

**Prince George Urban Aboriginal Strategy
Project Champions Council (PGUAS-PCC)
Terms of Reference (October 30, 2005)
LIVING DOCUMENT**

Background

The Federal Government announced the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) for the City of Prince George BC on January 13, 2005 to close the gaps that separate urban Aboriginal people from other Canadians. Prior to the official announcement, the federal, provincial and municipal government representatives along with the host First Nation, Lheidli T'enneh, urban Aboriginal representatives and community leaders met in Prince George BC and held the first planning meeting on December 7, 2004. Initially, the Federal Government piloted the UAS in eight Canadian cities starting in January 1998, recognizing that urban Aboriginal conditions seriously fell below the standards of non-Aboriginal Canadians. The Federal Government expanded the UAS to include four additional cities, including Prince George. The federal UAS focuses nationally on five priorities:

1. Targeting the socio-economic needs of urban Aboriginal people within federal initiatives;
2. Improving access to, and the co-ordination of, programs and services;
3. Raising awareness in specific multilateral forums;
4. Co-ordinating policy research, knowledge and information-sharing in the urban Aboriginal area; and
5. Improving horizontal linkages and policy integration within the federal government and seeking opportunities for partnerships involving the federal provincial and municipal governments, Aboriginal groups and the private sector.

On January 25-26, 2005, the Prince George Urban Aboriginal Strategy (PGUAS) was launched in an Open Space meeting. On Day One, 275 community members identified 42 community needs. On Day Two, the participants formed 20 working groups. Federal, provincial and municipal officials, together with urban Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service agencies, institutions, organizations, and individuals from a vast array of expertise and knowledge collaborated on common issues and plans to work together in partnerships. The interest was to enhance services for Aboriginal peoples in the Prince George area. The collective discussion groups confirmed that the long term objective of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy for the Prince George area was to plan and construct an integrated system of interdependent social, cultural and economic services that the urban Aboriginal community controls. Participants reviewed the 42 identified community needs and the projects that derived from the 20 working groups.

The leaders of the projects became Project Champions and it evolved into the Prince George Urban Aboriginal Strategy – Project Champions Committee (PGUAS-PCC) on March 6, 2005 that envisioned five urban Aboriginal priorities:

- Communications and Connections
- Employment and Business Development
- Health and Healing
- Learning, Literacy and Education
- Life Skills and Housing Support

Purpose

PGUAS utilizes a Stewardship Model where the urban community members make the decisions while using and building upon existing organizational resources to support the work of partnerships. The Stewardship Model was developed in Open Dialogue and embraces community diversity and vision while ensuring that accountability and administrative and developmental capacity rests within existing structures. The Stewardship Model allows the community members to make decisions, recommend the funding allocations and fulfill the administrative and communication functions. PGUAS balances many interests while meeting many needs.

The Stewardship Model consists of two bodies:

1. Project Champions Council (PCC)
2. PGUAS Administrative Authority

1. Project Champions Council

Composition

The PCC *was originally* composed of eighteen (18) Project Champions representative of the project partners who work in the community to advance the Urban Aboriginal Strategy and one (1) representative from each of the four levels of government: Lheidli-T'enneh, Canada, Province of British Columbia, and the City of Prince George. The Project Champions and the governmental representatives appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair and establish other committees, as required.

Roles

The PGUAS-PCC has several roles: It holds the overall vision of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy so that the decisions are made in the community; it

- (a) supports and assists with project development, partnerships, and linkages;
- (b) determines and provides the overall strategic direction;
- (c) implements the communications strategy by ensuring and soliciting ongoing community input that is reciprocal; and
- (d) recommends project and funding allocations

Duties of Member

Members are to contribute to the following duties:

- Attend each meeting or send an alternate
- Prepare for discussions and make decisions at each meeting
- Commit to operating on a consensus basis when making a decision
- Participate on sub-committee working groups that target key issues
- Participate in the promotion of the work of the PGUAS-PCC
- Contribute to monitoring and evaluation activities
- Contribute to research and policy design
- Provide cross-sector partnership opportunities for funding and sustainability, by developing a strategic plan for horizontal delivery of program and services.

2. PGUAS Administrative Authority

The partnership between two existing Aboriginal groups supports the work of the PGUAS and the community:

- a) Aboriginal Business Development Centre (ABDC), the coordinating body, and the
- b) Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment and Training Association (PGNAETA), the community entity

It facilitates communication and networking among the Project Champions and handles the administration and capacity building. PGUAS-PCC, which includes the community representatives, workers and volunteers, directs the Administrative Authority. It helps facilitate community gatherings, communications, project development, and management and administration of projects. The specific roles of the Administrative Authority are:

- a. The ABDC, the coordinating body, handles communication; organizes gatherings and the PGUAS-PCC meetings; and keeps records of decisions.
- b. The PGNAETA, the community entity, assists in project development with the PGUAS projects that need capacity building, administers the funds, develops the funding tools, provides contract management, oversees the administrative requirements of the project funds, and distributes the funds in compliance with Treasury Board Terms and Conditions for the Urban Aboriginal Strategy Pilot Projects (see Annex D).

Federal PGUAS Coordinator

The federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians is responsible for the national Urban Aboriginal Strategy. The UAS is a Government of Canada initiative that involves several departments, including Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD), Canadian Heritage, Health Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (Indian Affairs), Justice Canada, the National Secretariat on Homelessness, Industry Canada, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada and others. In British Columbia, the lead federal department to implement the PGUAS is the Western Economic Diversification Canada. WD oversees the contract with the Aboriginal Business Development Centre and the Contribution Agreement with the Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment and Training Association. Along with the Chair and Vice-Chair, WD also facilitates the proper functioning of the PGUAS to meet its due diligence, according to the Terms and Conditions for the Urban Aboriginal Strategy Pilot Projects (see Annex D). The Federal PGUAS Coordinator liaises between the federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy Committee, Indian Affairs, and the PGUAS.

The federal government is committed to working with provincial and municipal governments, local Aboriginal and non-government organizations, and the private sector to develop innovative solutions to address local priorities.

Lheidli-T'enneh, Provincial, and Municipal Governments

The government members liaise between their respective government agencies and the PGUAS.

Principles

The PCC members will operate under the principles of transparency, accountability, partnership, respect, open-mindedness, and inclusiveness in functioning and conducting its activities associated with the UAS (see Annex "A"), as described in "List of Projects (see Annex "E").

Time Frame and Frequency of Meetings

The PCC will exist for at least two years from the date of its first meeting. The PCC will review its Terms of Reference at the end of the first year and may revise the terms as necessary. The PCC will meet no less than four times per year to achieve its purpose and roles.

Quorum

For the purposes of scheduling and conducting a meeting, the two processes are:

- (a) to schedule a meeting, one of two Chairs and the Federal PGUAS Coordinator of Western Economic Diversification, and 75% of those in attendance, including the Chair agree; and
- (b) to conduct a meeting, 50% plus one (1) of the Project Champions must be in attendance (including the Chair).

In scheduling a meeting, the ABDC must contact all PCC members and have, at least, seventy-five percent (75%) of the PCC members confirmed to attend.

Governments, including Lheidli-T'enneh, Federal, Provincial, and Municipal representatives, must commit to being part of the process.

Proxy Voting

If the Project Champion or government representative is unable to be physically present at the duly called meeting, the member can provide input, in writing or on a facsimile [fax], through an alternate or by proxy, to the meeting.

Membership

Term of Membership

The current term for service is from March 2005 to March 31, 2007. Once the term of service expires, the participants at future community meetings will determine the composition of the PCC.

Replacement of Members

Where a PCC member is departing, the PCC will ask the project group to appoint another member.

Observers

Observers may attend such meetings. Participation of the observers should be through a Project Champion or governmental representative. Observers may address issues at the discretion of the PCC.

Communication to Community

A quarterly Community Update must be provided to the participants, the media, Aboriginal organizations, First Nations, service agencies, governments, institutions, and partners. A website should reflect all of the PGUAS-PCC projects, activities and events.

Linkages with existing Prince George Urban Aboriginal Working Group (PGUAWG)

The PGUAS-PCC will have formal and informal meetings with the PGUAWG to advise each other of the funding opportunities and partnership arrangements. In some instances, joint announcements may be beneficial not only to the project but also to the existing Aboriginal organizations.

Executive

The Chair and the Vice-Chair will formalize the agenda and will decide the arrangements, based upon the discussions of the PGUAS-PCC, regarding logistics and administrative matters. Where financial considerations are beyond the logistical and administrative authority, the Chair and Vice-Chair will seek guidance from the PGUAS-PCC. The Chair and Vice-Chair will be the signatories on letters and memoranda, on occasion, to accelerate the logistical and administrative processes between the meetings of PGUAS-PCC at its direction.

Procedure at Meetings

All meetings should commence in a timely manner and be structured with an agenda, record of decisions, and minutes. The Chair or Vice-Chair should conduct the meeting, according to consensus decision-making. Each speaker will be recognized in order as noted to the Chair. Each participant should be allowed to speak on each matter, allowing for other participants to be involved. Once it appears that consensus is reached, the Chair will verbally ask each participant for their understanding of the issue and seek their commitment. Should an issue need to be further discussed, the participant should advise the PGUAS-PCC to discuss the matter until consensus is reached.

Meeting Proceedings

The ABDC sends the agendas and meeting packages with adequate time for committee members to review or undertake consultation on the items to be discussed. Decision items will be indicated. PGUAS-PCC minutes will show action items and responsibilities. Minutes will be sent to the PGUAS-PCC for review and will be approved at the beginning of the subsequent meeting. Once approved, the committee minutes will be considered public documents.

Conflict of Interest

Where PCC members or a member of their immediate family will benefit financially from a project in which they are involved, they must declare a conflict of interest and excuse themselves from further deliberation and abstain from any of the decision-making process.

Award Process

The PGUAS-PCC will be responsible for the review of all of the proposals submitted by the project groups. Where some projects require capacity-building or guidance in submitting their proposal, the PGUAS-PCC will direct the Administrative Authority to assist with the proposal.

Subcommittees and Working Groups

The PGUAS-PCC may strike Subcommittees and working groups from time to time to work on issues of a more specialized nature. The PGUAS-PCC may also invite non-member representatives to attend the working groups. The working groups are accountable to the PGUAS-PCC.

Miscellaneous

ANNEX "A"

PRINCIPLES

Transparency – Transparency is built on the free flow of information and ensures access to relevant, timely and reliable information. Processes, institutions and information are directly accessible to all concerned, and information is provided for a clear understanding to monitor the situation.

Accountability – Accountability is the requirement to explain and accept responsibility for conduct of an assigned mandate and based upon agreed expectations. A commitment to accountability should include communications to an external audience and be a constructive tool for organizational development enhancing management practices, self- evaluation and strategic planning.

Partnership – Principles which include mutual trust and respect, joint investment of resources (monetary or in-kind), result in mutual benefits, and shared risks, responsibilities and accountabilities. The partnership should also acknowledge and reflect that planning, policy and program development, implementation, evaluation, and decision-making must be undertaken jointly between the Aboriginal members of the PGUAS-PCC and the members from First Nations, federal and provincial governments, and the City of Prince George.

Inclusiveness – Provision of broad-based opportunities open to input from, and participation of, the diverse urban Aboriginal community for the benefit of the urban Aboriginal population. Non-aboriginal and Aboriginal service providers are included.

Respect and Open Mindedness – Be respectful and open-minded while participating in the process.

ANNEX "B"

ACRONYMNS

ABDC – Aboriginal Business Development Centre

FN – First Nation

GST - Goods and Services Tax

HRSD – Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

INAC - Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

MARR – Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (formerly, the provincial representative was in the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women)

MCAW – Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women, Province of British Columbia, now representative is from the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

MERCs -

OFI - Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Metis and Non-Status Indians is the lead Minister for the UAS

PCC – Project Champions Council

PCO – Privy Council Office

PCSFO – Pacific Council of Senior Federal Officials

PGNAETA – Prince George Nechako Aboriginal and Employment Training Association

PGUAS – Prince George Urban Aboriginal Strategy

PGUAS-PCC – Prince George Urban Aboriginal Strategy Project Champion Council

RCAP – Royal Commission on Aboriginal People

RCT - Revenue Canada Tax

UAS – Urban Aboriginal Strategy

WCB - Workers Compensation Board

WD – Western Economic Diversification Canada

ANNEX "C"
GLOSSARY

Aboriginal Consensus is pure consensus that, in summary, means:

- (1) group solidarity in sentiment and belief
- (2) general agreement
- (3) where most concerned reach a judgment
- (4) to be in accord, and
- (5) to have a similar opinion or sentiment

City of Prince George, councillor or department and role and its representative is a member of the Project Champions Council

Conflict Resolution means a process by which the formal expression of opinion or intention is considered to its satisfaction after thorough discussion of the reasons for the clashing of interests

Indian and Northern Affairs: the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Metis and Non-Status Indians is the federal government department responsible for implementing the Urban Aboriginal Strategy across Canada and assigned the Western Economic Diversification Canada to implement the Urban Aboriginal Strategy in the Province of British Columbia

Lheidli-T'enneh is the First Nation in whose traditional territory the City of Prince George is located and its representative is a member of the Project Champions Council

Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (previously represented by Ministry of Children, Aboriginal and Women) and its representative is a member of the Project Champions Council

Policy and Procedure are as follows: Policy is a course of action that the PGUAS-PCC adopts for prudent or cautious conduct. Procedure is the way of acting or advancing such action, a way of performing a task or a series of actions conducted in a certain order or manner

Prince George – see City of Prince George

Quorum means a minimum number of PGUAS-PCC members that must be present to constitute a valid meeting

Resources include human resources and financial and in-kind contributions to enhance existing resources

Treasury Board is the federal government department that manages the public revenue of Canada

Urban Aboriginal Working Group is composed of representatives from the urban Aboriginal organizations, namely: Aboriginal Business Development Association, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, Metis Provincial Council, Prince George Native Friendship Centre, Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment and Training Association, and United Native Nations



Western Economic Diversification Canada is the lead federal government department that implements the Urban Aboriginal Strategy in the Province of British Columbia and its liaison officer is a member of the Project Champions Council

ANNEX D

**TREASURY BOARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE URBAN ABORIGINAL
STRATEGY PILOT PROJECTS**

ANNEX "E"

LIST OF PROJECTS

ANNEX "F"

ABORIGINAL CONSENSUS

Aboriginal Consensus is pure consensus that, in summary, means:

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The model strives to arrive at a unity of opinion rather than a unanimous opinion. Unity means that everyone in the group agrees with the essence of the decision and can support it, even if not all wholeheartedly agree with it. The nature and values of the PGUAS-PCC create an environment that both seeks and respects diversity of opinion and encourages debate.

1. Creation of Resolution: a more general proposal is raised where broad input is sought from the group. Discussion occurs until a unity of opinion regarding a specific proposal is reached.
2. Passing the Resolution: the group must support the resolution for it to be passed.

Where a disagreement occurs, two options exist:

- a) *Blocking or Challenging or*
- b) *Standing or Stepping aside*

a) Blocking or Challenging

Blocking or Challenging occurs when a person cannot support a decision and believes that allowing the decision to pass would bring significant harm to the group. Thus, one person has the power to stop a decision. The result of blocking or challenging can be final, in which the issue is set aside, or the group can continue to establish a consensus of opinion on the subject and create a proposal which satisfies the group as a whole.

b) Standing or Stepping aside

Standing or stepping aside occurs when a person cannot personally support a decision but does not see the need to block or challenge the decision as it would not harm the group in any important way. This person is specifically mentioned in the minutes of the decision as standing or stepping aside so that they will not bear any responsibility for the consequences of that decision.

If more than one person stands or steps aside, it is often an indication that more discussion needs to take place on the subject. The facilitator serves the group process, helping summarize input into an opinion that gradually approaches consensus. The facilitator does not contribute to discussions on the content of opinions, but rather helps to keep the group focused.