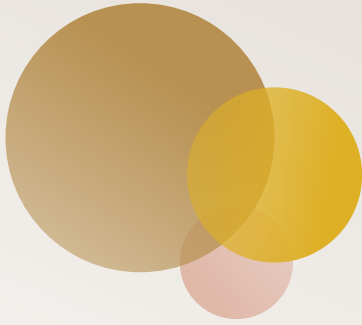


NOVEMBER 2022
TO JULY 2024

Learning, Sharing, and Actioning Together

Indigenous Engagement Approach and Findings

- » Calgary River Valleys Project
- » City Building Program



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NOVEMBER 2022 TO JULY 2024

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Calgary River Valleys Project and City Building Program Indigenous Engagement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT PROCESS OVERVIEW

The Indigenous Engagement process designed for the Calgary River Valleys Project and City Building Program was created to gather project-specific feedback, to collect ideas from Indigenous Nations, and to identify initial concerns regarding engagement. The process also established a basis for continuous collaboration, relationship building, and mutual understanding between The City of Calgary and Indigenous community members. Conversations and perspectives shared throughout the Indigenous Engagement served to enrich and strengthen existing connections between The City and Indigenous community members while also fostering new relationships. This formed a foundation upon which future projects and Indigenous engagement processes can build.

The process was designed with careful attention to ensure its alignment with Section 35 of The Constitution Act, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and The City of Calgary's Indigenous Policy Framework. In addition to formal legislation and policy, the process was intentionally and mindfully grounded in a deep understanding of Indigenous Peoples' unique relationship with the land, their inherent and Treaty-based rights, and the cumulative effects of industry and development placing these rights and relationships at risk. The process was further guided by the application of a Biocultural Diversity Framework highlighting the importance and interrelatedness of Indigenous languages, lifeways, and land-based knowledge.

As part of a pre-engagement process, City staff and project contractors met with the Consultation Offices of the Kainai Nation, Piikani Nation, Siksika Nation, Tsuut'ina Nation, Stoney Nakoda Nations, and the Métis Nation of Alberta – Region 3 to hear how the Nations wanted to participate, what concerns they wanted to bring forward, and what values needed to be considered. The result was a co-designed engagement process based in respect, reconciliation, relationships, and reciprocity. This pre-engagement consultation also created learning opportunities for City staff, including a workshop reviewing the history of colonization and Indigenous ways of knowing.

The formal engagement process consisted of a series of four Water, Land, and Climate Summits and a final June Camp for discussion of the Calgary Plan. Each Summit was centred around a particular theme and topic, identified through discussions where Nation representatives were encouraged to bring forward the issues most pertinent to their community members. The four Summits were complemented by additional small group discussions, followed by a final sharing session in June 2024 wherein previous participants were invited to review and confirm the information gathered through the engagement process and review the policy and direction outlined in the Calgary Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CALGARY RIVER VALLEYS PROJECT— WHAT WE HEARD

Engagement findings from the Calgary River Valleys Project underscored the need for consistent dialogue and relationship building with Indigenous Nations and community members in order for Indigenous voices and perspectives to be embedded at every stage of future City of Calgary planning and development processes. Participants emphasized that rivers are sacred places of great significance for traditional, ceremonial, and land use practices, and Indigenous involvement in surveying and monitoring the river valleys is crucial to the long-term health of the natural and cultural environment.

Specific recommendations centred around renewing and strengthening partnerships with Indigenous leaders; integrating the traditional knowledge held by Elders and Knowledge Keepers and allowing Nation representatives to review draft documents and policies for appropriate, respectful, and accurate knowledge integration; supporting and expanding existing consultation efforts such as Traditional Land Use studies; and connecting with Indigenous youth to ensure that traditional land-based knowledge and stewardship practices are preserved and passed on.

Additional recommendations related to the addition of new or updated interpretive signage in the river valleys and natural areas and shifting language use to incorporate Indigenous words and worldviews. Some of these actions will require cross-cultural and Indigenous-specific training for City staff to develop a shared foundation of knowledge among decision-makers prior to moving forward with any new initiatives.

Discussions also touched on the topic of improving and streamlining internal City processes—for instance, by increasing points of contact between departments so that work is not being duplicated or delayed, and the creation or growth of Indigenous-led stewardship programs to protect the watershed, establish guidelines for sustainable water use, and safeguard access to water for First Nations, the Métis Nation in Alberta, and urban Indigenous Calgarians. Participants also noted that these preliminary engagement findings must be followed by targeted discussions and the production of concrete, actionable steps with measurable goals for recommendations to be successfully implemented.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CITY BUILDING PROGRAM— WHAT WE HEARD

Engagement findings from the City Building Program revolved around themes of cultural awareness and sensitivity, accountability, and reciprocity. Participants noted that previous consultation processes undertaken by The City placed a significant burden on Indigenous groups and community members while giving little in return, resulting in broken trust and damage to relationships that can only be repaired through time and effort. Much like in the Calgary River Valleys Project, recommendations included updating City processes to embed Indigenous voices and knowledge at every stage, improving communication between City departments and clarifying individual staff responsibilities, and having staff participate in Indigenous-led diversity training and cultural sharing.

Discussions also centred around environmental concerns such as climate change mitigation, water management, and the protection of ecosystem diversity, as well as the issues of addiction and mental health, urban gentrification, and access to education and employment opportunities. Several suggestions emerged from these conversations, including ways of increasing Indigenous visibility in The City through the use of language and signage in urban areas, providing spaces to hold Ceremony and participate in cultural activities, supporting native species through Indigenous-led land management practices, and attracting Indigenous workers and students with job placements and scholarships.

Existing City of Calgary incentives and programs were acknowledged and appreciated as a starting point, with more engagement and collaboration yet needed to ensure continuous, respectful, and genuine inclusion of Indigenous perspectives, recommendations, and concerns.

“Reconciliation between Indigenous Peoples and the Crown requires our collective reconciliation with the earth.”¹

Land Acknowledgement

A draft written Land Acknowledgement was presented by Planning and Development Services staff at the June Camp – Calgary Plan Discussion on June 27, 2024. Comments and feedback were received from participants, revisions were incorporated, and the amended version is included here. City of Calgary staff are currently in the process of validating this draft with Treaty 7 First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta for inclusion in the Calgary Plan.

We acknowledge the land and sacred sites of the Indigenous peoples who have lived on and stewarded these lands since time immemorial. We thank Creator, our source of life, for the enduring gifts of this land.

Calgary is located within the inherent and cultural landscapes, and ancestral lands of the Siksikaitsitapi comprising of the Kainai, Siksika, Piikani, and Amskaapiikani Nations, and the historical lands of the Îethka Nakoda Wîcastabi, comprising of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney Nations, and the Tsuut’ina of the Great Dene Nation. These lands are also home to the Métis Nation in Alberta, Battle River Territory. We acknowledge all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people who have made Calgary their home.

Common ground exists between Indigenous relationships with the land and water, and the land-based practice of city planning. Working together, we seek to ensure harmonious and sustainable growth, while respecting Creator, this land, and all living beings.

We commit to learning about the histories, cultures, and perspectives of Indigenous peoples by recognizing their inherent rights. We also commit to moving forward together to respect and honour Indigenous and non-Indigenous planning practices, worldviews, and knowledge systems to steward these lands.

“Whereas: The Story of Moh’kinsstis 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.”

Mayor Naheed Nenshi, 2014

¹ John Borrows, “Earth-Bound: Indigenous Resurgence and Environmental Reconciliation,” in *Resurgence and Reconciliation: Indigenous Settler Relations and Earth Teachings*, ed. Michael Asch, John Borrows, and James Tully (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), 49.

Recognition of Contribution

We would like to thank all of the Nations, Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, Community Consultation Coordinators, individuals, groups, and Indigenous-led organizations who participated in the Calgary River Valleys Project and City Building Program Indigenous Engagement from November 2022 to July 2024 and who contributed to the recommendations for river valley planning and future community planning for The City of Calgary.

Water, Land, and Climate Summit Indigenous Participants

January 19, 2023; June 9, 2023; November 22, 2023; March 25, 2024

Albert Black Water	Kainai Nation
Alvin First Rider	Kainai Nation
Alvin Manitopyes	Keepers of the Water
Autumn Eaglespeaker	Keepers of the Water
Berna-Dean Holland	Métis Nation of Alberta
Brooke Aubichon	Miskanawah Community Services Association
Carmen LaSante	Métis Nation of Alberta
Carol Murray	Amskapi Piikani
Cedric Solway	Siksika Nation
Cindy Daniels	Stoney Nakoda Nation
Clarence V. Wolfleg	Siksika Nation
Dallis Mistaken Chief	Kainai Nation
Debbie Black Water	Kainai Nation
Elliot Fox	Kainai Nation
Fred Breaker	Siksika Nation
Gail Maiangowi	Siksika Nation
Ira Provost	Piikani Nation
Jaklyn Mistaken Chief	Kainai Nation
Jared Tailfeathers	Kainai Nation
Jason Chernow	Métis Nation of Alberta
JJ Shade	Kainai Nation
John Murray	Amskapi Piikani
Karla Onespot	Tsuut'ina Nation
Kimberley Van Patten	United Way / Planet Youth
Kimmy Houle	Blackfoot Confederacy Office
Lee Crowchild	Tsuut'ina Nation
Leon Crane Bear	Siksika Nation
Leroy Crazy Boy	Piikani Nation
Less Wolf Child	Kainai Nation
Megan Crow Shoe	Piikani Nation
Meghan Finnbogason	Miskanawah Community Services Association / Planet Youth
Michael Meguinis	Tsuut'ina Nation
Michael Onespot	Tsuut'ina Nation
Mike Oka	Kainai Nation

Mike Tailfeathers	Kainai Nation
Nelson Lussier	Métis Nation of Alberta
Pat Black Plume	Kainai Nation
Paula Smith	Blackfoot Confederacy Office
Rod Scout	Siksika Nation
Scotty Many Guns	Siksika Nation
Shelayne Wolf Child	Kainai Nation
Treffrey Deerfoot	Siksika Nation
Violet Meguinis	Tsuut'ina Nation
Wynter Ducharme	Métis Nation of Alberta

June Camp: Calgary Plan Indigenous Participants

June 27, 2024

Alvin Manitopyes	Keepers of the Water
Berna-Dean Holland	Métis Nation of Alberta
Carmen LaSante	Métis Nation of Alberta
Cedric Solway	Siksika Nation
Cindy Daniels	Stoney Nakoda Nation
Clarence V. Wolfleg	Siksika Nation
Dallis Mistaken Chief	Kainai Nation
Debra Piapot	Tsuut'ina Nation
Elliot Fox	Kainai Nation
Fred Breaker	Siksika Nation
Ira Provost	Piikani Nation
Jaclyn Silbernagel	Vibrant Communities Calgary
Jaklyn Mistaken Chief	Kainai Nation
Jared Tailfeathers	Kainai Nation
Kimmy Houle	Blackfoot Confederacy Office
Krista Ouellette	Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC)
Lee Crowchild	Tsuut'ina Nation
Lynnisa Pasap	Urban Young Professional
Marija Small Legs	Mount Royal University, Native Info Exchange (NIE)
Matt Hiltermann	Arts and Heritage Professionals
Megan Crow Shoe	Piikani Nation
Michael Meguinis	Tsuut'ina Nation
Nelson Lussier	Métis Nation of Alberta
Nicole Henbrey	Arts and Heritage Professional
Nicole Wolf Leg	Aboriginal Friendship Centre Calgary
Rod Scout	Siksika Nation
Scotty Many Guns	Siksika Nation
Tamara Cardinal	Arts and Heritage Professional
Treffrey Deerfoot	Siksika Nation
Violet Meguinis	Tsuut'ina Nation
Winona Lafreniere	Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC)

Small Group Discussions and Indigenous-Led Organization Meetings

Amber Big Plume	Manager, Business Development and Projects, First Nation Power Development, Tsuu T'ina Nation
Calista Burnett	Indigenous Arts and Heritage Professional
Cristi Adams	Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC)
Dustin House-Bearspaw	Indigenous Young Professional
Elissa Twoyoungmen	Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC)
Kablusiak	Indigenous Arts and Heritage Professional
Kahsha Patterson	Urban Indigenous Young Professional
Kimberley Van Patten	United Way
Krista Ouellette	Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC)
Lynnisa Pasap	Urban Indigenous Young Professional
Marija Small Legs	Mount Royal University, Native Info Exchange (NIE)
Matt Hiltermann	Indigenous Arts and Heritage Professional
Meghan Finnbogason	Miskanawah Community Services Association / Planet Youth
Nicole Henbrey	Indigenous Arts and Heritage Professional
Riel Manywounds	Indigenous Arts and Heritage Professional
Tamara Cardinal	Indigenous Arts and Heritage Professional
Tyler Mitchell	Urban Indigenous Young Professional
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Wyatt Then	Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC)

Groups

Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC)
 Native Information Exchange (NIE)
 Planet Youth and Shawnessy Indigenous Community Conversation Circle
 Urban Indigenous Young Professionals
 Indigenous Arts and Heritage Professionals

Survey Participants

Native Information Exchange
 Planet Youth and Shawnessy Indigenous Community Conversation Circle
 Urban Indigenous Young Professionals

The City of Calgary Staff - Calgary River Valleys Plan and City Building Program Indigenous Engagement Participation

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Anita O'Driscoll	Parks
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Chad Peters	City Building Program
Christina Fuller	City Planning and Policy
Crystal Many Fingers	Parks
Dave Pascut	Engage
Deb Hamilton	Planning and Development Services
Dawn Smith	Climate Governance and Reporting
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Harold Horsefall	Indigenous Relations Office
Harpreet Sandhu	(Former) Environmental Planning and Policy
Holly Gibney	Green Line Project Partnerships
Ivy Campbell	Climate Planning and Policy
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Jillian Prosser	Climate Adaptation
Karen Merrick	Communications
Kelsey Kublik	Water Services
Laura Graham	City Building Program
Lorelei Higgins	Indigenous Relations Office
Lorna Crowshoe	Planning and Development Services
Matthew Sheldrake	City and Regional Planning
Meriam Bravante	Engage
Michelle Reid	Parks
Michelle Wickham	Bison Historical Services - City of Calgary consultant
Nicole Newton	Natural Environment and Adaptation
Pamela Duncan	Environmental Strategy
Patrick Saunders	City Building Program
Rehana Rajabali	Environmental Planning and Policy
Robyn Jamieson	City Building Program
Ruth DeSantis	Climate Adaptation
Sandra Davis	River Engineering
Sarah Marshall	Environmental Planning and Policy
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Sherri Kellock	Indigenous Relations Office
Stephen Pearce	City Building Program
Tamara Marajh	Public Spaces Delivery
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Matt Knapik	O2
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Sarah Lumley	O2

Introduction

In 2021, Alexandra Hatcher Consulting Inc., in partnership with Paulette Fox of Harmony Walkers Inc., was engaged by O2 Planning + Design to initiate the Indigenous engagement for The City of Calgary's Calgary River Valleys Project (2021-2024). Hatlie Group, with Paulette Fox as Lead and Alexandra Hatcher as Co-Lead, were subsequently engaged to facilitate the Indigenous engagement for the City Building Program (2023-2024).

The approach to Indigenous engagement designed for the Calgary River Valleys Project (CRVP), and the City Building Program (CBP) that followed, was intended to nurture the vital relationships that have been fostered between The City and Treaty 7 First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and urban Indigenous Calgarians, repair broken connections and trust, and build new relationships in community that had not existed before. The engagement approach also reflects the municipality's commitment to fulfilling the Calls to Action outlined by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) as articulated in The City of Calgary's *White Goose Flying Report*, which is in alignment with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP).

This work is not only intended to transform how The City's Planning and Development Services Department engages with Indigenous Peoples, Nations, communities, and organizations, but it will also support the development of a guiding framework outlining how City departments can build enduring relationships, prioritize Treaty commitments, and complete work in ways that are in alignment with local Indigenous worldviews.

Engagement through both the Calgary River Valleys Project (CRVP) and the City Building Program (CBP) was iterative, rights-based, and built on the work that was initiated through the CRVP pre-engagement process in 2021 and 2022.

This work was not designed to be performative or an "add-on" to the public engagement for either project. The nature and scope of alignment and integration within The City can be seen as an appropriate model to ensure effective and efficient ongoing relationship building with Treaty 7 First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and urban Indigenous Calgarians. The Indigenous engagement for both the CRVP and CBP was grounded in a systems-based approach, was holistic, and worked from a land-based perspective.



Figure 1: CRVP and CBP Indigenous Engagement Timeline

BIOCULTURAL DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

Approaching this work through a Biocultural Diversity Framework allowed for the intersections of land, culture, and language, along with respect, reconciliation, relationship, and reciprocity to be present in all conversations. Using the Biocultural Diversity Framework as a base for design of the Indigenous engagement completed through CRVP and CBP enabled conversations that were strategic and could inform policy as well as discussions that were tactical and action-oriented.

Each of the Water, Land, and Climate Summits were designed to align with a direction that informed the location decision, held space for conversations centred around a specific theme, and provided the opportunity for each Treaty 7 First Nation and the Métis Nation of Alberta to open the Summit and have space for specific issues to be brought forward if they chose.

The Biocultural Diversity Framework then informed the process designed to support the Indigenous engagement for the City Building Program by ensuring the importance of the land, language, and lifeways to be incorporated not only in the engagement discussions but to also be incorporated meaningfully into the development of the Calgary Plan and its attendant policies and plans.

Calgary River Valleys Project: Biocultural Diversity Framework – October 2022

	EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
POTENTIAL HOSTS	Blackfoot Confederacy Office and Siksika Nation	Blood Tribe (Kainai Nation) and Blackfeet Nation (Amskapi Pikunni)	Piikani Nation and Tsuut'ina Nation	Stoney Nakada Nations and Metis Nation of Alberta Region 3
PLACEHOLDER DATES	January 2023 - Winter	June 2023 - Summer	October 2023 - Fall	March 2024 - Spring
THEME	RESPECT	RECONCILIATION	RELATIONSHIPS	RECIPROCITY
BIOCULTURAL	LANGUAGE	LAND	LIFEWAYS	LINKAGES
THEME CONTEXT	Placenames and linkages to Oral Customs with a focus on rivers and significant sites Impacts to Siksika Nation 2013 flood – Siksika Led Recovery Strategy and lessons for The City of Calgary	Impacts of drought on fisheries in the headwaters; transboundary tribal-led collaboration and conservation	Using Film, Art, Music and Spatial Technologies to enhance language revitalization and culture connections to land	Reflection and Celebration Does the Final Report/ Plan offer opportunities for actionable results; how will effectiveness be measured; did we capture and use information meaningfully, evaluate efficiencies . . . as a group
WATER, LAND & CLIMATE	FLOOD & DROUGHT: THE RIVERS FLOW CRVP Connection • Flood resilience approaches, narratives, and histories Other connections • Drought Resilience	LAND & WATER: THE RIVERS HEALTH CRVP Connection • Connected land and water planning Other connections • Sourcewater Protection • Riparian Protection • Open Space Planning • Climate Adaption	CLIMATE CHANGE & THE RIVER VALLEY CRVP Connection • Climate change and meaning for river valleys Other connections • Climate Strategy • Open Space • Flood Resilience • ESA Work	LANDSCAPES & LAND USES CRVP Connection • Cultural land uses • Cultural expression in the landscape Other connections • Open Space Plan • Climate Adaptation • Drought Resilience • Flood Resilience • Parks Management
BASE	DIVERSITY	INCLUSION	EQUITY	JUSTICE

Figure 2: CRVP Biocultural Diversity Framework

City Building Program: Biocultural Diversity Framework – October 2023

BIOCULTURAL	LANGUAGE	LAND	LIFEWAYS	LINKAGES
THEME	RESPECT	RECONCILIATION	RELATIONSHIPS	RECIPROCITY
City of Calgary INDIGENOUS POLICY FRAMEWORK	WAYS OF KNOWING	WAYS OF ENGAGING	WAYS OF BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS	WAYS TOWARDS EQUITABLE ENVIRONMENTS
DISCUSSION CONTENT	INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE	ARRANGING	TRANSFORMATION	IMPLEMENTATION
BASE	DIVERSITY	INCLUSION	EQUITY	JUSTICE
SEASON	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING

Figure 3: CBP Biocultural Diversity Framework

Framing

To conduct Indigenous engagement in support of the Calgary River Valleys Project and City Building Program from a place of respect, reconciliation, relationships, and reciprocity, it was critical to begin with an understanding that these projects are occurring with several different and essential frames.

- **Rights-Based Framing**
- **Treaty-Based Framing**
- **Reconciliation-Based Framing**
- **Cumulative Effects-Based Framing**

In alignment with the commitment of the Planning and Development Services Department to activating UNDRIP in its work,² the first step in approaching relationships from a place of respect was to consider that matters of historical, traditional, and cultural significance necessitated engagement with Treaty 7 First Nations as parties who entered into Treaty with the Crown in 1877. Second, matters of contemporary significance include Treaty 7 First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and Calgary's urban Indigenous Peoples.

RIGHTS-BASED FRAMING

The constitutionally enshrined nature of inherent Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, the Articles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action (TRC), and The City of Calgary's *White Goose Flying Report* and Indigenous Policy Framework (IPF) continuously guided the engagement approach, design, and tactics.

Building upon the learnings from the Biocultural Diversity Framework that formed the structure of the Calgary River Valleys Project's Water, Land, and Climate Summits, rights-based framing then provided a solid foundation for the City Building Program's Indigenous engagement approach to significantly influence future review and development of policies and plans throughout The City, ensuring that Indigenous engagement is based in respect, reconciliation, relationships, and reciprocity.

TREATY 7 FRAMING

TREATY: As long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the river flows.³

Treaty 7 was entered into on September 22, 1877 at Blackfoot Crossing by the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Stoney Nakoda, and Tsuut'ina Nations, and representatives of the Crown.

The true spirit and intent of Treaty 7 was the making of a relationship grounded in peace and friendship, a sharing of the land "in return for the Crown's promises, which entailed annuity payments, education, medical care, ammunition, assistance in farming and ranching, and assurance that we would be free to continue to hunt as we always had."⁴ However, as one

2 Peter Pengcheng Feng, "City Building Program - UNDRIP Implementation," presentation to The City of Calgary Planning and Development Services Department, Calgary, Alberta, August 2023.

3 Included in Karine Duhamel, "Gakina Gidagwi'igoomin Anishinaabewiyang: We Are All Treaty People," in *Treaties and the Treaty Relationship* (Winnipeg: Canada's National History Society, 2018), 13.

4 Treaty 7 Elders and Tribal Council, with Walter Hildebrandt, Dorothy First Rider, and Sarah Carter, *The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 11.

can discern from a map of linear footprint, there are fewer and fewer places to assert inherent Treaty Rights such as hunting in Treaty 7. The notion of cumulative impacts of multiple resource decisions over time sheds light on the challenges facing communities.

At the Water, Land, and Climate – West Summit (November 23, 2023), discussion turned to the history of Treaty, and specifically about Treaty 7 and Treaty 4. It was shared how the land is not ours to sell, but is Creator's, and that the understanding—or misunderstanding—of this idea is a collision of worldviews.⁵ For the Treaties in this region, resources were never negotiated, and Indigenous leaders only negotiated to the depth of a plow for agricultural purposes. The land was never ceded or sold, and the Treaty was only meant to be about sharing the land with the newcomers.

Understanding Treaty Rights in Canada also means understanding Section 35 of The Constitution Act. Treaty Rights were eventually included in the constitutional talks, enshrined in the Act in 1982, and state, "The existing [A]boriginal and treaty rights of the [A]boriginal people of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed."⁶ Further, the rights protected fall into four distinct categories:⁷

- **Aboriginal Rights:** The inherent rights belonging to the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada by virtue of their historic occupation and use of the land we now call Canada before European contact⁸
- **Aboriginal Title:** An Aboriginal right to land that derives from an Aboriginal People's historic occupation and control of a particular territory⁹
- **Métis Rights:** Aboriginal rights that address the unique history of the Métis Peoples as First Peoples of Canada¹⁰
- **Treaty Rights:** Rights that arise from the solemn promises between the Crown and Aboriginal Peoples of Canada¹¹

The land within Treaty 7 covers approximately 50,000 square miles.¹²

"Commencing at a point on the international boundary due south of the western extremity of the Cypress Hills; thence west along the said boundary to the central range of the Rocky Mountains, or to the boundary of the Province of British Columbia; west of the source of the main branch of the Red Deer River; thence southwesterly and southerly following on the boundaries of the tracts ceded by the Treaties Numbered Six and Four to the place of commencement."¹³

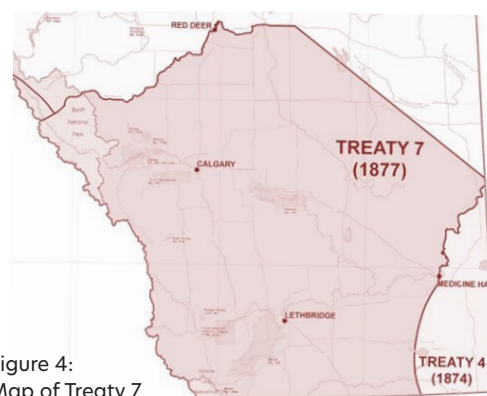


Figure 4:
Map of Treaty 7

5 Alvin Manitopyes, sharing in the Summit discussions, November 23, 2023.

6 Constitution Act, 1982, s. 35(1), being Schedule B to the Canada Act 1982, 1982, c 11 (UK), https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/Const_TRD.pdf.

7 Centre for Constitutional Studies, "Section 35 Aboriginal and Treaty Rights," September 9, 2021, accessed June 2024, <https://www.constitutionalstudies.ca/2021/09/section-35-aboriginal-and-treaty-rights/>.

8 *R. v. Van der Peet*, [1996] CanLII 216 at para. 21, 1996 SCC.

9 *R. v. Van der Peet* at paras. 115 and 119–20. See also *R. v. Adams*, [1996] CanLII 169 at paras. 26 and 64–65, 1996 SCC. The Supreme Court of Canada made its first declaration of Aboriginal title in *Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia*, [2014] CanLII, 2014 SCC 44.

10 *Van der Peet*, *supra* note 2 at para. 67; and *R. v. Powley*, [2003] CanLII at para. 17, 2003 SCC 43.

11 *Van der Peet*, *supra* note 2 at para. 120; and *R. v. Badger*, [1996] CanLII 236 at para. 41, 1996 SCC.

12 Treaty 7 Elders and Tribal Council, 1996, 240.

13 Treaty 7 Elders and Tribal Council, 1996, 233.

The Rights outlined within Treaty 7 included the right to hunt throughout the region outlined above, the allocation of reserves for each of the bands, annual payments (\$25) to band members, ammunition, clothing for Chiefs and Councillors, salaries for teachers on reserve, and cattle—but one less cow if the band wants to farm as well as raise cattle—but if they chose to farm, then specified equipment and seeds would be provided.¹⁴

In Canada, honouring Indigenous rights, including Treaty Rights, is enshrined in Section 35 of the Constitution. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDRIPA) can now also be used to guide the definition of Indigenous rights, including Treaty Rights. Land claims settlements are the common mechanism for identifying which Treaty Rights relate to which Nation or area; these can be used to identify rights for others across the country (see Cumulative Effects Framing below for more information).

There are three aspects of Treaty to consider:

Self-Determination

Indigenous self-determination can be simply defined as having the right to decide for themselves what is best for them.¹⁵

Self-Reliance

Self-reliance is participating in the political and economic mainstream for the ongoing benefit of Indigenous Peoples, and to not have to rely on federal funding.¹⁶

Self-Government

Indigenous peoples practiced their own forms of government for thousands of years before the arrival of European and other settlers in what is today Canada. These forms of government reflected the economic, social and geographic diversity of Indigenous peoples, as well as their cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.¹⁷

Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act guarantees the right to Indigenous self-government, and there are approximately fifty negotiations currently underway across the country.¹⁸

RECONCILIATION FRAMING

White Goose Flying Report

In 2016, The City of Calgary's *White Goose Flying Report* was submitted to City Council by the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC) and approved, outlining the municipality's responsibility to implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC): Calls to Action. The report included at its foundation the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which by the approval of the report, was sanctioned by The City of Calgary.

14 Treaty 7 Elders and Tribal Council, 1996, 232-236.

15 Canadian Museums Association, *Moved to Action: Activating UNDRIP in Canadian Museums* (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Museums Association), 2022, 11.

16 B. Joseph and C.F. Joseph, *Indigenous Relations: Insights, Tips & Suggestions to Make Reconciliation a Reality*, (Vancouver, BC: Page Two Books, 2019), 51.

17 Canada, "Self-government," <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100032275/1529354547314>.

18 Canada, "Self-government."

"The Calls to Action identified in this *White Goose Flying Report* are the result of several months of deliberation by CAUAC members. As key representatives of Calgary's urban Indigenous community, CAUAC sought to identify Calls to Action for The City to address that:

- are directed specifically at municipalities, or 'all levels of government'
- are feasible, and which The City has the ability to implement
- are impactful enough to reach the greatest number of individuals and families (non-Indigenous Calgarians included)
- are appropriately aligned to existing City initiatives and policies."¹⁹

The *White Goose Flying Report* led to the establishment of the *Indigenous Policy* (2017) and *Indigenous Policy Framework* (2017), launching the Indigenous Relations Office (2020), which is designing new ways of working with community throughout The City, including in Arts and Culture and with the establishment of the Moh'kinsstis Public Art Guiding Circle, Supply Management and Indigenous Procurement, Parks and Traditional Land Use Studies, and Indigenous engagement projects, including the Calgary River Valleys Project and the Green Line development, as well as the Indian Residential School Memorial Project and the St. Dunstan's School Site Memorial.

UNDRIP and Planning & Development Services Department

On June 21, 2021, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (UNDRIPA) received Royal Assent, creating a framework to advance Indigenous rights work at the federal level in Canada.²⁰ Based on this direction, it is essential that The City of Calgary work with the Treaty 7 First Nations to "co-develop legislative and policy processes, tools, and mechanisms to ensure that Historic Treaties are recognized, observed, and enforced—or in other words, implemented."²¹

To this end, the approach for the City Building Program's Indigenous engagement explicitly called out the importance of activating UNDRIP, with a focus on working with Treaty 7 First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and urban Indigenous Calgarians on the implementation of UNDRIP, with specific reference to Articles 11, 21, 24, and 29. This will not only inform the current bylaw and policy reviews included within the City Building Program but will also form the foundation for the review or development of future City of Calgary bylaws, policies, plans, projects, and initiatives, with consideration to Indigenous Peoples' inherent rights to the land in this region of Southern Alberta, and in Calgary specifically.

In August 2023, Peter Pengcheng Feng, City Building Program Urban Planning Student, presented "City Building Program - UNDRIP Implementation" introducing how the City Building Program could begin to act on UNDRIP and establish new ways of working with Indigenous Peoples and Nations in and around Calgary. A focus on moving "Beyond Consultation, Towards Partnership" was presented, with the joint actions needed on Issue Identification, Priority Setting, Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation. This report has gained traction to guide The City's approach to UNDRIP and engagement across the corporation.

In the context of long-term sustainability, long-term growth planning, and land-use regulations of The City, the following chart outlines the UNDRIP Articles, the rights held under each article, and the questions that formed the starting point for Indigenous engagement discussions through the City Building Program Indigenous engagement discussions.

¹⁹ Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC), *White Goose Flying: A Report to Calgary City Council on the Indian Residential School Truth and Reconciliation* (Calgary, 2016), <https://www.calgary.ca/content/dam/www/csps/cns/documents/cauac/white-goose-flying-calls-to-action-cauac.pdf>, 7.

²⁰ Canada, Department of Justice, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Implementation Secretariat (2023), *The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan*, 7, <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/declaration/ap-pa/ah/pdf/unda-action-plan-digital-eng.pdf>.

²¹ Canada, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Implementation Secretariat, 12.

UNDRIP Article	Rights under UNDRIP	Question
<p>Article 11 (1): Indigenous Peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.</p> <p>Article 11 (2): States shall provide redress through effective mechanisms, which may include restitution, developed in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples with respect to their cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property taken without their free, prior, and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs.</p>	<p>Right to practise and revitalize cultural traditions and customs</p>	<p>How can we work together to improve these three areas to recognize and support Indigenous values, culture, and health?</p> <p><i>Long-term sustainability</i></p> <p><i>Long-term growth planning</i></p> <p><i>Land-use regulations</i></p>
<p>Article 21 (1): Indigenous Peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.</p> <p>Article 21 (2): States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of Indigenous Elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities.</p>	<p>Right to improvements in economic and social conditions</p>	<p>How can The City support Indigenous-led projects intended to increase access to housing, social services, and ceremonial spaces in Calgary?</p>
<p>Article 24(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>Article 24(2): Indigenous individuals have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. States shall take the necessary steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of this right.</p>	<p>Right to traditional medicines and to maintain health practices</p>	<p>How can The City improve access to traditional foods and medicines?</p>
<p>Article 29 (1): Indigenous Peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for Indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.</p> <p>Article 29 (2): States shall take effective measures to ensure that no storage or disposal of hazardous materials shall take place in the lands or territories of Indigenous Peoples without their free, prior and informed consent.</p> <p>Article 29 (3): States shall also take effective measures to ensure, as needed, that programmes for monitoring, maintaining and restoring the health of Indigenous Peoples, as developed and implemented by the peoples affected by such materials, are duly implemented.</p>	<p>Right to conservation and protection of the environment and its productive capacity</p>	<p>How can The City and Nation's Traditional Knowledge Keepers co-create protocols for development processes?</p>

UNDRIP Articles 11, 21, 24, 29, Rights under UNDRIP, and Questions for Engagement

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS-BASED FRAMING

The cumulative impacts associated with urban development, transportation, agriculture, and other industrial activities pose a significant risk to infringement of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. This was upheld by the British Columbia Supreme Court when Blueberry First Nation from Treaty 8 in *Yahey v. British Columbia* successfully argued that the Crown, represented by the Province of British Columbia, had suffocated the meaningful exercise of their Treaty Rights through the cumulative impact of authorized industrial development.²²

While this is still rolling out in terms of agreements and settlements, Indigenous engagement for the CRVP and CBP was held in good faith and ensured adherence to Free, Prior and Informed Consent and explored applicable case-law in addition to UNDRIP, to ensure the interests and concerns of Indigenous Peoples were meaningfully considered. Often, and unfortunately, it is via litigation that rights become recognized, such as in a series of three court cases in the 2000s where there was clarification on the Crown's duty to consult, and a framework was outlined for implementation:²³

- The landmark *Haida* case, where it was recognized that the environmental health of Indigenous Peoples' territories, including the variability among species and the ecological complexes of which they are part, is necessary for them to exercise their constitutionally protected rights under Section 35 (*Haida V. British Columbia*, 2004).²⁴
- The *Mikisew Cree First Nation*, located in Treaty 8 in northern Alberta, in a case that resulted (after appeal) in a statement from the Supreme Court of Canada that "the duty to consult applies to Crown conduct under enacted legislation but not to the process of developing legislation."²⁵
- The *Taku River Tlingit* case against the Crown on whether the Crown had negotiated honourably with the Nation after its commitment to negotiate their land claim.²⁶

The cumulative effects and legal framing provide a deeper understanding of the need for meaningful consultation and engagement practices within the municipal context. Collaborative and good faith governance is vital to the reconciliation of rights, and understanding the history, legal requirements, and connection to relationships and accountability supports working together in a good way.

22 *Yahey v. British Columbia*, [2021] CanLII BCSC 1287, accessed December 12, 2023, <https://canlii.ca/t/jgpbr>.

23 Isabelle Brideau, "Supreme Court Trilogy," in *The Duty to Consult Indigenous Peoples* (Ottawa: Library of Parliament Background Papers, 2019), 2.

24 *Haida Nation v. British Columbia (Minister of Forests)*, [2004] 3 S.C.R. 511, 2004 SCC 73, accessed December 12, 2023, <https://www.canlii.org/en/ca/scc/doc/2004/2004scc73/2004scc73.html>.

25 Brideau, 9.

26 Indigenous Law Centre, University of Saskatchewan, *Taku River Tlingit First Nation v Canada* (Attorney General), May 27, 2016, <https://indigenoulaw.usask.ca/blog/2016/taku-river-tingit-first-nation-v-canada-attorney-general.php>.

LEARNING

Calgary River Valleys Project

PROJECT PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

The Calgary River Valleys Project (CRVP) Indigenous engagement provided a unique opportunity for The City of Calgary to action reconciliation. Rivers are a special place for Indigenous Peoples, with both important cultural and spiritual significance. Treaty 7 First Nations and Métis peoples have a long history connected to the landscape and waterways in the area now known as Calgary, and specifically at the confluence of the Bow and Elbow Rivers. This process brought Indigenous identities, histories, cultures, languages, traditions, principles, worldviews, relationships, and ways of knowing into municipal planning, advising, and decision-making discussions.

The Calgary River Valleys Plan was last updated in 1984, and Calgary has changed significantly in the ensuing 40 years. The CRVP was launched to align with the intended release date of the Government of Alberta's updated Flood Hazard Area maps, to support updating The City's land use regulations, and to guide development, planning, and investment in Calgary's river valleys, and specifically areas impacted by flooding.²⁷

PRE-ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

To start relationship building, a pre-engagement phase of work was initiated in Fall 2021 to support the development of an Indigenous Engagement Framework for the CRVP to guide discussions, share information, and action the lessons learned through the project delivery and planning outcomes for CRVP, and to also guide future work by The City of Calgary.

Paulette Fox, Alexandra Hatcher, staff of O2 Planning + Design, and The City of Calgary's CRVP Project Team hosted online discussions from November 2021 to January 2022. This included meetings with the community consultation coordination offices of the Kainai Nation, Piikani Nation, Siksika Nation, Stoney Nakoda Nations, Tsuut'ina Nation, and the Métis Nation of Alberta – Region 3, as well as with the Blackfoot Confederacy office.

Grounding the work in Ethical Space,²⁸ the Consultants and the CRVP Project Team listened to what was shared by the Nations and offered a rights-based approach to the co-design of engagement that would be based in respect, reconciliation, relationships, and reciprocity (the Four Rs). The following bullets briefly elaborate on the relevance of each "R" that guided the approach:

²⁷ Calgary, Calgary River Valleys Project, 2023, <https://engage.calgary.ca/rivervalleys>.

²⁸ Definition of Ethical Space: "Creating a place for knowledge systems to interact with mutual respect, kindness, generosity and other basic values and principles. All knowledge systems are equal; no single system has more weight or legitimacy than another." From Gary Pritchard, *Indigenous Place Making and Ethical Space* (2020), presented to the Canadian Environmental Law Association, accessed from <https://cela.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Indigenous-Place-Making-Ethical-Space.pdf>.

The Calgary River Valleys Project:

- **Respects** and recognizes the rights of Indigenous Peoples;²⁹
- Is rooted in the Truth and **Reconciliation** Commission (TRC) of Canada's Principles and Calls to Action;³⁰
- Includes a renewed Treaty **Relationship** with Indigenous Peoples;³¹ and
- Is grounded in **Reciprocity**, resurgence, and resiliency.

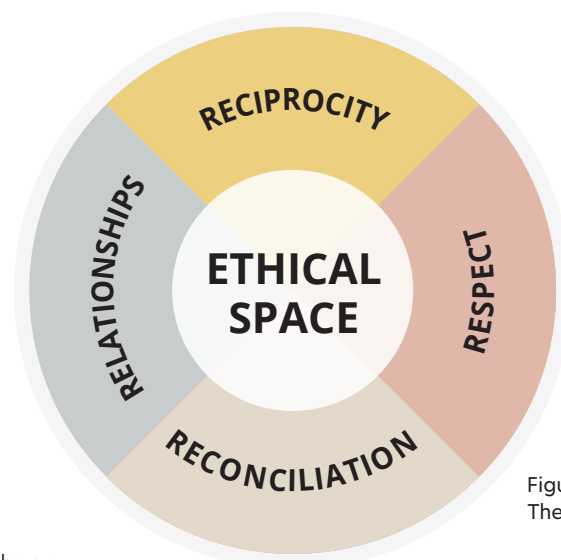


Figure 5:
The 4 Rs

Discussions from the pre-engagement phase resonated with guidance provided by CAUAC in the Indigenous Policy Framework³² for City staff holding Indigenous portfolios. An important outcome from the discussions included the need for City staff involved to begin to “unlearn” what they may have been taught or seen in history books, and to begin learning and listening as Treaty Peoples. Specifically, this recommendation led to the development of the paper “Unlearning to Learn” written by Dr. Gabrielle Lindstrom and submitted by Alexandra Hatcher Consulting for circulation internally at The City, as well as a workshop for City staff led by Dr. Lindstrom introducing the idea of learning to unlearn and unlearning to learn.

Another concern raised during the pre-engagement discussions included the lack of awareness or understanding regarding the complex intersections between the colonial past and, for example, the current climate and biodiversity crises. From an Indigenous worldview, these cannot be isolated from current discussions on river valleys. Moreover, important flags were raised regarding outstanding grievances with the federal and provincial governments, including Treaty 7 First Nation water rights. Rather than classify issues as out of their scope or jurisdiction, the Consultants encouraged all levels of administration and leadership within The City to become allies through reconciliation action.³³

The following outlines the Common Principles and Commitments that informed the CRVP Indigenous Engagement Framework and later the City Building Program Indigenous Engagement Project.³⁴

29 This includes the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights recognized and affirmed by Sections 17, 25, and 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, and international obligations related to the UNDRIP Act, 2021.

30 The TRC (2015) is connected to a long line of reports and commissions calling attention to a multitude and variety of issues stemming from colonization and its role relative to the assimilation and genocide of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Additionally, there have been reports since then, including the Missing Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) panel that released their report, “Reclaiming Power and Place,” in 2019.

31 Here in Treaty 7.

32 Calgary, *Indigenous Policy Framework for The City of Calgary* (2017), <https://www.calgary.ca/content/dam/www/csps/cns/documents/cauac/indigenous-policy-framework.pdf>.

33 Procedural aspects of the Duty to Consult linked to federal and provincial regulatory requirements guided by Crown legislation may be delegated to The City of Calgary as a third party, and these efforts will continue to occur separate from and/or parallel to the Indigenous Policy Framework (CAUAC, 2018). Ways forward through sustained dialogue and mutually beneficial relationships with Treaty 7 First Nations may enhance communication and knowledge at The City, which may provide the necessary foundations and understandings to assist in delegated aspects of the Duty to Consult being carried out (CAUAC, 2018).

34 Paulette Fox and Alexandra Hatcher, “Indigenous Engagement Framework for the River Valleys Plan Update,” February 18, 2022, internal report submitted to O2 Planning + Design, Calgary, Alberta.

Common Principles

The Indigenous Engagement Framework and approach for the CRVP flowed from a series of collaboratively developed Common Principles that provided a foundation of shared values that informed the work and a series of Commitments that guided how The City of Calgary staff would take into consideration all aspects of relationship building during the process, including logistics, communications, and gathering of information and stories.

- **Respect:** Inclusion and distinction—include all Nations as participants, understanding that there are different priorities and issues for each Nation.
- **Protocol:** Invite Elders to participate first and throughout the process; focus on building relationships.
- **Openness:** Don't come with preconceived ideas of what the end result will be.
- **Meaningful:** The process needs to be based in truth for reconciliation to take place and for positive change to happen; engage in a holistic approach.
- **Capacity:** Be aware that Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Consultation Coordinators are being asked to do multiple engagement processes with The City and with other agencies and governments.
- **Action:** Commit to actual action and results.

Once drafted, the Common Principles were then shared back to validate that what was heard was captured correctly, and also that the principles had laid out the agreed understandings of how each Nation wanted to work with The City, as well as the expectations that they had of the relationship building with the Project Team members.

Indigenous Engagement Framework

As part of the pre-engagement discussions, a series of commitments arose that provided clear direction to the Consultant and City teams to ensure all work was grounded in responsibility and accountability from the start.

Commitment to Protocol

Blackfoot Elder Dr. Reg Crowshoe of the Piikani Nation has shared that working in Ethical Space means the two worldviews, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, live in parallel. For example, the importance of outlining an agreement in a Pipe Ceremony is parallel to a written Memorandum of Understanding or a Terms of Reference.³⁵

It was recommended that the City Project Team work with the Nation's Community Consultation Coordinators and the appropriate Elders and Knowledge Keepers to maintain the connections initiated through the pre-engagement discussions and to build and deepen relationships throughout the engagement process. Discussions also illuminated the need to have Indigenous-led openings and blessings, to provide honoraria, and to offer tobacco prior to starting a session.

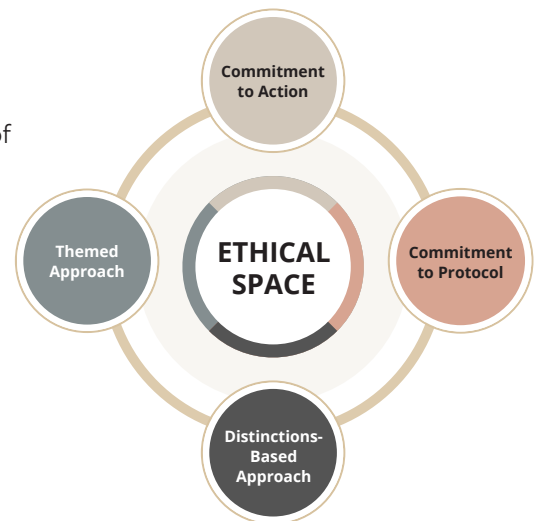


Figure 6: Calgary River Valleys Project Indigenous Engagement Framework (2021)

³⁵ Dr. Reg Crowshoe, internal meeting between Indigenous Gathering Place and The City of Calgary via Zoom and facilitated by Paulette Fox and Alexandra Hatcher, January 13, 2022.

Distinctions-Based Approach

For the Indigenous Engagement Framework, a distinctions-based approach provided opportunities to be inclusive and also respect the need for each Nation to directly engage in discussions on issues related to their specific needs and concerns.

To support this approach, each Treaty 7 First Nation, the Blackfoot Confederacy, and the Métis Nation of Alberta were invited to participate in a series of gatherings over the course of the year. The gatherings were held in locations that mirrored the direction indicated for the Summit. One-on-one meetings between The City and the Nation were then offered between the Summits for the Nation or individual to bring forward any feedback, ideas, or questions to The City.

The Consultants recommended that the CRVP Project Team work with each First Nation's Consultation Coordinator to administer the engagement processes, including invitations to Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members. This allowed for nurturing of relationships and for City staff and Nation staff to get to know each other.

Capacity

One of the Common Principles brought awareness to the fact that Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Consultation Coordinators are being asked to do multiple engagement processes within The City, as well as with other agencies and orders of governments. Because of this, and also in recognition of the mandate and alignments within the Climate & Environment Business Unit in Planning and Development Services, the engagement approach was broadened to include "Water, Land, and Climate" topics. As a result, the topics and themes to be explored through these Summits would connect to a range of planning activities—including flood and drought resilience, source water protection, climate adaptation, open space, and city planning—while continuing to directly support the CRVP.

City staff and project leads from other departments, business units, and initiatives were invited to participate in the Summits to bridge the discussions, to have engagement take place together with all the people hearing the same information at the same time, and to foster relationships among all the participants—Indigenous community members and City of Calgary staff.

Themed Approach

To support respecting land, language, and lifeways of Indigenous Peoples and building relationships between The City of Calgary and Indigenous Peoples in and around Calgary and the river valleys, a themed approach provided guidance to support discussions on the various issues regarding watershed management.

Using a Directional Round as a guide for the engagement and following the Biocultural Diversity Framework, a series of Water, Land, and Climate Summits were held at a location chosen for each direction, starting in the East. Invitations to participate in the Summits were shared with the Consultation Coordinators, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous community members.

Each of the Summits provided opportunities to enter into Ethical Space dialogue on biocultural diversity and watershed management, using the Four Rs approach and maintaining a base of diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice.

Commitment to Action

As there have been experiences in the past where engagement by The City of Calgary did not lead to action, was seen as extractive, did not in any way nurture relationships, and in some cases caused harm or damaged potential for future relationships, the CRVP Project Team was committed to truly supporting reconciliation by actively engaging in building relationships between The City and Indigenous communities. By respecting the capacity of all involved and providing a variety of opportunities to participate, as well as by compensating individuals for their time, the CRVP Project Team demonstrated actions of reciprocity. In addition, the actions of working from a more holistic perspective and incorporating other initiatives and projects that intersected with the CRVP work not only supported the action of commitment but was also respectful of the commitment to understanding capacity.

The CRVP Project Team was also committed to building internal capacity and cultural competency within the broader staff involved in this project and adjacent projects, such as the City Building Program. This enabled relationships to be fostered around areas of common interest and to work holistically.

The commitment to action through the CRVP included not only stepping into co-designing outcomes but also committing to continuing conversations and actions after a written document is complete; this process does not end when this document is written. The City of Calgary is working on new ways to strengthen relationships and work together to support the ecosystems in and around Calgary going forward.

Unlearning to Learn

To enter into Indigenous engagement in a good way, the CRVP Project Team engaged Dr. Gabrielle Lindstrom to develop a paper on decolonization and The City of Calgary, titled “Unlearning to Learn,”³⁶ which was submitted to the Project Team in September 2023. Dr. Lindstrom then facilitated a workshop with City staff who would be involved in the Water, Land, and Climate Summit process to review the history of colonization, Treaty-making, and truth, with the intention to support the CRVP Project Team working towards true reconciliation. This work directly contributed to the realization of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Call to Action #57: Education and Training.³⁷

“Unlearning to Learn” provided clarity on the historical tensions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations and began to identify what is at the root of the misunderstandings and the lack of knowledge that has shaped relationships over time. Simply put, that which has been taught has come from a colonial lens and has been constructed from “the settler narrative of nation-building, which has erased the truth of Canada as being founded on stolen land.”³⁸

The context provided throughout the paper introduced the CRVP as an invitation to become involved in ways determined by the Indigenous Nations, which involves a commitment to action and transparency.

As Lindstrom states,

“Given the pattern of extraction that has taken place and undoubtedly continues to take place in Indigenous communities, adopting a critical approach to engagement efforts is warranted, as is an acknowledgement of the importance of including Elders and Knowledge Keepers in all phases of engagement.”³⁹

36 Gabrielle Lindstrom, “Unlearning to Learn” (September 23, 2022), internal paper provided to The City of Calgary, submitted by Paulette Fox and Alexandra Hatcher.

37 TRC Call to Action #57: “We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.”

38 Lindstrom, 4.

39 Lindstrom, 23.

Indigenous Engagement Process

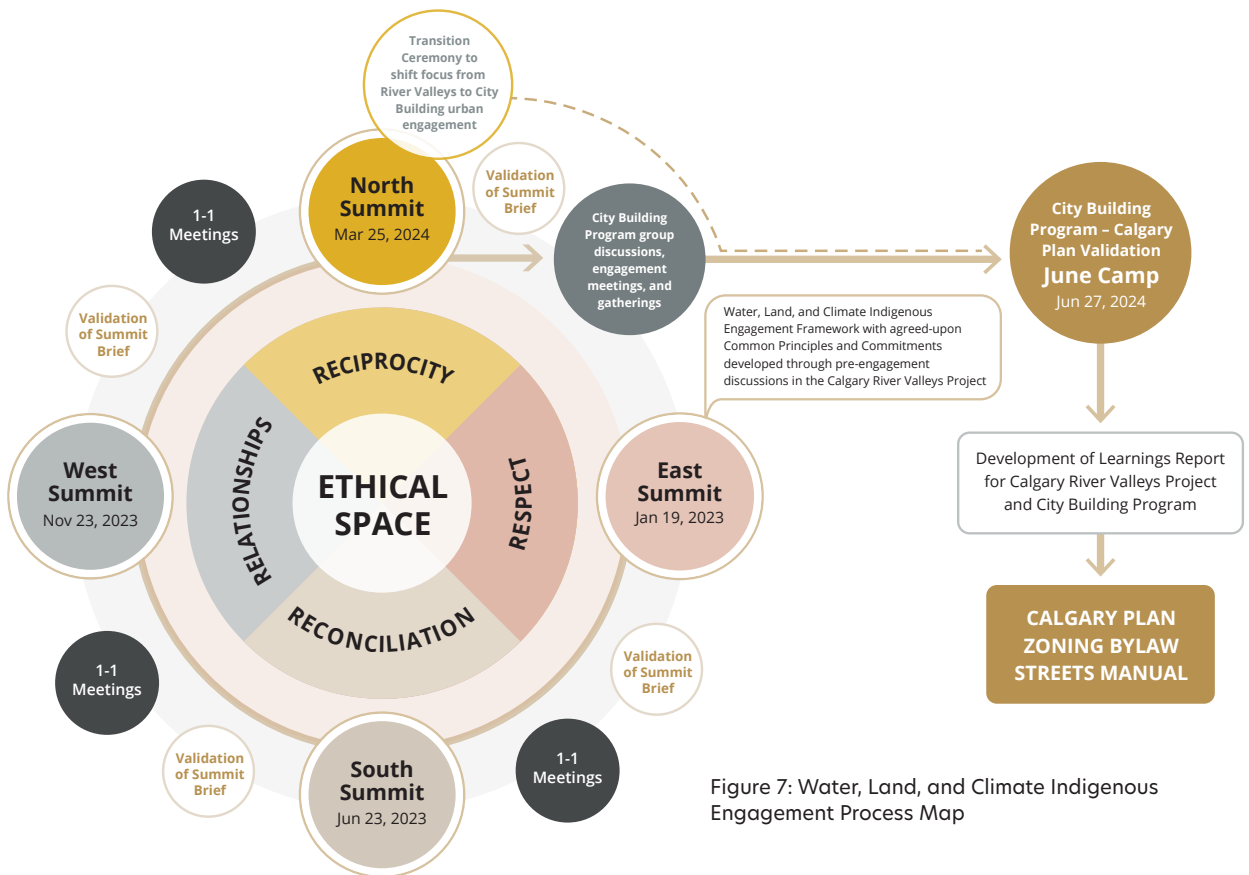


Figure 7: Water, Land, and Climate Indigenous Engagement Process Map

It was determined that a Directional Round would be the appropriate format to structure the bringing together of the Nations, City staff, and the Consultants working on CRVP. The timing of each Directional Summit was arranged as close to seasonal changes as possible, and the location of each Summit related to the direction in the round. Themes and approaches were based in the Common Principles and in the Commitments shared by the Nations with the CRVP Project Team in the pre-engagement process. The hosts listed in each Summit summary, and in the Biocultural Diversity Framework that provided the outline for grounding the Summits, were intended to provide the distinctions-based approach and inclusive approach to the work. The hosts were not intended to hold the responsibility of acting as organizer or scheduler, or to pay for any part of the process.

Invitations to all Treaty 7 First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta were distributed for each Summit by City staff. As relationships grew and were nurtured, additional Indigenous community members, groups, and organizations were invited to participate in the Summit discussions.

To start the process off in a good way, Elder Treffrey Deerfoot led a Pipe Ceremony on January 19, 2023 at the East Summit that launched the Indigenous engagement process for the Calgary River Valleys Project. Dave Pascut, with The City of Calgary's Engage department and a member of the CRVP Indigenous Engagement Project Team, shared the pipe, and a series of questions were put forward. Dave took responsibility for holding these questions and was accountable to them at the end of this project.

- How can the river valleys, as a subject and setting, be a foundation for direction setting for planning?
- What guidance can Nations offer The City of Calgary for building relationships with our Indigenous hosts and neighbours so we can ensure that all the cumulative knowledge they carry is embedded in how we think about and give shape to the river valleys?
- How can our colonial planning process evolve to learn more from Indigenous Peoples' teachings, ethics, and worldviews to produce different and better outcomes?
- How can we connect with the next generation of Indigenous youth to ensure they are involved in the future of Calgary and its built and natural spaces?

Water, Land, and Climate Summit Tables

EAST SUMMIT

	Blackfoot Confederacy Office Siksika Nation	
DATE	January 19, 2023	
LOCATION	Miskanawah Community Services Association	
THEME	RESPECT	
BIOCULTURAL	LANGUAGE	
THEME CONTEXT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placenames and linkages to oral customs with a focus on rivers and significant sites • 2013 flood impacts to Siksika Nation • Siksika-led recovery strategy • Lessons for The City of Calgary 	
WATER, LAND & CLIMATE	Flood & Drought: The Rivers Flow CRVP Connection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Resilience Approaches, Narratives, and Histories 	Other Connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought Resilience
BASE	DIVERSITY	

SOUTH SUMMIT

	Blood Tribe (Kainai Nation) Blackfeet Nation (Amskapi Piikani)	
DATE	June 7, 2023	
LOCATION	Ralph Klein Park	
THEME	RECONCILIATION	
BIOCULTURAL	LAND	
THEME CONTEXT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts of drought on fisheries in the headwaters • Transboundary tribal-led collaboration and conservation 	
WATER, LAND & CLIMATE	Land & Water: The Rivers' Health CRVP Connection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected Land and Water Planning 	Other Connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source Water Protection • Riparian Protection • Open Space Planning • Climate Adaptation
BASE	INCLUSION	

WEST SUMMIT

	Piikani Nation Tsuut'ina Nation	
DATE	November 23, 2023	
LOCATION	Seven Chiefs Sportsplex, Tsuut'ina Nation	
THEME	RELATIONSHIPS	
BIOCULTURAL	LIFEWAYS	
THEME CONTEXT	Using film, art, music, and spatial technologies to enhance language revitalization and cultural connections to land	
WATER, LAND & CLIMATE	Climate Change & the River Valley CRVP Connection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate change and its meaning for river valleys 	Other Connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Strategy Open Space Planning Flood Resilience Approaches ESA Work
BASE	EQUITY	

NORTH SUMMIT

	Stoney Nakoda Nations Métis Nation of Alberta	
DATE	March 25, 2024	
LOCATION	Fort Calgary (now known as The Confluence)	
THEME	RECIPROCITY	
BIOCULTURAL	LINKAGES	
THEME CONTEXT	Reflection & Celebration Does the Final Report/Plan offer opportunities for actionable results, and how will effectiveness be measured? Did we capture and use information meaningfully and evaluate efficiencies as a group?	
WATER, LAND & CLIMATE	Landscapes & Land Uses CRVP Connection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Land Uses Cultural Expression in the Landscape 	Other Connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Space Plan Climate Adaptation Drought Resilience Flood Resilience Parks Management
BASE	JUSTICE	

Validation

After each Summit was completed, a briefing was drafted that included recognition of participants, a summary of process, and an overview of what was heard and what was shared in the discussions.

Each Summit Briefing draft was then distributed to those who participated in the discussion to validate the content. Participants were invited to provide feedback, edits, removal, or addition of information in the document. The final four Summit Briefings are included within the appendices of this report.

One-on-One Discussions: Nation and City

Between each Summit, invitations were sent to Summit participants to meet with the Project Team on a one-on-one basis. This offered the opportunity for each Nation or individual to raise any specific issues, concerns, questions, or feedback in relation to their context and/or expertise and to the projects and initiatives that were locally based within the Nation. The information gathered through these one-on-one discussions was then incorporated into the development, design, and delivery of the following Summit.

Additionally, the CRVP Project Team was invited to Nation meetings to share information on the CRVP and to learn about Nation-led initiatives that connected with this work. For example, in November 2023, the Blackfoot Confederacy invited the CRVP Team to share an overview of the project with the Guardianship of the East Slopes of the Rocky Mountains.

Transition

The North Summit marked the end of the CRVP-hosted Directional Round and Water, Land, & Climate Summits, and a move to the CBP urban engagement phase of work that had begun in the Fall of 2023, building on the relationships and discussions initiated through CRVP. To officially signify this change in focus, Paulette Fox and Siksika Elder Treffrey Deerfoot invited two youth, The City staff responsible for the Calgary River Valleys Project, and the City Building Program staff to participate in a ceremony to mark the transition of the discussions from the river valleys to the future community planning for The City of Calgary.

As part of the Ceremony, it was shared that the discussions about water, land, and climate will not end with this process but will continue as relationships deepen, actions are taken, and issues are addressed.

City Building Program

PROJECT PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

In a rapidly changing city, the goal of the City Building Program is to help The City of Calgary strengthen its city-wide plans and tools so they can work together seamlessly.⁴⁰ The purpose of the City Building Program Indigenous Engagement was to work together with Treaty 7 First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta (Districts 5 & 6), and urban Indigenous Calgarians to inform the development of policy and regulations within the City Building Program.

The City Building Program focused on three main streams of work:

- The merger of the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) with the Calgary Transportation Plan into the Calgary Plan
- The transition of the Land Use Bylaw to Zoning Bylaw
- The development of the Streets Manual, formerly known as the Complete Streets Policy & Guides⁴¹

The stated goal of the City Building Program is to develop plans and tools that will enable the advancement of five outcomes over time:

1. Improve housing security and choice.
2. Support economic development.
3. Build a fair and equitable Calgary.
4. Act on climate change.
5. Enhance relationships with Indigenous communities.⁴²

INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Given the vast scope and truncated timeframe of the City Building Program, the Indigenous Engagement took as its foundation the work initiated through the Calgary River Valleys Project (CRVP), including the Common Principles and Commitments, and the development of a Biocultural Diversity Framework to guide discussion themes. The decision was made to build on the learnings and guidance provided through CRVP and to focus active engagement on urban Indigenous voices and a youth demographic (under 35 years of age).

Stepping into urban Indigenous perspectives, the City Building Program Indigenous Engagement Project Team met with individuals, groups, and organizations that live and or work within Calgary, to engage in discussions about the issues and ideas they have for the future of the city.

⁴⁰ Calgary, "City Building Program," <https://www.calgary.ca/planning/city-building-program.html>.

⁴¹ Calgary, "City Building Program."

⁴² Calgary, "City Building Program."

Shared Values

At the onset the project, members of the City Building Program Indigenous Engagement Team established Shared Values to provide a baseline for interactions and relationships among team members. These Shared Values were designed to be in alignment with the Common Principles developed under the CRVP and to provide direction as processes were developed, discussions deepened, and recommendations emerged:

- **Respect**, which is supported by Deep Listening and humility;
- **Truth**, which is based in honesty and courage;
- **Compassion**, which leads our heart-centred work;
- **Openness**, which is cultivated through patience, kindness, and anticipation of learning; and
- **Safety**, which relies on awareness, empathy, and creating supportive environments.

Distinctions-Based Approach & Relationship Building

To continue a distinctions-based approach, each Nation was provided the opportunity to share issues, concerns, and ideas specific to their needs on the topic of Future Community Planning. The inclusion of City Building within the Water, Land, and Climate Summits, as well as participating in introduction meetings and Indigenous-led organization meetings, engaging in small group discussions, and holding one-on-one meetings with Nations and Indigenous individuals living and working in Calgary, together provided The City with insight into Indigenous-specific concerns and ideas that connected with the City Building Program streams of work and The City's work in general. Each meeting was an opportunity for the City Building staff to start a new relationship or deepen an existing one.

Indigenous Engagement Approach

From November 2023 to May 2024, the City Building Program Team participated in existing organization-led gatherings or meetings, engaged in introductory meetings, participated in the Water, Land, and Climate Summits, hosted small group discussions, and held one-on-one meetings to further relationship building, share information on the City Building Program, and discuss questions relevant to the development of policy within the City Building Program.

To ensure as broad participation as possible, a survey was also made available to those unable to attend in-person discussions.



Figure 8: City Building Program Indigenous Engagement Timeline

Water, Land, and Climate Summits

The CRVP Indigenous engagement process initiated in January 2023 included “future community planning” as a topic that was the precursor to the official establishment of the City Building Program Indigenous Engagement process. At the East (January 2023) and South (June 2023) Summits, Future Community Planning was included as a table topic hosted by the then-lead for the development of the City Building Program. The City Building Program Indigenous Engagement Team was then officially included in the West (November 2023) and North (March 2024) Summits, with the table topic “Future Community Planning and City Building” and questions designed to support discussion around the activation of UNDRIP in urban planning.

Over the course of the Water, Land, and Climate Summits, table discussions included participants from the Kainai Nation, Siksika Nation, Piikani Nation, and Amskapi Piikani, as well as the Blackfoot Confederacy Office, the Tsuut’ina Nation, the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 and then Districts 5 and 6, as well as Indigenous-led organizations and groups working in Calgary. These conversations revealed that further relationship development should focus on urban Indigenous organizations, groups, and individuals, and specifically youth, postsecondary students, and young adults living and working in Calgary.

As the Water, Land, and Climate Summit series concluded its Directional Round at the North Summit in March 2024, a Transition Ceremony was held to transition the guiding focus from river valleys and watershed management to community planning.

One-on-One Discussions: Nation and City

Following participation in the Summit series, City Building staff invited participants to a one-on-one discussion with the City Building Indigenous Engagement Team to further discuss ideas, issues, or concerns in more detail. Several meetings took place that provided additional context for the planning documents, as well as clarity on language and expectations, and relationships were nurtured through continued conversations.

Introductory Meetings

Urban engagement began with introductory meetings to gauge the level of willingness among Indigenous organizations and community members to participate in the engagement process.

Through these introductory meetings, it became apparent that The City of Calgary had work to do in mending and healing broken relationships in the community. A number of organizations and individuals who were invited to participate declined, didn’t show up, or chose to opt out of invited gatherings. The comments provided cited a lack of willingness to take action on information shared, a lack of follow-up, and extractive and tokenistic behaviours that have left Indigenous individuals and communities wary of working with the municipality in any capacity.

Small Group Discussions and Indigenous-led Organization Meetings

In order to gain urban Indigenous Perspective, the City Building Indigenous Engagement Team organized small group discussions with young professionals who are living and working within Calgary to discuss issues, ideas, and concerns as they relate to the city’s future.

These conversations were focused around a presentation of what had taken place so far in the City Building Program, how information shared through the Water, Land, and Climate Summits had been incorporated into the Calgary Plan specifically, and how approaches to Indigenous engagement at The City are shifting to be more inclusive from the start of projects or initiatives.

Specific engagement tactics, questions, and strategies shifted to allow the Indigenous Engagement Team to be responsive to the needs of the individuals and groups they were engaging with in the moment. The conversations were facilitated and guided in a way that ensured the participants had the opportunity to share what was important to them; The City and the Engagement Team's job was to listen.

The City Building Program Team was also invited to attend a number of already-scheduled meetings of Indigenous-led organizations. The role of the team in these settings was to visit, listen, and build relationships with participants.

Survey

A survey was provided to those who were not able to attend the meetings or small group discussion gatherings so that there was an opportunity for them to also share their thoughts on the issues of land use, housing, services for Indigenous Peoples, and climate.

June Camp Overview: Calgary Plan Discussion

On June 27, 2024, the City Building Program Team hosted a gathering with Indigenous Nations, organizations, and community members to share the draft Calgary Plan and Indigenous-focused policies for discussion and feedback.

Starting in the morning, City staff shared how information gathered from the Water, Land, and Climate Summits, one-on-one meetings, and small group discussions has influenced the drafting of the Calgary Plan and related policies. This was followed by an activity where participants had the opportunity to view and comment on the Calgary Plan's draft Land Acknowledgement. The afternoon was dedicated to a series of table discussions, each focusing on a specific topic: Truth and Reconciliation, Collaboration and Relationships, Natural Systems, and Indicators and Accountability.

Discussions were primarily focused on the various sections of the Calgary Plan and the inclusion of Indigenous policies within the document. Each table had a facilitator and notetaker to capture conversations and highlight any specific changes or suggestions that participants wanted to see within the Calgary Plan. The following is an overview of these six recurring themes consistent throughout almost all discussions:

- Truth
- Balance/Imbalance and the Land
- Relationships
- Language
- Engagement
- Transformation

Detailed discussion summaries collected from each table are included in the Appendices.

Truth

Participants expressed that to genuinely achieve Reconciliation, we must first understand the Truth. This involves unlearning, listening to past injustices, and being truthful about the history of The City and the country. During the Land Acknowledgement discussions, an Indigenous participant pointed out the tendency to romanticize the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and settlers as opposed to viewing what occurred from a place of truth. In order for reconciliation to occur, it is important to recognize and acknowledge the harms that have been perpetuated and the trauma and anger that continue to be felt to this day.

Balance/Imbalance and the Land

It was shared that taking things from the land and replacing with things that do not belong there creates an imbalance. All things are connected, and working together creates a healthier balance for all.

- Certain plants grow together.
- Certain plants require birds to propagate.
- Beavers set up dens that build up a filter from the plants.
- Aquatic plants clean the water.

The colonial concept of ownership over the land was raised as a significant issue. Ownership of land, with its focus on who owns what, is not part of Indigenous worldviews. Planning, stewardship, guardianship, and caretaking is everyone's responsibility.

For Indigenous residents and Nations in and around Calgary, there are currently no official or legal ways to stop development if The City decides they want the land. There is a sense of “why bother identifying sites” if those sites will not be protected in the long term.

Relationships

The City must ensure that it is not only extracting knowledge from communities but also realize that building trusting relationships is what leads to sharing. To build proper relationships, The City must understand where people are coming from without making inferences or assumptions.

When considering Indigenous involvement, The City's project timelines need to be realistic and respectful of Indigenous ways of being. Time needs to be allocated for visiting and for bringing information back to the Nations for discussion. This is all part of relationship building and building trust between the Nation and The City.

Trust requires action and doing what you say you are going to do, not just words. Building and maintaining trusting relationships involves:

- Following up and sharing back information;
- Including Indigenous participation at all levels;
- Including Nations and Indigenous-led organizations from the beginning;
- Committing to continuous check-ins and validation before moving forward with any practice.

Language

Almost every table talked about language, and specifically the language used within the Calgary Plan. Most importantly, the document needs to be written in plain language so that everyone who is going to read and use the document can truly understand its intent.

Should – and passive language

The word “should” is passive; it does not engender action. Rather than being seen as an obligation or requirement, a statement that includes “should” may be considered as more of a nice-to-do, a suggestion. Replace the use of the word “should” with “shall” or “will” to show a commitment to the work of co-stewardship and collaboration.

Participants noted that there are a number of passive phrases throughout the document, and specifically the word “consider.” These must be changed to stronger words such as “embed” or be removed altogether.

The language in the Calgary Plan needs to reflect the intentionality of The City to change its approaches and responsibility to working toward equitable environments.

Indigenous Languages

Not everything is easily translated into English, and as has been mentioned in previous discussions, “English can mess things up.” Translating sections or concepts of the Calgary Plan into different Indigenous languages would be seen not only as a commitment to upholding UNDRIP and Indigenous language rights but would also provide Indigenous Peoples with the opportunity to see the Plan in their own language in ways that make sense to them, which can contribute to shared understanding.

Language is the focal point of Indigenous existence, and The City needs to understand the significance of how everything is connected—for example, sites are “lifelines” to Indigenous languages and cultures.

Language is also an integral component of the Biocultural Diversity Framework that the engagement process for both the Calgary River Valleys Project and City Building Program were based on.

Engagement

Historically, and typically, The City has tended to engage Indigenous people (and other consultation groups) in the middle or near the end of a project. Ensuring that Indigenous involvement is incorporated from the start of a project, planning process, or policy review will provide more opportunity for discussion and inclusion of Indigenous knowledge.

The current colonial-based structure of engaging is not set up for this way of working. Thought needs to be given to changing the systems that have oppressed and, in many cases, harmed Indigenous Peoples. Knowledge shared with non-Indigenous communities, including the municipality, needs protecting and translating in a collaborative and respectful way.

The word “engagement” triggers a particular path and practice that follows a very Western system. Consider a different word to describe what is taking place when working with Indigenous Nations, communities, peoples, and organizations. There needs to be a paradigm shift to include an Indigenous knowledge base in daily life and give oral histories as much credence as written knowledge.

Transformation

Treffrey Deerfoot pointed out that **now** is the time to move past reconciliation. While acknowledging the past is important, Treffrey voiced that reconciliation is just apology and “backtracking”—the term itself holds few aspirations toward making real and lasting changes. Instead, Treffrey asked that we move on to “transformation,” a word that the group repeatedly returned to in the discussion. Treffrey defined transformation as “making real change to move forward without erasing the past.”

The Calgary Plan must be a living document in order to last. It must be a document that is regularly revisited, reviewed, and maintained, having both City Councillors and Nation leaders, along with City staff and Nation staff, involved so there are no surprises. Include in the Plan how critical continuous guidance from Elders is, but also include the need for this work to be resourced appropriately, as a demonstration of The City’s commitment to reciprocity and working towards equitable environments.

A recommendation was also made to hold Ceremony for the document when it is brought forward to City Council, to acknowledge the collaborative work and the relationships that have been established and strengthened through the process.

Now is the time to build up communities, starting with policy building and establishing strong foundations. Transformation implies a continuous process. By revisiting it regularly, policy makers can stay attuned to all situations and be prepared for any changes in the relationship, thus making changes relevant, long-lasting, and, importantly, both transformative and collaborative.

CITY BUILDING INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW TABLE

Introduction Meetings Held	6
Community Meetings Attended	2
Small Group Discussions Held	3
Small Group Discussion Participants	22
Engagement Survey Responses Received	18
Water, Land, and Climate Summit Indigenous Participants	68 total
East	7
South	19
West	11
North	31
One-on-One Meetings Held	7
June Camp: Calgary Plan Discussion	31
CEREMONIES	
Pipe Ceremony (East Summit)	January 19, 2023
Transition Ceremony (North Summit)	March 25, 2024
Beaver Bundle Ceremony	May 24-25, 2024
Water Ceremony	June 9, 2024

SHARING

What We Heard: Calgary River Valleys Project

Land-Based Planning

- Integrate place-based, context-specific Indigenous knowledge in City plans and policies.
- Protect river systems, ecology, connectivity.
- Consider cumulative impacts.
- Focus on riverbank protection, restoration, and monitoring.

Supporting Existing Initiatives

- Facilitate City and Nation collaboration for upstream land and water protection.
- Focus on Nation-driven flood and drought resilience work.

Belonging and Celebration

- Create spaces for Indigenous cultural practice and Ceremony in river valleys.
- Increase visibility of Indigenous languages and signage in river valleys.
- Promote Indigenous tourism and economic activities.

City Coordination and Process

- Streamline City asks and coordinate initiatives.
- Continue to advance City cross-cultural training.
- Start all land- and water-based projects with Ceremony, demonstrating The City's commitment to working in a Good Way.

At the Pipe Ceremony held on January 19, 2023, that launched the Water, Land, and Climate Summit process, Dave Pascut from the City of Calgary's Engage Department was invited to be The City of Calgary's representative who shared the pipe with Siksika Elder Treffrey Deerfoot. As part of the Ceremony, a series of questions were put forward and Mr. Pascut was responsible for holding these questions and being accountable to them at the Transition Ceremony during the South Summit on March 25, 2024. The following is an account of the questions and the cumulated responses over the almost eighteen months of discussions.

How can the river valleys, as a subject and setting, be a foundation for planning direction setting?

Rivers are sacred. Increasing Indigenous presence and visibility in the river valleys, as well as spaces for inclusion and Ceremony, is a recommendation that can be supported by The City of Calgary and the Nations together. Determining how to work more collectively is not only a desire but a need as the issues that the Nations and the municipality are grappling with can only be truly addressed by working together.

The lessons learned and recommendations shared in the CRVP may be incorporated through policy development for river valleys and by identifying areas for partnership and ongoing collaboration. By not only including Indigenous engagement from the start of a project, policy review, or program development but by also learning what each Nation is currently working on, and how The City can support those initiatives and projects, true reciprocity is supported.

To this end, Indigenous involvement must be embedded into City processes from the start. Involvement cannot be just symbolic inclusion. Understanding the importance of protocol, language, and listening as learning is critical. And to learn fully and deeply, one needs to be ready and respectful of the Elders who are sharing their knowledge and wisdom.

The importance of respectful dialogue and information sharing is fundamental as this helps to build trust between Indigenous communities and The City. Listening leads to learning, and learning leads to action. Commitment to action—one of the primary commitments of the CRVP Indigenous Engagement—is vital to nurturing a trusting relationship and to moving initiatives forward together.

The need for active leadership-to-leadership discussions has been a common thread through not only the discussions around the CRVP but other City initiatives as well. Leadership within Nations and at The City set the stage for actions through administration and into community. Strong relationships at all levels are required for success.

Treaties need to be referenced and respected, recognized and reaffirmed. The late Stoney Elder Sykes Powderface (1933–2022) likened Treaties to a marriage: they don't just disappear; as long as the river flows, that is how long the relationship is. According to Blackfoot Elder Peter Weasel Moccasin, for the Blackfoot it is about renewal.

Policy and bylaw reviews should be taking these strategic issues into consideration and actioning accordingly, with specific reference to addressing harvesting in riparian areas; permitting for picking, foraging, and harvesting; Indigenous involvement in surveying and monitoring; and how best to support the stewarding and transferring of knowledge from generation to generation.

What guidance can Nations offer The City of Calgary for building relationships with our Indigenous hosts and neighbours so we can ensure that all the cumulative knowledge they carry is embedded in how we think about and give shape to the river valleys?

A number of recommendations and ideas were put forward over the course of the CRVP Water, Land, and Climate Summits and one-on-one discussions with Treaty 7 First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and Indigenous Peoples living and working in Calgary that impact the work of The City's water, land, and climate teams directly. The comments, questions, and concerns raised that relate to implementation of these recommendations will require internal decisions at The City regarding staffing, funding, and other resources to directly support this work from a place of intention. To make impactful change, internal systems of resourcing and allocation of capacity must align with the needs of the community.

The integration of Indigenous knowledge and weaving place-based Indigenous knowledge into the policies, plans, programs, and initiatives at The City requires new approaches to partnership, relationship, and actions. Holding meetings and gatherings with Traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who hold this knowledge, as well as reviewing written sources of information such as books and papers on these topics, can build understanding. Once information is integrated into draft project outputs, this information should be reviewed by Traditional Knowledge Keepers, Elders, Nation representatives, and The City of Calgary's Indigenous Relations Office to ensure it is represented and integrated well.

Consultation is a requirement when doing work along the bed or shore of a river, and The City has internally developed a comprehensive guide on Consultation, including opportunities for the process to provide meaningful outcomes. The standards of practice for how Indigenous communities can play an active role in river and riparian area projects—for example, restoration and monitoring—need to be considered in all of the implementation of work related to City policy review and writing, plan creation, and program development.

Calgary rivers were host to many traditional Indigenous uses. The City of Calgary needs to continue to work with Indigenous communities to ensure that Indigenous knowledge and traditional use is considered an integral aspect of the protection practices. The initiative to provide funding to advance Traditional Land Use Studies in The City—for example, specific to areas along the river valleys—is a good start.

The work being done with Parks, the Green Line Project, climate teams, and other departments across The City is beginning to demonstrate how various projects can work together to understand where intersections exist and to look at The City's work holistically. Removing the silos and barriers to truly support integrated work is required for success going forward.

How can we connect with the next generation of Indigenous youth to ensure they are involved in the future of Calgary and its built and natural spaces?

Involvement of youth and young people in learning how to take care of the land and to engage in passing on Traditional Knowledge has been raised throughout the CRVP discussions. Working in schools to share information with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and engaging youth in water monitoring and other activities are possible ways suggested to encourage and advance youth involvement.

How can our colonial planning process evolve to learn more from Indigenous teachings, ethics, and worldviews to produce different and better outcomes?

A number of recommendations were made that relate to specific outcomes and measures for the CRVP as well as other projects across The City of Calgary to support increasing awareness and making changes to how The City functions and implements actions in relation to the river valleys:

- Replace invasive species with native species when planting.
- Increase signage around The City to explain the environmental and cultural significance of the plants, fish, and animals in a particular area.
- Be mindful of the importance of language and words that are being used; transition from using paternalistic language to inclusive language in everything from interpretive panels in-situ to communication materials about initiatives to policy.
- Be respectful of the many languages used in Treaty 7, and work with language speakers for appropriate translations.
- Determine how First Nations Water Needs Assessments correlate with water security.
- Consider the distribution and quality of animal habitats.
- Establishing a riparian monitoring program that is Indigenous-led would provide opportunities to weave Indigenous knowledge with data collection and stewarding the waterways.

There are a number of opportunities to support and fund ongoing Indigenous-led watershed stewardship projects that will help achieve shared objectives for watershed protection. These need further exploration and discussion to determine appropriate approaches for implementation.

Further discussion is also needed to determine what implementation may look like from a holistic perspective. Open communication needs to take place about other projects, initiatives, or programs within the Nations in and around The City of Calgary. These may be currently underway or in the process of being planned, and discussions should be held to identify where The City can support and participate together with the Nations in moving forward collective outcomes.

What guidance can Nations offer The City of Calgary for building relationships with our Indigenous hosts and neighbours so we can ensure that all the cumulative knowledge they carry is embedded in how we think about and give shape to the river valleys?

The City of Calgary literature often refers to “our city” or “our rivers,” as if we are owners of the land and water. Local Indigenous worldviews recognize that we cannot own or control the environment and that attention needs to be paid to its needs and to respecting those needs. Within The City, those in Climate and Environment need to be careful of possessive language with regards to natural systems.

The City needs to follow up with Indigenous Nations to learn what is in place from a governance perspective in relation to land and water caretaking—for example, bylaws or other mechanisms regarding protection of plants.

Establish systems so that Indigenous Peoples can be involved in projects prior to blueprint development. This could include involvement at pre-application, approval, and then Ceremony to “close the loop” on a project. The City of Calgary needs to build capacity to invite Indigenous consultants into the process from the beginning so that proper protocols can be followed.

Education, including on-site signage and online education, that express Indigenous values combined with western methods is also crucial—for example, including “Water is medicine” as part of water conservation education messaging in public washrooms.

When working on a project where there is a groundbreaking, ensure that the land knows what is coming. Holding Ceremony before ground is broken on any project is a requirement.

What We Heard: City Building Program

Action and Accountability

- That The City prioritize inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in all matters for or about the land.
- That Indigenous Peoples see themselves in the city, in a historical and contemporary context.
- That there are appropriate spaces throughout the city for Indigenous Peoples to practise their cultures.
- That The City of Calgary actively work holistically, connecting departments and business units that are engaging and collaborating with Indigenous Nations, Peoples, and organizations on City projects.
- That The City of Calgary's Indigenous Relations Office and the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC) be considered partners in discussions and collaborative actions with Indigenous Peoples and in the development and implementation of City policy, planning, projects, and initiatives.
- That this work is resourced appropriately, with funds available to support reciprocity and decolonization, and that the capacity is available within The City to support this new way of working. This includes but is not limited to budget allocations, staffing, and adjustment of project timelines to support respectful and meaningful relationship building.

Acknowledge, Understand, and Respect Treaty Agreement

- That The City recognizes and respects Treaty Rights in their policies, plans, programs, and processes.
- That Treaty 7 First Nations can fulfill their caretaker commitments to Creator through accommodations made in places and spaces around the city.
- That meaningful policy is developed that is based in mutual benefits that clearly establish significant outcomes for local Indigenous communities.
- That Indigenous Peoples who come into Calgary can practise their rights.

Relationship Building and Mutual Benefit

- That The City work towards the establishment of clear policy on how The City engages with Indigenous Nations, Indigenous-led organizations, and Indigenous Peoples, based in UNDRIP.
- That The City continue working on programs and initiatives, ensuring that Indigenous worldviews and perspectives are respected.
- That to genuinely achieve reconciliation the City must commit to truth telling and building non-extractive, transparent, and mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous Nations, Indigenous-led organizations, and Indigenous peoples.
- That The City avoid taking a pan-Indigenous approach when developing policies, plans, programs, and processes relating to Indigenous peoples.

Leadership to Leadership Collaboration and Cooperation

- That conversation and relationship building from Mayor and Chief and Council to Council continue to support working together for mutual benefit.
- That Senior Administration to Senior Administration focus on establishing lines of communication and working in respect, reconciliation, relationship, and reciprocity.

Three primary guiding statements were provided by The City of Calgary leadership that formed the basis for the development of the Calgary Plan by the City Building Program.

- Shape the future of our community and our natural systems.
- Enhance relationships with Indigenous communities.
- Act boldly on climate change.

The conversations held with Indigenous Nations, communities, organizations, and individuals throughout the City Building Program Indigenous Engagement process resulted in discussing not only high-level policy but also specific ideas, concerns, and comments about engagement processes at The City of Calgary as well as environmental, social, and economic realities facing Indigenous community members living and working in and around Calgary.

City Engagement Process

Consultation and collaboration is valued by community members and Nations. However, those who are constantly asked to participate and contribute are experiencing burnout, often times being asked the same questions by the same department within The City over and over again. There is a desire to be proactive on issues and to work together, but in the past there has been a history of engagement without relationship building or collaborative actions, which has resulted in processes feeling extractive or tokenistic.

Relationships suffer when there is no action, no outcome, no follow-up, and no accountability. It is clear to Indigenous communities that City departments are not communicating internally, and that has impacted the desire and willingness to say “yes” when asked to participate in a process or discussion.

It was suggested that City staff involved with Indigenous engagement take a trauma-informed approach when dealing with vulnerable populations, and that coming in with a list of questions does not allow for a relationship to be developed. Cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity training was also recommended as there has been harm caused as a result of individuals in past processes not understanding protocol, differences among the Treaty 7 First Nations, and the history of the Treaty 7 region.

Many conversations cautioned that engagement should be designed with an awareness of taking a pan-Indigenous approach. Not all First Nations are the same, and not all Indigenous Peoples are the same. Understanding the local Indigenous context, including social and cultural histories, should inform how Nations and communities are included in all processes that involve Indigenous engagement.

Strategic Issues

The engagement communicated that The City needs to be accountable to the actions it commits to making. This includes not only taking responsibility but also having processes in place to be answerable to the action taken, or not taken, and mechanisms for redress if communities want additional information or explanation.

Accountability and taking responsibility is a key component to building trust, and healthy relationships cannot exist without trust at their core.

To that end, the City Building Program Indigenous Engagement Team heard that The City should prioritize healing and creating meaningful reciprocal (mutually beneficial) relationships with Treaty 7 First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, urban Indigenous-led organizations, and Indigenous Peoples living and working in Calgary. Inauthentic and non-intentional processes that ask for a lot from community with nothing being given in return—in some cases not even a “thank you”—have caused substantial damage over the years.

Collaboration should be embedded from start to finish throughout a project, including planning for Indigenous protocols, cultural practices and perspectives including Oral Tradition, performing a smudge, considering when and where to hold Ceremony, and language use.

Historical and culturally significant events and sites in Calgary should be acknowledged with signage developed by Indigenous Peoples. There are already some examples across the city, and more opportunities for learning will help with building understanding and compassion among Calgarians.

As has been mentioned before, the Engagement Team heard that there is a strong need for better communication between City departments and clarity around who is doing what internally, what engagement processes are being conducted, and which Nations are involved and to what level. Indigenous communities are involved in a large amount of work in all sectors of society and orders of government, and in the community. Being asked the same questions several times by different departments or Business Units is not only inefficient but is also frustrating for overburdened individuals, organizations, and communities.

The role of the Indigenous Relations Office (IRO) was raised several times. There is confusion as to whether the IRO is considered the primary contact point for all Indigenous-related work at The City and who in the office is responsible for which portfolios or projects. There is a need to clarify and strengthen the mandate and utilization of the IRO and, correspondingly, to strengthen communications about these roles, both within The City and externally. Connected to this but also separate is the relationship of the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC), who should be involved with policy development and implementation, and accountability of actions by The City. The role of CAUAC needs to also be clarified for City staff, as there is a great opportunity to work with the members of CAUAC, whose networks, experience, and expertise can greatly inform and support City projects and relationship building in community.

Environmental

The Climate Crisis was raised as a significant issue in several conversations. Drought and water management is a serious concern, and there is a need to learn more about how The City is managing water safety for not only residents of Calgary but also for those downstream living in the Nations in southern Alberta.

There were many suggestions on how to prioritize native species to manage climate risk, such as providing incentives and supports for community gardens with native species, as well as water and land management.

Social

Supports and resources are needed for Indigenous organizations and community members dealing with housing, addiction, mental health concerns, and the relationship with the Calgary Police Service. These are complex issues with no quick solutions, but in working together better, more possibilities emerge of finding ways to address social issues that work for Indigenous communities specifically.

A desire also exists for more community spaces to practise and connect with culture and community. This connects to other comments about wanting access to natural spaces for cultural and spiritual practices, as well as identifying urban spaces for gathering, visiting, and professional networking.

The Indigenous history of this land lacks visibility within the urban environment. The handful of murals and public art pieces installed in the downtown and Beltline areas of Calgary, or in specific sites such as Nose Hill, were identified as a good start but insufficient to raise the awareness of Indigenous history across The City. There is a need for better place marking, signage sharing the Indigenous history of this land, and incorporating the languages of Treaty 7 throughout the city.

Economic

A number of suggestions were put forward to actively support Indigenous economic opportunities and growth through scholarship and job placement, loan guarantee programs, parallel procurement strategies, real estate partnerships, and establishment of Urban Reserves. These directly support self-sufficiency and have both direct and indirect economic advantages to the community overall.

Several ideas were discussed on how to attract Indigenous talent through participation in Indigenous job fairs such as the Community Futures Treaty 7 Symposium, participating in public-facing Indigenous business listings.

ACTIONING

Next Steps for Ways of Working Toward Equitable Environments

During the many gatherings, meetings, and discussions over the course of the past three years, a number of common threads emerged that were deepened through story and an understanding by The City of Calgary staff of the need for accountability within community relationships. The Deep Listening that happened throughout the CRVP and CBP Indigenous Engagement conversations has resulted in direct actions being taken at the ground level, as well as in new ways of working being embedded within the high-level policy work being led by Water Resources, City Building, and other departments throughout The City.

As part of the Common Principles and Commitments that formed the foundation of the CRVP and CBP Indigenous Engagement approach and framework, having “openness” as to what the final outcomes would be was necessary. This provided the opportunity for the community to lead the way, and for The City of Calgary to take a step back from their conventional practice of coming in with the intended outcomes, programs, and actions already written.

As The City works towards equitable environments, measuring success and ensuring accountability to the openness needed, new ways of working and developing systems to support shared responsibility are required. The inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in the Calgary Plan and its related policies is one step, and the flow down to plans, projects, and initiatives needs to have UNDRIP at the top, feeding down into the work, and TRC Calls to Action at the foundation, feeding up.

Co-production of Indigenous Indicators to Action Reconciliation at The City of Calgary

INDIGENOUS INDICATORS

The use of a Biocultural Diversity Framework approach to both the Calgary River Valleys Project and the City Building Program Indigenous Engagement provided the opportunity to ensure that land, language, and lifeways were incorporated into discussions, were reflected in the themes for each Summit and Camp, and were integral to the development of the actions which informed the writing of the Calgary Plan. Building on this foundation, the Indigenous

Indicators and measurement system puts forth a rights-based approach for co-developing meaningful metrics and indicators⁴³ for Nations to evaluate and report on The City's accountability to Indigenous Policy goals and objectives. Input from the City Building June Camp, where the concept was introduced, is also briefly captured and includes advice and guidance from delegates moving forward.

Development of metrics and indicators from a place of Shared Values⁴⁴ is the first step in establishing a measurement system that works for both Indigenous communities and for those working within the western system of a municipal government. With the agreed-upon Common Principles and Commitments forming a solid foundation from which to work together through the CRVP and CBP Indigenous Engagement, these same Values and principles will further inform the work of co-producing evaluative mechanisms to report on The City's effectiveness and efficiency with respect to Indigenous Policy goals and objectives.

Clarifying the Calgary Plan's intent in the short-, medium-, and long-term needs to be clearly stated to capture the thirty-year life of the plan. Continuing to build relationships and sharing information and opportunities to participate in everything from policy development to actions supporting stewardship and safeguarding of the land are vitally important. Additionally, taking time to understand the visions of Indigenous Nations in parallel along the same horizons will be an important step moving forward in working with communities one-on-one.

Importantly, the focus of indicator work will be on four Articles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act⁴⁵ (UNDRIPA)—Articles 11, 21, 24, and 29—that have been specifically called out by the Planning and Development Services Department in accordance with Article 43, which states that “the rights recognized herein constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world.”⁴⁶ UNDRIP as the framework for implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action further aligns with respect and recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty rights in accordance with Section 35 of the Constitution.



Figure 9: The framework for implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action is the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

43 Paulette Fox, *Indigenous Health Indicators: A Participatory Approach to Co-designing Indicators to Monitor and Measure First Nations Health*, The Alberta First Nations Governance Centre (2018), 8.

44 Robin Gregory, et al. "Values-Based Measures of Impacts to Indigenous Health," *Risk Analysis* 36, no. 8 (2016): 1581-1588, <https://doi.org/10.1111/risa.12533>.

45 Canada, *Background: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, 2021, <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/declaration/about-apropos.html>.

46 United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (New York: United Nations, 2007), https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf.

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The indicator work will highlight the importance of partnerships with Treaty 7 First Nations and nurturing Indigenous-led programming based on the correlation between the health and well-being of Indigenous Peoples and that of species and ecosystems. Indigenous languages and cultures are founded upon diverse ecosystems and abundance of species.⁴⁷ In addition, these natural systems have been greatly influenced by Indigenous Peoples' governance based on natural law.⁴⁸ The concept referred to here is Biocultural Diversity,⁴⁹ where the worldview of Indigenous Peoples, and connection to land, language, and lifeways, illustrate the interconnectedness of all living beings.

Conversely, western economies driven by resource extraction, agriculture, and transportation sectors, among others, have in turn contributed considerably to both the increased land use and carbon footprint. The resultant scarcity impacts not only Indigenous cultures and languages, including the very practice of rights,⁵⁰ but at the same time we are losing species at unprecedented rates and experiencing extreme weather events; our planet and the human race are under threat and our collective future is entirely uncertain.

Reversing species extinction and stabilizing climate are interdependent phenomena that intersect with the assertion of Indigenous Peoples' inherent rights in a fundamental way.⁵¹ Assertion of rights by Indigenous Peoples, including settling existing land claims, goes further than science and policy alone can do at the rates required to meet targets, both domestically and internationally. It is

not that there is a deficit of science and policy; rather it is the lack of action by decision makers⁵² that has been called out as being the critical constraint to meeting both biodiversity and climate targets domestically and, by extension, internationally. The environment, including the interrelatedness of climate and biodiversity, is a significant determining factor in the health and well-being of Indigenous Peoples.⁵³

Targets need to be set by, for, and with Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Indicators centred in UNDRIP can provide a meaningful way forward that is evidenced-based.⁵⁴ For the Calgary Plan, specifically piloting the four UNDRIP Articles toward the co-production of indicators that directly link to accountability will offer a mechanism for communities that dives deeper than engagement sessions, through to implementation, evaluation, and reporting over the thirty-year life of the plan.

Rights under UNDRIP

- Right to practise and revitalize cultural traditions and customs
- Right to improvements in economic and social conditions
- Right to traditional medicines and to maintain health practices
- Right to conservation and protection of the environment and its productive capacity

47 Jules Pretty et al. "The Intersections of Biological Diversity and Cultural Diversity: Towards Integration," *Conservation and Society* 7, no. 2 (2009): 100-112, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26392968>.

48 Nicole Redvers et al. "Indigenous Natural and First Law in Planetary Health," *Challenges* 11, no. 2 (2020): 29, <https://doi.org/10.3390/challe11020029>.

49 Canadian Commission for UNESCO, *Reuniting Nature and Culture: The North American Declaration on Biocultural Diversity* (2019), <https://en.ccunesco.ca/blog/2019/11/north-american-declaration-on-biocultural-diversity>.

50 UN Environment Programme, "Indigenous Peoples and the Nature They Protect" (2020), <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/indigenous-peoples-and-nature-they-protect>.

51 Graeme Reed et al. "Indigenizing Climate Policy in Canada: A Critical Examination of the Pan-Canadian Framework and the ZéN RoadMap," *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities* 3 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.3389/frsc.2021.644675>.

52 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, "Summary for Policymakers, Section C: Adaptation Measures and Enabling Conditions" (2022), <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/chapter/summary-for-policymakers/>.

53 Agata Durkalec et al. "Climate Change Influences on Environment as a Determinant of Indigenous Health: Relationships to Place, Sea Ice, and Health in an Inuit Community," *Social Science & Medicine*, 136-137 (2015): 17-26, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2015.04.026>.

54 *Indigenous Navigator: Data by and for Indigenous Peoples*, "Indicators for Monitoring the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," https://indigenousnavigator.org/files/media/document/Navigator_UNDRIPIndicators.pdf.

METHODS

The outlined process is not intended to be a step-by-step checklist.⁵⁵ It provides a guide for:

- a) Design
- b) Development
- c) Implementation and
- d) Monitoring and Evaluation of indicators.

As can be seen from the outline below, a significant amount of work has been accomplished and, with modifications, can support the remainder of the process. The significant difference between a language-based approach to indicator development and a western-systems approach is that the goals, objectives, and actions set out in the Calgary Plan support the outcomes from a place of Shared Values, guiding the indicator development, and chosen by Indigenous communities to support their needs.⁵⁶

The City Building June Camp introduced this process, which requires further development as well as enrichment through conversations with The City, Treaty 7 First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and Indigenous-led organizations and individuals.

A. Design Phase

- 1. Establishing common ground and ground rules with participants
- 2. Clarifying overall intent (scope) of the Calgary Plan (immediate, and in the short, medium, and long terms)
- 3. Outreach, awareness, and communications (such as the correspondence pre-, during, and post-event discussions; Water, Land, and Climate Summit Series and Summaries provided; one-on-one meeting opportunities; and the development of public-facing documents)

B. Development Phase

- 4. Building a Vision Statement and Guiding Principles (for language-based indicators—i.e., not a vision for City planning)
- 5. Creating logic models (e.g., Seasonal Round, Directional Round, language-based Values)
- 6. Clarifying Broad Determinants of Health (e.g., piloting the four UNDRIP Articles)

C. Implementation Phase

- 7. Framing objectives
- 8. Developing and selecting Indicators
- 9. Designing surveys and questionnaires
- 10. Data collection, management, analysis, and reporting

⁵⁵ Fox (2018), 8.

⁵⁶ Fox (2018), 5.

D. Monitoring and Evaluation Phase

11. Establishing baselines, thresholds, and targets
12. Monitoring
13. Evaluating overall efficiency and effectiveness
14. Reporting (leadership, community members, professionals, other communities' success stories)

TYPES OF INDICATORS

When considering the types of indicators that can be used to measure the success of the Calgary Plan and its attendant policies, plans, and programs, there are different aspects to consider. Using an indicator framework for each objective that includes the three primary indicator types offers participants the opportunity to further define what is being measured, and why, and links directly to accountability.

- **Structural indicators** assess the legal and policy framework of a given order of government.
- **Process indicators** measure a government's ongoing efforts to implement human rights commitments through programs, budget allocations, etc.
- **Outcome indicators** capture the actual enjoyment of human rights by Indigenous Peoples.⁵⁷

CALGARY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The focus of the Indicators Table discussion at the City Building June Camp was based on Point 7 above, Framing Objectives. Due to time constraints, one sample objective/action was selected from the Calgary Plan, and participants were asked to consider the context in terms of the current narrative and to connect it to the relevant UNDRIP Article that is compatible to the Action. This first step included capturing the current situation regarding the essence of the objective. A future narrative will be considered, and participants were asked to provide feedback on what Values from their oral customs would be necessary to achieving the stated future.

The discussion concluded by asking participants to consider how these future states could become a reference point for measurement. An outline is provided on the next page as an example for discussion.

Moving forward, one-on-one conversations can dive deeper into what measures or metrics would be meaningful and appropriate to track success, and conversations can highlight the connection to language, land, and lifeways. These conversations can also provide the opportunity to identify community-based experts and agencies to support cohesion.

⁵⁷ Indigenous Navigator, *Indicator Framework*, <https://indigenousnavigator.org/explore-and-use-our-community-based-monitoring-tools/indicator-framework>.

Example Outline

The goal of a framing discussion is to generate conversation and outline any concerns before moving forward with the indicator co-design approach.

Calgary Plan: Building a Strong Downtown

Action 3. Support a safe downtown that prioritizes inclusion, well-being, and safety of Indigenous communities and equity-deserving groups by addressing systemic issues, racial discrimination, mental health and addiction support, and the over-policing of historically marginalized communities.⁵⁸

UNDRIP CONNECTION

Article 21: Right to improvements in economic and social conditions

1. Current Narrative

Participants discuss what is needed to capture the current situation from an evidence-based perspective and answer what baseline is needed to understand the current situation. Consider if there are studies or other reports that can be drawn from and leveraged. If not, what is needed to inform the baseline “current narrative.”

2. Future Narrative

Consider: “The City of Calgary is an anti-racist organization - where systemic racism and discrimination are no longer barriers to individuals’ or communities’ safety, access to resources and opportunities, or positive life outcomes.”⁵⁹ This quote is an example of a future state and was shared during the June Camp but should not be taken as the group’s consensus, or reflective of the group’s discussion on wording. It was presented by the facilitator to support conversations, provide an opportunity to share concerns, and discuss potential considerations on a going forward basis. Representatives from Nations working with The City may consider narratives, art, song, film, or other forms of expression to capture both the current and future narratives.

Next, the group would explore “what does success look like?” in this context.

3. Guiding Question

How can The City of Calgary support Indigenous-led projects intended to increase access to housing, social services, and ceremonial spaces in Calgary?

What does success look like with respect to:

- a) Inclusion
- b) Well-being
- c) Safety
- d) Other

Next, dive deeper into “future states” and consider what Values will drive success.

⁵⁸ Calgary, *The Calgary Plan: Calgary’s Municipal Development Plan* (draft—for engagement purposes only), June 11, 2024, 39.

⁵⁹ Dave Duckworth, The City of Calgary City Manager, as quoted in “The City of Calgary Launches Its Anti-Racism Strategic Plan,” May 9, 2023, accessed July 22, 2024, <https://newsroom.calgary.ca/the-city-of-calgary-launches-its-anti-racism-strate/>.

4. What Values from our respective oral customs are necessary to get to success?

5. What are the challenges/constraints?

- a) Systemic issues
- b) Racial discrimination
- c) Mental health and addiction support
- d) Over-policing of historically marginalized communities
- e) Other

Accountability

Accountability at its core is the willingness to accept responsibility and to explain one's actions. There are two components to accountability that ensure responsibility is assumed by the appropriate person, group, or team:

- Answerability: the right to get a response, and the obligation to provide one; and
- Enforceability: the capacity to ensure that an action is taken, and access to mechanisms for redress.⁶⁰

A starting point that was raised during the City Building Program discussions focused on establishing formal MOUs with not only Treaty 7 First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta, but working more formally with Indigenous-led organizations, establishing strong governance structures, and communications templates to help with clarity on expectations and outcomes.

In community relationship building, accountability is key for deepening and strengthening the relationship, especially if past experiences caused hurt or trauma. The Indigenous engagement discussions for both the Calgary River Valleys Project and the City Building Program shone a light on many broken relationships, and on distrust and mistrust of City staff and initiatives to the point—where there was significant harm done—where groups and organizations declined invitations to participate because of past practices. Such harms included not following up with organizations to let them know where the information provided was going to live, never calling again unless more information was wanted, not following up on actions, not taking any actions, not following protocol, and—not least of all—not saying, “Thank you for participating.”

As the relationships between Treaty 7 First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and urban Indigenous Calgarians with The City of Calgary begin to heal, accountability, and specifically answerability and enforceability, will become significant in ensuring that the relationships continue not only in a good way, but progress to a place of mutual respect, trust, and reciprocity.

⁶⁰ Institute of Development Studies, Participatory Methods, “*Citizen Participation and Accountability*,” <https://www.participatorymethods.org/method/citizen-participation-and-accountability>.

Appendix 1: Water, Land, and Climate Summit Briefs

After each Directional Summit, a brief was compiled from the group discussion notes, summarizing the points raised, and concerns, ideas, and stories shared. Each Summit Brief draft was then shared with the participants from the gathering and comments, edits, and changes were incorporated into the final document. The validated brief was then shared with City Leadership, providing an overview of the process, discussion, outcomes, and actions.

EAST SUMMIT



East Summit Participants, Miskanawah Community Association, January 19, 2023

The CRVP Indigenous Engagement began with the East Summit on January 19, 2023 at the Miskanawah Community Services Association, where everyone came together in the spirit of relationship building and beginning conversations around possible futures for the river valley in our communities, in addition to broader water, land, and climate resilience planning efforts.

Pipe Ceremony

Actioning the commitment to protocol, the Summit process began with a Pipe Ceremony led by Siksika Elder Treffrey Deerfoot. He offered a blessing to the process and a grounding for shared commitment to our work together. Dave Pascut, on behalf of The City of Calgary, offered the pipe with the following four requests:

- How can the river valleys, as a subject and setting, be a foundation for direction setting for planning?
- What guidance can Nations offer The City of Calgary for building relationships with our Indigenous hosts and neighbours so we can ensure that all the cumulative knowledge they carry is embedded in how we think about and give shape to the river valleys?

- How can our colonial planning process evolve to learn more from Indigenous Peoples' teachings, ethics, and worldviews to produce different and better outcomes?
- How can we connect with the next generation of Indigenous youth to ensure they are involved in the future of Calgary and its built and natural spaces?

These four questions informed each of the Summits going forward, the sharing of stories and information, and The City's commitment to actioning the lessons learned throughout this process.

A Sharing Circle began with an overview of the CRVP and the connection to broader watershed management, climate resilience, and city-building efforts at The City. Subsequently, discussions took place regarding the common principles guiding this work as well as concerns and opportunities for continuing to build relationships and demonstrate commitment to working together.

SOUTH SUMMIT

On June 13, 2023, the South Summit took place at Ralph Klein Park. Elder John Murray from Amskapi Piikani shared an opening blessing and his thoughts on the importance of water to Indigenous Peoples. Elliott Fox from Kainai Nation then offered opening comments on the Summit's theme of "The Health of the River." Both highlighted the importance of recognizing how sacred and personal water is and its significance to who we are. Elder Clarence Wolfleg, Siksika Nation, offered a closing at the end of the Summit and reminded those present of the importance of honouring, respecting, and learning from the wisdom and teachings that Elders share.

Throughout the discussions, it was noted that governments, such as The City of Calgary, have responsibilities and accountabilities to support Indigenous groups in fulfilling their duties to the land. The Project Team and City staff participating in this process heard this loud and clear: The City is actively listening and is committed to responding in a way that demonstrates reciprocity.

Summit participants discussed a range of topics, priorities, and concerns about the health of the rivers. Key direction emerging from these conversations is summarized below.

River Health Across the Watershed

Animals, fish, and people rely on rivers, streams, and wetlands for life, for foraging, and for water, but as the rivers dry up and are affected by drought, climate change, pollution, and other activities, water quantity and quality are impacted. For example, Indigenous people have had to look for new sources of berries because the season now arrives much later due to climate change, and new weeds are taking over, with plants coming in from outside the territory, with these weeds conflicting with Indigenous ways of being. Additionally, there are a limited number of places—or no places—where Indigenous people can go to partake in ceremonies and harvesting or other activities, because traditional places are now on private lands or are not accessible.

Strong interest was expressed in seeing discussions with Indigenous citizens when development is taking place on or near the riverbed, acknowledging that attention must be paid to traditional use of these areas. This should be the practice not just in the downtown area but across The City.

Participants discussed the need to focus on teaching young people how to take care of the land, and that bringing groups together that are doing education work would be an important action. Together, there should be a plan to determine how to collectively work together more often and more effectively, and to ensure that information is not duplicated and that opportunities are not missed.

River Health in The City

There are many opportunities to increase signage around The City to explain the environmental and cultural significance of the plants, fish, and animals in a particular area—for example, willow and its use as medicine; native trout species found in the headwaters of rivers; and the beavers by the Peace Bridge. One example of work underway would be the interpretive panels that will be placed at the Glenmore boat launch (as well as other sites across the watershed), sharing the Blackfoot Native Trout Recovery Project from both a Blackfoot and western science perspective. There is a great deal of misinformation out there—for example, the Tipi Ring at Nose Hill and the common misunderstanding that it is a Medicine Wheel. Signage can help learners to understand both a site's significance and its use.

When talking about water rights, treaties need to be referenced. The Keepers of the Water emphasized with staff that “water was never negotiated in treaty” and therefore remains a complex issue that is ongoing for First Nations.

Questions were raised as to how The City is managing the protection of areas and species, whether it is an area of natural sweetgrass or cottonwood trees, and about the cutting of native plants. There have also been issues with Saskatoons being pulled from the ground, buffalo berries disappearing because it is too dry, and wild mint being depleted due to over-picking. Staff from The City shared that efforts are underway through the Riparian Action Program to protect, manage, and restore riparian areas. There is interest in learning more about this program and in discussing opportunities for collaboration.

Working with schools is a great way to share information and inspire kids to become involved in taking care of the land.

Changing River Health

The colonial context of river health and water needs to be acknowledged and addressed, as colonialism is one of the root causes of climate change, and climate change is one of the primary causes of more extreme drought risks. A great deal of groundwater is now undrinkable, wells have dried up or are drying up, and many have observed that water is no longer present where it was historically.

The Winters Doctrine (1908), the Northwest Irrigation Act (1898), the Alberta Water Act (2000), and the First in Time, First in Right Principles (FITFIR) (1894) were raised as important foundations for understanding water laws and rights.

Treaty 7 First Nations have completed Water Needs Assessments, and the question was raised about how the Needs Assessments fit in with water security. There are challenges with water distribution, and there are not enough water trucks to bring water to where it is needed, including water needed for trees and watering livestock. Equally, Nations have also completed Local Early Action Plans to support climate adaptation.

The Blackfoot Confederacy is working to develop and measure biocultural indicators, including values, ethics, and metrics to elevate Blackfoot ways. Co-designing the indicators with Elders and youth provides the opportunity for learning, supporting children speaking the language in The City, and sharing the knowledge from past generations with future generations.

Many opportunities exist to weave in place-based, context-specific Indigenous knowledge throughout the CRVP, in addition to including broad Indigenous knowledge.

Sacred Places and Stories

There are many stories connected to places in and around the Calgary region, and archaeological evidence aligns has also lined up with Blackfoot stories—for instance, the significance of the confluence of the Bow and Elbow Rivers, where people camped; the connection to Fish Creek and the Buffalo Jump just north at Bow Bottom Trail (very close to where the Bow Valley Rancho Restaurant is located); another Jump at Edworthy Park at the top of the ravine; and several other locations along the Bow Valley, including within Calgary. There are also a number of sites for Ákokátssis connected to the rivers, including near Siksika (the Sand Hills area near Bow River / Siksika was mentioned) and other locations, including alongside many rivers throughout Alberta.

Ákokátssis includes ceremonial dances (sometimes referred to by others as sun dances), but it is much more than just that. Ákokátssis is a very important annual event and Ceremony in the Blackfoot culture and for all Blackfoot peoples. It is a cultural/social event that includes learning and education on Blackfoot ways/processes, cross-tribal exchanges of knowledge and relationships, reciprocity and relationship renewals, and feasting, among other things. There is much for The City to learn about ceremonies such as Ákokátssis and how it might support ceremonial practice in The City, but the importance of respectful dialogue and information sharing in learning is fundamental.

The importance of protocol as the CRVP proceeds cannot be overstated. Many stories and knowledge may be shared, but one does not just take or demand the knowledge. In addition, there are some protocols stating that some other stories or knowledge will not be shared with outsiders. Equally, not all Elders have the rights passed to them to tell specific stories or information—City staff must be attuned to these protocols. Listening is learning, and to learn fully and deeply, one needs to be ready and respectful of the Elders who are giving their knowledge and wisdom.

Long-Term Community Health

Indigenous involvement is not optional; it needs to be embedded into all policies and processes. In the past, Indigenous communities have been the last to be consulted, and by that point, decisions have already been made. By starting from a place of working together, actions can be more proactive. And actions should not only be in the political or technical realms, but also with Ceremony and with traditional knowledge to enlighten the conversation from Indigenous ways of knowing and being. In the past, settlers have come into communities, harvested information, and then left; this is damaging.

Municipalities must step up, and now is a time for creation with the municipality—to start from a place of Ceremony, to “lift the pipe,” and to then work together to share ideas and information. Then giving back to the community becomes a significant part of the relationship—specifically to give back to the programming, to healing. The key word is respect. It’s not just reconciliation; it’s creating equal opportunities, it’s about cooperation, and it’s about kindness.

Importance of language needs to be considered, changing from paternalistic and triggering to more inclusive. The western way of thinking is very siloed and usually an either/or: economic or social or environmental. In Indigenous cultures, thinking is intertwined, and everything is connected. Culture is a part of everything and is tied to the land, to the environment, to the social, to the economic. A more holistic view needs to be present, and actions related to that view need to understand the implications or consequences to other areas of work.

A call to engage directly with youth and young people, students, and technicians working on summer programs was also expressed.

Most importantly, Indigenous representation must be included in all of the conversations. This is no longer an add-on or “nice to have”; it is a requirement for true reconciliation to occur.

Finally, do not wait until the next Summit to take action: start now.

WEST SUMMIT



West Summit Participants, Seven Chiefs SportsPlex, Tsuut'ina Nation, November 22, 2023

The third Water, Land, and Climate gathering, known as the West Summit, began with introductions and remarks from the Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members present who spoke to how resilience is inherent to the Indigenous way of life.

Many stories, ideas, and questions were shared, and one statement summed up the discussion on treaty, rights, and water: "If this process is a river, and rights are at the headwaters and feeds in to the water, then we can't water down our rights."

Lee Crowchild, former Chief of the Tsuut'ina First Nation, spoke about the importance of water to Indigenous peoples, and specifically his people. He shared a story of a medicine wheel in the north part of their land which is about water. The lines from this medicine wheel lead water down to South America and to Nazca in Peru.

He spoke about how the Province violated their needs for SR1 and flood protection for the Tsuut'ina Nation, and the impact this has on people, wildlife, and the land. He closed his remarks by sharing that prayer is a foundation, that it gives us hope.

A participant spoke about how we need to think deeply about the environment, resource development, and growth, and its impacts on the land and water. That we need to ask "can we fix it"—meaning the constant need for expansion and resource development and the negative effects on the environment.

Another participant shared a story about seeing gopher mounds in the spring and that if they were large, this meant that there would be drought because the gophers had to dig down to be able to access water. They stated that we can't just look at the trees, that we need to look at the forest, the system, engage in a holistic way of looking at the environment. They shared that when we pray for water, we are praying for the full system—the glaciers, the rivers, the lakes.

Métis Nation of Alberta member, Berna-Dean Holland, shared that we must consider our brothers and sisters—the four-legged, two-legged, sliding, flying, and swimming animals that are impacted by human decisions regarding land, water, and air. We are stewards for them.

Tsuut'ina Nation Director of Consultation, Violet Meguinis, spoke about how everything has a spirit, including water, that everything is connected. She shared that to become living in this world, the spirits need to come together. She also shared that she learned at an early age about how living things are connected, and that we should only take what we need from the land.

Michael Onespot spoke about how the Tsuut'ina are water people and Beaver people, and connected to water, which is life. He shared that we have to work together, Calgary and Tsuut'ina, because of the Bow and the Elbow Rivers that run through the land. The water runs east, and the rivers connect our communities both upstream and downstream and this needs to be taken into consideration when decisions are being made; everything is connected.

He also shared that Fish Creek in Tsuut'ina is called Wolf Creek, Maghazina Tsisga.

An overview of Treaty was provided with an introduction to the historical context of Treaty 7 and Treaty 4 and an understanding that the original spirit and intent of treaty was known as the Peace and Friendship Treaties between the Nations and the Crown.

It was shared that when we make treaty, we have consensus, that there were discussions on what would be agreed to and, once made, that they are then the agreements we share. It was shared how the land is not ours to sell, it is Creator's, and that the understanding, or misunderstanding, of this idea is a collision of worldviews. For the Treaties in this region, resources were never negotiated, that we only negotiated to the depth of a plow, for agricultural purposes. The land was never ceded, or sold; the treaty was meant to be about sharing the land.

There was supposed to be a Water Treaty, but this never happened. The Alberta Natural Resources Act of 1930, which was established to transfer control over Crown lands and natural resources from the federal government to the Province of Alberta, did not include any consultation, engagement, or inclusion of Indigenous Peoples.

It was shared that Stoney Nakoda Nation Elders are offering tobacco to the glaciers and headwaters, giving thanks to the spirit of water. There is concern about the health of the glaciers, and that the impact of climate change is a real and growing concern. The group spoke about the need to educate communities about the relationship to land and water, and impacts of decisions, actions, and lack of actions on the health of our environment.

A Blackfoot perspective was shared of Treaty, which is that when you pick up the pipe, you cannot break the vow that was made, and that the pipe was at the Treaty-making.

In relation to this commitment, he shared the importance of bundles, that they give the Blackfoot people our stories, our ceremonies, and that taking care of bundles are sacred acts. Blackfoot don't lie because that would be going against the bundles: "Our word is good."

He also spoke about the importance of taking care of children, whether or not they are in our bloodline.

Participants echoed this sharing, that pipe is treaty, and that you can't break agreements from a Pipe Ceremony.

Violet Meguinis spoke about the importance of treaty to the Tsuut'ina, and specifically the Nation's first sovereign act, Tsuut'ina Adhesion, in 1883. She shared:

Treaty is important to acknowledge, our rights come from that process, we know our ancestors had ceremony before they got there. Our Head Chief Bullhead picked this site and despite the efforts of the government and NWMP to keep us by the Bassano area he kept bringing our people back to our current site. Finally they gave up. We consider this our first sovereign act... to pick your own land base was unheard of in that era.

Michael Onespot from Tsuut'ina shared that the mountains were the first things created on Turtle Island, and that pre-contact, the water was so pure you could drink from anywhere. The buffalo was the number one food source in the south, and caribou was the primary food source in the north. He said that we are still trying to keep our land and water healthy, but how are we going to do this when Calgary reaches two million people?

Mother Earth has a way of recuperating its children (plants, animals), but we still need to keep the rivers in our best interest: they connect us all, Tsuut'ina, Stoney, Siksika, Calgary.

Four small group discussion tables were arranged in the room after the Treaty discussion, with a specific topic and question for each. Community members were invited to choose a table to talk with The City staff and consultants on a topic that was important to them.

River Health Across the Watershed: Source Water Protection and Upstream Collaboration

Participants agreed that there is an undeniable connection between what happens on the land upstream and the impacts on communities downstream. That this is not just about climate change, but that people physically impact and change our river valleys. For example, establishing upstream dams and diversions can impact culturally important species such as cottonwood trees. Cottonwoods are important for ceremonial purposes since time immemorial, and they grow where there is plenty of water. The Oldman Dam altered the habitat and less and less cottonwoods are now found.

Natural landscapes act as a sponge, retaining and filtering water. When humans change the landscape, these natural functions no longer work as they should. This includes forestry, mining, irrigation, oil and gas exploration, agriculture, and cattle ranching. When humans make changes, such as deforestation, then water is wasted, as it is displaced and pushed downstream faster, which contributes to flood risk and water quality changes. These impacts not only affect humans, but changes to the water cascade to the fish, animals, and habitats—everything is affected. Animals tell us a lot about what is happening in our ecosystem, and we need to pay attention.

Western management of water and lands was identified as contributing to these impacts and the need to bring traditional Indigenous knowledge into City planning processes would mitigate many of these issues. The importance of understanding the interconnectedness of the ecosystem needs to be taken into consideration; for example, certain animal species may be seen as pests, such as insects or beavers, without recognizing the important role they play in the health of the ecosystem. For example, mosquitos are an important food source for bats, and bats are important for pollination of plants, which provide food. Another example is how you can tell the difference between irrigated lands and natural prairie (green vs. brown). Western farmers think about how much money the land and resources could make them. First Nations communities tend to keep their land natural, encouraging wider biodiversity.

It was shared that The City of Calgary made a mistake by not keeping the natural backwaters.

When there was a flood, these areas would fill up first, slowing the flow of water. Backwaters and their natural flow acted like a reservoir and the river has changed now so that water is conveyed faster.

The question was asked if traditional knowledge was a component of policy making, and the importance of giving Indigenous communities a seat at the table when creating policies was highlighted. And the question was asked, does The City have an Environmental Knowledge Policy?

Changing Rivers: Climate Change Resilience

Tsuut'ina Nation is concerned about water levels and are interested in where the water level markers are in The City of Calgary, as they are noticing the water level change for the past fifteen years. For example, wells have dried up and they need to plan around when water is available to do chores like washing the dishes, bathing etc. Cistern systems are used now and water is hauled in weekly to fill the cistern system because wells have dried up.

The aquifer that supports the Nation is getting low and drying up, and this is impacting wells on the Nation. One well is older and provides "rust water," and when it is used, it needs to be run for 20 minutes before the water is clear and available for use.

Rivers, lakes, and wetlands are all connected so if one is impacted so are all the other waters. The Nation is anticipating that some wetlands will dry up due to climate change and human interference. There is concern about logging and its impact for the Foothills area to supply and filter water that is needed to support the Nation. For example, the Highwood area clearcutting has impacted the location of animals which move to new areas where humans live, which increases human and wildlife conflict. Removal of trees not only impacts water flow, but it also creates less sheltered areas so the land temperature increases, and water dries up.

Animals are shifting hibernation timing and migration patterns and seem to be coming into the Nation more to look for food. Grizzlies were still active two weeks ago, which is not normal, and the shifting migration of birds that are not leaving until later, or at all.

Water is getting plugged and so it's not flowing the way it used too. Grass was the main feed for cattle for the entire summer and into fall and now it is browning earlier due to lack of water. This is impacting livelihoods of Nation members, and because of this, some are considering a change in how they live due to the lack of grass to feed cattle and the cost of purchasing feed.

The City of Calgary has put in a water line, but it was only to a certain area of the Nation and doesn't support most of the residential housing in the Nation. This coupled with the concern about water supply due to climate change and population growth, the Tsuut'ina Nation is starting to look at the development of a Watershed Plan or source water to provide water security for its people. And to support action, the Nation is establishing a Climate Change Department.

Long-term Community Health: Future Community Planning

The discussion began with building understanding of the historical and cultural significance of sites within The City of Calgary, such as Nose Hill, Fish Creek, Bow Valley, Ogden, and Hawkwood.

In 1992, Alvin Manitopyes was involved in a counter action to the celebration of 500 years since Columbus's arrival. He set up a tipi at Nose Hill with the goal to declare Nose Hill as a sacred site. A sacred fire was lit and support was garnered from local associations. He shared:

"Nose Hill is a very significant site and our most sacred site. We declared it as such to create awareness of our connection to this land. Soon afterwards, Calgary's Mayor and Ralph Klein declared Nose Hill a Park. I was invited to the opening, but now that location is under legal designation and under white man's law. I believe they wanted to overshadow our claim of it being a sacred site. I asked where the Chiefs were at the opening of the park - they had not been invited."

The Mayor at the time wanted to keep the hill as natural and pristine as possible, and we agreed to consult with the Nations but we didn't know who would pick up the expense of the honorarium. The City did ask me if they could put in concrete paths, but we requested permeable pathways. Dirt paths were initially laid, but there are now concrete paths.

There is a need for placemaking and finding the intersections between story and science. Citizens of Calgary do not have the entire context of the significant and sacred Indigenous sites and areas within the city. There is a more holistic worldview that is necessary to understand where what we now call Calgary fits on a map. A whole picture would take into account the story, the science, archaeology, and the anatomy of the territory.

As colonial settlers, many Calgarians don't feel connected to the historical significance of this place. Our settler consciousness needs to shift. We must keep the dialogue going, incorporating Indigenous worldview and philosophy in the conversation. There is also much valuable culturally significant and historically significant information in Fish Creek and the Bow Valley that has not yet been documented.

One issue raised was the need to prioritize and memorialize Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIW). There are areas in Calgary where there are unmarked graves that have not been pursued by The City or ignored. This is part of Truthing, and understanding all of the truth of our community's history. We can't just jump to reconciliation, which is often the action; we have to focus on the truth and getting the truth right. Now is the time for The City to do Truthing, unlearning to learn, and learning to unlearn, in all areas of The City and at all levels. This is the first step in a long-term process.

The Future Community Planning table included two youth participants who were open in sharing their experience as young people who have lived within The City and also on reserve. They spoke about how they notice a significant learning gap among their peers, in language, connection to the land, cultural significance, history, and general understanding. One comment shared was "People treat us like aliens." Increasing opportunities to share peer-to-peer as youth in the community and to exchange cultural information would go a long way to building understanding.

River Valleys: Rivers and Flooding

The River Valleys table started its discussion with a focus on space for celebration. Berna-Dean Holland stated, "You can't practise culture unless there is something to practise with." Indigenous culture is practised through place and land, and every ceremony is a kind of celebration. Even sombre times are celebrations; there is an acknowledging that life comes and goes. Tears are healing and can be shed in both happiness and sadness.

Place-based discussions centred on the importance of habitats and of planting of specific species together, and the importance of monitoring riparian species and riparian health.

When considering what qualities of space support celebration, responses included a choice of space—some more quiet, some more social. Infrastructure can support celebration as well as reflection, from benches and other sitting areas, spaces to place blankets on the ground which is important for creating connection to the land, and infrastructure that has a richness and is natural, not concrete and cold. Signage was brought up as a potentially fraught issue. The concept of "gentle signification" was a great way to consider how to share information without being intrusive.

Decisions can be made to bring together place- and land-based knowledge and learning, for example the choice for the new place-based Métis districts to be rooted in landmark rather than abstract jurisdiction.

Discussion turned to the question of what prompts for celebration The City can provide in open spaces, from materials and invitations to beauty, to connection to nature and being physically close to the land, literally on the ground, and considering sensory experiences such as olfactory and auditory as well as sight and touch.

Sensory Dimensions

- smell of grasses and of different habitats
- sounds of birds and water
- places to sit on and feel the ground
- where can you touch the ground
- wooden benches (wood as a connector material – need to create things that are beautiful)
- smell of soil

There is also a value to the natural prairie landscape. A comment was shared that we should ensure that “prairie” is read as sacred space, along with the more “charismatic” landscape types, such as mountains.

The concept of Urban Forestry was talked about and an example of a “backyard tiny urban forest” was shared. Encouraging gardens of native trees and shrubs, food and berries, and celebration spaces in private yards where seasonal changes are marked, and the joy of return (species or specific animals) is honoured.

The importance of return was an interesting discussion as it reminds us that we are part of a cycle, which connects to the discussions around holistic views and acknowledging the parts of the ecosystem in which we exist.

The final portion of discussion brought up the idea that adornment is a gift that is part of celebrating the life of the animal; for example, an eagle feather is a gift, and an honour to receive. If you find a dead porcupine, it's an amazing source of resources. Porcupines only have one baby per year, and their quills come at a high energy cost. People who harvest quills for crafts may not realize that even though they weren't killing the animal, they were exacting a life-threatening energy cost. If this is for adornment, then those quills are not “earned.” There needs to be understanding that adornment is a gift; we must use everything to approach a resource in a good way.

NORTH SUMMIT



North Summit Participants, Fort Calgary, March 25, 2024

Thank you to Stoney Nakoda Elder Cindy Daniels for providing an opening blessing and her thoughts on the theme “Water, Land, and Climate.” She emphasized the importance of recognizing how personal water is and its significance in who we are.

A Land Acknowledgement was provided in partnership by Chad Peters, City of Calgary, and Siksika Elder Treffrey Deerfoot, where the significance of gathering together on the land to talk about the importance of water was shared. We also thank Treffrey again for transitioning the project from the Calgary River Valleys Project to the City Building Program, and for reminding us of the importance of honouring, respecting, and learning from the wisdom and teachings that Elders share.

During community member introductions, table discussions, and dinner time chats, we heard many themes, priorities, and concerns relating to the health of our water systems, the land, and the community. The outline below is a summary of what was heard over the course of the day together.

Core Learnings

- Engagement is about collaborating through the entire lifecycle of a project, with Indigenous perspectives involved and considered right from the beginning.
- The native species of this land are what keep it in balance and best practice is to utilize land management systems natural to this environment.
- Placemaking isn't just about memorializing and commemoration; it is about collaborating in our work, in addition to performing Ceremony to achieve a relationship of respect and reciprocity with the land we engage.
- It's time for Government-to-Government level dialogue around drought and water management.
- Urban Indigenous Youth need accessible/inclusive urban spaces and opportunities to practise and maintain connections to their cultures.

Land Stewardship

Attendees participated in one of five discussion tables that covered Land Stewardship, Landscapes and Placemaking, and Drought and Water Security. Community members were invited to participate in a topic of their choosing to discuss with City staff issues important to them and their community.

Discussions about Land Stewardship began with Elders posing several questions to The City, including what "Stewardship" really means to The City. There were concerns about a lack of respect for traditional knowledge and the question of feeling processes have been like "Cultural Tourism," noting that it isn't enough for The City to take knowledge, put it into policy, and call that Reconciliation.

Participants at the table noted that older generations may be leery of the term "Stewardship" and of engagement processes because they have been sharing knowledge for years without seeing action. The conversation highlighted the need for meaningful, continued relationship building, understanding, and following up on engagement.

Themes around worldview, species preservation, and matters of health were discussed as well as a recurring concern about increased population and development and the perceived inability of The City to stand up to developers. Some felt that money talks the loudest in an oil and gas city.

It's About Worldview

The discussion centred on the difference between Indigenous and western worldviews and the realities of Indigenous Ways of Knowing. It was shared that, comparatively, Indigenous stewardship is more sustainable because this worldview is built on understanding the Natural Laws created and written on the land. Elders spoke of the importance of respecting the land and the spirits connected to it and how the Western idea of ownership exemplifies this conflicting worldview.

City of Calgary literature often refers to “Our City” or “Our Rivers” as if we are owners of it. It was emphasized that local Indigenous worldviews recognize that we cannot own or control the environment and that we need to pay attention to its needs and respect those needs. The conversation touched on removing invasive species and making way for those that belong (like the beaver). Unfortunately, those most knowledgeable about plants and ceremonies are the ones who end up disadvantaged in western society because their understanding isn't always recognized or respected.

Preserving Native Species

During the conversation, an Elder shared their perspective on Land Stewardship, emphasizing the importance of keeping the land as natural as possible and not assuming control over it. Each plant has developed to live here; they're drought- and fire-resistant, with natural grass roots helping all plants survive. The western grasses used now have such shallow roots. European farming methods have done lasting damage by cutting all these natural deep-rooted grasses.

To prevent erosion, the traditional way is to leave riverbanks alone, as willows, cottonwoods, and other native species have deep roots that keep banks from eroding. They mentioned that Indigenous ways of managing the land have successfully prevented large fires and promoted the growth of native species that provide nutrients back to the land, unlike invasive species that don't give back to the land when burnt.

Matters of Health

The conversation also touched on concerns about the health of the land and thus the health of the people who live here, with mention of the dangers of walking barefoot in the grass due to carcinogenic chemicals like Roundup. Artificially making the lawn green is in no way proper land stewardship. There was also the concern that you can only eat one fish a day due to the high levels of dioxin in the water due to industry.

The Need for Balance

One Elder discussed how, in some cultures, there are male and female plants; sometimes, men can pick certain plants and other times, women can. The female spirit is associated with nurturing and giving life, and there is a special connection between women and the Earth. There always needs to be balance. Land stewardship is honouring this balance, especially for the sake of Indigenous peoples living in urban areas.

Community Connections

Another Elder shared how fish eggs stick together, representing their community. They mentioned that being kicked out of the community was a harsh penalty often resulting in death due to a lack of supports. They noted that when they return to the community, even after being away for a long time, they are still welcomed and feel connected. We must take care of this land to sustain our connections and survive here.

Youth Perspective

Much like the Elders' perspective on connectivity, a youth at the table expressed the importance of feeling connected to their community and the challenges of living in two worlds simultaneously. They noted their feeling of connection when camping at the Sundance every year and the difficulty in balancing these issues off Reserve. They also shared similar concerns to other participants about the sustainability of current population growth and what that means for all of the natural systems that support us.

Landscapes and Placemaking

There were many diverse viewpoints expressed during the conversation about what Placemaking meant to the individuals at the table, and how The City can support Placemaking.

Overall, there was an emphasis on the necessity of Ceremony as well as the need for collaboration, inclusivity, and community involvement in shaping policy, and identifying and recognizing culturally important sites throughout the area. Additionally, the conversation highlighted the desire for youth to have access to culturally relevant spaces within The City, as well as giving them ownership and responsibility towards those spaces.

What Is Placemaking to You?

A participant shared that Ancestral Lands are where Ancestral spiritual beings still reside, and that Placemaking is therefore not just about creating memorials or installations but about an ongoing relationship of respect and reciprocity with the land. There is a sacredness in these lands, and everyone and everything is interconnected with the beings they share the landscape with.

It was shared that growing up listening to Elders, one participant was taught that everything is alive. *"Energy waves are the Spirit. They require respect and reciprocity - always giving back. This is why we offer tobacco allowing us to be in the energy field of the ancestors."* Ceremony is an act that protects us and keeps us safe. Placemaking therefore comes through Ceremony. When you go to a new place, you are invading the space of sacred beings and need to be sensitive to not having a destructive presence.

Placemaking to another attendee is the appreciation of the stories of this place, and the connection to places through oral histories. For example, some Indigenous territory markers were Saskatoon Berries, and awareness of these markers are passed down through oral knowledge and community connectivity.

Another participant noted that Placemaking is about having places to go to practise traditional knowledge. This requires that City restrictions are not barriers to a community's capacity to be with, and work on, the land.

Placemaking to others is also about remembering and documenting the importance of specific areas and sites. It is about being seen in an urban setting and remembering that English is a foreign language on this land. It is to relocate sites that are not widely known or visible, and reclaiming, documenting, and mapping these culturally significant places. Examples included hundreds of different locations of pictographs, springs, creeks, glacials, buffalo jumps, tipi rings, wheels, cairns, specifically along the rivers and through Paskapoo slopes, Fish Creek, Woodbine, Scotsman Hills, and even pre-residential era St. Dunstan's.

From one City employee's perspective, Placemaking is also found in policy development and equitable hiring practices.

Working Together on New Developments

Participants discussed that within the development process, there is a potential for a large diversity of roles that support the act of Placemaking and related Ceremony. Questions were posed as to what roles could more people have beyond the Elder role. What are the roles of Consultants and Traditional Knowledge Keepers in the development process? The Paskapoo pre-walk was brought forward as a positive example of ways Indigenous communities can support positive outcomes in the development processes.

Participants wanted to understand more about how Indigenous people can be involved prior to blueprint development, and how City builders can best “close the loop” through Ceremony. Can this be part of The City approval process? Or pre-application process? Currently, planners go to Reserves to have these conversations, and Consultants aren’t on that land which their decisions impact. The City must build capacity to invite Indigenous Consultants into the process from the beginning so proper protocols can be followed.

In addition, new developments and revitalization projects should continue to strive to find and work with Placemaking elements to tell the stories related to the land they are on and connect the design of the space with the area that is being built up.

Inclusive Spaces with Shared Responsibility

The importance of understanding what an inclusive space truly is was a recurring theme during the Placemaking discussion, with conversation underscoring the need for collaboration and inclusivity in urban planning and policy development. Participants expressed that for spaces to be truly inclusive, equity must be embedded directly into policy, and cultural uses of spaces must be intentionally pursued.

The conversation also highlighted the desire for youth to have access to spaces within their own urban communities and the importance of giving them ownership and responsibility within those spaces. Participants emphasized the necessity of a holistic approach, involving re-evaluating existing policies to create meaningful shifts. It’s critical that the development of inclusive spaces require community involvement in not only shaping policies, but also ensuring that feedback is shared back to communities.

Youth Perspective – Access without Barriers

Participants stressed that youth want and need access to culturally relevant places and spaces in their urban communities. It was noted that City transportation only really caters to the working class, and that many Indigenous youth do not feel like they have space in the urban environment to practise and find connection to their culture and community.

Looking to the Future

The conversation ended with one Elder sharing the following anecdote from another Elder in their community:

- You’ll be buying water. (This came true two years later.)
- People will come to you to learn how to take care of the land. (This is happening now.)
- You will need to preserve Indigenous Religion.
- You will need to protect Indigenous Language.

Drought and Water Security

Drought and water security are major issues of concern for participants. Due to the lack of coordination between The City and Province, participants feel as if engagement isn’t getting anywhere, as they have warned for decades of drought possibilities and are frustrated. They have been documenting and consulting for years about how low the water levels have gotten on Reserve and are truly concerned that there have yet to be any formal agreements to prepare for and mitigate the crisis.

It's Time for Leadership-to-Leadership Engagement

One participant reiterated the need for leadership-to-leadership discussion involving City Council, the Mayor and Indigenous Chiefs (Major and Minor), with City leadership making the first steps to represent their willingness and commitment to recognize the severity of the issue. There was also expressed concern that revisiting and modernizing the Provincial Water Act may be what is needed to put us on the right path.

Citing lived experiences of noticeable and consistently low surface and groundwater levels, in addition to food scarcity for on-reserve livestock, participants shared concerns about big corporate projects getting permits, and the connection between growth of industry, development and population with the impact on our water. It was stressed that serious decisions need to be made, and that growth and development can't continue at this rate or we will all run out of water. Participants are sure that at this rate we will have to start buying water, and that this was an issue needing attention long ago; we are now just having to catch up. It was expressed that as long-time stewards and occupants of this land, Indigenous communities have the perspective and knowledge needed to mitigate risks associated with drought.

Drought Preparedness

Additionally, there was concern about The City's level of drought preparedness, and questions as to how The City captures stormwater and if The City has any policy or law in place to encourage utilization of said stormwater capture, drip irrigation techniques, and sustainable lawn management.

It was stressed that there is natural infrastructure far superior to dams and reservoirs that can, and do, sustain water availability and storage (specifically wetlands and beavers). A participant shared that one beaver dam holds 100 gallons of water for a season—just one beaver. So beyond limiting local growth and development, a critical element is allowing native species to coexist on the landscape.

Another participant noted that prior to the Provincial Government changing over, it had been stipulated that waters—specifically the South Saskatchewan River—must be protected. However, the problem of diversions and dams remains. We are seeing culturally critical vegetation such as cottonwoods dying off because of the dams. This is a long-building and ever-growing issue that encompasses an area larger than Calgary and involves unsustainable agricultural and industry practices that must be addressed.

Beyond Calgary, governments must pass laws and policies to prevent damage to our shared source water, and there needs to be widespread awareness of the negative impacts that building reservoirs and diversions have on native ecosystems and downstream communities.

Food Security

Beyond the issue of food scarcity for reserve livestock, participants expressed the need for people to have space to grow their own gardens within the urban environment, in addition to building a culture that provides capacity to do so. This was noted because so many people live in small apartments and there is the challenge of sustaining community gardens without designated personnel. It would be of benefit to the community for The City of Calgary to expand the availability of sustainable, inclusive, and welcoming community gardens.

Water Is Life. Water Is Survival.

Participants noted that there is a general lack of understanding as to how important water is to local Indigenous cultures and their deep understanding that water is not only for hygiene and Ceremony but also for life and survival. This worldview gives water prominence and importance not necessarily reflected in western worldviews. This means water isn't to be misused, disrespected, or wasted. Water is to be cherished. Water is to be respected. Water is to be protected.

Importance of Educating the Population

All participants agreed that drought education is a critical component to how we face current and potential water crisis. There is a need for concerted effort to tell and expect that people will respect and ration water. It is The City's responsibility to provide the population with real tools and methods to do this and to consistently ensure that people understand the importance of water-saving measures, including growing drought-resistant gardens and crops. This should be included in early education and be shared through all communities, including First Nations. Citizens must be encouraged to use rain barrels and to collect the rainwater.

Participants noted the success of online education (citing experience in the U.S.). Campaigns down south clearly express that water is more precious than oil, and that water is medicine. Washrooms signs in Montana clearly say, "Water is Medicine." They are an example of the success of educating using traditional values combined with western methods. Signs are in restaurants and gas stations, etc.

Signs of the Times

Many participants shared their lived experiences and expressed what water issues they see due to drought and poor water management. Stories shared included:

"Our fields are running out of hay because of drought so now we must buy feed."

"Little Wolf Creek aquafer always used to be up to my hips, and is now consistently below the knees."

"We are seeing vegetation dying because of the dams—such as the cottonwood—it's ceremonial for us."

"Animals go where the water is; Tsuut'ina never had a problem with coyotes and grizzly bears until the last four years. Calgary will be next."

"We can use our water for showering and washing, but we can't drink it. We used to have good mountain water—but it's no longer good."

Learning from the Past

Elders expressed the need to learn from previous droughts, and how impacts of human activities such as mining, clear cutting, and oil and gas on the source of water have on the depletion of our groundwater, and the conflict it brings to communities fighting over water allocations. We need to start thinking long-term.

JUNE CAMP: CALGARY PLAN



June Camp Participants, Crescent Heights Community Association, June 27, 2024

Table Discussion Summaries

Truth and Reconciliation

Participants shared that the “Truth” part of Truth and Reconciliation needs to be present in everything that The City puts forward. One Elder stressed that the evidence and accurate history of this area shows us that the Blackfoot have been here for between 18,000 and 55,000 years. This is, most importantly, Blackfoot territory. Other Nations came here, but later, and the historical timeline supports this reality. There was compassion in the relationships among the Nations, and there are many relations connected in all the Nations in this area.

Recommendations were made to integrate history throughout the document—for example, by sharing historical examples of how the Blackfoot used to gather herbs and plants for Ceremony, with illustrations included that visually represent what has taken place on this land historically.

From a contemporary perspective, it was suggested that The City share what it is currently doing—for example, transferring land back for the Indigenous Gathering Place, the Residential School Memorial, and the commemoration of St. Dunstan’s Indian Residential School.

Participants agreed that the Indigenous policy statements must avoid pan-Indigeneity. Some may consider the phrasing of “dual perspectives” as amassing all Indigenous perspectives into one. Use of these types of phrases needs to be clearly defined. Also, a “distinctions-based approach” must be present and acted on. This means working with each individual Nation and providing opportunities for each Nation to share what is important to them, including their concerns and their ideas.

It is important that there is shared accountability for the implementation of the Calgary Plan and an understanding of how accountability will be managed. This includes having clearly outlined responsibilities to ensure answerability and mechanisms for enforceability.

Calgary Plan: Specific Notes – Truth and Reconciliation, Chapter 1

- **1.2.1**

Second paragraph – starts with “In 1895...”

- > **Revision 1.2.1**

“~~The signing of~~ **Entering into** Treaty 7, however, resulted in the **taking of land by the colonial government** ~~unexpected surrendering of land~~, the creation of the reserve system, colonial practices, and broken promises that have negatively affected Indigenous Peoples.

- > Feedback:

- Indigenous Peoples never surrendered their land.

Natural Systems

Calgary is and has always been an Indigenous city. It has been a place of gathering, trade, and community both in a historical and contemporary context. And conserving, protecting, and restoring is critical to sustainability and the health of The City and communities—both Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

The Calgary Plan needs to view natural systems as “part of who we are.” This phrasing was translated from a Blackfoot word by Elders, demonstrating the deep meaning in language that does not always translate to English and the fact that this “has always been known.”

A non-Indigenous worldview underestimates the wisdom of animals, nature, and the connection of everything. Natural planting can help with many issues:

- Reducing potable water use for outdoor watering
- Erosion concerns
- Invasive species
- Adding wisdom, beauty, and food security with native species
- Reducing effort to care for native plants (labour, herbicide/pesticide use, etc.)
- Paying attention to the timing of nature
- Lessons learned from traditional animals (e.g., buffalo, beavers)
- Future protection of keystone species (e.g., bees, bats)

A key focus for policy and future designs must be about creating balance with nature and understanding the natural cycles of life and death and about being mindful and intentional on restoring and rewilding where it can take place. One example shared is bringing back to the Bow River native trout, which are no longer here. Cutthroat trout have been pushed out, and they are indicator species. The fact that they are not in the water means the environment is not safe for this species. They have been replaced with non-native trout, and those fish still need cool, clean water to survive.

A question was raised on the “carrying capacity” of Calgary. How many people are too many? How long can Calgary keep growing if we have overextended the carrying capacity of the land and the water? What can we mitigate in the natural systems and which ones are somewhat still functional? Once capacity is reached in any given area, negative impacts and damage occur, and the ability to care for people, animals, and plants is lost.

Co-development of policies on climate, land and water, and ensuring Indigenous perspectives are included, are critical to ensuring the sustainability of the land and all living beings. Policies need to make certain that Indigenous Peoples can easily access sites for more cultural harvesting, medicines, and traditional plantings.

Incorporating Ceremony into the policy supports understanding the relationship with the natural world. When we understand the connections, we can protect them. If we don't understand, then we cannot protect. Ceremony also helps to develop a sense of spiritual connection to the land—you can feel it in your soul.

Calgary Plan: Specific Notes – Natural Systems, Chapter 2

- **General**

- > Are there areas identified specifically for medicine walks? Are there specific areas to do these walks for education on plant knowledge? Currently, individuals go wherever public access is available, but being exposed that way when harvesting is not appropriate.

- **2.2.1**

- > **Section E**

Further to comments on restoration, add protecting, monitoring, and restoring specific species to this policy.

- > **Revision 2.2.1e**

Rivers are sacred to Indigenous Nations and communities. **In collaboration with** The City, ~~should collaborate with them in~~ watershed management **is a joint responsibility**, including **identifying**, protecting, **monitoring, and restoring**, and ~~monitoring~~ **working together with** biocultural indicators along the rivers.

- > Feedback:

- Monitoring and restoring were important additions to this statement.

- **2.2.2**

- > **Section K**

There was general agreement with this policy statement at the table.

Participants called attention to interconnectedness in urban gardens (birds, bees, insects, plants, seeds, etc.) and noted additional functions of some plants, such as improving water quality by filtration in wetlands/aquatic species, medicinal qualities, and a role in climate resilience, mitigation, and adaptation.

Participants reiterated the importance of the balance of natural systems and that this has always been known. Participants noted Indigenous views and traditional practices of sustainability, such as:

- moving camps to limit the impacts to the land; and
- knowledge of hunting—knowing which animals to kill to maintain populations.

This policy could be implemented in:

- riparian areas by replacing riprap/concrete with natural plantings, etc., to protect from floods and reduce pollution; and
- implementing learnings from forest fires into forest and deadfall management.

> Section L

There was general agreement with this policy statement, with an additional area of focus around ensuring there is replenishment of native species. As shared by Berna-Dean Holland, “We can try to mimic the actions of the big herds of bison and other wildlife (for example, beavers) through sustainable restoration practices, spreading seeds, restoring soils and habitats, natural infrastructure. And so in this way, replenishing while we stand in one spot.”

Concerns around the lack of regulation, lack of knowledge in non-Indigenous communities, and increasing trendiness of foraging (which is appropriation) were clearly expressed. There is an increased risk of destruction of natural areas, overharvesting, as well as health risks from harvesting incorrect species (e.g., angelica vs. hemlock).

Opportunities may exist for permitting and/or lessons; however, Indigenous Peoples of Treaty 7 must have priority. This will ensure:

- the right experts are being engaged;
- knowledge specific to our local area;
- the ability to designate appropriate rights/amount of harvesting (i.e., traditionally only women or holy people were tasked with harvesting certain plants);
- a shift away from the mindset of economy-driven decisions (i.e., herbicide companies) or “harnessing” nature, toward education, especially for children;
- opportunities for Ceremony;
- opportunities for sharing between Treaties—with the traditional sharing economy pre-1500s noted;
- building of respect and cultural sensitivity, especially around learning from Elders and the protocols of offering and respect;
- increased respect, decreased entitlement; and
- continued revival of the Treaty–City relationship.

> Sections M, N, O

There needs to be education on taking only what you need and on needing to learn from the grandfathers. Biologists only teach the plant; they do not talk about sustainability.

> Section N

Work with the Treaty 7 First Nations and the Métis Nation to identify sites that are scattered all over Calgary. Where there is a possibility of an area to be used differently, ensure that the Nations are contacted first before action is taken.

Different Nations may have used the area differently from one another, and this needs to be considered in the planning.

Contact the right person to identify the sites and the significance of the sites; they have to be in the societies, Elders identified. They have to find the Knowledge Keepers with appropriate knowledge of the area.

> **Revision: 2.2.2.n**

~~The City should collaborate with~~ Indigenous Nations **should to** determine how significant sites and associated knowledge about them (including archaeological findings) are shared with the public, if at all.

> Feedback:

- The sentiment was shared that this is not strong enough. This work should not be a collaboration with Nations, but rather led by Nations within City boundaries.
- "If at all" was really important for this group!

> **Section O**

Have processes in place to ensure that non-Indigenous harvesting ensures sustainability. Currently appropriation is happening, and non-Indigenous People are using plants for non-traditional purposes, which cannot only decrease access for Indigenous Peoples but can also put the species at risk. Elders want to pick medicine, which is combined with teachings. It may be dangerous when someone who does not know the plant picks one that looks exactly the same but which could be poisonous.

Remove any requirements for permits for Indigenous Peoples to harvest. This supports Indigenous inclusion.

We need to have it written into the policy that concepts like restoration and sustainability are Indigenous-led to ensure the knowledge is kept and incorporated into operations, process, and practices. There is also a right time and place to harvest, and this needs to be respected.

> **Revision: 2.2.2.o**

Indigenous-led opportunities for the sustainable foraging of food, cultural, medicinal, and ceremonial plants must be enabled.

> Feedback:

- "Indigenous-led" needs to be highlighted here, so that it is rooted in cultural practice and protocol.

Collaboration and Relationships

A participant shared that all of what Indigenous People know is from nature, including collaboration and the belief that everything is connected. As one participant stated, "We have the Creator's breath in us, so we are Creators too." Relationships are built on observation of nature and each other. This sentiment led to sharing that The City must visit on the land, come to Indigenous camps and events, and see how things are done: "You may not understand everything you see, but seeing it will help you learn how we do things, and that's how you collaborate and come together—by attempting to understand."

More resources are required to make it possible for Indigenous People to speak in their languages and have technology to translate the meanings. This would help so they can explain themselves better and so the children can connect with their languages as well, allowing all of us to learn from each other more genuinely.

Within the context of The City of Calgary as well as the Calgary Plan, use Indigenous spoken language more often so that essence and meaning are not lost, and give more time for a pause so that English isn't automatically pulled into conversation as the default. As has been mentioned, "English can mess things up," and the true intent can be lost in that translation.

By using Indigenous language, we can move past government-constructed language and terminology. Language is central in bridging worldview gaps and in making intentions authentic and meaningful.

The Calgary Plan currently does not include the historical context of the policies that came before. Relating to the Truth part of Truth and Reconciliation, there is no mention of the Indian Act or Section 35 of the Constitution, and there is only one mention of the United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). This context is necessary to understand the disenfranchisement of Indigenous Peoples not only in this country but within the municipality. This history directly impacted the way in which The City of Calgary was established and has continued to inform the way in which Indigenous Peoples have not been involved in policy development and implementation. As was shared, “UNDRIP is not the ceiling; it is the ground floor.”

Additionally, there needs to be a better way to share information back to Indigenous leadership. Having The City come into communities and give presentations, visit, and build relationships—leadership to leadership—is crucial.

Within the Calgary Plan, there needs to be a section for Indigenous perspective specifically—for example, by having draft policy written in part by the Nations to include Indigenous narrative.

Guiding Circle

Establishment of a Guiding Circle for finalization, implementation, and accountability of the Calgary Plan, with equal representation from all the Nations, was suggested in order to support working together more collectively and through consensus.

The Guiding Circle could also help support language and wording around land, water, and climate issues, among others. With a biocultural diversity lens, this must include land, lifeways, and language. A dedicated liaison at The City, or a City department, could support meaningful check-ins and confirmation with community as well as support relationship building for City staff and connections with Nations.

Calgary Plan: Specific Notes - Implementation, Chapter 6

- **6.1**

- > General:

- There is a need to recognize that everything Indigenous Peoples do is land-based and to apply Two-Eyed Seeing to every project and situation from the beginning in order to understand how it ties to the land and stewardship.

- **6.1.1**

- > There needs to be a statement about knowledge co-production and co-protection—something in place to consistently check in with Nations, Knowledge Keepers, etc. to ensure that information is correct and being shared appropriately.

- > **Section J**

- Becoming more specific may be less inclusive; leave some room for interpretation and “reading into” spirit and intent, and balance this with the need to keep broader high-level language so it can be applied to wider variety of situations.

- **6.2.1**

- > With technical studies and by engaging with Indigenous experts, there must be restrictions in place and understandings to ensure knowledge is being shared in a good way and will be used respectfully.
- > Nations assess places and spaces for cultural, historical, and spiritual significance; one of the major stumbling blocks is the provincial department of historical resources where government information is not shared back with the Nations.
- > Good policy would focus on protecting and acknowledging known/existing sites but also provide the ability to explore other sites that have not yet been listed or acknowledged.

Indicators and Accountability

The table discussion around indicators was focused on the different ways that Indigenous Nations felt biocultural indicators could be expressed for the Calgary Plan. As context, information was provided that framed Indigenous indicators and focused on using a Biocultural Diversity Framework approach to ensure land, language, and lifeways are incorporated into their development.

Development of indicators from a place of Shared Values is the first step in establishing a measurement system that works for both Indigenous communities and those working within the western system of a municipal government.

Participants shared that it would be valuable if Indigenous contributions to Calgary, including the arts, economy, etc., could be recognized. Many homeless feel embarrassed and as if they are not part of society, so if The City could do more to show how they are part of society and how they have contributed, this would be impactful.

There is a desire to have more Indigenous placemaking in the downtown area, including in arts and cultural areas, and by incorporating signage in Treaty 7 languages.

There is also a strong desire for a gathering place for all Indigenous Nations to come together in the downtown area. A project is in the works, and The City needs to ensure that it is truly for all and that there is participation from Treaty 7 First Nations and the Métis Nation in Alberta in its development.

Participants expressed a strong desire for increased economic development opportunities for Indigenous Peoples, including the approval and implementation of the procurement policy currently being developed that would support Indigenous vendors in accessing opportunities within The City. There must also be opportunities to determine how Indigenous Nations are benefitting from Indigenousization of projects and opportunities.

The relationship between The City and Nations is incredibly important, and developing and maintaining those relationships needs to be part of the ongoing work of The City. City staff and leadership need to make going out to the Nations a priority, rather than simply inviting the Nations to come into The City for discussions. The trust is being built back up, but it is fragile, and when one side does not follow through, this impacts the relationship and the possibilities that can come from strong relationships.

Participants discussed the idea of each Nation having their own indicators. Indigenous indicators work on a different timeline than those the Calgary Plan is currently working within. The time that is needed must be given, and there must be no pressure to conform to a deadline that is unreasonable and does not allow for the work to be accomplished in a good way.

Calgary Plan: Specific Notes

- Indicators in the Calgary Plan must be used as a form of accountability for The City.
- The idea of an annual report with written indicator updates is a Western approach, and there was discussion that an oral reporting and monitoring method might be more meaningful.
- A data-sharing agreement needs to be in place so that information and data can be shared among The City and the Nations, ensuring that data is not shelved after collection. No one person or group owns the data.

Calgary Plan: Specific Notes – General City Policies, Chapter 4

- **4.10.1**
 - > Pair Public Art with Cultural Landscapes to share, acknowledge, preserve, and protect existing art/sites.
 - > Relate section to 4.11 as they are connected through existing art/artifacts, parks, histories site names, etc.
 - > **Section D**
Define “functional” in layman’s terms.
 - > **Section F**
Further define “histories” as not just stories but the existing evidence and artifacts at existing important sites (buffalo jumps, glacial erratics, trade sites, foundational trails and roads), including names.

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