending 50 percent or more of their income on shelter increased to 20 percent from 16 percent.

⁴³ Federation of Canadian Municipalities Quality of Life Reporting System. Domains and Indicators <http://www.fcm.ca/qol3/team3.htm>

In 2001 19.7 percent of Aboriginal households who own, and 44 percent who rent, paid 30 percent or more of their income on shelter costs across the 20 cities. For non-Aboriginal households the proportions were substantially lower – at 14 and 37 percent. In 1991 the same figures were slightly lower for Aboriginal households at 18 percent for owners and 37 percent for renters. For non-Aboriginal households, compared to 2001, the rate for owners was higher at 15.6 percent but lower for renters at 31 percent.

Table 4 illustrates that renter affordability is a problem in all centres. In Halifax, Regina, Saskatoon, and Vancouver more than a half of all Aboriginal renters pay 30 percent or more of their income for shelter. Affordability for Aboriginal homeowners is more of a problem in Vancouver, Calgary, Windsor, London, and York.

Table 4. Percentage of Households Paying 30% or More of Their Income on Shelter Costs

Urban Centre	2001				1991			
	Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	Own %	Rent %	Own %	Rent %	Own %	Rent %	Own %	Rent %
Calgary	22.1	42.9	15.1	33.2	18.0	37.8	15.2	32.3
Edmonton	20.0	40.6	13.4	32.7	14.9	44.0	13.2	32.5
Halifax	20.9	51.8	11.0	39.8	11.3	32.5	12.6	30.9
Halton	16.4	41.1	12.9	33.7	18.4	27.6	17.4	26.7
Hamilton	21.2	48.6	14.8	40.7	19.9	36.0	17.7	30.8
Kingston	20.5	43.0	12.3	43.1	16.2	31.3	14.2	29.7
London	23.7	47.0	13.1	41.1	17.0	42.0	14.2	32.5
Niagara	21.6	44.4	14.3	39.5	18.0	38.2	15.0	32.1
Ottawa	16.2	34.7	10.3	34.7	17.0	27.4	14.3	28.0
Peel	19.8	35.4	20.3	34.3	23.2	27.4	24.8	30.4
Quebec	8.9	35.6	9.3	28.9	16.4	30.7	12.3	27.1
Regina	16.4	51.6	8.7	36.6	17.8	49.9	11.4	31.3
Saskatoon	18.7	59.2	11.4	39.3	14.1	53.7	13.2	33.4
Sudbury	17.4	41.5	12.1	39.1	13.0	33.9	12.4	31.0
Toronto	18.9	39.1	20.3	39.9	21.1	32.1	20.5	32.2
Vancouver	34.2	55.9	24.9	40.2	18.3	50.5	16.6	37.9
Waterloo	16.2	39.7	12.2	32.1	23.4	29.7	17.1	29.0
Windsor	25.3	46.7	12.3	39.8	16.2	40.2	12.7	34.2
Winnipeg	13.5	41.6	9.5	31.5	16.7	44.8	12.6	31.9
York	21.8	42.9	21.3	37.0	26.0	34.4	23.6	31.2
Average	19.7	44.2	14.0	36.9	17.8	37.2	15.6	31.3

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991, 2001, courtesy of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities

In 2001, 7.8 percent of Aboriginal owners in the 20 QOLRS municipalities and 22.5 percent of Aboriginal renters paid 50 percent or more of their income on shelter costs compared to 4.9 percent of non-Aboriginal owners and 16.9 percent of non-Aboriginal renters (Table 5). Winnipeg has the highest proportion of Aboriginal households who pay 50 percent or more for their housing, 21.4 percent of owners and 33.2 percent of renters.

Table 5. Percentage of Households Paying 50% or More of Their Income on Shelter Costs

Urban Centre	2001				1991			
	Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	Own %	Rent %	Own %	Rent %	Own %	Rent %	Own %	Rent %
Calgary	6.7	20.0	5.2	16.2	4.9	14.8	5.2	13.4
Edmonton	6.6	18.6	5.0	15.4	3.8	13.4	1.8	13.3
Halifax	7.0	22.6	5.5	17.3	9.8	19.0	2.9	13.7
Halton	7.3	18.7	5.0	14.2	8.9	16.6	2.2	13.9
Hamilton	6.6	19.5	4.5	14.7	13.8	20.0	2.5	13.7
Kingston	10.2	28.3	4.1	19.1	2.4	16.8	1.9	13.9
London	3.8	24.7	3.8	12.6	4.7	13.1	1.1	10.6
Niagara	9.8	25.5	4.7	19.4	6.4	18.4	2.3	14.4
Ottawa	6.8	21.5	3.6	20.1	5.3	15.6	2.5	13.8
Peel	6.2	28.2	4.3	19.9	8.4	18.6	2.5	14.4
Quebec	10.1	20.9	4.9	17.9	3.7	18.6	1.3	15.0
Regina	4.4	15.7	3.3	16.1	5.3	11.9	2.5	12.4
Saskatoon	8.5	18.4	6.5	15.5	5.0	12.2	2.5	12.4
Sudbury	3.4	13.4	3.7	13.2	4.6	15.2	2.4	12.4
Toronto	6.8	27.5	2.9	16.1	19.1	27.7	1.1	13.4
Vancouver	9.1	30.2	3.6	18.1	15.0	25.3	1.7	14.6
Waterloo	7.5	21.1	4.4	18.5	4.2	18.8	1.5	15.3
Windsor	7.3	19.7	7.6	19.4	15.9	16.1	6.1	14.6
Winnipeg	21.4	33.2	10.7	20.0	49.7	24.8	5.4	15.7
York	6.0	22.1	3.8	15.1	5.5	13.2	2.0	12.1
Average	7.8	22.5	4.9	16.9	9.8	17.5	2.6	13.7

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991, 2001, courtesy of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities

According to the *Quality of Life Reporting System* report the affordability gap can be best explained in terms of the cost and supply of rental accommodation in Canadian municipalities⁴⁴. More than 40 percent of households in the QOLRS municipalities were living in rental housing in 1991. However, construction of new rental units came to a near halt in the subsequent 10-year period, falling from 31 percent of starts to 8 percent in these municipalities. While not all rental starts offer affordable housing, the rental market offers a relatively affordable entry point to the housing market. With fewer rental units being constructed Aboriginal households face reduced access to affordable housing. Vacancy rates fall and rents at the lowest end of the rental market increased with growing demand. Aboriginal incomes have not kept pace with increasing rents.

4.5 Summary

This brief analysis of the FCM Quality of Life indicators shows that there are clear signs of continuing income inequality and social marginalization of the rapidly increasing Aboriginal population. The circumstances of urban Aboriginals are affecting many aspects of quality of life in Canadian municipalities and contribute to the instability of urban communities. The

⁴⁴ FCM 2004, p.26

concentration of Aboriginal people in specific urban centres has resulted in sustained pressure on municipal services to keep pace with the rapidly changing service and program needs.

5.0 Interview Findings

The information in this section is derived from interviews with municipal service providers from Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Regina, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Kitimat, Kamsack, Dawson Creek, Red Deer, Lethbridge, and Thompson.

The interviews clearly indicate that municipal governments respond in different ways and have a variety of opinions on what role they should be playing in serving Aboriginal people. There is a consensus, however, that without access to additional resources their ability to respond is limited.

The information collected during the interviews is summarized below under key theme areas arising from the discussions.

5.1 The Arrival of Aboriginal People in Municipalities

Though municipal governments generally are not able to maintain extensive statistics it is clear that the numbers of Aboriginal people are increasing, both from arrivals and from natural increase of the resident population. There was a strong consensus that numbers will continue to increase over the next couple of decades.

Most new arrivals are coming from reserves and northern communities but many are also arriving from small off reserve communities. The larger municipalities also attract people from neighbouring provinces. Bigger municipalities such as Toronto do not experience a large population increase from on reserve communities located nearby, as Aboriginals are able to access services and amenities without moving into the city.

Smaller municipalities do not experience the major influx noted by larger cities but their Aboriginal population is increasing. Most centres, large and small indicate people do move in and out of the community and within the centre itself. There is a great deal of “churn” or movement of Aboriginal people making service delivery very difficult.

5.1.1 Arrivals Are a Mix of Ages and Household Types

Arrivals are a wide mixture of household types and age groups. The majority are young single people, young families, and many single parent families. There are also a number of extended family households arriving that include parents and grandparents. The majority of arrivals are in the 18-35 year age range. Many cities indicate that very few elderly are moving in, while others note a rising number of seniors looking to access services.

5.1.2 Arrivals Are Seeking a Range of Services and Improved Quality of Life

The primary reasons people move to urban centres are to access employment, education, housing, health care, and social assistance. Employment and education are the key factors in the decision to move. Following families and connecting with families is also important.

Young individuals come for education. The presence of colleges and Universities as well as public schools that have Aboriginal components in their regular curriculum attract a number of youth/students. Many of the larger urban centres now have Aboriginal alternative schools that are very popular with families and children. Two parent and single parent families come for employment, family and child related services, and the elderly and some people in all age groups come for health care. Municipal governments that host regional health centres commented on the increasing number of people moving to access health services.

A variety of other reasons are also important. Some come to escape conditions and circumstances and the general lack of services on the reserves, and to access a better lifestyle and improved prospects. Some centres also have better housing options than they can access on reserves, although housing is rarely the primary reason for moving. It can be an attraction in smaller urban centres where there is often a surplus of rental units and a range of affordable rental options. Many come to cities because they want to leave the environment of drugs and alcohol on the reserves. Domestic violence certainly plays a role in the move: many are escaping violent situations, particularly female single parents.

Several respondents noted that television has had a significant impact on reserves. It has broadened the perspective of Aboriginal people and introduced them to a different lifestyle that they want to experience.

5.1.3 Upon Arrival Aboriginal People Face Barriers in Accessing Services

Upon arriving to municipalities, Aboriginal people are only able to access services to a limited degree. People who come for employment have mixed success: those with skills are generally more successful; those without skills have much difficulty. If Aboriginals come on assignment (pre-arranged move as a student or for health care) they do get the services they require. There is a definite lack of housing for specific population groups and, in the larger centres in particular, affordable housing options are not available. Some are able to improve their prospects but many find poverty leaves them marginalized, disappointed and frustrated in their search for a better quality of life. Often Aboriginal people have more success in accessing services offered by Aboriginal agencies.

Municipal governments emphasise that service delivery is becoming increasingly difficult. The numbers of people arriving are increasing while funding for many types of service has remained static or have been subject to cutbacks. There is concern that individuals who require services outnumber the capacity of service agencies to provide services. Jurisdictional disputes between governments and a lack of clarity on who should provide (and pay for) services is also a problem. It was also noted that there is often competition, not cooperation, between Aboriginal organizations and service providers over who should serve particular groups and this does not facilitate efficient delivery of services.

Lack of awareness and urban life skills also contribute to the barriers faced by Aboriginal people. There are cultural barriers, a sense of social and physical isolation, discrimination and racism. . Lack of information is also a problem, as Aboriginal people do not always have information on available services immediately on arrival. Very few municipalities have a coordinated “one-stop shop” for information. Often the information is available but it is scattered amongst many different service organizations. Many centres indicated a definite need for a resource or transition

centre that provides one-stop shopping with information on where to access housing, employment, education, groceries, parenting programs, and other services.

Accessing information is particularly difficult for individuals who have never been to the city before, do not have contacts in the city, do not read or speak English, or suffer from extensive mental and/or physical disabilities. Currently municipal governments use different ways of making the information on services more available. Many cities have a service guide but it does not always get into the hands of those who need it. There are also websites that contain information on how to access services but many do not have access to the Internet. The Thunder Bay Police have created a position called an Aboriginal Liaison Officer and they provide information and help for arrivals. Many municipalities have Friendship Centres that could become one of the best places for Aboriginals to go with regard to information and referral services for housing placement, employment training, if these centres were organized and funded to provide these services. In some centres schools are doing a good job of providing information. Other possible solutions include more municipal-Aboriginal liaison officers, websites, and educational campaigns.

In smaller centres access to information is not seen as a problem. This may be related to the small size of these cities and the geographical proximity of services. Municipal offices, particularly in small centres are active in directing arriving Aboriginals to service agencies.

Many municipal governments see the provision of information as an area where they could play a greater role, either by providing enhanced information services themselves or working with Aboriginal organizations to help them expand this service. However, shortage of staff and funding makes it difficult to enhance their current activities in this area.

5.2 The Arrival of Aboriginal People is Placing Additional Demands on Municipal Services

There was a general consensus among respondents that the arrival of Aboriginal people is generating additional demands for a range of services. Some municipal governments, however, experience difficulty separating the pressures associated with the arriving Aboriginal population from the high population growth of the resident Aboriginal population. This was particularly true of rapidly growing communities. These centres are experiencing increasing difficulties in making services broadly available to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Small municipal governments, because of the fewer Aboriginal people involved, do not experience substantial pressures on housing, education, health care or policing. They did point out, however, that as the population of Aboriginal people increases, so does their cost of providing general municipal services.

5.2.1 There is a Lack of Appropriate Affordable Housing

The increasing Aboriginal population has placed a lot of pressure on the housing supply, particularly the low end of market stock in the rental sector. Waiting lists for affordable units illustrate the magnitude of these pressures. Winnipeg has a waiting list of approximately 2,400 people for Aboriginal units. In Calgary there are 1,200 Aboriginal people on the waiting list for social housing. People in Calgary working for minimum wage have to work at least 80 hours a

week just to cover basic costs of housing, food, and clothing which illustrates the strong relationship between housing costs, housing affordability and poverty.

There is a great deal of pressure on the housing units purposely built by Aboriginal organizations for Aboriginal people, as waiting list figures suggest. There are simply too few affordable, adequate units in either the social or the private sector to accommodate those arriving and landlords are able to charge unreasonable rents for less than adequate accommodation. Existing social housing units are generally directed to low-income people in general, as opposed to particular groups such as Aboriginals, and as noted above, waiting lists for units managed by Aboriginal groups are very long. Even if those arriving can afford housing it is often in very poor condition. Slum landlords are a big problem and discrimination and cultural barriers also play a role in finding adequate housing.

Because of the housing crisis many people have no choice but to live with relatives and friends. There is a great deal of “sofa surfing” particularly by young individuals. On the other hand, the transient nature of many of the people means they often choose to live with family and friends because they do not want to commit to long-term lease arrangements. This contributes to the couch surfing, especially among youth. Many individuals are forced to stay in city shelters until they become more familiar with city services and the local housing situation.

Housing availability in small centres is much better. People generally have a choice of housing units at an affordable price. In some small centres where there is a surplus of private rental units available at reasonable prices, Kamsack and Kitimat, for example, pressure on the stock is not as problematic.

In some municipalities, the lack of affordable, appropriate housing exacerbates homelessness among the Aboriginal population. In large Western cities there are substantial numbers of homeless and up to about 80 percent of the homeless are Aboriginal. In other centres, such as Toronto and Vancouver, there are many homeless people but Aboriginals do not comprise a significant proportion of them. Small communities like Kamsack and Kitimat do not identify homelessness as a problem. The hidden homeless (those without access to stable shelter) and the high-risk households in very inadequate and unaffordable housing are a significant concern in all municipalities.

Nearly all centres called for enhanced funding for affordable housing strategies to assist the homeless and the people in high-risk housing circumstances. However, most municipal governments depend on other orders of government for housing funding, indicating that solutions for the housing crisis require a partnership approach.

5.2.2 Education

Although indirectly related to municipal services, there is pressure on educational services, both in terms of space for students and the need for culturally appropriate programs, and teachers with the qualifications to teach these programs. School systems also face the pressure to engage Aboriginal youth and keep them in school. Municipal governments report having children who are not registered or attending schools and most of them are Aboriginal. Some children 12 years old have never attended school. There are Aboriginal Alternative schools in some communities.

These schools are having greater success in engaging and maintaining Aboriginal youth and there is pressure to provide more of these schools in centres that do not have them.

5.2.3 Policing

There is also growing pressure on policing. Often crime is committed, not by the permanent Aboriginal population, but by visiting transients. The local drug scene, unemployment, and family violence contribute to high crime rates in urban communities. More liaison officers, more outreach and more Aboriginal recruits are needed in nearly all communities.

5.2.4 Public Health

There is certainly pressure on the health care system, particularly because of drug addictions, diabetes, kidney problems, long-term care needs for young and old, and Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) individuals. There is also an increasing demand for culturally appropriate health care. Aboriginal people as a whole have significant health care needs but are poorly connected to services.

5.2.5 Increasing Racial Tensions

Municipal governments feel that racial tensions exist to a limited degree but could get worse in the future. In most centres racism is subtle, as opposed to overt. Racial tensions, to a certain extent, can be attributed to the growing pressure arrivals are placing on the housing supply, education, policing, and health care services. Several interviewees noted that the constant need for ever greater levels of funding for Aboriginal programs is negatively influencing people’s perspectives and opinions. However, respondents explained that this racism is not just a result of recent arrivals, but has been a problem for several generations. Youth are a major target of racism.

The situation in resource communities and mining centres is different. The racial tension there is not Aboriginal specific. It is associated more with the social and ethnic issues common in a resource community. These communities have a significant demand for both skilled and unskilled labour and attract immigrants, making them very ethnically diverse so racism is less targeted at the Aboriginal population. In global cities such as Vancouver and Toronto the tremendous ethnic diversity also means Aboriginal people are less likely to be targeted as victims of racism.

Most municipal governments suggested that racism and discrimination, although certainly still a problem, were declining. The efforts of municipal governments through committees that work on issues associated with race relations, discrimination, employment equity, and other initiatives to reduce conflict and hostility in the community are making a difference. Many municipal governments have been very active in this area.

5.3 Municipal Governments are Providing Services to Address the Unique Needs of Aboriginal People

Municipal governments reported that they prefer “to serve the citizens of the community as a whole”. Therefore the majority of the services that cities offer are not targeted to Aboriginal

people specifically, although Aboriginal people tend to be frequent users. The broadest range of programs accessed by Aboriginal people is in the sports, culture, and recreation areas. They are generally open to all, but municipal governments make a special effort to encourage Aboriginal participation.

Although the preference is to deliver services to all citizens, some municipal governments are moving towards more targeted Aboriginal initiatives to serve the unique needs of Aboriginal people. For example, Saskatoon has the Youth Centre, Pow-Wow Song and Dance, Aboriginal Life Guard Program, and Aboriginal Modelling programs. Toronto’s Urban Aboriginal Economic Development Committee provides skill building for entrepreneurs, sessions for youth entrepreneurs, information on employment and business services, ideas on incubators, etc. The Toronto Police have an Aboriginal Peace Keeping Unit, Thunder Bay has Aboriginal Liaison Officers in the police force, and Edmonton has made considerable progress in recruiting Aboriginal police officers to work with people on the street. Municipal governments feel there is a need for targeting in some service areas because the mode of delivery is often different. If programs are targeted to the community as a whole, they are not always culturally appropriate.

Many municipal governments make grants available for community programs and to community organizations. These include daycare programs, mom and tot programs, early prevention programs, programs for elders coming into the municipality, youth programs, cultural events and festivals, and a small selection of housing programs. Some also provide housing grants to Aboriginal housing groups.

Municipal governments provide in-kind support in terms of staff time, facilities, and administrative assistance for programs for Aboriginal people. Many centres have municipal staff who work specifically with Aboriginal groups in the community. They also work with Aboriginal people in social and recreational development and help with liaison and networking. Municipal governments are setting aside land and they provide park space and facilities for various Aboriginal communal purposes.

Municipal governments prefer to delivery programs through partnership arrangements, particularly with Aboriginal organizations. Involving Aboriginal groups and people improves networking, promotes Aboriginal involvement in planning and delivery and enhances the amount of funds available as most Aboriginal groups are able to access some funds from other orders of government.

Most often municipal governments invest money in programs that are jointly funded with other orders of government. For instance Thunder Bay funds programs through the District Social Assistance Board, specifically for social assistance and housing (83 percent of the costs come from the City, the remainder from the province). Ontario municipal governments are responsible for funding housing and social assistance since the province “devolved” this responsibility several years ago. Aboriginals are major clients in both these program areas. However these two programs are not delivered specifically to Aboriginals. Winnipeg contributes to the Neighbourhoods Alive Program that funds inner city revitalization and housing development. The City provides \$10,000 for every house that is built or renovated under the housing initiative. Winnipeg, like many other cities, also provides funds to support capacity building and operation of neighbourhood organizations.

Most municipal governments, particularly the larger centres, feel that responsibility for delivery of services cannot be left entirely to the other orders of government. Aboriginals are citizens of the municipality and like all citizens should be provided with services. Funding is the key issue. Municipalities need other forms of funding beyond the property tax. Other orders of government and Aboriginal organizations have to come to the table with money. If this funding was provided municipalities would probably be in a better position to deliver some services.

5.3.1 Some Municipal Governments Develop Their Own Urban Aboriginal Strategy

Some of the larger cities interviewed have or are currently developing municipal Urban Aboriginal Strategies. In the development of the strategies, municipal governments are looking at how cities provide services, what services are provided, what services are needed, the adequacy of current services, and potential partnership arrangements.

Most of the strategies developed or planned have only a limited allocation of funds and their success will depend heavily on funding from other orders of government. In Winnipeg, for example, under the policies set out in their Aboriginal strategy they have the power to go to Council to request funds for specific initiatives. To date, however, they have not done this, but have worked to access money from a range of other sources to fund initiatives. A common concern among municipal governments is that unless there is access to additional resources they will not be able to implement these strategies.

Many municipal governments have developed specific Aboriginal initiatives that serve the same purpose as broader strategies. For example, Lethbridge has a Mayor’s Initiative for Aboriginal Opportunities that works very closely with grassroots representatives and community-based service providers to facilitate Aboriginal service provision.

Municipal governments are also addressing Aboriginal issues through initiatives tied to the traditional general municipal services, particularly recreation, sports and cultural activities. Municipal governments work closely with Aboriginal organizations and undertake consultations to enhance integration, reduce barriers to participation, and promote cultural diversity. Some cities have introduced components within these traditional services targeted specifically to Aboriginals.

Municipal governments feel they cannot continue to ignore the issues and opportunities associated with an increasing Aboriginal population. They want to work to increase the flow of funds from the other orders of government to Aboriginal communities, and facilitate dialogue at the local level. Several respondents stated they are prepared to partner with other orders of government to facilitate delivery of services and programs. They also want to encourage the establishment of a better working relationship with the Aboriginal community so that they can better deliver services to Aboriginal people.

5.3.2 Some Municipal Governments Develop Race Relations or Social Equity Committees

Several municipal governments have race relations or ethnic diversity committees or other equity strategies. Most of these Committees report to Council and many are chaired by an Aboriginal

person. They draw their membership, not just from Council, but also from a wide range of community and ethnic organizations. Most cities indicated they were very careful to encompass not just Aboriginals but all ethnic groups, races, religions, and sexual preferences. These committees, it was reported, have generally been effective in reducing tension within the community; they become a framework for discussion on a number of issues and generally promote partnerships and networking.

Smaller centres generally do not have their own Aboriginal Strategies, Race Relations Committees, or formal committees of any kind. There is some integration on a personal level and a dialogue between Aboriginal organizations and Councils. Municipal governments cooperate with Aboriginal Councils on a project-by-project basis, mostly for cultural events. Some municipal governments indicated the need for a formal committee, a strategy or special organizations to facilitate consultation with the Aboriginal community, but time and resources to develop such functions are not available.

5.3.3 Municipal Governments Require Adequate Data to Assess Aboriginal Service Needs

Municipal governments depend primarily on Statistics Canada data to assess the needs of Aboriginal people within their communities. The general consensus is that the information available is not really adequate or sufficient. Their greatest concern with Stats Canada data is that it becomes dated very quickly, particularly as the number of Aboriginal people is changing rapidly. Stats Canada data also does not provide the human services needs information required. It contains good information on housing, employment, education and income, but not on the social needs of Aboriginal people. Some smaller centres find that the Statistics Canada data adequately serve their purposes.

Only a few centres collect their own population figures or undertake a homeless count. Additional sources of data municipal governments use include statistics from the Canadian Council on Social Development, government agencies, service providers, and their own needs assessment studies. Data available from service agencies, although very useful, are not collected or analyzed in a coordinated or regular manner and more frequent updates are needed.

Many of those interviewed felt that FCM could contribute to the task of data collection and analysis, obtaining special cross-tabs from Stats Canada and organizing the collection and analysis of service agency data, particularly in the large municipalities. Very few of the municipal officials interviewed were familiar with the FCM Quality of Life Reporting System and only a couple mentioned that they had used it.

5.4 There are Cost Implications in the Delivery of Services to Aboriginal People

Most respondents noted that, though it is difficult to assess the magnitude of costs, the increasing Aboriginal population within municipalities is resulting in both direct and indirect costs for municipal governments. These increasing costs are due to programs and services specific to Aboriginal people, and increases in costs associated with the provision of traditional services resulting from general population increases.

5.4.1 Municipal Governments Require More Resources to Adequately Assess Costs

Municipal governments, as a rule, do not itemize the cost of providing services to Aboriginal people; because most programs are not specifically targeted to Aboriginals and municipal governments lack staff time and resources to undertake the considerable amount of work that would be necessary to obtain the figures. Some centres stated that they deliver services for all citizens and would not want to treat the costs separately because to do so would not be politically astute. They keep track of programming as a whole and the cost of services for Aboriginal people are part of the service base and they are not being quantified in any way. Several respondents mentioned that case studies on this issue would assist in assessing the magnitude of these costs.

5.4.2 Costs are Increasing and Funding is Limited

As noted above, most municipal governments provide some funding (including in-kind staff time and facilities costs) for programs and services for Aboriginal people. There was consensus that costs are increasing for both regular municipal services and special programs for Aboriginal people. The common concern is that general servicing costs are increasing for many reasons, including the arrival of Aboriginal people, while the municipal revenue base is not changing. Municipal governments do not have the taxation sources to obtain increases in revenue to meet the growing demand for services. The increases in costs seemed to be a greater concern as centre size increases but smaller municipal governments also face rising costs.

Despite the lack of specific figures, the interviews yielded enough information to establish levels of magnitude. For example, the small municipality of Kamsack provides approximately \$11,000 in in-kind costs (staff time and facilities) and another \$3,500 in direct program cost to fund a program for mums and tots, and sports activities.

Regina, a mid-sized city, has a budget for Aboriginal Services of \$160,000 that covers salaries plus programming in sports and recreation. In addition, a portion of the housing grants budget of \$2.5 million provided by the City annually goes to Aboriginals. Regina also provides grants totalling several thousand dollars to neighbourhood associations that work with Aboriginal groups. Larger cities such as Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, and Vancouver provide funding of several hundred thousand dollars.

Respondents from smaller municipalities indicated that limited funding is available to provide services from provincial and territorial governments, Aboriginal groups, and other sources. These smaller municipalities provide few services directly, but deliver a limited number of the services mainly in the areas of parenting support, recreation, employment training and job creation opportunities within the municipal administration. Some contribute to the programs delivered in partnership with Aboriginal people, including staff support and facilities.

Many respondents stressed that it is important to recognize that the arrival of Aboriginals increases the cost of delivering traditional municipal services to a growing general population, for example sewer, water, transportation, fire, and policing. Discussions on municipal services for Aboriginal people usually centre on special services and unique needs without consideration of the increasing costs associated with providing traditional municipal services. Staff time, facilities, facilitating discussions with the other orders of government and Aboriginal groups,

networking, helping to initiate projects and general liaison work also consumes significant resources, though there is no specific source of funds to compensate for these costs.

5.4.3 Municipal Governments Actively Seek Partners to Fund and Deliver Aboriginal Services

Municipal governments actively seek partners, both governmental and non-governmental to cooperate on initiatives and alleviate cost demands. Municipal governments spend a great deal of time and effort seeking funding from other sources and many of the Aboriginal programs they deliver directly, or in partnership with other organizations, are cost shared. The other orders of government are the major contributors, although funding is often provided by Aboriginal organizations but some of this money often comes from governments in the first place. In Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Toronto and Winnipeg the business community is a contributor to a range of programs, particularly those to develop business skills in the Aboriginal community. Some municipal governments work with Aboriginal organizations to raise funds in the community to support Aboriginal cultural events. Several municipal governments access lottery funding from provincial governments to help pay for community events, support community organizations, and fund early prevention programs for mothers and children.

In several of the large municipalities, universities and community colleges are funding partners in a range of educational and skills development programs. Sports teams and community groups also contribute time and dollars to initiatives. Foundations like the Winnipeg Foundation, the Bronfman Foundation and, in Alberta, the Mitchener Foundation also contribute funding in centres like Winnipeg, Toronto, Vancouver, and Red Deer.

5.4.4 Enhanced Federal and Provincial Funding is Required in a Number of Areas

All the programs municipal governments are currently delivering to Aboriginal people could benefit from increased funding. In addition to providing more of the service, services and programs must become culturally appropriate and better coordinated with the activities of other orders of government and Aboriginal groups.

Several respondents cited housing as a priority that should be enhanced through federal and provincial funding. Adequate, affordable housing provides the stable base people need to access other services.

There should also be more funding for family-based programs and services, for sports and recreation, business development and entrepreneurial initiatives, transition and resource centres, educational initiatives and health care services. Although most municipal governments prefer to leave the mainline health and education programs to other orders of governments, there are a lot of community-based supports and programs municipal governments are better positioned to deliver.

Other services that should be introduced or enhanced include seniors services, detox centres, head start programs, awareness and liaison programs in the police service, and health prevention programs, particularly for pregnant women, children and the elderly. Job training that is linked to northern development such as construction of environmentally improved housing, resource

extraction and development should be introduced so that Aboriginal people are trained to take jobs in the north as opposed to bringing in labour from the south. Respondents also stressed the need for the promotion of cultural awareness. Municipal governments could introduce more programs like Fire Cadet and Life Guard training, Aboriginal arts, and cultural awareness programs.

There is a real need to build community capacity. More funding is needed for community outreach and community workers and to hire Aboriginal Liaison Officers to work in community development. Money is also needed for leadership development for individuals and non-profits.

Additional programs and services identified included more money for transportation, programs of poverty alleviation, drug and alcohol counselling, treatment and healing centres, half-way houses for young offenders, more counselling in the schools, more culturally appropriate educational services, funding to support the process of integration, consultation and partnership building, and money for Aboriginal policy development.

Respondents are concerned that the local tax payers provide recreation facilities, transit, and fire protection and these services are used by Aboriginals from nearby reserves or people who are in the city for short periods of time but do not pay taxes. Some municipal governments feel there should be some mechanism by which funds from other orders of government are provided to help pay for Aboriginal use of these services.

Respondents from smaller municipalities indicated that the provision of programs and services for Aboriginal people should be the responsibility of other orders of government, and would not want to introduce new programs unless new resources are provided.

5.4.5 Summary of Cost Implications

Several points stood out in the discussion on funding. It was clear that:

- municipal governments do not have good information on the cost of providing Aboriginal services;
- the costs are increasing but municipal governments do not break out the cost associated with providing services to Aboriginal people;
- nearly all municipal governments provide some level of support in a variety of areas;
- some of the support is in-kind (staff and facilities) but direct funding is also provided;
- most direct funding goes to the more traditional services municipal governments provide such as sports, recreation, and cultural events;
- other areas that result in municipal costs include policing, support for Aboriginal business development, building entrepreneurial skills, Aboriginal job creation, and in Ontario, housing and social assistance;
- the costs of other traditional services such as water, sewer, fire protection, and transportation also increase with an increasing Aboriginal population;
- the level of support provided by municipal governments does not even come close to addressing the needs of Aboriginal people;
- whenever possible municipal governments use funds from other sources to address Aboriginal service needs; and,

- without additional sources of revenue it will be difficult for municipal governments to provide higher levels of support.

Although municipal governments are major funding contributors, in both actual dollars and in-kind contributions, what became clear from the discussions was that there were very few programs delivered that did not have some funding, either directly or indirectly, from the two other orders of government. If municipal governments are going to play a greater role in providing Aboriginal services they need new sources of revenue or enhanced funding from the traditional sources.

5.5 An Infrastructure for Collaboration Exists Among Governments

There are a growing number of mechanisms and processes designed to facilitate collaboration amongst orders of government on Aboriginal issues. Although collaboration and communication are improving, municipalities identified a need for more discussion, liaison, and better communication and suggested a number of ways this could be achieved.

5.5.1 Collaborative Initiatives Led by Municipal Governments

Municipal governments use a wide range of mechanisms and processes to communicate with other orders of government on Aboriginal issues. Best practices include:

- Assigning staff to provincial, territorial and federal portfolios, as well as staff who work on tri-partite agreements;
- Creating positions for Aboriginal Liaison Officers who work with other orders of government as well as Aboriginal organizations;
- Establishing regional inter-sectoral committees that bring together representatives from the three orders of government and Aboriginal organizations. These inter-sectoral committees tend to focus on human resource issues, justice and youth;
- Developing municipal Urban Aboriginal Strategies with significant Aboriginal representation. In Calgary all orders of government and Aboriginal organizations are represented on the Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative and this partnership has proven to be a very good inter-sectoral, inter-governmental interface;
- Integrating Aboriginal representation in municipal administration and governance;
- Working through their local MLA and MP to increase intergovernmental collaboration;
- Working through local provincial and territorial municipal organizations or FCM in an attempt to address Aboriginal issues;
- Increasing communications between municipal councils and local band councils;
- Establishing community-wide forums for discussion; and
- Several centres noted they work through the Big City Mayor’s Caucus to try to resolve Aboriginal issues.

Several municipal governments reported that they help deliver programs for other orders of government, but generally nothing is specifically targeted to Aboriginals. For instance, Winnipeg participates and takes an active role in the delivery of housing and neighbourhood revitalization programs under the tri-partite initiative Neighbourhoods Alive. Saskatoon, Regina, Lethbridge, Toronto and Red Deer have been active in the delivery of homeless initiatives under the federally based Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative. Several municipal governments deliver the

federal Residential Rehabilitation Programs. Some municipal governments are responsible for delivering social assistance. Many also deliver, or assist with the delivery of, business development and entrepreneurial skills programs, as well as early childhood prevention programs. Most also take an active role in delivering housing programs. Generally, the smaller the centre, the less likely it is to deliver programs for other orders of government.

Many municipal governments have found themselves playing the role of facilitator, trying to resolve disputes, and obtain consensus. They play this role without adequate resources to contribute time and staff in facilitation activities.

5.5.2 Collaborative Initiatives Led by Provincial and Territorial Governments

Provincial and territorial governments are involved in urban Aboriginal program and policy development. Recently provincial policy frameworks and Aboriginal-specific programming were introduced by several provincial governments. For instance, in 1999 the Alberta government released its Aboriginal policy framework *Strengthening Relationships*. In its *2001 Speech from the Throne*, the provincial government of British Columbia committed itself to redoubling its efforts to address urban Aboriginal issues. Saskatchewan’s *Métis and Off Reserve First Nations Strategy* attempts to address the needs of the urban Aboriginal population. Several provincial governments are also active partners in the Federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy (see Appendix C for more detail) and many joint programs with municipal governments are noted throughout this report.

5.5.3 Collaborative Initiatives Led by the Federal Government

Of the almost \$8 billion per year that the Government of Canada invests in Aboriginal specific programming, almost 90 percent goes to assist First Nations people on reserve that comprise less than one-third of the total Aboriginal population⁴⁵. Off reserve, 22 federal departments currently deliver 80 programs to Aboriginal people that address a range of policy fields, including health, homelessness, training, employment, education, justice, childcare, youth, and cultural support.

In the Government of Canada’s *2002 Speech from the Throne* the needs of Aboriginal people residing in cities were recognized for the first time. The April 2002 interim report of *Prime Minister’s Task Force on Urban Issues* made several recommendations aimed at alleviating some of the pressures shouldered by urban Aboriginal People; and in 1998, the federal government launched its *Urban Aboriginal Strategy*.

The federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy was announced in recognition of the growing urban Aboriginal population and the pressing need to better serve urban Aboriginals through improved coordination and collaboration within the Government of Canada, and among all orders of government and Aboriginal organizations.

In its 2003 *Budget*, the Government of Canada allocated \$25 million over three years to support the UAS. The bulk of UAS funding is being used to support pilot projects in eight priority urban centres: Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Regina, Winnipeg, Toronto, and Thunder

⁴⁵ Longfield and Godfrey 2003

Bay (see Appendix C). The pilot projects are designed to test new ideas on how to better respond to the local needs of urban Aboriginal people; how to better align federal programs to both provincial programs and the efforts of other agencies; and to gain a better understanding of what works, what does not, and why⁴⁶. Some of the projects are linked to larger initiatives addressing inner city concerns and urban revitalization. Budget 2004 proposed to extend the UAS through to 2006–07, and to double the total from \$25 M to \$50 M to allow current projects with promising results to be expanded and to support projects in up to six more communities. The most recent Speech from the Throne reaffirmed the commitment to fund services for off reserve Aboriginals, indicating the government plans to expand the partnership approach used to develop the Vancouver and Winnipeg Agreements to cooperate in service delivery. It also plans to expand the Urban Aboriginal Strategy with other willing provinces and municipal governments.

Several municipal governments also work within the Federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) but they indicate that the Strategy involves Aboriginal people in a limited and selective way and it has a limited funding base. They would like the Federal UAS to be better organized and more transparent, with more opportunities for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service agencies to participate in program and project design and development. There is also concern that the strategy is driven by the political constituencies (both within government and the Aboriginal community), with too little input from community and service agencies. An additional concern is that the UAS seems to be driven by the Privy Council and Western Economic Diversification but the solutions have to be community driven. It was also noted that the fragmentation of the Aboriginal community also makes progress difficult.

The introduction of the Federal UAS does, however, illustrate that urban Aboriginal issues are beginning to be approached in a more comprehensive and coordinated manner. Although there is still a great deal of room for improvement, programs and services are more and more a result of the collaboration between the municipal, provincial, territorial and federal governments. The partnerships in some cities also actively involve Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations, service providers and urban Aboriginal people.

5.5.4 Collaboration Among Governments can be Improved

Despite these existing processes for intergovernmental collaboration, municipal governments continue to face severe challenges – lack of funding, inconsistent programming activity, policy overlaps, lack of Aboriginal specific services, and inadequate Aboriginal data – in addressing barriers faced by Aboriginal people living within their boundaries. The jurisdictional environment in which urban Aboriginal policy-making takes place is still characterized to a considerable extent by “silos both within and between the municipal, provincial and federal orders of government”⁴⁷. Much of the program activity is developed in isolation from one order of government to another, and sometimes from one department to another within a particular order of government. This has resulted in inefficient use of resources, overlapping policy, duplication of programs, and gaps in services. The policy and program vacuum, which is not being filled effectively by any level of government is, in part, responsible for the serious lack of services for Aboriginal people in urban centres.

⁴⁶ Government of Canada. Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians. Urban Aboriginal Strategy. Backgrounder – Urban Aboriginal Strategy http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca/interloc/default.asp?Language=E&Page=strategy&Doc=20031125_backgrounder_e.htm

⁴⁷ Longfield and Godfrey 2003, p.6

Respondents offered suggestions for improving inter-governmental communications. These included:

- more federal involvement and transparency on Aboriginal issues at the municipal level;
- more provincial involvement in Aboriginal issues;
- involvement of Aboriginal organizations in discussions as an equal partner;
- institutional structures, for example provincial and territorial ministries of Aboriginal affairs;
- greater leadership from the Aboriginal community, playing a more active role in organizing and chairing inter-sectoral committees; and,
- development of more tri-partite agreements as in Winnipeg.

There was consensus that inter-governmental communication was improving, but there is a significant need for more discussion and liaison, and better communication.

5.6 Aboriginal Groups Play an Active Role in the Community

Respondents from the municipal governments surveyed identified a significant number of Aboriginal service organizations that work to provide a range of services to Aboriginal people in their municipalities. They stressed the important role these organizations played in improving the quality of life of those they served. They also noted a number of difficulties the organizations faced and the challenges municipal governments experience in working with Aboriginal service organizations.

5.6.1 A Diverse Group of Aboriginal Organizations Provide a Variety of Services

Large municipalities have many Aboriginal organizations providing a range of services including housing, education, skills development, transportation, counselling, alternative schools, health care and support services, entrepreneurial development, and early prevention programs amongst others. The nature of the clients served spans the entire range of household types and ages in the larger communities, although smaller communities focus more on youth, prenatal programs, and children. The service organizations include Métis, First Nations, and Pan-Aboriginal. Many have clearly demonstrated success but municipalities expressed concern that most of the organizations lack sufficient funding and have no guarantee of long term sustaining funds.

The range of services Aboriginal organizations provide include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Literacy▪ Economic development▪ Parent support programs▪ Family counselling▪ Health care and support services▪ Transitional services to new arrivals▪ Entrepreneurial development▪ Mobile outreach▪ Alternative education programs▪ Nutrition counselling | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Housing▪ Child and family services▪ Transportation▪ Employment and skills development▪ Food security programs▪ Cultural programming▪ Family support workers▪ Healing houses▪ Clothing services▪ Drug, alcohol counselling |
|--|--|

- Lunch programs
- Cultural programming
- Early prevention programs
- Street patrols for homeless
- Information services
- Entrepreneurial development
- Services for disabled people
- Legal services and supports

More detail on organizations in specific centres and the services they offer are included in Appendix D.

Most municipalities lack formal programs for resettlement and transition support. Most centres do not have transition centres that provide services for recent arrivals. Many of the organizations mentioned above provide some transition services with the limited funding and resources they have. However, these services are often scattered among many different organizations making them hard to access, and people are often not aware of them. There are no organized and coordinated programs providing transitional services. Friendship Centres often act as a transition centre but their services are limited and directed mostly to street people and not necessarily focused on recent arrivals. Some Aboriginal organizations provide transitional housing, but the numbers of units are limited and there are very few units for families.

5.6.2 Municipal Governments Experience Challenges Working with Aboriginal Service Organizations

Many Aboriginal organizations lack sustainable, long-term funding, and are continually involved in proposal and application preparation for funding. Municipal governments engaging in partnerships with these organizations are often implicating in seeking funding from other orders of government.

Although there are a wide range of Aboriginal organizations providing a range of services, municipal governments feel that often the services are not coordinated and the organizations compete instead of cooperating. There is some conflict and competition between Aboriginal organizations for funding and the client base. Municipal governments often end up playing the role of facilitator, trying to forge partnerships, negotiate disputes, and move initiatives forward.

Some Aboriginal organizations serve only a specific client group and may not include non Status Aboriginal people. Working with these groups is difficult for municipal governments, who cannot discriminate on the basis of band membership or status.

5.6.3 Cooperation with Aboriginal Organizations can be Improved

Most of the respondents reported that there is not enough collaboration or communication with Aboriginal groups. Often there is no forum or institutional structure for consistent and ongoing dialogue. However, substantial and sustainable resources are required in order to develop relationships and build trust.

There was a consensus that more dialogue is required and there has to be both formal and informal structures with adequate funding in place to promote better communications. Generally it is more difficult to obtain funds for communication and dialogue than to support programs. This is particularly problematic because the process of communication is time consuming and

expensive. Other orders of government need to consider relationship-building exercises in addition to program and service delivery when considering proposals.

5.7 Clarification of Roles and Responsibilities is Required

Municipalities struggle to make program decisions and allocate scarce resources to Aboriginal people in a jurisdictional environment that is characterized by a lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities. Service gaps, duplication of services and unmet needs will continue to be a problem unless clarity on specific jurisdictional issues is achieved.

5.7.1 Municipal Governments Require Clarification on Specific Jurisdictional Issues

The municipal governments identified several issues that have to be resolved. There is a need for clarification of responsibility in several areas: housing, health, social assistance, urban reserves, and many others. Key questions that have to be addressed include: What should be the role of the municipal government? What is the nature of federal responsibility? What are Bands and Band Councils responsible for? What is the role of the province? What does Aboriginal self-government mean? What are the jurisdictional issues associated with the creation of urban reserves? It is all too *ad hoc* at present.

There is a need to address the jurisdictional confusion surrounding status, non-status, and Métis. There has to be clarification on who is responsible for funding, particularly for non-status. Off reserve and on reserve differences also have to be addressed. At this point they are in “different boxes” in terms of their treatment by the federal government. Aboriginals off reserve have been ignored for a long time and no particular order of government appears to want to take responsibility for their service needs. Municipal governments are having difficulty defining their role in this state of ambiguity.

There is a concern that Aboriginal groups are also uncertain about the municipal government’s jurisdiction as far as Aboriginal programs and certain services are concerned. For so long, Aboriginals have viewed themselves as “a federal responsibility” that they are sometimes reluctant to work with other orders of government.

Some municipal governments raise the possibility that they could deliver more programs to Aboriginals for other orders of government. Municipal governments might be better placed and equipped to do this because of their greater familiarity with local issues facing Aboriginal people, their knowledge of local Aboriginal service organizations and their accessibility to the Aboriginal residents of the municipality. Their concern is that at present responsibilities for specific service areas have not been clearly identified and often delivery is *ad hoc*. They are reluctant to accept added responsibilities unless there is greater clarity on roles and responsibility for funding. Other municipal governments are not really interested in delivering services for other orders of government and see the municipal role only as a partner, not a sole, provider of services. They feel they would have problems funding anything else.

Resolution of land claims was a key jurisdictional issue for resource communities like Kitimat, Dawson Creek, and Thompson. Without resolution of land claims, resource development, they

suggested, would grind to a halt reducing job opportunities for community residents including off reserve Aboriginal people.

Most small municipal governments believe that the federal government should maintain responsibility regardless of where Aboriginals live and municipal governments should not have any particular responsibility beyond traditional municipal services. They try to avoid areas where they do not feel they have a mandate. They have no resources and do not want to make commitments they cannot keep. Some centres seem to be less concerned about jurisdictional responsibility and more concerned with how to create partnerships between the orders of government and between governments and the Aboriginal communities.

Municipal governments really want to be able to define the municipal role and mandate, however this is hard to do when the responsibilities of the other orders of government are not clearly defined. Municipal governments struggle to be inclusive to the Aboriginal community as they are citizens but clarity on the roles of others would help. Several municipal governments indicated that they would like FCM to lead the way in resolving jurisdictional issues.

5.7.2 There is Ambiguity on Which Order of Government Should be Responsible for Funding and Delivering Programs and Services to Aboriginal People

Three major points of view prevailed. The first favoured partnership approaches to service delivery with municipal governments playing a role. It has to be a partnership with all orders of government and Aboriginal groups involved, but the roles and responsibilities in this partnership have to be well defined. FCM should be playing a greater role in facilitating discussion in this area and helping define the roles for municipal governments.

The second opinion was that the federal government should be solely responsible for delivering programs and services to Aboriginal people, for providing funding to satisfy operational costs and enable program development. This view was much more prevalent amongst smaller municipal governments. A long-term commitment to funding is very important.

The third opinion stressed a greater role for the Aboriginal community. Improved inclusion of Aboriginal leaders and residents in terms of the program development and service delivery was stressed. While municipal governments should certainly play a role in planning and delivery, it should be done in partnership with Aboriginal groups. Municipal governments have to start concentrating on the positive aspects of Aboriginal people in municipal jurisdictions and build on the potential they bring to cities. Some of the municipal governments would like to see Aboriginal groups taking more responsibility for program delivery with the federal government providing the funding.

5.7.3 New Processes are Required to Resolve Jurisdictional Issues

There was a range of opinions on what is required to resolve the jurisdictional issues. Municipal governments want to be involved as they are close to the problems and issues but they often get told what to do without being able to provide input. Municipal governments are also constrained in the role they can play because of their limited ability to raise funds.

There has to be a dialogue with all orders of government, Aboriginal groups, and community groups. The importance of creating partnerships between the orders of government and between governments and the Aboriginal communities was emphasized. Several interviewees suggested that more tri-partite agreements are required.

Some municipal governments felt FCM should play a lead role in dialogue with other orders of government, community, and Aboriginal organizations. Others, especially small municipal governments, believe the federal government has to play the key role in resolving these issues.

Municipal governments would like to see a more “community-based approach” to dealing with the issues facing Aboriginals. They stress that getting to the grassroots and bringing more of a local sense to programs and services is very important for achieving lasting success. Municipal governments feel that all those likely to be affected should be able to have a say in resolving roles and responsibilities. Ideally Aboriginal people have to decide what is best for them.

6.0 Suggestions for Further Research

The literature review, data analysis, and summary of information collected during the interviews adds considerable knowledge to our understanding of the issues municipal governments need to be aware of as Aboriginal people move into their jurisdiction in increasing numbers. This report expands the data available on the characteristics of the Aboriginal population, the services they require, service gaps, the role municipal governments are playing and the jurisdictional problems municipal governments are grappling with. However, the work also highlights areas where additional research is required. These include but are not restricted to:

- work to more adequately determine the level and nature of municipal costs associated with providing services to Aboriginal people. Case studies are required;
- work to clarify the many jurisdictional issues that leave municipal governments confused on roles and responsibilities of the various partners involved;
- research on alternate sources of funding that might be available to municipal governments to fund Aboriginal services;
- work to determine mechanisms and processes municipal governments can introduce to more effectively provide arriving Aboriginals with the information they require to access services;
- work to determine what specific transitional services are required and who should provide them;
- development work on structuring and introducing frameworks to facilitate improved dialogue, communication, and partnership approaches between municipal governments and Aboriginal groups and the other orders of government;
- work to expand the Quality of Life Reporting System and improve municipal awareness of the data and how it can be used;
- development of better data to improve policy development and program planning; and,
- development of a “best practices” information system in areas of service delivery, funding, and communication by drawing on examples from different municipalities.

7.0 Conclusion

The Aboriginal population is one of the most rapidly growing sectors of society and an increasing proportion of Aboriginal people live in urban municipalities. They are a young population with a high, but declining, birth rate. With one-third of the population under the age of 14 years, they represent a large proportion of the labour force of the future in many urban municipalities. Their high mobility rates make service and program delivery difficult. Dealing with the pressure of a rising number of Aboriginal people and ensuring they receive the services they require in urban municipalities will be an important challenge for all orders of government in the coming decades. The urban municipalities that the growing numbers of Aboriginal people call home are increasingly feeling the pressure to respond to the needs of Aboriginal people.

Municipal governments are experiencing pressures associated with an increasing number of Aboriginal people. These pressures are particularly evident in areas such as housing, education, policing, and health care. There are also pressures on the traditional areas of municipal services such as transportation, recreation, and community services. Municipal governments are working to broaden the dialogue and open new lines of communication with Aboriginal people. Additional work is also needed to develop more effective partnerships with Aboriginal people and other orders of government if the needs of Aboriginal people are to be adequately addressed. Clarification of areas of jurisdictional ambiguity would also facilitate more effective delivery of services and help to reduce program duplication and eliminate service gaps.

Municipal governments are struggling with limited resources to respond to a range of service needs. Currently they rely heavily on resources from the senior orders of government. Unless there are changes in the resource base municipal governments can draw on, they will continue to look to the provincial, territorial and the federal governments for funding.

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APPENDIX A: SELECTION OF MUNICIPALITIES FOR THE PROJECT

To help identify the centres that should be considered for selection for the sample of municipalities to be interviewed the following data were analysed:

- 1) the distribution of the Aboriginal identity population by province and territory;
- 2) the top 25 urban municipalities by the absolute number of Aboriginal identity people;
- 3) the top 25 centres by the proportion of the total population that are Aboriginal identity people; and,
- 4) the number and proportion of Aboriginal identity population in Canada’s top 25 census metropolitan areas.

Aboriginal Identity Population by Province and Territory

The Aboriginal identity population’s share of the total population has grown from 2.8 percent of all Canadians in 1996 to 3.3 percent in 2001 representing an increase of 17.6 percent. The Aboriginal identity population of each province is shown in Table A1.

Table A1. Aboriginal Identity Population in Canadian Provinces, 2001

GEOGRAPHY	Total Population	Aboriginal ID Population	% Aboriginal ID Population	% of Canadian Aboriginal ID Pop
Newfoundland and Labrador	508,075	18,775	3.7	1.9
Prince Edward Island	133,385	1,345	1.0	0.1
Nova Scotia	897,570	17,010	1.9	1.7
New Brunswick	719,715	16,990	2.4	1.7
Quebec	7,125,580	79,400	1.1	8.1
Ontario	11,285,550	188,315	1.7	19.3
Manitoba	1,103,700	150,045	13.6	15.4
Saskatchewan	963,150	130,190	13.5	13.3
Alberta	2,941,150	156,225	5.3	16.0
British Columbia	3,868,875	170,025	4.4	17.4
Yukon Territory	28,520	6,545	22.9	0.7
Northwest Territories	37,100	18,730	50.5	1.9
Nunavut	26,670	22,720	85.2	2.3
Canada	29,639,040	976,315	3.3	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada: Profile for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Divisions, and Census Subdivisions, 2001 Census.

The Aboriginal identity population makes up a much greater proportion of the total population in the Northern Territories – 22.9 percent in the Yukon, 50.5 percent in the Northwest Territories and 85.2 percent in Nunavut. Eastern provinces have relatively small Aboriginal populations, ranging from 1.0 percent of the total population in Prince Edward Island to 3.7 percent in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2001. The proportions of Aboriginal population are much larger

in the western provinces – ranging from 4.4 percent in British Columbia to well over 13 percent in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

The last column of the table also shows the Aboriginal identity population as a percentage of Canada’s total Aboriginal identity population in 2001. Over 60 percent of the Aboriginal identity population lives in the four western provinces. 19.3 percent of the total Aboriginal identity population reside in Ontario, 8.1 percent in Quebec, and 5.4 percent in the Atlantic Provinces. Only 4.9 percent of Canada’s Aboriginal population lives in the Territories.

Aboriginal Identity Population by Urban Municipality: Absolute Numbers

The table below presents the top 25 Canadian urban municipalities by absolute numbers of Aboriginal identity population. In 2001 there were 14 cities in Canada with Aboriginal identity populations greater than 5,000 and eight cities above 10,000 people. Aboriginal identity population in 11 more cities ranged from 3,000 to 5,000 persons. Winnipeg has the largest Aboriginal population number: 52,415 persons in 2001 identified themselves as Aboriginal.

Table A2: Top 25 Urban Municipalities with Largest Aboriginal Population, 2001

#	GEOGRAPHY	Total Population	Total Aboriginal ID Population	% Aboriginal ID Population
1	Winnipeg	610,445	52,415	8.6
2	Edmonton	657,355	30,365	4.6
3	Calgary	871,140	19,760	2.3
4	Saskatoon	193,660	19,015	9.8
5	Regina	175,600	15,300	8.7
6	Toronto	2,456,805	11,370	0.5
7	Vancouver	539,625	10,445	1.9
8	Prince Albert	33,430	10,185	30.5
9	Ottawa	763,790	8,625	1.1
10	Thunder Bay	107,405	7,245	6.7
11	Prince George	71,990	7,155	9.9
12	Greater Sudbury	153,510	7,020	4.6
13	Surrey	345,780	6,900	2.0
14	Hamilton	484,385	6,265	1.3
15	London	332,940	4,600	1.4
16	Sault Ste. Marie	73,475	4,530	6.2
17	Thompson	13,225	4,510	34.1
18	Prince Rupert	14,530	4,330	29.8
19	Kamloops	76,820	3,965	5.2
20	Brandon	38,940	3,730	9.6
21	Yellowknife	16,450	3,635	22.1
22	Nanaimo	71,805	3,380	4.7
23	Burnaby	191,385	3,145	1.6
24	Iqaluit	5,195	3,065	59.0

Table A2: Top 25 Urban Municipalities with Largest Aboriginal Population, 2001

#	GEOGRAPHY	Total Population	Total Aboriginal ID Population	% Aboriginal ID Population
25	Whitehorse	18,920	3,010	15.9

Source: Statistics Canada: Profile for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Divisions, and Census Subdivisions, 2001 Census.

Aboriginal Identity Population by Urban Municipality: Proportion of Aboriginal Identity People

Table A3 presents 25 cities with the largest proportion of the Aboriginal identity population in 2001. All of them have above 15 percent Aboriginal identity population as a percentage of the total population. For 18 cities the ratio exceeds 20 percent and four of them have a proportion above 50 percent.

Table A3. Top 25 Urban Municipalities with Largest Percentage of Aboriginal Population, 2001

#	GEOGRAPHY	Total Population	Total Aboriginal ID Population	% Aboriginal ID Population
1	Fort Smith	2,165	1,300	60.0
2	Inuvik	2,855	1,690	59.2
3	Iqaluit	5,195	3,065	59.0
4	La Ronge	2,700	1,475	54.6
5	Hay River	3,455	1,565	45.3
6	Happy Valley-Goose Bay	7,880	2,730	34.6
7	Lac la Biche	2,690	920	34.2
8	Thompson	13,225	4,510	34.1
9	Meadow Lake	4,500	1,535	34.1
10	The Pas	5,725	1,780	31.1
11	Prince Albert	33,430	10,185	30.5
12	Prince Rupert	14,530	4,330	29.8
13	Slave Lake	6,535	1,770	27.1
14	Sioux Lookout	5,290	1,300	24.6
15	High Prairie	2,660	625	23.5
16	Yellowknife	16,450	3,635	22.1
17	Selkirk	9,190	1,970	21.4
18	High Level	3,435	715	20.8
19	North Battleford	13,500	2,660	19.7
20	Portage la Prairie	12,195	2,330	19.1
21	Mattawa	2,170	400	18.4
22	Lloydminster	7,790	1,295	16.6
23	Duncan	4,445	735	16.5
24	Whitehorse	18,920	3,010	15.9

Table A3. Top 25 Urban Municipalities with Largest Percentage of Aboriginal Population, 2001

#	GEOGRAPHY	Total Population	Total Aboriginal ID Population	% Aboriginal ID Population
25	North eastern Manitoulin and the Islands	2,475	385	15.6

Source: Statistics Canada: Profile for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Divisions, and Census Subdivisions, 2001 Census.

Aboriginal Identity Population for Canada’s 25 Major Metropolitan Areas

Table A4 represents absolute and proportional population figures for the Aboriginal population in 25 major Canadian Metropolitan Areas (CMAs).

Table A4. Aboriginal Absolute Population Figures for 25 Major Metropolitan Areas, 2001

#	GEOGRAPHY	Total Population	Total Aboriginal ID Population	% Aboriginal ID Population
1	Winnipeg	661,730	55,755	9.11
2	Edmonton	927,020	40,930	8.43
3	Vancouver	1,967,475	36,860	8.26
4	Calgary	943,310	21,915	6.81
5	Toronto	4,647,960	20,300	4.80
6	Saskatoon	222,630	20,275	4.42
7	Regina	190,015	15,690	2.83
8	Ottawa - Hull	1,050,755	13,485	2.32
9	Montréal	3,380,645	11,085	1.87
10	Victoria	306,970	8,700	1.34
11	Thunder Bay	120,365	8,200	1.32
12	Greater Sudbury	153,890	7,380	1.30
13	Hamilton	655,055	7,265	1.28
14	London	427,215	5,640	1.11
15	St. Catharines - Niagara	371,400	4,970	1.03
16	Québec	673,105	4,125	0.99
17	Windsor	304,960	3,965	0.79
18	Halifax	355,945	3,520	0.78
19	Kitchener	409,765	3,240	0.75
20	Oshawa	293,545	3,015	0.70
21	St. John's	171,105	1,195	0.61
22	Chicoutimi	153,020	1,145	0.55
23	Saint John	121,340	945	0.44
24	Trois-Rivières	134,645	735	0.33
25	Sherbrooke	150,385	280	0.19

Source: Statistics Canada: Profile for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Divisions, and Census Subdivisions, 2001 Census.

The average percentage of Aboriginals across the 25 centres is about 2.5 percent of total population with the highest proportions in Edmonton, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Regina, Sudbury and Thunder Bay. This pattern, to a significant extent, mirrors the regional distribution of the Aboriginal population in Canada. These proportions, however, are affected by the size of the centre: though Toronto has a very low proportion of Aboriginal identity population because of its size, the absolute number is quite high – 20,300. Centres with a very low proportion of people of Aboriginal identity include those in Quebec and the Maritime Provinces.

For the purpose of this project 16 urban municipalities were identified as target centres for interviews with municipal officials. The list includes all centres targeted by the Urban Aboriginal Strategy, big cities with large absolute numbers or proportion of Aboriginal population, and smaller urban centres that also have a substantial Aboriginal population (Table A5) as well as some centres suggested by FCM officials.

Table A5. Selected Urban Municipalities by Absolute Number and Percentage of Aboriginal ID Population, 2001

#	GEOGRAPHY	Total Population	Total Aboriginal ID Population	% Aboriginal ID Population	% of Canadian Aboriginal ID Population
1	Winnipeg	661,730	55,755	8.4	5.7
2	Edmonton	927,020	40,930	4.4	4.2
3	Vancouver	1,967,475	36,860	1.9	3.8
4	Calgary	943,310	21,915	2.3	2.2
5	Toronto	4,647,960	20,300	0.4	2.1
6	Saskatoon	222,630	20,275	9.1	2.1
7	Regina	190,015	15,690	8.3	1.6
8	Prince Albert	39,885	11,640	29.2	1.2
9	Thunder Bay	120,365	8,200	6.8	0.8
10	Yellowknife	16,450	3,640	22.1	0.4
11	Red Deer	66,565	2,675	4.0	0.3
12	Medicine Hat	61,115	1,335	2.2	0.1
13	St. Albert	52,770	1,225	2.3	0.1
14	Kitimat	10,240	540	5.3	0.1
15	Dawson	1,240	335	27.0	0.0
16	Kamsack	1,910	300	15.7	0.0
	Canada	29,639,035	976,310	3.3	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada: Profile for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Divisions, and Census Subdivisions, 2001 Census.

Interviews were completed with fourteen of the sixteen target centres. For a variety of reasons it was not possible to arrange interviews in St. Albert, Yellowknife, Prince Albert and Medicine Hat. Lethbridge and Thompson were added to the list for a total of fourteen completed interviews. Approximately 34 percent (over 4500 people) of the Thompson population identified themselves as Aboriginal. Lethbridge has approximately 2300 Aboriginal people representing just over three percent of the total population. However, the Aboriginal population in Lethbridge is increasing rapidly.

APPENDIX B:
RESEARCH DISCUSSION GUIDE
RESEARCH ON ISSUES FOR MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS AND ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

To improve the level of feedback during the interview a Discussion Guide was developed. This Guide stated the purpose of the interview and identified the general themes and questions. The Guide was distributed prior to the interview so that people would have time to give the questions some thought and collect information they might have available. Receiving the questions prior to the interview also allowed the initial contact time to bring in other people who could contribute to the discussion.

The fourteen interviews conducted yielded a wealth of information from both large and small municipalities, northern municipalities whose focus is resource development, smaller municipalities in areas predominated by agriculture, municipalities in oil rich areas, and global cities such as Vancouver and Toronto where Aboriginals are only one sector of a very ethnically diverse population. Most of these centres have one thing in common; an increasing number of Aboriginal people and increasing pressures to respond to a range of service needs.

The Discussion Guide

Studies indicate that barriers to employment and to programs and services often impede the success of Aboriginal people moving from reserves to urban centres. It is unclear which order of government is responsible for providing services to Aboriginal people living off reserve. As a result, government action is not coordinated. This produces overlapping policies and services in some sectors and gaps in others. Consequently, services are generally not delivered effectively.

Although studies exist on the challenges experienced by urban Aboriginal people, information on the key issues municipal governments face in accommodating Aboriginal people is not readily available. As such, FCM is currently conducting research to understand the implications and challenges that confront municipal governments serving Aboriginal people living off reserve within their boundaries. The data collected will be used as a basis for discussion with other orders of government and Aboriginal organizations, with the aim of improving coordination of programs and services to Aboriginal people.

A small sample of municipal governments has been selected and interviews will be held with municipal service providers using the following questions as a guide. This discussion guide is provided in advance of the interview to provide an indication of questions to be asked, and to provide an opportunity to invite other municipal staff to participate in the interview if necessary.

1. Over the past couple of decades the migration of Aboriginal people from Reserves and small rural and northern communities has significantly increased the number of Aboriginal people in urban centres. This migration is expected to continue, and perhaps even intensify, over the next decade. The Aboriginal population is a young population and Aboriginal people are seeking better education, health care, jobs, housing and a host of other services that are not available on the Reserves or in small communities. They arrive in urban centres seeking these services. For a variety of reasons they often experience difficulties in accessing these services.

To set the context for the discussion that follows please provide us with your impressions of:

- a) The characteristics of the Aboriginal people moving to your community (number, family types, etc)
 - b) Why you think Aboriginal people are moving to your community. What services are they seeking? Are they successful in accessing these services? If not, why not?
 - c) Do they have access to the information on available services when they arrive?
 - d) Do they have to live with friends and family, or are they able to find their own accommodation? Is their accommodation adequate and affordable?
 - e) What data is your municipal government using in assessing the state of Aboriginal population/services available? Are these data sufficient to assist in service programming?
2. We would like to turn now to more specific discussion on how the arrival of Aboriginal people affects your community and what role the municipal government is playing in facilitating the integration of the Aboriginal population.
- a) Has the arrival created racial tensions? Has it created pressure on the housing supply? Has it increased the number of people who are homeless? Is there increased pressure on the school system, policing services, health care, etc.?
 - b) Has your municipal government developed an “Urban Aboriginal Strategy”? Does your municipal government have a “Race Relations Committee” that involves Aboriginal people? Are there other municipal committees or organizations that work to facilitate the integration of Aboriginal people in the municipality? What steps (committees or other venues) has the municipal government taken to facilitate consultation with Aboriginal people and organizations?
3. Many municipalities are playing an active role in providing services to Aboriginal people.
- a) Is your municipal government providing specific services or programs? Can you provide us with details on the nature of these programs: mandate, focus, criteria, client group, activity level, years in operation, etc.?
 - b) Are these programs paid for by the municipal government, other orders of government, or are they cost shared?
 - c) Does your municipal government deliver programs for other orders of government? What is the nature of these programs?

4. Many municipal governments are incurring considerable costs in providing services to Aboriginal people.
 - a) does your municipal government have a good understanding and record of these costs? Are the costs increasing or decreasing?
 - b) What is the cost to the municipal government of the programs and services you provide? Can you break these costs into direct program costs and indirect costs such as staff and administration time or use of municipal facilities that may not be recorded as a direct program cost?
 - c) If programs are cost shared can you provide the total cost and the share provided by each order of government?
5. We would like to briefly discuss what role Aboriginal groups are playing in the community.
 - a) What Aboriginal organizations are active in the community? What services do they provide?
 - b) Do Aboriginal organizations provide transitional services? Is there an Aboriginal transition centre?
6. We would like to turn now to issues that involve integration, collaboration and cooperation with other orders of government.

Please tell us:

- a) What programs and services are municipal governments delivering to Aboriginal people that could be or should be enhanced by federal or provincial funding? If additional funding was available from senior orders of government, what new programs or services could or should municipalities deliver to Aboriginal people?
- b) Are there other programs or services where federal or provincial funding has to be enhanced to facilitate the integration of Aboriginal people?
- c) What mechanisms or processes does your municipal government have in place to facilitate communications with other orders of government? What steps could be taken to facilitate communications and joint planning?
- d) Do Aboriginal organizations work closely with the municipal government? Other orders of government? How could this co-operation be enhanced?

7. Finally, we would like to briefly discuss jurisdictional issues.
 - a) What particular issues do you feel require clarification as far as jurisdictional responsibility is concerned?
 - b) Are there specific services that you feel municipal governments are taking responsibility for that should be the responsibility of other orders of government, Aboriginal organizations?
 - c) Are there services that other jurisdictions are providing that should be the responsibility of the municipal government?
 - d) What process do you feel is required to resolve these jurisdictional issues?
 - e) In general, who should be responsible for delivering programs and services to Aboriginal people?

Thank you for your participation in this discussion. Privacy and confidentiality will be respected in the preparation of the final report. Opinions and ideas will not be identified or attributed to particular individuals.

APPENDIX C: THE FEDERAL URBAN ABORIGINAL STRATEGY STATUS OF THE PILOT PROJECTS

Winnipeg

The City of Winnipeg’s document *First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways* identified its policy platforms in five specific areas: employment, economic development, safety, quality of life, and outreach and education⁴⁸. These areas represent the first steps toward building a comprehensive Urban Aboriginal Agenda for the City. Each area contains a specific “pathway commitment” through which targeted strategic initiatives can be developed. Some of the strategic initiatives identified in the policy document may be self-financed by the City of Winnipeg, others will require the full participation of the other orders of government, community groups, and the Aboriginal community.

Vancouver

The UAS approach developed in Vancouver focuses on three priorities: Aboriginal youth, health and homelessness. Pilot project partners include the cities of Vancouver and Surrey, the province of British Columbia and local Aboriginal organizations. The first group of approved projects are managed and administered by the Greater Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Strategy Steering Committee (Western Economic Diversification Canada 2003).

Saskatoon

In Saskatoon, although there is no formal agreement in place, the federal, provincial, municipal, First Nations, and Métis governments have established an effective working relationship to deal with Aboriginal issues. Regional Inter-sectoral Committees are one of the vehicles by which the Government of Saskatchewan approaches human services needs and these committees work with initiatives flowing out of the UAS. Saskatoon’s current agenda includes affordable housing; kids-not-in-school; alternative school models to re-engage kids; literacy; early childhood risk recognition; accessibility to human services; connections to the labour force, and youth-at-risk. Pilot projects sponsored by UAS will help serve these agenda items.

The City of Saskatoon also has a Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee in place and the policies developed by this Committee help supplement activities under the UAS⁴⁹. A number of existing strategies and action plans that the City has already committed to, including an employment equity plan, the “Saskatoon Community Plan for Homelessness and Housing”, and the Innovative Housing Incentives Policy enhance and supplement UAS activities.

Regina

In Regina there is also no formalized agreement on urban Aboriginal programming. However, the UAS working with the Regina Inner City Community Partnership (RICCP), an organization dedicated to the renewal of Regina’s inner city, supports projects in partnership with the private

⁴⁸ City of Winnipeg (2003) First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways.

⁴⁹ City of Saskatoon. Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Policy
http://www.city.saskatoon.sk.ca/org/leisure/race_relations/CDRR_Policy.pdf

sector, three orders of government and a cross section of service organizations including First Nations and Métis service providers. In 2003 the RICCP released its *Report on the Community Vision and Action Plan* that identified six priority areas: housing and infrastructure, crime and safety, business and economic development, health and human services, and education and community development⁵⁰. The pilot projects under UAS support these priority areas.

Calgary

The City of Calgary, in partnership with the federal and Alberta governments, charitable foundations, and Aboriginal organizations, organized a 1999-2000 consultation process and conference entitled *Removing Barriers: A Listening Circle* (Hanselmann and Gibbins 2002). The Listening Circle process attempted to determine needs, challenges, and potential solutions to issues confronting Aboriginal people in Calgary. Urban Aboriginal issues recognized were justice, education, health, services, funding, human rights, housing, and employment. The process resulted in the development of Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative (CUAI), a partnership involving approximately 35 organizations from the Aboriginal, corporate, non-profit, and public sectors. The City of Calgary, two provincial government departments, and three federal government departments provide core funding. The activities of CUAI, where possible, are coordinated with and enhance federal UAS initiatives.

Edmonton

To strengthen the UAS initiative, the City of Edmonton is currently preparing a corporate project charter “Urban Aboriginal Accord” in consultation with Edmonton’s Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee. The City’s 2003-2005 Corporate Business Plan identified a need to examine issues, needs, opportunities and municipal roles and responsibilities to address the needs of Edmonton’s Aboriginal population.

Toronto

The Toronto Urban Aboriginal Strategy Demonstration Project Interim Management Committee (TUAS DPIMC) conducted consultations to identify the urgent needs and priorities of Toronto’s Aboriginal community. The report *All Voices Heard* summarizes the input of the Aboriginal community on its needs and priorities relative to the Urban Aboriginal Strategy⁵¹. The most important priorities identified are arts, culture, business, youth, education, employment and training, health, housing and homelessness, justice, elders, and disabled.

Thunder Bay

The Thunder Bay UAS project is planning to focus its Aboriginal strategy on homelessness and child poverty. Focal points for the strategy development are shelter, food security, after school programming, life skills programming, and information centralization. These issue areas reflect the priorities of the City.

⁵⁰ Human Resources and Skills Development, Government of Canada (2003) North Central Regina Community Vision and Action Plan Announced. News Release
<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/sk/newsroom/2003/nr09113.shtml>

⁵¹ Marlene Finn and Associates (2004) *All Voices Heard: The Toronto Urban Aboriginal Strategy Community Consultation*. Final Report. TUAS Demonstration Project Management Committee.

APPENDIX D: ABORIGINAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE SERVICES THEY PROVIDE

Among many others, Aboriginal organizations in Winnipeg include the Aboriginal Centre of Winnipeg, the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre, the Aboriginal Literacy Foundation, Anishnaabe Oway-Ishi, Anokiwin Training Institute, the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development, Children of the Earth High School, the Circle of Life Thunderbird House, Indian Family Centre, and the Indian and Métis Friendship Centre.

Saskatoon has the Saskatoon Tribal Council, an organization that represents seven reserves around Saskatoon. There is also the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, the Saskatchewan Tribal Council Urban Services Branch, the Central Urban Métis Federation, the Métis Nations of Saskatchewan, and a number of housing offshoots and women’s organizations.

In Calgary there is a minimum of 60 to 70 organizations that deliver a range of services. These include the Calgary Native Friendship Centre, the Aboriginal Children’s Health Society, the Aboriginal Resource Centre, the Treaty Seven Economic Development Corporation, the Calgary Aboriginal Mentorship Program, the Calgary and Area Child and Family Services, the Métis Calgary Family Services, and the Calgary Community Support for Parents. Toronto, Vancouver and Edmonton also have a significant number of Aboriginal organizations providing a diverse range of services.

In Thompson the Keewatin Tribal Council offers housing, social services, transportation, information and counselling services. MaMaWi Friendship centre provides short-term housing and programs for women and children. The Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimahanah and the Manitoba Métis Federation provide employment services and skills development. The Burntwood Regional Health Association provides health care support and services. The Bands in the area make available various services ranging from transportation to information support and counselling.

Red Deer Aboriginal Employment Services provides career development training. The Native Friendship Centre provides transitional services. Shining Mountains Living Community Services is a non-profit agency that provides mobile outreach, a recovery home, and a healing home. Métis Links offers youth programming. Métis Local provides addiction and counselling services. There are also the Aboriginal Community Council, Aboriginal Family and School Front Line Program, and an alternative school operated by Bands in the area. Mitchener Services provides services for developmental disabilities. There are Liaison workers with Child and Family Services, Alta Human Resources and Employment, as well as other service agencies.

The key Aboriginal group in Thunder Bay is the Fort Williams First Nations. They deliver a range of services, as does the Native Friendship Centre.

Small municipalities such as Dawson, Kamsack, and Kitimat have a much more limited number of Aboriginal organizations. Dawson City has an Aboriginal housing association that works to provide subsidized housing. The Dawson Creek Resource Society provides counselling for families and services for children. Newean provides clothing, services for pregnant women, nutrition counselling, drug and alcohol counselling, and an Aboriginal court worker. The B.C. Métis Association provides free lunches three days a week for 100 people. They are a focal point

for funerals, an alternative school and a family support worker. In Kamsack there is the Red Women’s Society that provides counselling services for urban Aboriginal women. There was a Friendship Centre but is now closed. There is the Kitimat Band Council in the Aboriginal Village outside Kitimat, but no specific organizations within Kitimat.