

Citizens' Council

Report on 2024 Citizens' Proposals

Submitted to the Chair July 30, 2025



Otipemisiwak
Métis Government

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Introduction

About This Report This report was written in fulfillment of Section 21 of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government *Self-Government Act*, which requires that the Citizens' Council submit a report to the Chair no later than 21 days before a Citizens' Gathering setting out any actions taken by the Citizens' Council regarding Citizens' Proposals adopted at the preceding Citizens' Gathering.

The contents of this report address all Citizens' Proposals brought forward at the August 2024 Annual Citizens' Gathering, and the report was submitted to the Chair by resolution of the Citizens' Council on July 30, 2025.

What Is a Citizens' Proposal? Section 20 of the *Self-Government Act* sets out the ability for the Citizens' Gathering to adopt proposals to the Citizens' Council by resolution. These proposals are advisory in nature, but the Citizens' Council is required to make a response to each adopted proposal, even if they decide not to pursue the action advised in the proposal.

Citizens' Council's Approach On September 11, 2024, the Chair presented a preliminary report on the Citizens' Gathering to the Citizens' Council. The final report, including all Citizens' Proposals brought forward at the 2024 Citizens' Gathering, was tabled at the October 17, 2024 Citizens' Council meeting.

At the November 7, 2024 Citizens' Council meeting, proposals 1, 5, 6, 9, and 10 were referred to the Senior Executive Officer for review, as they related to the operations and direction of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Administration. The remaining proposals were ordered according to priority to address at Citizens' Council. However, the Citizens' Council later made the decision to respond to proposals as the relevant information was available rather than strictly following the order of priority.

Depending on the nature of each proposal, recommendations and insights were provided by Administration staff to support the Citizens' Council's decision-making process. The resulting decisions are presented in this report.

Citizens' Proposal 1

That the Citizens' Council consider the creation of 2SLGBTQ+ coordinators that are integrated into the departments of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Response The Citizens' Council referred this proposal to the Senior Executive Officer to consider, as it involves staffing and direction of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Administration.

Based on recommendations received from the Health, Children and Family Services, Consultation, Environment and Climate Change, Human Resources, Justice, Self-Government, and Intergovernmental Relations Departments, the Senior Executive Officer has determined that following actions will be taken to meet the intent of the proposal with the resources available.

First, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Administration will make best efforts to pursue an organization wide EDI approach. To support this, all departments will invest in targeted training and capacity building for all staff and leadership focused on 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion. All departments will also establish internal accountability mechanisms to ensure they track and report on their efforts to create inclusive and affirming spaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ Citizens, as well as ensure an ongoing review of programs and policies. The Self-Government Department in particular will require Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) for all Governance and Policy staff.

Second, an interdepartmental 2SLGBTQIA+ committee will be created with representatives from each department, as well as Métis community members. Further funding will need to be found to support the operations of this committee, including honoraria for community member participation.

At their June 12, 2025 meeting, the Citizens' Council accepted these decisions for information and directed them to be included in this report.

Citizens' Proposal 2

That the Citizens' Council consider that a 2SLGBTQIA+ Provincial Secretary be appointed and entrusted a mandate regarding 2SLGBTQIA+ issues to deal with the concerns and perspectives unique to two-spirit people.

Response The creation and assignment of Cabinet portfolios falls within the authority of the President. At the Feb. 12, 2025 Citizens' Council meeting, the President informed the Citizens' Council that she would be expanding the portfolio of Tai Grauman, then Provincial Secretary for the Advancement of Women & Girls, to include a mandate for the advancement of 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

Following Ms. Grauman's resignation as Provincial Women's Representative in May 2025 and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Cabinet restructuring in June 2025, Secretary Rebecca Lavallee was appointed as Secretary of Youth, Sport, & Gender Equity. This portfolio includes a mandate to address systemic barriers in collaboration with all Otipemisiwak Métis Government departments and affiliates in support of 2SLGBTQIA+ Métis.

Citizens' Proposal 3

That the Citizens' Council consider that there be an Elder, Youth, 2SLGBTQIA+ (two-spirit), and Women position on committees and advisory councils where reasonable.

Response At their June 12, 2025 meeting, the Citizens' Council resolved to include language regarding the consideration of diversity in appointments to both committees and advisory bodies in their Citizens' Council Rules of Procedure. These Rules of Procedure are still in development, but when finalized will provide greater clarity and certainty in the way that the Citizens' Council conducts business.

Citizens' Proposal 4

That the Citizens' Council consider scheduling a formal government to government meeting with Fort Chipewyan Métis Nation, and extend it to any other Métis Community interested, to be held within 60 days.

Response The Citizens' Council considered this proposal at their February 12, 2025 meeting, informed by information from the Transition Team of the Self-Government Department regarding ongoing transition communication with Fort Chipewyan Local #125 Council.

Upon review of the record of communication between the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and the Fort Chipewyan Métis Local #125, as part of the ongoing efforts related to the transition of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government in fulfillment of our Constitution, it is clear that the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Administration has repeatedly extended offers to meet with the Fort Chipewyan Métis Local #125, and this offer to meet and engage in a constructive dialogue, focused on transitioning to the government envisioned by our Constitution remains open.

A transition information session is scheduled for Citizens of the Fort Chipewyan Métis District in early September 2025.

Citizens' Proposal 5

That the Citizens' Council consider the creation of Cree/Michif language immersion programs and possible partnerships with educational institutions.

Response The Citizens' Council referred this proposal to the Senior Executive Officer to consider, as it involves program development and direction of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Administration.

Based on recommendations received from the Children and Family Services (CFS) and Health Departments, the Senior Executive Officer has determined that following actions will be taken to meet the intent of the proposal with the resources available.

First, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Administration will explore the feasibility of immersion programs with a particular focus within Early Learning and Child Care and community-based settings. The CFS Department will conduct a needs assessment and environmental scan to determine the scope, design, and resource requirements for these programs, as well as revisit the findings of the 2021 language survey.

Second, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government will ensure a structured inclusion of Cree/Michif into department materials. The following actions will support this approach.

All departments will:

- reference Cree and Michif language rights in culturally safe care standards and advocacy work;
- integrate language into governance language, such as the naming of initiatives and programs;
- make best efforts to develop culturally safe intake forms or client resources with Cree/Michif translations;
- include language-based questions in needs assessments, such as comfort with language use in care settings;
- support the use of traditional languages in the naming of new programs, community clinics, or wellness spaces;
- make best efforts to provide a Cree/Michif translator at engagement services;
- encourage staff to use greetings or affirmations in Cree or Michif where appropriate;

Citizens' Proposal 5 (continued)

- make best efforts to track Citizen preferences or feedback on language visibility in materials and services;
- include language as a measure of cultural safety in program evaluations;
- name meeting rooms, program spaces, or mobile clinics using Cree/Michif terms; and
- include land-based or place-naming elements in programming to reinforce language connections to territory.

The Health Department will:

- include language revitalization as a guiding principle in all health-related policy documents, frameworks, and strategic plans;
- include a dedicated language section or word-of-the-month in Health publications;
- produce short videos or social content featuring knowledge holders explaining wellness terms or teachings in their language;
- make best efforts to work with Rupertsland Institute to co-develop Cree/Michif language orientation materials for health staff; and
- provide optional language learning resources for staff, focused on health and wellness vocabulary.

At their June 12, 2025 meeting, the Citizens' Council accepted these decisions for information and directed them to be included in this report.

Citizens' Proposal 6

That the Citizens' Council consider holding Citizen engagement sessions to do needs assessments on the topics of health, seniors, and mental health and addictions in each district.

Response The Citizens' Council referred this proposal to the Senior Executive Officer to consider, as it involves staffing and direction of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Administration.

Based on recommendations received from the Children and Family Services (CFS) and Health Departments, the Senior Executive Officer has determined that following action will be taken to meet the intent of the proposal with the resources available.

Citizen engagement sessions will be prioritized in specific Districts where there are clear drivers of action, allowing more efficient use of resources while strengthening trust and responsiveness in communities.

At their June 12, 2025 meeting, the Citizens' Council accepted these decisions for information and directed them to be included in this report.

Citizens' Proposal 7

That the Citizens' Council consider having District Councils and District Captains complete and present either verbal or written annual reports on the activities and best practices of the District Councils.

Response The Citizens' Council considered this proposal at their February 12, 2025 meeting, informed by a recommendation from Otipemisiwak Métis Government Administration.

Council determined that information about District operations would be included in established Citizens' Gathering reports as appropriate and relevant, giving consideration for the distinct reporting requirements of District Councils within their own Districts and the time-constraints for presenting reports at the Citizens' Gathering. For those Districts with operating District Councils, additional information will be provided at those Districts' Annual District Gatherings.

Citizens' Proposal 8

That the Citizens' Council consider recognizing the date that the people of Jasper were allowed to return to their homes after the July 2024 wildfires, whereas historically Métis people were not allowed to return to their land or hunt in what became Jasper national park.

Response The Citizens' Council considered this proposal at their March 18, 2025 meeting, which was held in Jasper, informed by a recommendation from the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Administration.

The Citizens' Council resolved to recognize August 16th as the date residents were permitted to return to the municipality of Jasper following the 2024 wildfire, and to further recognize the event at the 2025 Citizens' Gathering.

Citizens' Proposal 9

That the Citizens' Council consider having youth programming be more community based rather than centralized.

Response The Citizens' Council referred this proposal to the Senior Executive Officer to consider, as it involves program development and direction of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Administration.

Based on recommendations received from the Youth Programs and Services (Youth), Children and Family Services, and Health Departments, the Senior Executive Officer has determined that the following actions will be taken to meet the intent of the proposal with the resources available.

Central coordination of youth programming will continue; however, the Youth Department will prioritize filling vacant Youth Coordinator positions in the Northern and Southern Regions.

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government will also make best efforts to pursue more community-based youth programming. To achieve this goal, provincial head office will:

- support Districts interested in leading youth programming to apply for external funding;
- create standardized and culturally grounded youth programming toolkits that Districts can adopt and adapt;
- pilot community-based programs in Districts with higher capacity; and
- invest in training District-based staff or volunteers to deliver culturally safe and engaging programming.

At their June 12, 2025 meeting, the Citizens' Council accepted these decisions for information and directed them to be included in this report.

Citizens' Proposal 10

That the Citizens' Council consider that there be more cultural programming aimed towards adults.

Response The Citizens' Council referred this proposal to the Senior Executive Officer to consider, as it involves program development and direction of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Administration.

Based on recommendations received from the Harvesting, Health, Children and Family Services (CFS), Communications, Environment and Climate Change (ECC), Human Resources (HR) and Justice Departments, the Senior Executive Officer has determined that following actions will be taken to meet the intent of the proposal with the resources available.

First, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government will develop and expand upon cultural programming that is not age specific. To achieve this, the following actions will be taken:

the Communications Department will make best efforts to develop virtual series for social media (for example, a Michif Word series and Métis Historic Community videos);

all departments will make best efforts to consider ways to meet mandates for Youth and Elders/Seniors programming while not restricting access to adults (ages 30-59); and

the ECC Department will continue to offer programming to all age groups.

Second, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government will make best efforts to develop and expand upon cultural programming specifically for adults. To do this, the following actions will be taken:

- the Justice Department will continue to prioritize applying for grant funding to develop and implement Métis culturally specific and trauma-informed programming for adults navigating the justice system; and
- the Registry Department will make best efforts to allocate a yearly budget to Harvesting to hire an additional staff member and offer more opportunities to implement land-based learning for adults.

Citizens' Proposal 10 (continued)

Third, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government will develop and expand upon family-aimed cultural programming. The Health and CFS Departments, in particular, will support this goal by investing in family-oriented cultural programming.

Finally, the HR Department will expand the Métis history and culture component of the HR onboarding process for Otipemisiwak Métis Government employees.

At their June 12, 2025 meeting, the Citizens' Council accepted these decisions for information and directed them to be included in this report.

Citizens' Proposal 11 (Out of Order)

That the Citizens' Council consider allowing each Citizen to identify which district they want to be registered in based on their historical ties, as opposed to where they currently reside, with registry including the right to vote.

Response This proposal was ruled out of order by the Chair as it conflicts with section 4 of the *Elections and Referenda Act*.

Citizens' Proposal 12

That the Citizens' Council consider strengthening communication between Citizens' Representatives, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, the District offices, and Citizens.

Response The Citizens' Council considered this proposal with input from the Self-Government and Communications Departments. In response, the Citizens' Council launched a set of actions to strengthen communication across the Nation's governance structure, including between Citizens, their Representatives, District offices, and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

- A standardized newsletter template has been developed and presented to the Citizens' Council. Citizens' Representatives are to use this template and establish a regular schedule for district-level updates.
- The Communications Department has prepared branded banners and a step-by-step guide for launching Facebook pages.
- The Citizens' Council and District Council sections of albertametis.com will be updated to include accurate and accessible contact details for each Citizens' Representative and District Captain.
- Citizens' Representatives and District Captains are encouraged to continue submitting updates to the "Districts" section of the Voyageur Voice, highlighting local events, initiatives, and Citizen engagement opportunities.
- Citizens' Representatives and District Captains will encourage Citizens to update their information with the Registry and sign up for the Voyageur Voice distribution list, to improve outreach and ensure effective communication.

Citizens' Proposal 13 (Withdrawn)

That the Citizens' Council consider having a secondary membership available to Citizens who would ordinarily be eligible for citizenship with the Métis Nation of Alberta but cannot currently reside in their home territory (e.g. out of Province or out of Country).

Response This proposal was withdrawn after the Chair confirmed that section 4(2) of the *Citizenship Act* already permits individuals living outside of Alberta to be Citizens of the Métis Nation within Alberta.

Citizens' Proposal 14

That the Citizens' Council consider having a piece of land for the Nation for communal gardening.

Response The Citizens' Council referred this proposal to the Senior Executive Officer to consider, as it involves the use of Otipemisiwak Métis Government land holdings and direction of the Administration. Based on initial analysis by the Self-Government Department and Facilities and Building Operations Department, the Senior Executive Officer has determined that the following actions will be taken to meet the intent of the proposal with the resources available:

- Nekinan Lodge and Métis Crossing have been identified as the most viable options for a community garden. A full feasibility assessment of both sites will be conducted, including review of land use requirements, infrastructure needs, and long-term sustainability.
 - Note: Other locations, including the Delia Grey Building, Tail Creek Campground, and Calgary, were considered. These were either found unsuitable due to reasons such as limited space or a lack of land ownership.
- As part of these feasibility assessments, a detailed plan will be developed to outline costs for site preparation, seasonal operations, staffing or volunteer coordination, and maintenance, along with potential internal and external funding sources.
- The Environment and Climate Change Department's existing work in developing a Métis-led Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area in Alberta has been identified as another possible avenue of implementation. The relevant departments taking on this project will be directed to pursue discussions with Environment and Climate Change staff to determine if it would be possible to integrate a Community Garden space within the Métis-led Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area.



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