



Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee

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April 19, 2004

Edmonton Aboriginal Community Members, Organizations and Representatives

Re: Introducing the *Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord* Initiative

Dear **Community Members**,

Hello, Welcome, Tan'si, tawow, Oki, Boojhoo, Auneen, Me'taleyn, Kwey! Now is the time, more than ever, when our diverse Aboriginal Nations of Edmonton have come to a crossroads of opportunity to establish for ourselves, our protocols and agreements for a new and stronger relationship with the City of Edmonton, the Province of Alberta, and the Government of Canada. This Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord Initiative is about the future as a place of well-being and success for our Peoples.

We (EAUAC), in partnership with the three orders of government, are honoured to take a facilitating role in dialogues and talking circles with our communities to discover how this new and stronger relationship can be built. We envision the Accord Initiative as a way in which we can gather as a collective voice and develop working and living relationships to better serve and maintain our Urban Aboriginal Peoples, their voices, and respective identities. This future should be a place of strong and true partnerships.

The "Accord Initiative" is a milestone for Urban Aboriginal Relations in Canada. It holds the potential of a broad-based agreement that will recognize the important work that is being done by Aboriginal Agencies, Organizations and Representative bodies in our city and that will further enhance their missions and mandates. We will look to our Elders and Community Leaders for their wisdom and insight into how we can support one another and discuss the issues. We will seek out our Youth and ask them for their participation and guidance and invite them to the tables. We will go to each of our Communities for their visions and concerns. We will then bring all these ideas and concepts together to the communities for further review. The EAUAC does this in the spirit of peace and friendship and with the goal of securing positive futures for the coming generations. The future should also be a place and a way of coming together.

Please feel free to share this information with others within the Aboriginal community and call 496-4936 or EAUAC@edmonton.com to add additional names to our Aboriginal Stakeholder's List.

We look forward to working with you on this important initiative.

In the Spirit of Peace and Friendship,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lewis Cardinal". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross symbol at the beginning of the first word.

Lewis Cardinal, Chair
Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee

Cc: EAUAC Executive: Angela Lamoureux (Vice-Chair), Robb Campre, Leonard Robinson

Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord Initiative

The City of Edmonton, working together with the City Council-appointed Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (EAUAC), and in partnership with the Government of Alberta and Government of Canada, is about to begin the *Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord* Initiative. The Initiative will be implemented in four phases. It responds to growing awareness of the needs and aspirations of Edmonton's Aboriginal citizens and is intended to create opportunities to work together toward a brighter future for Aboriginal people in Edmonton. This Initiative has been identified in the City of Edmonton's 2003-2005 Corporate Business Plan, and supports the Plan Edmonton municipal responsibility area "Services to People."

What is the Accord Initiative Intended To Achieve?

The Accord Initiative will develop a process for ongoing dialogue between the City and Aboriginal citizens to establish mutual understanding and stronger relationships as the basis for improving the City's services for Aboriginal Edmontonians.

The Initiative will also provide opportunities for all three orders of government and EAUAC to combine efforts with community stakeholders to ensure that dialogue and consensus building occur, and attention is given to the priorities identified by Aboriginal communities in Edmonton.

The Initiative is a way for governments and Aboriginal communities to work together through an inclusive process to build an Accord that all members can own.

The City of Edmonton is interested in:

- improving its service delivery for Aboriginal people.
- Being a more attractive place of employment for Aboriginal people.
- Ensuring that available resources flow to Urban Aboriginal priorities, as determined by Aboriginal people in Edmonton.

Phase One - Dialogue and Relationship Building - Summer/Fall 2004

The first and most important phase of this Initiative will be the creation of "Listening Circles" and other culturally appropriate forums. These inclusive discussions will bring Aboriginal citizens and other stakeholders together in **reviewing needs and opportunities**, and developing consensus on priorities. Simply put, Aboriginal communities and stakeholders will be asked what they think this new or strengthened relationship would look like, what principles and values should be observed, and how a better relationship could improve service delivery and address the issues of the day.

The intent of this phase is to listen to, and respect, others and promote common understanding, which are essential steps in **building trust** and **developing shared priorities**. This relationship building process will be designed and implemented by EAUAC, supported by a Community Process Coordinator funded by the Federal and Provincial partners and supported by a team of City staff. The Accord process will honour and respect each role and the responsibilities that any Aboriginal organization or stakeholder may have.

This first phase of the Initiative should be completed in 2004, and will be documented in a "Listening Circle Report."

Phase Two – Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord - Winter/Spring 2005 The second phase of the Initiative will see shared development, review and approval of the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord. The Accord (or whatever name and format is mutually agreed upon) is expected to include a set of **mutually held values and principles**, and **protocols for creating a sustained respectful working relationship** between the City of Edmonton and Aboriginal citizens. Mutual understanding of the protocols will help each partner define its roles and responsibilities in working together to achieve success.

Phase Three - Working Together to Achieve More - Summer 2005/Ongoing

Having reached an Accord, the next step will be to identify and undertake **shared actions**. The collective strength of the participating organizations will result in focused action using available funding and resources to greatest advantage. Potential participants, beyond government and service delivery organizations, include local health and education authorities, voluntary and business sectors and other parties who would bring expertise and resources to the table. The City of Edmonton will have a Project Team in place to examine Department-specific business cases for improving City services of importance to Aboriginal people, and to look at specific ways to improve Aboriginal participation in the City's workforce. The Team will review current plans and policies, and bring forward **promising practices** from all parts of the country for consideration by stakeholders. The Initiative is intended to address the barriers faced by Urban Aboriginal people as they strive to participate fully in Edmonton's economy and quality of life.

Phase Four - Annual Project Status Review - December 2004-December 2009

The partners will involve stakeholders in **annual reviews of progress** to determine what adjustments or further stakeholder involvement will best keep initiatives moving forward. Throughout the process there will be periodic **renewal and recommitment** to the principles, values and protocols of the Accord.

EAUAC will initiate its hiring process for the Community Process Coordinator in early April. For specific information, please visit the EAUAC website at www.aboriginal-edmonton.com. The City will establish a project office in late April to support this Initiative.

In the interim, for further information on the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord Initiative, please contact:

Mike Kroening, Project Manager	496-5827
Bea Fricson, Project Leader	496-4814
Laura Auger, EAUAC Support	496-4936

For information from the Government of Canada and Government of Alberta, please contact:

Wendy Stewart-Fagnan (Canada - WED)	495-5776
John McDonough (Alberta - AA&ND)	427-9448

03/30/2004 MK/mk