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Municipal-Indigenous Relations in Atlantic Canada

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Article abstract

The significant increase in the urban Indigenous identity population in Atlantic Canada in the past ten years warrants an investigation of urban Indigenous policies that asks, to what extent are municipalities in Atlantic Canada bridging relations with urban Indigenous Peoples? Over half of Canada's Indigenous Peoples reside in urban centres, yet no one level of government has taken responsibility for developing policies regarding urban Indigenous Peoples. Since the new millennium, municipalities are bridging relations with urban Indigenous Peoples. Not only are these initiatives in Western and Central Canadian municipalities varied, but they are also understudied. An analysis of Municipal-Indigenous relations in Charlottetown, Fredericton, Halifax, and St John's addresses the following: municipal capacity for Indigenous inclusion; urban Indigenous policy initiatives; and the extent to which municipalities are responding to the Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

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Municipal-Indigenous Relations in Atlantic Canada

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Abstract

The significant increase in the urban Indigenous identity population in Atlantic Canada in the past ten years warrants an investigation of urban Indigenous policies that asks, to what extent are municipalities in Atlantic Canada bridging relations with urban Indigenous Peoples? Over half of Canada's Indigenous Peoples reside in urban centres, yet no one level of government has taken responsibility for developing policies regarding urban Indigenous Peoples. Since the new millennium, municipalities are bridging relations with urban Indigenous Peoples. Not only are these initiatives in Western and Central Canadian municipalities varied, but they are also understudied. An analysis of Municipal-Indigenous relations in Charlottetown, Fredericton, Halifax, and St John's addresses the following: municipal capacity for Indigenous inclusion; urban Indigenous policy initiatives; and the extent to which municipalities are responding to the Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Municipal-Indigenous Relations in Atlantic Canada

The significant increase in the urban Indigenous identity population in Atlantic Canada in the past ten years (see Table One) warrant an investigation of urban Indigenous policies at the municipal level of government. To what extent are municipalities in Atlantic Canada bridging relations with urban Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous voluntary organizations, including Friendship Centres, and urban Indigenous communities? It is crucial to hear the voices of these mostly marginalized urban communities (Proulx, 2011; Sanderson, & Howard-Bobiwash, 1997; Silver, 2006; Warry, 2007) by locating municipal Indigenous relations as another facet of policy development for urban Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Charlottetown, Fredericton, Halifax and St John's, each representing one of the four Atlantic provinces were selected for this article

There are no constitutional obligations at the federal or provincial levels to oversee relations between urban Indigenous Peoples and local government. What does exist, however, is a disproportionate number of urban Indigenous Peoples who remain marginalized compared to the general population (StatsCan, 2021). "[D]iscrimination, the legacies of residential schools, and social problems marginalized urban Aboriginal people, decreased social inclusion, and even alienated them from their own culture and traditional teachings and adversely affected quality of life" (Findlay et al., 2014, p.2). One step toward Indigenous inclusion in policy processes has been the establishment of Indigenous advisory councils in larger urban centres in Western and Central Canada. For instance, Toronto's Aboriginal Advisory Committee was created in 1999, Vancouver's Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee was created in 2011, and Winnipeg's Aboriginal Relations Department was created in 2014 (Heritz, 2016). These committees are significant entities that incorporate Indigenous perspectives within the machinery of local government. This research will report on the scope of Indigenous representation within the machinery of local government. Ultimately this project assesses the extent of engagement of Atlantic municipalities in building relations with the increasing Indigenous identity population and developing urban Indigenous policies in the four selected cities in Atlantic Canada.

While the literature highlights the emerging interest in urban Indigenous culture in Atlantic Canada it also reveals that the actual interface between Indigenous Peoples and local government remains understudied compared to Central and Western Canada. This research is designed to fill in the ten-year gap (Horak & Young, 2012) from the last assessment of Municipal-Indigenous relations in the four Atlantic cities to bring greater awareness of how the majority of Indigenous Peoples are included in policy processes generally and the relations between urban Indigenous Peoples and local government, specifically.

The paper commences with context regarding the Atlantic urban experience within theoretical, constitutional, racial, and urban frameworks. Next, the methodology approaches the study of the four cities with a consideration of Walker's framework of consultation for urban Indigenous Peoples and the specific municipal Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). An assessment of Municipal-Indigenous relations in Charlottetown, Fredericton, Halifax and St John's is followed by an analysis based on Walker and the pertinent TRC Calls to Action. The Conclusion recognizes the preliminary initiatives undertaken by the four cities in developing Municipal-Indigenous relations and locates avenues for further research.

Table 1. Indigenous Identity Population: 2021

Municipality	Population	Indigenous Identity Population	Indigenous Identity Percentage	Percentage Change in Indigenous Population 2011-2021
Charlottetown	77,385	1,640	2.1%	63.7%
Fredericton	107,165	5,125	4.8%	45.8%
Halifax	461,140	18,850	4.1%	67.3%
St John's	208,820	7,050	3.4%	55.8%

StatsCan Census 2021

Background

Over half of all Indigenous Peoples in Canada live in urban centres (StatsCan, 2021) and up until colonization relocated them, Indigenous nations have been in Canadian cities since time immemorial (Anderson & Flynn 2021). Chris Andersen provides a definition of "urban Indigenous" as a distinctive and legitimate form of Indigenous identity (2013) that consists of twelve elements. There is no order of the elements that shape the distinctiveness of the urban Indigenous experience. Economic elements include economic marginalization and a growing professional/middle class. Indigenous identity elements include cultural diversity, legal diversity, status blindness, urban Indigenous institutions, and distinctiveness of urban Indigenous policy ethos. Social elements include the character of informal networks, attachment to non-urban communities, struggles over the political representation of urban Indigenous Peoples, racism/social exclusion, and place(s) of Indigenous women in urban Indigenous social relations. While community characteristics are unique to each urban centre, Andersen (2013) identifies commonalities that comprehensively conceptualizes the urban Indigenous experience across Canada.

Before we assess how municipalities are bridging relations with Indigenous Peoples, we need to understand how Indigenous Peoples were removed from governance systems. This section commences with a discussion of settler colonialism and its contribution to the alienation of urban Indigenous Peoples from local governance.

Rather than existing in the past, settler colonialism is a living phenomenon (Comak, 2019; Midzain-Gobin & Smith, 2020) that positions settler colonial society to replace Indigenous Peoples. Coulthard (2014, p. 175) explains that settler-colonial power rationalized Indigenous territories as *terra nullius*, declaring Indigenous Peoples as too primitive to bear rights to land when they first encountered Europeans, therefore rendering legally "empty" land available for colonial settlement. The goal of settler colonialism "was to displace Indigenous peoples from their lands, break and bury the culture that grew out of relationships with those lands, and, ultimately, eliminate Indigenous societies so that settlers could establish themselves" (Woroniak & Camfield, 2013). The process of Indigenous elimination includes physical violence and forms of racism supported by an ideology of white supremacy.

Indigenous elimination as systemic racism is inherent in institutions including education, justice and health care systems that decrease the life chances of Indigenous Peoples. The gendered provisions of *The Indian Act* deliberately attempted to eliminate Indian status for Indigenous women who married non-Indigenous men and were forced to leave their reserves. Similarly, the residential school system removed children from their families, resulting in intergenerational family breakdown (Dorries 2019, pp. 28-29). Residential schools, the education and justice systems and family services are institutions that together constructed Indigenous Peoples as the "other" (Silver, 2006, p. 36). The "Sixties Scoop" refers to the accelerated removal of Indigenous children for adoption by mostly non-Indigenous families that actually started in the 1950s (Fournier & Crey, 1997, p.88). Settler colonialism continues to the present day. The Millennium scoop is a witness to ongoing removal of Indigenous children from their biological homes into foster care mostly with white families (Stewart & LaBerge, 2019, p. 200).

By relocating to the city, Indigenous Peoples, "were responding to conditions of colonial deprivation and reoccupying land within their traditional territories" (Hugill, 2019, p. 74). Urban centres are places of Indigenous belonging rather than migration. It is imperative to recognize that Indigenous Peoples are moving within their own traditional territories (Snyder et al., 2015) and urbanness does not eradicate their rights (Darnell, 2011, p. 41). For Mohammed, Walker, Loring and MacDougall municipalities must recognize their historic ties to Indigenous Peoples: "Given that Canadian cities neither sprung from the soil naturally, nor were accidentally established in locations devoid of connections to Aboriginal societies, the question of how to support the indigeneity and civic engagement of Aboriginal peoples in urban spaces is an important one" (2017, p. 288).

Indigenous inclusion involves the incorporation of Indigenous worldviews, knowledge, and experience. Indigenous worldviews have "a deep and abiding physical and spiritual connections as kinfolk with their place, land, territories, environment, and resources since time immemorial" (Matunga, 2013, p. 18). For Bouvier and Walker (2018, p. 130) municipalities "still do a poor job overall of making space for Indigenous sovereignty, worldviews, processes, and protocols in the shared space of the city." In addition to addressing the participation of Indigenous Peoples within settler colonialism, is understanding their leadership within the machinery of local government. Just like the disconnect between Indigenous and settler governance systems, there are differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous concepts of leadership (Althaus & O'Faircheallaigh, 2019, p. 85). Rather than a technique, Indigenous leadership is a centuries old approach of seeing the world and living one's life (Julien et al., 2010, p. 124) that may not align with non-Indigenous administrative structures. Indigenous public servants face the challenge of: "bridging representation backwards into government as an *employee*, forward with their communities as their *representatives* within government, and as a bridge between governments and communities through a *constituency* relationship" (author's italics) (Althaus & O'Faircheallaigh, 2019, 93).

Williams and Schertzer's (2019) framework for political representation of Indigenous Peoples is premised on Indigenous sovereignty prior to colonization and the justification for a specifically Indigenous claim to self-determination. While their framework was originally constructed for federal political representation, their principles of recognition, protection and decolonization transcend multilevel boundaries to make them applicable to any level of government, including local governance.

Indigenous Peoples are protected by the state by way of binding guarantees the empower them with the right to determine their interaction with the colonial settler state. While principles of recognition and protection are in place, the framework acknowledges the legitimacy of the settler state which may be at odds with decolonization. While the federal and provincial governments devote most of their resources to First Nations who live on reserves, all levels of government in Canada have constitutional responsibilities for "the existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada" (Canada, 1982), including those residing in urban centres (Andersen & Denis, 2003; RCAP v2 Part1, 1996).

Provincial governments, while not actively bridging relationships between urban Indigenous Peoples and municipalities (Alcantara & Nelles, 2016), control municipalities and are autonomous agents in policy fields (Young, 2012, p. 15). Along with the federal government, provincial governments have a "duty to consult" when they consider an action that impact on First Nations, like land development or resource extraction (Anderson & Flynn, 2021). Not all municipalities agree that they do not owe a legal duty to consult First Nation due to their constitutional subordination as creatures of the provinces (Alcantara & Nelles, 2016). Fraser and Viswanathan (2013) find that the Crown Duty to Consult is a mutually beneficial practice, but its legislation provides minimal guidance for its practice. In the absence of Supreme Court cases that extend the duty to consult to municipalities Anderson and Flynn (2021) maintain that case law and provincial legislation support municipal responsibility to consult.

When it reported in 1996, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) proposed governance systems that included urban Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes in areas relevant to the acknowledgement, maintenance, and preservation of their cultural identity. One proposal was for a co-management system where institutions and services established at various levels of government that serve the general population be given specific provisions for Indigenous participation established through enabling legislation. While RCAP admitted that co-management offered urban Indigenous Peoples limited access to influence government, one benefit included Indigenous voice in local government and relationship building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. A second proposal was for a community of interest model that would bring together existing urban Indigenous organizations to develop a new form of governance. A municipal body with political and administrative functions would enter into agreements with Indigenous and other urban governments to cooperate in service delivery (Heritz, 2018a). These two proposals were never formalized.

Instead, in 1997 the federal government created the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) to reduce disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in urban centres. Its initial objective was: "to raise awareness about the needs of local communities, improve access to federal programs and services, and to improve horizontal linkages among federal departments and other sectors" (AADNC, 2011, 2). The objective of the federal government, through the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Metis and Non-Status Indians (OFI), was to partner with other governments, community organizations and Indigenous Peoples to support local projects. The UAS had two key features. The first was to bring community members to form a steering committee to "guide the allocation of resources and the direction of the UAS-related initiatives" (AANDC, 2011, 23). There was flexibility in the composition of the steering committees. Some were made up of only Indigenous membership. Others included federal,

provincial, and local representatives as voting members and others included government representatives as non-voting members. The second feature of the UAS was its reliance on Indigenous communities for their knowledge about their needs and how they should be prioritized (AANDC, 2011, 23). The UAS initially operated in thirteen cities whose combined Indigenous population represented more than 25 per cent of Canada's total Indigenous population: Vancouver, Prince George, Lethbridge, Calgary, Edmonton, Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Thompson, Thunder Bay, Toronto, and Ottawa (AANDC, 2011). In 2007 the UAS was moved from a pilot project to a government program with a total commitment of $68.5 million for five years and was further renewed in 2012 for $27 million for two years. At this point Halifax was the only municipality in Atlantic Canada included in the UAS. That changed in 2014 when Fredericton and St John's Friendship Centres were included in the federal consolidation of Canadian Heritage funding for Friendship Centres ($23million annually) and its urban Indigenous programming ($20 million annually) into a single UAS with a focus to increase economic participation of urban Indigenous Peoples across Canada (INAC, 2017, iii). Replacing the UAS in 2017, the Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples (UPIP), with an annual budget of $53 million, provides programs and services for women, vulnerable populations, youth, transition services, outreach programs and community wellness (ISC, 2024; NAFC, 2024). Three of the four Friendship Centres in Atlantic Canada are located in the cities in this study, Fredericton, Halifax and St John's and will be introduced below.

The recent Supreme Court of Canada decision clarified federal responsibility for off-reserve Indigenous Peoples, most of whom reside in urban centres. In the *Daniels* decision, the court ruled that the term "Indians" in s. 91(24) of the Constitution Act 1867 includes all Indigenous Peoples. In other words, the *Daniels* decision shifts the constitutional responsibility of the federal government from mostly Indians on reserve to all Indigenous Peoples, including those who live in urban centres. The *Daniels* decision also highlights how this gap in responsibility has impacted Métis and non-status Indian people who "are the most disadvantaged of all Canadian citizens" (Magnet, 2017, p. 28). The *Daniels* decision means that the federal government is responsible to most urban Indigenous Peoples, but there is "no legal obligation on the federal government to do anything specific" (McIvor, 2018, p. 55).

Since the new millennium municipalities, to varying degrees, are taking the lead in initiating urban Indigenous policies. Municipalities face challenges in developing urban Indigenous policies. Municipalities may not recognize the attributes of citizens as federal and provincial governments have, especially when federal and provincial governments have jurisdiction over Indigenous issues. Urban Indigenous populations may be smaller and diverse compared to other groups. If and when municipalities develop urban Indigenous policies, they are unique to each locality and reflect various historical legacies (Peters, 2011). Anderson and Flynn (2020) argue the while the legal relationships have focused on the duty to consult, there are legal concerns Indigenous Peoples share with municipalities that include the environment, land use planning, and social services, for example. Government relations with Indigenous-Black people is another facet of inclusion considering Black people have been on Mi'kma'ki territory for over 400 years. Descendants of enslaved Africans cannot be considered settlers of Canada because their migration was the outcome of the trans-Atlantic slave trade (Beals & Wilson, 2020). For Black people to be Indigenous was regarded as cultural, racial, and social disadvantage, so this mixing was not always revealed, even to relatives. This in part explains the paucity

of literature speaking about Indigenous-Black people in colonial Canada on one hand yet explains how this knowledge is sustained through the telling of our stories on the other. Beals and Wilson (2020), through their research with Indigenous-Black people in three regions of Canada, explain how the pain associated with historical "erasure affects Indigenous-Black people in a myriad of ways, including how we think about ourselves, and how events in our histories and current realities shape, break, and re-shape our identities. We live and suffer the legacy of colonization with marginalized dual-identities, yet we are not recognized as bona fide members of our identity" groups (p. 30).

The traditional territories of the Mi'kmaq, Passamaquoddy, and Wolastoqiyik include present-day Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland (Murray, 2011), while the Innu and Inuit reside predominantly in Labrador (Dunn & Pantin, 2012). As part of their traditional territories Indigenous Peoples have always inhabited urban centres. However, an amendment to the *Indian Act* in 1911 removed First Nations from reserves that adjoined or were situated within a town or city with a population less than 8,000 (Paul, 2006). A correspondence between a federal Member of Parliament and a Director of Indian Affairs discussing a relocation of Indigenous Peoples in Nova Scotia in 1945 to "one or two central place of inhabitation" illustrates colonial violence against them: "to reduce the difficulties and wasteful expenditure of public moneys that are involved in trying to educate, hospitalize, train and care for the relatively few Indians … I am sure you will agree that the worst conditions prevail on those reserves that are located on the outskirts of important industrial cities and communities" (Paul, 2006, p. 311).

Most Newfoundland Mi'kmaq communities are not federally recognized under the *Indian Act* and there are no reserves to protect language and sustain cultural knowledge (Lawrence 2009). According to Lawrence, today's Mi'kmaq community leaders "were children when their parents, forced to engage in the wage economy, began to be silent about their identities and stopped speaking the language" (Lawrence, 2009, p. 42-43). This situation is made more complex by the assertion that only the Beothuk, and not the Mi'kmaq are Indigenous to Newfoundland (Lawrence, 2009). Moving into the twenty-first century, urban Indigenous policy in Newfoundland continued "to be a minimally highlighted and underfunded policy area" (Dunn & Pantin, 2012, p. 218).

The obligation of municipalities to respond to the 94 Calls to Action recommended by the TRC provides another criterion to determine the extent to which the four Atlantic cities are engaging with Indigenous communities. There are five Calls to Action where municipal governments are specifically mentioned, in addition to the federal and provincial governments. Four of these Calls to Action, while integral to municipal responsibilities for the TRC, are not the focus of this research project: Number 43 calls for the adoption and implementation of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP); Number 47 calls for the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius; Number 75 calls for disclosure and protection of residential school cemeteries; Number 77 calls for the transfer of residential school records to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (TRC 2015). Number 57, specific to this research project, calls upon all levels of government: "to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-

based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism" (TRC, 2015, p. 271). The responsibility of local government to train City Hall staff according to the criteria set out by the TRC (Lachance & Rose, 2020; IPAC, 2017) provides a window to investigate the extent to which municipalities are working with Indigenous Peoples to undertake not only "reconciliation monitoring but also monitoring that reconciles" (O'Neil, 2020, p. 83). For de Costa (2017), the TRC "does have specific potential for mobilizing individuals, communities or institutions that already recognise a need to engage" (p. 196).

Building on research conducted in large urban centres (Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Toronto)(Heritz, 2016), in Saskatchewan (Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert)(Heritz 2018b), and in Ontario (Brantford, Hamilton and Niagara)(Heritz, 2021), this project scrutinizes policy making as confined specifically to municipal government and determine the extent to which Indigenous Peoples or the organizations that represent them are represented in decision-making processes that pertain to Indigenous issues, and municipal responses to the Calls to Action set out by the TRC.

Methodology

This comparative qualitative case-study (Ragin, 1987; Yin, 2009) research project focuses on the extent of the relationship between municipal governments in Charlottetown, Fredericton, Halifax and St John's and their Indigenous communities, how it impacts on policy formulation and implementation and the extent to which Indigenous peoples are represented in local government.

This research project received ethics approval by a review committee that included members of the Indigenous community. Information was gathered by conducting interviews to elicit detailed input from participants regarding the scope of relations between municipal government and Indigenous Peoples, identify initiatives, assess municipal progress in Indigenous relationship building and determine the extent to which Indigenous Peoples are included in policy processes in local government. Recruitment relied on internet searches of municipal websites and Indigenous organizations. Snowball sampling (Bleich & Pekkanen, 2013) was used to expand the search to Indigenous organizations, elected officials and municipal staff. Participants selected for interviews included Indigenous and non-Indigenous municipal staff, Indigenous organizations including Friendship Centres (Howard, 2011), elected municipal officials, municipal staff, and members of provincial government and provincial organizations responsible for urban affairs. In some cities there was a reluctance for government officials to participate in the interviews because their municipalities were in the process of bridging relations with Indigenous Peoples, and they preferred to defer to other officials. Not everyone who was contacted agreed to be interviewed. Fourteen participants agreed to be interviewed, six of whom self-identified as Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. They ranged from representatives of Friendship Centres and other Indigenous organizations, Municipal-Indigenous liaison staff, and elected officials. Confidential semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions (Bleich & Pekkanen, 2013) were conducted through Teams (a videoconference application) from their homes or workplace. Interviews lasted from 30 to 60 minutes. Participants were sent a transcript of their interview with the option of submitting their revision. Of the seven participants that resubmitted revisions most choose to add or clarify information from the original transcript.

The information obtained from interviews and searches of municipal documents related to Indigenous policies admittedly may not report on every detail of Municipal-Indigenous relations in the four cities, but it does provide information regarding the presence of Indigenous entities, their location within municipal administration, staff complement, initiatives, services, relationships with other governments or voluntary organizations that assist them in carrying out their mandate, and the degree to which they have responded to the Calls to Action as set out by the TRC.

Walker's (2008) framework, based on consultation with Indigenous Peoples regarding their relationship with municipal government, provides a coherent set of goals regarding urban Indigenous policy. The five areas of highest priority, opportunities, and challenges identified in the study provide the framework to analyze Municipal-Indigenous relations, as follows:

1. Citizen Participation and Engagement: Municipal-Indigenous relations could be improved by engaging Indigenous participation ranging from household to community/neighbourhood, to city council.

2. Governance Interface: Other approaches to improving Municipal-Indigenous relations is through cultural, service, or educational organizations. Municipalities should undertake and regularize an Indigenous advisory body that consists of leaders of Indigenous communities who are engaged in consultation and decision-making on municipal matters as they pertain to Indigenous Peoples.

3. Aboriginal Culture as Municipal Asset: The opportunity for both communities to strengthen their interface includes, but is not limited to, Indigenous culture in urban design, community services, street and park naming, and economic development. An office within municipal government committed to the culture and aspirations of Indigenous Peoples may accommodate this work. Municipal human resource strategies should include recruitment, training, and retention initiatives to attract and promote Indigenous staff.

4. Economic and Social Development: Partnering with Indigenous communities can yield gains by acknowledging Indigenous culture and history in municipal heritage and tourism. Private_sector partners can provide job and entrepreneurship training and business development for Indigenous residents.

5. Urban Reserves, Service Agreements and Regional Relationships: Urban reserves and service agreements provide economic development opportunities for both First Nations and municipalities (Walker, 2008). Urban reserves may range in size from a city lot to 35 acres (Canada WEDC, 2016). A federal order-in-council officially transfers the land into an urban reserve, which is then made subject to the *Indian Act* (Barron & Garcia, 2005; Tomiak, 2017). Addition to Reserves (ATR) is the transfer of land by the Crown for the use and benefit of a First Nation in rural or urban settings (ISC, 2022).

Walker's framework has been streamlined to assess Municipal-Indigenous relations for the four municipalities. The major revision was shifting Citizen Participation from a category because it aligns

with the overall assessment of this study. The remaining four categories assess Municipal-Indigenous relations as follow: Governance Interface reports on formal Indigenous representation within the machinery of local government; Indigenous Culture as Municipal Asset reports on the representativeness of Indigenous Peoples in community services and hiring practices; Economic and Social Development reports on partnerships and collaborations; and Urban Reserves and ATRs reports on intergovernmental cooperation regarding the creation and maintenance of urban reserves. Next, the empirical evidence of relations between each of the four municipalities and their Indigenous communities will be followed by a discussion utilizing Walker's framework.

Charlottetown

Charlottetown is located on the traditional and unceded territory of the Abegweit Mi'kmaq.

In Epekwitk (Prince Edward Island) (L'nuey, 2024) the Mi'kmaq treaties are treaties of "peace and friendship" (Bulger, 2012, p. 64-65). Charlottetown's population is 77,385, with an Indigenous population comprising 2.1 per cent, or 1,640 in 2021, increasing 64 per cent between 2011 and 2021 (StatsCan). More Indigenous Peoples in PEI live off-reserve than on and a large percentage of off-reserve reside in the Charlottetown area. As of 2012 urban Indigenous peoples did not appear "on the city's radar" (Bulger, 2012). Rather, relations with the Indigenous community in PEI is formalized through the Tripartite Agreement made up of representatives from the Native Council of Prince Edward Island, the federal and the provincial governments to work on policy areas including health, housing, education, economic development, and justice (NCPEI 2024). As a member of the Indigenous community explained, the Tripartite Agreement allows the Native Council a seat on the steering committee which "helps with political advocacy" (Bulger, 2012).

In April 2020 a statue of John A Macdonald, located in a prominent place in downtown Charlottetown was covered by a bucket of red paint. According to an interviewee, the Indigenous community wanted the statue removed in response to Macdonald's role as a genocidal prime minister. City Council set up an ad hoc committee that included representatives from the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI, Native Council of PEI and L'Nuey Moving Towards a Better Tomorrow. Reporting to Council in Spring 2021 the committee advised that the statue be removed, which has taken place.

According to an interviewee, Charlottetown displays Indigenous flags at City Hall, but not inside Council Chambers and it does not commence Council meetings with an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement. On the first national Truth & Reconciliation Day, September 30, 2021, both the province of PEI and the city of Charlottetown closed to honour the day. There was a flag raising ceremony sponsored by the city of Charlottetown.

The Epekwitk Assembly of Councils recently constructed a building on the Charlottetown waterfront to house its Indigenous organizations and to showcase Indigenous art, culture and entrepreneurship (Fraser, 2020).

Charlottetown appears to be taking a step toward building relations by including Indigenous communities in its statue removal decision and flag raising ceremony on the inaugural Truth &

Reconciliation Day, however it falls short of substantive urban Indigenous policies as outlined in the Calls to Action by the TRC. Specifically, Charlottetown has yet to undertake Call to Action Number 57 that calls upon all levels of government to provide educate public servants about Indigenous Peoples (TRC, 2015, p.271).

Fredericton

Fredericton is located on the traditional unceded territory of the Wəlastəkwiyik (Maliseet) and Mi'kmaq Peoples. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq, Wəlastəkwiyik (Maliseet) and Passamaquoddy Peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1726. Fredericton's population is 107,165 and its Indigenous population is 5,125, or 4.8 per cent, having increased by 46 per cent between 2011 and 2021 (StatsCan, 2021).

For Murray (2011) the absence of urban Indigenous policy is a continuation of a political culture that stretches back from colonial times to the present day, demarcated by four regimes. The first regime, proximation, dates to before Confederation when the close proximity between the town of Fredericton and St Mary's reserve was considered convenient for official reasons. The second regime, segregation, acknowledges the passing of the *Indian Act* in 1876 regulating Indigenous territory as reserves, and status which could be lost voluntarily or involuntarily. This lasted until the mid-twentieth century when the third regime, eradication, attempted to integrate Indigenous Peoples into the local labour market. The fourth regime, trans-spatialization, at the end of the twentieth century, responded to the entrenchment of Aboriginal rights in the *Constitution Act 1982* (Canada, 1982) imposing on both the federal and provincial government a duty to consult. This final regime also linked economic relationships between city and reserve. However, urban Indigenous policies were not developed through these regimes.

The New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council (NBAPC) represents the interests of Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqey, and Passamaquoddy Peoples (status and non-status), who live off-reserve throughout the province of New Brunswick, since 1972. It is active in improving the social and economic standards of off-reserve Indigenous Peoples of New Brunswick in areas such as housing and economic development (NBAPC 2024). According to an interviewee the federal government's Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) is funding NBAPC to have a discussion with Fredericton, Saint John and Moncton on building an urban coalition to give urban Indigenous communities more voice, to help design better, more responsive services.

The main focus of the City of Fredericton's relations with Indigenous Peoples is its relations with St Mary's First Nation (also known as Sitansisk), the reserve adjacent to the city. An interviewee explained that relations include making equipment that is still operational available to St Mary's, transferring sign permits to St Mary's and assisting St Mary's with acquiring, and developing an asset management plan. In 2022 St Mary's signed a two-year agreement with the Fredericton Police Force to improve communications, increase response capabilities and a program to mentor youth (CBC, 2022). Fredericton has a Manager of First Nations Relations whose role is to maneuver Fredericton's response to UNDRIP, the TRC's Calls to Action and build relations not only with the local Wolastoqey (St Mary's), but all six Wolastoqey First Nations.

Within Fredericton, the city liaises with the Indigenous community through the Wolastoqey Nation in New Brunswick (WNNB) and the Under One Sky Friendship Centre. An interviewee explained that non-status Indians do not have a direct relationship with the federal government, but they are represented by the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP). The federal government does not seek to serve Indigenous Peoples where they live, and they don't just live on reserves. Another interviewee explained that one of the challenges they face is the assumption that Indigenous Peoples in urban centres can access services: there are more Indigenous Peoples outside than inside reserves. An interviewee further explained: "Challenges are non-Indigenous service providers say they care, but they don't know what to do, or are afraid of being politically incorrect, so they don't do anything."

In honour of Truth and Reconciliation Day Fredericton permanently raised the Wolastoqey flag at City Hall on September 30, 2021 and will display the flag for Sitansisk (St Mary's) in City Hall Council Chamber (Fredericton, 2021).

The City of Fredericton is aware of the 13 Calls to Action that link directly to municipalities, as an interviewee explained, "an overview of the TRC is just trying to get everyone's head wrapped around the legal, moral, and best practices to act in good faith." In keeping with Call to Action 57, the interviewee also explained that cultural competency training for municipal staff is underway with Under One Sky Friendship Centre providing cultural sensitivity training for Mayor and Council, and at the Director level, with plans for extending the program to the City's 700 employees. Fredericton displayed "Every Child Matters" banners on the bridges leading in/out of the city. Also, Under One Sky developed a Take It Outside Fredericton program at Odell Park, where they installed a kiosk and the city built a firepit and provides wood.

Regarding urban reserves, an interviewee explained that Fredericton would like to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Wolastoqey Nation in New Brunswick (WNNB) for two reasons. The first is that the city is situated in their traditional territories and there is a need to protect the archeological resources. The second, is the six communities have submitted a joint ATR in the City of Fredericton.

Halifax

Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) is in the Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. Covering 5,500 square kms, it is home to half of Nova Scotia's population and 60 per cent of its economy. HRM's Indigenous identity population increased 68per cent, to 18,850 between 2011 to 2021 (StatsCan, 2021). Today, Indigenous Peoples make up 4 per cent of the HRM's population and 14 per cent of its homeless population that has been estimated to be closer to 30 per cent (Homeless Hub). Nova Scotia's past highlights Indigenous genocide and racial policies that include Cornwallis's bounty on Mi'kmaq scalps, expulsion of Acadians, and the forcible relocation of Blacks from Africville (Finbow, 2012).

At the provincial level, Nova Scotia created the Office of L'nu Affairs and the Nova Scotia Framework Agreement on Aboriginal Treaty Rights/Umbrella between the federal government, province of Nova Scotia and the Mi'kmaq people was signed in 2002 (Nova Scotia, 2024). While the agreement could

provide an institutional node for linking the province with urban Indigenous issues, no activity had been reported by 2012 (Finbow, 2012). The Native Council of Nova Scotia (NCNS) is the self-governing organization for Indigenous Peoples residing off-reserve in Nova Scotia with a mandate to advocate for and represent their community (NCNS, 2024). The Mi'kmaq Friendship Centre is a gathering place for community events, that also provides programs for the Indigenous community and the annual summer powwow on the Halifax Commons (Finbow, 2012).

Halifax was a participant in the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) starting in 2008, appointing one of their staff from Community & Recreation Services to join the Halifax Aboriginal Peoples Network (HAPN) which undertook grassroots level outreach. Changes in the UAS in 2014 transferred the HAPN to a new Urban Partnership program that focused on Indigenous participation in the economy (Halifax, 2018). Evaluators of the program found that the economic focus failed to "recognize the complexity and interconnections of the challenges to socio-economic well-being that urban Indigenous peoples face" (INAC, 2017, p. 15). In 2017 the UAS was replaced with the Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples (UPIP) that shifted its concentration from selected cities like Halifax to organizations to provide programs and services for women, vulnerable populations, youth, outreach programs and community wellness (ISC, 2021).

Halifax was the only one of the four cities in this study to participate in the Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study (UAPS, 2010) that provides information regarding the urban Indigenous experience from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives. One of ten cities selected from across Canada representing a total of 46% of Canada's urban Indigenous population (UAPS, 2010, p.19) the Halifax study surveyed 200 Indigenous people. A majority indicated: pride in being Indigenous (UAPS 2010, p.48); participation at least occasionally in cultural activities; support for an Indigenous justice system; and the need to take steps to protect their culture, especially the Mi'kmaq language (UAPS 2010, p.63). Indigenous Peoples in Halifax were more likely than those in the other cities studied to find friendship centres useful. A majority also believed, "a strong connection to their Aboriginal heritage is most important to the concept of a successful life for urban Aboriginal peoples in Halifax" (UAPS 2010, p.108).

Acadia First Nation, Millbrook First Nation and Sipekne'katik First Nation are the three Mi'kmaq Band Councils that maintain relations with HRM, two of them having service agreements. At the political level there are relationships between the Mayor and the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs. A HRM Councillor has been appointed as an Indigenous Community Liaison since 2018. HRMs CAO communicates with the CEO of Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn (KMK) the administrative secretariat of the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mk'kmaw Chiefs. HRM provides funding for Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre for certain projects and programs for the urban indigenous population estimated at 25,000 residents. The Mi'kmaq flag is displayed inside Council Chambers, and one is displayed outside City Hall in a rotation that includes the month of October. There is a Downie-Wenjack Legacy Room in the Main Floor Boardroom at City Hall. Council Meetings commence with an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement and staff email signatures include HRM's Land Acknowledgement.

Halifax's Diversity & Inclusion Framework committed the municipality to addressing the TRC's Calls to Action that impact municipal services. It established a Special Advisory Committee on the

commemoration of Edward Cornwallis (aka Cornwallis Task Force) the recognition of Indigenous history and established a permanent Indigenous Community Engagement Advisor position within the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (Halifax 2015, 6).

The Cornwallis Task Force, a panel consisting of five Indigenous and five non-Indigenous members commenced its work on improving Indigenous relations in Halifax by initiating the removal of the Statue of Edward Cornwallis. An interviewee explained that a majority of Haligonians "did not want the statue touched. It was an educational process to have people understand Mi'kmaq history and why it matters." The Cornwallis Task Force report outlines the TRC Calls to Action and continues to report annually to Council on the implementation of its recommendations. Cornwallis Park is now named Peace & Friendship Park honouring treaties made in the 1800s. The interviewee also noted another decommissioning project is correcting the misspelling of Mi'kmaq in the Halifax. A prominent example is the naming of the Mic Mac Mall, the largest indoor shopping mall in the HRM, which uses an outdated mispronunciation of the Mi'kmaq (CBC, 2018). In 2021 HRM's new fireboat was named Kjipuktuk, meaning "great harbour" the name Mi'kmaq people gave to Halifax. Another interviewee explained that Council undertook the KAIROS blanket exercise as part of cultural competency training (referred to as Treaty Education) and a large number of the HRM's 3,700 fulltime employees, especially at the management level, have undertaken Treaty Education. As one interviewee explained: "The biggest setback is that people don't know Indigenous history."

The Mi'kmaw Friendship Centre is proposing to build a $30-40 million centre and affordable housing at the foot of Citadel Hill, that will require a land transfer from HRM. As one interviewee explained: "There is not enough Federal money for infrastructure within our First Nations or to fund the important operational work of the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre or even meaningfully help build them a new centre. The last time I checked there was only $2 million available nationally to fund the repairs or builds of the Friendship Centre network in Canada."

Mi'kmaq History Month takes place each October, starting with the Treaty Day celebration on October 1. A Truckhouse trading centre, reminiscent of those described in The Treaty of 1752 (Paul, 2006), is being planned on the waterfront to share Mi'kmaq culture by selling crafts and lobsters and providing employment opportunities for the Mi'kmaq to trade and barter. Indigenous art is displayed at Point Pleasant Park and Halifax hosts Treaty Day with events at the Grande Parade by City Hall. Halifax has a Culture and Heritage Priority Plan that does not specifically mention Indigenous Peoples in its plans for history, museums, parks, cultural landscapes. Halifax hosted the North American Indigenous Games in 2023.

Some First Nations have urban reserve lands already developed and some have land set aside for development. Addition to Reserves is the opportunity to redevelop a part of 70 acres of Shannon Park, a former national defense site. Another ATR is 12 acres of property for the use and benefit of Acadia First Nation on Hammonds Plains Road. The project includes a gas station, convenience store, gaming facility and restaurant employing 33 full and part-time staff (INAC, 2017).

St John's

St John's is located on the unceded, traditional territory of the Beothuk and Mi'kmaq (First Light, 2024a). Between 2011 and 2021 St John's Indigenous population increased 56 per cent to 7,050, totalling three per cent of the municipal population (StatsCan, 2021) and 26 per cent of its homeless population (Homeless Hub). The Inuit population in St John's increased significantly, from 345 in 1991 to 680 in 2011 (Morris, 2016) to 730 in 2016 (APS, 2016). St John's has the fourth largest urban Inuit population in Canada. Twenty-seven per cent of Inuit now live outside Inuit traditional lands and over a third of them live in Edmonton, Montreal, Winnipeg, St John's and Ottawa (Morris, 2016). One interviewee observed: "We don't have geographically focused Indigenous Peoples across St John's. Indigenous Peoples include Innu, Inuit, people from Labrador as well as Mi'kmaq, and Indigenous people from across Canada. There is a different dynamic in St John's compared to other municipalities with adjacent Indigenous communities."

In September 2020 St John's passed a Declaration in Support of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples "to promote and strengthen mutually respectful relationships with the urban Indigenous community in St John's and with all other first Peoples in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador" (St John's, 2020). It has also signed a Declaration in Support of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and a MOU with First Light Friendship Centre. An interviewee observed: "There is a more inclusive approach on committees and there is a commitment to work together."

St John's communicates with Indigenous communities through First Light Friendship Centre and First Voice Urban Indigenous Coalition (FVUIC). FVUIC came out of a virtual policy conference held in November 2020 that brought together researchers, urban Indigenous community members and representatives from all levels of government under the banner of Decolonize YYT: Pathways to Reconciliation. FVUIC provides a permanent forum for thirty members representing Indigenous community advocates, Memorial University, community organizations, federal, provincial, and local government representatives to collaborate on issues such as homelessness, discrimination and disparities in employment and health (First Light, 2024a).

Council meetings start with an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement (First Light, 2024b). An interviewee reported that a representative of First Light Friendship Centre sits on the City's Inclusion Advisory Committee and no staff at city hall are specifically assigned to Indigenous issues. In 2018 St John's City Council discontinued commemorating St John's Day, named for John Cabot and his arrival in what is now Newfoundland in 1497. In 2020 the province followed St John's lead. In June 2021 St John's Council asked residents to observe National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21 in its place. The holiday was called June Day until it was officially renamed National Indigenous Peoples Day in May 2024 (First Voice, 2024). St John's supports capital funding for First Light and supports Indigenous Artists and event funding for National Indigenous Peoples Day. First Light has a presence in St John's; Day Care Centre, a Shelter, and a Community Centre. St John's has provided funding for infrastructure. One interviewee observed "St John's is becoming more Indigenous focused…City Council is more positive on working together."

According to that interviewee, St John's is training key staff members in First Light's Indigenous Cultural Diversity Training to provide the foundation necessary for organizations to work together to build relevant components of First Voice's Community Action Plan into the St. John's Healthy City Strategy. Youth Coordinator worked with First Light for the City's summer camp programs.

Indigenous culture includes a memorial in St John's for the last living Beothuk. One interviewee explained that parks and open spaces that recognize Indigenous Peoples are part of the Community Action Plan. An interviewee explained: "From where I stand as a citizen there is more visibility. St John's is becoming more Indigenous focused. There is more visibility at the Eastern Edge Gallery and a Mi'kmaq artist [Jordan Bennett] did a beautiful mural. City Council is more positive on working together."

Discussion

There has been significant growth in the Indigenous identity population in all four cities, which has spurred an investigation into the extent that Atlantic municipalities are bridging relations with Indigenous Peoples consistent with the policies of most of the ten municipalities in Western and Central Canada (Heritz, 2016; Heritz, 2018b; Heritz, 2021).

Indigenous Peoples in the four cities in Atlantic Canada remain, for the most part, within the confines of settler colonialism. Most of the initiatives bridging relations with urban Indigenous Peoples are generated within governance frameworks that historically excluded them and continue to do so in the present day. Two notable exceptions were the removal of the Macdonald and Cornwallis statues in Charlottetown and Halifax respectively, that actually spurred municipal awareness of the atrocities of settler colonialism. Reversing an earlier decision, Charlottetown's an ad hoc committee that included representatives from Indigenous organizations was instrumental in removing the statue. After the removal of the Cornwallis statue, Halifax created the ironically named Cornwallis Task Force to address its response to the TRC's Calls to Action in its annual report to Council.

Except for service agreements between Fredericton, Halifax and their respective First Nations reserves, formalized Municipal-Indigenous relations appear to be a more recent development in Atlantic Canada. The presence of Friendship Centres in Fredericton, Halifax and St John's provides the sole source to determine policy linkages between urban Indigenous Peoples and municipal government. While Friendship Centres are assisting municipalities in cultural competency training as part of the TRC's Call to Action 57, there does not appear to be any reconciliatory efforts by municipalities to assist Friendship Centres. For example, while Halifax assists its Friendship Centre with funding for some of its programming, it is lagging in providing a land transfer for its desperately needed new centre. It is too early to predict the impact the presence of the newly built Mi'kmaq Centre in Charlottetown will have on relationship building between the city and its Indigenous community.

The federal government appears to be in the process of coalition building with provincial and local government as seen in St John's with First Voice Urban Indigenous Coalition. However, the federal government itself is not directly involved in meeting any obligations coming out of the *Daniels* decision

(Magnet 2017). Also of note is relationship bridging did not specifically address any efforts to build relations with the Indigenous-Black community (Beals & Wilson 2020) in any of the four cities.

Next, Walker's criteria analyze municipal relations bridging with urban Indigenous Peoples in the four municipalities.

Governance Interface

Except for Charlottetown, the three other municipalities have responded to one of the TRC's Calls to Action (2015) in their Indigenous Land Acknowledgement commencing their Council meetings. Halifax has the most linkages between its municipal government and Indigenous with the Downie-Wenjack Legacy Room at City Hall, its mayor and CAO have formal liaisons with Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs and the KMK, respectively and a HRM Councillor is appointed as an Indigenous Community Liaison. Coming out of the removal of Cornwallis statue, the Cornwallis Task Force is scheduled to report regularly on the city's commitment to addressing the TRC's Calls to Action. St John's initiated relations with Indigenous Peoples in its Declaration in Support of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, its MOU with First Light Friendship Centre and its participation in the FVUIC. Fredericton's Manager of First Nations Relations and Halifax's Indigenous Community Engagement Advisor are the only two Indigenous liaison staff positions in the four municipalities. However, Fredericton's staff position is mandated to prioritize relations with First Nations on reserves rather than with Indigenous Peoples residing in the city.

Municipalities are responding to the commemoration of Indigenous Peoples. Charlottetown closed their municipal offices and held a flag raising ceremony on the first national Truth & Reconciliation Day on September 30, 2021. Fredericton displays "Every Child Matters" banners on its bridges. Halifax celebrates Treaty Day to commence Mi'kmaq History Month. St John's set the tone for the city and the province to replace the commemoration of John Cabot with Indigenous Peoples in June.

Governance interface consists of land acknowledgements and commemoration of the first Truth and Reconciliation Day. While these practices acknowledge the Indigenous community and move toward reconciliation, they fall short of Indigenous inclusion within municipal governance. For instance, none of the cities in Atlantic Canada have Indigenous advisory councils found in comparatively similar municipalities in central and western Canada.

Indigenous Culture

Cultural competency training, the TRC's Call to Action 57, to strengthen the interface between municipalities and Indigenous Peoples has been completed for Council and senior management in Fredericton and Halifax and is underway for their employees as of Spring 2022 while St John's approach is to select key staff members. Charlottetown did not disclose any plans for cultural competency training for Council or staff. Similar to Governance Interface, there appears to be some, rather than substantive, movement to respond to cultural competency training in only three of the cities.

Except for Charlottetown, there are efforts to incorporate an Indigenous cultural presence in the three municipalities. Fredericton assisted Under One Sky Friendship Centre in developing a kiosk and firepit at Odell Park, Indigenous art is displayed at Point Pleasant Park in Halifax and St John's has a statue honouring the last living Beothuk.

Economic and Social Development

Other than Halifax hosting the North American Indigenous Games in 2023, and potential employment opportunities for Indigenous peoples in building a new Friendship Centre and Indigenous housing, there does not appear to be any meaningful engagement between the municipalities and Indigenous Peoples regarding economic and social development.

Urban Reserves

Fredericton and Halifax are the two municipalities with urban reserves. Both municipalities are currently in negotiations with their respective First Nations to transfer land ownership to them through the ATR process. The transfer of municipal lands to First Nations acknowledges their autonomy within urban settings to be self-determining beyond the traditional confines of territorial reserves. However, urban reserves fall short of serving all members of the urban Indigenous community.

Conclusion

Atlantic municipalities are responding to the significant increase of urban Indigenous Peoples by varying degrees and tend to be in earlier stages of policy making compared to initiatives that have taken place in Central and Western Canada. Also, the four municipalities are addressing Municipal-Indigenous relations with varying policies. The removal of statues of Macdonald and Cornwallis were defining moments in initiating inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in a Council decision in Charlottetown, while it formalized relations with the Cornwallis Task Force in Halifax, respectively. Other than acknowledging Truth & Reconciliation Day in 2021, Charlottetown lags in governance and Indigenous culture development compared to the other three municipalities. Fredericton, like Halifax, demonstrates increased response to building Indigenous-Municipal relations with an Indigenous position and the commencement of cultural competency training at City Hall, indicating some movement to addressing the TRC's Calls to Action for municipalities. St John's approach to Indigenous governance includes declarations of supports, MOUs with its Friendship Centre and the intergovernmental coalition of the FVUIC.

The Municipal-Indigenous relationship in Halifax supports previous studies that larger municipalities even with proportionately lower Indigenous identity populations are taking the lead in incorporating Indigenous relations within its machinery of government compared to Charlottetown, Fredericton, and St John's. Altogether, the four municipalities studied demonstrates varied approaches to commencing relations with urban Indigenous Peoples in Atlantic Canada. However, Indigenous Peoples in Halifax, like the three other cities, remain in a settler colonial relationship where little or no substantive changes have been made to accommodate them, their knowledge and traditions within or beyond the machinery of local government. Future research should consider the extent to which municipalities are bridging

Indigenous Black relations within equity, diversity and inclusion policies It should also consider how the increasing number of urban Indigenous Peoples who are not affiliated with First Nations on reserve envision their relationships with local government.

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