

NEEDS ASSESSMENT: SERVICES FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN GATINEAU

SYNTHESIS REPORT

First Peoples Innovation Centre (FPIC)

Assessment conducted by:

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With the collaboration of **Magalie Civil**, research assistant

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**NEEDS ASSESSMENT:
SERVICES FOR INDIGENOUS
PEOPLE IN GATINEAU**

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As the authors of this report, we have gained a better understanding of the challenges of urban life for Indigenous people in Gatineau, at a time when reconciliation between Indigenous and non Indigenous people is mutually beneficial for building strong communities. We hope that this study will contribute to renewed understanding of the lived experience of Indigenous people in Gatineau and their needs, and encourage the development of programs or structures designed to meet those needs.

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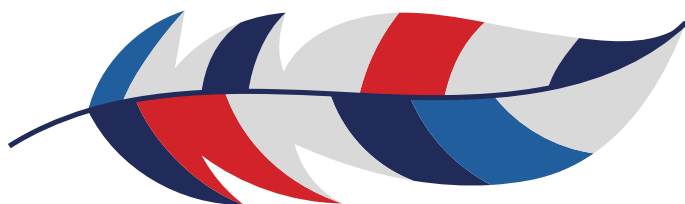
Glossary

We have adopted the following definitions for this needs assessment, validated by the members of the Governance Committee:

Indigenous	A term used in Quebec, Canada and other countries to refer to First Peoples. The First Peoples of Quebec are represented by the First Nations and Inuit. First Nations and Inuit comprise several communities with their own cultural identities.
First Nations	In Quebec, the First Nations are represented by the Abenaki, Algonquin, Atikamekw, Cree, Innu, Malecite, Mi'gmaq/Micmacs, Naskapi, Huron Wendat and Mohawk.
Inuit	The first inhabitants of the Canadian Inuit Nunangat, made up of four arctic regions, and their descendants. The arctic region in Quebec is Nunavik. ¹
Métis	The Métis people originated in the 1700s when French and Scottish fur traders married Indigenous women, such as the Cree and Anishinabe (Ojibway). Their descendants formed a distinct culture, collective consciousness and nationhood in the northwest of Canada. The word "Métis" in section 35 of the <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i> refers specifically to this nation, meaning that the constitutionally recognized Métis Nation does not include all persons of mixed Indigenous and European heritage. ²
Community	The term "community" is inclusive and includes different types of land bases, including Indian reserves as defined in the Indian Act, lands reserved for the Cree and Naskapi, and northern villages in Nunavik, as well as Indian settlements and communities without land bases.

¹ Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. Maps of Inuit Nunangat. <https://www.itk.ca/maps-of-inuit-nunangat/>

² The government of Quebec does not exclude the possibility of historic Métis communities in the province. However, the recognition of such communities must be tied to an irreproachable demonstration of their existence, according to the Powley Test established by the Supreme Court of Canada in *R. v. Powley*. This demonstration has not been made to date.



Introduction

In 2019, the First Peoples Innovation Centre (FPIC) ordered a needs assessment to study access to services for Indigenous people in Gatineau. The FPIC wished to gain a better understanding of the realities and challenges facing long-term Indigenous residents of Gatineau and Indigenous people living there temporarily, as well as identify their most significant needs.

A Governance Committee provided guidance for this project from July 2019 to January 2021. Members of this committee represented the Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation (MAMH, Quebec), the Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones (SAA, Quebec), the Ville de Gatineau, the Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ), the Maniwaki Native Friendship Centre and the First Peoples Innovation Centre. This document synthesizes the full report, which interested readers can find on the FPIC website at <http://cipp-fpic.com/en/current-projects>.



Background and study objectives

The objectives of this study were to: a) identify, classify and analyze the needs of long-term Indigenous residents of Gatineau and Indigenous people living there temporarily as well as gaps in services, and b) gather their thoughts on initiatives, projects or structures that could meet their needs.³

The study focused on needs in four different areas: a) education and employment; b) food security and housing; c) health care and social services; d) culture, tradition, spirituality and identity. The study looked at different age groups within this population as well: while youth were specifically targeted for the first need, the participants for the other themes were primarily adults.



Method

The study used several methods and methodological approaches:

- A literature review focused on scholarly journals and reports in the field. The selected texts helped identify, for each theme, the challenges facing Indigenous people in an urban environment as well as emerging practices for organizing and adapting the service offer for this population.
- A demographic and socio-economic profile of the Indigenous population in Gatineau (First Nations and Inuit), based on 2016 census data.
- The identification of needs through qualitative methods: 22 semi-structured interviews with key informants were held between July and December 2019 with the goal of gaining a better understanding of services from the provider's perspective.⁴
- Four focus groups with a total of 25 participants from First Nations and Inuit groups were held between November 2019 and January 2020 with the aim of gaining a better understanding of the barriers to accessing these services for Indigenous users.
- Two directories of Indigenous organizations and regional round tables.
- An online survey and a door-to-door survey were completed by 75 respondents. This quantitative data rounded out the portrait obtained through the interviews and focus group discussions. Respondents from First Nations and Inuit groups made up 83% of all respondents.

3 For this report, we will focus on First Nations and Inuit.

4 Of these 22 interviews, 5 were conducted with people with knowledge of culture, traditions and spirituality. These interviews replaced the focus group on this theme.

Section 1. Literature review

- The studies reviewed revealed and confirmed the issues and challenges facing Indigenous people living in the city.
- These studies signal the continued growth of Indigenous populations in urban centres and their diversity.
- The city offers greater proximity to educational institutions, employment services, health care and social services. However, the city also presents many challenges for Indigenous people and systemic inequalities persist, according to the studies consulted.
- These challenges are associated with the shift from a community-oriented way of life to the individualistic way of life imposed by the city. Distance from family and social networks, discrimination, racism and difficulty accessing housing are just a few of the issues raised. The literature as well as the work of recent commissions highlight access to culturally safe services and the preservation of cultural identity as important issues.⁵
- **In the area of education**, Indigenous populations continue to have significantly lower levels of education than the rest of the Canadian population. On the one hand, the intergenerational impact of the education system and residential schools and their negative consequences for Indigenous peoples are well documented in the studies consulted. On the other hand, we now have a better understanding of factors that affect student retention and academic success, and we can better identify approaches that may help retain Indigenous students in the school system. In this sense, there is an emphasis on cultural safety and integrating decolonizing approaches into curriculum as well as the explicit promotion and valuing of Indigenous languages, cultures and knowledge in educational institutions.
- **In the area of employment**, Indigenous people are less likely to be employed than non-Indigenous people, with lower employment rates and higher unemployment rates. However, education has positive effects and helps reduce the gaps. Research in this area has thoroughly documented the positive effects of employment on people's social and economic well-being and identity development. Yet Indigenous people face barriers such as discrimination, racism and negative stereotyping when it comes to finding and retaining jobs.
- **In the area of food security**, the studies reviewed gave a clearer picture of the ways urban environments restrict access to traditional food as well as a better understanding of the ceremonial nature and the values attached to these foods. The ability to maintain Indigenous food sovereignty and pass it on to new generations in urban centres is a major challenge on top of meeting the basic needs of many people in precarious financial situations.
- **In the area of housing**, the studies examined pointed out the overrepresentation of the Indigenous population among Canada's urban unhoused and insecurely housed populations. Different cultural conceptions of housing and mobility, as well as complex and traumatizing relationships between colonizing states and Indigenous peoples are the roots of this phenomenon. Intervention measures are necessary, in particular targeted human capital development programs and support for urban transitions.
- **In the area of health and social services**, the selected articles reported persistent gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and discriminatory attitudes on the part of health care providers. The literature highlights the importance of creating more inclusive environments for care that respect the autonomy of Indigenous users. In addition, health care and social interventions must be accompanied by better access to traditional health care in an urban environment. Finally, when it comes to decision making and policy development, approaches promoting adaptation and equal opportunity, as well as the elimination of persistent institutional norms and practices that taint the quality of services, are recommended in the latest report of the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec.
- **In the area of culture, tradition, spirituality and identity**, the articles reviewed focused on the contribution of these dimensions to the physical and emotional well being of Indigenous people. These dimensions serve as protective, preventive and healing factors in addressing issues such as addiction, suicidal ideation and suicide attempts.

⁵ Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec: listening, reconciliation and progress. Final report. https://www.cerp.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Fichiers_clients/Rapport/Final_report.pdf

Indigenous health professionals and social workers are increasingly using cultural, traditional and spiritual approaches. The selected articles also explore the role that urban Indigenous organizations can play in preserving and revitalizing Indigenous culture and spirituality as well as supporting the overall well-being of urban Indigenous individuals, families and communities.

Section 2. The demographic and socio-economic profile of Gatineau's Indigenous population

- In 2016, Gatineau was home to 10,420 residents who reported "Indigenous identity" on the 2016 census. Of these residents, 4,565 individuals belonged to "First Nations," 5,235 to the "Métis" group, 80 belonged to the "Inuit" sub-population and 180 people reported multiple Indigenous identities.
- This study focuses on the "First Nations" and "Inuit" groups. This is a younger population compared to the non-Indigenous population and is growing at a faster rate (3.5% per year). It is estimated that this population will reach 6,538 people in 2026.
- There are more women (55 %) than men (45 %), and single people and divorced people account for 35% and 9.3% respectively.
- Details on housing reveal distinctions: 14% of Indigenous people live in subsidized housing, 45% live in private dwellings built in 1980 or earlier, 9% spend more than one third of their income on major repairs, 79% are homeowners with mortgages, and 43% of households have two or more earners compared to 11%, 43%, 6%, 69% and 39% of non Indigenous households, respectively.
- 61% of residents in both target groups have knowledge of both official languages. The use of Indigenous mother tongues in the home is limited among First Nations, at 8%, and is higher among Inuit, at 19%.
- In education, the proportion of Indigenous people without a certificate, diploma or degree is high (26%). This population is also underrepresented at the high end of the scale for degrees at the bachelor's level or higher (13% compared to 25% among non Indigenous people). Education gaps are unfavourable for Indigenous people in general, and are more pronounced among Indigenous men than

Indigenous women compared to their respective non-Indigenous counterparts.

- Indigenous people are highly mobile. One in two people in this population have moved in the last five years. Of these, 41% moved within Canada; 60% of these moves were within the province of Quebec, and 40% were interprovincial.
- Work, employment and unemployment rates among the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations are relatively similar. However, Indigenous people have a lower median total income than non-Indigenous people. In addition, they spend a larger portion of their after-tax income on essential consumption (up to three times more than non-Indigenous people). Inuit appear to be the most precarious population group.



Section 3. Gatineau's Indigenous youth – Gaps and needs in education and employment

Education



The perspective of service providers

- Between 1% and 5% of students in postsecondary institutions in Gatineau are Indigenous (approximately 60 students at UQO, and between 30 and 45 students in Cégeps).
- Indigenizing processes are underway in most of these postsecondary institutions (Université du Québec en Outaouais, Cégep de l'Outaouais, Heritage College).
- Indigenization means that “conscious efforts are underway to bring Indigenous people, philosophies, knowledge, and cultures into strategic plans, governance roles, curriculum development, and review, research, and professional development” (CACUSS/ASEUCC, 2018, p. 4).
- Postsecondary liaison officers are tasked with providing students with individual and group support by giving workshops, promoting Indigenous resources in Gatineau and Ottawa, and raising awareness among school staff.
- In Gatineau high schools that have a large number of Indigenous students (Philemon Wright and Darcy McGee), specialized school staff fill the liaison role for Indigenous students and their parents or tutors.
- Indigenization processes took longer to be initiated in Gatineau than in other cities and measures are fairly recent, so there are still significant gaps.
- According to interviewees, these gaps have to do with university curricula and pedagogical approaches, student support services, administrative tools that are not adapted, the lack of culturally relevant spiritual support and generally unfriendly spaces.
- Additionally, unmet needs are likely pushing many Indigenous students to enroll in Ottawa schools, which are better prepared to accommodate them.
- Some of the changes key informants mentioned that could improve these services include reliable data to help plan services, simpler administrative tools, more awareness training for administrative and teaching

staff, the inclusion of Indigenous content, relevant approaches and pedagogies, implementation of recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) and the Viens Commission (2016–2019), more appropriate language tests and more scholarships.

- Key informants made recommendations on eight major themes, outlined in the report.
- Some recommendations have to do with the importance of offering services to young students outside of educational institutions, including activities related to Indigenous culture, traditions, arts and crafts, and spirituality. These services are currently available in Ottawa.
- Interviewees said that more proactivity from Gatineau postsecondary institutions is both wanted and needed.
- If these institutions increased their efforts, it would help to attract and retain Indigenous students in Gatineau.



The perspective of Indigenous youth

- Indigenous youth aged 18 to 32 participated in a focus group on education and employment. It was clear that there were differences between youth who were born in or have lived in Gatineau for quite some time and those who had left their communities not long before the start of the fall 2019 semester.
- The first group were more aware of resources available in Gatineau, had jobs and had the benefit of being able to live with their parents, while youth in the second group had encountered difficulties trying to find housing and adapt to postsecondary school.
- Two major challenges are transitioning from community life to life in the city and finding housing. Other issues mentioned were related to food security, living expenses, tuition fees and language barriers.
- One of the benefits for youth of living in Gatineau was the proximity to Ottawa and its wide offering of Indigenous services and cultural activities.
- Factors that influenced which postsecondary institution youth chose included quotas for Indigenous students (universities), study programs, language and proximity to their community.

- Youth at the Cégep de l'Outaouais said that they didn't know when they first enrolled that there was a liaison officer for Indigenous students. However, by the time of the focus group, they all knew about the officer and about what organized activities there were.
- Youth greatly appreciated these activities and the creation of culturally relevant and safe spaces like the Anishinabe garden and an Indigenous space with the medicine circle on the Gabrielle Roy campus.
- Along the same lines, focus group participants felt very positive about efforts to adapt study programs and include Indigenous content.
- The person in charge of liaison for Indigenous students helps integrate them into college life and the region's Indigenous community. This includes making trips to the FPIC and Kumik in Gatineau and to the Odawa Native Friendship Centre in Ottawa.
- Students faced challenges in school, mentioning the colonial approaches and attitudes of some of their teachers and classmates. However, in general, Indigenous youth said that they felt accepted in their postsecondary educational environment. The fact that these environments are so culturally diverse helps to reduce tensions between Indigenous and non Indigenous students.
- There were some incidents that demonstrated why it is necessary to continue educating teachers and the educational community in general about the power relations that have shaped the history of First Peoples in Canada and the consequences of these relations.
- The divide between youth who were born in or grew up in Gatineau and those who have recently moved to the city is a determining factor in whether youth are aware of and use the services of Indigenous organizations. Another influencing factor was whether youth self identified as Indigenous.
- In general, youth were more aware of urban Indigenous organizations in Ottawa than in Gatineau. There are more organizations in Ottawa, they are better advertised and their services are more frequently used by youth.
- Youth appreciate having access to activities like arts and crafts, traditions, meetings with Elders, traditional meals and Indigenous dances. Youth most frequently visited organizations in Ottawa, like the

Assembly of Seven Generations, the Odawa Native Friendship Centre and the Wabano Centre.

Employment



The perspective of service providers

- Indigenous youth are one of Emploi Québec's target groups in the Outaouais region, but more in-depth analysis is needed to determine the size and characteristics of this population group.
- There are very few Indigenous youth who use existing CJEO social and professional integration resources, and youth dropout rates for these programs are very high.
- Service providers identified a number of gaps that are related to: a) the lack of demographic and socio economic data on Gatineau's Indigenous population; b) knowledge of approaches that might be relevant for social and professional integration of Indigenous youth; c) a lack of familiarity with Indigenous organizations in Gatineau; d) difficulty getting into contact with Indigenous clients.



The perspective of Indigenous youth

- Participants were students enrolled in postsecondary programs who were working at the time of the meeting or who had worked before starting school.
- These youth had not used available resources like CJEO's services, but youth who lived in Gatineau were aware of them. Youth had found their jobs by using family or social connections or answering job postings.
- It seems like these services could really help youth who have recently moved to Gatineau.
- Internships, summer jobs and co-op placements with the federal government helped Indigenous university students access more long-term employment.
- Some youth reported wanting to return to their communities after finishing their studies. Most of these youth had just moved from an Indigenous community.
-

Section 4. Gatineau's Indigenous population – Gaps and needs in food security and housing

Interviews with regional organizations and the focus group dealt with the following themes: a) awareness of food security resources available in Gatineau and expectations; b) housing needs in Gatineau and barriers to access; c) familiarity with urban Indigenous organizations and availability of culturally relevant resources for food security and housing. Focus group participants also spoke about the benefits of life in Gatineau and what gaps exist.



The perspective of service providers

- Gatineau's Indigenous population does not make extensive use of available food security resources and services.
- A lack of data means food organizations are unable to properly understand the needs of this population, accurately assess the number of users and improve operations.
- Food banks used to collect this data but stopped doing so after 2017.
- The service offering should be more closely tied to demand by adapting these services and making them more flexible (English services, extension of services to underserved neighbourhoods like the Plateau, consideration of traditional foods, etc.).
- Some emerging practices appear to do a better job of meeting the needs of Gatineau's Indigenous population (e.g., the community fridge in the First Peoples Innovation Centre and the collective kitchen based on traditional Indigenous food).
- In the opinion of key informants, new approaches to food security and healthy lifestyles like the "sustainable food system" could do a better job of including the needs of Indigenous residents when it comes to strategically planning food needs in Gatineau and the Outaouais region.
- Finally, in order to consider the needs of Indigenous residents, it is vital that Indigenous organizations have an increased presence and participation in round tables and regional organizations, but there are few Indigenous organizations in Gatineau and the capacities of those that exist are limited



The perspective of Indigenous users

- Participants were satisfied with life in Gatineau. The majority have lived in Gatineau for quite some time (2 to 37 years).
- Positive aspects were the peace and quiet of the city, being so close to nature and access to services that do not exist in participants' communities.
- The proximity of the city to Ottawa also allows participants to use certain services, including cultural and health services.
- These participants regularly or occasionally receive emergency food assistance in Gatineau. A determining factor in whether participants used the services of a food bank was if their living conditions had deteriorated due to illness, loss of housing or a breakup.
- Users don't just want improvements to services, they also need to be able to count on initiatives that can meet both their dietary needs (based on Indigenous traditions) and their need to socialize at the same time.
- Some existing initiatives received praise (coffee meetups, native friendship centres, etc.).
- The group brought up the need for Indigenous youth to have a meeting place to call their own.
- Finally, Indigenous tenants in Gatineau have a hard time accessing affordable housing. High prices, racism, discrimination from landlords, and insufficient subsidized housing are all barriers to access.



Section 5. Gatineau's Indigenous population – Gaps and needs in health and social services

For this theme, interviews with key informants and the focus group dealt with health and social services in Gatineau and Ottawa and their cultural relevance. We consulted participants about the importance of health care and traditional Indigenous practices and what they needed in this regard.



The perspective of service providers

- Both Indigenous residents and health and social services professionals in Gatineau have unmet needs.
- Users need to obtain culturally relevant services. Demand for these services is higher among Indigenous Elders with disabling chronic illnesses, reduced autonomy or in palliative care, and among their caregivers.
- Indigenous organizations in Ottawa and in communities currently offer some of these services, but they can be hard to access for Gatineau residents.
- These needs could be met by a complementary combination of traditional care and public health care.
- Professionals identified training, awareness, access to relevant resources and greater coordination with Indigenous organizations as the things they needed the most to better serve Gatineau's Indigenous population.
- There are few Indigenous organizations in Gatineau. Key informants could only identify the FPIC, Kumik and the Alliance autochtone, and they did not mention any other Indigenous health care stakeholders.
- Practices in place elsewhere could serve as inspiration for Gatineau, like weekly visits from health care professionals to the Maniwaki Native Friendship Centre, trainings offered by the centre, and the Anishnabe Peedigehn health services at the Maniwaki hospital, but they require an Indigenous structure for implementation.



The perspective of female Indigenous users

- Focus group participants were mainly residents of the city of Gatineau who have lived here for over twenty years. Only one participant had moved here recently.
- Compared to Ottawa and participants' communities of origin, Gatineau has a lot of advantages, such as the availability of jobs, less expensive housing, educational services and more generous family benefits.
- The proximity to Ottawa and access to services offered by Indigenous organizations in Ottawa were also appealing factors.
- Participants used services in Ottawa (Montfort hospital, private clinics, Wabano Centre) and Gatineau.
- The Wabano Centre and the Odawa Native Friendship Centre offer services that users considered culturally relevant (diabetes management programs, programs for pregnant women, etc.) and have health care professionals who are sensitive to the needs of the Indigenous population.
- There are certain barriers, in the opinion of respondents: a) these services are no longer offered to new users living in Gatineau; b) services in Gatineau are mostly in French; c) there are sometimes cultural misunderstandings (i.e., time management) with health care and social services professionals; d) discriminatory attitudes and racism toward Indigenous people have been observed.
- Participants emphasized the need for health and education service providers to continue receiving awareness training if the recommendations of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) and the more recent Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec (2019) are to be implemented.
- Quebec is a latecomer compared to other Canadian provinces, which have already implemented measures in line with these recommendations.
- Finally, participants emphasized how important it is for Gatineau to have a native friendship centre that could: a) help people navigate health and social services, b) provide cultural interpretation services, c) offer programs for different age groups and needs, and d) bring together Indigenous residents of Gatineau.

Section 6. Gatineau's Indigenous population – Needs and gaps in culture, traditions, spirituality and identity

- There are few resources in Gatineau for culture, traditions and spirituality. The only resources identified in the city were a federal program with Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC), two liaison offices (or liaison officers) with Indigenous students (with a third liaison office planned), an Indigenous student organization and the First Peoples Innovation Centre.
- Programs based on Indigenous culture, traditions and spirituality are a major factor in the well-being of the urban Indigenous population, as they help give Indigenous people a way to be supported spiritually and receive advice from Elders, as well as a place to hold ceremonies and rituals (prayers, smudging, sharing circles for expressing experiences and emotions, giving thanks), among other things.
- These programs help Indigenous people develop resilience, and in doing so, contribute to their physical and mental well-being.
- Resources are scarce and compartmentalized. If Indigenous organizations, liaison offices and federal agencies collaborated, they could help these resources be used more efficiently.
- Participants brought up establishing a native friendship centre in Gatineau or strengthening the role and resources of an existing organization as potential responses to the gaps identified.
- Indigenous art is more visible in public spaces, which helps raise awareness with the general public and gives Indigenous residents a chance to reconnect with their culture. According to interviewees, further efforts are necessary to make the city a more welcoming place for Indigenous residents.

Section 7. The survey

The survey data largely matched the results of the 2016 census and what was said in the interviews and focus groups.

- The Indigenous population is young and primarily First Nations. The demographic trend toward a younger population is constant due to the influx of youth moving to the city.
- Demographically, youth are more concentrated in the sectors of Hull and Aylmer, while more Elders live in the Gatineau sector.
- A significant proportion of the Indigenous population surveyed has lived in Gatineau for over five years.
- The two main reasons for moving to Gatineau are for education or to find a job.
- Indigenous people report using French (36%), English (32%) and both official languages (32%) to receive services.
- Indigenous youth who have recently moved to Gatineau are mostly looking for education to improve their socio-economic situation, and financial assistance is strongly emphasized as a factor of success.
- Indigenous people have an employment rate relatively comparable to non Indigenous people. However, Indigenous people have lower incomes on average, and government transfers are a significant source of additional income. Respondents reported high levels of dissatisfaction with their economic situation.
- Indigenous people are primarily employed in the private sector and the Indigenous community sector, despite Gatineau being a city where employment is heavily concentrated in various parts of the public service. Social connections are a major factor in gaining employment.
- Two factors that are strongly appreciated are access to a dental health professional and high overall quality of life in Gatineau. However, respondents felt there was insufficient access in Gatineau to health resources and spiritual assistance based on Indigenous culture, access to Indigenous organizations that offer these services, and opportunities to socialize and connect with other Indigenous residents. Ottawa's Wabano Centre is regularly mentioned as a place where

culturally relevant health care services can be obtained.

- Housing conditions for Indigenous people are generally satisfactory. Youth have more complaints about their housing situation, and the cost of rent is the biggest obstacle. Access to subsidized housing is the most desired type of assistance.
- Nearly one Indigenous person in two reports not being able to buy or obtain the food they need. Respondents' preferred options for ensuring food security are calling on their family and friends and, to a lesser extent, on food banks.
- In this context, although traditional food like wild game has a strong identity-based value, it is not an essential need in the city. The priority is above all to support dietary needs and eat balanced meals. Respondents did still bring up the importance of having a place where youth can learn about Indigenous food traditions.
- Culture, traditions and spirituality are major factors in the lives of Indigenous people, especially in an urban environment where ties to nature and the community are not a given. Yet over half of respondents (51%) think that Gatineau does not offer a fulfilling cultural environment, while 28% have a more positive perception and 21% weren't sure.
- Dissatisfaction is high with regard to activities, such as those organized by the city, by schools and in support of Indigenous artists.
- Finally, respondents were asked to talk about what measures they would prioritize to improve their quality of life in Gatineau. The most common responses (85% and higher) had to do with youth education (funding, support and school environment) and the transmission of Indigenous knowledge, culture and traditions (places to pass down knowledge, more incentives for Indigenous artists, gathering and sharing spaces). Awareness training for social professionals and employers in Gatineau were also ranked quite high. Below that were measures to do with traditional Indigenous food (places to prepare and obtain products, and traditional Indigenous food training), which were mentioned by between 64% and 75% of participants.
- Compared to other age groups, people 65 and older placed more importance on awareness training for social professionals, the availability of gathering and

sharing spaces, and meetings with Indigenous Elders.

- Nearly three Indigenous people in four would like to continue living in the city, including 41% for life.

Section 8. Priorities and recommendations

- The work of the recent official commissions, their resulting calls to action and the commitment from different levels of government all create a favourable environment in which to look at what Indigenous people living in urban environments need.
- This study's goal was to examine the needs of long-term Indigenous residents of Gatineau and Indigenous people living there temporarily. A second goal was to understand their point of view with regard to initiatives, projects or structures that could meet their needs.

Life in Gatineau

- Indigenous people are satisfied with life in Gatineau. This is one of the clearest findings from the focus groups, individual interviews and the survey. Indigenous residents appreciate their quality of life in this city and most of them also want to remain there (71%).
- The proximity of Gatineau to Ottawa is seen as a unique advantage in terms of opportunities for education, employment and access to health services, as Indigenous residents rely on this to access certain services, including cultural and health services.
- Although this proximity is viewed positively, it also leads to frequent comparisons of the services offered in the two cities, revealing major gaps in Gatineau.

Priorities

- Priorities were identified by sector and there are a number of measures that could be implemented to address these gaps.
- There are eight recommendations affecting multiple types of needs. These are:
 - a. Making improvements to the way data on the Indigenous population is gathered, processed, and shared to improve decision making

- b. Educating and training representatives of service providers (professionals, teachers, non-Indigenous students, etc.)
- c. Implementing initiatives to make the city of Gatineau a more inclusive environment for Indigenous residents
- d. Reducing compartmentalization and improving efficiency with regard to resource management and sharing
- e. Helping residents navigate services (employment, education, housing, health care, food security, spiritual support, etc.) and referring them to appropriate services
- f. Establishing an informal meeting/sharing space for all Indigenous residents
- g. Holding traditional Indigenous activities in French
- h. Strengthening existing organizations' capacities or creating a new organization.

Meeting needs

- There are a number of options to create a structure that can help meet the needs identified. These options, which take into account the viewpoints of the people consulted, the available literature, and observations on the ground, are:
 - a. Creating a new organization
 - b. Establishing a multi-service / service point centre
 - c. Establishing a network of organizations or a local Indigenous round table
 - d. Strengthening the capacity of an existing Indigenous organization
- Whichever option is chosen, the structure's mandate should reflect the following responsibilities:
 - Representativity on regional round tables, increased visibility of the Indigenous population, contribution to an Indigenous perspective
 - An informed opinion on Indigenous issues or referrals to relevant resources
 - Data gathering or compilation and publishing of relevant planning tools, an informed opinion on data-related needs

- Welcoming Indigenous people (youth and adults) from remote and rural communities
- Help navigating services and guidance to the appropriate services
- Networking between long time and new residents
- Establishing services, coordinated service delivery, collaborations and partnerships (CISSSO, CJEO, postsecondary institutions, Ville de Gatineau, provincial ministries, etc.)
- Education/training of service providers and the general public
- A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks analysis would be useful to more clearly identify the advantages and limits of whichever model is chosen. The model should be recognized and supported by Indigenous authorities and have local Indigenous governance.
- These priorities and recommendations may be of interest to organizations and institutions that wish to participate in efforts to make the city of Gatineau a more inclusive and appealing environment for Indigenous residents.





