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About Us

The City of Winnipeg strives to be a vibrant and healthy city which places its highest priority on quality of life for all its citizens.

Indigenous Relations Division (IRD) was established in 2013 to provide leadership and an Indigenous perspective on civic programs, services and initiatives that support and address the needs of Winnipeg’s Indigenous community.

Journey of Reconciliation

The City of Winnipeg’s Journey of Reconciliation began in 2016 with initiatives such as the creation of Winnipeg’s Indigenous Accord and the implementation of five Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action that relate to municipalities. This remains an ongoing effort and is done in collaboration with community partners and other City departments.

Please read on to find out more about IRD’s 2019 Journey of Reconciliation achievements, as well as the successes of our Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak partners.
Winnipeg’s Indigenous Accord

**JUNE SIGNING CEREMONY**

At a signing ceremony each June, local organizations, businesses, groups, and individuals formally join the City in their commitment to reconciliation as Accord partners. In 2019, 27 new partners signed the Accord and made a commitment to put reconciliation into action.

To learn more on how to take action on reconciliation or to become a partner, please visit [winnipeg.ca/indigenousaccord](http://winnipeg.ca/indigenousaccord).

- Attendees look on during the June Signing Ceremony
- A teepee was erected for the June Signing Ceremony at City Hall
- MC Kimberley Puhach and Elder Norman Meade
- Mayor Brian Bowman is joined by Elders Norman Meade and Mae Louise Campbell during the Grand Entry
- Attendees look on during the June Signing Ceremony
ALL PARTNER GATHERING

On November 1st, 2019, the City co-hosted the fourth Partner Gathering at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet (RWB). The Gathering promoted sharing, learning and encouragement between Accord partners in an open and welcoming space. Dialogue included experiences and perspectives related to the development and implementation of Partner goals involving the TRC Calls to Action and how organizations can take action.

Over 70 Accord partners were in attendance as RWB, the Winnipeg Boldness Project and Assiniboine Credit Union shared their stories of reconciliation in action and were also treated to a performance from the RWB’s Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation. Supported by the TRC, this ballet was intended as a means of communication and connection among the Survivors of the Indian Residential School system, the Indigenous Community and all Canadians on the path towards reconciliation.

#2PARTNER CHALLENGE

At the 4th Annual All Partner Gathering in November, Mayor Bowman challenged Winnipeg’s Indigenous Accord Partners to recruit 2 new Partners each in time for the June 2020 Signing Ceremony. Accord Partners have a shared commitment to reconciliation that is rooted in the TRC 94 Calls to Action, and share their knowledge and experiences with others.

Do you think you can find 2 partners to join Winnipeg’s Indigenous Accord? Take the #2PartnerChallenge and help to advance reconciliation in our city. Visit winnipeg.ca/indigenousaccord to learn more.
Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak

Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak, (pronounced Awsh-kay Anish-a-nob-bay Nee-ga-nee-walk) which means “Young Indigenous People Leading” in Ojibway, is the City of Winnipeg’s Indigenous Youth Strategy. The mission of Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak is to give Indigenous youth positive opportunities in the community and civic system by providing culturally appropriate programs and supports. These include opportunities related to employment, education, training, literacy and recreation. IRD’s goal in providing these opportunities is for Indigenous youth in Winnipeg to be able to increase their resiliency, self-sustainability, and personal strengths, and to achieve their goals and dreams for the future!

Youth by Numbers

1,774 | Drop-in visits to Ndinawe’s Youth Resource Centre Recreation Program
21 | Diplomas and Post-Secondary Certificates were obtained
666 | Certificates were obtained (First Aid CPR, WHMIS, etc.)
1 | Indigenous youth transitioned from an Internship to permanent employment with the City of Winnipeg
113 | Participants completed a program
61 | Indigenous youth found employment
63 | Youth continued their education

*This number is not unique # of participants

Post-Secondary Trades Scholarship

Scholarships in the amount of $1,000 were awarded to Indigenous youth enrolled in full time trades programs at recognized post-secondary institutions in Winnipeg. The scholarships were awarded to assist with tuition expenses and each of the winners demonstrated excellent academic achievement and community leadership.

Here are the 2019 recipients of the award:

**Kevin K.**
Red River College

**Hayden W.**
Red River College

**Orlean W.**
European School of Aesthetics

Best of luck in your future endeavors!
Eagles Nest Youth Program

The Urban Eagle Transition Centre held a Graduation Ceremony for the Eagle’s Nest Phase 33 Aboriginal Youth Program and Wichii Oskiiga Youth Mentorship Program. There were 17 Indigenous youth that graduated from the Eagle’s Nest Program with certificates of completion and fundraised $1,000 for their graduation hoodies.

Students celebrated their successes while sharing the significance of attending sweats, cultural education and being connected to their Indigenous heritage. Charlene, a participant of the Eagles Nest Aboriginal Youth Program, was enthusiastic about her experiences and shared that she most enjoyed her volunteer work.

Resource Assistance for Youth’s (RaY’s) Growing Opportunities Program

JONATHAN R.H.

After utilizing services at RaY’s HUB Model, Jonathan is now helping to give back to the community. He is employed full time at Denver Restorations, and shares with others the amazing work that happens at RaY. Jonathan is featured below sharing his story with NHL Alumni, funders and audience members at the Hockey Helps the Homeless event.
Spence Neighborhood Association

Youth who attend Spence Neighbourhood Association’s (SNA) First Jobs 4 Youth (FJ4Y) Program shared their experiences while preparing a Christmas dinner for 400 community members at the Magnus Eliason Recreation Centre.

**LEO W.**

Leo heard about the program through the Youth Employment Services and has been a participant for over two years. He loves the friendly and social work environment at SNA, and has learned how to cook and open up to other people.

Leo would like to run his own business one day because his program coordinator, Leslie, has inspired him with her hard work and dedication in running their social enterprise.

Broadway Neighbourhood Centre (*BNC*)

The 11th Annual Just TV Showcase was held at the West End Cultural Centre on November 28th, 2019, and included songs, music videos, and short films created and presented by 19 BNC youth. The performances illustrated their life experiences and challenges, while demonstrating their dedication and commitment to their community.
Urban Eclipse Screening

In September 2019, IRD hosted filmmakers Jesse Green and Vanda Fleury-Green to screen their work *Urban Eclipse: Rising Tides of Kekekoziibii (Shoal Lake #40 First Nation)* as part of the City’s Leadership Series, with the intention of bringing a renewed perspective and understanding about Indigenous history and culture to leaders within the organization. The film looks at the history of the aqueduct, impacts on the Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, and efforts to build Freedom Road. It includes interviews with Shoal Lake 40 community members as well as archival documents. Later in the year, the Winnipeg Public Library and Archives Department presented the film at the Millennium Library. The film has won a Manitoba Day Award for its use of records at the City of Winnipeg Archives, namely the records of the Greater Winnipeg Water District.

**Feedback:** “I keep thinking about how the boil water advisory and how that impacts the members of Shoal Lake 40. I have a toddler and I imagine trying to stop her from drinking bathwater or being careful not to swallow when she’s brushing her teeth and how difficult that must be.”

Training Stats

In response to Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action #57, which calls upon all levels of government to provide education to public servants on the history of Indigenous Peoples, the City of Winnipeg offers a half-day training session for all public service staff and a two-day training session for public service staff with direct reports.

As of December 2019, approximately 9,500 City of Winnipeg employees have been trained through scheduled and department-requested sessions.

**Feedback:** “I encourage the City of Winnipeg to work with the Provincial and Federal government branches in order to mandate Indigenous training in ALL workplaces. I believe [this training] will only benefit the citizens of our country.”
2019 National Indigenous Peoples Day

National Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations took place on June 21, 2019 in the courtyard of City Hall, where City of Winnipeg employees came together in honouring the cultures of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples. The program included an opening prayer by Elder Clarence Nepinak, honour song by Chrissy Slater and special remarks from Mayor Bowman. Employees enjoyed a lunch of BBQ bison smokies while being treated to traditional Indigenous performances from the Walking Wolf Dancers & Singers, Metis storyteller and songwriter Ted Longbottom, The Metis Club Traditional Dancers, and Inuit throat singer Agatha Kumastisutiksak.

Other activities included bannock making on a fire in the courtyard and a Tipi Raising and Teachings workshop, where participants had the opportunity to take part in the raising of a Tipi while learning the meanings of each Tipi pole. There were also local Indigenous artisans set up at vendor tables and a body painter.

Indigenous Peoples Month

More workshops were provided throughout Indigenous Peoples Month to celebrate and further our knowledge and awareness of the Indigenous cultures. These workshops included We Are All Treaty People, a guided tour at the Manitoba Museum that examined ideas, laws, languages, and stories that helped shape the numbered Treaties in Manitoba.

The Métis History and Culture workshop examined 400 years of Métis history and what the Métis Nation looks like today. The Manitoba Inuit Association workshop explored Inuit history, culture and traditions of Inuit people as well as an opportunity to learn about the work at the Manitoba Inuit Association.
Shoal Lake Display

Learning more about where Winnipeg’s water comes from and acknowledging past and present events surrounding water is vital to Winnipeg’s Journey of Reconciliation. It was in this spirit that Archives and Records Control put together a new temporary display at City Hall discussing the Winnipeg aqueduct’s history over the past 100 years. It serves as an opportunity to reflect on how Winnipeg has talked about and remembered the aqueduct. It also acknowledges that, as the city becomes more aware of the impact of its decision to select Shoal Lake as a water source, specifically the impacts to Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, additional perspectives on the aqueduct’s history are needed.

The display features archival pictures dated back to 1913 of Shoal Lake 40 community members. These photos were used in consultation with Shoal Lake 40. Newspaper clippings from 1919 and images of the construction are also included. Historical Markers and Commemoration is currently on the main floor of the Susan A. Thompson Building and reflects on how Winnipeg has talked about and remembered the aqueduct.
Welcoming Winnipeg

Indigenous Peoples are the original peoples of this land and have contributed to the creation and evolution of this city. However, this is not evident in our day to day movement, the surroundings and the environment. As Winnipeg has a large Indigenous population, it is extremely important that Winnipeg takes on a leadership role to resolve the absence of Indigenous history and perspective within our city.

On January 29, 2019, Mayor Bowman announced a public engagement effort regarding the Welcoming Winnipeg initiative. The public engagement was intended to obtain input from Winnipeggers to help the city develop a process and policy to guide how the City recognizes and commemorates various historical people and events with place names, plaques, signs, and street names. The City carried out two phases of consultation to obtain input from the public regarding the process of adding to, creating new or removing/rename historical markers and place names. It was determined that the public felt strongly that all options regarding historical markers and place names should be considered, so further input on each of these options was obtained.

Key messages and concerns gathered throughout the engagement process included: Indigenous history and perspectives should be considered for the naming/rename of places; research and historical accuracy are essential in reviewing and considering any changes to existing or new names; balance and diversity are guiding principles in decision-making; and education, historical accuracy and support by those who are most impacted must be key components of this initiative.

As a result of the two phases of consultation, the Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History Policy was developed, and approved in early 2020 by Council. IRD will work with departments to implement the policy, which includes establishing a Committee of Community Members and reviewing existing by-laws and policies to recommend changes to Council, in keeping with the guiding principles, criteria, and processes outlined in the Policy. While this review is taking place, the Policy will be applied as a lens to existing naming policies, by-laws, and processes.

Throughout October 2019, a Welcoming Winnipeg Walking Tour led in partnership with the Manitoba Museum took City employees on a tour of historical markers near City Hall to discuss the stories that they convey. IRD will continue to offer the tour through the Manitoba Museum to City employees, and it is anticipated that the Winnipeg Public Library will begin offering tours to the public in summer 2020.