

# Parallel Engagement Framework

## ***Affordable Housing for Urban Indigenous Calgarians***

### **Background**

Administration is working with Indigenous stakeholders to identify what The City of Calgary's role could be to better support the delivery of affordable housing for Indigenous people living in Calgary.

To ensure genuine and meaningful engagement, it was critical to have housing understood and translated into Indigenous concepts that have meaning for community. A parallel engagement framework was developed based on Elder Dr. Reg Crowshoe's Blackfoot governance model to help facilitate understanding and dialogue between two worldviews. Underscored by principles such as OCAP™ (ownership, control, access, and possession) and FIBI (For Indigenous, By Indigenous), the framework equally recognizes Indigenous and non-Indigenous systems and enables The City and community stakeholders to work together in a culturally safe and ethical space.

### **Engagement Activities: Urban Indigenous Stakeholders**

Engagement activities premised Indigenous worldviews and systems. To set the strategic direction of the work, Administration approached the Elders' Knowledge Circle to act as the project's Elders group. The Elders' Knowledge Circle is a knowledge society that connects elements of Indigenous and Western systems through the creation of ethical space and focuses on urban Indigenous issues in Calgary. Elders are from various Nations including Treaty Seven, Six, Eight, urban (those originally from outside of the Alberta area), Inuit and Métis.

To dive deeper into the strategic directions set by the Elders group, a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was formed and comprises of Indigenous-serving housing providers and service organizations. The TAG identified gaps and barriers Indigenous Calgarians face when seeking and sustaining affordable housing.

The strategic directions and input from community were transcribed, themed and summarized in the *What we heard: Community engagement and research report – Understanding the affordable housing needs of Indigenous Calgarians: By Indigenous people for Indigenous people*. The urban Indigenous content of the report was validated through a traditional Blackfoot tea dance ceremony, which enables Administration to move forward in this work with support and permission from community.

Given the timing of this project during the global COVID-19 pandemic, all sessions were conducted virtually. In total, more than 14 unique sessions with more than 60 individuals were held from June 2020 – February 2021.

### **Roadmap: A Parallel Process**

The following roadmap outlines the parallel process guiding this work. It illustrates Administration's commitment to oral Indigenous practice, as well as its responsibility to The City process. It also parallels key project milestones/deliverables.

