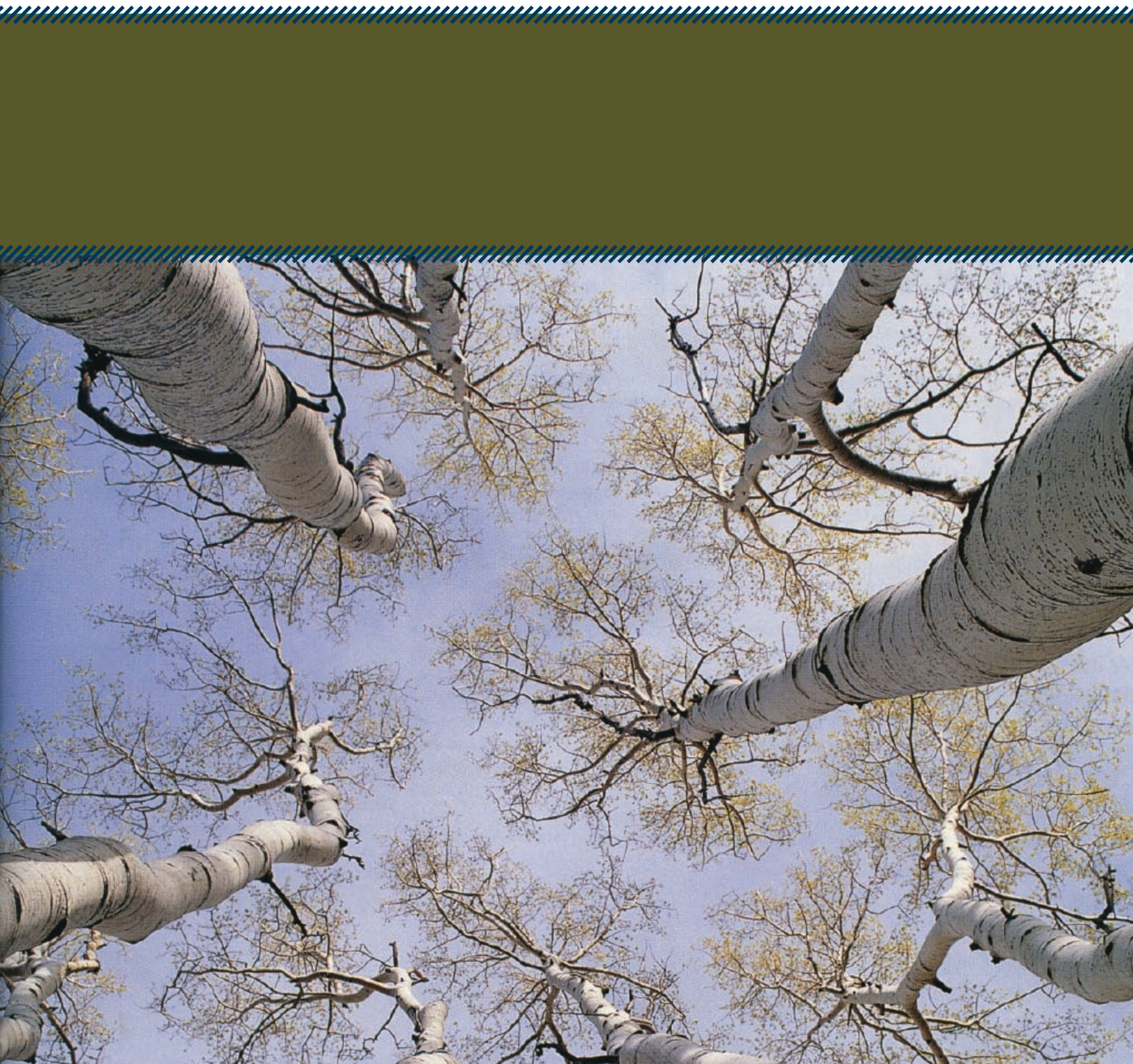


CALGARY URBAN ABORIGINAL INITIATIVE

reporting back to the community



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For further information on CUI, the Domain groups, or the Collaborative Granting Process, please visit www.cuai.ca, or contact a Project Team member:

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Director's Message

The Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative (CUAI) grew out of work that was initiated in 1999 with *"Removing Barriers: A Listening Circle"*, which endeavored to identify solutions to barriers that face Aboriginal Calgarians. CUAI is a partnership initiative that was developed in order to facilitate forums where the recommendations from *"Removing Barriers: A Listening Circle"* might begin to be implemented.

While CUAI is a relatively young undertaking, its mandate and reach have grown, and it has made some significant progress in bringing together the Aboriginal community, stakeholders, and all levels of government in order to provide a home for ongoing discussion, coordination, and informed action in support of Calgary urban Aboriginal issues and initiatives.

Eight Domain groups in the areas of education, employment, health, housing, human rights, justice, services, and funding are the heart of CUAI. All of the Domain groups are operational and working to continue making important gains in their areas of influence. The Collaborative Granting Process (CGP) developed by CUAI in partnership with the Government of Canada's Urban Aboriginal Strategy in 2002 is about to undertake its fourth funding cycle. The CGP has built a successful track record of funding projects that address high-priority needs and service gaps as identified by the Aboriginal community through leveraging dollars and creating funding partnerships.

Perhaps you participated in *"Removing Barriers: A Listening Circle"* and are curious about what evolved from its findings. Perhaps you sit on a CUAI Domain group but are interested in finding out what's been happening in other Domain areas. Perhaps you have heard about the CGP but would like to find out more about the process. Whatever your interest might be in CUAI, the following pages are intended to provide you with an overview.

I would like to thank everyone whose time and energy have been instrumental in helping CUAI to thrive and grow. The potential of what we are able to achieve through CUAI is a function of how well we are able to engage a broad range of people in working together to improve the lives of Aboriginal Calgarians. We could not achieve this without the interest and support of all of our many committed participants.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about CUAI.

Barbara Milmine
Director
January 2006

CUAI History

The Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative (CUAI) grew out of *“Removing Barriers: A Listening Circle”*, a multi-phase, qualitative, community-based research initiative that took place in Calgary in 1999. The first phase of *“Removing Barriers: A Listening Circle”* engaged Aboriginal Calgarians in identifying barriers to service and systems access in Calgary. Subsequent phases focused on bringing together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members and stakeholders in order to vision solutions to existing barriers. A final consultation report summarizing the recommendations from *“Removing Barriers: A Listening Circle”* is available on the CUAI website (www.cuai.ca).

CUAI is a partnership initiative that aims to support and enhance work across and between eight Domain groups by engaging broad bases of stakeholders in order to affect real and sustainable advances for urban Aboriginal Calgarians.

CUAI is not a service delivery agency, a government department, a funding body, or a not-for-profit organization. CUAI is a true collaborative, and its potential is a function of the degree to which it engages community members, stakeholders and government around common goals.

Listening Circle → CUAI

CUAI aims to ensure that urban Aboriginal issues are addressed in a manner that is reflective and supportive of the unique context and culture of Calgary’s Aboriginal citizens. Eight Domains, or areas of interest, evolved out of the consultations that took place through *“Removing Barriers: A Listening Circle”*, and have become the central focus of work being undertaken by CUAI. These Domains are:

- Education
- Employment
- Health
- Housing
- Human Rights
- Justice
- Services
- Funders

CUAI’s Mission

“To provide a home for ongoing discussion, coordination, and informed action in support of Calgary urban Aboriginal issues and initiatives”





CUAI Structure

CUAI Domain Groups

- Exist in order to identify issues and act on recommendations as identified through consultation with the community.
- Empowered with a mandate to engage the community in identifying issues and developing and implementing recommended action plans.
- Domain membership is based on the terms of reference of each CUI Domain group, and each Domain group selects a representative to the CUI Committee.

The CUI Project Team

- The CUI Project Team provides administrative and operational support to all aspects of the Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative.
- The Project Team consists of a Director, Community Liaisons, and other staff as required.

The CUI Committee

- The CUI Committee is the coordinating sector of the Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative.
- It supports activities across Domain groups and provides guidance and support to the Project Team.
- In addition to stakeholders, community members, and an Elder, all Domain groups are represented on the CUI Committee to ensure active and effective participation from, and communication between, all involved.

Domain Groups

The eight Domain groups are the heart of the Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative. It is through these groups that CUI maintains its connection with the Aboriginal community, and engages the participation of experts in areas of critical concern for Aboriginal Calgarians. Domain groups are comprised of community members, agency staff, industry experts, along with a variety of additional stakeholders. Domain group participation is free and open to all, with the exception of the Funders Domain which restricts membership to funders with an interest in urban Aboriginal program support.

Domain groups are comprised of community members, agency staff, industry experts, along with a variety of additional stakeholders.

Education Domain

- First formed with the assistance of the CAPS-C (Calgary Aboriginal Post Secondary Committee) in the fall of 2002.
- The Education Domain has developed a terms of reference and communications materials.
- The Domain has hosted many forums around a variety of areas including: Aboriginal literacy, information sharing, program sharing, and gap identification in the education realm from early education to adult learning.
- The Education Domain has taken a lead role in continuing discussions around the prospect of creating an Aboriginal education centre in Calgary.

Employment Domain

- The Employment Domain began to structure itself between 2000 and 2002.
- An operations document, communications materials, and a timeline of activities has been developed by the Domain.





- The Employment Domain's initial focus were the 5 recommendations from the "Removing Barriers: a Listening Circle" final consultation report. Over a 2 year period, 3 project teams (database, cross cultural and hiring and retention) were developed to address three of the five recommendations. The last two recommendations were over-arching issues that overlapped with the first three.
- The Domain has featured speakers in the following areas: hiring and retention, employer's best practices, the medicine wheel and balance in the workplace, other Aboriginal initiatives in the Calgary area, programs/services currently offered, and employment gaps.
- The Employment Domain has also hosted a focus group around the possibility of developing an Aboriginal youth centre in Calgary.

Health Domain

- This Domain began with a partnership between CUIAI and the Calgary Health Region's Aboriginal Health Council in 2003. Work is currently being undertaken to redevelop the Health Domain in order to provide it with a larger and more diverse membership base.
- The Health Domain has developed a terms of reference and sets annual goals around Aboriginal health-related issues and priorities.

Housing Domain

- This Domain is based on a partnership between CUIAI and the Calgary Homeless Foundation's Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness.
- This Domain develops their own terms of reference, communications materials, subcommittees, and annual priorities.

Human Rights Domain

- The newest of the CUI Domains, the first community engagement meeting specific to human rights was held in February 2005. This meeting brought interested parties together in a “conversation café” style forum to discuss and provide recommendations on human rights issues in five demographic categories – children, youth, women, men and seniors/Elders.
- The Domain has developed a terms of reference and priorities for the upcoming year, and has begun some initial work with the Human Rights Commission on the development of an Aboriginal Ombudsman Community Liaison position.
- A presenter from the Alberta Human Rights Citizenship and Commission was brought in to discuss the process of lodging a complaint.

Justice Domain

- After the *“Removing Barriers: A Listening Circle”* process, CUI partnered with the Calgary Police Service and the Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY) in hosting an Aboriginal Youth Justice Listening Circles forum in 2001.
- In 2003, the Justice Domain reconvened and has been working with its membership to address issues and gaps that affect Aboriginal people in the justice system.
- The Domain has developed a terms of reference and communications materials.
- The Justice Domain has hosted forums in several areas including: domestic violence, Aboriginal gangs, and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Syndrome (FASD).





Services Domain

- The Services Domain evolved as a result of CUII collaborating with two community groups – the Aboriginal Multi-Services Partnership group (AMSP) and the Aboriginal Community Coordinating Council (ACCC).
- In early 2004, interested parties came together to develop the domain and establish a terms of reference.
- The Domain has hosted presentations on a variety of issues, gaps and available services in the social services realm, including the Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre and Piitoayis Family School.

Funders Domain

- This Domain operates differently from the other Domains, as it does not represent a service-based sector. Rather, the Funders Domain aims to take steps to streamline the process of funding Aboriginal programs and services and to make it more accessible to the community and related agencies.
- Membership of this Domain began with a partnership with a group of funders who began meeting prior to the establishment of CUII. Over the years it has evolved based on the development of CUII's Collaborative Granting Process (CGP) and the availability and interest of new funders. In 2005 work was undertaken to redefine the goals and membership of this group.
- This Domain is comprised solely of representatives from funding entities that have an interest in funding Aboriginal programs and services.

The Collaborative Granting Process (CGP)

In 2002, CUI, in partnership with the Government of Canada's Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS), developed a Collaborative Granting Process (CGP) specific to urban Aboriginal programs and services. The Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) works collaboratively with urban Aboriginal and community organizations in order to support locally driven and designed solutions to meet the needs of Aboriginal people living in cities.

Through the CGP, urban-based organizations, agencies, and programs that aim to serve the Aboriginal community are able to apply for funding in various capacities. Although CUI is not a funder, by facilitating the Collaborative Granting Process it endeavors to streamline the funding process for both applicants and funders by allowing a broad base of funders to consider each proposal submitted, and by giving funders an opportunity to come together in an effort to leverage dollars and create funding partnerships.

Each CGP cycle uses the following process:

- Priority setting for upcoming funding cycle at Domain group level
- Creation of CUI plan based on Domain group priorities
- Submission of Letters of Intent (LOI)
- Hold workshops and work with applicants one-on-one to foster partnerships and refine proposals prior to submission
- Submission of proposals
- Proposal ranking at Domain group level
- Funders meet to review proposals, leverage dollars, and create funding partnerships wherever possible
- Successful applicants are put in touch with interested funders in order to continue processes required to secure funding

The objective of the CGP is to prioritize investment in community-driven projects that build on existing strengths or address high-priority needs and service gaps in the urban Aboriginal community.





About the CUA I logo



The four colors used in the logo (black, red, yellow, white) are representative of many First Nations traditions, beliefs and concepts; the four directions, the four quarters of the Medicine Wheel, etc. These colors also reflect the Métis Sash, as well as the four quadrants of the city of Calgary.

The graphic elements contained in the CUA I logo also reflect meaning on many levels. The broken arrow down the middle is an obvious Aboriginal identifier, and a symbol of peace, unification, connection and positive change. The circle has various significant meanings for Aboriginal people, such as the Medicine Wheel, Mother Earth, the circle of life, and the wheels of the Métis Red River cart. The circle is also evident in the dreamcatcher and the mandala, elements that reflect balance and continuation. There is a circle within a circle which reflects CUA I reaching out to the community, to stakeholders on all levels, and to the Listening Circle Domain groups, providing a sense of continuity and connection. The sunburst indicates the enlightening power of the sun, with eight rays symbolizing the eight Domain areas. The two faces represent cultural diversity with two entities facing each other, communicating and seeing 'eye to eye.' This duality symbolizes time, as in before and after, the past and the future, reflecting equality and balance.

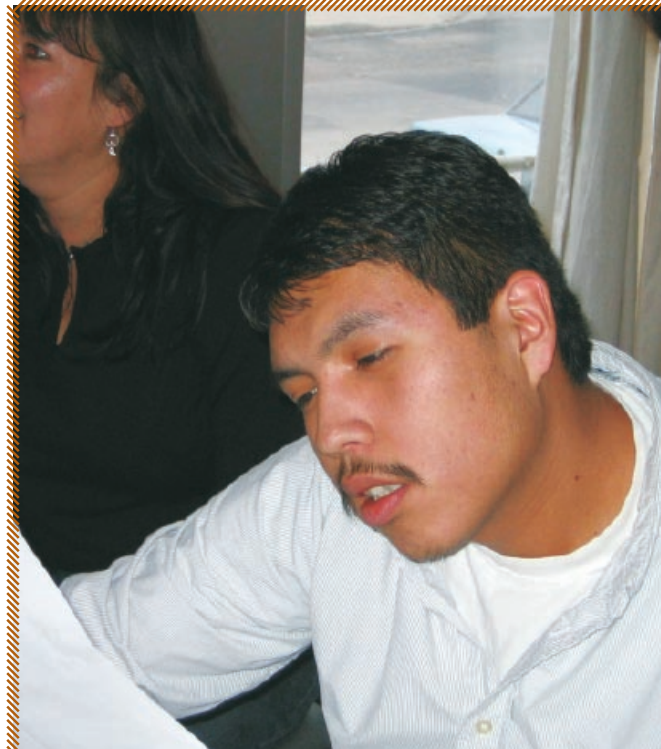
Acknowledgements

The CUI Project Team wishes to gratefully acknowledge the support of the many people whose dedication, time, and efforts have helped to shape both CUI's successes and its potential. This list includes, but is not limited to, past and current Domain group members, Domain Chairs, CUI Committee members, community supporters and volunteers. CUI would also like to thank CGP team members, the Tamarack Institute, and all of the funders who have worked together on the CGP for the benefit of the community. We are especially thankful for the wisdom and prayers of our Elder which continue to guide our work and provide us with valuable teachings.

CUI would also like to gratefully acknowledge the support provided by the City of Calgary, the Government of Alberta, and the Government of Canada.



*Inside cover artwork is from the Ojibway Dream by Arthur Shilling, 1986.
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www.cuai.ca



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