

# Indigenous Gathering Place

## **THE CASE FOR A CALGARY INDIGENOUS GATHERING PLACE**

August 29, 2017

Prepared for:  
**Indigenous Gathering Place Committee**

Prepared by:  
**Aaron Aubin Consulting Inc.**

# Acknowledgments

## Traditional Territory Acknowledgment

It is acknowledged that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Blackfoot (Kainai, Piikani, and Siksika), Tsuut'ina, and Stoney people (Treaty 7), as well is the homeland of the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3. The Indigenous Gathering Place respects this presence past, present, and future, and their knowledge, ways of knowing, language, culture, and traditions.

## Volunteer Acknowledgment

The Indigenous Gathering Place (IGP) Leadership Team wishes to gratefully acknowledge the support of the many people whose dedication, time, and efforts have helped to shape this IGP document. The IGP Leadership Team would also like to thank the IGP Committee members, and all of the people who have worked together on the IGP for the benefit of our community. We are especially thankful for the wisdom and prayers of Reg and Rose Crowshoe and our Elders, who continue to guide our work and provide us with valuable teachings.

## Funder Acknowledgment

The IGP Leadership Team also wishes to acknowledge the Calgary Foundation, and the Calgary Homeless Foundation for their financial contributions to the Indigenous Gathering Place, and the creation of this document.



Figure 1.0, Treaty Areas and Métis Regions of Alberta

# Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgment</b>	<b>i</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>36</b>
Traditional Territory Acknowledgment	i	Strategic Actions/Next Steps	36
Volunteer Acknowledgment	i		
<b>Overview</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Endnotes</b>	
Traditional Oral and Western Written Practices	2	Sources and Photo Credits	
Shared Values and Ethical Space	6		
<b>Mission and Value Statements</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>List of Figures</b>	
Mission Statement	8	Figure 1.0, Treaty Areas and Métis Zones of Alberta	
Value Statements	9	Figure 2.0, Western Vs. Traditional Governance Models	
		Figure 3.0, Process for an Indigenous Gathering Place	
<b>Creating an Indigenous Gathering Place</b>	<b>10</b>	Figure 4.0, Insights from Indigenous Gathering Place Meetings and Workshops	
Moh’Kinsstis	10	Figure 5.0, Who is involved?	
Indigenous Gathering Place Committee	11	Figure 6.0, Map of Residential Schools Across Canada	
Indigenous & Community Engagement	12	Figure 7.0, Community Demographics	
Support for an Indigenous Gathering Place	16	Figure 8.0, Review of Other Indigenous Gathering Places	
United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	16	Figure 9.0, Indigenous Gathering Place Concept	
Truth and Reconciliation Commission	20	Figure 10.0, Remaining Process for an Indigenous Gathering Place	
City of Calgary Policy and Literature Review	22		
Community Demographics	24	<b>List of Tables</b>	
Review of Other Indigenous Gathering Place	25	Table 1.0, Western Vs. Traditional Law	
University of Calgary, Graduate Architecture Studio ‘Moh’kinsstis	30	Table 2.0, Western Written System	
Indigenous Gathering House’ Projects		Table 3.0, Traditional Oral System	
		Table 4.0, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	
<b>Building an Indigenous Gathering Place</b>	<b>32</b>	Table 5.0, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action	
Indigenous Gathering Place Uses and Activities	32	Table 6.0, Review of Other Indigenous Gathering Places	
Sustainable Revenue	34	Table 7.0, Sustainable Revenue Review	
		Table 8.0, Strategic Action Plan and Next Steps	
		<b>Appendices</b>	
		Appendix A – IGP Committee Members	

# Overview

Since time immemorial the Blackfoot Confederacy, and other First Nations and Métis people have called Calgary (Moh'kinsstis to the Blackfoot people) and its surrounding area their home. Prior to European settlements, the Blackfoot have had a traditional order of oral governance with theories, authority, and implementation practices. From natural laws came oral traditions, ceremonies, stories, and songs that granted access and authority. However, the written practices and government assimilation policies that continued for over 150 years have significantly impacted Indigenous culture, language, practices, songs, protocols, and traditional ways; creating a reliance mainly on western law.

Over the past few years, with the adoption of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, political and societal awareness of these issues has changed. There is a will to recognize the past and change beliefs and practices to acknowledge Canada's First Nation, Métis, and Inuit' rights to Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and the basic human rights that have been withheld from them. Given this new political climate in Canada, and the will of a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous volunteers who have formed the Indigenous Gathering Place (IGP) Committee, they have been united to change the narrative for Indigenous Peoples. Since 2014, the IGP Committee (previously known as the Indigenous Gathering Place Advisory Committee) have had a focus to build an Indigenous gathering place in Calgary, Alberta, where Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can share, connect, heal, renew, and celebrate Indigenous culture.

In February 2017, the IGP Committee, in partnership with the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary as an acting fiscal agent, retained Aaron Aubin Consulting Inc. to prepare a business plan. Over the course of several discussions, meetings, and workshops, this business plan has emerged as "A Case for a Calgary Indigenous Gathering Place". Through this document traditional oral practices and western written practices are explained, parallels are drawn and a new process defined within the context of an ethical space, a safe place to design, develop, validate, and build an Indigenous gathering place.

Through the work of the IGP Committee, and the work undertaken over the past six months the following has been completed:

- Founding Annual General Meeting / Blackfoot traditional ceremony;
- Mission and Values Statements;
- Ethical Space and Process for developing Indigenous gathering place;
- Thorough community engagement process, which included in depth discussions with community Elders from all Nations, and continues today;
- Review of policies, reports and studies supporting a Calgary Indigenous gathering place;
- Community demographics which demonstrate a growing urban Indigenous population in Calgary;
- Review of other Indigenous gathering places across Canada and internationally, identifying the possible uses, activities, and ideas for developing a sustainable revenue; and,
- What a Calgary Indigenous Gathering Place could be and how it may be financially sustained.

There is still more work to be done before the Calgary Indigenous Gathering Place is built. Therefore, strategic actions and next steps have been identified at the end of this document, to help the IGP Committee, Elders, government, agencies, corporations, private investors and the community help make the Indigenous Gathering Place more than an idea or vision, but, a reality.



## Traditional Oral and Western Written Practices

Since time immemorial, the Nitsiitapi (Blackfoot people) have been in the Calgary area and surrounding territory, known as Moh'kinsstis. The Nitsiitapi are a self-governing people, with their own traditional practices and protocols which exist in an oral tradition, and serve as a Natural Law. In Canada, western practices and protocols are conveyed in acts, policies, licenses, and permits, which exist in written documents, and serve as Canadian Law. The difference between Natural Law (traditional) and Canadian Law (western) is that Canadian law is founded on western religious beliefs, where dominion has been given to humanity (Genesis 1:26-28), and humanity is superior to all creation. However, in the context of traditional laws, the Creator conceived humanity as equal to all of creation (noted in oral Creation stories). To understand the difference between these laws better, the following **Table 1.0, Western Vs. Traditional Law** has been provided.

There are clear parallels between the two laws with similarities being interpreted, such as church and ceremonies, and hierarchical structure and circle structure. If the two laws are implemented, further parallels are made as shown in **Table 2.0, Western Written System** and **Table 3.0, Traditional Oral System**.

Additionally, in the traditional system, First Nations people were created within this specific geographic location (Calgary) and as such, authorities have been derived from the creation within this geographic location. Authorities are represented through songs (e.g., Treaty song) as opposed to government acts (e.g., Treaty agreement) that exist in the western laws.

Considering how these two laws are implemented and validated in a contemporary context, the following example is provided in **Figure 2.0, Western Vs. Traditional Governance Models**. In the western governance model example of a corporation, the Chief Executive Officer implements a decision making process, whereby they have Chief Financial Officers, Vice-Presidents, and Management assist them in making decisions regarding issues and opportunities (western equivalent to 'stories'). In the traditional governance model, the four First Nations (Kainai, Siksika, North Piikani and South Piikani) collaborate through their community Elders (western equivalent for Vice-Presidents and Management) to assess stories (western equivalent to strategic issues and opportunities), and to make decisions which are then formalized by a smudge (used to retain the balance of life and form agreements); with the equivalent in a western model being a written and signed agreement or contract.

**Table 1.0, Western Vs. Traditional Law**

Western Law	Traditional Law
• Dominion	• Equality
• Language and written system	• Language and oral system
• Church, education, and government	• Ceremonies, education, and government
• Hierarchical structure of practice	• Circle structure of practice

*Source: First Nation Oral Cultural Ways, Dr. Reg Crowshoe, 3/21/2015*

**Table 2.0, Western Written System**

Practices	Systems	Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules</li> <li>• Robert Rules of Order</li> <li>• Corporate management models</li> <li>• Written process (existing)</li> <li>• Practices (Tech)</li> <li>• Develop Implementation</li> <li>• Operations, Management</li> <li>• Consensus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories of Creation, Nature, Morals, and Values and Mission Creations</li> <li>• Beliefs systems / stories of validations</li> <li>• Documents and languages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land, People, Water, Animals and Resources</li> </ul>
Rules	Absolute Laws	Natural Laws
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Martin's Criminal Code</li> <li>• Government Acts</li> <li>• Treaty Signing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moses and the 10 Commandments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holy land</li> </ul>

**Table 3.0, Traditional Oral System**

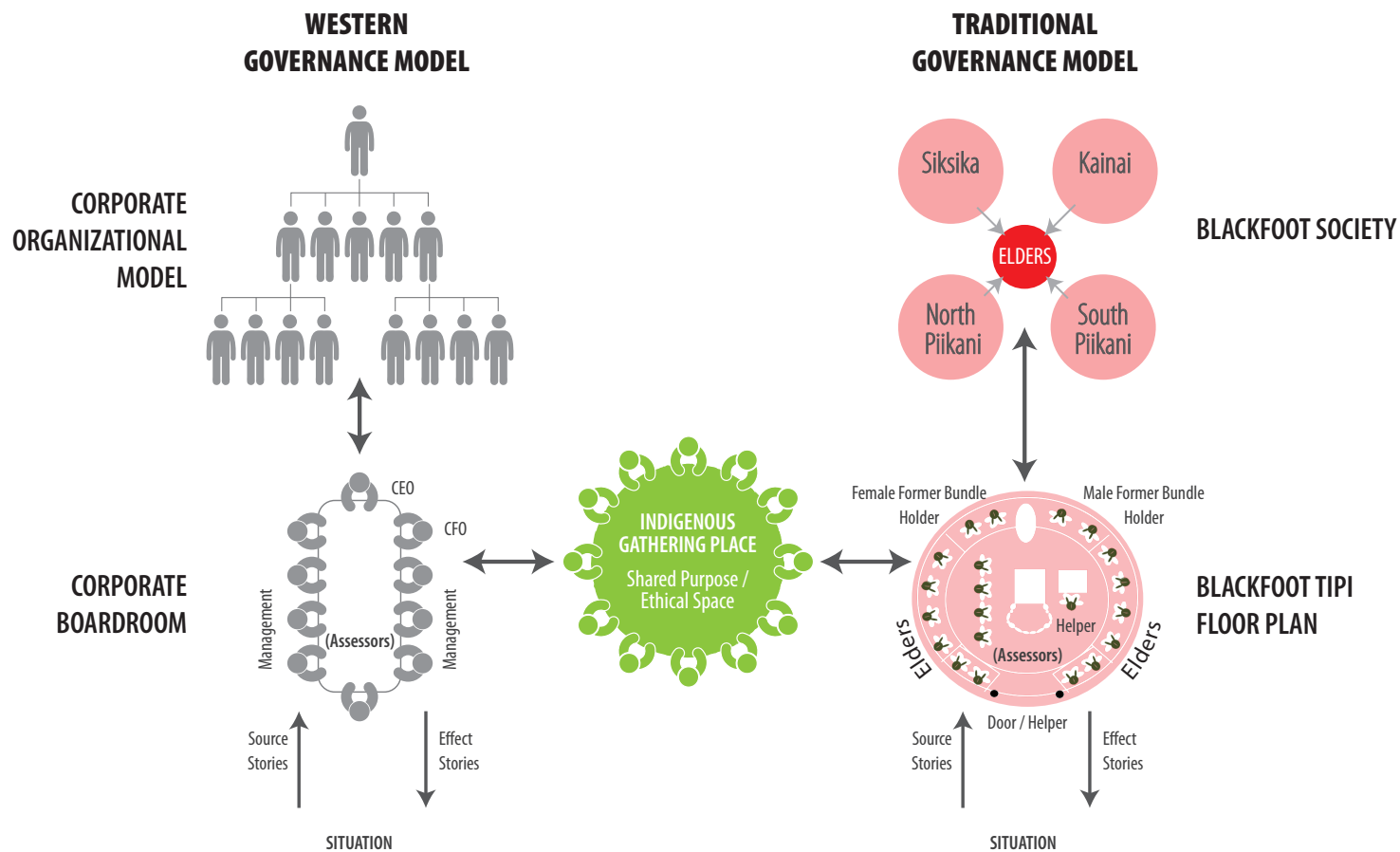
Practices	Systems	Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transfer Rules</li> <li>• Venue, Action, Language, and Song Process</li> <li>• Ceremony Models</li> <li>• Oral Process (existing)</li> <li>• Circle Structures (Tech)</li> <li>• Develop Implementation</li> <li>• Practices (Tech)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories of Creation, Napi, Kutuis and Bundle Creations</li> <li>• Beliefs systems/stories of validation</li> <li>• Songs and languages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land, People, Water, Animals and Resources</li> </ul>
Rules	Absolute Laws	Natural Laws
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treaty songs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Nation Geographic Location</li> </ul>

Source: First Nation Oral Cultural Ways, Dr. Reg Crowshoe, 3/21/2015

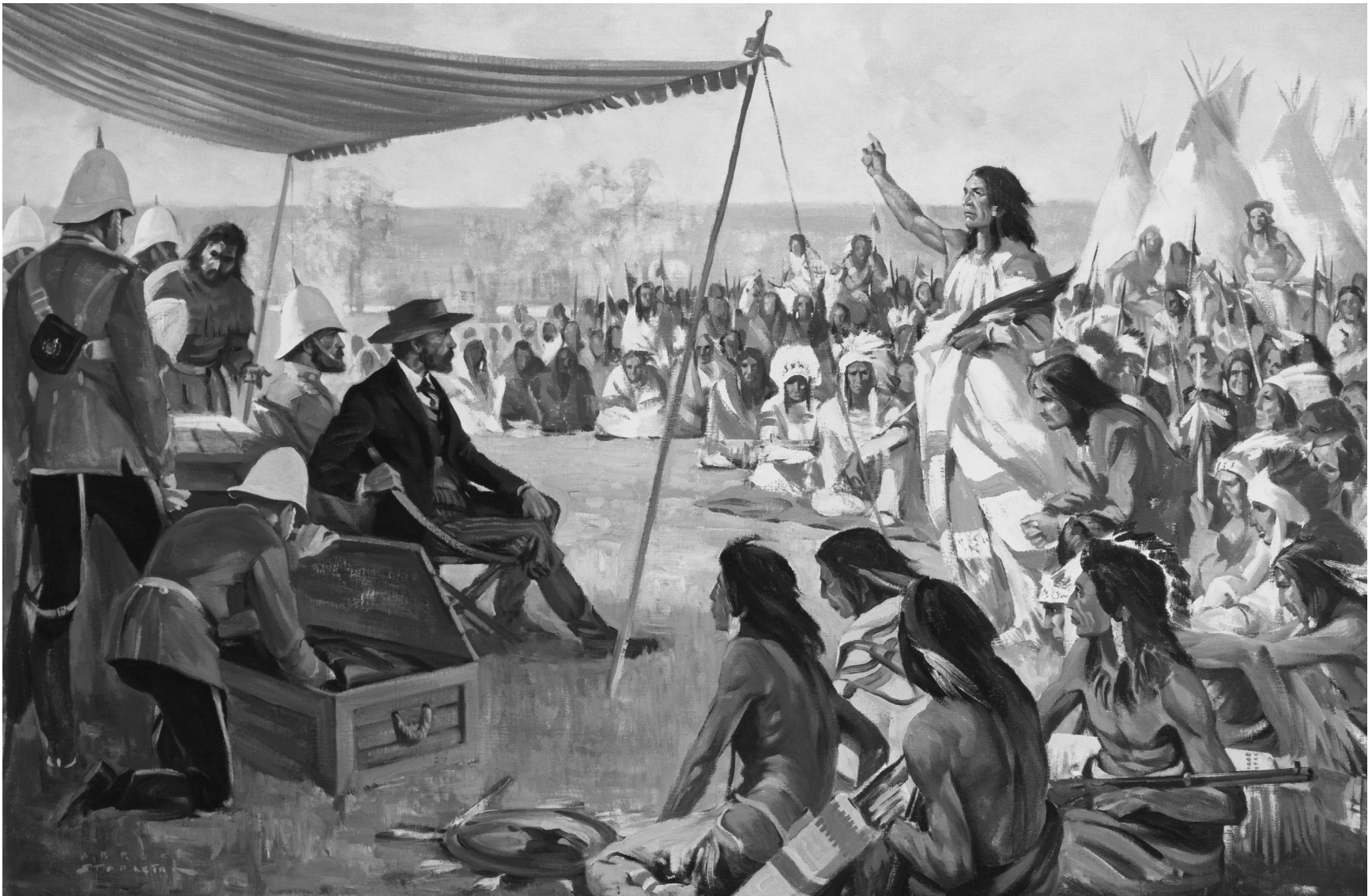
It is recognized that the Canadian Law exists, the Natural Law should also be acknowledged. The reality in Canada, however, is something different. In Canada, the Indian Act and other legislation and policies were created to dismantle the traditional systems, and convert First Nations and Indigenous Peoples to Christianity to assimilate them so that they would conform with the mainstream colonial society. This was manifested in several ways, such as Indian reserves, residential schools, and the banishment of cultural ceremonies (e.g., Sundances, Potlatches), languages, and protocols.

Today in 2017, the Government of Canada and Indigenous Peoples recognize that one group does not have domination over the other; and that if we are to live together we must have truth and reconciliation of the past and move together in harmony, recognizing: Aboriginal and Treaty rights, rights to self determination, and the rights to manifest, practice, develop, and teach spiritual and religious traditions .

**Figure 2.0, Western Vs. Traditional Governance Models**



Source: Model and process adapted from discussion and input from Reg Crowshoe, July 10, 2017, and prepared by Aaron Aubin



*The Blackfoot signing Treaty 7, 1877*

## Shared Values and Ethical Space

As shared later in the document, the governments of Canada, Alberta, and Calgary have made important efforts in the acknowledgment of First Nation, Métis and, Inuit people and their Aboriginal, Treaty, and human rights; recognizing the intent of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action. All three levels of government are aligned through the intent to design, develop, and implement various programs, services, initiatives, and funding to rebuild and further relationships and partnerships with Indigenous Peoples.

The Indigenous communities in Calgary are aligned with a unique opportunity to reconnect with their origins, identities, language, protocols, and traditions through the development of an Indigenous Gathering Place as discussed later in this document.

It is understood that numerous western acts, legislation, policies, procedures, and processes will need to change before truth and reconciliation can be fully realized, however, a path needs to be drawn for everyone to move forward.

Understanding that during this change and uncertainty, we need to recognize our shared purpose, and align visions and values. We need to create a safe environment, an ethical space where everyone can: explore ideas, aspirations, and thoughts, and reconnect with traditions, protocols, and practices to define a new future and preserve the unique perspectives, cultures, language and ways of knowing and doing.

In response, an Indigenous Gathering Place is being proposed. To develop a project or idea (Indigenous Gathering Place), western practice would necessitate a 'business plan' being developed to evaluate: the feasibility, need and demand, concept, market, capital, and operations, before approval could be granted. In a traditional practice, as explained through the above there are parallel systems and practices to validate projects and ideas, and facilitate approvals (traditional equivalent to a smudge). By creating an ethical space bridging the gap between the traditional and western practices, we recognize both systems as equal partners; seeking to harmonize, evaluate, and define a new process together.

In order to fully realize truth and reconciliation, it is important to equally appreciate both written and oral systems, and ensure that this process is adaptive and constantly evolving so that it can be a place for everyone which remains relevant to everyone. It's a journey, a new direction, and a new future being forged in partnership instead of conflict.

**Figure 3.0, Process for an Indigenous Gathering Place**, illustrates a oral and traditional practice along the top, shown in red, and a western practices along the bottom, shown in black. In the middle, the process for an Indigenous Gathering Place, shown in green. The middle process, illustrates a blend of both the western and traditional practices, and creates an ethical space for developing the Indigenous Gathering Place. Towards the end of the process in the middle of the figure is brown text, this text identifies the remaining work that has been identified for developing an Indigenous gathering place.



Figure 3.0, Process for an Indigenous Gathering Place

**ORAL / TRADITIONAL PRACTICE**



**Vision**

- Equality with all relations

**Seven Sacred Teachings**

- Love, Respect, Truth, Honesty, Courage, Wisdom, and Humility

**Circle Structure Model**

- Blackfoot Tipi
- Sacred Bundles
- Source of Authority

**Venue, Action, Language and Song**

- Pipe Societies
- Sits in First Nation Venue, demonstrates skills and knowledge, speaks Blackfoot, and sings pipe songs that give authority

**Smudge**

- Maintains Balance
- Renewal of Knowing and Healing
- Forms Agreement

**Pipe and Stories**

- Protocols
- Approval
- Implementation

**ETHICAL SPACE - PROCESS FOR AN INDIGENOUS GATHERING PLACE**



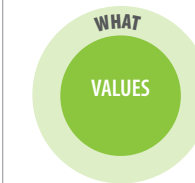
**Overview**

- Traditional Oral and Western Written Practices
- Shared Purpose, Ethical Space, and Blended Process



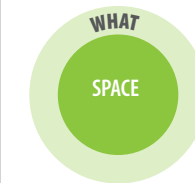
**Mission Statement**

- Mission Statement



**Values & Value Statements**

- Values & Value Statements



**Creating an Indigenous Gathering Place**

- Moh'kinsstis
- Indigenous Gathering Place Committee
- Indigenous and Community Engagement
- A Case for an Indigenous Gathering Place



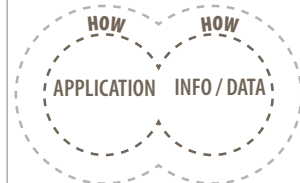
**Building an Indigenous Gathering Place**

- Indigenous Gathering Place Design Concept
- Sustainable Revenue
- IGP Governance Structure
- Identify Indigenous Gathering Place Site
- Meet Government & Agencies



**Business Case**

- Due Diligence
- Architectural Concept Plan
- Comprehensive Business Plan
- Business Plan Approval
- Financing and Funding
- On-going Engagement



**Land Acquisition, Architectural Design, Construction and Occupancy**

- Purchase Land
- Conduct Legal Land Survey
- Hire Architect, complete: design building permit, tendering, and supervise construction
- Hire Construction Company
- Obtain Building Occupancy

**WESTERN PRACTICE**



**1) Executive Summary**

- Overview
- Vision Statement
- Mission Statement

**2) The Business: IGP**

- Background & History
- Concept / Requirements
- Competition
- Advantages

**3) The Market: Community Needs**

- Market and Services Analysis
- Programs & Services
- SWOT Analysis
- Competition
- Review of Comparable Projects

**4) Operations and Management**

- Leadership Team TOR
- Legal Structure
- Organizational & Personnel Structure
- Community Involvement
- Premises / Facility
- Equipment / Improvements

**5) Marketing and Investment Strategy**

- Marketing Document
- Initial Capital Plan
- Overall Project Schedule

**6) Financial Model**

- Investment & Development Costs
- Operational Projections

Source: Model and process adapted from discussion and input from Reg Crowshoe May 1, 2017, and prepared by Aaron Aubin

The Case for a Calgary Indigenous Gathering Place

# Mission and Value Statements

The case for an Indigenous Gathering Place was developed through engagement with both members of the IGP committee and the diverse Indigenous communities in Calgary. Through a series of facilitated discussions, meetings, and workshops, the Mission Statement and Values of the IGP were developed, taking into consideration the unique perspectives of those who shared their wisdom throughout this process, which embodied both western and traditional methodologies.

## Mission Statement

*The Indigenous Gathering Place is the space where we share, connect, heal, renew and celebrate Indigenous culture. Here we protect traditional Indigenous practices, languages, and Elders' wisdom and oral and written teachings, among all nations and all our relations.*

## Value Statements

The following value statements are based on the Seven Sacred Teachings, with the statement beside each value supporting what the IGP holds true.

<b>RESPECT</b>	<i>We understand that respect is still needed, and believe that when we demonstrate respect for all our relations, we create a better environment for everyone.</i>
<b>COURAGE</b>	<i>Recognizing that we are supported by our teachings, and are evolving a safe and inclusive place for all, we have the resilience to keep walking on the road to reconciliation, we will keep going as our ancestors before us, and our children after us.</i>
<b>LOVE</b>	<i>Through love we are able to forgive ourselves and others, this is the path to healing through which we are able to reconcile.</i>
<b>TRUTH</b>	<i>Truth can be difficult to hear and to share. Fostering an environment where truth can honour relationships helps us to become who we were created to be, and allows us to safely speak our truth.</i>
<b>HUMILITY</b>	<i>We value the contribution that each person, community, and organization will make to the IGP by learning from each other and working together. No one individual or nation is above or below another. We are all one, with an awareness of our personal weaknesses.</i>
<b>HONESTY</b>	<i>We speak and act with honesty, authenticity, integrity, and kindness.</i>
<b>WISDOM</b>	<i>We rely on the wisdom of our Elders and our ancestors to guide us on our path. We continue to learn as we honour the wisdom of all our relations.</i>



# Creating an Indigenous Gathering Place

## Moh'kinsstis

The Blackfoot people have a historically significant connection to Calgary, known as Moh'kinsstis. Moh'kinsstis translates to elbow, and refers to the confluence of the Elbow and Bow rivers where Fort Calgary stands today. This area is especially significant to the Siksika Peoples (member of the Blackfoot Confederacy), as they believed that this place is where "Napi" (Creator) created people. Traditionally, First Nations people have used Calgary's rivers for transportation and trade, and camped along the banks, gathering in these places long before European settlers arrived.

Traditionally, Indigenous Peoples held gatherings, and still do through Pow Wows, Sun Dance Ceremonies, Sweats, Traditional Dances, and Celebrations. In the western context, these events may be interpreted as engagement, where information is presented, issues and concerns discussed, and in some cases decisions and agreements are made.

Members of the IGP Committee introduced below, have participated in many traditional activities and hold important and relevant knowledge from these activities.



*Blackfoot Sun Dance Camp, 1880s*

## Indigenous Gathering Place Committee

In 2014, Chief Robert Joseph, through Reconciliation Canada, facilitated a discussion and workshop in Calgary. Members of the community, corporations, non-profits, city representatives, and members of the public gathered to discuss the future of a reconciled Canada. With momentum and support, a community-driven initiative rooted in culturally appropriate spiritual guidance and tradition began; forming the IGP Advisory committee (2015), known today as the IGP Committee.

The IGP Committee is a group of volunteers coming from a broad cross section of backgrounds, and while they do not formally represent their employers, bring extensive knowledge about:

- Traditional and cultural practices
- Social and economic development
- Educational programs, initiatives, and opportunities
- Municipal processes and decision making
- Youth engagement
- Architecture, planning, and construction
- Community needs
- Interfaith and spiritual groups
- Health/spiritual programs and services
- Private corporations, foundations and change agents

Today, the IGP committee is comprised of a leadership group of 5 people and a general committee of 32 members (see **Appendix A**). The IGP Committee has five sub-committees: Research; Communications; Fundraising; Building/Grounds; and, Wisdom/Cultural Advisory. Monthly meeting agendas and meetings are prepared and circulated to the committee. The actions identified are carried out largely on a volunteer basis. The IGP Committee is currently developing a memorandum of understanding with the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary(AFCC) to formalize roles and responsibilities, and the IGP relationship with AFCC as the interim fiscal agent.



**Indigenous Gathering Committee, Regular Meeting on May 17, 2016**

*(above from left to right): Helen Hamlin, Dianne Ollerenshaw, Reg Crowshoe, Suzanne Dzus, Eve MacMillan, Janet Naclia, Amanda Ens, Roy Bear Chief, Joe Pimlott*

## Indigenous Community Engagement

In carrying out the IGP engagement, the IGP Leadership team and the consultant co-designed an engagement process identifying a series of meetings and workshops with IGP Committee members and Elders. The purpose of the engagement was to:

- Build on the IGP Committee's knowledge;
- Explore why an IGP was needed;
- Work together to develop an IGP mission statement and values;
- Understand who would use and visit the IGP;
- What the IGP would contain and where it might be located; and,
- How it might accomplish some of the goals set out in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and other supporting reports.

Over a period of six months the following meetings and workshops were held:

- March 14, 2017, Half-day IGP Committee Workshop
- March 15, 2017, Half-day IGP Committee Workshop
- April 12, 2017, IGP Committee Meeting
- April 19, 2017, University of Calgary Graduate Architecture Studio - "Indigenous Gathering House" Presentations
- May 1, 2017, IGP Leadership Meeting
- June 2, 2017, IGP Elder's Full-day Workshop
- June 8, 2017, IGP Elder's Workshop Debrief Conference Call
- June 12, 2017, IGP Committee Meeting
- June 23, 2017, IGP Leadership Meeting
- July 4, 2017, IGP Committee Writing Workshop
- July 10, 2017, IGP Committee Writing Workshop

Additionally, an IGP package was prepared and circulated to the Committee for review and comments, on July 6, 2017, and July 11, 2017. These packages included: a draft copy of the IGP Mission Statement, Value Statements, IGP Activities and Spaces, and additional materials for review and comment. **Figure 4.0, Insights from Indigenous Gathering Meetings and Workshops**, shows a collection of quotes, notes and photos that were gathered.

Throughout the engagement process IGP Committee members, Elders, and youth were engaged and provided valuable feedback and input. Engagement regarding the IGP is an on-going process and the IGP Committee continues to meet monthly to discuss arising opportunities to advance the development of an Indigenous gathering place. **Figure 5.0, Who is involved?**, illustrates some of the groups the Committee is looking to meet and continue to involve in the development of the Indigenous Gathering Place.

Figure 4.0, Insights from Indigenous Gathering Place Meetings and Workshops



IGP Meeting, July 10, 2017

*Other organizations are very limited in their access to spirituality - IGP should fill this gap.*

*"Let's Indigenize ourselves." - Karli Crowshoe, Piikani Youth*



IGP Meeting, July 10, 2017

*Let us recognize that there is more wisdom than Elders.*

*"We needed to ensure that this is what the community wanted, this is what has the blessings of the Elders and the knowledge of the Elders to move forward."  
- Eve MacMillan*

*Being a non-Indigenous person, being immersed in the culture, I feel sad other people don't get that opportunity.*

*"If we are going to make an Indigenous Gathering Place, and we start from a business plan- it won't be an Indigenous Gathering Place"*

*"It would be so nice in the city if we had this centre [...] especially for our young people who are lost in the city, that don't know their culture." - Rose Crowshoe, Piikani Elder*

*"Our Young people don't know what to say, but they need encouragement to say whatever is on their mind."*

*"It's time for our community to have more than just a tipi once a year."*

*"We believe in who we are, and the practices of how we become who we are, and these practices can never be broken down."  
-Reg Crowshoe, Piikani Elder*



Elder's Workshop, June 2, 2017



*"Urban youth who don't even know their culture, who may know they are of Indigenous Heritage should feel just as welcome and find a place to connect"*

*Need to consider the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action, and what the IGP can do.*

*Should be a place where you are respected, and allowed to talk to the creator in your own way while remembering the Indigenous context*

*This is a place where everyone will be welcome*

*"A space that reflects the world view of the Blackfoot people"*

*"Being a non-Indigenous person, [...] I have had the opportunity to learn and get involved, to see the stories of heartbreak and hurt. It is a cultural place of healing, of education, of reconciliation."*

*This is not new, the thought of a centre is not new. I feel Creator is guiding us. This is the group, the reconciliation, it's not just the speak. We will be the action, the oral; this is the difference, the IGP will be reconciliation in action.*

*"There will be a fire there always."*



*IGP Meeting, July 10, 2017*

*Everyone should be included regardless of age; many programs are only for Youth - where do the adults go?*

*This could also be used as an area for feasts, cultural weddings, funerals.*



*Elder's Workshop, June 2, 2017*



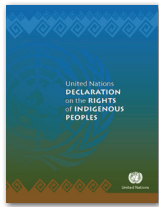
*IGP Meeting, July 10, 2017*



Figure 5.0, Who is involved?

## Support for an Indigenous Gathering Place

Through their formal endorsements of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Calls to Action, both the Provincial Government of Alberta and Federal Government of Canada have shown their support for the fundamental rights of Indigenous Peoples. Both the UNDRIP and Truth and Reconciliation Canada Calls to Action outline elements of reconciliation that could be supported by and IGP in Calgary, as similar concepts have shown success elsewhere. The following sections outline the specific alignments between the UNDRIP, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action, and other Indigenous gathering places and cultural centres.



### United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The Canadian Federal Government first adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2010, and announced its formal, unqualified endorsement of the declaration in 2016. Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada states that the declaration "addresses the rights of Indigenous Peoples on issues such as: culture, identity, religion, language, health, education, and community." An Indigenous Gathering Place in Calgary would support the development of all of these things, by bringing community members together to celebrate their cultures and spirituality. Additionally, Alberta has endorsed the UNDRIP in, and in 2015 Premier Rachel Notley sent out an open letter to Cabinet, asking them to review their ministries and improve alignment with the.

Upon review of the UNDRIP's 46 Articles, 12 were identified as demonstrating significant alignment with the values and purpose of the Indigenous Gathering Place. The following **Table 4.0, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** demonstrates these alignments, and the subsequent need for an Indigenous Gathering Place within the City of Calgary.

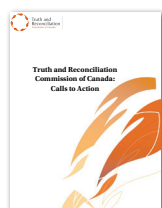
**Table 4.0, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

<b>Articles from United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</b>	<b>IGP Alignment</b>
<b>Article 2:</b> Indigenous Peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their indigenous origin or identity	An Indigenous gathering place connects Calgary's Indigenous Peoples with their origins and identities in an environment that is open and free from discrimination.
<b>Article 3:</b> Indigenous Peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.	An IGP gives Indigenous Peoples in Calgary and the surrounding regions a space for self-determined and independent cultural development.
<b>Article 7:</b> Indigenous individuals have the rights to life, physical and mental integrity, liberty and security of person.	An Indigenous Gathering Place would greatly assist Indigenous Peoples in exercising their rights to life, physical and mental integrity, liberty and security of person. The IGP also helps by providing Indigenous Calgarians with a place to practice cultures and traditions free from discrimination.
<b>Article 8:</b> 1. Indigenous Peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture. (See also, Article 8, a,c,d)	An Indigenous Gathering Place provides Indigenous Peoples with the capacity to continue practicing and sharing their culture with future generations in an urban environment that lacks access to tradition and culture.
<b>Article 11:</b> 1. Indigenous Peoples have the right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature	An Indigenous Gathering Place provides the space and resources required to practice and revitalize culture as an entity that would work towards protecting the past and present for future generations.
<b>Article 12:</b> 1. Indigenous Peoples have the right to manifest, practise, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.	An Indigenous Gathering Place provides Indigenous Peoples with a space to safely practice their spirituality free from discrimination.



Articles from United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	IGP Alignment
<p><b>Article 13:</b> 1. Indigenous Peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.</p>	<p>An Indigenous Gathering Place fosters the revitalization of history, language, oral tradition, philosophies, etc., by providing a venue for Indigenous Peoples of all generations to come together.</p>
<p><b>Article 24:</b> 1. Indigenous Peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals. Indigenous individuals also have the right to access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services.</p>	<p>A traditional garden at the Indigenous Gathering Place provides urban Indigenous Peoples access to the traditional medicines that they have a right to collect and use.</p>
<p><b>Article 25:</b> Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.</p>	<p>Historically, Calgary has been a gathering place for Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial, and is both culturally and spiritually significant, therefore, Indigenous Peoples have a right to continue maintaining and strengthening their spiritual relationship with their traditional lands.</p>
<p><b>Article 26:</b> 2. Indigenous Peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.</p>	<p>Calgary falls within the traditional territory of the Blackfoot people, therefore, Indigenous Peoples have the right to develop and Indigenous Gathering Place within their traditional territory of Calgary.</p>

Articles from United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	IGP Alignment
<p><b>Article 31:</b> 1. Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions. 2. In conjunction with Indigenous Peoples, States shall take effective measures to recognize and protect the exercise of these rights.</p>	<p>Canada, and the Province of Alberta, having formally endorsed the UNDRIP, are obligated to recognize and protect the rights stated in Article 31. An Indigenous Gathering Place within Calgary provides a venue for the exercise and protection of these rights.</p>



## Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action

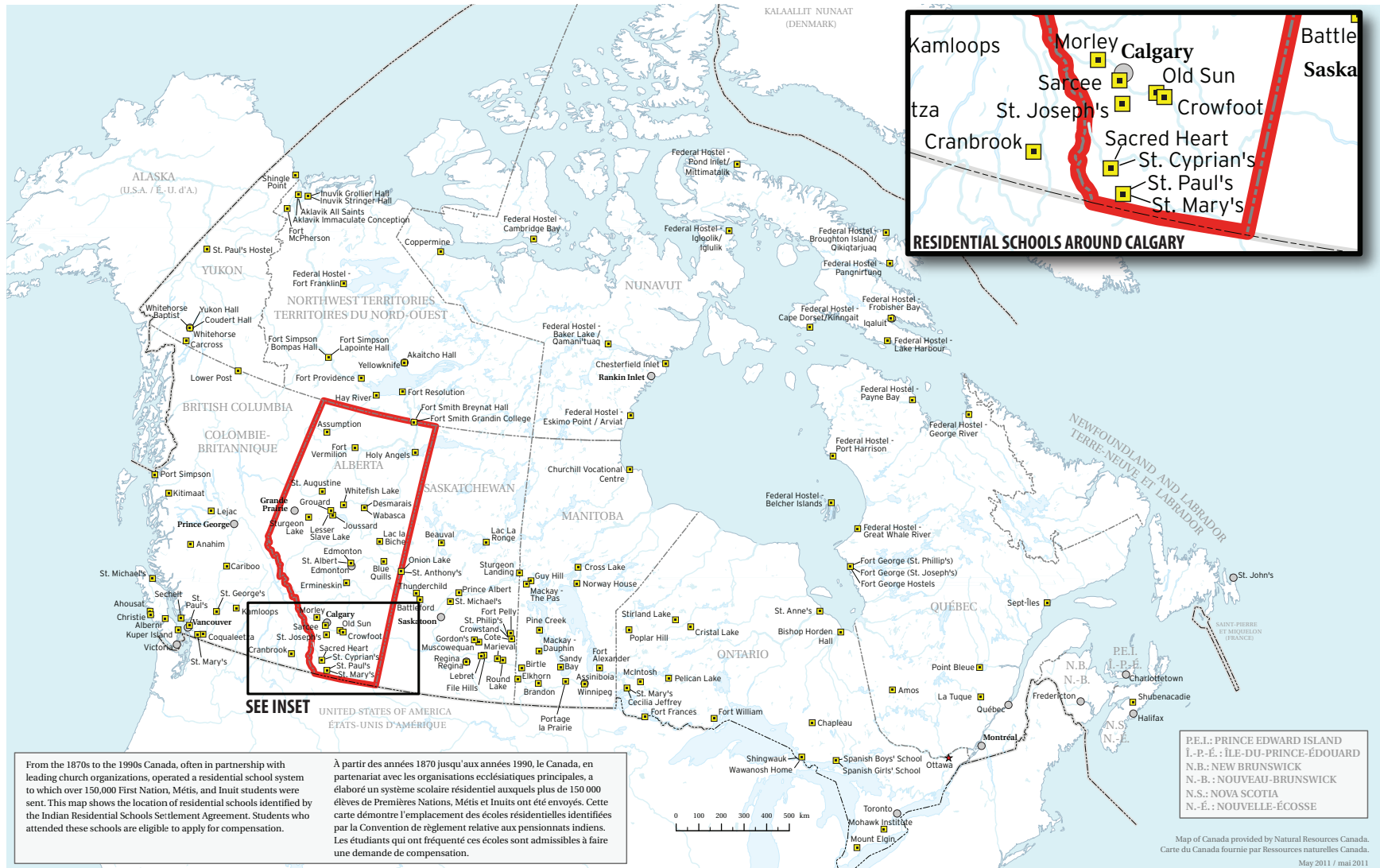
The Canadian residential school system affected at least 150,000 Indigenous children over 7 generations, predominantly in western Canada. In Alberta, there were 26 residential schools, the most of any province; with 10 located in the southern portion of the province around the present-day City of Calgary (see **Figure 6.0, Map of Residential Schools Across Canada**). The damage that residential schools caused, however, did not end with the individuals who attended them, but has impacted generations of Indigenous Peoples through intergenerational trauma. Recognizing that the effects of assimilation policies and residential schools are still being felt today, it is vital that the Indigenous community has a place to come together and heal through tradition, culture, and spirituality, playing a significant role in the reconciliation process.

In 2015, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released 94 official Calls to Action as part of the Canadian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement; calling on all levels of government within Canada to work together to improve reconciliation efforts throughout the country. Recognizing the damaging impacts that aggressive assimilation policies had, and continue to have on Indigenous Peoples, the 94 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action clearly articulate and defend the rights of Indigenous Peoples to maintain and preserve their cultures, languages, traditions, and life-ways. Of the 94 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action, 2 have been identified in **Table 5.0, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action** as having a direct and significant correlation to the establishment of an Indigenous Gathering Place within the City of Calgary.

**Table 5.0, Truth and Reconciliation of Canada Calls to Action**

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action	IGP Alignment
<p>14. We call upon the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act that incorporates the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them.</li> <li>ii. Aboriginal language rights are reinforced by the Treaties.</li> <li>iii. The federal government has a responsibility to provide sufficient funds for Aboriginal-language revitalization and preservation.</li> <li>iv. The preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures are best managed by Aboriginal people and communities.</li> <li>v. Funding for Aboriginal language initiatives must reflect the diversity of Aboriginal languages.</li> </ul>	<p>An Indigenous Gathering Place would provide a venue for the teaching, sharing, and preservation of Indigenous languages as a place where urban Indigenous Peoples could come and learn their traditional languages.</p>
<p>21. We call upon the federal government to provide sustainable funding for existing and new Aboriginal healing centres to address the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual harms caused by residential schools, and to ensure that the funding of healing centres in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories is a priority.</p>	<p>For many individuals, healing is closely connected to spirituality and spiritual well being. An Indigenous Gathering Place would in part serve the as an Aboriginal healing centre, as it could provide a venue for people to heal through spirituality and renewed connection to culture</p>

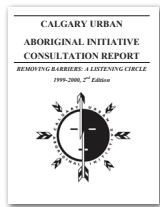
Figure 6.0, Map of Residential Schools Across Canada



## City of Calgary Policy and Literature Review

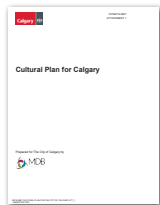
Traditionally, Calgary has been a gathering place for Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial; holding a strong spiritual and cultural meaning. Currently, there is no dedicated space for Urban Indigenous Peoples to come together and practice their culture and spirituality that is permanent, year round, and available to all. In Calgary, many of the programs, services, and spaces for Indigenous Peoples are lacking the spiritual elements that many people require to heal completely from trauma and/or adversity. An Indigenous Gathering Place would provide a venue for Indigenous Peoples to connect with their spirituality and culture in a safe, open, and welcoming environment.

In understanding how known the need for an Indigenous Gathering Place, a non-exhaustive literature review of readily available documents, policies, and reports was completed. The following is brief summary:



### Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative

In 2000 and 2015, the Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative's reports titled "Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative Consultation Report" and "Calgary Urban Aboriginal Strategic Plan 2015 – Domain Priorities, 2015-Onward", respectively, both identified the need for a cultural/gathering place, as stated by "develop a cultural centre, a place to practice spirituality" and "Goal 2: Aboriginal people in Calgary have an all nations gathering place that provides an opportunity for spiritual wellness", respectively.



### Cultural Plan for Calgary, 2016

In November 2016, The City of Calgary approved a Culture Plan, within the document it identifies "It is important that Indigenous cultures gain greater visual representation in the city for their creative talents, customs, traditions and connections to the land through public art or other markers. There was also a call for a centrally located, easily accessed outdoor space or facility where Indigenous people could gather to express and practice their cultural traditions. Strengthening relationships with established cultural organizations to support more Indigenous programs and activities is another area for attention."



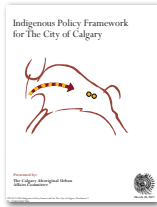
### White Goose Flying, Calls to Action, 2016

In May 2016, the Calgary Urban Aboriginal Affairs Committee (CAUAC), a citizen advisory committee of Calgary City Council published a report titled "White Goose Flying", reviewing the 94 Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and providing a series of recommendations. In the section titled "Stream B: Spiritual Healing, Culture and Arts Commemoration" CAUAC recommended "work collaboratively to seek real estate, appropriate infrastructure, public buildings, gardens and parkland for Indigenous ceremonial, cultural, commemorative activities as well as healing".



### Indigenous Policy, CP2017-02, City of Calgary, 2017

In 2017, the Calgary City Council approved and adopted an Indigenous Policy, acknowledging that The City of Calgary is situated in the traditional territory of the Niitsitapi (the Blackfoot people) and the people of Treaty 7 at the confluence of the Elbow River and the Bow River. In the policy The City commits to improving the relations, and states "1.2 The City will strive to learn from and work with Indigenous communities, grounded in the spirit and intent of reconciliation. The City is devoted to a shared pathway forward, and a firm commitment to building an equitable and inclusive city."



## Indigenous Policy Framework for The City of Calgary, 2017

In March 2017, CAUAC presented the Indigenous Policy Framework to City Council; the Framework informs the Indigenous Policy providing context for the City's future work with Treaty 7 Nations and urban Indigenous communities. The Framework, Indigenous Policy, and White Goose Flying report collectively represent Calgary's shared path to reconciliation. Within the Framework, it defines Moh'kinstis, a Blackfoot word which means "elbow" and references where the Elbow and Bow Rivers meet, which was a "gathering place for Niitsitapi" (the Blackfoot people).



## Proclaiming the Year of Reconciliation, The City of Calgary, 2014

In April 2014, as part of the national event, The City of Calgary proclaimed March 27, 2014 to March 27, 2015, The Year of Reconciliation. This is the first time The City has made a year-long proclamation; stating *"The Story of Moh'kinstis says that before there was the place we call Calgary, the First Peoples were stewards of this land. At the confluence of two rivers, the lifeblood of our city, our cultures converged and our story began;" "The first European settlers did not honour the unique culture of our Aboriginal ancestors. Aboriginal people were isolated from their traditional and spiritual ways. This is exemplified by the many thousands of Aboriginal children who were forcibly removed from their homes and taken to residential schools, but is also evident in many other examples of disenfranchisement;" "The effects of government policies toward Aboriginal peoples have had a tremendously negative impact on our city and country. Canada has been denied the benefit of the contribution of First Nations to our collective history. Our story cannot be complete without listening to this voice;" and "Reconciliation is an opportunity for us to advance with a greater understanding of the historical impacts that have shaped the experiences of Aboriginal people to date. It will not right the wrongs of the past, but is the start of our journey, together;"*

In summary, these examples have clearly identified the need for an Indigenous Gathering Place/venue for Indigenous Peoples to practice their cultures and traditions. It is evident that Indigenous Peoples have the right to express and practice their cultures, and require more permanent/accessible venues for healing and reconciliation where they are able to come together as a community as they have been since time immemorial. It is also important to note that the confluence of the Bow and Elbow rivers, which lies right in the heart of the city, has been a traditional gathering place for the Blackfoot peoples for millennia. Recognizing that Calgary lies within the traditional territory of the Blackfoot peoples, it is their right to use land within the city for ceremonial and traditional purposes, and establish an Indigenous Gathering Place with the city. Additionally, Calgary's 2014 Year of Reconciliation identified that there were opportunities for greater understanding of Indigenous Peoples and cultures, and Indigenous Gathering Place, being open to all, would support this understanding.

## Community Demographics

Based on the 2011 National Housing Survey (NHS), the Aboriginal population increased by 232,385 or 20.1 per cent between 2006 and 2011, to a total of 1,400,685 people who identified as being Aboriginal. Among the provinces and territories in Canada, Alberta had the third largest Aboriginal population in the country with 15.8 per cent or, 220,695 people (Statistics Canada, Population and Demographic Distribution-Aboriginal Statistics at a Glance: 2nd Edition, Pg. 5) (see Figure 7.0, Community Demographics).

According to the 2011 NHS, 56 per cent of the Aboriginal population live in urban areas. Between 1996 and 2011, the number of Aboriginal people living in urban areas grew by 7 per cent. Among the cities across Canada, Calgary has the fifth largest urban Aboriginal population. (Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Fact Sheet for Alberta, Pg. 1)

In Alberta, one in seven Aboriginal people lived in Calgary. Calgary's Aboriginal population is comprised of 51 per cent Métis (14,645), 44 per cent First Nations (12,855), and 1 per cent Inuk, one per cent had multiple Aboriginal identities (155), and three per cent (1,005) identified with an Aboriginal identity not included.

The Aboriginal population in Calgary is relatively young when compared to the overall population. Almost half (44 per cent) were under 25 years old (versus 31 per cent for Calgary as a whole). Only three per cent of the Aboriginal population were seniors (aged 65+), compared to 10 per cent for Calgary as a whole. The median age for the Aboriginal population was 28 years, eight years younger than the median age of the overall Calgary population (36.4 years). (City of Calgary Demographics)

In summary, Calgary has the fifth largest urban Aboriginal population in Canada, with the almost half the population being under 25 years old. The Aboriginal population in Calgary is largely Métis (56 per cent) and First Nation (44 per cent). The growth Calgary's Aboriginal population can be attributed to number of common factors such as: fertility, mobility and migration.

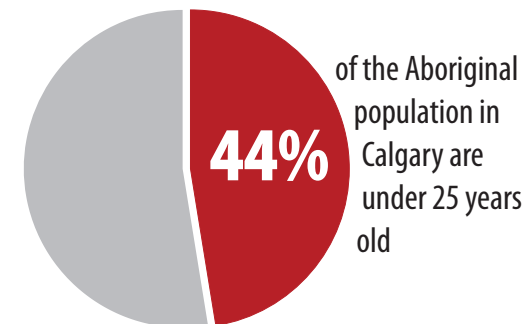


Figure 7.0, Community Demographics

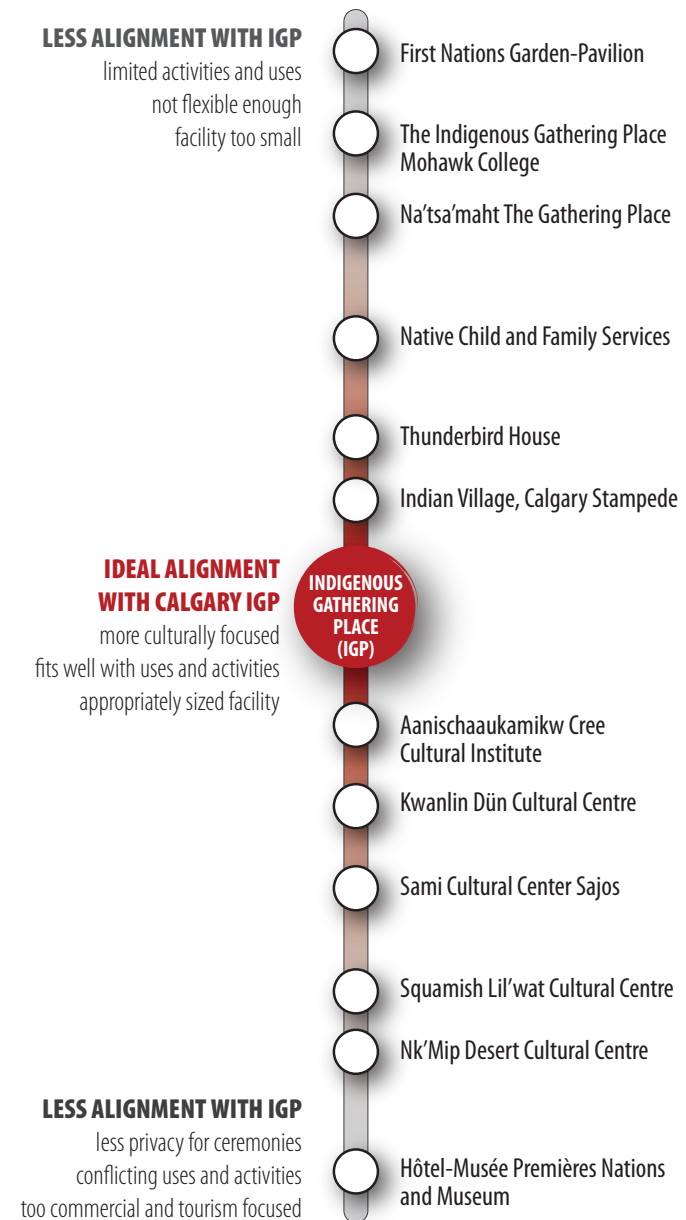


## Review of Other Indigenous Gathering Places

In developing the Indigenous Gathering Place, several other Indigenous gathering places and cultural centres were researched from across Canada and internationally. These places helped inform Calgary's IGP and guide discussions.

Through this review we studied the location, size, capacity, types of uses and activities, and ways in which revenue was generated to support the facility. Upon review, Thunderbird House; Indian Village, Stampede; Anischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute, and Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre closely aligned with Calgary's IGP with related uses, activities, capacities, cultural preservation, and revenue generation. The facilities that did not align as closely helped to inform what types of roles Calgary's IGP was not going to potentially involve or support.

**Table 8.0, Review of Other Indigenous Gathering Places** shows the list of Indigenous gathering places that were considered, identifying the capacity, size and activities. Additionally, the following pages show a series of photos from these facilities highlighting potential ideas and designs for the Calgary IGP.



**Figure 8.0, Review of Other Indigenous Gathering Places**



**Table 6.0, Review of Other Indigenous Gathering Places**

<b>Building</b>	<b>Capacity/Size/Cost/Year</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>Na'tsa'maht The Gathering Place</b> Victoria, British Columbia	150 people / \$750,00.00 / 2010	Indigenous Gardens, Elder Teachings, Indigenous Student Programs, Ceremonies, Circular Design, Three-Tier Seating, Funded by Government Grant
<b>Sami Cultural Center Sajos</b> Inari, Finland	900 people / 12,000 sq.ft / €15.0 Million / 2012	Auditorium; Acoustical Concerts; Interpretation Facilities; Multipurpose Hall; Meeting Rooms; Restaurant; Library ; Archives; Audio-Video Studio and Editing Facilities; Classrooms; Offices Conferences
<b>The Indigenous Gathering Place Mohawk College</b> Hamilton, Ontario	60 people	Open-air pavilion; Fire Circle; Water Garden; Traditional Garden; Traditional Ceremonies; Teaching; Meditation; Reconciliation; Outdoor Classroom; Cultural Presentations
<b>Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute</b> Oujé-Bougoumou, Quebec	30,000 sq.ft / \$10.0 Million / 2011	Performance Space for Music, Film and Video; Exhibition Space; Displays; Library and Archives; Demonstration Spaces; Teaching Spaces; Storage; Research Labs; Administration; Conservation Spaces; Space for Language, Traditional Pursuits, Arts and Crafts; Gathering Space; Fundraising
<b>Thunderbird House</b> Winnipeg, Manitoba	300 people / \$2.8 Million / 2000	Elder Services; Ceremonies; Cultural Traditional Healing Programs; Traditional Medicine Plants; Sweatlodge; Open Drum Practices; Sharing Circles; Cultural Awareness Workshops; Kitchen; Spiritual and Cultural Centre
<b>Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre</b> Whitehorse, Yukon	1,200 people / \$25.0 Million / 2012	Long House; Multi-Purpose Room; Artist Studio; Classrooms; Elder's Lounge; Interpretive Displays; Fire Pit; Weddings; First Nation Healing Garden; Catering Services; Dance and Drum Groups; Tradeshow
<b>Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre</b> Whistler, British Columbia	38,000 sq.ft / \$30.0 Million / 2008	Cafe; Restaurant; Traditional Meals; Membership Opportunities; Exhibits; Interpretive Tours; Museum; Dance Performance; Drumming; Gift Shop; Gallery; Outdoor Exhibits; Movies; Forest Walk
<b>Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre</b> Osoyoos, BC	900 people / 12,000 sq.ft / \$6.6 Million / 2006	Cultural Centre; Guided Interpretive Walks; Presentations; Dancing; Singing; Drumming; School Programs; Group Tours; Eco Tours; Fishing Excursions; Gift Shop; Event Rentals; Weddings; Receptions; Meetings; Conferences; Amphitheatre

Building	Capacity/Size/Cost/Year	Activities
<b>First Nations Garden-Pavilion</b> Montreal, Quebec	2,000 sq.ft / \$3.0 Million / 2001	Commemoration Place; Gardens; Museum; Pavilion; Pathways; Outdoor Displays; Meeting Spaces; Forested Areas; Store
<b>Hôtel-Musée Premières Nations</b> Wendake, Québec,	400 people / 2,100 sq.ft / \$16.2 Million / 2008	Hotel; Museum; Meetings; Conferences; Weddings; Events; Conferences; Restaurant; Spa; Longhouse; Traditional Food; Exhibits; School Tours; Snowshoeing; Guided Tours; Myths and Legends Experience
<b>Indian Village, Calgary Stampede</b> Calgary, Alberta	30 acre site / \$15.0 Million / 2016	Traditional Foods; Cafe; Indian Village Interpretive Program; First Nation Youth Dancers; Ceremonies; Pow Wow Competition; Flag Raising; Traditional Storytelling; Traditional Games; Hand Game Demonstration; Meat Cutting Competition; Piikani, Kainai, Stoney Nakoda, and Tsuut'ina Tribe Day; Tipis; Pathways; Gathering Place; Camping
<b>Native Child and Family Services of Toronto</b> Toronto, Ontario	30,000 sq.ft / \$1.3 Million (Cost of Roof Project)	Gathering Place; Social and Cultural-Based Services; Drop-In Daycare; Artist Studios; Administration Offices; Longhouse; Rooftop Healing Lodge; Fire Circle; Public Assemblies; Ceremonies; Drumming; Circle Sessions; Counseling; Meetings



*Na'tsa'maht The Gathering Place  
Victoria, British Columbia*



*Hôtel-Musée Premières Nations  
Wendake, Quebec*





*Thunderbird House  
Winnipeg, Manitoba*



*Indigenous Gathering Place Mohawk College  
Hamilton, Ontario*



*Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre  
Whitehorse, Yukon*



*Native Child and Family Services of Toronto  
Toronto, Ontario*



*Indian Village, Calgary Stampede  
Calgary, Alberta*





*First Nations Garden-Pavilion  
Montreal, Quebec*



*Sami Cultural Center Sajos  
Inari, Finland*



*Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre  
Osoyoos, British Columbia*



*Aanishchaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute  
Oujé-Bougoumou, Quebec*



*Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre  
Whistler, British Columbia*

\* Photo Credits see Appendix A





*Project A – Christina James and Logan Armstrong*

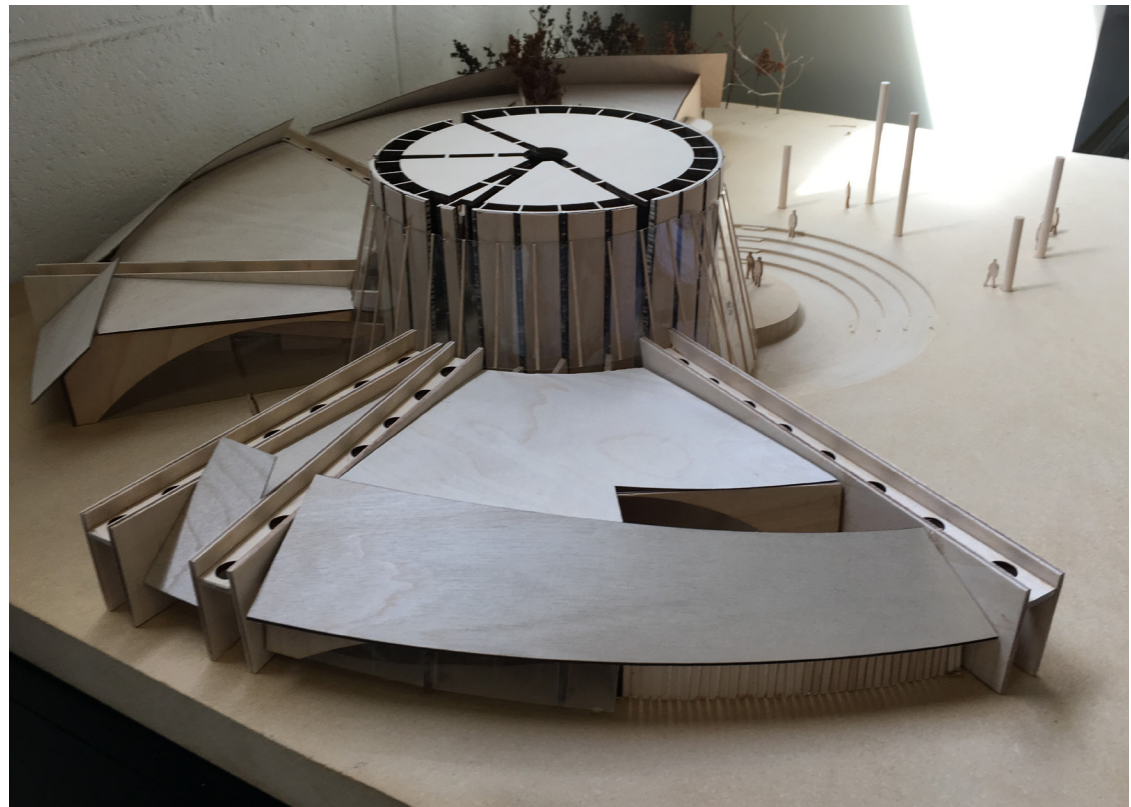


*Project B – Zoe Lewis and Elena Bushell*

## University of Calgary, Graduate Architecture Studio 'Moh'kinsstis Indigenous Gathering House' Projects

The University of Calgary Graduate Architecture Studio titled 'Indigenous Gathering House' (taught by Dr. Brian Sinclair), in Winter 2017, considered the design of an innovative centre that embodies and celebrates Indigenous Culture. The Moh'kinsstis Indigenous Gathering House was imagined as an approximately 2000 m<sup>2</sup> education, administration & community facility located in the Fort Calgary area of downtown Calgary. This project included extensive site analysis, contextual and cultural research, and the input and guidance by Elders.

The following photographs represent a few of the student models that were created as part of the Studio, which were a helpful reference to understanding a future Calgary Indigenous Gathering Place.



*Project C – Yanja Tumurbaatar and Nicholis Bortolin*





*Project D - Kristen Forward and Jordan Hart*



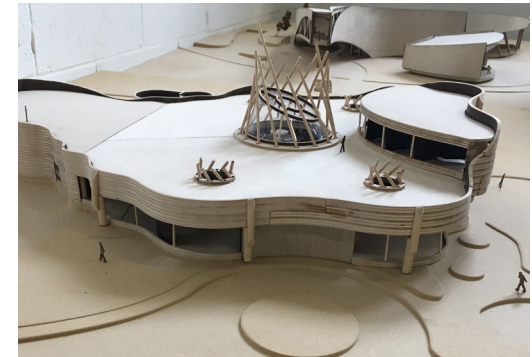
*Project E - Riley Syjuco and Vincent Cheng*



*Project F - Sumer Matharu and Graeme Haunholter*



*Project E - Riley Syjuco and Vincent Cheng*



*Project F - Sumer Matharu and Graeme Haunholter*

# Building an Indigenous Gathering Place

## Indigenous Gathering Place Uses and Activities

Over the past three years the IGP committee has been meeting to identify what an Indigenous gathering place might look like and where it might be located within the City of Calgary. Through a series of facilitated workshops and a review of other Indigenous Gathering Places, several uses and activities emerged.

As illustrated in **Figure 9.0, Indigenous Gathering Place Concept**, a series of uses and activities have been captured as well as where the Indigenous Gathering Place might be located.

What has been envisioned is a place for everyone, Indigenous and non-Indigenous; youth and Elders; dancers and singers; and, storytellers and learners. The Indigenous Gathering Place would be a building with a large area near a river and natural setting. Inside different uses could occur simultaneously, one Elder could be teaching a language class, while in the next room, a youth drumming group could be recording a CD in a professional music studio. There would be traditional food made in a large kitchen that could prepare enough food for small and large gatherings. At the centre of the facility, there would be a large community gathering place for dances, drumming, singing, teaching, and celebrating. Additionally, the building and site would reflect Indigenous Peoples' ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship and harmony with all relations (animals, plants, rivers, etc.).

Outside, traditional medicines and food could be found in the garden or natural areas that surround the facility. Large Powwows and celebrations could be held in a traditional arbour, while smudge ceremonies could be held in a private area of the grounds, close to the facility. Overnight stays in tents and tipis could also be accommodated, supported by the facilities, change rooms, and washrooms, and equipped with showers.

The preference for a location is downtown, close to the Bow and or Elbow rivers, and accessible by transit. It is important that the site be undeveloped, clean, and without soil contamination. The cost, size and location of the Indigenous Gathering Place are at present unknown, however, based on the review of other Indigenous Gathering Places the following could provide a very preliminary criteria to be discussed and explored further.

**Site:** 2.0–4.0 ha (5–10 acres)

**Facility:** 2,000–2,700 sq.m (21,000–30,000 sq.ft)

**Cost:** \$13.0–\$18.0 million

**Capacity:** 300–400 people indoors and 500–1,000 people outdoors

*Note: The above information is preliminary for discussion purposes only. Substantial work has been completed, however additional effort is required to refine IGP uses and develop an architectural programme, after which a more detailed estimate could be provided.*



Figure 9.0, Indigenous Gathering Place Concept



## Sustainable Revenue

Beyond funding and building an Indigenous Gathering Place, defining a sustainable revenue stream will be important to operating and maintaining the facility and ground. Through engagement and a review of other Indigenous gathering places a series of uses and activities have been identified for the Calgary Indigenous Gathering Place. Additionally, through this process, key groupings of possible users have been identified along with possible uses they might have. These uses have been aligned to the Indigenous Gathering Place, as shown in **Table 7.0, Sustainable Revenue Review**.

Based on a review of the possible uses eight core spaces (ranked based on review of Table 7.0) within the Indigenous Gathering Place could be potentially used to capture a sustainable revenue stream as identified below:

- Community Gathering Space
- Multicultural Room
- Teaching Space
- Ceremonial Room
- Traditional Medicine Garden
- Rehearsal / Prep Space
- Boardrooms
- Language, Arts Crafts and Music
- Cultural Awareness Training
- Café/Restaurant

Table 7.0, Sustainable Revenue Review

# Indigenous Gathering Place

Indigenous Gathering Place

	CORPORATE / GOVERNMENT						EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS						INDIGENOUS PEOPLE & AGENCIES						COMMUNITY						
	Meetings and Conferences	Cultural Ceremonies	Cultural Awareness Training	Teaching Space	Research	Mediation / Conflict Resolution	Cultural Awareness Training	Indoor and Outdoor Teaching Space	Language, Arts, Crafts, and Music	Traditional Knowledge Classes	Elder Storytelling and Counseling	Cultural / Graduation Ceremonies	Cultural Ceremonies	Cultural Awareness Training	Teaching Space	Research / Archives	Meetings and Conferences	Mediation / Conflict Resolution	Food Preparation / Traditional Medicines	Events: Weddings, Wakes, Celebrations	Cultural Ceremonies	Drumming, Dancing, Singing, Language	Library / Research	Elder Storytelling and Counseling	Cultural Awareness / Interpretation
Community Gathering Space	●		●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Traditional Medicine Garden		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●				●		●				●
Kitchen			●				●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●		●		●	●	●				
Boardrooms	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●		●	●		●			●					●
Library /Archives			●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●				●	●						●			
Multicultural room	●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●			●	●	●	●	●
Dance Studio			●				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●						●	●			●
Teaching spaces	●		●	●	●		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					
Ceremonial Room		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				●	●	●	●		●	
Outdoor Arbour			●				●	●				●	●		●					●	●	●		●	●
Rehearsal/ Preparation Space		●	●	●					●			●	●	●	●		●		●	●	●	●		●	●
Museum / Artifacts			●		●		●	●	●	●	●			●	●	●			●				●	●	●
Youth Gymnasium								●	●		●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●	●	●		●	●
Sewing Room			●				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●										●
Elders Room	●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●				●					●	
Drum Studio			●				●	●	●	●		●	●		●					●	●	●			●
Sweat Lodges		●	●				●	●		●	●	●	●								●				

# Summary

## Strategic Actions and Next Steps

Over the past six months, a tremendous amount of progress has been made to develop “A Case for a Calgary Indigenous Gathering Place.” Through extensive engagement, not only have significant stories, opportunities, ideas, aspirations, and information been captured, but a new process founded on both western and traditional practices. With the new process a shared purpose has been defined within an ethical space and safe environment to talk about a gathering place to share, connect, heal, renew, and celebrate a resurgence of Indigenous culture. As illustrated in **Figure 10.0, Remaining Process for an Indigenous Gathering Place**, there remains more work to building and enjoying a new Indigenous Gathering Place.

**Table 8.0, Strategic Actions and Next Steps**, identifies six important and significant steps, however, there are other tasks, actions, activities, and processes embedded, which will emerge throughout the process

**Figure 10.0, Process for an Indigenous Gathering Place**



**Table 8.0, Strategic Actions and Next Steps**

Description of Actions / Next Steps	Action Term
<b>Establish an IGP Governance Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete assessment of IGP Governance Structure</li> <li>Establish a legal entity / cultural foundation</li> <li>Develop board of directors and formalize IGP Committee structure</li> </ul>	6 months
<b>IGP Site</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with the Fort Calgary, Calgary Stampede, Heritage Park and others to discuss possible sites / facilities for the IGP</li> <li>IGP Site Acquisition Study: Evaluate possible IGP sites, determine approval process, capital costs, requirements and recommend site</li> </ul>	6 months
<b>Meet with Local, Provincial and Federal Government and Agencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with City of Calgary to discuss possible City-owned sites and support for the IGP</li> <li>Meet with Alberta Culture and Tourism, Education, Indigenous Relations, and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, to introduce IGP and identify support and potential funding opportunities</li> <li>Identify and meet with local funding agencies to introduce IGP and identify support and potential funding opportunities</li> <li>Formalize community support through letters of support, partnerships, and agreements</li> <li>Prepare and submit funding proposals to secure resources to develop and build the IGP</li> </ul>	6 months to 1 year
<b>IGP Business Case</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the preferred site, complete due diligence, site investigations, and develop an IGP Architectural Programme and Concept Plan</li> <li>Prepare a comprehensive business plan including: operations, sustainable revenue stream, capital costs, financing plan, marketing strategy and implementation plan</li> <li>Obtain business plan approval, formalize funding agreements and secure IGP financing</li> </ul>	12-16 months
<b>On-going Engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to facilitate regular IGP Committee meetings to further work on the IGP</li> <li>Secure funding and support for on-going engagement with Elders to formally define IGP activities, programs, and services</li> <li>Secure funding to develop IGP website and communication materials (e.g., brochure, website, presentations) to engage the broader community and raise awareness of the IGP</li> <li>Facilitate youth workshops throughout Calgary and surrounding communities to exchange knowledge, learn about youth needs, interests and priorities</li> <li>Meet with possible corporate and private investors to secure support and funding</li> </ul>	On-going
<b>Land Acquisition, Architectural Design, Construction and Occupancy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchase land and complete legal land survey</li> <li>Select and hire Architect to: facilitate land approval process (land use redesignation, development permit); complete detailed design, secure building permit; issue tendering drawings; select construction company; supervise construction; and obtain building occupancy permit.</li> </ul>	3 years

---

## ENDNOTES (Sources and Photo Credits):

Page 5

### **The Blackfoot signing Treaty 7, 1877**

*Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <http://www2.glenbow.org/dbimages/arc1/c/na-40-1.jpg>*

Page 10

### **Blackfoot Sun Dance Camp, 1880s**

*Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <http://www2.glenbow.org/dbimages/arc1/s/na-403-1.jpg>*

Page 11

### **Indigenous Gathering Committee, Regular Meeting on May 17, 2016**

*Source: Indigenous Gathering Committee, Meeting Minutes, May 17, 2016*

Page 13

All Photos shown taken by Aaron Aubin, Aaron Aubin Consulting Inc.

Page 14

All Photos shown taken by Aaron Aubin, Aaron Aubin Consulting Inc.

Page 21

### **Map of Residential Schools Across Canada**

*Retrieved August 29, 2017, from: [http://www.myrobust.com/websites/trcinstitution/File/pdfs/2039\\_T&R\\_map\\_nov2011\\_final.pdf](http://www.myrobust.com/websites/trcinstitution/File/pdfs/2039_T&R_map_nov2011_final.pdf)*

Page 27

### **Na'tsa'maht The Gathering Place**

*Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <http://camosun.ca/services/facility-rentals/images/facilities/lq-natsamaht-outside-14998073243.jpg>*

### **Hôtel-Musée Premières Nations**

*Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <http://tourismewendake.ca/fileadmin/templates/ds/page/images/BandeauMusee4.jpg>*

Page 28

### **Thunderbird House**

Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <http://www.winnipegarchitecture.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/715-Main-Angle-2.jpg>

### **The Indigenous Gathering Place Mohawk College**

Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <http://assets.inhabitat.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2016/08/Hoop-Dance-Gathering-Place-by-Brook-McIlroy-8-1020x610.jpg>

### **Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre**

Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <http://www.kwanlindunculturalcentre.com/wp-content/uploads/Front-of-Facility-with-Flowers-Small-Cropped.jpg>

### **Native Child and Family Services of Toronto**

Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <http://spacing.ca/toronto/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2011/03/12.jpg>

### **Indian Village, Calgary Stampede**

Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: [https://i.cbc.ca/1.3667699.1467839295!/fileImage/httpImage/image.JPG\\_gen/derivatives/original\\_620/indian-village-enmax-park.JPG](https://i.cbc.ca/1.3667699.1467839295!/fileImage/httpImage/image.JPG_gen/derivatives/original_620/indian-village-enmax-park.JPG)

Page 29

### **First Nations Garden-Pavilion**

Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <http://saucierperrotte.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/premieres-nations-5-2000x2000.jpg>

### **Sami Cultural Center Sajos**

Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: [http://images.adsttc.com/media/images/5017/effd/28ba/0d49/f500/10ca/large\\_\\_jpg/stringio.jpg?1414007898](http://images.adsttc.com/media/images/5017/effd/28ba/0d49/f500/10ca/large__jpg/stringio.jpg?1414007898)

### **Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute**

Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <http://cdn.freshome.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/exterior-modern-project-institute-canada.jpg>

### **Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre**

Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <http://www.archdaily.com/10629/nkmip-desert-cultural-centre-hbbh-architects/50102cd728ba0d4222000fb1-nkmip-desert-cultural-centre-hbbh-architects-image>

### **Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre**

Retrieved August 04, 2017, from: <https://slcc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/visit.jpg>



# Appendix A IGP Committee Members

Membership as of August 2017

Pamela Beebe  
William Beauregard  
Leslie Bigbull  
Reg and Rose Crowshoe  
Suzanne Dzus  
Amanda Ens  
Judy Fernades  
John Fischer  
Michelle Fournie  
Daphne and Kelly Good Eagle  
Teneya Gwin  
Helen Hamlin  
Anne Harding  
Doreen Healy  
Tamara Himmelspace

Katelyn Lucas  
Eve MacMillan  
Tyler Makinaw  
Wayne Mollison  
Christy Morgan  
Janet Naclia  
Dianne Ollerenshaw  
Curtis Olson  
Joe Pimlott  
Brenda Roland  
Mike Simoens  
Dr. Brian Sinclair  
Regan Smith  
Sandra Sutter  
Lee Stevens