Bridging the Gap: Connecting with Aboriginal Citizens in Your Community

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Canadian population at 33 million in 2006, with nearly 1.8 million reporting Aboriginal ancestry.
Of these, 1.2 million report Aboriginal identity, in three distinct groups:

Aboriginal Identity Population

- First Nations single response: 698,025
- Métis single response: 389,780
- Inuit single response: 50,480
- Multiple and other Aboriginal responses: 35,500

Total = 1,172,785
54% of that Aboriginal population live in urban areas.
... and these numbers are increasing

- **Montreal**: +5% (Aboriginal) +60% (Overall)
- **Halifax**: +4% (Aboriginal) +51% (Overall)
- **Toronto**: +9% (Aboriginal) +31% (Overall)
- **Edmonton**: +10% (Aboriginal) +27% (Overall)
- **Calgary**: +13% (Aboriginal) +26% (Overall)
- **Thunder Bay**: +1% (Aboriginal) +23% (Overall)
- **Winnipeg**: +3% (Aboriginal) +22% (Overall)
The urban Aboriginal community is a permanent population

- A large majority of urban Aboriginal people consider the city home
- They aspire to the “good life”, but they don’t want to be just like other Canadians
- Identity is crucial, as important as basic needs
- The city is a venue for creative development of Aboriginal culture
- Education is valued for self and children, but there are barriers
Why we need to pay attention

• One in two Aboriginal peoples in Canada now live in cities

• The urban Aboriginal population is young and growing

• Canada has yet to come to terms with this reality

• Our focus has been on reserve issues and on problems
Bridging the Gap: Connecting with Aboriginal Citizens in Your Community ~ Expert Panel

- **John Gordon**, Director, Urban Aboriginal Strategy, AADNC, Office of the Federal Interlocutor
- **Jeffrey Cyr**, Executive Director, National Association of Friendship Centers
- **Leona Carter**, Director, Aboriginal Relations Office, Community Service, City of Edmonton
- **Erin Hogan**, Councillor, Thompson Manitoba, Urban Aboriginal Strategy
- **Gilles Dorval**, Aboriginal Relations Advisor, City of Saskatoon