



ECONOMIC WELLNESS PROJECT

{ VISIONING A LIVEABLE CITY }



Final Report, March 2017



www.tassc.ca

INTRODUCTION

In 2016 the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC) received project funds through the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to provide the Community Economic Wellness Plan. This project supported consultation and action-planning to contribute to increased economic participation of Toronto's urban Indigenous people. This Final Report seeks to ask the question: *How will we build economic wellness within Toronto's Aboriginal community?*

The project included 5 community discussion circles entitled, *Visioning A Liveable City*, that targeted diverse groups of Indigenous people living in Toronto: Women, men, seniors, youth, and 2-spirit community members. To further the inclusivity of all community members, outreach efforts were made to community members who identify as students, Métis, Inuit, 2 spirit, transgender, homeless, and those that live outside of the downtown core.

Once the discussion circles were complete, TASSC held a large community gathering entitled, *Honouring Our Community - Creating an Inclusive City*. At this event TASSC provided a summary of the discussion circles and presented three emerging themes for community members to consider. Community members were asked to provide recommendations and action-planning on the emerging themes to ensure work continues after the life of this project.

In tandem to this project, TASSC provided presentations to non-traditional stakeholders to leverage what we've learned and increase the

number of new relationships and partnerships being made within Toronto's Indigenous communities. To accompany this work, TASSC commissioned Ryerson University's Magnet program to create a 5 minute video showcasing the vibrancy of our urban Indigenous community.

Summary of Activities

Discussion Circles

In total 72 individuals took part in our *Visioning A Liveable City* discussion circles. The circles took place between the end of January, 2017 to mid-March 2017 and occurred in the evenings at local Indigenous organizations, with the exception of the 2-spirit discussion circle, which took place at the 519 Community Centre as recommended by a member agency of TASSC. The circles were facilitated by two Indigenous facilitators with experience working with TASSC's member agencies. Each circle had a minimum of 11 participants and a maximum of 19. With the exception of the senior's circle², each circle had representation of individuals who identified as students, Métis, Inuit, 2-spirit, transgender, homeless, or those how do not live in the downtown core.

Report Back and Action Planning

The Report Back on *Visioning A Liveable City* and Action Planning event was held on March 29th during the day at the Native Canadian

² The senior's circle did not provide a follow up evaluation. Therefore this information is not available.

Centre of Toronto. Participants were given two opportunities to participate during the day. In total, 40 individuals participated and provided recommendations for further action. TASSC Executive Director, Crystal Basi, provided an overview of the project, the main themes that emerged from each discussion circle, and three overarching themes that were common to each discussion circle. Through the support of the Métis Nation of Ontario, an Indigenous facilitator provided an action planning session on the main themes identified.

Presentations and partnerships

Throughout the project over 10 presentations were made to new stakeholders. The desired outcomes of these presentations were to build new relationships and bring on new partnerships that would support the economic wellness of Toronto's diverse Indigenous communities.

A summary of presentations and/or new partnerships that evolved between September 2016 to March 31, 2017 can be found in Appendix B of this document.

TASSC Community Investment Video

Magnet consulted with TASSC and community members to select locations, footage, and candidates to be interviewed for the film. Those interviewed were both Indigenous individuals and non-Indigenous allies that could speak to the vibrancy and positive impact that the Indigenous community offers Toronto. Filming began in January and wrapped up in March.



SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION CIRCLE THEMES

The focus of these discussion circles was to answer the question, *How will we build economic wellness within Toronto's Aboriginal community?* However, when testing the focus group questions our facilitators received strong recommendations to broaden the question to incorporate a more holistic understanding of 'economic wellness'². For this reason, "How do you envision a liveable city?" became the question we used to discuss the many community needs that are foundational to building economic wellness.

For each discussion circle the facilitators used the warm up question, "What does community mean to you?" and "What does urban space mean to you?" This allowed the participants to get comfortable with providing answers, thinking positively, and collaborating on solutions. Next the question, "How do you envision a liveable city?" was asked. Participants were encouraged to think broadly and without limitations. Each remark was recorded on a flipchart for participants to view. After the allotted time, participants were asked to walk around and stick dots on three to five remarks that resonated with them the most. From there, participants reflected on the most common themes and co-created titles to describe these themes.

The following is a summary of the most common themes that emerged with each discussion circle.

² This message was echoed in the INAC Summary of What We Heard in UAS Engagement 2016: "It was felt by participants that in the end, a focus on these more basic elements would eventually lead to greater participation in the economy"

For a detailed summary of each discussion circle and the emerging themes, please review Appendix A at the end of this report.



Women's Discussion Circle

Emerging Themes

- *Safe Spaces*
- *Housing with Dignity*
- *Accountability of agencies to communities*
- *Indigenous Landscapes*

Youth Discussion Circle

Emerging Themes

- *Better Housing*
- *A Place to Thrive*
- *Safety*
- *Addressing Racism & Discrimination*

Senior's Discussion Circle

Emerging Theme

- *Inuit Support*
- *Need for Representation*
- *Affordable Seniors Residence*

2-Spirit Discussion Circle

Emerging Themes

- *Deeper Discussion Needed on Colonization*
- *Need for Representation*

Men's Discussion Circle

Emerging Themes

- *Access & Information*
- *Housing & Shelter*
- *Addiction Support*
- *Business, Entrepreneurship, Employment*
- *Culture*
- *Improving services through better coordination*

ACTION PLANNING

On Emerging Themes from Discussion Circles

On March 29th individuals who participated in the discussion circles as well as the general community were invited to participate in Report Back and Action-Planning around three themes that were common to all discussion circles:

Safety: How can we build our communities and/or urban centre so that we ALL feel more safe?

Information, Communication & Accountability: What are ways that service providers can improve information sharing & accountability to community members?

Housing: What are things we can do to help support the housing needs of Indigenous peoples in Toronto?

With each themed question, the follow up questions included:

What can we as **community members** do?

What can **agencies** do?

What can the **community** at large do (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous)?

What can **government** do?

Participants were instructed to provide recommendations or action items and indicate which group they felt was best suited to take up the action - community members, agencies, community at large, or government.

At the end of the session community members were asked how they would like TASSC to report back and the timeframe for doing so.

Safety

Community discussions included cultural safety and the need for the community to address lateral violence within the Indigenous community. The safety of 2-spirit community members was also brought up with an emphasis on the crisis of 2-spirit people taking their own lives. Action #1: Service providers and government need to report back to the community on how they are addressing 2-spirit suicide in Toronto.

This discussion also included physical safety and the need for emergency support and accessible transportation to ensure safety when traveling. Suggestions for service providers included looking at flexible hours of operation outside of regular 9:00 - 5:00 hours, increasing access to TTC tokens to prevent individuals from going missing, and developing a transportation loop between agencies. Reestablishing an addictions centre was also recommended for the long term health and safety of community members.

Action Item #2: TASSC to provide a safety audit on where services are located, how accessible and safe they are and what distances people are traveling to access them.

Action Item #3: Service providers and government to respond to what actions are being taken to reestablish an addictions centre for Indigenous people in Toronto.

Information, Communications, and Accountability

Community members had many ideas on how to better share information within the community. There was consensus that Indigenous service providers need to find better ways to let community members know what services are available. One recommendation was to create an Indigenous services database that connects all Indigenous agency's websites and the City's 211 website. The database would include search items that identified what criteria is needed to participate in any given program. One suggestion was to have this database governed by a Community Advisory Committee. Another recommendation was to share information on services with non-Indigenous service providers that support Indigenous community members; this may be accomplished by having more Indigenous staff within non-Indigenous service providers.

Community members offered recommendations toward stronger accountability of Indigenous service providers to community members. One recommendation was for service providers attend more community events and ensure the wider community is invited to agency events. Another recommendation was to hold a large event where service providers could report back on their activities and listen to community voices. This would require finding a large venue and inviting government authorities. Finally, there was a recommendation to develop a general and transparent complaint process.



ACTION PLANNING

On Emerging Themes from Discussion Circles - *continued*

Housing

Community members all acknowledged there was a lack of affordable and accessible housing in Toronto. However, within this reality there were specific gaps that community members felt needed to be addressed. There were several identified needs:

- A need for transitional housing when individuals are transitioning from hospitals to shelters
- A need for a hospice for elders
- A need for programs that focus on individuals leaving incarceration

It was recommended that Indigenous shelters and housing should address the needs of Indigenous individuals first.

Action Item #4: Service providers to explain how housing is or can be offered to all women and their children and not only for those that are fleeing family violence.

Action Item #5: MPPs need to respond on how they plan on addressing housing issues that come out of policy reports.

Action Item #6: Service providers and government officials to report back on what is being done to house seniors and especially those in need of post-operative and palliative care.

Reporting Back to Community

Community members agreed that they would like TASSC to report back to the community at each season. There was also a suggestion that a steering committee be created and made up of a member of each Indigenous service provider that belongs to TASSC.



NEXT STEPS

The Community Economic Wellness Project brought new attention to the basic community needs that must be addressed before Indigenous people can be expected to increase their participation in the economy.

Miigwetch, nia:wen, marsee, to all the community members who came out on cold evenings to share their vision of a liveable city and for speaking with great truth and honesty on where TASSC and the community need to go to bring all of us to a place where we are thriving, rather than surviving.

Over the winter season TASSC has gained invaluable insight from women, men, seniors, youth, and 2 spirit community members. Here are just a few ways that we've already utilized the information provided by the community:

- Review and analyze the needs, challenges, recommendations, and action items for immediate response
- Direct quote community member responses in advocacy work as it relates to capacity building and communications
- Take immediate action to develop an internal policy around stronger inclusivity and representation of 2 spirit community members

The information provided by community members will inform and guide TASSC's other current research initiatives. This includes TASSC's three year community-action project that focuses on building inclusivity within Indigenous groups,

a child and family needs assessment, and building knowledge around capacity building for Indigenous agencies.

TASSC is committed to reporting back every season to community members. This includes where action has been taken and the impact of this action, as well as any challenges and limitations that we've faced in implementing recommendations or action items.

TASSC is also committed to sustaining and stewarding our new relationships and partnerships that have been established over the course of this project. This includes inviting new and potential partners to our events, providing updates, and creating a reciprocal relationship of advising and seeking guidance where appropriate. Finally, the 5 minute video created in tandem with this project will be shared with all local Indigenous service providers and groups as a tool to reach out to new partners and share the vitality of Toronto's Indigenous communities.



APPENDIX A.1

Discussion Circle Summaries

Visioning A Liveable City Discussion Circle:

Women's Circle Summary

"It's time for us to honour each other."
- participant

Friday, January 27, 2017

5:30 PM

Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto
191 Gerrard St E, Toronto, ON

19 Indigenous women attended the Women's Circle. During the introductions, it was apparent that there was a lot of diversity within the circle, including participant age (25 - 65), number of years living in Toronto (born and raised, to recently moved to Toronto), self-identity (Ojibwe, Cree, Soto, Mohawk, Sault, Métis, 2-Spirited), and job status (full-time, part-time, unemployed, student).

An interesting point that arose from the discussion was that the majority of participants lived more than a 30-minute travel from NWRCT. Not all participants have the luxury to afford the round-trip journey to make it to the NWRCT, citing time, money, and distance as impediments to establishing and fostering community.

Over 14 suggestions were provided by the participants in defining, "what does community mean to you?" Although the responses varied, the most common collective understanding included:

- Safe place to raise your children;
- Equality for making decisions; and
- Recognition of roles and responsibilities in Indigenous organizations.

There were 12 suggestions provided by the participants in answering, "what does it mean to live in an urban space?" The theme that resonated most was around Protocols/Laws; in this context, meaning the need to honour cultural roles and responsibilities within an urban context.

There were 30 responses to Visioning A Liveable City. Emerging themes included:

- Safety
- Accountability;
- Housing;
- Training;
- Creation of a safe place; and
- Programming improvements.

Participants were then asked to indicate which themes they agreed with most. The four themes that emerged were collectively defined as:

Safe Spaces

Areas of discussion included physical spaces: safety for children, travelling by TTC, housing, and access to safe spaces in isolated areas. It also included cultural safe spaces to practice cultural responsibilities and protocols, and to be able to self-identify without being labelled or classified.

Housing with Dignity

Areas of discussion included more affordable housing in safe, clean places, and more Indigenous-only housing providers. Better access to appropriate services was also mentioned; a participant explained that she had to go to various agencies to get her needs met.

Accountability of agencies to people in community

Areas of discussion included the ability of community members to feel they had a voice and that they were part of decision making. Also included ensuring leadership was accountable to the community and part of the community.

Indigenous landscapes

Areas of discussion included creating spaces that reflected Indigenous ways of knowing and being, while taking down symbols that are seen as hostile or violent to the lives of Indigenous people. It also included being able to perform cultural roles and responsibilities in urban settings. Education on the history of Indigenous peoples and lands was also mentioned.



APPENDIX A.2

Discussion Circle Summaries

Visioning A Liveable City Discussion Circle Senior's Circle Summary

*"Economic wellness comes from a space
where community lives together."
- participant*

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

5:00pm

Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
16 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON

Participants: 12

12 Indigenous seniors attended the Senior's Circle. Only one senior had ties to a nation that was within the Greater Toronto Area. 10 statements were provided by the participants in defining, "what does community mean to you?" Most common responses included: aspects of sharing, working together, supporting one another, and caring about each other. Communication was also a key theme in the definition of community: being listened to, sharing information, and knowing that you have been heard.

When it came to the question, "what does it mean to live in an urban space?", the theme that resonated most among the participants was gathering. Some participants felt that a

community hub is vital to physically bringing people together. They believed that establishing an economic development area, populated with independent, small businesses, would drive residents to move there. However, there was concern over the current location of for a business area, as it is located in a high crime neighbourhood. The participants felt that individuals would not want to bring their children there or go for a coffee.

Also included was the need for specific land set aside for Indigenous use, such as pow wows. The purchase of land to build housing was also seen as a better option than buying a house. Others felt that being spread out allowed individuals to learn more about other cultures. One individual noted that when people leave reserves and come to Toronto, they may not want to live within an Indigenous community; this is what they were getting away from. There was also acknowledgement that there is great diversity within Toronto and this creates difficulties in working with everyone. There was a suggestion that agencies could work collectively and share resources.

Visioning A Liveable City

Emerging themes included: Inuit support, need for Indigenous representation, affordable senior's residence.

APPENDIX A.3

Discussion Circle Summaries

Visioning A Liveable City Discussion Circle

Men's Circle Summary

"It's got to be built on proud tradition. I am proud of who I am as a Native person and I have a proud tradition."

-participant

February 16, 2017

6:10 pm

Na Me Res

26 Vaughn Road, Toronto, ON

Participants: 14

The Men's Discussion Circle was well attended by 14 Indigenous men from the community. Our goal in recruiting participants was to be as inclusive as possible; the large majority of participants identified as being First Nations however a few identified as Inuit. There were several individuals who indicated they were students, and one person indicated they were two spirited. About one-quarter of the individuals indicated they were homeless, and two individuals indicated they live outside of the downtown area. The majority heard about the Discussion Circle through Na Me Res staff at Sagatay, while others were informed through networking, posters, or friends sharing on social media.

The participants articulated their understanding of, "What does community mean to you?" extremely well. A participant explained that for Indigenous men, community is a place for men to improve themselves in a healthy manner. It's about having a place to address their needs and having a better understanding of themselves so they can change. Some direct answers include:

"It means everybody coming together; coming to a good understanding of everybody; being mindful that we are all different; trying to work out our differences and working together."

"Come together and help each other; share knowledge"

"Somewhere where you feel safe and accepted"

"Community to me is actually a place where you pass on cultural knowledge to the next generation"

Urban space

When asked how community is different than urban space the participants commented on the size and complexity of Toronto. Indigenous people living in Toronto are scattered and this was not necessarily considered a bad thing - a few participants mentioned its good to be mindful and learn from other cultures and to be respectful. It was also acknowledged that being part of the community and passing on traditional knowledge is more difficult in Toronto.

The topic of the location of an Indigenous business

APPENDIX A.3

Men's Circle Summary - *continued*

area came up. Many participants felt that this area was not conducive to success. They felt that the City had provided the community with the worst location - downtrodden, high crime, and too many drugs. One participant commented that people are scared that their lifestyle will change if low income people move into their spaces. Regent Park was suggested as a good example where mixed-income communities work.

Visioning A Liveable City

Overall there was optimism that changes are being made and the government will be providing funding for programs and services. Several themes emerged from 'Visioning a Liveable City':

Access and Information

Access to culture included more language classes and to different cultural teachings. Some felt they would need to go to their home reserve to learn a language or get a teaching - this isn't possible for many. Access included less discrimination practices within agencies where you never know if you need status or not to participate. There was also recognition that access to culture was secondary to meeting the survival needs. One participant stated, "language is important to maintain my identity as an Anishnawbe; but right now, I got other things to do first, before I could do that. It's on the backburner."

Access to information and resources was also suggested so that people can get involved and make a difference. It was noted that it is especially hard for people who work to know what's going

on in the community. Being able to know where and how to access training funds was also seen as a priority. Finally, participants envisioned access to educational services tailored to meet their goals.

Housing and Shelter

Not surprisingly access to housing supports - especially for men - came up in discussion. A participant felt that Indigenous men are not offered spaces at the same rate as Indigenous women and families. "Having good housing with good location is key to being able to support (being part of community)" Affordable living, low-income housing, in a good location, and being proud of where you live were many of the visions for the future.

One participant spoke of the need to support Indigenous men coming out of incarceration. When they are trying to reintegrate they need a place to stay, a place to feel welcome, safe, and a place to become confident again.

Addictions support

Participants wanted to address the drug and alcohol problem in the community. A suggestion for the future is to create a drug and alcohol recovery program just for men that includes traditional elements such as a spirit circle. Guidance and mentorship was seen as a necessity in offering these services. This deep level of support is a stepping stone that many participants agreed was missing. These services would need to be far away from where those recovering would not be tempted. Alternatively,

there was an idea to create a safe space where Indigenous men already gather – such as Allen Gardens Park. Participants envisioned a program without labelling and where there is support for one another.

Business, Entrepreneurship, Employment

A few participants had a clear vision for building the economic wellness of the community. A participant felt partnerships with other businesses that are interested in furthering the well-being of Indigenous people are needed. There was also discussion on the need for a formal “Aboriginal business strategy” that gathered people in a council style to find out what types of businesses can flourish. This would require more community engagement and financial advisors, and planners to provide support. The creation of small social enterprises as a stepping stone toward employment and gaining confidence was also suggested. This model was seen to allow men to take chances and build their motivation.

Participants stressed that it was very difficult to deal with the gaps in time between being trained and starting employment. Many training programs end in March and employment will not start until September. Personal coaching was seen as a solution to assist people in transitioning into work life and assisting with any work related issues.

Culture

Participants felt that the community needs to recreate culture. Participants envisioned embracing ceremonies not just for loss

(strawberry ceremonies for MMIWG) but also for celebrations and exposing children to culture. Large spaces to hold cultural events was one suggestion to increase culture in the community. One participant commented that men have been the missing factor. Men need to be reintegrated into their role in society. Men could be in the middle of community helping Elders and children to connect. One participant mentioned that men have access to Elders but the children are missing, and commented, “As a community we learn a lot better when we see children.”

Improving Services

Several participants agreed that there is a need for long-term, integrated services. Where some suggested merging Indigenous services together to connect and work better together, others felt that the agencies just needed to be able to direct people to other services in a consistent way. Many participants liked the idea of creating one sign-up sheet that would allow anyone to access all other services.



APPENDIX A.4

Discussion Circle Summaries

Visioning A Liveable City Discussion Circle Youth Circle Summary

*"A place where people are actually living
and not just trying to survive"*
-participant

February 22, 2017

6:00pm

Native Youth Resource Centre of Toronto
655 Bloor St W, Toronto, ON

Participants: 11

What does community mean to you?

Youth expressed ideas of safety, togetherness, support, and feeling free and unconstrained. Communities were seen as bringing people of all races together.

What does an urban space mean to you?

All youth participating in the discussion circle saw a distinction between community and an urban space. Youth spoke about an urban space as a place to be yourself and get away from a community or government building where you can't be yourself. An urban space offers opportunities to do things - participate in dance, food, and culture. It also offers a place

to find a community; however, if you can't find a community, you're on your own.

Access was seen as an issue where money is needed to participate in these urban spaces. One participant saw a sharp contrast between community and urban space; communities are welcoming, whereas urban spaces are government services and businesses that demand money. Where there are small pockets of community spaces, these places are begging for funding and fighting to stay open.

Visioning A Liveable City

At times, the participants would lament on challenges and issues they face as an Indigenous youth in an urban setting. In those moments, the youth were not visioning a more liveable city, however, TASSC has included these discussion points and framed them in a way that moves the conversation forward, this includes:

- A city where police treat racialized youth with respect;
- A city where Ontario Works (youth used the word 'welfare') service providers treat youth with dignity;
- Schools that are safe spaces to learn about Indigenous history and culture in ways that are respectful and accurate; and
- A city that plans for the long term and takes future generations into consideration.

When visioning a liveable city, the following themes emerged:

Better Housing

There was an emphasis on the need for housing for single household parents and for youth moving to Toronto on their own.

A Place to Thrive

This means living in a place where you can experience happiness and focus on living rather than trying not to die. This included having leisure time to do fun things rather than always taking on double shifts, and having access to programs like art, dance, and karate. The need for access to better education and jobs was supported by all youth.

Safety

Youth envisioned a city where they felt safe to be themselves and where diversity was embraced. Physical safety was also mentioned. Youth wanted to feel safe walking alone on the streets and not be worried about encountering violence, sexual harassment, and being stopped by police. Youth also envisioned more safe drug injection sites and tackling gang violence. One youth suggested self-defense programs for young women.

Addressing Racism and Discrimination

Youth spoke about constantly feeling judged by those in power. Youth felt judged by the colour of their skin, their hair, and the clothes that they wore. They spoke about being viewed as suspicious,

simply for appearing black or Indigenous. Some female youth felt that they were targeted for sexual violence because they were Indigenous. Youth felt judged and discriminated against by the justice system, police, and the welfare system. One solution brought forward by a participant was for more positive media coverage which portrayed Indigenous communities in a good light. Better media representation was also seen as a way for youth to feel better about themselves.



APPENDIX A.5

Discussion Circle Summaries

Visioning A Liveable City Discussion Circle 2Spirit & Trans Circle Summary

*"But nothing happens. Nothing changes.
Everything has been the same since 1992."*
-participant

March 14, 2017

6:00 pm

Located at 519 Community Centre
519 Church St, Toronto, ON

Participants: 17

The discussion circle with 2 Spirit and transgender participants was attended by 17 participants. Our goal in recruiting participants was to be as inclusive as possible; half of participants identified as 2 Spirit, while a smaller number also identified as transgender, bi, and gender complex. Two participants identified as Métis and one identified as Inuit. Three of the participants also indicated they were students.

What does community mean to you?

Participants spoke of a sense of belonging, support, safety, solidarity and engagement. One participant used the analogy of a bundle of twigs - they're harder to break when numbers are large. There was also the notion of diversity, the gathering of minds, and

knowing that there is already expertise and resources within the community.

What does an urban space mean to you?

Participants started to answer the question by mentioning the need to adapt quickly in an urban setting; a need to become street wise because everything is moving so fast. There was also a discussion on the need for balance. One participant mentioned that they may gain a community when coming to an urban centre but they may lose traditional lands and a home community. Another participant suggested that they should not have to choose. There should be resources available so that cultures and traditions can be practiced.

The intersectionality of being Indigenous, 2 Spirit and a transgender person was mentioned - this includes the layers of colonialism that complicates one's very existence, let alone navigating oneself in the community and accessing services. Further, there is a lack of programming for individuals between the ages of 29 to 50.

The financial hurdles involved in living in an urban space was addressed. This included taxation, gentrification, and precarious (contract, short-term) work. It was also mentioned that programs and services are poorly funded and that sustainability is an issue.

It was noted that there is a difference between accessing services and specific programming. There are many services that agencies offer that are "inclusive", however there are few programs that are accessible to 2 Spirit and transgender individuals. "When it comes to 2 Spirit and trans they're not even

accepted in those communities due to the skepticism around those 2 Spirited and trans people.”

Need to Address Colonization

It was pointed out that colonization was a missing piece of the discussion. An acknowledgment that Indigenous bodies have been/are being made invisible in this urban setting. “Urban setting has been placed on my back. And that’s not being recognized. Settlers get to benefit by some people’s backyard.” There was consensus that there was extreme frustration at the lack of change over the years and a need for representation. One participant offered the following, “what I would like to say with the history of our people, we were revered. And it’s not that our history is lost, it’s just resting, it’s just challenging us to find it and bring it back.”

There were strong critiques of TASSC and TARP as it pertains to engagement and addressing the needs of the 2 Spirit and transgender community. This includes:

- Conversations and dialogue are not enough. Many participants felt that this is mere tokenism;
- Patronizing to offer gift cards when others are getting paid, not respecting time and knowledge;
- Patronizing to ask for information for the sake of a report and nothing happens;
- Representation is lacking in overseeing research;
- Hard for others to understand the day-to-day experience of 2 Spirit and transgender people;
- Dismissal of feelings being expressed is frustrating;

- Systemic biases – not hiring 2 Spirited people; not reinvesting back into 2 Spirit community; and
- TARP over simplifies and over generalizes and does not have an anti-colonial analysis. It suggests there are 2 classes of people: Middle class or poor people. Conflict of interest with those on steering committee.

The participants provided solutions to take back to TASSC for strong consideration. These include:

- Must use at least one 2 Spirit / transgender facilitator moving forward;
- Discussions should focus on activism and not just dialogue. If information on rights are not part of a discussion, then it’s a complete waste of time;
- TASSC needs to understand the frustration that people have with the processes and lack of outcomes;
- “Listen to us how we feel to either help us change or stay quiet”;
- Need for representation and recognition that the 2 Spirit community is involved in this report (no longer silenced);
- Need for reflexive praxis – thinking deeply about how we engage and the impact that actions and privilege has on groups; and
- Participants should have a pay time.

APPENDIX B

Summary of Presentations and/or New Partnerships

Presentation/Meeting	Relationships Built	Partnerships Formed
Federation of Canadian Municipalities with member organization	Informed the FCM letter to Minister Bennett dated September 26th. FCM Indigenous lead attended March 29th Honouring our Community event.	N/A
City of Toronto Urban Fellows	Each Urban Fellow will look at ways to support Indigenous capacity building from their respective departments.	N/A
Presentation to City of Toronto Social Development, Finance & Administration and other divisional guests	Several divisions have followed up for advice and requests to provide presentations to TASSC on their actions toward reconciliation	TASSC invited to provide an Indigenous equity lens to City budgeting. SDFA reached out to TASSC for cultural competency training. TASSC now sits on Community/Non-Profit City Advisory Table.
Local Indigenous academic and health researchers and professors	TASSC now sits on the Committee for Indigenous Research Initiatives for the Ontario HIV/AIDS Treatment Network	5 Indigenous researchers and professors have agreed to sit on the newly formed TASSC Research Advisory Circle to provide advice on our community research initiatives
Toronto Sports Council	N/A	Toronto Sports Council is partnering with Indigenous agencies in summer of 2017 to provide free sports certification, and opportunities for summer employment

Presentation/Meeting	Relationships Built	Partnerships Formed
Ottawa, Vancouver, Winnipeg Indigenous coalition groups	On-going	Formation of the Canadian Indigenous Executive Network (CIEN) to collectively address urban Indigenous issues across Canada
City of Toronto Shelter, Support and Housing	Agreement to co-develop a Terms of Reference and wise practices between SSHA and Indigenous community	TASSC partners with SSHA to provide a community magnet event to better understand the Indigenous reality of homelessness. TASSC provides cultural competency training to 50 volunteers.
City of Toronto Children's Division	On-going	TASSC partnering with Children's Division to provide a community needs assessment to address the needs of children and families
Ryerson University DiverseCity OnBoard	On-going DiverseCity to increase the number of matches between Indigenous professionals and Board of Director positions DiverseCity to invest in cultural competency training	N/A
AFP Foundation for Philanthropy - Fellowship in Inclusion and Philanthropy	Provided interview to Fellow on needs of Toronto's Indigenous community and agencies	Interview to be posted on AFP Foundation for Philanthropy website.
Social Planning Toronto	On-going	TASSC now sits on Community Advisory Committee for Capacity Building







Ontario Trillium Foundation
 Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario
 An agency of the Government of Ontario
 Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

 **TORONTO**



 Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

Métis Nation of Ontario 

