

Healing Our Past. Celebrating Our Future.



ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25



Otipemisiwak
Métis Government



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Message from the President

Dear Citizens,

It is my honour to share these Presidential greetings as we come together for our second annual Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizens' Gathering and our 97th year of gathering as a Nation.

This year's theme, "Healing Our Past, Celebrating Our Future," speaks to the spirit of this moment. As we gather at Métis Crossing, we do so in a place rich with history and meaning. This land has always been a place of gathering and healing for our people. Before Alberta was a province, and before Canada was a country, the Métis were here living in strong communities. We were trading, harvesting, and governing ourselves. That spirit continues today.

The rivers, lakes, forests, and prairies of Alberta have shaped our stories and sustained our families. The land holds the memory of our ancestors and the promise of our future. It teaches us, heals us, and grounds us in who we are as distinct Indigenous Peoples.

Over the past year, we've continued the important work of asserting our sovereignty and advancing self-government.

We made progress on building and strengthening our government. Over 50% of District Councils have now been formally established and incorporated. This is an incredible milestone that deserves to be celebrated. At the same time, no District is behind in their transition. Each District is building towards full self-government implementation in a way that reflects the unique needs of their Citizens.

We brought forward new work to reclaim our role in caring for Métis children and families. Our January gathering, "Reclaiming Our Children, Transforming Our Path," was an important step toward creating our own models of child and family care, rooted in our culture and supported by the legal recognition of C-92.

We welcomed 29 plains bison yearlings to Métis Crossing. This expands on our journey to restore the sacred relationship between our Nation and the buffalo.

We held our first-ever Promoting and Increasing Cultural Safety (PICS) Leadership Conference, bringing together youth, women, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and leaders to share their stories and vision for safer, more inclusive communities.

We advanced the Healing Waters Recovery Community, a Métis-led, land-based treatment centre that blends cultural and clinical care. This project will save lives and serve as a beacon of hope for Métis Citizens and Albertans who are recovering from substance use.

We also announced the Cecil Bellrose Métis Housing Project in Edmonton's Griesbach neighbourhood. This affordable housing development honours a respected Métis leader while responding to the urgent housing needs of our Citizens. It will provide safe, affordable homes for low-income Indigenous families, with a particular focus on women and children. The building's first floor will house a childcare facility that can immediately welcome up to 48 children. We have plans to expand this space so that it can accommodate 72 children within the next five years. The program will include culturally safe learning, an outdoor area for land-based education, and access to traditional food.

Each of these steps is part of our path towards healing. On this path, we are rebuilding what was taken from us and preparing for future generations. Nation-building is about wellness, community, and pride. It's about fulfilling the dreams our ancestors had when they declared, again and again, that the Métis would govern ourselves.

Thank you for being on this journey with me. I am grateful for your trust, your strength, and your belief in what we can build together.

Andrea Sandmaier
President
Otipemisiwak Métis Government



MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER OF ALBERTA

On behalf of the Government of Alberta, it is my pleasure to send greetings to everyone attending the 2025 Citizens' Gathering.

As you come together to celebrate the achievements of 2024 and plan for what's ahead, I hope you will be encouraged by the bonds of community you share. The Métis are an essential part of the province's history and culture and remain an integral part of Alberta's economic future.

Alberta's government remains committed to a path of reconciliation and prosperity shared among all those who call this land home. I look forward to continuing to work with you to achieve those goals.

Please accept my very best wishes for a positive and productive Citizens' Gathering!

A blue ink signature of Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta, written over a faint background of the Alberta Legislative Assembly building.

Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta



Ministre des
Relations Couronne-Autochtones



Minister of
Crown-Indigenous Relations

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H4

Message from the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

Tansi! Hello! Bonjour!

It is my honour to send greetings to the leadership and citizens of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government for the second annual Citizens' Gathering.

This event is a special time to celebrate your hard work and achievements over the past year. The 2024-25 Annual Report highlights the significant progress you have made to support Métis rights and community well-being throughout Alberta.

Last year's first Gathering marked a historic milestone as you continue to take control of your own affairs in your journey along the path of self-governance for Métis citizens in Alberta. Replacing the Annual General Assembly—proudly held for 95 years in a row—the new Citizens' Gathering is an example of the strength, leadership, and new vision of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

To every Citizen, your leadership, resolve, and achievements this past year are a testament to your strength. I hope that the Citizens' Gathering fills you with Métis pride, brings you together and builds excitement and hope for the years ahead.

Moving forward, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* will continue to guide and shape our work. This means making sure Métis are included in the decisions that impact them, and working together to close gaps, support Reconciliation, health and social wellness, cultural pride, and capacity building.

As the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, I look forward to building a strong relationship with your Government and supporting you in moving your vision forward for future generations.

Maarsii. Thank you. Merci.



The Honourable Rebecca Alty, P.C., M.P.

Canada 



On behalf of the Town of Smoky Lake, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for the kind invitation to attend the 2025 Citizens' Gathering, hosted by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

It is an honour to witness and support this next chapter in the ongoing journey of the Métis People. The transition from the Métis Nation of Alberta to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government marks an extraordinary step forward in self-governance, and we commend the vision, leadership, and collective determination that have brought you to this moment.

As the oldest continuous Métis government in Canada, with over 72,000 registered Citizens, the strength of your voice and the importance of your history are undeniable. Last year's inaugural Citizens' Gathering was a powerful milestone, and we are proud that this year's event will be held at Métis Crossing. This place embodies heritage, resilience, and cultural pride.

The Town of Smoky Lake deeply values its connection with the Métis community. We are proud to have Métis Crossing in our backyard, established on the original river lots of Métis settlers, and to be a part of preserving and honouring the rich and meaningful history. Our partnership continues to grow, guided by respect, collaboration, and a shared commitment to reconciliation and cultural celebration.

Much of this connection would not have been possible without the leadership and vision of past President Audrey Poitras. I have immense respect for her decades of unwavering dedication to Métis people, and I truly believe she has been the cornerstone in building the relationship between the Town of Smoky Lake and Métis Crossing.

Her words resonate deeply: *"It is a place of pride where we not only share culture and tradition but offer an opportunity for others to learn and experience Métis culture."* That spirit of pride, education, and cultural exchange is something we witness every day at Métis Crossing, and it continues to inspire our community.

We look forward to the 2025 Gathering and offer our congratulations on all that has been achieved. Please know that we stand alongside you in support and solidarity as you move forward in this exciting new journey.

With sincere appreciation,
Mayor Amy Cherniwchan
Town of Smoky Lake

Celebrating 20 Years since the opening of **Métis Crossing!**

2025 marks two decades of cultural pride, community building, and Métis-led tourism excellence.



From humble beginnings as **Métis homesteads and community gatherings on historic river lots** to becoming **Alberta's premier Métis destination**, Métis Crossing has grown into a powerful example of resilience, identity, and reconciliation.





Visitors enjoy immersive cultural experiences, authentic storytelling, and the beauty of traditional lands and our connection with them.

As we honour our past and look to the future, Métis Crossing continues to be a place where history lives, the land teaches, and people connect – **building a legacy for all Métis Citizens and Canadians for generations to come.**



Healing Our Past. Celebrating Our Future.

Métis people have always had a relationship with the land. We are its stewards and protectors. We are the voice for the earth and the water. In return, Earth has given us remedies, teachings, and medicines that heal our mind, body, and soul. These medicines have carried us through hard times and have been passed down through generations.

The home remedies that our Kookums and aunties shared with us as kids—designed to strengthen our lungs, help our headaches, and soothe sore tummies—were quiet acts of resilience that kept our ancestors' knowledge alive. The recipes and medicines they taught us have deepened our connection to the land today. As we gather for our 97th year, let us honour the land that has healed us time and time again and celebrate our bright futures ahead. ■



Original artwork created by Taylor Schenkeveld

*Citizens' Council
& Cabinet of the
Otipemisiwak Métis
Government*



Citizens' Council



Andrea Sandmaier
President



Vacant
Women's Representative



Rebecca Lavallee
Youth Representative



Darryl Campbell
Citizens' Representative –
Foothills Métis District



Catherine Schnell
Citizens' Representative –
Medicine Hat Métis District



Joe Chodzicki
Citizens' Representative –
Red Deer Métis District



Trevor Ward
Citizens' Representative –
Rocky View Métis District



Nelson Lussier
Citizens' Representative
– Calgary Nose Hill
Métis District



Jason Chernow
Citizens' Representative –
Calgary Elbow Métis District



Kaila Mitchell
Citizens' Representative –
Jasper House Métis District



Lisa Wolfe
Citizens' Representative –
Lac Ste. Anne Métis District



Sarah Wolfe

Citizens' Representative –
Fort Edmonton Métis District



Aura Leddy

Citizens' Representative
– Edmonton Whitemud
Métis District



Alfred L'Hirondelle

Citizens' Representative –
St. Albert Métis District



Karen (KC) Collins

Citizens' Representative
– St. Paul-Cold Lake
Métis District



Shannon Dunfield

Citizens' Representative –
Grande Prairie Métis District



Barry Dibb

Citizens' Representative –
Peace River Métis District



Bobbi Paul-Alook

Citizens' Representative –
Fort Vermilion Métis District



Judy Ann Cardinal

Citizens' Representative
– Fort Chipewyan
Métis District



Brooke Bramfield

Citizens' Representative –
Fort McMurray Métis District



Valerie Quintal

Citizens' Representative –
Conklin Métis District



Jason Ekeberg

Citizens' Representative –
Lac La Biche Métis District



Joseph Tremblay

Citizens' Representative
– Athabasca Landing
Métis District



Grant Lacombe

Citizens' Representative
– Lesser Slave Lake
Métis District



Cindy Moore

Citizens' Representative
– Wabasca-Desmarais
Métis District

Citizens' Council Annual Report

September 2025 will mark two years since the first Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizens' Council was elected and our Constitution came into force. From day one, we have been working to bring to life the fair, transparent, accountable, responsible government envisioned in the Constitution.

The Citizens' Council is made up of 25 democratically elected Representatives: the President, the Women's Representative, the Youth Representative, and a Citizens' Representative for each of the 22 Districts. Each plays a role in bringing the voices of the diverse people of the Métis Nation within Alberta to the table to make decisions and take action for the advancement of all Citizens and the Métis Nation within Alberta as a whole.

From April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025, the Citizens' Council held 14 regular meetings, as well as several information sessions, briefings, and workshops. Minutes of all Citizens' Council meetings can be found online at albertametis.com/governance/citizens-council/meeting-minutes.



Citizens' Council Meeting, June 2025

LEGISLATION

The Citizens' Council passed Bill 2024-01, An Act to Amend the District Boundaries Act, at the July 10, 2024 Citizens' Council meeting. This amended the District Boundaries Act to modify the composition of the District Boundaries Commission to include a Citizen from each of the Territories in addition to a chairperson, aiming to improve equity of representation for all Territories on the commission.

The Citizens' Council passed Bill 2024-02, An Act to Amend the Elections and Referenda Act, at the January 29, 2025 Citizens' Council meeting. This amended the Elections and Referenda Act to extend protections against inducement, interference, and intimidation to nominees and candidates in Otipemisiwak Métis Government elections.

With the help of administration, work is also being undertaken to refine the legislative development process, creating a more effective way for Citizens' Council members to take an idea or proposal and create draft legislation.

COMMITTEES

Traditional Economic Practices Committee of Citizens' Council

The Traditional Economic Practices Committee will be chaired by Provincial Secretary of Harvesting & Culture, Grant Lacombe. As of May 2025, additional members have not yet been appointed.

This committee was created by resolution of the Citizens' Council in May 2025 for the purpose of protection and promotion of traditional economic practices of the Métis Nation within Alberta, with a focus on trapping.

Legislative Proposal Assessment Committee of Citizens' Council

The Legislative Proposal Assessment Committee (LPAC) was chaired by President Andrea Sandmaier and included Secretary Tai Grauman, Secretary Rebecca Lavallee, Secretary Jason Chernow, Representative Sarah Wolfe, Secretary Bobbi Paul-Alook, Secretary Brooke Bramfield, and Secretary Grant Lacombe.

Created on a trial basis in March 2024, this committee was responsible for assessing the feasibility and compliance of legislative proposals submitted by members of the Citizens' Council to determine whether Council would decide to continue to pursue these proposals, and therefore direct administration staff to

assist in drafting the proposed legislation. The committee was additionally tasked with the work of developing a comprehensive review and engagement plan for the existing Otipemisiwak Métis Government Laws.

This committee was dissolved in March 2025 and replaced with the Legislative Review and Engagement Committee, to create a more refined and streamlined legislative proposal process with all members of Citizens' Council involved more meaningfully.

Legislative Review and Engagement Committee of Citizens' Council

The Legislative Review and Engagement Committee (LREC) is chaired by President Andrea Sandmaier and as of June 5, 2025 includes Secretary Rebecca Lavallee, Representative Jason Chernow, Secretary Sarah Wolfe, Representative Bobbi Paul-Alook, Secretary Brooke Bramfield, and Representative Cindy Moore.

This committee was created by resolution of the Citizens' Council in March 2025 to take over the work of developing a comprehensive review and engagement plan for the existing Otipemisiwak Métis Government Laws from the Legislative Proposal Assessment Committee.

Nomination Committee of Citizens' Council

The Nomination Committee is chaired by President Andrea Sandmaier and includes Secretary Barry Dibb, Representative Joseph Tremblay, Secretary Grant Lacombe, Secretary Aura Leddy, and Representative Jason Chernow.

This committee was created as the Officers and Judicial Tribunal Members Nomination Committee by resolution of the Citizens' Council in September 2023 to facilitate the Citizens' Council's responsibility to appoint the Auditor General, Ombudsman, Chair, and Judicial Tribunal members immediately following the 2023 general election. The committee was later renamed the Nomination Committee to capture a broader scope of work relating to Citizens' Council appointments within the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

In May 2024, the Nomination Committee provided nominations to the Citizens' Council for two remaining vacancies on the Judicial Tribunal, resulting in successful appointments. This process proceeded in accordance with strict principles of equity, fairness, accountability, and privacy. Applications were redacted prior to review against a merit-based rubric, ensuring an unbiased assessment of the applicants' suitability for the roles.

Upcoming work will include the appointment of members to the District Boundaries Commission.

Emergency Management Committee of Citizens' Council

As of June 5, 2025, the Emergency Management Committee (EMC) is chaired by Provincial Secretary of Environment, Climate Change, & Emergency Management, Aura Leddy, and includes President Andrea Sandmaier, Representative Darryl Campbell, Representative Joseph Tremblay, Secretary Grant Lacombe, Representative Bobbi Paul-Alook, and Secretary Lisa Wolfe.

In 2024/25, the EMC continued to support the Provincial Secretary of Environment, Climate Change & Emergency Management in advocating to various levels of government for long-term, distinctions-based funding and Métis-led emergency response structures. The EMC also endorsed the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's first Emergency Management Strategy and Workplan, developed through Citizen survey data and interdepartmental collaboration, with a strong focus on ensuring Métis cultural values and lived experiences are central to preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.

District Relations and Transition Committee of Cabinet

The District Relations and Transition Committee (DRTC) is chaired by President Andrea Sandmaier and includes Secretary Jason Ekeberg, Secretary Joe Chodzicki, and Secretary Lisa Wolfe.

Representatives from this committee play a key role in the District transition process, attending meetings and information sessions within their respective areas: Northern Alberta (Jason Ekeberg), Southern Alberta (Joe Chodzicki), and Central Alberta (Lisa Wolfe).

Artifact Repatriation Committee of Cabinet

Established in June 2024, the Artifact Repatriation Committee (ARC) is chaired by President Andrea Sandmaier and includes Secretary Grant Lacombe and Secretary Karen Collins.

With the support of the Consultation Department, the ARC is currently working on identifying potential funding streams to support repatriation work. As a part of the repatriation process, they are determining the feasibility of various paths forward (including what funding is available, how various items should be stored, what types of items might be available for repatriation, and how to ensure that the items are accessible to community) and working on relationship-building with bodies such as the Royal Alberta Museum and the Glenbow Museum as they develop updated repatriation policies.

COUNCIL OF ELDERS AND KNOWLEDGE KEEPERS

One of the key priorities for the Citizens' Council in the past year has been working towards establishing a council of Elders and Knowledge Keepers with the clear purpose of providing advice and support to the Citizens' Council, as set out in the Constitution and Self-Government Act.



The Citizens' Council hears from Elders and Knowledge Keepers at the first workshop to develop a council of Elders and Knowledge Keepers in February 2025.

To this end, the Citizens' Council has participated in three workshops as of June 2025, to develop what this council will look like, with the guidance and input of several Elders and Knowledge Keepers. It is critical not only that this council be established, but that it is done in a way that honours the needs, time, and commitment of our Elders and Knowledge Keepers and that embodies fair, transparent, accountable, and responsible governance.

We hope to pursue further engagement with Citizens, particularly Elders and Knowledge Keepers, on this council as we move forward in the coming year.

CITIZENS' COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE

In March of 2025, the Citizens' Council participated in its first workshop to refine a draft set of rules for the practices and procedures of the Citizens' Council. Informed by historical Métis governance practices and in-depth discussion by all Citizens' Council members,

these rules will ensure that the work of Council, particularly within meetings, is conducted in a consistent, accountable, and responsible manner. When finalized and adopted, these rules will give greater transparency into the conduct of the Citizens' Council business and provide a strong foundation for future Citizens' Councils to build upon.

Further workshops have been planned for this summer to bring this draft closer to its completed form.

In January 2025, the Citizens' Representatives for Rocky View and Wabasca-Desmarais Métis District resigned from their positions. A by-election was held in April 2025 to fill the resulting vacancies, and on May 13, 2025, Trevor Ward and Cindy Moore were sworn in as Citizens' Representatives for Rocky View Métis District and Wabasca-Desmarais Métis District.

Trevor Ward is looking forward to serving as Citizens' Representative for Rocky View Métis District. With deep Métis roots, Trevor carries the names of Monkman, Whitford, Spence, Bruce, and Taylor—families with rich histories across Alberta and the Métis Nation. Through the generations, his family has lived across the Homeland, carrying forward a legacy of resilience, connection, and pride.

Trevor is a dedicated father and a long-standing contributor to his community. He was previously elected to the District Council and served as Treasurer for Rocky View Métis District. Now, as Citizens' Representative, he is committed to upholding the voices and values of Métis Citizens and ensuring that local perspectives shape the future of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

He is passionate about advancing our culture, advocating for accessible opportunities, and building stronger connections—not only within the Rocky View Métis District but across all Districts—through listening, collaboration, and respect.

Cindy Moore is excited to begin her role as Citizens' Representative for the Wabasca-Desmarais Métis District. A dedicated educator, she has taught in Wabasca for 22 years, including eight as a principal. She holds a Bachelor of Education from the University of Alberta with a minor in Aboriginal Studies, and a Master of Arts from Athabasca University focused on leadership and special education.

Cindy is passionate about her Métis heritage and continues to learn traditional skills like capote-making, reindeer tufting, and sash weaving. Raised in Swan Hills, she spent every summer in District 22, forming deep ties to the land and community. Her great-grandfather, George Gullion, once held river lot 34 in Edmonton and worked for the Hudson's Bay Company. For 30 years, Wabasca has been her home.



Swearing in of officials elected in Spring 2025 by-election. Left to right: Cindy Moore, Citizens' Representative for Wabasca-Desmarais Métis District; President Andrea Sandmaier; Diane Peredery, District Captain for Wabasca-Desmarais Métis District; Trevor Ward, Citizens' Representative for Rocky View Métis District.

Cindy is motivated to continue advocating for her people. She believes in the strength and uniqueness of Métis history and wants to foster cultural pride through education, awareness, and the celebration of traditions. She recognizes that youth are vital to carrying this work forward and believes it is essential to elevate their voices. At the same time, she values the wisdom of Elders and emphasizes the importance of creating more opportunities for intergenerational engagement. ■

The Cabinet of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government

The role of the Cabinet is to oversee the operations of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and implement Otipemisiwak Métis Government Laws. Cabinet members, called Provincial Secretaries, are appointed by the President within the Citizens' Council, and each has a distinct mandate to focus on key priorities for the government. You can learn more about the role of each

Provincial Secretary by reading their mandate letters, available online at albertametis.com/governance/citizens-council, as well as their contributions throughout this annual report.

Cabinet Members as of June 5, 2025



Cabinet Members (as of June 5, 2025)

Member Name	Name of Office
Andrea Sandmaier	President; Provincial Secretary of Self-Government, Métis Rights & Consultation, Intergovernmental Relations, Truth & Reconciliation, & Tourism
Joe Chodzicki	Provincial Secretary of Citizenship & Registry; Acting President
Jason Ekeberg	Provincial Secretary of the Treasury
Sarah Wolfe	Provincial Secretary of Records
Rebecca Lavallee	Provincial Secretary of Youth, Sport, & Gender Equity
Kaila Mitchell	Provincial Secretary of Health, Wellbeing, & Seniors
Brooke Bramfield	Provincial Secretary of Children & Family Services
Valerie Quintal	Provincial Secretary of Housing & Infrastructure
Lisa Wolfe	Provincial Secretary of Education, Training, & Veterans
Grant Lacombe	Provincial Secretary of Harvesting & Culture
Karen (KC) Collins	Provincial Secretary of Metis Settlement & First Nation Relations & Language Revitalization
Aura Leddy	Provincial Secretary of Environment, Climate Change, & Emergency Management
Nelson Lussier	Provincial Secretary of Justice
Barry Dobb	Provincial Secretary of Economic & Rural Development

President



**Andrea
Sandmaier**

Provincial Secretary of Self-Government, Métis Rights & Consultation, Intergovernmental Relations, Truth & Reconciliation, and Tourism; Chair of Cabinet; Governor of Métis National Council

President Andrea Sandmaier is a proud Métis woman, wife, mother of three boys, and grandmother. She is from Cold Lake, but her ancestral roots originate from the Red River settlement, and she has ties to Batoche, Duck Lake, and St. Paul de Métis.

With over 15 years of experience in mortgage finance, President Sandmaier has demonstrated a keen ability to understand and address the unique needs of individuals and families. After the history-making first General Election in September 2023 of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, President Sandmaier was elected with a sweeping mandate, based on building from the successes of the past, while moving the Métis Nation forward towards recognized self-government and self-determination. President Sandmaier is deeply committed to honouring

the history and culture of the Métis people while forging a path towards a progressive and inclusive future.

KEY PRIORITIES

Self-Government and Treaty Work

- Lead negotiations for a modern Treaty that protects our rights and lands and reflects what Citizens want.
- Put into action the 2023 Self-Government Agreement, including securing long-term funding agreements with Canada.

Protecting Métis Rights and Advancing Reconciliation

- Follow the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action in all government work.
- Make sure Crown consultation processes are strong and that District Councils have the power to protect Métis rights and resources.

Building Strong Government Relationships

- Represent our Nation at the Métis National Council.
- Represent the Otipemisiwak Métis Government in Nation-to-Nation and Government-to-Government meetings both provincially and federally.
- Create partnerships that help Métis voices be heard in decisions affecting our communities.

Supporting Métis Culture and Economic Growth

- Grow Métis tourism projects like Métis Crossing to share our culture and create jobs.
- Support programs that preserve our language, stories, and traditions for the future.

Being Open and Accountable

- Provide regular updates to Citizens about progress on self-government and Treaty negotiations.
- Listen to District Councils and Citizens to ensure your voices guide our work. ■

Children & Family Services



**Brooke
Bramfield**

Provincial Secretary of Children & Family Services

Secretary Brooke Bramfield is a proud member of the Callihoo family and has called Fort McMurray home since 2013. Secretary Bramfield is experienced in communications, government relations, and grant writing. She has also worked for the McMurray Métis. She is inspired by Métis Elders and Youth, especially their stories and shared experiences, and has always been a strong advocate for children and families.

MANDATE

Support C-92 Implementation by working with Administration to establish Métis-led child welfare systems that prioritize family preservation and cultural continuity.

Advocate for Prevention and Early Intervention Programs Development in collaboration with Administration to reduce the number of Métis children in government care.

Support Culturally-Grounded Foster Care and Adoption Systems by collaborating with Administration to advance service delivery models and systems that maintain children's connections to Métis identity and community.

Enhance and Expand Family Reunification Programs by supporting programming developed and delivered by Administration which provides wraparound supports including housing, counselling, and life skills training.

Empower all Métis Children and Families in Alberta by improving access to culturally grounded programs and services that enhance wellbeing, strengthen identity, and encourage active participation in the community.

Build Partnerships with education and health service providers to create seamless support networks for vulnerable families in collaboration with Administration.

Advocate for Sustainable Federal and Provincial Funding on the advice of Administration, which supports Métis-specific child and family services.

Ensure Accountability Measures are implemented by Administration to track outcomes and ensure services meet community needs and expectations. ■

Citizenship & Registry



**Joseph
Chodzicki**

Provincial Secretary of Citizenship & Registry; Acting President; Governor of Métis National Council

Secretary Joe Chodzicki was born and raised in High Prairie and traces his Métis ancestry through his mother, Margaret Laboucan, to the Erasmus-Nooseky family from White Fish Lake. A longtime advocate and community leader, Secretary Chodzicki has served the Métis Nation of Alberta in many roles, including Local Vice President and President, Region 3 Vice President, and now as Citizens' Representative of the Red Deer Métis District under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. After a 12-year career with the City of Red Deer Transportation Department, he recently retired.

Secretary Chodzicki is a proud Métis man living in Red Deer and is father to Robert and Crystal and Mooshum to Alexis, Hailey, and Scarlett.

MANDATE

As Acting President act on the President's behalf, if the President is unable to fulfill their duties, in the capacity as Acting President in accordance with the conditions set out in the Self-Government Act.

Uphold the Nation's Citizenship Registry with integrity, maintaining the rigorous and world class standards which have been developed over more than two decades.

Develop Regulation in collaboration with the Secretary of Harvesting & Culture to refine policies for identifying Métis rights-holders and harvesters to be set out and regulated by a Regulation to the Citizenship Act.

Advocate for Federal/Provincial Recognition of Métis Citizenship cards as valid government-issued photo identification.

Act as Governor to the Métis National Council representing the Otipemisiwak Métis Government as the second representative to the Métis National Council, ensuring Alberta's distinct voice is heard and our interests protected.

Support District Councils by ensuring Administration has processes established to validate Citizenship in support of District level programs and services.

Promote Awareness of the Registry's role in preserving Métis history and community ties both in Alberta and beyond. ■

Economic & Rural Development



**Barry
Dobb**

Provincial Secretary of Economic & Rural Development

Secretary Barry Dobb was raised in Eureka River. He attended school in Montagneuses Valley, Worsley, and Hines Creek. In 1976, he married his wife Cindy, then moved to the Fairview area to ranch and raise two children. His lineage includes the Basnett and Whiteford families, which trace back to Grande-Clairiere, Manitoba. Representative Dobb worked in construction, drilling rigs, owned a slashing company, and continues to ranch with his family today.

For around 13 years, he worked in various roles within the Métis Nation of Alberta. He was the Vice-President of Region 6, and Past President and Vice-President of Fairview Local. He is dedicated to providing strong, honest, and accountable leadership to his family, the Peace River Métis District, and our Métis Nation.

MANDATE

Support Métis entrepreneurship expansion by providing strategic advice to the Office of the President in alignment with the goals of Apeetogosan Development Inc. and Pinnacle Business Services.

Advance Major Projects Participation by supporting the Office of the President and Administration in equity stake negotiations in major projects to ensure Métis benefit from economic development projects.

Develop Relationships with the Secretary of State (Rural Development) to advance the priorities and interests of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Advance Regulation with the support of the Self-Government Department, that would regulate purchasing and procurement, in a manner that combines a focus on cost-competitiveness with support for Métis-owned businesses.

Promote Métis Cultural Enterprise in collaboration with the Office of the President and Secretary of Harvesting and Culture to promote economic development through tourism.

Engage Citizens in collaboration with Citizens' Representatives and District Captains to identify local economic priorities in each District.

Strengthen Partnerships with Industry and Governments by working with Administration to identify and create sustainable opportunities that will have lasting benefits for Métis Citizens and our Government. ■

Education, Training & Veterans Affairs



**Lisa
Wolfe**

Provincial Secretary of Education, Training & Veterans Affairs

Secretary Lisa Wolfe grew up in Lac La Biche and is now residing in Alberta Beach, which lies within the Lac Ste. Anne Métis District. From 1989 to 1995, Lisa served as a commissioned officer in the Canadian Armed Forces and is a retired Edmonton Police Officer who began her service in 1995. She has served on many Indigenous boards and committees for the last 30 years and is currently a member of the Board of Governors for Rupertsland Institute and the Premier's Council on MMIWG. She is passionate about working for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government in the Lac Ste. Anne Métis District.

Secretary Wolfe's Métis heritage is from the Cardinal, Ladouceur, Burke, McDonald, Desjarlais, and Auger families. Lisa uses her traditional knowledge to make moccasins, do beadwork, and sew. She also likes to harvest plants and vegetables for her family.

Lisa has been married for 30 years and is a mother of four and a grandmother of two.

MANDATE

Advance Métis Control of Education & Training Systems by representing the Otipemisiwak Métis Government as an appointed member of the board of Rupertsland Institute.

Support Transition in collaboration with the Office of the President, the Senior Executive Officer, and the Self-Government Department to ensure the efficient and orderly transition of Rupertsland Institute as part of the self-government transition being undertaken by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Honour Métis Veterans through commemorative projects and advocate for federal recognition.

Advance Education Policies that incorporate Métis teaching methods and cultural knowledge.

Collaborate with Youth and Economic Development Portfolios to support Administration and align training with the needs of youth and upcoming economic opportunities and priorities.

Engage Veterans and Families to address their unique needs through the development of tailored programs where funding is available.

Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities that connect generations and preserve Métis history. ■

Environment, Climate Change & Emergency Management



**Aura
Leddy**

Provincial Secretary of Environment, Climate Change & Emergency Management

Secretary Aura Leddy is a proud two-spirit Métis person whose family comes from the St. Albert and Lac Ste. Anne areas, but Representative Leddy calls Edmonton home.

Representative Leddy has worked in community, schools, and interpretative sites, passionately sharing Métis stories and experiences. Secretary Leddy is committed to building community, uplifting youth, and sharing culture.

MANDATE

Support the Implementation of a Métis Climate Action Strategy by Administration that combines traditional ecological knowledge with modern science to address climate impacts on our communities.

Advocate for the Establishment of Protected Conservation Areas that safeguard culturally significant lands and waters while preserving traditional harvesting rights.

Support the Development of Community Resilience Plans by Administration to protect against climate emergencies in a manner that incorporates Métis knowledge, addresses specific regional vulnerabilities, and strengthens Métis-led emergency response systems.

Advocate for the Development of Environmental Stewardship Programs by Administration that will train and employ Métis Citizens in land monitoring, restoration, and sustainable resource management.

Advance Renewable Energy Projects that reduce emissions while creating economic opportunities for Métis communities.

Chair the Emergency Management Committee along with Council colleagues, with support from Administration, to ensure improved response warning systems related to natural disasters that impact Métis communities and Citizens.

Build Research Partnerships with Administration and academic institutions to document climate impacts and develop culturally-appropriate adaptation strategies. ■

Harvesting & Culture



**Grant
Lacombe**

Provincial Secretary of Harvesting & Culture

Secretary Grant Lacombe lives in Canyon Creek with his wife of 25 years, Tammy. He has lived in the Slave Lake area since 1978. He is the great-great-grandson of Laurent and Eleanor Garneau. He has always been involved with his Métis heritage thanks to his parents, Norman and Myrtle Lacombe. Past President of the MNA, Stan Daniels, was very influential in Secretary Lacombe's early years. Secretary Lacombe has worked in the oil and gas sector for 35 years, and the last 5 years with Northern Lakes College in Slave Lake. Secretary Lacombe is known for always finishing any job he starts to the best of his ability.

A dedicated hunter, fisher, and gatherer of plants and medicines, Secretary Lacombe appreciates those who harvest with him, and he honours the Creator for the gifts of the land. He enjoys sharing harvests with Elders he knows and those he has yet to meet, and he teaches his kids and his three grandchildren the same values. He is very proud to represent his family and the Lesser Slave Lake Métis District in the new Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

MANDATE

Advocate for Expanded Harvesting Rights Recognition in collaboration with the Office of the President and Administration through continued negotiations with provincial and federal governments to secure comprehensive harvesting agreements across all Métis Territories.

Advance Cultural Preservation Programs to be developed by Administration that document and revitalize traditional harvesting practices, including hunting, fishing, trapping, and plant gathering knowledge systems.

Implement Youth Harvesting Education initiatives in collaboration with the Secretary of Youth, Sport, and Gender Equity and Administration that connect new generations with Elders and Knowledge Keepers through land-based learning experiences.

Establish Conservation Partnerships with environmental organizations in collaboration with the Secretary of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management that aim to ensure sustainable harvesting practices that protect ecosystems while asserting Métis rights.

Promote Cultural Tourism Opportunities that showcase Métis harvesting traditions and crafts while generating economic benefits for communities and serve on the Board of Directors of Métis Crossing and its associated corporate holdings.

Strengthen Harvester Registry Systems in collaboration with the Secretary of Citizenship and Registry and the Registrar to verify and document harvesting rights-holders through culturally-appropriate processes.

Develop Regulation in collaboration with the Secretary of Citizenship & Registry which regulates and defines the inclusion of the Harvester registration process and data with the Citizenship Registry in a manner that aligns with the Citizenship Act. ■

Health, Wellbeing & Seniors



**Kaila
Mitchell**

Provincial Secretary of Health, Wellbeing & Seniors

Secretary Kaila Mitchell was born and raised on a ranch near Marlboro, Alberta. She is a proud two-spirit Métis individual whose paternal heritage originated from Lac Ste. Anne, Jasper House Métis, and the Michel Band. After graduating from Parkland Composite High School, her pursuit of understanding Indigenous narratives took her to Langara College in Vancouver, where she took Aboriginal Studies and learned about the profound effects of intergenerational trauma and the importance of preserving our culture and languages. She has worked at the Alberta Legislature as a Legislative Coordinator and as a Ministerial Assistant to the Minister of Education.

Secretary Mitchell is fervently dedicated to building strong intergovernmental relations and ensuring that our Métis traditions and culture grow and thrive.

MANDATE

Advance a Métis Health Strategy to be developed and implemented by Administration that addresses physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing through culturally-grounded approaches.

Advocate for Expanded Primary Healthcare Access to services tailored to Métis needs across all Districts, with special attention to rural and remote communities, in collaboration with Administration.

Advance a Whole Health Approach to Addictions by positioning the Otipemisiwak Métis Government as an Indigenous Government leader in addictions recovery, by supporting the implementation of a Métis-led recovery continuum, and by collaborating with the Secretary of Housing and Infrastructure to support the development of recovery-focused housing and addiction recovery treatment centres.

Support Métis Seniors by ensuring the Health Department endeavours to create comprehensive support programs for Métis seniors focusing on culturally-appropriate care, housing, and social connection, based on available funding.

Establish Health Partnerships between our Government and healthcare providers to ensure delivery of trauma-informed and anti-racist care for Métis patients.

Honour Traditional Healing by supporting Department initiatives that integrate traditional healing practices common to Métis Citizens and their communities with mainstream healthcare services through collaboration with Knowledge Keepers.

Advocate for Métis-specific Health Policies and funding at federal and provincial levels with the support of Administration and in collaboration with the Office of the President.

Advance Accountability & Transparency by supporting the implementation of measurable health outcomes tracking to evaluate program effectiveness and identify service gaps within the Health Department. ■

Housing & Infrastructure



**Valerie
Quintal**

Provincial Secretary of Housing & Infrastructure

Secretary Valerie Quintal is from Conklin and is of Métis background. Her father's family names are Quintal and Boostrom, while her mother's family names are Cardinal and Bourque. Her ancestors trapped, hunted, harvested, and were all proud Métis people. She was raised in Conklin by Andrew and Margaret Quintal. Her father worked for the Northern Alberta Railway and trapped and hunted. Her mother worked as a teacher's aide for the Northland School Division. Both carried on Cree language and traditions. Secretary Quintal was employed by the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo for 25 years as a Water Plant Operator, then took early retirement. She then became an Assistant Manager for her mother's business, Quintal Contracting Ltd.

Secretary Quintal is very involved in her community and with various organizations, providing valuable support to ensure the needs and concerns, as well as the socio-economic, cultural, and well-being of our Métis community are met.

MANDATE

Support a Métis Housing Strategy to be developed and implemented by Administration that addresses the spectrum of needs, from emergency shelters to home ownership, across urban, rural, and northern communities.

Advance Infrastructure Development by supporting Administration efforts to establish Métis-specific building standards and prioritizing projects that serve as community hubs while meeting environmental sustainability goals.

Oversee Affordable Housing Stock Expansion by supporting Administration's engagement in strategic acquisitions, partnerships with developers, and innovative financing models that increase availability while reducing wait times.

Create Specialized Housing Solutions by collaborating with Administration to build, develop, or acquire transition homes, recovery residences, and culturally appropriate senior living facilities that incorporate traditional design elements.

Advocate for Property Tax Exemptions and other fiscal measures to reduce operating costs and increase reinvestment in housing maintenance and improvements.

Establish Infrastructure Partnerships with federal and provincial governments to secure long-term funding for developments in support of Otipemisiwak Métis Government goals and objectives.

Facilitate the Transition of Métis Housing and its associated Affiliate corporations to become one or more Institutions of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, as set out in the Constitution and Transition Plan, with support from the Senior Executive Officer. ■

Justice



**Nelson
Lussier**

Provincial Secretary of Justice

Secretary Nelson Lussier was born and raised in St. Louis, Saskatchewan, a Métis and French community along the South Saskatchewan River about 30 kilometres northeast of Batoche. His roots reach back to St. Boniface, Manitoba, to Maxime Lepine, a Métis leader. His grandfather, Mederic Zepherin McDougall, was a founder of the Métis Society of Saskatchewan.

Secretary Lussier moved to Calgary in 1989 and ran a successful small business in the financial service industry for eight years, then developed a thriving construction company that he operated for the following 25 years. He has played an active role in his community, volunteering for local sports and social events.

Since taking office, he has focused on building strong relationships with Métis Citizens working in the justice system, as well as in the fields of addiction and mental health. These valuable connections are helping to accelerate the progress of his mandate as Secretary of Justice, ensuring that initiatives addressing the needs of the Métis community are implemented more effectively and efficiently.

His relationship with the City of Calgary is moving forward in developing affordable housing, which he believes will foster healthy families for the future.

MANDATE

Support the Development of a Métis Justice

Framework in collaboration with Administration, that incorporates traditional dispute resolution methods while addressing contemporary legal challenges facing our communities.

Establish Community Justice Programs by supporting Administration initiatives that include restorative justice initiatives, elder mediation circles, and culturally-grounded sentencing alternatives.

Combat Systemic Discrimination by advocating for implementation of training programs for justice system professionals and the creation of Métis-specific court support services.

Strengthen Legal Partnerships with law schools, legal aid organizations, and provincial/federal justice departments to improve access to justice.

Advocate for Policy Reforms at all government levels to address the overrepresentation of Métis in the criminal justice system.

Support the Development of Youth Justice Initiatives by Administration and external bodies, which focus on prevention, diversion, and rehabilitation through culturally-relevant programming.

Advance Justice Infrastructure by supporting Administration-developed programs including dedicated Métis court workers, community legal clinics, and public legal education resources based on available funding. ■

Metis Settlement & First Nation Relations & Language Revitalization



**Karen
Collins**

Provincial Secretary of Metis Settlement & First Nation Relations & Language Revitalization

Secretary Karen Collins is from Elizabeth Metis Settlement. Her grandfather, Kwaskwepicikan Albert Collins, came from Montana, held land at St. Paul des Métis, lived at Wolf Lake Colony, and settled to raise a second family on Elizabeth Metis Settlement. Secretary Collins has worked for and with Indigenous organizations, commissions, and governments, including 16 years of service on the MNA Provincial Council as well as work on the MNA's Constitution Commission. This enabled her to connect with many people from various Indigenous nations from coast to coast to coast, gathering numerous lifelong teachings and traditions.

As a mother of two sons, Usini and Owen, Secretary Collins firmly believes that we learn from those who have gone before us, and it is our responsibility to use that knowledge and pass those teachings on to our children and others for them to make things better.

MANDATE

Strengthen Metis Settlement Relations by supporting the establishment of formal government-to-government agreements that respect the unique status of Settlements while advancing our shared priorities.

Build First Nation Partnerships through regular leadership dialogues and collaborative initiatives that honour our shared histories and territories.

Advance Indigenous Language Revitalization Initiatives by collaborating with Administration to support a Michif Language Revitalization Plan as well as other language initiatives to ensure the development of immersion programs, digital learning tools, and intergenerational language transmission initiatives, based on funding availability.

Advocate for Federal Language Funding by supporting Administration negotiations related to Canada's implementation of the Indigenous Languages Act in support of Michif and Cree language initiatives.

Renew Relationships with Alberta Native Friendship Centres by collaborating with Administration to develop and renew a Memorandum of Understanding between the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association.

Report from the Secretary of Metis Settlement, First Nation Relations & Language Revitalization

Tansi,

It has been my honour to serve in this role for the past two years. Strengthening and nurturing relationships with our families and relatives no matter where they reside is a vital part of who we are. It is rooted in our traditions, values, and way of life to remain connected to our wahkomakanak, for wahkotowin has always guided the Métis way.

Since our last Gathering, your government has been working diligently to build the foundation of our new structure under our Constitution. This work will continue over the coming years, and relationship-building particularly with Metis Settlements and First Nations leadership remains central to that process.

TREATY 1-11 GATHERING IN COLD LAKE

Last August, I attended the Treaty 1-11 Gathering in Cold Lake, co-hosted by Beaver Lake Cree Nation and Cold Lake First Nations at the historic English Bay Treaty Grounds. This powerful event brought together Elders, Knowledge Keepers, leaders, guest speakers, and Citizens from across the numbered Treaty territories which span 58% of Canada.

Each day began with pipe and water ceremonies and closed with prayer. Ceremonies, traditional feasts, and sweat lodges were held throughout the week. The sessions addressed numerous shared concerns:

- Access to clean water and environmental protection
- Climate change and natural resource stewardship
- Inclusive education with Indigenous languages, Treaty history, and Indigenous teachers
- Child welfare, especially in the context of Act C-92
- Cultural preservation and ceremony protocol particularly for youth
- Justice reform, governance, and identity.

Discussions around the need for a First Nations-led justice system, the return to tribal governance, and the role of the “status card” in relation to Treaty identity were both thought-provoking and emotional.

Presentations on UNDRIP emphasized the right to free, prior, and informed consent in decisions affecting land and life. I recognized many shared struggles with our own government, particularly the challenge of working with the state and the slow pace of meaningful change.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

In September, I attended the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association (ANFCA) AGM Gala. It was a joy to reconnect with many familiar faces. A few years ago, the Métis Nation within Alberta and ANFCA signed a Memorandum of Understanding to support collaboration on areas of shared concern. As this relationship is now part of my mandate, we have begun administrative-level conversations to renew and revitalize that agreement.

10TH BUFFALO TREATY GATHERING IN STANDOFF, ALBERTA

Also in September, Elder Art Cunningham and I attended the 10th Buffalo Treaty Gathering in Treaty 7 territory. This Treaty, with signatories from sovereign First Nations across Turtle Island, symbolizes reconciliation and reconnection—with the buffalo as a central figure. Historically, the buffalo sustained the Métis through food, ceremony, and trade.

After a five-year pause, the gathering resumed with a re-signing by existing signatories and new ones, including a Nation from Texas. Individuals were also welcomed to sign in support, and both Art and I did so. I was honoured to briefly address the crowd and share about the work being done at Métis Crossing, which is home to a buffalo herd, including sacred white buffalo.

We reconnected with Norman Fleury (Métis Nation—Saskatchewan) and his son Mark, who serves as buffalo guardian. We also met with a representative from the Buffalo Institute to explore how the Métis Nation within Alberta might formally join the Treaty. Plans are underway to host a meeting this October at Métis Crossing with Buffalo Treaty representatives and other key partners. I look forward to showcasing the important work being done with our herd and engaging in these meaningful discussions.

Recommendation: Watch the documentary, "Singing Back the Buffalo" by Tasha Hubbard, an epic reimagining of North America through the lens of buffalo consciousness and resurgence.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Attended events in St. Paul (Mannawanis Friendship Centre) and Bonnyville (Lakeland Society for Truth and Reconciliation). Both emphasized mutual respect, collaboration, and healing.

Metis Settlements Proclamation Day

Attended the November 1 flag-raising ceremony in Edmonton.

Remembrance Day Ceremony at Fishing Lake Metis Settlement

Participated in honour of our veterans and laid a wreath on behalf of our government. A community potluck followed.

Christmas Gala at Elizabeth Metis Settlement

Served as MC for an evening filled with fiddling, jigging, singing, Santa photos, and a community feast.

Royal Alberta Museum and Otipemisiwak Métis Government Repatriation Committee

Participated in two meetings. More details can be found in the Consultation Department's report.

Saddle Lake Cree Nation Presentation on 1885 Frog Lake Incident

Attended a compelling session highlighting a new perspective on the tragedy, especially regarding the fate of children and its connection to residential schools. The story challenges colonial narratives and should be shared widely.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- Delivered a presentation on our governance structure at Ardmore School to engaged Grade 7 students.
- Filmed a Rupertsland Institute video for Grade 3 Social Studies on Metis Settlements.
- Collaborated with Cold Lake First Nations' Education Department to support Métis inclusion in National Indigenous Peoples Day events. A heartfelt thanks to Ron and Gerry Quintal for bringing their trapper's tent, furs, and traps—your contribution was deeply appreciated.

LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

With the reissuance of mandate letters, Language Revitalization has been added to my portfolio. I recently met with the department's team and want to extend my gratitude to Secretary Lisa Wolfe for her foundational work. I look forward to supporting the existing workplan and bringing our languages back to life.

CLOSING REFLECTIONS

As we move forward with our modern-day Treaty, it is vital for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government to foster relationships, rekindle old ones, and make our vision and values known. Many of our District leaders are already doing this work. We must remember that many of us have family who are members of both First Nations and Metis Settlements.

At the heart of everything we do is wahkotowin, our relationships. It is a foundational value that we must keep alive and thriving.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen (KC) Collins
Secretary of Metis Settlement, First Nation Relations
& Language Revitalization ■

Treasury



**Jason
Ekeberg**

Provincial Secretary of the Treasury

Secretary Jason Ekeberg was born and raised in Lac La Biche and is a proud descendant of the Pruden and Cardinal families. He has spent his life connected to the land—farming, hunting, fishing, and trapping. In addition to his role with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, Secretary Ekeberg helps operate and maintain a family farm and runs his own business, which employs a large number of Indigenous people. Secretary Ekeberg brings a strong background in Alberta's oil and gas sector and practical understanding of fiscal responsibility to his role as Secretary of the Treasury.

MANDATE

Ensure Financial Transparency & Accountability

by supporting Administration in the continued implementation and delivery of financial management systems that provide clear, accessible reporting to Citizens as required by the Constitution and the Financial Management Act.

Provide Rigorous Oversight of Citizens' Council budget processes, expenditures, and Representative expenses as set out in the Financial Management Act, and act as a liaison between the Citizens' Council and District Captains with respect to budgetary allocations and financial oversight.

Advocate for Secure & Sustainable Funding by supporting Administration negotiations of funding streams and models which will support long-term governance operations and program delivery.

Oversee Citizens' Gathering Financial Reporting by collaborating with Administration and the Auditor General to ensure comprehensive financial reports are developed for presentation at Citizens' Gatherings.

Protect the Nation's Resources by ensuring Administration takes all steps necessary to optimize banking and investment strategies to maximize government returns on existing resources.

Safeguard the Nation's Finances by ensuring that Administration conduct thorough cost-benefit analyses for all proposed legislation and major initiatives prior to their finalization by Citizens' Council and act as one of the two required signing authorities for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. ■

Records



**Sarah
Wolfe**

Provincial Secretary of Secretary Records

Sarah Wolfe is a young Métis woman who comes from the Cardinal and Ladouceur families from Fort Smith and Lac La Biche. In 2024, Sarah graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in Political Science.

For over 15 years, she has been an avid participant in the Métis community through performance. Wolfe is a professional singer and has performed at the Salute to Excellence at the Winspear, the Belcourt Brosseau Métis Awards, Métis Fest, and Métis General Assemblies. She has sung for events hosted by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and its affiliates, the City of Edmonton, the Government of Alberta, and Edmonton Public Schools, as well as weddings and celebrations of life.

Through making moccasins, beading, and sewing, Wolfe practices the traditions taught to her by her mother and grandmother. Her next goal is to become fluent in Michif, and she is currently taking classes. Wolfe has a passion for her Métis community and is proud to serve the Citizens of Fort Edmonton District as their Citizens' Representative.

MANDATE

Maintain and Modernize the Public Registry by ensuring all laws, treaties, and records of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government are accurately recorded by Administration and easily accessible to Citizens in both digital and physical formats.

Increase Meeting Efficiency in collaboration with Administration by developing review and recording standards for meeting minutes and records, which ensure accuracy and transparency, in an effort to avoid unnecessary procedural delays during Council proceedings.

Enhance Transparency Systems by collaborating with Administration to publicize Citizens' Council meetings, ensure meeting recordings are accessible, and to develop a Regulation which supports and regulates the livestreaming and video recording of Citizens' Council meetings for the benefit of all Citizens.

Safeguard Government Archives by collaborating with Administration to preserve historical documents and personnel files in secure, organized systems.

Streamline Information Sharing by supporting the creation of standardized procedures for cross-departmental record management that comply with the Self-Government Act and Constitution.

Serve as Signing Authority when delegated, and act as one of two required signatories for official government documents, ensuring proper authorization processes are followed as set out in the Self-Government Act.

Represent the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Executive as an appointed member on the Board of Directors of the Métis Education Foundation.

Develop Regulation in collaboration with Administration that recognizes and regulates the official marks of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government for approval by Cabinet. ■

Youth, Sport & Gender Equity



**Rebecca
Lavallee**

Provincial Secretary of Youth, Sport & Gender Equity

Secretary Rebecca Lavallee was born in Lac La Biche and was raised deeply immersed in her Métis culture and community. Starting as a summer student with the Métis Nation within Alberta, Secretary Lavallee gained valuable insights into Métis governance and the importance of her voice as a Métis youth. She believes it is crucial to amplify youth voices in the Métis community, especially in governance. Youth are often told they are the leaders of the future, which is true, but they are also leaders right now, actively engaging and shaping the present.

Secretary Lavallee believes it is important that Métis youth are given the opportunity to stand alongside their elders and mentors, advocating for policies that respect our sovereignty and protect our communities.

“Youth hold a wealth of knowledge; we have ideas, perspectives, and experiences that everyone would benefit from hearing.”

MANDATE

Advance a Métis Youth Strategy by supporting the Youth Department’s development and implementation of a comprehensive Métis Youth Strategy focused on leadership, cultural connection, and civic engagement.

Expand Province-wide Sport Programming by supporting the Youth Department in creating province-wide programs that promote both traditional Métis sports and competitive athletic opportunities.

Address Systemic Barriers, Age, and Gender Equity in collaboration with all Departments and Affiliates in support of Métis Women, Girls, 2SLGBTQIA+, and Youth in order to ensure youth and gender perspectives are integrated across all government policies and programs.

Support Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer by supporting Administration in the establishment of safe, culturally-grounded spaces for mentorship and intergenerational knowledge sharing.

Build Strategic Partnerships with educational, athletic, and advocacy organizations to expand opportunities that align with the goals and objectives of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Ensure Accountability Measures are implemented by Administration. ■

Citizens' Representatives

Citizens' Council, June 2025



DARRYL W. CAMPBELL FOOTHILLS MÉTIS DISTRICT

Darryl W. Campbell serves as the Citizens' Representative for the Foothills District. He is a highly dedicated advocate for the community and is committed to addressing the needs of its Citizens.

Guided by compassion and work ethic, Darryl is determined to enhance the community's well-being while preserving the cultural heritage of the Métis people. Darryl is known for being kind and open to conversation. He encourages Citizens to share their concerns and ideas. He continues to strive to create a stronger, more united future for Citizens of the Foothills District through commitment, trust, and respect.



CATHERINE SCHNELL **MEDICINE HAT MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Catherine serves as the Citizens' Representative for the Medicine Hat Métis District. She was born in Medicine Hat and lives in Cypress County with her husband and three children. Her Métis heritage is connected to May Flora Bray, Vernon Johnson, Jemima McKay, Caroline Cook, Catherine Sinclair, and Nahovway (Margaret) Norton.

She has held many roles throughout her career. This includes machine operator, small business owner, telephone operator, secretary, judicial clerk, massage therapist, and riding coach. She volunteers with community organizations, including the Dunmore Equestrian Society and the Miywasin Friendship Centre.

She inherited her love of horses from Flora, her grandmother, who homesteaded outside of Medicine Hat. She is proud to serve the new Otipemisiwak Métis Government and looks forward to the journey.



TREVOR WARD **ROCKY VIEW MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Trevor serves as the Citizens' Representative for Rocky View Métis District 4 and carries deep Métis roots through the Spense, Bruce, Monkman, Whitford, and Taylor families. These strong ties live across Alberta and throughout the Métis Homeland. His family history is grounded in connection, resilience, and a lasting sense of pride in the community.

He is a dedicated father and active member of the community who lives in Rocky View. He previously served on the District Council and was the Treasurer for the Rocky View Métis District. His deep commitment to service and leadership reflects his Citizens and their priorities at every single level of governance.

Trevor advocates for advancing Métis culture, building unity across all districts, and expanding opportunities. He is committed to working with others and ensuring that the perspectives and wants of Citizens help shape the future of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.



JASON CHERNOW **CALGARY ELBOW MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Jason Chernow descends from proud Métis roots. Jason's Métis family names, to name a few, include Jobin, Courtreille, Dumas, and Ferguson. Jason is a Métis entrepreneur with a lengthy background in youth services. Jason is dedicated to using his skills and experiences to bring tradition and culture into modern Métis lifestyles.



ALFRED L'HIRONDELLE **ST. ALBERT MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Alfred L'Hirondelle has his roots in St. Albert from his great-grandfather's river lot. He also has strong community ties to East Prairie Metis Settlement, where he spent a lot of time in his youth. For the past 35 years, Alfred has been involved in the community, from the Edson Friendship Centre and Alberta Native Friendship Centre Association to his work as the President of the St. Albert Métis Local 1904 and Region 4 President. Alfred is dedicated to achieving positive outcomes for Métis Citizens, and after years of working with communities, he wants to continue to support and empower people in the St. Albert Métis District and strengthen connections across the province.



SHANNON DUNFIELD **GRAND PRAIRIE MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Shannon Dunfield lives in Grande Prairie, with her home Métis community in Kelly Lake. Her Métis heritage is on both sides of the family, with the maternal side being Gladue/Whitford and the paternal side being Belcourt/Gauthier. Shannon has a Master's Degree and has worked in education, health, sport, and the not-for-profit sector for the past 30 years.



BOBBI PAUL-ALOOK **FORT VERMILION MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Bobbi Paul-Alook is a mother of five who resides on a small hobby farm outside of High Level with her husband, children, and grandchildren. Her home community is Buttertown/Fort Vermilion, where many generations of her ancestors have lived. Her Métis roots trace back on both her paternal and maternal lines to the Red River, through ancestors who migrated west during the fur trade in the mid-1800s. Her family names are Lambert, Mercredi, Ducharme, and Lizotte.

Bobbi graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2006 from the University of Alberta and has worked in healthcare for over 20 years. She has continued her education in recent years, focusing on health and law. Since the beginning of 2019, she has served as President of Fort Vermilion Métis Local 74 in a volunteer capacity.

She brings purpose, strength, and commitment to her role as Citizens' Representative and remains dedicated to advocating for District 15.



JUDY ANN CARDINAL **FORT CHIPEWYAN MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Judy Ann Cardinal was raised in Bigpoint as a child and came to the town of Fort Chipewyan to attend school. She learned vital survival skills, the value of hard work, and self-expression from her parents. She currently serves as a community educator at the Fort Chipewyan Community High School and holds the position of Vice-President of the Fort Chipewyan Métis Nation. Judy is a passionate advocate for drug and harm reduction and is raising awareness on the issue of Murdered and Missing Indigenous people. Her dedication has empowered and guided the community's youth.



JOSEPH NOEL TREMBLAY **ATHABASCA LANDING MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Joseph Noel Tremblay serves as the Citizens' Representative for District 20 in Athabasca Landing. With Métis roots tracing back to the Tremblay, Cardinal, Bruneau, and Courteorille families in the Lac La Biche area, Representative Tremblay's heritage is deeply connected to traditional Métis ways of life like harvesting, gathering, trapping, hunting, and fishing. As well as working for the NAR Railroad, he has a 40-year career in the oil and gas industry, is self-employed as a home building contractor, and is a longtime Boilermaker member. Above all, his passion lies in advocating for Métis Citizens and advancing the rights and self-determination of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.



CINDY MOORE **WABASCA-DESMARIS MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Cindy Moore is proud to serve as the Citizens' Representative for the Wabasca-Desmarais Métis District. She is a dedicated educator who has taught in Wabasca for over 22 years, including eight years in a Principal position. She graduated from the University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Education and a minor in Aboriginal Studies, as well as a Master of Arts from Athabasca University, where her studies included special education and leadership.

She is passionate about her own Métis heritage and dedicates time to learning traditional skills such as sash weaving, reindeer tufting, and capote-making. She was raised in Swan Hills but spent every summer in District 22, where she began forming deep ties to the community and the land. Her great-grandfather, George Gullion, once held river lot 34 in Edmonton and worked for the Hudson's Bay Company. She has called Wabasca home for the past 30 years.

She values cultural pride through education, celebrating traditions, and creating space for intergenerational connection.

Further bios for our Citizens' Council can be found on pages 20–35

*District Captains
of the Otipemisiwak
Métis Government*



District Captains of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government



GUY L'HEUREUX FOOTHILLS MÉTIS DISTRICT

Guy L'Heureux serves as the District Captain for the Foothills Métis District and honours his Métis heritage and history on his mother's side. This lineage traces back to Marie Lambert, a Saulteaux woman born in 1787. His family includes the Naults, who stood alongside Louis Riel during the formation of the Métis government and the Red River Resistance.

Guy's passion for the Métis culture stems from his uncle, Ovide Cadrain, a World War II veteran. His mother also inspired him to celebrate his heritage. Previously, he served as President of the Lethbridge Métis Local as well as Vice President of the Pincher Creek Local. Encouraged by his wife to continue advancing rights in Southern Alberta, he pursued the role of District Captain.



AMBER BOYD ROCKY VIEW MÉTIS DISTRICT

Amber Boyd lives with her family in Cochrane, Alberta. Her family names include Cariou, Beaulieu, Hamelin, Garipey, and Vandal. As an Executive Director, she led a national charity supporting Indigenous students. She has also worked in other senior executive and board of directors' roles. She is a writer and artist, and her upcoming book, "Blood, Bannock, and Beads," has been purchased by Greystone.



CARMEN LASANTÉ CALGARY ELBOW MÉTIS DISTRICT

Carmen was born in Brooks, Alberta, and raised with Métis ancestry through the Leveille family. Her background is in political campaigning and rural irrigation. She is actively engaging more with her Métis heritage. She hopes to create space for others who, like her, did not grow up completely immersed in Métis culture. Her journey reflects reconnection, and she is committed to sharing it with others.



TERRY RUDYK **JASPER HOUSE MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Terry Rudyk's Métis roots connect back to Prairie Echo, north of High Prairie, and surrounding areas such as Grouard. Her ancestral names include Shaw, Jobin, and Chalifoux. She has lived very close to Métis traditions and resided in a log home heated with wood and filled with food that was only grown and harvested.

Terry obtained two college diplomas in Business Administration and Business Skills from Red River Community College in Winnipeg, both of which she earned with honours. She spent over 20 years of her career working in banking, bringing a strong foundation in administration and financial management. She is the eldest of five siblings and currently resides with her husband, son, daughter-in-law, and grandson. She brings a rich professional background and expertise as District Captain for Jasper House Métis District 7.



JOSEPH RENÉ DE MEULLES **FORT EDMONTON MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Joseph René de Meulles grew up in Churchill, Manitoba, and has been involved with helping the Métis people since the age of 12. His mother, Myrtle de Meulles, was an Indigenous artist who received the "Order of Manitoba" and the "Order of the Métis Nation" for her commitment to the Métis community and preservation of Métis culture. René's parents taught him the importance of giving back to the community. René honed his leadership skills as a Captain in the Fire Service in Manitoba. He was the youngest Fire Chief in the history of Saskatchewan. After moving to Alberta 30 years ago, he served as an elected official on an Edmonton school board while raising his three children with his wife, Jodi Howard.

René has been an entrepreneur and a dedicated public servant, currently serving as the Fort Edmonton Métis District Captain under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.



BERNIE POITRAS **ST. PAUL-COLD LAKE MÉTIS DISTRICT**

Bernard (Bernie) Poitras is from Elk Point, Alberta, growing up north of Elk Point at a beautiful place known as Moose Mountain. His grandfather was in Louis Riel's provincial government, and great-grandfather Laurent Garneau was a Captain serving with Riel. He worked in the oil patch in all aspects for 40 years. Bernie has been involved in announcing rodeos and chuckwagons (CPCA, for 30 years). Bernie is a member of Toastmasters International.



CHANTEL SPARKLINGEYES
LAC LA BICHE MÉTIS DISTRICT

Chantel Sparklingeyes is a Métis woman, mother, and wife from Lac La Biche. Chantel was born a Boucher and raised in a strong matriarchal home by her mother, Dianna Boucher and her kokum, Jeannette Boucher. Her family names are Boucher, Cardinal, and Lavallee. Chantel's kokum is a Cardinal and Lavallee from Powstick (Owl River). Her Moshom, the late Patrick Boucher, is from Draper, but was raised in Lac La Biche. She is a mother of three and has been married to Pierre Sparklingeyes since 2015. Chantel holds a Bachelor of Indigenous Social Work and has dedicated her 13-year career to enhancing the quality of life for Indigenous people in her hometown. She has deep political roots from the Boucher and Lavallee side of her family and was driven by her commitment to improving the lives of Métis people in her home community.



BRIAN LADOUCEUR
ATHABASCA LANDING MÉTIS DISTRICT

Brian Ladouceur is a proud Métis Citizen from the Lac La Biche Mission, but later moved to the Buffalo Lake Metis Settlement where he raised his family. Growing up, his family briefly housed the late Harry Daniels, whose commitment to advocacy, along with that of his late brother Earl, inspired Brian to dedicate himself to advancing Métis rights around him.

Brian was one of the first Indigenous contractors in Northern Alberta. He later became a founding member of the Regional Oilfield Aboriginal Business Association (ROABA), which recognized the need for strong Indigenous representation in the gas and oil industries.

He currently works on the Operational Framework Task Team, working alongside Indigenous communities, governments, and universities to develop the Indigenous Community-Based Oil Sands Monitoring Program. Brian is inspired by past Métis leaders and remains devoted to advancing the rights of those people around him.

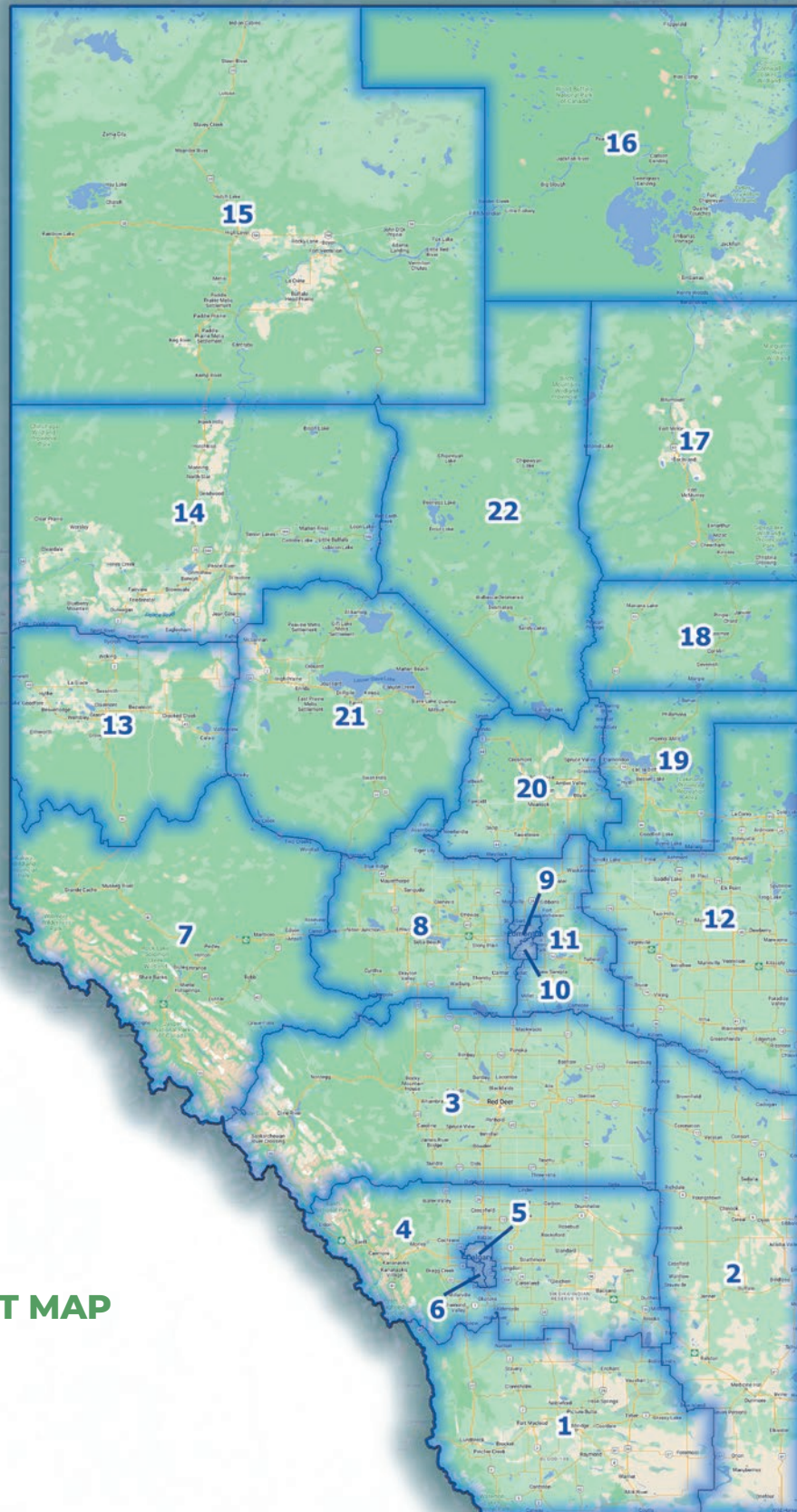


DIANE KIM PEREDERY
WABASCA-DESMARAIS MÉTIS DISTRICT

Diane Kim Peredery is excited to serve the Citizens of the Wabasca-Desmarais Métis District as their District Captain. Diane Kim was born in Wabasca and speaks fluent Cree. She is at her happiest when she is out on the land hunting and gathering. She has a passion for plants and their traditional uses. She is happily married, blessed with two beautiful stepdaughters, sons-in-law, and three precious grandchildren, with one on the way in October.

Diane is motivated to help all Citizens of the District. She looks forward to engaging with Elders and Knowledge Keepers to revitalize and maintain Métis traditions and culture. She is committed to keeping all of her Citizens informed of all the changes happening in the Métis Nation within Alberta. She is also committed to working with local industry and stakeholders. She has experience in consulting with both the oil and gas industry and the forestry sector, and looks forward to bringing that knowledge into her new role as District Captain.

DISTRICT MAP



District Council Report

The following report provides updates on the recent activities and the transition status of each of the 22 Otipemisiwak Métis Government Districts as of late spring 2025.

Because the transition process is ongoing and can shift quickly, this report may not reflect the most current information in your District. For the most up-to-date information for your District, please contact your District Captain. If your District does not have a District Captain, you can contact your District's Citizens' Representative or the District Relations and Transition Sub-Committee (DRTC) representative for your area.

DRTC Representatives:

- Secretary Joe Chodzicki (South)
- Secretary Lisa Wolfe (Central)
- Secretary Jason Ekeberg (North)

Contact information for District Captains can be found on the Otipemisiwak Métis Government website: albertametis.com/governance/districts/district-council

Contact information for Citizens' Representatives can be found on the Otipemisiwak Métis Government website: albertametis.com/governance/citizens-council

Foothills Métis District

The Foothills Métis District continued to build toward a District Council in 2024/25, achieving a major milestone with the election of District Captain Guy L'Heureux on November 14, 2024. To complete the formation of the District Council, an election for additional District Councillors was called on April 7, 2025, with voting to take place in June 2025.

These elections are an important step in the District's transition and show the ongoing commitment of Citizens in the Foothills Métis District to shape a strong and responsive local government.

Election results will be available on the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's website once certified: metiselectionsab.com

Medicine Hat Métis District

Progress toward fully establishing a District Council for the Medicine Hat Métis District continued in 2025 with an election for District Captain and Councillors officially called on April 7, 2025, with voting to take place in June 2025. In the interim period leading up to the election, the Medicine Hat Local 8 Council has continued to serve as the interim District Council, ensuring ongoing local leadership and community engagement throughout the transition process.

Election results will be made available on the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's website once certified: metiselectionsab.com

Red Deer Métis District

The Red Deer Métis District continues to move through the transition process. District Council bylaws were initially approved by the Citizens' Council. However, following a change in leadership at Red Deer Local 492, the Local chose to revise the bylaws to reflect updated priorities and a revised direction for leadership.

These revised bylaws have now been finalized and re-submitted to the Citizens' Council for approval. The Local is working to organize an Annual General Meeting to adopt the finalized bylaws. Upon adoption, the bylaws will be submitted to the Alberta Registrar.

Following acceptance by the Registrar, an election for District Captain and Councillors will be held within 180 days. This will mark the next major step in fully transitioning from the former Local Council to a District Council.

Rocky View Métis District

The Rocky View Métis District has continued to strengthen its leadership and deepen its presence through cultural celebration and strategic partnerships. District Captain Amber Boyd, elected on September 18,

2023, was joined by District Councillors Alana Newton, Adrian Pruden, Donovan Taylor, and Trevor Ward following their election on November 14, 2024. Councillor Trevor Ward later resigned in spring 2025 after being elected as the Citizens' Representative for the District.

Over the past year, the District has hosted a slate of cultural programming. This includes Métis Culture Days in Lake Louise, the Métis Stampede Festival in partnership with Calgary Nose Hill and Calgary Elbow Métis Districts, and the Métis Winter Festival in collaboration with Calgary Nose Hill, Calgary Elbow, and the City of Airdrie.

Rocky View District Council has also worked closely with Parks Canada to advance Métis visibility and recognition. This has led to initiatives such as the installation of a digital welcome sign in Heritage Michif at Banff National Park and participation in a historic ceremonial bison hunt within the park.

Calgary Nose Hill Métis District

The Calgary Local 87 Council has formally submitted a letter of commitment to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Transition Team, signaling its intention to proceed with the transition process. The Local has confirmed it will move forward following the completion of outstanding financial audits, marking an important step toward establishing its District Council as part of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Calgary Elbow Métis District

District Captain Carmen Lasanté, elected on September 18, 2023, was joined by District Councillors Rhonda Baglot, Javan Belcourt, Samaria Nancy Cardinal, Randall Feddersen, Peter McPherson, and Charlette Vivier following their election on November 14, 2024.

The District has been active in building community engagement and fostering local leadership. It hosts monthly business and professional mixers that draw Métis Citizens from across Calgary. Calgary Elbow has also partnered with neighbouring Districts to co-host major events. This includes the Métis Stampede Festival and the Métis Winter Festival, helping to strengthen inter-District collaboration and showcase Métis culture in Alberta's urban centres.

Jasper House Métis District

District Captain Terry Rudyk was elected on November 14, 2024. An election for additional District Councillors was called on April 7, 2025, with voting to take place in June 2025.

Election results will be made available on the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's website once certified: metiselectionsab.com

The District is actively working to establish a District Office in Edson, which will serve as a hub for local programming and community connection. Plans are underway to launch cultural events and community gatherings out of the new office. This aims to create more opportunities for Citizens to engage with their government and celebrate Métis identity in the region.

Lac Ste. Anne Métis District

The Lac Ste. Anne Métis District continues to move steadily toward full District governance. In spring 2025, the District Council bylaws were approved by the Citizens' Council, which marks a key step in the transition process.

The Local Council held a special meeting in late May 2025 to formally adopt the bylaws. Now adopted and granted full approval by the Citizens' Council, the bylaws have been submitted to the Alberta Registrar for official recognition.

Following acceptance by the Registrar, the District will call an election for a District Captain and Councillors within 180 days. This is to ensure Lac Ste. Anne Citizens are represented through democratic, community-driven leadership under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Fort Edmonton Métis District

District Captain Joseph René de Meulles was elected on November 14, 2024, bringing strong leadership to the Fort Edmonton Métis District. To complete the District Council, an election for additional District Councillors was called on April 7, 2025, with voting scheduled for June 2025.

Election results will be made available on the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's website once certified: metiselectionsab.com

The District is currently focused on the establishment of a District Office and Métis Cultural Community Centre. This new space will serve as a central hub for governance, cultural programming, and community engagement, helping to strengthen Métis identity, visibility, and services in the region.

Edmonton Whitemud Métis District

The Edmonton Whitemud Métis District continues to advance its governance as part of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. The District Council bylaws have been fully approved by the Citizens' Council. This is a significant step in the transition process.

Currently, the Local Council is reviewing the approved bylaws and may choose to introduce revisions. Should revisions be made, the updated bylaws will be resubmitted to the Citizens' Council for approval, followed by a special meeting to formally adopt them at the local level.

Once adopted and granted final approval, the bylaws will be submitted to the Alberta Registrar. Upon official acceptance, the District will proceed by calling an election for a District Captain and Councillors within 180 days, moving closer to a fully elected and operational District Council.

St. Albert Métis District

The St. Albert Métis District continues its transition as part of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. An election for District Captain and Councillors was officially called on April 7, 2025. Voting is scheduled to take place in June 2025.

Election results will be made available on the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's website once certified: metiselectionsab.com

In the interim, the St. Albert–Sturgeon County Métis Local 1904 Council remains actively engaged in governance to serve as the interim District Council. Their leadership has provided critical continuity during this period of transition, ensuring that local needs are addressed and Citizens remain informed and supported.

The upcoming election marks a key milestone in advancing locally elected, accountable Métis governance within the St. Albert Métis District.

St. Paul-Cold Lake Métis District

The St. Paul-Cold Lake Métis District has made significant progress in establishing its locally elected leadership as part of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. District Captain Bernie Poitras was elected on September 18, 2023, followed by the election of District Councillors Roy Missal for the St. Paul Sub-District, Rhonda Hodgson for the Lloydminster Sub-District, Sandra Evans for the Cold Lake Sub-District, and Carrie Goldsmith for the Bonnyville Sub-District on November 14, 2024.

To ensure full representation across the District, a by-election will be held to fill the remaining roles for the Fishing Lake Metis Settlement/Elizabeth Metis Settlement Sub-District and the Youth Councillor position.

In addition to building strong local governance, the District has actively engaged in consultation and relationship-building with several industry partners, including those involved in major energy projects. These partnerships are key to advancing economic opportunities and aim to ensure the interests of Métis Citizens are represented in regional development.

Grande Prairie Métis District

The Grande Prairie Métis District continues to move forward in its transition. In April 2025, the Citizens'

Council approved the District Council bylaws in principle, marking a key milestone in the transition process.

Since then, the Local Councils within the District have been working to finalize their amalgamation agreement. Once complete, a special meeting will be called to formally adopt the bylaws.

Following full adoption and final approval from the Citizens' Council, the bylaws will be submitted to the Alberta Registrar. Upon acceptance, the District will move to the next phase by calling an election for a District Captain and Councillors within 180 days. This is to ensure that Métis Citizens in the region are represented through democratic, community-based leadership.

Peace River Métis District

The Peace River Métis District is progressing steadily through the transition process. In March 2025, the Citizens' Council granted approval in principle to the District Council bylaws, marking an important step in formalizing local governance structures.

Since that time, the Local Councils within the District have been working to finalize their amalgamation agreement. Once this work is complete, a special meeting will be called to adopt the bylaws.

Following their adoption and final approval by the Citizens' Council, the bylaws will be submitted to the Alberta Registrar. Upon acceptance, the District will enter its next phase by holding an election for District Captain and Councillors within 180 days so that locally elected leadership can represent and serve Citizens in the region.

Fort Vermilion Métis District

The Fort Vermilion Métis District continues to advance through the transition process. The District's bylaws have already received full approval from the Citizens' Council, marking a significant milestone.

Currently, the Local Council is working to organize a special meeting where the bylaws will be formally adopted by Citizens. Once adopted, the bylaws will be submitted to the Alberta Registrar for registration.

Upon acceptance by the Registrar, the District will move forward with elections for a District Captain and Councillors within 180 days. This paves the way for an elected leadership team to represent Citizens and guide the District's next chapter.

Fort Chipewyan Métis District

The Fort Chipewyan Métis District is preparing to take the next steps in its transition under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. A Citizen Information Session is being planned to provide local Citizens with updates on the

transition process to offer guidance on what to expect in the months ahead.

This session will serve as an important opportunity for community members to ask questions, share input, and gain clarity on the District's path forward as it works toward establishing a District Council.

Fort McMurray Métis District

Once this District's bylaws are accepted by the Alberta Registrar, the Fort McMurray District will move forward with an election for District Captain and Councillors within 180 days. This ensures locally elected leadership can represent and serve Citizens in the District.

The McMurray Métis Local 1935 Council currently serves as the interim District Council, providing continuity of representation and services for Citizens in the Fort McMurray region until this next milestone is reached.

Conklin Métis District

The Conklin Métis District is currently advancing through the early stages of its transition. Work is underway to prepare District Council bylaws.

Once the draft is complete, the bylaws will be submitted to the Citizens' Council for approval in principle. Upon receiving that initial approval, the Local Council will convene a special meeting to formally adopt the bylaws, after which they will be submitted for full Citizens' Council approval.

Following full approval, the bylaws will be submitted to the Alberta Registrar, paving the way for the District to establish its elected leadership structure and fully participate in the governance framework of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Lac La Biche Métis District

The Lac La Biche Métis District continues to advance its leadership structure under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. Chantel Sparklingeyes was elected as District Captain on November 14, 2024.

To further strengthen representation across the District, an election for additional District Councillors was called on April 7, 2025, with voting scheduled to take place in June 2025. These developments reflect the District's ongoing commitment to inclusive, democratic governance and active Citizen engagement.

Election results will be made available on the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's website once certified: metiselectionsab.com

Athabasca Landing Métis District

The Athabasca Landing Métis District has taken significant steps to formalize its leadership under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. Brian Ladouceur was elected as District Captain on September 18, 2023, and has since been joined by District Councillors Bestt Blayze Peterson and Rachael Sharron, who were elected on November 14, 2024.

With this leadership team in place, the District is well positioned to support local governance, community development, and the advancement of Métis interests in the region.

Lesser Slave Lake Métis District

The Lesser Slave Lake Métis District continues to advance its transition under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. The District Council bylaws have been fully approved and accepted by the Alberta Registrar, marking a key milestone in formalizing local governance.

An election for District Captain and Councillors will be called in the near future, bringing locally elected leadership to the region.

In the meantime, the Slave Lake Local 19 Council continues to serve as the interim District Council, ensuring continuity of service and ongoing engagement with Citizens throughout the District.

Wabasca-Desmarais Métis District

The Wabasca-Desmarais Métis District welcomed new leadership in 2025 following a change in its elected officials. Diane Peredery was elected as District Captain on April 17, 2025, succeeding Regan Auger, who resigned in January 2025 after being elected in September 2023. District Councillor Bill Auger continues to serve, since being elected on November 14, 2024.

A by-election for one additional District Councillor is expected to be called in the near future to fill the remaining vacancy and complete the District Council. ■

*Judicial Tribunal
of the Otipemisiwak
Métis Government*



Judicial Tribunal of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government

This report was originally submitted to the Citizens' Council on May 13, 2025, in fulfillment of section 11 of the Judicial Branch Act.

The remaining two of six required Judicial Tribunal members were appointed at the May 29, 2024, meeting of the Citizens' Council:

- **Janis Cunningham**
Lower Athabasca River Territory (two-year term)
- **Corinne Willier**
Lesser Slave Lake Territory (two-year term)

They joined previously appointed members Lionel Chartrand (Chairperson, four-year term), Arlan Delisle (North Saskatchewan River Territory, four-year term), John Phillips (Battle River Territory, two-year term), and Shea Taylor (Peace River Territory, four-year term), who were all appointed on November 20, 2023.

The Judicial Tribunal held their first meeting on July 27–28, 2024. This meeting was a workshop, where the Tribunal heard from several departments within the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and focused on drafting the Interim Rules of Procedure for the Judicial Tribunal.

The Tribunal held a second meeting on September 28–29, 2024. This meeting was a workshop where the Tribunal heard from a speaker on Alternative Dispute Resolution processes and focused on finalizing the Interim Rules of Procedure.

The Tribunal met for a third time on November 24, 2024. This was a virtual meeting to review and discuss two active files before the Tribunal. Decisions were made and issued on both matters, with the decisions signed on December 5, 2024, and sent to the parties shortly after.

The Tribunal then held virtual meetings on January 26, February 16, and March 16, 2025, to review and discuss two new active files before the Tribunal. A decision was issued on one file, and the other file was determined to be outside the Tribunal's jurisdiction. Both files were closed after review.

The Tribunal has two active files, both of which are currently held in abeyance.

All decisions of the Judicial Tribunal are publicly available online. ■



Visit
Decisions
of the Judicial
Tribunal
webpage



President Andrea Sandmaier (centre) stands with the remaining Judicial Tribunal members appointed at the May 29, 2024 meeting of the Citizens' Council. From left to right: Janis Cunningham (Lower Athabasca River Territory), President Sandmaier, and Corinne Willier (Lesser Slave Lake Territory).



President Andrea Sandmaier (centre) stands with the Judicial Tribunal of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. From left to right: Shea Taylor (Peace River Territory), John Phillips (Battle River Territory), President Sandmaier, Chairperson Lionel Chartrand, and Arlan Delisle (North Saskatchewan River Territory).

Department Reports



Children and Family Services

The Children and Family Services Department of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government is proud to serve Métis children and families across Alberta by delivering culturally grounded programs that support well-being, connection, and identity. From early learning to family reunification, our work is rooted in Métis values and driven by community voice. This report highlights key accomplishments from the past year and our ongoing commitment to empowering Métis families through responsive, innovative, and culturally-rich services.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMMING

The Early Learning Programming helps Métis children from birth to age 11 and their families by creating fun and meaningful programs based on Métis culture and traditions. These programs support children's learning and growth while helping them feel proud of who they are. Families also get the chance to connect with each other and share in the joy of Métis ways.

DAYHOME START-UP PILOT PROGRAM

The Dayhome Start-Up Pilot Program (DHSUP), launched in January 2025. This two-year pilot program helps increase the number of Métis-owned dayhomes across the province. Designed by Children and Family Services

and ran with the support of Apeetogosan, DHSUP offers grants, business support, and culturally-rich starter kits to help new providers. The goals are to increase Métis-run dayhomes, give Métis children access to early learning in spaces that reflect their culture, and build strong, connected communities. From launch to March 31, 2025, we had 15 total applicants, 12 who were approved to move forward with the process. We are still accepting applications for this program and welcome interested Métis Citizens to apply.

FLOURISHING FUTURES ACCESSIBILITY GRANT PILOT PROGRAM

On September 16, 2024, the Early Years Team launched a brand-new program that works to support Métis children facing developmental, social, emotional, or behavioural challenges to learning. This program provides eligible families with \$5,000 per year to access services and

Otipemisiwak Métis Government

Flourishing Futures Accessibility Grant for Métis Early Learners

This program is designed to support Métis Early Learners aged 0-11 across Alberta by covering the cost of services and supports that will address common developmental, social, and emotional barriers to learning.

- Ready to apply or want to learn more about the program? Visit our website linked below!
- For more information, please contact us at FlourishingFutures@metis.org or 780-455-2200

Are you a caregiver of a Métis Early Learner seeking supports and services to help overcome learning barriers?

Early Years

Otipemisiwak Métis Government
Children and Family Services

780-455-2200
1-877-454-2884
Otipemisiwak@metis.org

resources referred by professionals to help Métis children overcome barriers to learning.

To date, the Flourishing Futures Accessibility Grant Program has received 188 applications, 95 of those applicants have received or are currently receiving funds through the program.

Here is how community has responded to the first six months of the Flourishing Futures Accessibility Grant Program:

“...was hoping words would come to me to show our excitement and gratitude for being a part of this pilot project but I don’t know if words will ever be enough.”
– Caregiver of a recipient

“You’re like knowledge keepers, elders or guides on how we can provide the best learning experience. Our family is so thankful for this amazing opportunity.”
– Caregiver of a recipient

“This is amazing, and honestly we have felt so supported through this process. Words really can’t convey the stress and worry in just trying to help your little ones, so thank you from the bottom of our hearts.”
– Caregiver of a recipient

CONNECTING THROUGH CULTURE FAMILY RETREATS

The Children and Family Services Department once again organized both a Summer and Winter Connecting Through Culture Family Retreat at Métis Crossing, designed to unite Métis families and Knowledge Holders to reinforce family bonds, create lasting memories, and fully immerse participants in Métis culture and traditions.

Eighty Métis families, or a total of 225 individuals, participated in cultural activities facilitated by Métis



Knowledge Holders, focusing on reclaiming the foundations that have always promoted healthy living in our communities—transferring cultural knowledge, fostering a strong cultural identity, and instilling a sense of belonging to a robust, healthy, and self-determined Métis Nation.

FROSTY REELS FAMILY CAMPS

Partnering with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Harvesting Team, the Children and Family Services Department has actively responded to the community's needs by establishing secure environments that nurture the genuine connections integral to Métis families since the Nation's inception.

The Frosty Reels Family Camp hosted 51 Métis families (101 adults and 120 children) over five weekends in February and March 2025, offering an enriching experience filled with culture, connection, and fishing.



NATOONA MICHIF PIMATISIWIN (EXPLORING MÉTIS CULTURE) AT HOME

The Children and Family Services Department remains dedicated to supporting Métis families by fostering cultural learning through age-appropriate activities that families can enjoy together. Each mailout includes cultural information, materials, and an activity aimed at engaging early learners and their families in Métis history and values while fostering family connections.

This year, the Early Years team released the following mailouts to 2,417 families who registered to receive the packages:

- Little Métis Chefs Bannock Mailout
- Truth and Reconciliation Day Mailout
- Métis Culture Card Collection: Starter Bundle Mailout – Series 1 and Series 2

The *Métis Culture Card Collection* registration is ongoing and once registered, the family will automatically receive the next series in the set once it's released.

OSKAYA AYAMICHIKEWAK (YOUNG READERS)

The Oskaya Ayamichikewak program is an ongoing initiative that promotes early literacy by fostering a love of reading and connection among Métis early learners and their families. In collaboration with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, this program provides Métis children with a monthly delivery of books to their homes, free of charge, from birth until their fifth birthday.

This year, 288 Métis children registered to receive books through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library for a total of 953 active participants in the program, and a total of 1,081 graduates from the program.

In July 2024, the Early Years team enhanced the Dolly Parton Imagination Library by mailing *Little Métis Sleepy Horse* by Leah Dorion to all program children, along with an invitation to a live virtual reading and discussion with the author.

The Young Readers Program continues to strengthen family bonds and nurture a passion for learning among Métis families across Alberta.



NURTURING CONNECTIONS: MÉTIS FAMILY GATHERING

From September 13–15, 2024, the Children and Family Services Department hosted the *Nurturing Connections: Métis Family Gathering* in Calgary. The event brought together 198 Métis children and families from across Alberta for a weekend rooted in culture, community, and connection. Elders, Knowledge Holders, and professionals helped create a space full of stories, wisdom, and laughter.

Here is what families shared about the experience:

“...listening to my daughter sing in the bathtub at the hotel ‘I am proud to be metis!’ was soul warming!!!!... it’s not the hotel or Métis crossing but the community, the culture and the connection that feels so good.”
– Karrilyn

“We have often felt left out and not sure where we fit in... Meeting so many others just like us was so empowering. We felt loved, heard, seen and safe.”
– Danielle

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Festive Family Support Program** reached 1,503 Métis families with culturally relevant holiday resources and activities.
- **Gear Up for School** distributed 2,994 school supply kits to Métis early learners from preschool to Grade 6.
- **Métis Family Christmas Party** welcomed 200 families to Métis Crossing for crafts, carolling, and winter fun with Métis Santa.
- **Community Presence:** Participated in 22 events, including Alberta Métis Fest and cultural days with Explore Edmonton at K-Days and Farm Fair.

MÊTAWÊTAN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE (ELCC) CENTRE

The Children and Family Services Department is leading a very exciting early learning program to support Métis children and families in Alberta. The department is opening the *Mêtawêtan* Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centre in Edmonton, scheduled for September 2025. This will be the first Otipemisiwak Métis Government ELCC Centre in Alberta and will offer up to 72 child care spots and create 12–16 jobs for Early Childhood



Educators. The centre will provide a safe and welcoming space where Métis culture, language, and traditions are part of everyday learning. It’s a big step forward in making sure Métis children grow up connected to their identity and community.

ACT C-92, AN ACT RESPECTING FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES ACTIVITIES

Since Act C-92 came into effect on January 1, 2020, affirming Indigenous self-government in child welfare, Children and Family Services has worked to inform Métis Citizens about its impacts. In 2024, we updated key

resources, including the *Reclaiming Our Children* booklet, pamphlets for Métis children and caregivers, and a two-page summary on how the Act affects Métis Albertans.

Two new videos were also used for various engagements and events:

“*The Otipemisiwak Métis Government’s Path to Reclaiming Our Children*” – A dynamic explainer on the Act and the journey of Métis child welfare.

“*Le Michif Niyaanan: We Are Métis*” – A one-hour documentary on Métis history and present-day experiences.

From summer to fall 2024, we visited 12 communities across Alberta, informing the 2024 *What We Heard Report*, released in January 2025.

RECLAIMING OUR CHILDREN, TRANSFORMING OUR PATH C-92 GATHERING

From January 30 to February 2, 2025, Children and Family Services hosted a province-wide gathering in Edmonton, inviting Citizens to review and shape the proposed Métis Children and Family Services model.

Keynotes by Josephine Hamelin and Dr. Jeannine Carrière offered historical and present-day perspectives on Métis child welfare. Citizens led discussions focused on four key areas: Prevention, Early Intervention, Intervention, and Transition to Adulthood. The event was a powerful step toward culturally grounded services built by and for Métis children, youth, and families.

FAMILY REUNIFICATION PROGRAM

The Family Reunification Program (FRP) supports Indigenous families in preserving and restoring parent-child relationships through a culturally grounded, referral-based model. The program integrates traditional knowledge and land-based teachings to help families heal, strengthen bonds, and create safe, loving homes. In 2024, FRP expanded its team with dedicated cultural and wellness roles, extended Outreach Services from three to six months, and launched *Wahkohtowin: Staying Connected*, a mentorship initiative that supports families even after graduation.

Over the past year, families participated in cultural activities like ceremonies, outdoor adventures, and a communal gardening project that ended with a shared



harvest celebration. A welcoming makeover of the Edmonton site was completed, and a new location in Bonnyville is set to open in 2025. Between January 2024 and February 2025, four families graduated, with all eight active families joining seasonal programs. The summer also saw the launch of an informal youth employment program, where children as young as 8 years old earned rewards while developing life skills and community ties.

FASD BRIDGING CONNECTIONS PROGRAM

The FASD Bridging Connections Program supports Métis Albertans of all ages living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), offering warm, culturally rooted, person-centered care. Services range from helping individuals access assessments and set personal goals to fostering stronger community connections. The Bridging Futures Program specifically supports Métis youth aged 15–25 as they navigate adulthood, independence, and long-term planning, using a strengths-based approach grounded in Métis identity.

Over the past year, the program delivered 10 FASD *Métis Cultural Awareness Trainings* to 230 service providers, deepening understanding of Métis culture and promoting respectful care. FASD Caregiver Connect Nights provided virtual community circles rooted in Métis traditions, offering support and reducing isolation. Additionally, five *Navigating FASD Webinars* equipped 88 participants with practical strategies to better support loved ones. Together, these initiatives strengthen community-based, culturally safe support for Métis families affected by FASD.

MÉTIS FAMILY RESOURCE PROGRAM

The Métis Family Resource Program (MFRP) supported 261 children from 202 families this year through culturally grounded services. Families engaged through 18 regional Meaningful Involvement Meetings or direct outreach, and our team processed 60 citizenship applications and created 77 cultural plans to keep children connected to their Métis heritage.

Our Adoptions Specialist advanced 86 citizenship applications for adopted individuals, with 71 approved. We reached 131 caseworkers through six cultural awareness sessions and hosted impactful caregiver events—130 attendees at Métis Crossing and 35 in Edmonton—combining cultural connection with training.

NAVIGATING MÉTIS COMMUNITY RESOURCES PROGRAM

This year, we proudly launched the *Navigating Métis Community Resources Program*, joining Alberta's Family Resource Network as one of 21 resource hubs supporting Métis families with easier access to culturally relevant services. As a referral-based program, it helps connect families to existing Otipemisiwak Métis Government supports across the province.

We hosted six virtual Community Information Sessions with 231 participants, covering topics like healthy pregnancies, Métis matriarchs, and traditional harvesting. Partnering with MP Psychology, we also held *Métis Mingles*—hands on wellness workshops featuring yoga, beading, sensory play, and more—with 82 participants celebrating culture, connection, and community across Alberta.



CONCLUSION

This year has marked tremendous growth for the Children and Family Services Department. As we look ahead, we remain committed to strengthening existing initiatives and developing new, culturally grounded services that reflect the values and needs of Métis families. In 2025, key focus areas include advancing work under C-92, opening the first Métis ELCC Centre, and deepening supports through the Family Reunification and Métis Family Resource Programs.

We are also hiring! If you're passionate about supporting Métis families, explore our current openings: albertametis.com/careers ■

Consultation

The Consultation Department exists to protect and advance the collectively-held constitutional rights, claims, and interests asserted by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government as the representative and governing body of the Métis Nation within Alberta. When the Canadian Crown contemplates conduct that has the potential to negatively impact Métis Citizens, the Consultation Department, where appropriate, works to identify and understand those impacts and develop ways to mitigate or avoid them and, where impacts are unavoidable, develop and propose accommodation measures aimed at offsetting them. This process is carried out in accordance with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution, our intergovernmental agreements with Canada, and relevant domestic and international legislation, regulations, agreements, and case law.

While the term “consultation” can be used in many contexts, our department specifically focuses on Crown consultation, a process essential to ensuring that current and future generations of Métis will continue to be able to engage in cultural practices and activities, including hunting and harvesting.

WHAT IS THE “DUTY TO CONSULT”?

The “duty to consult” is a duty imposed on the Crown that requires it to consult Aboriginal peoples on any action it plans to take that may adversely impact Aboriginal or treaty rights. As the Métis do not have any treaty rights, consultation with the Métis currently deals exclusively with Aboriginal rights, which are recognized and affirmed by Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. This is why you may see the phrase “Métis s.35 rights” used in documents or legal filings related to consultation with the Métis.

The duty to consult can also be delegated to industry by the Crown. For example, if the Crown wishes to grant a permit to a company to construct a new pipeline, it may delegate the duty to consult requirements onto that company. That company would then be responsible for consulting with any Indigenous community whose proven or claimed Aboriginal or treaty rights may be impacted by the construction of that pipeline.

The level of consultation required by the duty to consult is situational and scaled. Proven rights have more weight than rights that are claimed or asserted but not proven, and strong claims have more weight than “weak” claims. Likewise, the extent of the expected or potential impact on these rights can change how much consultation is required with Indigenous communities.

If an Indigenous community has a weak claim for an Aboriginal right and the project is unlikely to have any substantial or lasting impacts, the duty to consult may only require the Indigenous communities be notified; if an Indigenous community has a proven right or strong claim and the project is likely to produce substantial and lasting impacts, the duty to consult may require the consent

of these potentially-affected Indigenous communities to pursue the project. However, these are both extreme examples, and most consultation falls somewhere in the middle. In most cases, impacts are mitigated (e.g. altering how or where a project is constructed to avoid or minimize impacts) or when mitigation is not possible, those Indigenous Nations whose rights are impacted are accommodated (negotiating ways to offset or compensate for unavoidable impacts, e.g. setting aside land for protection or reclamation, or developing programs that benefit affected rights-holding collectives).

The Consultation Department supports the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's role in the Crown consultation process, in coordination with our Métis governance structures. We consider what negative impacts a project may have and how those impacts can be mitigated, and work with our Districts, industry, and government partners to implement those mitigations.

TRANSITIONING TO THE OTIPEMISIWAK MÉTIS GOVERNMENT

As the Otipemisiwak Métis Government continues on its self-government journey, the Consultation Department is adapting its processes to better serve the new governance structure. Changes in the 2024/25 fiscal year built on the changes undertaken in the previous year and have thus far included changing the scope of Consultation Coordinator activities to correspond with the new Territory boundaries, redesigning the notification system used to receive and distribute consultation notices, hosting information sessions to government and industry on our new governance structure, and developing a suite of service modules to offer to Districts undertaking a consultation project in their area.

Over the last year, we have seen additional elections held to elect new District Captains, Métis Locals update their bylaws and transition to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, and fully operational District Councils express their eagerness and ability to assume the authorities and responsibilities granted to them by our Constitution, which states:

Section 15.7(c): The authority and responsibility of District Councils extends to the conduct of consultation and accommodation with the Crown, industry, and other Indigenous groups on behalf of the Citizens residing in the District regarding their rights, claims, and interests.

Section 15.8: The District Councils of each Territory shall establish procedures to coordinate their work in conducting consultations in relation to the rights, claims, and interests collectively held by the Métis community of

the Territory they represent with the Crown, industry, and other Indigenous groups.

These are exciting changes, and to best support District Councils in the Crown consultation process, the Consultation Department is continuing to reshape our operations, adapting to the shifting needs and priorities of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, getting to know and build relationships with Métis Districts, and growing our capacity. We look forward to continuing to navigate the transition process and to playing a role in this historic shift to self-government.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Over the past year, the Consultation Department has significantly enhanced its staff, resources, and technical capacity. In considering where we might need to build capacity, we consider how work flows through the Consultation Department and where in that flow there are difficulties, or which steps are most timely.

For example, on a project where we are trying to identify potential impacts to Métis Aboriginal rights that the construction of a new bridge over a stream may impose, we would consider the cultural significance of the site (i.e., which Métis communities are nearby, if it is occurring in a Harvesting Area, etc.), the ecological significance of the site (i.e., if the stream is a spawning ground, where the stream leads, etc.), and any other potential significance of the site (i.e., if there are other projects nearby that may exasperate cumulative effects).

By increasing our capacity, we can identify those potential impacts quicker and more effectively; building our staff capacity has included recruiting staff from various expertise backgrounds so that we have a riparian expert who could immediately identify if a stream is a spawning ground or of other ecological significance; building our resource capacity has included researching and creating historical reviews of Métis communities, so that we know exactly which communities could face impacts; and building our technical capacity has included the purchase of drone technology capable of taking LiDAR imagery so that we can quickly visualize sites as they currently exist.

Capacity Building: Staff

Over the 2024/25 fiscal year, the Consultation Department more than doubled its staff capacity, hiring four program coordinators, two Consultation Coordinators, three researchers and policy analysts, one manager, four summer students (two of which remained on part-time), and worked with the Communications Department to hire a Consultation Department Communications Coordinator.

The additional staff has boosted the capacity of the department to take on more Crown consultation projects and grant-funded programs over the last year, allowing us to address potential impacts and strengthen our processes and knowledge base. However, we now look towards how to use the capacity we've built to better understand and support the various and unique needs of Districts that have fully transitioned and are exercising their authority to undertake Crown Consultation, both individually and also in collaboration with other Districts in accordance with Section 15.8 of our Constitution.



Consultation team during fieldwork

Capacity Building: Resources

The Consultation Department has also been building its informational resource capacity; this type of capacity is important to ensuring that our research has a strong foundation rooted in both the quantity and quality of supporting sources. This means that we can support our claims (such as claiming that a community is historically Métis, or that a confined feeding operation will negatively affect a nearby lake) with as many sources as possible and with sources that can withstand scrutiny.

This year, we have secured a number of resources to support our ability to consult on projects occurring in and around waterbodies/riparian areas. Additionally, we have secured extra copies of these resources in order to share them across the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and its Districts, so that as Districts undertake the Crown consultation process, they have the foundational knowledge to support their claims as well.

Capacity Building: Technical

This year, we continued to build our technical capacity, particularly regarding Geographic Information Systems (GIS), which allows us to build and analyze maps. In addition to the continuation of work consolidating multiple internal datasets, we secured two drones that will allow us to capture real-time images of sites of importance (such as culturally significant sites, project sites, etc.) and integrate those images into our GIS production through software such as QGIS and newly acquired licenses for ArcGIS.

A number of Consultation Department staff members have received drone training and obtained a license to fly the drones. Moving into the 2025/26 fiscal year, we intend to continue building our drone capabilities by securing the necessary tools to capture LiDAR imagery and explore opportunities to integrate LiDAR into the Crown consultation and Traditional Land Use data collection processes.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Relationship building is essential to the work undertaken by the Consultation Department. Building and formalizing strong relationships internal to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government (such as with Districts and other departments of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government) as well as external relationships (such as environmental non-governmental organizations, industry proponents, federal and provincial regulators, and other stakeholders) is crucial to the Crown consultation process. Relationship building leads to more opportunities for collaboration, including the co-development of new programs, initiatives, and strategies that directly or indirectly support the protection and advancement of Métis rights in Alberta.

Importantly, this year the Consultation Department also made exceptional advances in building relationships with Citizens; through the Promoting and Increasing Cultural Safety program, we connected with dozens of Métis women, youth, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals to learn more about their experiences and perspectives and how those experiences and perspectives can be better incorporated into the Consultation Department's work.

Additionally, we made significant strides in strengthening our relationship with key stakeholders: we supported the signing of a renewed relationship agreement with EPCOR and began working with the Royal Alberta Museum on their approach to repatriation as they develop a new repatriation framework. Additionally, we continued to build connections with regional watershed alliances through our Aquatic Habitat Restoration Program, participated in advisory committees with the Alberta



Representatives from EPCOR, Otipemisiwak Métis Government elected officials, Elders, and members of the Consultation Department at the EPCOR – Otipemisiwak Métis Government Declaration of Relationship Agreement signing in November 2024.

Energy Regulator (AER), the Canada Energy Regulator (CER), the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC), and contributed to research studies through the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER).

Relationship Building: EPCOR – Otipemisiwak Métis Government Declaration of Relationship Agreement

Following the coming-into-force of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution, the Consultation Department and EPCOR jointly identified the goal of updating our existing relationship agreement with one signed by current leadership that specifically recognizes the new governance structures and authorities of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Signing this new Declaration of Relationship was vital for re-aligning the agreement with our current vision, goals, and legal requirements, strengthening trust, and ensuring the continued growth of the relationship between EPCOR and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government remains relevant, effective, and beneficial to both parties.

The updated agreement was signed in November 2024 at Métis Crossing and builds on previous commitments to foster and sustain a strong relationship based on mutual respect, trust, and a willingness to listen, learn, and achieve common interests, including those related to Consultation.

Relationship Building: Reconciliation through Repatriation

Repatriation is the process through which cultural items owned and housed by institutions such as museums and archives are returned to the cultural group. This year, the Consultation Department began thinking about and working on the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's approach to repatriation.

Often, museums and archives collections were historically sourced through methods which were predatory; many items would have been stolen, forcefully taken, or sold in desperation. Repatriation does not change transgressions of the past; however, by returning the items to their rightful homes in culturally appropriate methods, families and individuals to whom those items were lost may find peace knowing that the items are now safe, and, as a community, we can begin to heal those past wounds.

EPCOR President and Chief Executive Officer John Elford (L) and Otipemisiwak Métis Government Andrea Sandmaier sign the EPCOR – Otipemisiwak Métis Government Declaration of Relationship Agreement.



DEPARTMENT REPORTS

As a starting point, we are building relationships with key stakeholders; in the 2024/25 fiscal year, we connected with and made visits to the Royal Alberta Museum. The Royal Alberta Museum is Alberta's provincial museum, which means that they are responsible for overseeing the province's collections, including many Métis artifacts and historical items. Some of these artifacts and items include beaded clothing and household items (moccasins, jackets, tea cozies, etc.), woven sashes, furs and hides, etc.

We are also supporting the Royal Alberta Museum as they develop a new repatriation framework to guide their approach to repatriation and expand it beyond its current scope, which (among other gaps) does not currently address how to repatriate Métis items.

Moving forward, our repatriation efforts will continue to focus on building relationships with relevant stakeholders across the province and will also go beyond relationship building into capacity building and knowledge building so that when we begin to repatriate these items, we can do so in a meaningful and secure way.

PROJECTS WRAP UPS: TERRESTRIAL CUMULATIVE EFFECTIVES INITIATIVE & AQUATIC HABITAT RESTORATION FUND

Terrestrial Cumulative Effects Initiative

Under the Government of Canada's Terrestrial Cumulative Effects Initiative, the Consultation Department conducted research to better understand cumulative effects, how those effects impact the lives and rights of Métis Citizens, and how those impacts can be understood and mitigated.

Cumulative effects are defined as the combination of changes (environmental or otherwise) that occur due to past, present, or future human activity. These changes in turn affect ecosystems and/or human well-being in a given area.

The first phase of the Terrestrial Cumulative Effects Initiative relied heavily on Citizen engagement and allowed the Consultation Department to increase its understanding of how Indigenous Knowledge can contextualize and be integrated into Western environmental science. It also provided us with first-hand feedback on the types of information, tools, and resources to better understand and evaluate the potential cumulative effects and how those effects impact Métis rights.

The second phase of the Terrestrial Cumulative Effects Initiative focused primarily on the creation of materials that addressed the concerns and key areas of interest identified by Métis Citizens in the initial phase. Additionally, the Consultation Department obtained a high-quality drone and licensed several department members. This drone will allow the department to record high-quality images of various sites of importance, such as Métis harvesting sites, areas of cultural significance, and project areas.



Aquatic Habitat Restoration Fund Project

In 2024/25, the Consultation Department wrapped up projects related to the Aquatic Habitat Restoration Fund, completing a number of activities addressing priorities such as Citizen education and engagement, data collection, capacity building, and environmental stewardship. The overall goal of this project is to identify opportunities to improve conditions of Alberta waterbodies and associated ecosystems so that it can continue to support Métis traditional uses such as harvesting and fishing.

Some of the activities completed under the Aquatic Habitat Restoration Fund project include:

- Water testing and monitoring at Pigeon Lake over a period of six months.
- Created a handbook for Métis Citizens.
- Developed the Responding to Experiences of Aquatic Concern with Technology (REACT) app for Citizens to easily notify us of concerning experiences and observations in and around Alberta waterbodies.
- Hosted Caring for Our Waters Day, which brought Métis Citizens together with various environmental protection groups and educated Citizens on the Aquatic Habitat Restoration Fund project.



PROJECT LAUNCH: PROMOTING & INCREASING CULTURAL SAFETY FOR MÉTIS WOMEN, YOUTH, & 2SLGBTQQIA+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The Promoting and Increasing Cultural Safety for Métis Women, Youth, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ Community Members program seeks to better understand and support Métis women, youth, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ in Alberta. At its core, cultural safety refers to the ability of a person to safely engage in cultural activities. However, creating culturally safe spaces and fostering cultural safety amongst a community is more complex. This project has two major activities: research and engagement, and information sharing and training. The program was launched in summer 2024 and will run until spring 2026. In the 2024/25 fiscal year, the Consultation Department collaborated with the Youth Department to split these

activities, with the Consultation Department leading research and engagement.

Goals of the Promoting & Increasing Cultural Safety program include:

- Ensure that Métis rights stemming from the experiences of Métis women, youth, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ are protected and advanced by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.
- Better incorporate these perspectives into the activities of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Consultation Department, including in Crown Consultation processes.
- Enhance the ability of Métis leaders across the Métis homeland to support Métis women, youth, and 2SLGBTQQIA+.
- Promote and support cultural safety for not only Métis women, youth, and 2SLGBTQQIA+, but for all Métis persons.



The Consultation Department launched the Promoting and Increasing Cultural Safety program in August 2024 with a series of group engagements in Medicine Hat. Following the group engagements in Medicine Hat, we travelled to Peace River, Fort McMurray, Calgary, Edmonton, and had three virtual series of group engagements, two of which were open to the full province and one of which focused specifically on Calgary. We also conducted several one-on-one interviews with knowledgeable Métis women, youth, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals.

During our conversations in the group engagements, we explored a wide range of themes surrounding cultural safety, including how participants engage with their Métis culture and any barriers that they face doing so. This information was then compiled into a *What We Heard* report that was released at the Promoting & Increasing Cultural Safety Leadership Summit hosted by the Youth Department.

Moving into the 2025/26 fiscal year, the Consultation Department will continue to travel across the province engaging with Métis Citizens. We are also excited to announce that we will be taking on both aspects of the Promoting & Increasing Cultural Safety program in



the 2025/26 fiscal year and will be hosting the second Promoting & Increasing Cultural Safety Leadership Summit in February 2026. We thank the Youth Department for their contribution to this program.

CONCLUSION AND WHAT'S NEXT

The Consultation Department is excited to continue our work strengthening the voices and cultural safety of Métis women, youth, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals and incorporating those experiences and perspectives into the Crown consultation process. As we evolve as a department, rising to meet the needs of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, we look forward to expanding our portfolio of ongoing programs and service modules, growing our capacity to be responsive to emerging impacts on Métis rights, claims, and interests.

Part of this growth will include continuing to build capacity – staff, resource, and technical – to action the various Crown consultation notifications received across the province each year and to conduct the foundational research that strengthens the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's position in the Crown consultation process. We will also seek to continue filling gaps in our knowledge base, by conducting Traditional Land Use Studies (TLUS) in under-studied areas, such as in southern Alberta, or undertaking research to better understand and incorporate the experiences of all Métis persons into the work undertaken by the Consultation Department. ■

Environment and Climate Change

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change (ECC) Department remains deeply committed to minimizing environmental impacts, supporting the preservation of Métis Citizens' culture and traditions, and supporting the long-term resilience of future generations in the face of a changing climate and environment.

Through the Askîy Initiative, the ECC Department is expanding its environmental monitoring efforts. These ongoing projects focus on understanding the health, abundance, and distribution of culturally significant species and traditionally harvested plants, fish, and wildlife. As part of its broader environmental conservation efforts, the ECC Department continues its work of establishing a network of Otipemisiwak Métis Government-led Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs).

Salay Prayzaan, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's 4.86-megawatt AC community generation solar project, has been fully operational for its first full year. The ECC Department continues to seek resources to expand its solar micro-generation capacity, increase the energy efficiency of Otipemisiwak Métis Government buildings, and achieve significant energy reductions at both Otipemisiwak Métis Government and affiliate facilities. For the first time, the ECC Department, in collaboration with Métis Capital Housing Corporation, has supported Citizens in obtaining energy efficiency retrofits for their homes through the Energy Efficiency Retrofits Program.

The ECC Department continues to create opportunities for dialogue and knowledge sharing among Citizens. This year's engagements elicited conversations about energy, climate change, and species at risk, and participating Citizens identified their concerns about and priorities for addressing climate change and protecting the

environment. Advocating for these priorities locally, nationally, and internationally remains one of the Department's key objectives.

DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- The ECC Department worked closely with Métis Capital Housing Corporation (MCHC) to develop the new Energy Efficiency Retrofits Program. Administered by MCHC, the pilot intake began accepting applications on June 2. The program will help Citizens living in Alberta install energy efficiency retrofits in their homes.
- More than 3,500 Citizens participated in ECC events.
- Since 2024, the ECC Department secured an additional 903.54 acres of land for its Alberta-wide IPCA network, expanding it to 2,187.02 acres.
- Over 600 Community Monitoring Forms have been submitted for fish and berry health monitoring, setting a new record.



Traditional Plant Walk

Overhead shot of Salay Prayzaan during the winter.



RENEWABLE ENERGY INITIATIVE

Salay Prayzaan (Métis Crossing Solar Project)

Salay Prayzaan is an Otipemisiwak Métis Government-owned community-generation solar project located at Métis Crossing. The 4.86-megawatt AC solar facility will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and generate economic and community benefits for community partners.

As of December 31, 2024, Salay Prayzaan has generated 5,910 megawatt-hours (MWh) of electricity, yielding a revenue of \$295,433 and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2,406 tonnes CO₂ equivalent.

Project Highlights

- Salay Prayzaan began generating power on December 8, 2023.
- In 2024, it produced 70% of what had been forecasted due to technical issues.
- SkyFire Energy was selected as its operations and maintenance provider.
- Salay Prayzaan won the 2025 Emerald Award in the Energy category.

Future Work

- Explore the addition of battery storage and agrivoltaics.

Solar System Installations on Otipemisiwak Métis Government Buildings

In 2018/19, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government secured funding from the provincial government to install small-scale, “own-use” solar systems on its properties. Also known as micro-generation sites, these solar systems were installed on 36 office buildings and residential units owned by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and its affiliates to produce clean energy and reduce electricity costs.

In 2024, these 36 systems produced 365,400 kWh of electricity, resulting in an estimated reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of 190 tonnes CO₂ equivalent. This is equivalent to the electricity usage of 50 Alberta homes or the GHG emissions reduction achieved by planting 3,165 trees. Through the solar installations, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government saved over \$45,000 on electricity bills and generated an extra \$5,000 in revenue through the sale of emissions offset credits.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY INITIATIVE

The Energy Efficiency Initiative's programs and projects improve the energy efficiency of Citizens' homes and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's buildings, reducing energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions.

- Deep Retrofits Accelerator Initiative (DRAI): The ECC Department collaborated with DRAI funding recipient Four Winds & Associates to start the process of installing deep retrofits in Otipemisiwak Métis Government buildings. As a participant in this initiative, the department also has access to mentorship and utility bill tracking for better energy efficiency upgrades.
- Through DRAI, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government completed energy audits at 10 Otipemisiwak Métis Government and affiliate-owned properties and now plans to perform detailed engineering work on select buildings.
- The department would like to thank Four Winds & Associates, Simplify Energy Consultants, and the Sustainability Projects Group for their support in making this project possible.
- The ECC Department and Métis Urban Housing Corporation (MUHC) established the Home Upgrades Program, successfully retrofitting 20 MUHC homes. Retrofits included energy efficiency upgrades such as building insulation and replacements for windows, furnaces, and water heaters.

- The new Energy Efficiency Retrofits Program was also co-developed by the ECC Department and MUHC. Through this initiative, eligible Citizens can apply to receive funding for energy efficiency retrofits that reduce energy consumption, lower emissions, and decrease energy costs. The program's pilot intake began accepting applications on June 2.

Future Work

- Develop long-term sustainability plans for Otipemisiwak Métis Government and affiliate buildings and operations.
- Continue collaborating with funders to secure new opportunities to make Otipemisiwak Métis Government and affiliate buildings more energy-efficient and climate-resilient through retrofits.
- Expand water tracking for Otipemisiwak Métis Government and affiliate buildings.
- Develop education for Citizens on energy efficiency and sustainability.

ENERGY MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

Greenhouse Gas Inventory

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government maintains an inventory of utility bills and related greenhouse gas emissions to monitor energy consumption at

Table 1: The utility usage and greenhouse gas emissions resulting from electricity and natural gas consumption by Otipemisiwak Métis Government and affiliate-owned properties in 2024 compared to 2018.

Total Energy Use	2018 (Base Year)	2024
Natural Gas	82,991 GJ	76,616 GJ
Electricity	6,752,104 kWh	6,811,462 kWh
Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions	2018 (Base Year)	2024
Natural Gas (Scope 1) GHG Emissions	4,291 tCO ₂ e	4,094 tCO ₂ e
Electricity (Scope 2) GHG Emissions	3,984 tCO ₂ e	4,019 tCO ₂ e
Total GHG Emissions	8,274 tCO ₂ e	8,113 tCO ₂ e

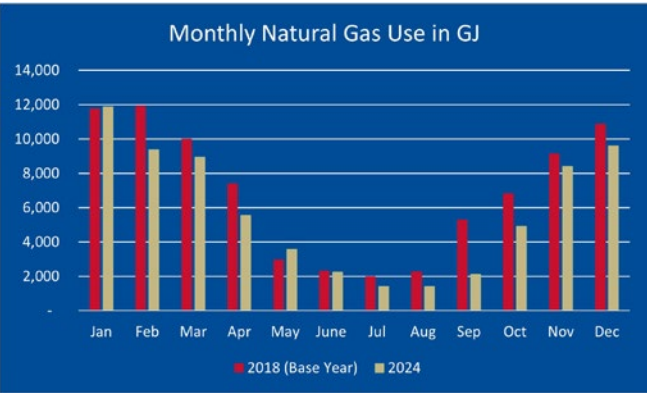
Note: The GHG emissions are calculated based on the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and are unverified. Calculated using the Alberta Carbon Emissions Factor Handbook (Version 1.0 and 3.1).

Otipemisiwak Métis Government and affiliate sites on an ongoing basis. This data makes it possible for the ECC team to assess the impact of completed energy efficiency projects. It is also used to inform the addition of energy efficiency and energy conservation measures that can reduce the Otipemisiwak Métis Government’s energy usage and provide cost savings.

Future Work

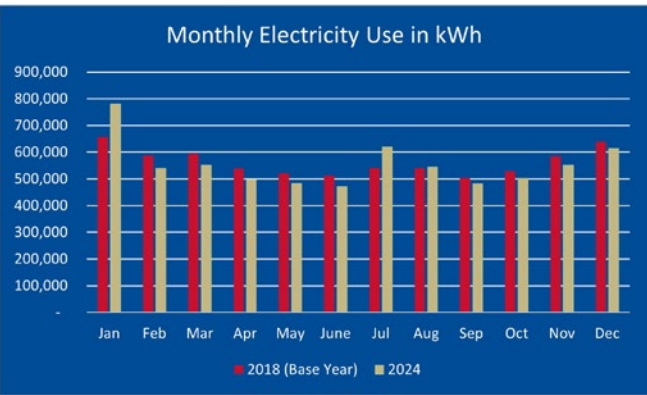
- Expand the Greenhouse Gas Inventory to include Scope 3 indirect emissions.

GHG Inventory Total Natural Gas Consumption



Total natural gas consumption by Otipemisiwak Métis Government and affiliate buildings in 2024 compared to 2018.

GHG Inventory Total Electricity Consumption



Total electricity usage by Otipemisiwak Métis Government and affiliate buildings in 2024 compared to 2018.

SUSTAINABILITY CAPACITY BUILDING

The ECC Department works closely with Otipemisiwak Métis Government affiliates to promote sustainability and climate action across every institution. This year, the ECC team and Métis Capital Housing Corporation, Métis Urban Housing Corporation (together referred to as Métis Housing), the Facility and Building Operations Department, and Métis Crossing worked together to hire Sustainability Officers. The Sustainability Officers will be responsible for advancing these organization’s sustainability efforts by reviewing and implementing long-term climate action plans and sustainability projects, enhancing their capacity.

One of the ways the ECC team coordinates climate change initiatives is through its quarterly Climate Table meetings, which are attended by both the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and its affiliates. Opportunities outlined in the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Climate Change Action Plan are also discussed and advanced during Climate Table meetings.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The ECC Department is committed to helping Métis Citizens navigate emergencies such as wildfires and flooding. This work includes creating emergency preparedness initiatives and resources, alongside raising awareness of emergency prevention and mitigation.

Project Highlights

- The Otipemisiwak Métis Government collaborated with the Districts of Fort McMurray and Jasper House to support Citizens affected by wildfire evacuations.
- The ECC Department developed Preparedness Information Fact Sheets. These covered topics such as setting up cooling kits, making an air purification fan, preparing for wildfires, and building emergency vehicle kits.

Future Work

- Continue to refine and develop emergency management preparedness information and resources.
- Create and launch ongoing social media campaigns focused on emergency management.
- Expand the Emergency Management team, which was recently joined by a Summer Student Assistant in spring 2025 and by an Emergency Management Coordinator.

Emergency Management Engagements

To gain a better understanding of Citizens' knowledge of emergency management, their past experiences, and their needs, the ECC team has been engaging with Citizens and Otipemisiwak Métis Government departments and affiliates through a series of interviews and surveys.

These engagements have provided the ECC team with a wealth of guidance and knowledge that will be used as a roadmap for future emergency preparedness and mitigation efforts.

Project Highlights

- The emergency management survey received over 800 responses from Citizens. Data collected from the survey is currently being analyzed to guide the planning and implementation of Citizen-focused emergency management initiatives.
- The ECC Department interviewed all Otipemisiwak Métis Government departments and affiliates to gain insight into their services and identify potential Citizen-focused emergency management supports for future crises.

Future Work

- Ensure future and ongoing emergency management efforts are grounded in traditional values and informed by knowledge learned from the land, Knowledge Keepers, and Elders.
- Develop future emergency management initiatives, preparedness, and mitigation strategies based on insights gained from surveys and interviews.
- Develop an emergency management framework for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.
- Continue developing emergency management initiatives that will support Citizens who are facing immediate emergencies.

ASKÎY COMMUNITY-BASED ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING INITIATIVE

The Askîy (Cree for "Earth" or "land") Initiative braids Métis Traditional Knowledge with Western Science methods to monitor and understand Citizen concerns about the environment and climate change. This initiative has been shaped and guided by Citizen engagements conducted in 2017 and 2023.

Environmental monitoring began in 2020 and consists of a combination of annual projects and opportunities for

Citizen learning. Askîy monitoring projects are focused on examining the health, distribution, and abundance of cultural keystone species, including traditionally harvested plants, fish, and wildlife. Community learning programs include the annual Bird and Plant Walks, events such as the Guardians Gatherings, and community events like Alberta Métis Fest.

Askîy Guardians Gathering

The ECC Department hosts Askîy Guardians Gatherings to share information about the Askîy Initiative and promote opportunities for Citizens to get involved in environmental monitoring.

On March 22 and 23, 2025, a two-day Askîy Guardians Gathering event was hosted at Camp Warwa at Lac Ste. Anne. Participating Citizens attended an ECC presentation on Askîy community monitoring programs and spent time on the ice to learn Métis ice fishing practices from Knowledge Holders and each other. They also had the opportunity to follow along with harvesters, who demonstrated setting a gill net, rod and reel fishing, and filleting fish.



Harvesters who helped lead the 2025 Winter Guardians Gathering alongside ECC staff. Harvesters assisted with teaching and helping Métis Citizens with all their ice fishing needs. From top left to right: Cody Dietz, Adam Gamble, Harlan Wakaluk, Kenny Blachford. Bottom left to right: Beverly Lambert, Dean Fahner, Waanita Chartrand.

Project Highlights

- 54 Métis community members, including friends and family, attended the March 2025 Askîy Guardians Gathering.
- 15 new Guardians have submitted Fish Health Community Monitor forms since attending the Askîy Guardians Gathering, highlighting the gatherings' success in boosting participation in Askîy monitoring programs.

Future Work

- Plan additional Askîy Guardians Gatherings and prioritize hosting winter gatherings across the province so all Citizens can attend.

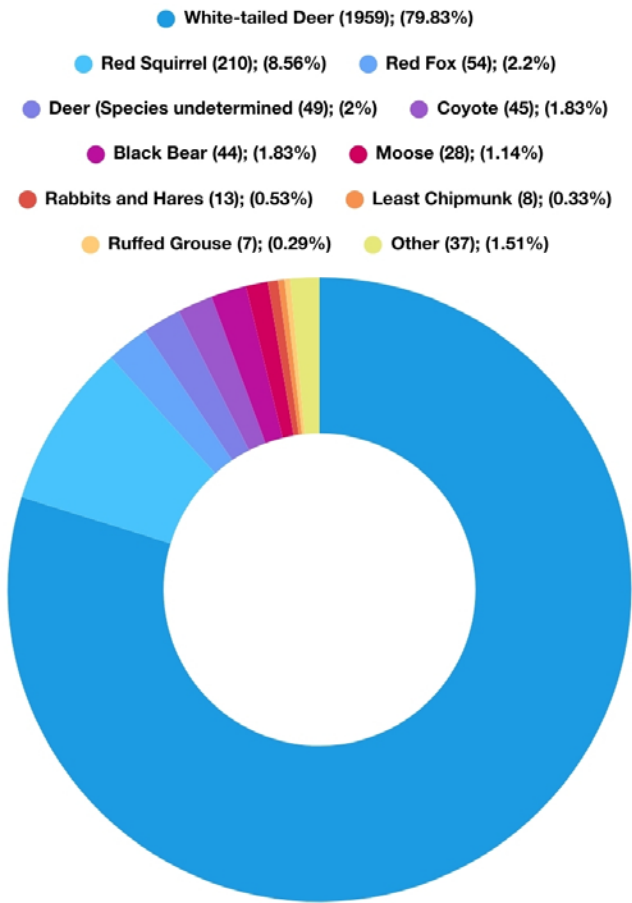
PLANT PROJECTS

Berry Health Monitoring

To address Citizens' concerns about changes in plant health and abundance, the ECC Department launched the Berry Health Monitoring project in 2020. In consultation with the community, the ECC team selected 36 berry harvesting sites that are now assessed on a yearly basis. Berry productivity, plant health, site species composition, and site characteristics, including canopy cover, are noted during each evaluation, making it possible for the department to track changes over time.

Project Highlights

- In 2024:
 - 94,160 plants were counted, spanning eight different berry species. The most frequently recorded species were chokecherries (45.7%), saskatoons (34.9%), pin cherries (6%), and gooseberries (5.6%) (based on recounted plants only).
 - Raspberries and blueberries were the most productive out of the monitored species. Over 99% of raspberry flowers developed into fruit!
- Cameras were deployed at nine monitoring sites to study the use of these berry patches by wildlife.
 - White-tailed deer were the most frequently recorded species and made up ~79.32% of total detections. Wildlife presence varied greatly between sites. White-tailed deer were detected at seven sites, red squirrels at five, and red foxes were only detected at one.



This graphic represents the composition of wildlife detected on berry patches across central Alberta throughout the summer months (May 30-July 18, 2024).

Citation: MNA ECC-Berry Health Monitoring 2024. [2024]. 'Berry Health Monitoring 2024'. Data accessed from WildTrax, [<https://discover.wildtrax.ca/>].



Future Work

- Continue to track plant health and productivity. Plant health trends will be evaluated and compared to local climate conditions to identify factors that may affect these invaluable species.
- Consider expanding monitoring activities to collect data about localized weather conditions and snow accumulation over the winter.

Community Berry Health Monitoring

In the summer of 2024, Berry Health Community Monitoring Forms were launched to support the ongoing Berry Health Monitoring Program. These forms provide valuable insight into the community's harvesting experiences and berry health across Alberta. By submitting berry harvesting trip reports, Citizens improve the ECC team's understanding of how their harvest could be impacted by climate change, industrial, and recreational activities.

Project Highlights

- Since launching in 2023, Citizens have submitted 331 monitoring forms.
- Citizens reported harvesting in 20 out of the 22 Districts across the province, ranging from Fort Chipewyan to Cypress Hills. Most harvesters travelled less than 60 kilometres to visit their berry-picking sites.
- July and August were the most popular months for berry picking, with saskatoons being the most targeted and harvested species.
- In 2023, 44% of people identified that they collected "enough" berries to meet their needs. This decline in satisfaction could indicate that outside influences may be making it more difficult for Citizens to meet their harvesting needs.

Future Work

- Relaunch the updated berry trip form in July 2025, so that Citizens can continue sharing their berry harvesting experiences and observations.
- Conduct an in-depth analysis of the results and compile it into an interactive public report.

Community Plant Walks

In 2024, the ECC Department hosted six Community Plant Walks around the province. This program aims to reconnect Métis Citizens with the land by providing learning opportunities and promoting sustainable harvesting practices. Participants learn about the cultural significance of local species, get space to familiarize themselves with species native to their area,

and learn how to approach plants with a respectful harvesting mindset.

Project Highlights

- Walks were led by Knowledge Holder Natalie Pepin of ReSkilled Life and hosted in Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Peace River, Slave Lake, and Lac La Biche.
- In total, 96 Citizens participated in the Community Plant Walks.
- In spring 2025, four walks were hosted in Edmonton and Calgary.



Get Your Garden Growing Garden Guide

To support Citizens' interest in learning how to garden and support their families with healthy produce, the ECC Department produced the beginner-friendly "Get Your Garden Growing" gardening guide. It was created with the recognition that online information can be overwhelming and not necessarily relevant to Alberta growers. Developed with the support of experienced local gardeners, it features community-sourced wisdom throughout its pages and will continue to evolve based on ongoing feedback.



Get Your Garden Growing guide and back cover artwork provided by Métis artist Elena Mercuri.

FISH PROJECTS

Fish Health Community Monitor Program

Launched in 2021, the Fish Health Community Monitor program provides Citizens with a way to report the health and vitality of the fish they catch. It is made up of three online forms, each of which collects different information:

- Fishing Trip report (effort, satisfaction, and catch rate)
- Fish Health Measurement report (length, weight, quality)
- Fish Palatability report

The ECC Department uses this data to understand the current state of fish, fishing, and waterbodies in Alberta. Seasonal prize draws are held to thank Askîy Guardians who participate in the program.

Project Highlights

- In the 2024–2025 season, 223 community members submitted a total of 393 reports from 113 different lakes:
 - 217 Fishing Trip reports
 - 103 Fish Health Measurement reports
 - 73 Fish Palatability reports
- Walleye, northern pike, and lake whitefish were the top three species caught and eaten by Askîy Guardians.

Future Work

- Analyze the data gained from this program and create an interactive public report that shares the results with the community.
- Use the data to inform future environmental monitoring and conservation work.
- Collect data for the fifth consecutive fishing season from June 2025 onward.

Targeted Fish Health Monitoring

In January and February 2025, youth, ECC staff, and a team of Métis harvesters travelled to four lakes to catch and assess fish as part of the Fish Health Monitoring Program. The team used traditional Métis ice-fishing methods to catch the fish, which were then measured, weighed, and examined for health indicators. At each lake, tissue samples were collected from 10 walleyes and 10 lake whitefish for mercury and other toxicology testing. Otoliths were also gathered from the fish to gather data on their age.

Project Highlights

- In 2025:
 - ECC staff and Métis harvesters monitored Christina Lake, Calling Lake, Lesser Slave Lake, and Moose Lake.
 - In total, 320 fish were sampled, the majority of which were walleyes, lake whitefish, northern pikes, burbot, and ciscoes.



Targeted Fish Health Monitoring Team. Top from left to right: Beth Blanchette (Engagement Coordinator), Craig Letendre (Harvesting Manager), Joshua Letendre (Harvester), Dwight Knull (Harvester), Jonathan Farrow-Scott (Youth), Keith Grant (Harvester), Anthony Pica (Aquatic Environmental Coordinator). Bottom left to right: Tycen Robinson (Youth), Kirsten Letendre (Harvester), Cheyanne Edmonds (Youth), Jac Curry (Wildlife Coordinator), Rayna Gilfillan (Wildlife Summer Student).

- Tissue samples testing for mercury, methylmercury, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons were collected from 10 walleye and lake whitefish at each lake.

Future Work

- Revisit Lesser Slave Lake and Calling Lake in 2028 to expand on the now-completed three-year baseline monitoring.
- Select two new lakes in 2026 and initiate targeted sampling protocols.
- Complete the third year of monitoring at Christina Lake and Moose Lake during the 2026 ice fishing season.
- Upload the results from age and toxicology sampling to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Fish Health ArcGIS StoryMaps in the coming months.

Askî Youth Environmental Monitoring

As part of the Lake Fish Monitoring program conducted in early 2025, three Métis youth participated in fish health sampling at Moose Lake and Lesser Slave Lake. The youth learned monitoring techniques and Métis Traditional Knowledge from harvesters and ECC staff, including how to set a gill net and assess fish health.



Harvesters teach Youth about the Jigger and how to use it. The Jigger is a Métis invention used to set gillnets under the ice in the winter months. Left to right: Craig Letendre (Harvesting Manager), Tycen Robinson (Youth), Jonathan Farrow-Scott (Youth), Keith Grant (Harvester).

Project Highlights

- See the “Targeted Fish Health Monitoring” section for a data summary.
- By sharing Traditional Knowledge with Métis youth and supporting their participation in the project, the ECC Department helped strengthen Métis resilience and community connections.
- Intergenerational knowledge was exchanged between Métis harvesters and youth.
- At the end of the program, the youth shared their thoughts in one-on-one interviews, which will be featured in a recap video that’s expected to be published in early fall 2025.

WILDLIFE PROJECTS

iHunter ABHuntLog

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government partnered with the Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) and the University of Alberta to continue participating in the ABHuntLog project. Through the iHunter app, ABHuntLog collects anonymized data from self-identified Métis harvesters who are out on hunting or scouting trips. Collected data helps track species population trends, provides insight into land-use activities, and documents areas where Citizens exercise their Section 35 rights. The Otipemisiwak Métis Government retains ownership of all data submitted by this user group.

Project Highlights

- ABHuntLog gathers trip data, including the number of days spent hunting or scouting, the number of animals harvested, and the total distance travelled.
- Of the 1,401 total respondents in 2024, 53 individuals identified as Métis harvesters. They reported 55 trips in total (91% of which occurred from September to December).
- The regional distribution of these trips was as follows: Northern Boreal (56%), Foothills (27%), Parkland (7%), Prairies (7%), Mountains (1.8%).
- A free version of the app was launched in 2024 to boost participation.

Future Work

- Encourage Citizens to use ABHuntLog during the 2026 hunting season.
- Analyze data shared during the 2023-2025 hunting seasons.

Chronic Wasting Disease – Community Awareness

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a prion disease that affects ungulates, primarily mule deer, in Alberta. CWD mainly occurs in Southern Alberta, outside of recognized Otipemisiwak Métis Government harvesting zones, but it is spreading. As the effects of CWD on humans are not fully understood at this time, people are encouraged to submit the heads of the animals they've harvested for testing, especially if they're hunting in affected areas.

The ECC Department runs yearly campaigns to promote safe harvesting practices and raise awareness of CWD.

Migratory Bird Harvesting Survey

With funding support from the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), the ECC Department completed its annual migratory bird harvesting survey for the 2024 harvesting season. The primary purpose of this survey is to collect harvesting data from Otipemisiwak Métis Government harvesters in Alberta that informs CWS' migratory bird conservation work.

Project Highlights

- 149 Citizens participated in the survey during the 2024 harvest season.
 - 1,173 birds, spanning 23 different species, were reported to have been harvested across Alberta.
 - The most common migratory bird species harvested were Canada geese (440), snow geese (237) and mallards (197).



- Citizens can view data from 2019 up to 2023 on the Migratory Bird Survey Results StoryMap.



Future Work

- Run a survey next winter to examine the 2025 migratory bird harvest.



Community Bird Walks

In 2024, the ECC Department hosted four Community Bird Walks around the province. Observing birds in their habitats encouraged Citizens to practice stewardship through citizen science, promoted the exchange of knowledge and created an opportunity for Citizens to share their appreciation for the land.

Project Highlights

- Partnering with local guides, the ECC team offered Community Bird Walks in Edmonton, Calgary, Peace River, and Lethbridge.
- In total, the Community Bird Walks successfully engaged 29 people and received positive feedback.

Future Work

- Host a Bird Walk in June 2025 at Alberta Métis Fest. Citizens can also sign up for the Edmonton, Calgary, or Red Deer Bird Walk. The walks are co-hosted by the ECC team and Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizen Ariane Inman of Bird Dreams, a Sherwood Park-based eco-tourism company.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

The Environmental Conservation Initiative aims to protect the lands, waters, and air that Métis Citizens across Alberta rely on to practice their culture and traditions. Together with the Askîy Community-Based Environmental Monitoring Initiative, projects that fall under this initiative

will work to address environmental concerns and create opportunities for Citizens to engage in land stewardship.

Pilot IPCA: Muskoseya Ispikaa'pawew

In 2023, the ECC Department established a 158-acre pilot Métis-led Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) near Edmonton. The pilot IPCA provided Otipemisiwak Métis Government staff with the experience and model they needed to start the process of establishing IPCAs throughout the province. Through engagement with our Citizens, Knowledge Holders, and our Language Revitalization team, it has been named Muskoseya Ispikaa'pawew, meaning The Grass Stands High. The ECC Department continues to work on expanding the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's IPCA network.

Project Highlights

- 154 acres of the IPCA property were submitted to the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) as a Protected Area to contribute to Canada's goal to conserve 30% of its lands and waters by 2030.
- A series of 8 interpretive signs and a trailhead sign were designed in 2024. The signs will be installed along a 1.3 km walking trail on Muskoseya Ispikaa'pawew in spring 2025.
- A seating area featuring wooden benches and a fire pit was installed in 2024 for Otipemisiwak Métis Government programs and community use.
- Nearly 200 species have been observed using Muskoseya Ispikaa'pawew's grassland, wetland, and forest habitats.

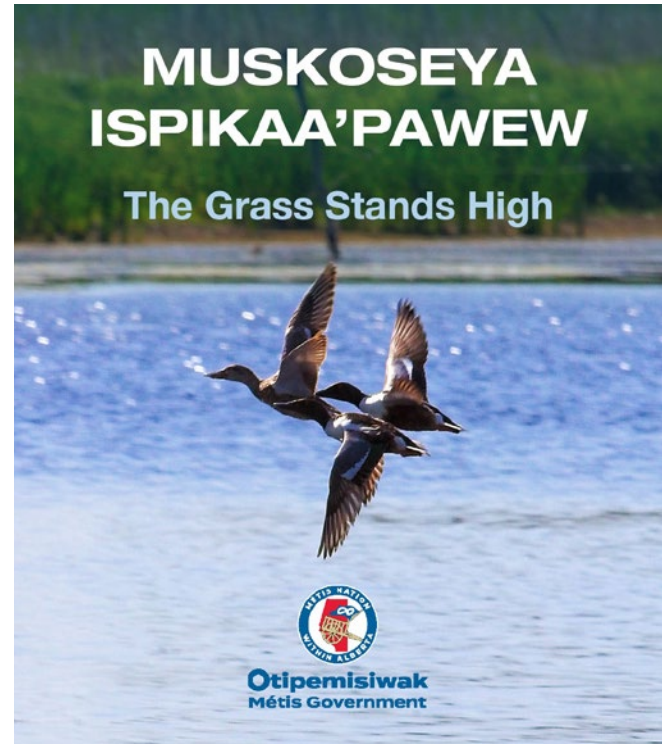
Future Work

- Open Muskoseya Ispikaa'pawew to the public in the summer of 2025.
- Commence Citizen programs and stewardship events in the summer of 2025. These opportunities will be promoted via the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's social media channels.

Supporting Species at Risk on Muskoseya Ispikaa'pawew

In 2024, the ECC Department received funding from the Indigenous Partnerships for Species at Risk (IPSAR) program to monitor and support sensitive species and their habitat at Muskoseya Ispikaa'pawew. The project centres on three species at risk: the barn swallow (listed as Special Concern), the yellow-banded bumble bee (Special Concern), and the gypsy cuckoo bumble bee (Endangered). As part of this project, the ECC team is

constructing nesting structures for and monitoring barn swallows, conducting monitoring and habitat assessments for bumble bees, creating interpretive signage to raise awareness of these at-risk species, and creating opportunities for Citizens to get involved.



The Pilot IPCA, Muskoseya Ispikaa'pawew.

Project Highlights

- ECC staff conducted a total of 8 bumble bee monitoring surveys and 5 habitat assessments between May and September 2024. Their findings were as follows:
 - 10 species were recorded.
 - 16 at-risk bumble bee individuals were recorded.
 - 1 nest was detected.
- Two barn swallow nesting structures were constructed, providing a total of 24 nest cups.
- As of April 2025, barn swallow monitoring surveys are being conducted weekly to examine nesting structure use.
- Interpretative signage for both the at-risk bumble bee species and the barn swallows was finalized in March 2025.
- CBC published an article and video that featured some of the project.



Read the
CBC article

Future Work

- Continue bumble bee monitoring surveys and habitat assessments through 2025/26.
- Continue barn swallow monitoring through 2025/26.
- Host Citizen-focused species at risk programming in 2026.

Expanding the IPCA Network

The ECC Department continued its work of establishing a network of Métis-led IPCAs in Alberta to fulfill the core values identified by Citizens during IPCA engagements held in late 2020.

Project Highlights

A series of land purchases were made over the last year to establish IPCAs and expand our IPCA network:

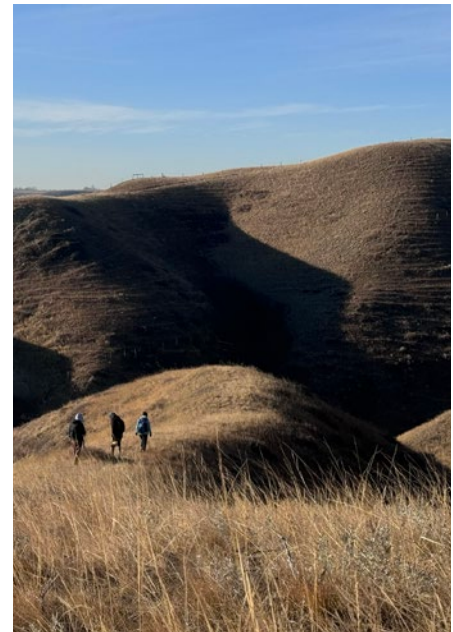
- In October 2024, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government purchased 151 acres of land featuring native grasslands and coulee habitat near Lethbridge.
- In February 2025, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government purchased 156 acres of land featuring native grasslands and coulee habitat near Drumheller.
- In March 2025, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government purchased 156 acres of land featuring tame grasslands, forest, and wetland habitat in Strathcona County. The properties connect with the Golden Ranches Conservation Area and support ecological connectivity to Elk Island National Park.



Bumble bee surveys and barn swallow nesting structures on Muskoseya Ispikaa'pawew.

Future Work

- Conduct baseline monitoring of the new IPCA properties and assess habitat health, biodiversity, the presence of invasive species, and maintenance issues.
- Share data obtained from baseline monitoring activities with Citizens over the next year to get feedback on management activities, stewardship opportunities, programming, and potential names for the IPCAs.
- Continue securing funds, evaluating potential lands to expand the IPCA network, exploring partnerships, and creating opportunities for Citizens to participate in land stewardship and conservation programs.



Our newest IPCA properties near Strathcona County, Drumheller, and Lethbridge.

Native Bee Conservation Program

The Native Bee Conservation Program provides Citizens with Bee Kits, which contain everything they need to provide food and shelter to Alberta's native bees: a bee nesting box, native wildflower seeds, and educational materials about pollinators. In the spring of 2024, the ECC Department mailed out 254 Bee Kits to Citizens.

Project Highlights

- Citizens can now browse native bee conservation resources and an FAQ on the program's new landing page.
- The ECC Department has created an iNaturalist project, making it possible for Citizens to submit photos of the native bees that use their boxes.

In 2024

- 18 observations were uploaded to the iNaturalist project.
- 223 Citizens completed a feedback survey.
 - 67% of Citizens reported their nesting boxes being used.
 - 96% of Citizens had bees use the wildflowers they planted.
 - 9 different bee groups were seen, with bumble bees being the most common.

In 2025

- Nearly 300 Citizens registered for a chance to participate in the 2025 program.
- A new bee nesting box model was distributed in partnership with Scopa.
- 150 Bee Kits were provided to Citizens.

Future Work

- Seek opportunities to offer this program in 2026 and continue to evaluate how the program can be improved and expanded based on feedback from program participants.
- Update the Program's StoryMap.
- Create a bee nesting box maintenance tutorial video.

Conservation Land Access Dashboard (CLAD)

In August 2023, the ECC Department launched the Conservation Land Access Dashboard (CLAD). This interactive dashboard is an easy-to-navigate tool that Citizens can use to identify publicly accessible conservation sites across Alberta. It also displays

permitted land-use activities at each site, including traditional plant gathering, hunting, fishing, and camping.

This dashboard was developed as an interim solution to support Citizens in finding land access opportunities while the ECC Department works to increase land access through the establishment of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs).

Project Highlights

- CLAD highlights 1,065 publicly accessible conservation sites across Alberta from a large swath of organizations (e.g., Alberta Conservation Association, Nature Conservancy Canada, Parks Canada, Alberta Parks, etc.).
- CLAD has been visited over 2,767 times over the past year (May 7, 2024 – May 7, 2025).
- Recently, CLAD was updated to Version 1.10, which includes:
 - The addition of snowmobiling as a land-use activity, along with a corresponding filter. Users can now check which conservation sites permit snowmobiles on-site, off-site (for staging areas and campgrounds), or on-ice (for ice fishing).
 - Changes to the dashboard layout and language, easier access to visitation rules, as well as the addition of conservation sites' permission/booking links.

Future Work

- Update CLAD yearly (typically between December and February) to reflect any additions, removals or changes to conservation sites identified by the ECC Department's partners, as well as any changes to the conservation sites' permitted land-use activities.
- Continue to explore potential partnerships with organizations to expand the number of highlighted conservation sites within the Dashboard.



View the
Conservation
Land Access
Dashboard

PARKS CANADA PROJECTS

Ecological Corridor IPCA

In March 2025, the ECC Department acquired 156 acres of land in Strathcona County using funding from Parks Canada's National Program for Ecological Corridors, which will support terrestrial wildlife movement across the Beaver Hills Biosphere. As part of the broader IPCA initiative, this IPCA will provide Citizens and the public

with opportunities to connect with the land, learn more about Métis culture, and increase harvesting access in the region.

Project Highlights

- The IPCA property features nearly 1 km of shoreline on North Cooking Lake and contains a mix of forest, wetland, and open grassland habitat. It is situated within the Cooking Lake moraine, an internationally recognized area known for its highly productive wetlands.
- The IPCA supports connectivity with Elk Island National Park and the Cooking Lake-Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area to the north, and with the Golden Ranches Conservation Area and Ministik Lake Game Bird Sanctuary to the south.
- The ecological corridor supported by this IPCA is utilized by white-tailed deer, moose, elk, beaver, porcupine, grouse, and various species of waterfowl and songbirds.

Future Work

- Complete baseline monitoring activities, including the deployment of remote cameras and autonomous recording units (ARUs) that will examine habitat health, biodiversity, the presence of invasive species, and maintenance issues. Data collected will be shared with Citizens to inform IPCA management activities, stewardship opportunities, and programming.
- Set up interpretive signage that highlights various aspects of Métis culture, describes the different plants and animals in the area, and explains the importance of ecological connectivity across the landscape.

CITIZEN LAND-BASED STEWARDSHIP

Native Seed Collection Event

In partnership with Parks Canada, the ECC Department held its first-ever Native Seed Collection event at Elk Island National Park in September 2024. The full-day event included transportation from Edmonton to the park and back, a catered lunch, instruction led by ECC staff, and hands-on seed collection at different locations in the park. The seeds collected from this event were cleaned, processed, and stored in the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's seed bank. They will be used for future restoration purposes on IPCAs.

Project Highlights

- During the Native Seed Collection event, 19 volunteers collected seeds from 7 different native plant species.
- Volunteers shared overwhelmingly positive comments in their post-event feedback, indicating a strong desire and need for more land-based stewardship projects and initiatives that include Citizen participation.

Future Work

- Host more Native Seed Collection events this summer and fall to provide additional stewardship opportunities to Citizens.
- Continue to strengthen the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's relationship with Elk Island National Park and work collaboratively to increase opportunities for land-based stewardship within and outside of the park.

ECC staff and Citizens collecting native seeds during an event at Elk Island National Park.



ENGAGEMENT & POLICY

Over the past year, the ECC team engaged with over 3,500 Citizens through in-person and online events, information-sharing initiatives, and various programs. Ongoing Citizen engagement and feedback continue to drive program planning and delivery while informing policy and decision-making.

Energy & Climate Engagements

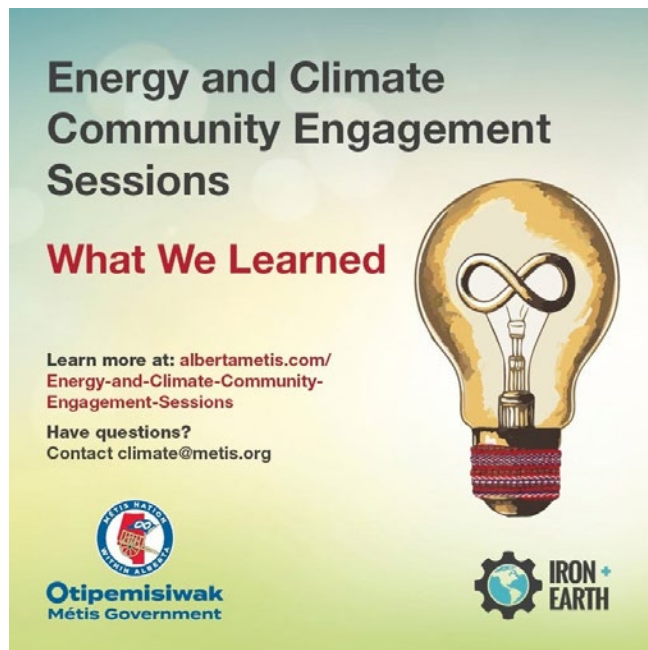
In the spring of 2024, the ECC team collaborated with Iron and Earth to better understand the perspective of Métis Citizens regarding the “just energy transition.” The ECC team held several in-person and online sessions to discuss the switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources with energy workers, their families, and communities.

After analyzing feedback from 283 participants, the ECC Department identified three key energy priorities: concerns about the cost of energy and affordability, the reliability of energy access, and the need to reduce the environmental impact of the energy sector. Citizens envisioned an energy transition that integrates diverse perspectives and promotes balanced approaches, while also emphasizing transparency in decision-making and local solutions.

Specific guidance for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government included providing more information about renewable energy technology, financial support for retrofits and utilities, continuing engagement and advocacy efforts, and supporting workers in gaining access to training.



Read the
Energy and Climate
Change
Community
Engagement
Sessions
summary



Energy Transition Sessions: What We Learned.

Food Security and Seed Mail Out

In January 2025, the ECC team launched the Seed Mail Out program, which provides Métis Citizens with the materials, tools, and educational resources necessary to produce their own food through home gardening. The program aims to enhance food resilience and self-sufficiency among Citizens, supporting the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's efforts toward collective food security and sovereignty.

This year, the program sent Seed Mail Out packages to 400 Métis households. Each package contained one of

three different seed package options, which were each tailored to different growing regions and growing spaces. Additionally, each household received a set of garden tools and the "Get Your Garden Growing" guide, which provides beginner-friendly gardening tips for planning and maintaining a garden.

Project Highlights

- Over 1,000 Citizens registered for the Seed Mail Out Program.
- 400 Citizens across Alberta received seed packages and gardening materials.

Future Work

- Seek opportunities to continue offering the program next year.
- Request feedback from this year's recipients to identify ways to improve and expand the program.

Species at Risk Engagements

In March and April 2025, the ECC team held five in-person and two online engagements and hosted an online survey to better understand the concerns and priorities of Métis Citizens about species at risk in Alberta. Participants were asked about both formally listed species at risk and those that are important to them, as well as their priorities for species protection efforts led by Citizens, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, and the federal and provincial governments.

To support these engagements, a Knowledge Holders Gathering was held at Métis Crossing. The Gathering lasted a full day and succeeded in fostering deeper discussions about Métis relationships with species at risk and the future of species at risk protection.

Project Highlights

- 72 Citizens participated in the online and in-person engagements.
- 11 Knowledge Holders participated in the Knowledge Holders Gathering.



Species At Risk engagement session at the Edmonton Valley Zoo.

Future Work

- Run a survey from May 2025 to June 2025 to reach Citizens who could not attend the engagements.
- Analyze the data from the engagements and survey and distribute the findings to Citizens and other Otipemisiwak Métis Government departments to help inform future programming and advocacy.

Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment

The weather is becoming less predictable, and environmental hazards such as wildfires and floods are occurring more frequently. In November 2024, the ECC Department hosted several Climate Risk webinars to gain a deeper understanding of future climate change impacts in each Otipemisiwak Métis Government District. Expert speakers shared insights into the changes that can be expected in the coming decades and their potential impacts on our communities. Recordings of these sessions can be found online.

Additionally, the ECC team is compiling data to better inform future climate adaptation practices. This includes examining climate change risks, such as wildfires, flooding, and storms, to determine what actions must be taken to minimize their impacts on Citizens.

In January 2025, the ECC team also hosted two Métis Climate Action gatherings, inviting 40 Knowledge Holders to participate in discussions about climate change in Alberta and to explore culturally appropriate paths for fostering resilient communities. To gain more insight into

how climate change is already impacting people, the ECC Department launched a “Let’s Get Prepared Together” survey for Citizens and received over 800 responses. This data is currently being analyzed and compiled into a report to help guide the actions the Otipemisiwak Métis Government will take to navigate climate change.

Promoting Sustainability

The ECC team continues to provide information and resources to support Citizens in making eco-conscious decisions. Over the last year, sustainability tips were shared in the bi-weekly Voyageur Voice newsletter along with grants and opportunities to help promote environmental stewardship.

Through quarterly collaboration with Otipemisiwak Métis Government affiliates and the ECC Climate Table, the ECC Department shares funding streams and explores ideas for working together to make the Otipemisiwak Métis Government more environmentally sustainable. Staff also provide materials and resources by participating in Otipemisiwak Métis Government events and distributing them at their department’s booth.

The ECC team continues to run the Environment and Climate Change Speaker Spotlight, an initiative that invites Métis community members and industry professionals to talk about environmental stewardship, sustainability, and climate action from a Métis lens. Since late 2022, 12 virtual sessions have been hosted, covering topics such as food security, emergency preparedness, cultural burning, harvesting, and more.



Watch past
Speaker
Spotlights



Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Knowledge Holders
Gathering participants in Edmonton, January 18, 2025.

Each Speaker Spotlight session has been recorded and can be found on albertametis.com. Stay tuned for upcoming sessions via the bi-weekly newsletter and our social media channels! If you are interested in presenting, please reach out to climate@metis.org.

Policy & Advocacy

The ECC Department actively engages with other governments, organizations, and Indigenous Peoples at the local, national, and international levels on issues surrounding nature conservation and climate change. ECC staff regularly participate in key meetings and collaborative discussions, highlight Métis-led environmental and climate initiatives as panel participants, and provide feedback on policy and program development. This work ensures that Métis perspectives and voices are heard and represented in all forums concerning environment and climate action.

Project Highlights

- ECC staff attended and participated in sessions at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP) 29th meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan, as well as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) 16th Conference of the Parties (COP-16) in Cali, Colombia. They completed this work alongside Jason Chernow, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's then-Provincial Secretary of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management.
- ECC staff attended the Goose Moon Table Meetings (formerly known as the Canada-Métis Nation Table on Clean Growth and Climate Change) and Strawberry Moon Table Meetings on Nature to build relationships, share information on joint policy development, and identify Métis-specific considerations for programming and funding.

Future Work

- Continue to tailor program development to Citizens' needs, focusing on the impacts of climate change on Citizens, tackling emergency preparedness, hosting engagements on species at risk, and developing resources with a Métis lens.
- Continue promoting sustainability while reducing our internal environmental footprint by enhancing initiatives and capacity support for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and its affiliates.
- Continue expanding our advocacy and support for Citizens by implementing policies and practices that ensure community voices are amplified in discussions about how to effectively support Métis-led environmental stewardship and climate action.

CONCLUSION AND WHAT'S NEXT

The ECC Department remains dedicated to minimizing environmental impacts while safeguarding the culture and traditions of Métis Citizens. Through the Askîy Initiative, our ongoing monitoring efforts will establish baseline data that will help us detect environmental changes and trends. This commitment also includes securing lands for environmental conservation and empowering Citizens to eventually be able to engage in Métis-led land stewardship.

The ECC Department will continue to advance the Climate Change Action Plan by implementing initiatives aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing Métis engagement and awareness of climate change, and fostering capacity-building and economic opportunities for Métis Citizens. We continue to work on behalf of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and its affiliates to fulfill the mandate from Citizens to take meaningful action on climate change.

The ECC Department will continue maintaining a collaborative relationship with Citizens by listening to their concerns and seeking feedback to guide the development of new programs, while also advocating for policies that reflect the needs of Citizens. We are continually working to support our Emergency Management planning and programming and advance the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's collective efforts towards food sovereignty.

Above all, we are committed to empowering Citizens with the knowledge, tools, and opportunities necessary to embrace sustainable living, reduce their carbon footprint, engage in environmental conservation, and raise awareness about environmental issues and potential impacts. We invite Citizens to reach out and share any comments, questions, or ideas with our team at environment@metis.org or climate@metis.org. ■

Harvesting

The Harvesting Department continues to focus on creating efficiency in the harvesting card process to ensure we are mailing cards quickly to approved Harvesters. The average turnaround time for harvesting cards is approximately 6 to 8 weeks. We have assisted in updating Alberta RELM accounts for our Citizens, so they can print off their domestic fishing licence (DFL). In addition, we have facilitated another round of the Harvester Relief Support (HRS) Program, which benefited Otipemisiwak Métis Government-approved Harvesters by assisting with costs surrounding harvesting. The Harvesting Department also continues to hold land-based learning sessions for Métis women in Alberta, as well as assist all departments with any of their harvesting needs.

HARVESTING APPLICATIONS

The first harvester applications were accepted on September 1, 2019. To date, we have over 15,000 approved Harvesters. In the 2024 fiscal year, the Harvesting Department received a total of 3,132 harvesting applications, which averages approximately 261 harvester applications per month.

The Harvesting Department is continually updating Citizens' Alberta RELM accounts. During this process,

a Harvester's status is changed on their Alberta RELM account to "Recognized Métis Harvester." This means that Harvesters no longer need to go to the Alberta Fish & Wildlife office to update their account as we can now complete this task in-house. The Alberta government updated the Domestic Fishing Regulations on April 1, 2025 so we ask that all Harvesters continue to follow the Domestic Fishing Regulations.



**Read Domestic
Fishing
Regulations
for 2025/26**

HARVESTER RELIEF SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Harvester Relief Support (HRS) Program was extremely successful in the 2024 fiscal year. It provided our approved Harvesters with a maximum \$200 reimbursement for many of their harvesting needs, such as ammunition, butchering costs, deep freezers, fishing equipment, and more. In total, we were able to assist 523 approved Harvesters.



Grant Lacombe, Craig Letendre, Amber Boyd, Donovan Taylor, Shauna Taylor, Tim Taylor, Joel Gamache, Adrian Pruden, Amy Dunlop, Bernie Ouelette, Nikki Jackman, Trevor Pambrun, Marvin Goodon.

Attendees of the Youth Culture Camp and Youth Department



FISHING EVENTS

The Harvesting Department supports all departments of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government in relation to their harvesting needs.

In early June of 2024, the Harvesting team, with the help of then-Secretary Tai Amy Grauman, held another Métis Women's Fishing Day on the shores of Pigeon Lake. We had 15 to 20 women join us for our Catch-Clean-Cook

Fishing Day. On this day, we gifted the Métis women with their own fishing gear and taught them how to tie their lures, bait their hooks, and shore fishing practices using a pickerel rig. We also gifted them with a filleting knife set and taught them how to fillet walleye. To top off the day, we gifted the women with a cast-iron frying pan and taught them how to cook their catch. We also enjoyed a fresh walleye fish-and-chips lunch on the shore.

From June 21-23, 2024, the Harvesting Department set up a table at Alberta Métis Fest, held at Métis Crossing, to perform a walleye filleting demonstration throughout the day, as well as talk about the gill net setting process, which always draws a crowd.

From July 4-7, the Harvesting Department assisted District 15 Citizens' Representative Bobbi Paul-Alook with the Fort Vermilion Culture Camp. We demonstrated various activities such as teaching how to tie lures, and had a chance to go down to the river and experience some casting. We also went on plant walks and taught rabbit snaring. It was a great experience for the youth and everyone involved.

On July 22, we assisted the Youth Department with their Youth Culture Camp. Here we went out to Cross Lake and taught the youth how to tie their lures, as well as how to use a pickerel rig for shore fishing. One youth caught a fish, which was extremely exciting for everyone.

In mid-September, the Harvesting team assisted the Children and Family Services Department with the Nurturing Connections Family Gathering in Calgary.



Joshua Letendre, Anthony Pica, Dwight Knull, Jac Curry, Keith Grant, Analena Theisen, Caitlin Wagner, Craig Letendre.



During this event, the Harvesting Department talked about the history of gill net fishing and demonstrated the various tools and equipment used to gill net fish. We also discussed the use of the “Prairie Ice Jigger” which was a Métis invention.

In October, with the help of then-Secretary Grauman and Secretary Brooke Bramfield, the Harvesting team held another very successful Métis Women’s Fishing Day in District 17 Fort McMurray on the shores of the Clearwater River. This was similar to Women’s Fishing Days in the past and was very successful, with quite a few fish caught by the women.

At the end of October, the Harvesting Department joined in the Métis Cultural Hunt for bison in Banff National Park. This historic event would be the first bison hunt in the park in over 145 years. A huge thank you to District 4 Rocky View District Captain Amber Boyd for all the hard work she put into ensuring this hunt was successful. Although a bison was not harvested, that is not the only measure of success. A lot of great knowledge and great Métis friendships were gained during this hunt.

This past winter, the Harvesting Department worked alongside the Environment and Climate Change Department on two separate occasions for the Askîy Fish Health study. Gill nets were set at four different lakes across Alberta (Christina Lake and Calling Lake the first week, Moose Lake and Lesser Slave Lake the second week). Once again, the Environment team invited Métis youth aged 18 to 29 to submit a short message about their Métis connections and what it would mean for them to take part in the fish study. Four Métis youth were selected

to join the project and learn about setting gill nets and processing the fish for testing, as well as all other aspects of fishing. The project was a huge success, and the Environment team was able to collect enough samples and data pertaining to the provincial lakes and overall fish health. The Environment department was able to secure funding to have the fish sent and tested for a variety of different elements, such as mercury levels.

In the spring, our Harvesting team assisted the Children and Family Services Department in facilitating the Frosty Reels Family Fishing Camp. This year the camps were held at Camp Maskepetoon on the north shore of Pigeon



Attendees of the Pigeon Lake Women’s Fishing Day.

Joshua Letendre, Anthony Pica, Dwight Knull, Jac Curry, Keith Grant, Beth Blanchette, Rayna Gilfillan, Cheyanne Edmonds, Tycen Robinson, Jonathan Farrow-Scott.



Lake and ran on multiple weekends; we were able to add one more weekend this year for a total of five. Camp Maskepetoon has 11 cabins and this year we were able to facilitate approximately 50 families to come and stay in a cabin for the weekend and enjoy the incredible outdoors. Each family member who attended received an ice fishing rod and reel, an ice fishing bucket and lures to keep, as well as a filleting kit for each family. In addition, they were able to fish Pigeon Lake on Saturday and try their new

rods on the ice. Families were also able to see and learn how a gill net was traditionally set through the ice using the “Prairie Ice Jigger,” which was originally designed by Métis fishermen in the early 1900s. Everyone was treated to a fresh walleye fish-and-chips feast right on the ice. We would like to take this opportunity to recognize all the Knowledge Holders and Harvesters who helped with the fish study and the family camps. Your knowledge and assistance are very much appreciated! ■



Family from the Frosty Reels Family Fishing Camp.



Attendees of the Fort McMurray Women's Fishing Day.

Health

The Health Department is dedicated to advancing the health and wellness priorities of our Citizens. Over the past year, we have advanced a range of health research initiatives to better understand and support the unique needs of Métis Albertans. Through strong partnerships, we have focused on generating culturally grounded evidence to inform programs, policies, and services. From enhancing cancer care and screening efforts, to exploring children's perspectives on health and well-being. Our work continues to centre Métis voices, experiences, and priorities. Beyond health research, our community wellness programs are designed to provide culturally safe, accessible, and responsive services that support holistic well-being.

This past year, our programs have continued to grow and evolve, reflecting both the diversity of our Citizens and the increasing demand for comprehensive wellness supports across the province. Every initiative is rooted in our commitment to community care and grounded in the understanding that identity, land, and kinship are central to well-being. We are especially proud to advance a transformative, Nation-led approach to healing and wellness through initiatives such as *New Beginnings*, *Healing Waters*, and *Pishkayhta* – a comprehensive continuum of culturally safe recovery supports. These efforts reflect our commitment to ensuring that recovery is not a journey taken alone, but one deeply supported by community, culture, and connection.

Health Research Projects

CANCER

Over the past year, the Health Department continued to implement the *Alberta Métis Cancer Strategy*. In partnership with Cancer Care Alberta, we promoted the Métis Cancer Care Course to advance cultural safety in cancer care for Métis Albertans. Over 100 cancer care professionals across Alberta registered for this course. We also delivered presentations at cancer centres throughout

BREAST CANCER SCREENING

Get Screened.
Cancer screening saves lives.

What is a mammogram?

A mammogram is a breast x-ray that detects small, abnormal cells.

When should I have a mammogram?

You should have a mammogram **every two years from age 45 to 74.**



Otipemisiwak
Métis Government



CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING

Get Screened.



Cancer screening saves lives.

What is a Pap test?

A Pap test is a swab of the cervix to check for abnormal cells.

When should I have a Pap test?

You should have a Pap test **every three years from age 25 to 69.**

COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING

Get Screened.



Cancer screening saves lives.

What is a FIT?

A FIT (fecal immunochemical test), or a poop test, checks for traces of blood in your poop you cannot see.

When should I have a FIT?

You should have a FIT **every year from age 50 to 74.**

the province to advocate for improved cancer care and support for Métis Albertans and their loved ones.

In collaboration with the University of Calgary and Alberta Health Services Screening Programs, we created two publications sharing findings from our previous cancer screening survey. These include:

1. *Barriers to and facilitators of breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening and cancer screening histories of Métis people in Alberta, Canada* in the Journal of Circumpolar Health.
2. *Cancer Screening Survey Community Report* published on the Otipemisiwak Métis Government website.

Building on this work, we launched the Cancer Screening Health Promotion Campaign to raise awareness of and increase participation in breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screening programs in Alberta.

In March 2025, the Health Department held its first Cancer Peer Support Retreat at Métis Crossing in partnership with Wellspring Alberta. This retreat welcomed Métis Albertans and their loved ones affected by cancer to connect, share experiences, and participate in cultural activities. We continue to promote the Indigenous Cancer Sharing Circle offered by Wellspring Alberta to provide a culturally grounded space for Métis Albertans experiencing cancer to find connection and support.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH

The Lii Zaanfaan ("The Children") Project focuses on the health and well-being of Métis children aged 10 and younger in Alberta. This collaboration between the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, the University of Alberta, and Queen's University aims to understand the health determinants affecting Métis children and identify culturally grounded actions to support their wellness.

Over the past year, the Health Department, in collaboration with academic partners, completed the analysis of the Lii Zaanfaan Children's Health and Well-being Survey, which received 986 validated responses from caregivers. The findings from this survey offer valuable insights into the physical, emotional, and cultural dimensions of Métis children's health.

We also delivered 180 Cultural Craft Kits to Métis children across the province. These kits provided children with materials and prompts to explore various art forms and express their thoughts on health, happiness, and Métis identity. We received 48 completed art projects that offered powerful reflections on joy, cultural identity, and belonging from the perspectives of Métis children. Selected pieces were featured in the Lii Zaanfaan Virtual Art Gallery and displayed at the Citizens' Gathering in August 2024.

In June 2024, we hosted two Métis family gatherings in Edmonton and Calgary, welcoming 27 adults and 25 children. The gatherings used conversational methods to explore caregiving, community connection, and childhood well-being. Participants reflected on what it means to grow up Métis, what supports are needed to help children thrive, and what additional resources would strengthen caregiver capacity. These dialogues reinforced the importance of culturally relevant supports and the strength of Métis families.



EMERGENCY CARE

In collaboration with partners from Alberta Health Services, the University of Alberta, and the University of Calgary, the Health Department launched the Quality of Care for Métis in Alberta Emergency Departments Project. This project aims to inform the development of interventions that will promote culturally safe health systems and care practices for Métis people with emergent and urgent health needs.

In May and June 2024, we engaged 32 Métis Albertans and their loved ones through community gatherings and telephone interviews. The engagements were grounded in Métis ways of knowing and doing, and conversational methods were used to explore the gaps, needs, and priorities of Métis Albertans in relation to accessing emergency services and care.

Concurrently, the Health Department, in collaboration with University of Alberta partners, examined quantitative differences in emergency department visit characteristics and quality measures between Métis and non-Métis people in Alberta between 2017 and 2022. Preliminary analysis showed that Métis people accessed emergency care more often than non-Métis people during the study period, with those in the North zone accounting for a disproportionate number of visits. Additional statistical analysis is ongoing to further explore triage levels, rural emergency department use, access to primary care, and common reasons for emergency visits among Métis Albertans.

LONG-TERM AND CONTINUING CARE

Over the past year, the Health Department continued implementing the Long-Term and Continuing Care (LTCC) Project. This project aims to engage Métis Albertans to better understand their needs and priorities related to LTCC and inform the future planning and delivery of LTCC services and programs.

In May 2024, the Health Department held a community gathering in Edmonton, welcoming 76 community members across Alberta. The gathering employed conversational and “dotmocracy” methods to validate findings from previous engagements and confirm LTCC gaps, needs, and priorities for Métis people in Alberta. A final engagement report was submitted to Indigenous Services Canada in September 2024 to inform the development of a federal LTCC framework. Additional information about this project, including engagement methods and key findings, is available on the Otipemisiwak Métis Government website.

In February 2025, we invited five Métis Albertans to participate in recorded interviews to share their LTCC stories and insights. During the interviews, participants reflected on Métis-specific practices and perspectives related to LTCC, the services needed to support Métis Albertans accessing LTCC, and resources required to support caregivers. The recorded videos from this initiative will be compiled into an LTCC Video Resource and published on the Otipemisiwak Métis Government website. The LTCC Video Resource is intended to engage Métis Albertans and their loved ones accessing LTCC services across the province. The video resource will also invite policy makers and service providers to engage with Métis Albertans who are accessing LTCC, fostering broader awareness and contributing to policy and practice improvements.

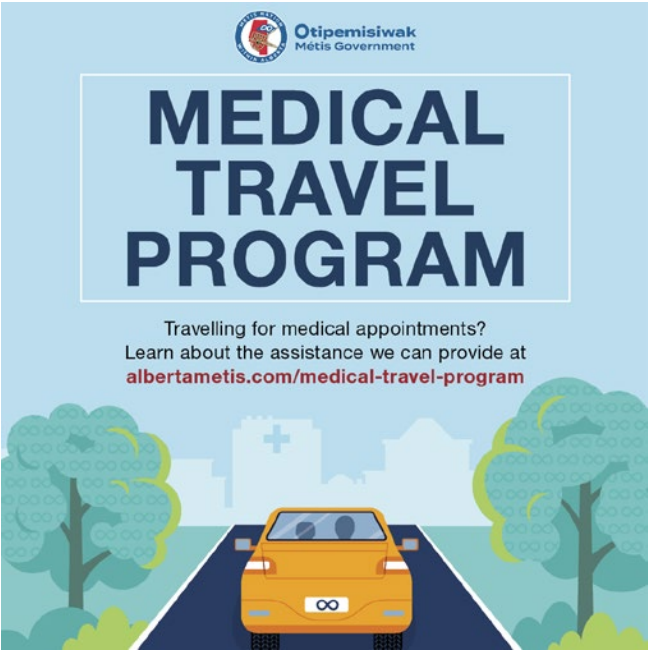
Community Wellness Programs

MEDICAL TRAVEL PROGRAM

The Medical Travel Program is available to Métis Citizens traveling more than 100 kilometres within Alberta to attend a medical appointment. The Medical Travel Program aims to ease the strain on individuals and families navigating the complexities of medical treatment by providing accommodations and mileage reimbursement.

The Medical Travel Program continues to grow rapidly, highlighting the rising demand for its services and its essential role in helping Métis Citizens access the care they need. Over the past year, the Medical Travel Program facilitated 968 accommodation reservations and processed 2,606 applications for mileage reimbursement, supporting Métis Citizens in attending 3,210 medical appointments. The table below provides a summary of the growth of this program over the past five years.

These significant figures highlight the program’s impact across various medical needs, from families accessing vital preventive care such as medical and dental appointments to individuals receiving critical life-sustaining treatments.



“The Medical Travel Program has been and continues to not disappoint my needs. I’m very grateful for the opportunity to be accepted each time I apply. In my opinion, having access to the program is a blessing, helping our Métis people with a gift of kindness and understanding.”

Table 1: Overview of Medical Travel Program Data

Fiscal Year	Number of Accommodation Reservations	Number of Mileage Reimbursements	Number of Appointments
April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025	968	2,606	3,210
April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024	616	604	1,060
April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023	290	66	553
April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022	137	40	331
April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021	32	6	17

DENTAL PROGRAMS

Our Dental Programs are a collaborative initiative made possible through a valued partnership with the University of Alberta School of Dentistry. These programs are dedicated to improving the oral health and overall well-being of Métis Citizens by providing access to high-quality, culturally safe dental care. Through dental clinics and dental referral programs, we strive to offer low-cost and free dental services to our Citizens.

The Adult Dental Referral Program provides Métis Citizens aged 17 and older with access to subsidized dental care for, but not limited to, extractions, fillings, cleanings, and root canals. Over the past year, 154 Métis Citizens were referred to this program.

The Youth Dental Referral Program provides free dental services to Métis youth between the ages of 3 and 16. Services include dental exams, cleanings, fillings, and extractions. Over the past year, 74 Métis Citizens were referred to this program.

Three Dental Clinics were hosted in communities across Alberta, including Slave Lake (April 2024), Grande Prairie (November 2024), and Okotoks (February 2025). These dental clinics are made possible through our partnership with Access for All Dentistry, a student-led initiative at the University of Alberta. These clinics provide free dental care to Métis Citizens, as well as opportunities to connect to community and culture. Over the past year, 1,504 dental treatments, valued at over \$131,000, were provided free of cost to 180 Métis Citizens (see Table 2).

SUPPORTS AND SERVICES NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

The Supports and Services Navigator (SSN) Program assists individuals and families in accessing the services and supports they need. Designed to simplify the often-complex network of social, health, educational, and

developmental resources, our SSN offers personalized guidance to help clients find the most appropriate support for their unique circumstances.

The SSN continues to play a critical role in connecting Métis Citizens to services across Alberta by maintaining an up-to-date, comprehensive database of available resources. The SSN Program has also expanded its outreach by engaging in regular resource meetings with external organizations to enhance the quality and scope of its referral network.

Individuals can access the SSN through phone calls, emails, walk-in appointments, and referrals from Otipemisiwak Métis Government departments, affiliates, and partners. Over the past year, the SSN Program responded to more than 2,200 inquiries, averaging 185 inquiries per month. The most common areas of inquiry were health services (19%), housing (15%), education (9%), and legal support (6%).

The Benevolence Fund, which provides financial support to Métis Citizens navigating the loss of a family member, remained a significant focus, with 243 inquiries and 135 successful applications processed over the past year. Additionally, the Sixties Scoop Database, maintained by the SSN Program, grew by 13 Métis Citizens seeking to stay informed about developments in the ongoing class action process.

COMMUNITY WELLNESS ADVOCATE PROGRAM

The Community Wellness Advocate (CWA) Program aims to increase access to mental wellness supports for Métis Citizens. Over the past year, the CWA Program provided 452 referrals to clients, 383 of which were for mental health or substance use resources and 113 were specifically for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Wellness Program. In addition, 80% of clients who

Table 2: Overview of Dental Clinic Data

Fiscal Year	Number of Patients	Number of Treatments	Value of Treatments
Slave Lake Dental Clinic (April 2024)	53	337	\$30,811.10
Grande Prairie Dental Clinic (November 2024)	63	629	\$50,049.54
Okotoks Dental Clinic (February 2025)	64	538	\$50,155.82
Total	180	1,504	\$131,016.46

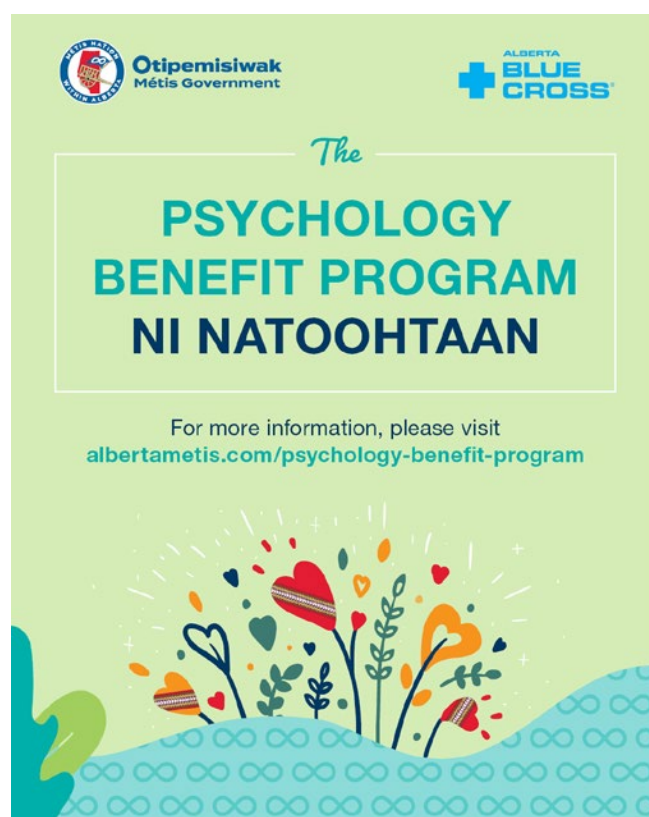
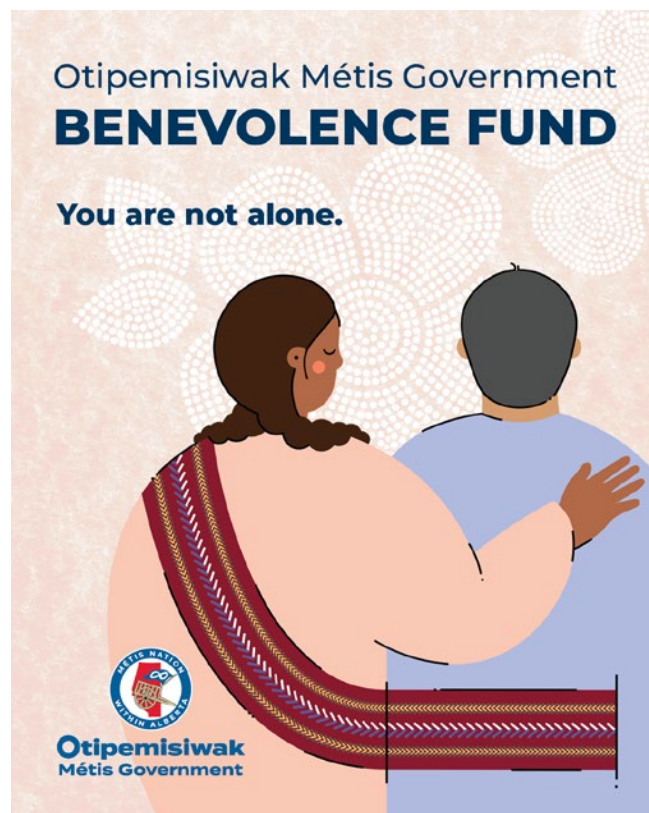
completed our feedback survey reported that the CWA was able to help them find what they were looking for and that the CWA was knowledgeable, providing appropriate information and referrals. Moreover, the CWA Program continues to successfully centre cultural safety at its core, with 93% of survey respondents agreeing that the CWA was kind, polite, and culturally safe.

The CWA Program also hosted two Virtual Wellness Circles facilitated by the Weaving Wellness Centre. The first of these focused on the unique experiences and challenges faced by Métis Survivors of the Canadian residential school system and day school system, exploring topics of intergenerational trauma, coping strategies and well-being, and practicing self-compassion, while allowing participants to share their stories and draw from the collective wisdom of the group. The second Wellness Circle series focused on Métis holistic wellness and included sessions on land-based healing, traditional art forms, and storytelling.

NI NATOOHTAAN PSYCHOLOGY BENEFIT PROGRAM

Ni Natoohtaan, also known as the Psychology Benefit Program, was launched in October 2024. The Psychology Benefit Program is an expansion of the former Financial Support for Mental Wellness Program and offers two intakes annually, one in the spring and one in the fall. The expanded program now supports 200 Métis Citizens each year by providing funding to access services with registered psychologists or social workers in Alberta for longer-term and complex mental health needs. To improve accessibility and ease of use, we have partnered with Alberta Blue Cross to enable direct billing with providers.

Over the past year, the Psychology Benefit Program enrolled 102 Métis Citizens during the first intake period, including 27 children who were registered by a parent or guardian. Interest in the Psychology Benefit Program remains high, with inquiries continuing well beyond the application period. This overwhelming response highlights not only the importance of mental health for Métis Albertans, but also the strong demand for the program. It further underscores that many Métis Citizens have already established trusted relationships with specific providers and wish to continue their care without interruption.



LAND-BASED CONNECTION PROGRAMS

The accomplishments of our Land-Based Connection Programs highlight the essential role that relationships and connections with family, friends, community, culture, and nature play in improving the mental well-being of Métis Albertans. Over the past year, several important programs were successfully implemented.

We held a Land-Based Healing Retreat at Métis Crossing from September 20–22, 2024, with 28 participants. The theme of this retreat was *Re-kindling Our Spirit, Returning to the Land* and aimed to enhance community ties, Métis identity, and cultural-spiritual connections with the land. Activities such as canoeing, medicine walks, tea blending, and a traditional music workshop were offered. Attendees reported leaving the retreat with a strengthened spirit, a strong sense of belonging, and an appreciation for the teachings shared.

We also launched The Four Seasons: Land-Based Connection Workshop Series in October 2024. Our fall workshop, *Maskihkiy: A Gift from the Earth*, was conducted as a virtual workshop on October 27, 2024, attended by 26 participants. This workshop focused on tea blending and traditional medicine teachings, offering attendees valuable knowledge and practical skills. Participants expressed gratitude for the comprehensive materials provided and their new learnings.

Our winter workshop, *Kanatsowin: Foundational Knowledge in Traditional Métis Soap Making*, held virtually on March 9, 2025, engaged 18 participants in learning about traditional soap-making techniques. The workshop was highly appreciated for its educational value, with participants eager to share their newfound skills within their communities and families.

These programs exemplify the successful integration of cultural practices into health initiatives, providing Métis Albertans with meaningful opportunities for personal and community growth.

COMPASS FOR THE CAREGIVER PROGRAM

The COMPASS for the Caregiver Program celebrated a successful year, uplifting caregivers through its comprehensive workshop series. In partnership with Caregivers Alberta, we proudly launched an adaptation of the COMPASS for the Caregivers Program, tailored to support Métis Citizens with culturally safe and responsive care. Designed to enhance mental well-being, the program effectively addressed challenges such as grief and guilt, while providing caregivers with essential skills in stress management, communication, and future planning.



Participants from Re-kindling Our Spirit, Returning to the Land Retreat. In alphabetical order: Aleigha Aaker, April Aaker, Pat Aaker, Ameilia Acuna, Nicole Acuna, Levi Acuna, Carissa Bergevin, Paulette Dalhseide, Sherry Duncan, Rechelle Eklund, Melanie Fayant, Terri Foster, Courtney Gariepy, Jenni Hettinga, Shanon Hicks, Gina Levasseur, Cindy Lilge, Kristy Page, Bryden McCoy, Elsa Sandy, Adiena Sansom, Shauna Simpson, Ruby Smith, Payton Walsh, Tori Wilde, Lisa Vaughn, Velma Weisgerber. Photo taken by Karen Acuna.



Caregivers Alberta | CARING FOR CAREGIVERS

COMPASS for the Caregiver WORKSHOP

This award-winning workshop helps caregivers balance their own well-being with the challenges of caregiving.

FRIDAYS
9 AM – 11:30 AM
6 weeks (Zoom)

January 31 – March 7, 2025

Register at albertametis.com/compass
REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 22, 2025

For more information, email:
Gina Levasseur at GLEvasseur@metis.org

Otipemisiwak Métis Government

Health Department
AlbertaMetis.com

Over the past year, the program engaged 25 enthusiastic participants. Among them, 12 dedicated individuals took further steps by committing to the development of a Métis Caregivers Kinship Support Group. This peer-led group is a pivotal development that will offer support to Métis caregivers to address their caregiving challenges in a safe and culturally grounded space.

Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing an interest in additional sessions and specialized workshops, highlighting the program's significant impact. One participant shared a transformative experience:

“I didn’t realize how stuck I was. I was so angry and felt so alone. Visiting with other people, going through similar issues gave me hope. I didn’t feel so alone, and I feel like a heavy weight has been lifted. Thank you for this class!”

The success of this year’s program underscores our commitment to meeting caregivers’ diverse needs, providing immediate relief, and promoting long-term well-being.

TOBACCO REDUCTION PROGRAM

The Tobacco Reduction Program is a multidimensional health promotion initiative that offers Métis Citizens aged 18 and older a variety of support options to help them reduce or quit their commercial tobacco use.

Our QuitCore Group Program is a 12-hour program that covers a range of topics, including nicotine dependence, reduction techniques, nutrition, physical activity, and stress management. Graduates are awarded a “QuitKit” and are eligible for a \$500 Alberta Blue Cross benefits card, which can be used to access nicotine replacement therapies (NRTs) and cessation medications. Over the past year, we hosted one Virtual QuitCore Program, which was completed by 11 Métis Citizens, as well as our first Land-Based QuitCore Program in October 2024. The Land-Based QuitCore Program gathered eight Métis Citizens for a weekend at Métis Crossing, allowing participants to connect with each other and Métis culture, practice reduction techniques, and apply stress management strategies in a culturally significant setting.

QuitCore graduates and their families were also invited to join a QuitRetreat at Métis Crossing. We hosted our annual QuitRetreat in September 2024, which welcomed six Métis families for a weekend of celebration and connection with community, culture, and the land.

Our Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) Program is a condensed program designed for Métis Citizens who want to access NRTs to support their commercial tobacco



Reduce and/or quit your tobacco use!

QuitCore Land-Based Program

October 18–20 | Métis Crossing

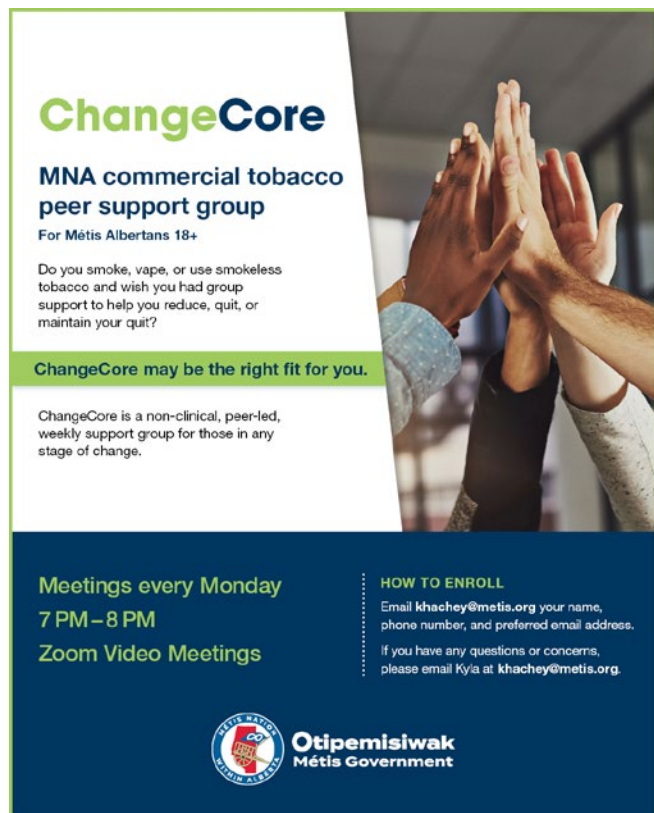
albertametis.com/quitcore-land-based-program

Register by October 14 to secure your spot!

Otipemisiwak Métis Government

reduction goals, without committing to the 12-hour QuitCore Group Program. Over the past year, 65 Métis Citizens completed the NRT Program.

The ChangeCore Peer Support Group is a weekly, peer-led support group. Hosted by QuitCore Graduates, it offers a supportive environment for Métis Citizens on a tobacco reduction journey to connect, visit, and encourage each other. Over the past year, 30 Métis Citizens have joined the group.



ChangeCore

MNA commercial tobacco peer support group

For Métis Albertans 18+


Do you smoke, vape, or use smokeless tobacco and wish you had group support to help you reduce, quit, or maintain your quit?

ChangeCore may be the right fit for you.

ChangeCore is a non-clinical, peer-led, weekly support group for those in any stage of change.

Meetings every Monday
7 PM–8 PM
Zoom Video Meetings

HOW TO ENROLL
 Email khachey@metis.org your name, phone number, and preferred email address.
 If you have any questions or concerns, please email Kyia at khachey@metis.org.

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 Métis Government

“Has been an outstanding resource and support. Holds us accountable while offering a judgment-free space to share and learn together.”

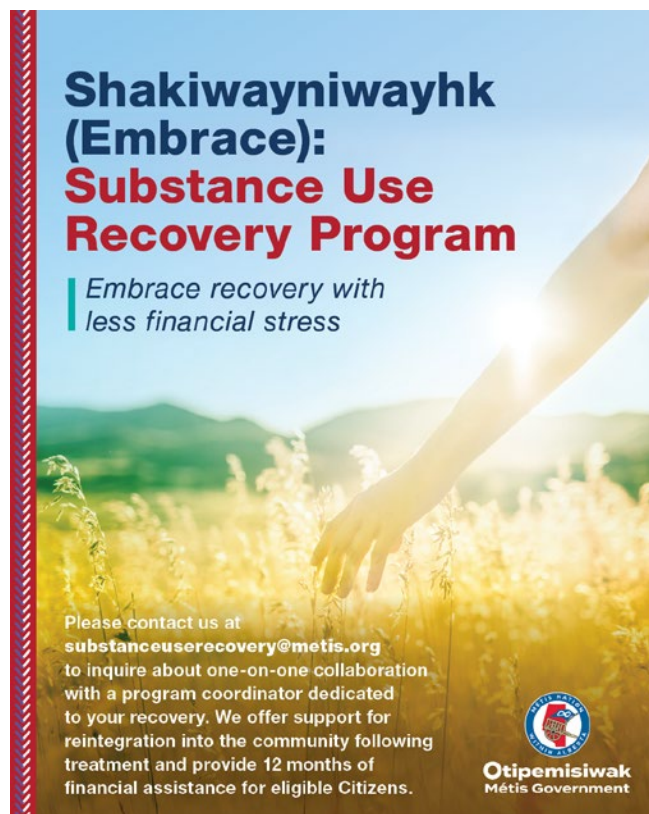
In addition to these components of our Tobacco Reduction Program, we launched a tobacco cessation video series consisting of 11 episodes that provide helpful information and address common questions in short, accessible videos. The videos are used as learning tools within our Tobacco Reduction Program and are also available on the Otipemisiwak Métis Government website.

SHAKIWAYNIWAYHK OPIOID RECOVERY WRAP-AROUND SUPPORT PROGRAM

Shakiwayniwayhk, also known as the Opioid Recovery Wrap-Around Support Program, was designed to provide individualized financial and wrap-around support to eligible Métis Citizens following the completion of a residential substance use treatment program. The program aims to support a seamless transition into the community and promote long-term recovery.

Since its inception, the Opioid Recovery Wrap-Around Support Program has welcomed a total of 19 participants, with 15 graduating from the program in the past year. Participants were supported through 91 internal referrals and 152 external referrals to various culturally safe community resources. The most common referrals were for mental health programming (27%), housing support (19%), and substance use support (12%). Participants had a total of 57 visits with their program coordinator, including in-person, virtual, and phone interactions. Participants prioritized financial support for rent, groceries, utility bills, gas, and household expenses.


Participants were also invited to join an in-person retreat for a weekend of connection and celebration and our weekly Connections in Recovery Peer Support



Shakiwayniwayhk (Embrace):
Substance Use Recovery Program

Embrace recovery with less financial stress

Please contact us at substanceuserecovery@metis.org to inquire about one-on-one collaboration with a program coordinator dedicated to your recovery. We offer support for reintegration into the community following treatment and provide 12 months of financial assistance for eligible Citizens.

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 Métis Government

Group, which provides a safe environment for anyone affected by substance use to connect and share their recovery journey.

In February 2025, the Opioid Recovery Wrap-Around Support Program was expanded to provide financial wrap-around support to Métis Citizens recovering from all forms of substance use disorder, rather than exclusively opioid use disorder. Now known as the Substance Use Recovery Program, this program also recognizes outpatient treatment programs in its eligibility criteria and has welcomed a second program coordinator as we aim to support an additional 30 participants.

RECOVERY CONTINUUM

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government is pioneering a transformative approach to wellness through landmark projects that together create a comprehensive, culturally-grounded continuum of care for Métis Citizens. Each initiative reflects a commitment to healing that is rooted in Métis values, self-determination, and community connection.

NEW BEGINNINGS

Located in Edmonton, the New Beginnings Transitional Housing Project will offer a 40-bed supportive housing facility, bridging a critical service gap by providing stable accommodation, cultural supports, and pre-treatment services for Métis Citizens awaiting long-term substance use treatment.

This renovated space will deliver trauma-informed programming that uniquely blends mental health supports, life skills training, and Métis cultural practices – creating a safe and empowering environment for individuals preparing for their recovery journey. Residents will be supported in maintaining vital community ties while strengthening the skills and resilience needed for long-term wellness.

If work remains on schedule, we anticipate welcoming residents to New Beginnings in the fall of 2025.

HEALING WATERS

Meanwhile, near Métis Crossing and Smoky Lake, the Healing Waters Recovery Community will become Alberta's first Métis-led long-term recovery community. Situated on 32 acres of healing land, this residential program reflects a bold step forward in building culturally safe recovery spaces that honour Métis identity, land-based traditions, and self-determination.

Healing Waters will offer Métis Citizens the recovery capital – the tools – they need to thrive. The program is designed to support individuals as they reintegrate into their communities with a strengthened sense of identity, practical skills for independent living, and robust aftercare support. Healing Waters embodies a holistic, strengths-based vision of recovery, fully aligned with Alberta's Recovery Model, while remaining firmly grounded in the unique culture, resilience, and future of the Métis Nation.

Construction and operational planning are progressing rapidly. If all continues according to schedule, we look forward to welcoming residents to Healing Waters in early 2026.

CONCLUSION AND WHAT'S NEXT

Looking ahead, the Health Department remains dedicated to advancing holistic, culturally grounded wellness supports that reflect the evolving needs of Métis Albertans.

In the coming fiscal year, we are proud to expand our efforts through several new initiatives. These include the introduction of systems navigation and follow-up support for Métis individuals and families navigating cancer care, ensuring no one walks this journey alone.

Building on the priorities identified through our Long-Term and Continuing Care Project, we will deepen our focus on supporting Métis Citizens to age safely at home and exploring culturally appropriate approaches to end-of-life care.

In partnership with the Children and Family Services Department, we are also co-developing a Métis Children's Health Strategy to better support the health, wellness, and development of our youngest Citizens. Further, we will launch new programming to prevent commercial tobacco use among youth and promote long-term health through early intervention.

Alongside these initiatives, we remain focused on knowledge translation, ensuring research findings are shared meaningfully with our community to support transparency, accountability, and continued dialogue. Through ongoing program evaluation, we are also committed to strengthening and expanding our community wellness programs to meet the diverse and growing needs of our Citizens. These future-focused initiatives reflect our unwavering commitment to care that honours Métis culture, values, and our shared vision for a healthy Métis Nation – a Nation where all Métis Albertans are happy and healthy, grounded in their cultures and languages, and thriving as individuals and members of their families and communities. ■

Intergovernmental Relations



Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) manages relationships and interactions between different levels of government such as federal, provincial, municipal, and other Indigenous governments. IGR plays a critical role in ensuring effective communication, coordination, and collaboration across jurisdictions. Our primary goal is to support coherent policy development, resolve jurisdictional issues, and advance shared priorities.

In 2024/25, the IGR department continued to support the work of other departments in accomplishing their priorities and objectives, promoting our businesses and entrepreneurs and supporting their growth and opportunities, and advancing our interests at both federal and provincial levels.

Within the IGR department, our dedicated team has coordinated various events and has acted as a conduit between various levels of government and other Métis governments. We have also held several events in support of advancing our priorities, with a focus on benefits to Citizens. The Economic Development team coordinated events like the Métis Business Mixer and Federal Procurement Workshops to promote partnerships amongst Métis entrepreneurs and expand knowledge about accessing federal procurement opportunities, and the Art Collective team facilitated workshops that support Métis artists in developing their careers as artists. The Languages team continues to grow, and so too has its capacity to facilitate family-friendly events at notable venues, like the Calgary Zoo and Fort Edmonton, to support Métis language revitalization.

We are pleased by the successes and progress we made this year and look forward to continuing our work for the Métis Nation within Alberta in the coming year.

PROVINCIAL RELATIONSHIP

The Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) team is dedicated to maintaining and strengthening the relationship between the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and the Government of Alberta. Past work saw the creation of sub-tables for the Health and Children and Family Services departments, where department leaders discuss core issues in their portfolios with officials from the Government of Alberta. We are also working to support the development of similar tables for other priority areas of our governments. As a provision of the Framework Agreement between the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and the Government of Alberta, we have been collaborating with Government of Alberta officials to review progress of the agreement and are seeking to initiate negotiations on renewing the agreement for the future.

The collaborative approach taken by the IGR team works to ensure the Government of Alberta is well-informed about our achievements and long-term goals. This approach is ongoing and requires both parties to participate in continued communication and education to strengthen the relationship. This will also be an invaluable forum for discussions on the continued advancement of our self-government with the Government of Canada. As this work progresses, it is the overarching goal of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government to represent the interests of Citizens on a provincial level and grow a shared vision for the future.

FEDERAL RELATIONSHIP

We have continued the work of previous years in supporting engagements between various Otipemisiwak Métis Government departments and the Government of Canada in garnering the necessary support to achieve the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's key priority areas. Establishing and maintaining meaningful and respectful relations with the federal government is essential to our vision of advancing our key priorities. This enables us to access resources to advance initiatives across various

Otipemisiwak Métis Government departments. As these interdepartmental initiatives are nearer to being realized, we are better situated as a government to address the distinct needs of our Citizens and promote the well-being of the Métis Nation within Alberta.

To this end, IGR has engaged in and supported dialogue throughout numerous working groups and tables with the federal government. This includes engaging in federal procurement, implementation of the United Nations Declaration Act and associated Action Plan, the Federal Economic Reconciliation Framework, Residential Schools Missing Children and Unmarked Graves, housing, homelessness, education, justice, veterans, Parks Canada, Department of National Defense, self-government negotiations, and many more federal departments and initiatives requiring intergovernmental engagement.

Throughout the year, the IGR department has engaged in numerous Métis National Council facilitated Permanent Bilateral Mechanism (PBM) meetings with the federal government. The Senior Officials PBM was held on the 24th and 25th of April 2024 and continued discussions on some focus policy areas from previous years. This included economic development, health, and emergency management. These policy areas influence the success of each other, and the PBM is a valuable platform to strategize holistic, well-thought-out solutions and leverage necessary support to respond to the needs of Citizens. In the past, the PBM was a starting point for the development of key initiatives for the Métis Nation, like our current housing programs, homelessness initiatives, post-secondary education supports, and capitalizing our lending affiliate, Apeetogosan Métis Development Inc.

The IGR department also works closely with the Métis National Council to support our participation in governance of the national representative as well as numerous initiatives and tables working to advance shared priorities of the Nation. Notably, we have worked with the Métis National Council Governing Members on the establishment of Co-Development Principles between the Métis Nation and federal government. After a lengthy series of discussions and drafting sessions, the federal government endorsed the principles in June 2024. Co-Development Principles mark a milestone in government-to-government relations in establishing a set of principles to guide the government-to-government relationship between the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and Government of Canada. While this work may not see immediate tangible outcomes for Citizens, it sets a framework for how we want the federal government to work with us and is intended to provide increased involvement in decisions that affect us.

GLOBAL SUMMIT

The 2nd Annual Métis Nation Global Summit was held in Ottawa on February 12 and 13, 2025, and focused on sustainable development across a number of sectors. Facilitated by the Métis National Council, the summit served as a platform to discuss the ways through which Indigenous rights, culture, and values could harmoniously co-exist with economic growth, in alignment with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Summit also touched on socioeconomic barriers that impede the vision of sustainable development. These include, but are not limited to, poverty, restrictions to healthcare, and inequitable access to education amongst Indigenous populations.

Panels featuring Elders, academics, professionals, and youth community leaders shed light on the barriers impeding economic development for Indigenous communities and touched on the concern of sacrificing our distinct Indigenous values and traditions to achieve these goals. Elders emphasized the importance of maintaining values integral to our identity, namely our inclusivity of women and spiritual connection to the land, when devising strategies to advance economic development. Alternatively, professionals, such as a trade lawyer from the United Nations Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, highlighted existing barriers restricting trade between Indigenous communities and the importance of eroding these barriers for achieving economic reconciliation and Indigenous self-determination.

Such topics illustrate the breadth and scope of the conversations held at the Global Summit. The IGR department always looks forward to engaging in rich, thought-provoking discussions to broaden our knowledge to better serve our Citizens.

United Nations Declaration Act (UNDA)

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples continues to guide reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and the Government of Canada. Since receiving Royal Assent on June 21, 2021, the United Nations Declaration Act (UNDA) mandates the Government of Canada to take measures ensuring that federal laws are consistent with the measures listed in the Declaration itself, table annual progress reports, and develop an action plan to further guide the implementation of its measures.

The subsequent UNDA Action Plan tabled on June 21, 2023, in Parliament includes 181 measures reflecting the priorities of Indigenous peoples across Canada and outlines a roadmap for advancing these measures and

supporting reconciliation through a nation-to-nation and government-to-government approach. Within the Action Plan is a section dedicated to address distinctly Métis priorities. These Métis priorities identify key initiatives or actions to be taken in advancing the principles of the United Nation Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the Government of Canada. We will continue to push Canada to advance these obligations, which involves meetings with various departments and Ministries of the Government of Canada that have been identified within the Action Plan as key in implementing specific Action Plan Measures to ensure that our needs, concerns, or realities are a part of the implementation of the plan. Tangible outcomes in this work have been few and far between, but we will continue to use this tool to work to advance our interests at the federal level.

The UNDA Action Plan commitments have provided the impetus for discussions over the establishment of Co-Development Principles. Currently, in collaboration with the Métis National Council, IGR engages in discussions with the federal government to flesh out a framework for meaningful Métis involvement into Canada's governance, regulation, and policymaking processes. In alignment with the UNDA Action Plan Commitments, Co-Development Principles support Métis self-determination through recognizing the inherent right of the Métis to have a voice on federal policies that impact them.

Continuing the work of previous years, IGR continues to monitor and record UNDA-related developments. Assessing the successes of UNDA between the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, along with other Indigenous governments, and the federal government reveals opportunities to date to advance our key priorities. It furthermore provides us with information on the possible challenges that await. This equips our department, and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government as a whole, with vital insight on how best to engage with the federal government to better assure that we advance the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's mandate to best serve our Citizens.

Economic development is key to counteracting socioeconomic barriers onset from the colonial policies of the past. These barriers have contributed to unbalanced opportunities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. As such, Métis have faced disproportionate obstacles when establishing businesses or pursuing meaningful career paths, hindering the overall economic development of Métis communities and the social mobility of some Citizens.

Steps taken towards economic reconciliation are vital to addressing socioeconomic barriers faced by the Métis and improving the livelihood of our Citizens through development opportunities. Building upon ongoing efforts toward economic reconciliation, the Otipemisiwak

Métis Government represents Métis interests in national conversations aimed at removing these barriers and supporting Indigenous-led economic growth. The federal government's commitment towards economic reconciliation is not only just but also provides new economic opportunities with the potential to prosper Canada as a whole.

Economic Reconciliation Summit

Conversations centred on economic development took place at the annual Reconciliation Summit held in Ottawa on April 1, 2025. The Otipemisiwak Métis Government engaged with Indigenous leaders, federal policymakers, and industry representatives to explore strategies for community development. Amongst the topics addressed at the event was community access to capital, methods for building equity, and opportunities for innovation and sustainable development throughout Indigenous communities. Sessions focused on the Federal Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program and the competitive advantages afforded through Indigenous procurement and partnerships further raised awareness of resources currently available to Métis entrepreneurs. Most notably, discussions were held highlighting own-source revenue and its importance for advancing self-determination, Indigenous-led growth, and achieving true economic reconciliation.

Economic Reconciliation Strategy

Strategic planning is essential to organizational success. It provides clear direction, ensures alignment with overarching goals, enhances resource management, prepares the organization for necessary changes, and aligns initiatives with the needs of Citizens. As Economic Development is an important priority for our government and there is a current shift in industry and governments to look at economic reconciliation, we felt it was timely to build our own strategy to guide our foray into this space.

There are several definitions and approaches to economic reconciliation, but what does it mean for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government? What do we need to do to realize economic reconciliation in our communities and government?

In 2025, we initiated the process of developing an Economic Reconciliation Strategy. Engagements have taken place with Citizens and leadership in numerous forums, including leadership engagements, one-on-one interviews with key knowledge holders, the leaders of our affiliates, participants of the 2025 Business Mixer, and directly with Citizens throughout Alberta who had engaged with our consultants at the 2024 Citizens' Gathering in Edmonton. We have also released an online survey to collect input from any who wish to contribute.



Federal Procurement Workshop, Edmonton



We will continue to receive input through these channels and want to ensure that the final strategy is reflective of the input received and is relevant to the needs of our Citizens.

Federal Procurement Workshops

In collaboration with Procurement Assistance Canada and Indigenous Services Canada, IGR facilitated two Federal Procurement Workshops. These workshops held in Edmonton and Calgary respectively during fall 2024 were designed to help Métis businesses better understand and access federal procurement opportunities and provide feedback to government officials on their experiences or thoughts on the current procurement process. From navigating application processes to learning how contracts are awarded, these events equipped entrepreneurs with information needed to confidently navigate government purchasing systems. Interested businesses registered on Alberta MétisWorks were invited to engage directly with Procurement Assistance Canada officials in navigating their specific interests and needs and receive real-time support in accessing the Government of Canada Procurement systems.

Alberta MétisWorks Business Mixer and Economic Summit

Building on the momentum of the Procurement Workshops, IGR facilitated the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Alberta MétisWorks Business Mixer and

Economic Summit. Held on March 28–29, 2025, in Nisku, Alberta, the theme of this mixer was Building Bridges to Economic Reconciliation and Opportunity. The Mixer featured a robust program of panel discussions, workshops, keynote addresses, a tradeshow, and networking opportunities. Sessions were designed to provide practical tools, build relationships, and promote business growth across a range of topics, including:

- Energy & Natural Resources
- Economic Reconciliation & Partnerships
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation
- Government Procurement & Policy
- Empowering Métis Economic Success
- Accessing Post-Secondary and Business Funding
- Starting and Running a Business
- Career and Business Opportunities for Métis Youth
- Business Growth Strategies
- Wellness and Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

Attendees had the opportunity to engage directly with major companies and organizations such as TC Energy, Enbridge, EPCOR, and the Cities of Calgary and Edmonton, as well as network with fellow Métis entrepreneurs. These connections fostered an environment of collaboration and mutual support.



MétisWorks Business Mixer & Summit team in March of 2025. Wyatt Telford, Joseph Atkinson, Rosalind Wassegijig, President Andrea Sandmaier, Katie Suvanto, Peter Fernandes, Tyler Fetch, Theo Peters.



Panelists at the MétisWorks Business Mixer & Summit in March of 2025.

A final highlight of the summit was the high level of Citizen involvement—all keynote speakers were Métis Citizens who volunteered their time and expertise to give back to the community. Their participation speaks to the deep sense of pride, resilience, and commitment to collective success that defines the Métis entrepreneurial spirit.

Alberta MétisWorks: The Métis Business Directory

Our Federal Procurement Workshops and Business Mixer also helped to raise awareness of Alberta MétisWorks, which continues to serve as a valuable tool for established and up-and-coming Métis businesses. Alberta MétisWorks is an online business directory developed by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government featuring Métis owned and verified businesses. It supports Métis businesses with procurement opportunities and processes, operates as a platform for Métis business

partnerships across various sectors, and promotes the visibility of Métis businesses across Métis communities within the province. We know there is always room for improvement and continue to work on making this tool as powerful as possible in supporting our businesses.

LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

This past year marked a period of foundational growth and deep engagement for the Language Revitalization team. Our work centred on building the internal and community capacity needed to carry out long-term, grassroots-centred language revitalization across our Nation. This includes onboarding to support the growing workload of the Languages team in facilitating events and providing a greater assortment of Métis language supports to our Citizens.

We invested significant time and resources into developing staff knowledge, building tools, and nurturing the relationships that sustains our work. From planning cultural events and translation projects to conducting research and piloting new tools, our team worked collaboratively with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, communities, and organizational partners to advance the reclamation and restoration of Métis languages.

Our team furthermore devised and integrated new systems to improve knowledge gathering so that we may enhance our team's capacity and better create supports for Métis language learners. Since April 2024, this has included conducting systematic reviews of current resources and academic literature to identify gaps in



Juno Engineering President, Brad Fuhr, during his keynote speech at the MétisWorks Business Mixer & Summit in March of 2025.

the linguistic record. Identifying these gaps enables our team to create accurate language learning resources to supplement ongoing projects like the Language Bundle Template, community events, and engagement.

The Languages team has worked with communities and stakeholders to coordinate and engage in multiple language-centred events throughout the past year. The *Mamawii Kishkayta – Gather and Learn* event held in Calgary on June 14, 2024, featured community-led language tables with games and other activities. On July 18–22, 2024, our team worked with the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan Languages Team to co-host the *Back to Batoche Festival* language tents. Featuring language activities, including a scavenger hunt and wildlife identification game, the *Prairie Prowl: A Métis Adventure* held at the Calgary Zoo and the Royal Tyrrell Museum on August 24–25, 2024, allowed Métis children the opportunity to engage in activities that improved their familiarity with Métis words. Finally, *Taanishí Michif: Our Languages, Our Stories* held in Fort Edmonton on October 5 offered family-focused performances and storytelling. All these events and activities have supported our Nation by enabling Métis families to engage in fun, family-friendly activities that educate and teach Métis languages while raising awareness of the other supports and future initiatives to be provided by our team.

Language Support and Initiatives

Language supports ranging from locating suitable terms for naming buildings to educational resources have broadened the use and availability of Métis vocabulary. These supports help to normalize and raise familiarity of Métis vocabulary

across Métis communities and provide a distinctly Métis style and flare to projects and initiatives provided by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. The Languages team has provided culturally grounded translations for naming buildings, signage, and book titles. This, for instance, includes helping to name housing provided by Métis Urban Housing and Métis literature projects.

Languages Bundle Template

Our team has developed the Michif Language Bundle—a comprehensive, community-driven resource designed to support Métis Citizens in learning, reclaiming, and revitalizing their languages. Currently in limited release to gather feedback from community leaders, the bundle includes print and digital tools such as workbooks, dictionaries, and language databases. It offers a flexible framework for Citizens and leaders to engage with Michif through culturally grounded programming and community-led workshops.

Featuring Northern Michif, Southern Michif, French Michif, and Cree, the bundle strengthens grassroots efforts by enabling District Captains and Citizens' Representatives to co-develop local strategies aligned with national revitalization goals. By embedding Métis languages into everyday life, the bundle supports meaningful language use in homes, classrooms, and workplaces across Alberta.

As we look toward the coming year, we are confident in the success of the Language Bundle and its role in revitalizing Michif. It will serve as a vital tool in advancing community-led language programs and sustaining Métis identity for generations to come.



**KISÎHTOSKÂTONAW:
OTIPEMISIWAK MÉTIS
GOVERNMENT ART COLLECTIVE**

In supporting Métis artists, the Art Collective throughout the past year hosted multiple events, curated exhibits, and provided Citizens with services to support them in their journey into the world of Métis arts. Hosting two Métis Art Markets at Kingsway Mall, Métis artists were invited, free of charge, to a venue to sell and gain recognition for their art. These events, one held in the spring and the other in the fall, help Métis artists generate revenue for their work and gain further exposure to their practices, and thus support their artistic enterprise by

offsetting some of the costs of producing art and making new connections with other artists and the public.

As with previous years, the Art Collective setup exhibits different forms of Métis art, fostering cultural appreciation and providing a platform for artists to share their distinct work. At the 2024 Annual Citizens' Gathering, held at the Expo Centre in August, the Art Collective curated the Artist Showcase and spearheaded a sash weaving project that created a unique sash to commemorate the first gathering under our Constitution. Exhibits like those held in Back to Batoche 2024 offered a live looming session and beading circles that served to engage and educate attendees in the methods involved in the production of Métis art.





Art Collective initiatives are varied and tailored to address the unique needs of different artists, but always centre on one tenet: support the artists. Ranging from workshops on crafting strong resumes and cover letters and informing artists of their rights as artists, to member gatherings to assist and illustrate the intricacies of weaving techniques and proper material selection, the Art Collective has served both established and up-and-coming Métis artists, with often the former mentoring the latter. In addition, the Art Collective regularly seeks out opportunities for our artists to engage, such as Métis involvement in tables for the Strathearn Art Walk.

In 2026, in support of Métis artists, the Art Collective is organizing the curation of a Métis Religion and Spirituality art exhibit to showcase the artistic expression of religion and spirituality of a select group of Métis artists. Establishing exhibits like these serve as a means for the Art Collective to raise awareness of its services and provide Métis artists with the opportunity to exhibit their artistic talents in a safe and supportive environment. Exhibits are often expensive and difficult to access for artists, and through this initiative we are building the opportunity for our artists to build their resumes and showcase the amazing talent in our citizenry.

In this vein, we have also started a weaving class and cohort training to build their practices in weaving sashes. Our goal is to empower Citizens in producing cultural art and building sustainable practice as weavers. The class is close to wrapping up, and we now have a number of skilled Métis weavers that will make hand-woven sashes, made in Alberta, by Alberta Métis artists. We are extremely proud of our artists and excited that we were able to support the reinvigoration of our culture and economy through this project.

Our team continued to grow throughout the past year as the demand for our services increased. Last year, we saw the introduction of two Art Collective Assistant summer students and a Retail Administrator. We have also witnessed some turnover in our staff and have recruited an Associate Director who will start in September 2025. On the note of retail, our retail and gallery space at Renaissance Tower has been furnished and is awaiting final permitting and necessary inventory and sales systems to be finalized. The space will display art for sale and viewing, as well as hold workshops and classes to further advance the objectives of the Collective. We proudly purchase art from our members for sale and viewing at the Gallery. We hope to host a grand opening in 2025 once the necessary permits have been obtained and our new Associate Director has started.

CONCLUSION AND WHAT'S NEXT

Throughout 2024/25, IGR has grown in scope and staffing, exemplified by the growth of the Art Collective and Languages teams. This growth has enabled our department to better serve a broader range of Métis Citizens.

In the coming year, we look forward to acknowledging our Métis residential school Survivors and continuing to support work across the range of initiatives the Otipemisiwak Métis Government undertakes.

IGR will continue expanding our capacity through the establishment of a new team dedicated to collecting the stories of our residential school Survivors and families of Survivors to ensure their voices are heard. Currently, we plan to build and launch a dedicated portal on the Otipemisiwak Métis Government website that features stories and testimonies of our residential school Survivors, as well as their families, to acknowledge, raise awareness, and document the truth of our people.

We are also looking to build our understanding of our veterans' needs and identify resources by bringing people together to talk. Through building a strong understanding of what our veterans and their families need, we are better positioned to address those needs.

We remain committed to advancing Métis rights and remaining vigilant in seeking opportunities to enhance what we can deliver to our Citizens. This includes maintaining respectful government-to-government engagement with the provincial and federal governments. Maintaining dialogue through the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism will be indispensable in achieving our aspirations in the future. We will continue to work on your behalf through the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism, and bilaterally, to advance our priorities as a government. ■

Justice

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Justice Department was established in August 2023, following a 2021 resolution that reaffirmed a strong commitment to Métis-led, culturally safe, and trauma-informed support for Métis people involved in the justice system. Although we are still in the early stages of development, the department is working toward delivering a culturally relevant justice program grounded in the values and beliefs of Métis Albertans. This program aims to ensure fair treatment, promote awareness of legal rights, and provide meaningful support to Métis individuals as they navigate the complexities of the criminal, family, and youth court systems.

Throughout the 2024/25 fiscal year, the Justice Department has continued to face the ongoing challenge of securing grant funding to both build capacity and expand programming. Despite these hurdles, the team remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting Métis Albertans and assisting individuals who have questions about, or are involved, in the justice system.

We welcome you to join us in recognizing our progress and the ongoing challenges we face as we remain committed to advocating for and supporting Métis Albertans on their journey through the justice system.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST YEAR

Strategic Plan 2025–2030

In late February 2025, the Justice Department developed their Strategic Plan to clarify and document the Justice Department's mission, vision, and long-term objectives to prioritize efforts, effectively allocate resources, and ensure staff are aligned to the department's goals.

Mission

Through collaboration, partnerships, and advocacy, we are committed to addressing the systemic barriers that contribute to the overrepresentation of Métis people in the justice system.

Vision

Working with stakeholders, community organizations, and Métis people, we will advance culturally specific, trauma-informed solutions that promote fairness, equity, and self-determination within the justice system.

Objectives

1. Ensure the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's perspectives and priorities on Métis rights are brought to the foreground.
2. Provide culturally specific trauma-informed supports to Métis people in their journey through the justice system.
3. Educate and engage with stakeholders and community.
4. Engage and collaborate with key stakeholders.
5. Obtain long-term and predictable funding.

Year End Statistics – April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025

Criminal Matters	29
Family Court Matters	28
Other (e.g. Civil, Reintegration, etc.)	42
Total Intakes	99

Breakdown by Districts – April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025

	District	Intake
District 1	Foothills	1
District 2	Medicine Hat	2
District 3	Red Deer	5
District 4	Rocky View	3
District 5	Calgary Nose Hill	4
District 6	Calgary Elbow	0
District 7	Jasper House	3
District 8	Lac Ste. Anne	4
District 9	Fort Edmonton	14
District 10	Edmonton Whitemud	10
District 11	St. Albert	1
District 12	St. Paul – Cold Lake	4
District 13	Grande Prairie	4
District 14	Peace River	0
District 15	Fort Vermilion	0
District 16	Fort Chipewyan	0
District 17	Fort McMurray	2
District 18	Conklin	4
District 19	Lac La Biche	1
District 20	Athabasca Landing	2
District 21	Lesser Slave Lake	0
District 22	Wabasca-Demarais	0
Total Intakes		64

Note: 35 people did not identify which District they were from when accessing support from the Justice Department.

Finding Justice Documentary

One of the justice initiatives that emerged from the province-wide Métis Justice Strategy community engagements was the creation of a documentary titled, *Finding Justice: Métis Families' Experiences with the Criminal Justice System*. The film explores the aftermath of a tragic event that occurred on March 28, 2020, when Jacob Sansom and Maurice Cardinal, two Métis hunters, were found shot dead near their vehicle in rural Alberta after returning from a successful hunt. In the documentary, seven of their family members share their personal experiences navigating the criminal justice system in the wake of this devastating loss.

Join us for the premiere of the documentary

Finding Justice:
Métis families' experiences with the Criminal Justice System

April 5 | 2 - 5 p.m.
Edmonton Public Library
Whitemud Crossing Branch
145, 4211 106 Street | Edmonton

Secure your ticket by April 3

Otipemisiwak Métis Government epl.ca

Victims and Survivors of Crime Week

As part of its ongoing commitment to community engagement, the Justice Department hosted the 2024 Victims and Survivors of Crime Event, titled, *The Power of Collaboration: Mamawi Petohtewak – Cree for Coming Together*. This one-day event aimed to bring together Métis Albertans to raise awareness on the challenges faced by victims and survivors of crime and to highlight the services and legal supports available to assist them and their families.

The Justice Department partnered with the RCMP, Calgary Police Service, Edmonton Police Service, and local community agency CEASE, all of whom participated in a panel discussion. The event welcomed 60 participants, including community members, victims and survivors of crime, their loved ones, and justice and community service professionals.



Attendees took part in a facilitated table conversation activity, which focused on identifying gaps, challenges, and opportunities for improving support and services for victims and survivors of crime and their families. The feedback gathered from these conversations helps to inform future planning and programming within the Justice Department.

Below are the top five priorities that were identified:

1. Funding and resources
2. Addressing systemic racism
3. Education and training (for police, community members, and professionals)
4. Having policy makers at events
5. Police and Professionals adjust communication styles to meet the needs of victims and survivors and loved ones

The Justice Department will be taking the identified priorities into consideration as it continues its work. Moving forward, greater collaboration and stronger relationships with community partners—including law enforcement agencies, provincial and federal correctional institutions, parole services, victim services, and the Family Information Liaison Unit—will be essential to providing culturally sensitive and effective supports for Métis victims and survivors of crime.

The event was a notable success and offered valuable insight into the areas where continued improvements are needed—particularly within policing and the broader criminal justice system. It also marked the first time the Otipemisiwak Métis Government hosted an initiative

of this kind, laying important groundwork for future community-led justice initiatives.

Justice Series Educational Presentations

The Justice Department has continued its efforts to educate Métis Albertans through the Online Justice Series—a set of virtual educational presentations tailored to the needs of Métis communities. The first session, held in April 2024, focused on Record Suspensions (formerly known as Pardons), followed by presentations in June on the Parole Board Hearing Process and Victim Services Canada. Although the series has been temporarily paused due to staffing constraints, we aim to resume in the 2025/26 fiscal year.

JUSTICE ENGAGEMENTS

The Justice Department continues to engage with Citizens on key justice-related topics to ensure that Métis voices are meaningfully included and advocated for in the development of policy and programming. Below are two engagement initiatives held during the 2024/25 fiscal year.

Restorative Justice

In March 2024, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation within Alberta received a \$25,000 one-year Alberta Community Justice Grant to address the unique challenges that Métis, Indigenous, and Racialized Communities (MIRC) face in developing culturally relevant and sustainable restorative justice (RJ) services. The goal of the project was to implement a community-driven and culturally sensitive engagement process to advance restorative justice across MIRC communities in Alberta. This work was guided by the principle of *Nothing About Us, Without Us*.

As part of this initiative, the MIRC committee facilitated eight online sharing circles in September and October 2024, engaging 62 participants from diverse backgrounds. Additionally, 38 individuals took part in a session held at the 2024 Alberta Restorative Justice Association Conference in Edmonton. These efforts made significant strides in identifying systemic barriers and fostering collaborative relationships to support the growth of restorative justice in MIRC communities.

This participatory action research project resulted in five recommendations:

1. It is recommended the project seek additional funding from Alberta Justice and other sources to develop an Indigenous RJ Provincial network.
2. It is recommended that resource personnel be secured to handle all communication updates

and email distribution lists, develop promotional materials and a website/social media presence, as well as take meeting notes and coordinate in-person forums.

3. It is recommended that a provincial non-political neutral entity be formed/funded for continuance, and this project, initially named MIRC (Métis, Indigenous and Racialized Communities) be called Alberta Indigenous Restorative Justice in Action (AIRJA).
4. It is recommended that a provincial gathering be held annually or biennially (every two years) to share information about culturally relevant RJ services, build relationships, and promote collaborative action with formal authorities to advance the TRC Calls to Action and UNDRIP.
5. It is recommended that funding be explored from different sources to design culturally relevant RJ training and certification of peacemaking facilitator skills and competencies in a highly supportive service delivery model to achieve intended outcomes – address the cycle of violence connected to unresolved intergenerational trauma.

A *What We Heard* report was completed for this initiative and was utilized to develop further funding opportunities for RJ within the province.

Métis Court Work (Weyesowew Atoksew) Program

In March 2025, the Justice Department submitted a proposal to Alberta Justice to establish a Métis Court Work Program (MCWP)—a program specifically designed for Métis people, respecting their distinct cultural traditions and legal needs. The MCWP aims to support Métis individuals involved in Alberta’s criminal, family, and youth court systems by providing culturally relevant, compassionate, and trauma-informed assistance. This initiative represents a significant step toward advancing Métis self-determination and strengthening self-government.

To inform the proposal and ensure it reflects the needs of the community, eight virtual engagement sessions were held with Métis Citizens and families with lived experience. Participants included representatives from the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizens’ Council, Otipemisiwak Métis Government staff, Government of Alberta and City of Edmonton staff, non-profit and Indigenous organizations, members of the legal community, and law enforcement agencies. These sessions were instrumental in shaping a proposal that is truly Métis-centred.

While there is a recognized need to support Métis individuals across all communities in Alberta, due to resource and funding constraints, the Justice Department has proposed to initially launch the MCWP in Edmonton, which is home to the second-largest urban Métis population in Canada—over 44,000 individuals, or 35% of Alberta’s Métis population. Expansion to other priority areas will be considered as additional resources become available.

A *What We Heard* Report summarizing the engagement sessions was included as part of the proposal. As of May 25, 2025, the Justice Department is still awaiting a response on the outcome of the grant application.

CONCLUSION AND WHAT’S NEXT

The Justice Department is proud to continue building a justice program that genuinely reflects and responds to the needs of Métis Albertans. As we grow and evolve, we remain passionately committed to supporting the Otipemisiwak Métis Government by strengthening staff capacity and developing culturally grounded programs that address the distinct needs and lived experiences of Métis individuals navigating the justice system.

Looking ahead to the 2025/26 fiscal year, the Justice Department will be launching three key initiatives aimed at addressing the unique justice-related needs of Métis communities.

First, in partnership with the Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research at the University of Alberta, we are developing a Métis Justice Online Training Course to enhance awareness and understanding of Métis perspectives within the justice system.

Second, we will be conducting research and developing a framework for a Métis Youth Justice Diversion Program, guided by the lived experiences of Métis Albertans. This initiative will focus on providing culturally appropriate alternatives—such as restorative justice—to the formal justice system for Métis youth in conflict with the law.

Finally, we are launching a Gender-Based Violence (GBV) initiative titled, *Breaking the Silence: Empowering Men and Boys*. This project will assess gaps in existing GBV-related programs, services, and supports to better meet the needs of Métis victims, survivors, and their families. Additionally, it will bring greater attention to the often-overlooked issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Men and Boys by prioritizing Métis-specific data collection and research in this area. ■

Métis Identification & Registry Systems

The Registry Department is dedicated to maintaining the integrity of its process while assisting self-identifying Métis to become Citizens of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government by providing consistent support and service to both its Citizens and Otipemisiwak Métis Government applicants. This past fiscal year, our Registry Department received a total of 7,412 new applications from across all application channels, including in-person, Registry Sessions, email, and mail-in. We continued to host extended hours in the Provincial Office building in Edmonton, which provided applicants with more flexibility on select evenings and weekends to complete their applications in a more personal and accommodating setting. We issued citizenship to 6,462 applicants, as our total citizenship reached 73,858 by March 31, 2025. Applications for Harvesting were also fruitful, with Registry receiving 3,180 applications. By the end of the fiscal year, the total number of Harvesters reached 16,990.

REGISTRY APPLICATIONS

Registry sessions have continued to be well attended by applicants from across the province. These sessions are important to Alberta Métis communities, as they not only provide a method of direct contact with applicants and Citizens who may not otherwise have the opportunity, but they remain an important method of spreading awareness about the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and its programs and affiliates. Over the course of the fiscal year, Registry planned and facilitated 107 sessions that brought in 1,618 applications, accounting for 22% of our total applications throughout the year.

Citizenship verification remains a department focus as we continue to strengthen the integrity of the database. Opportunities for verification arise during Otipemisiwak Métis Government departmental programming, where the benefit of collaboration with different departments is exemplified. For instance, we continue to provide ongoing support to Alberta MétisWorks, Rupertsland Institute, and Métis Housing, among many others. During the 2024/25 year, we were able to verify 13,466 Citizens. To further support the integrity of the database, the Registry Department has worked with Indigenous Services Canada to validate our Citizens. We will continue the process of removal for anyone who no longer meets the definition of Métis as defined in the Citizenship Act.

We launched the Contact Information Portal in August 2024 to further simplify the process of updating personal contact information for Citizens who have undergone a change of address, passed away, or experienced another change. This portal acts as an accessible, online alternative to the physical forms that are already available. Since its launch, the portal has proven to be successful, with 3,396 total primaries and 1,935 total households choosing to use this method of updating information.

To further support self-identifying Métis in becoming Citizens, the Registry Department collaborated with Rupertsland Institute (RLI) with the goal of entering high schools and registering potential youth Citizens, as well as their families. Registry first connected with RLI in

December 2024 to discuss hosting registry sessions in schools. RLI provided contacts within school divisions and additional support, like developing a partnership with career development-based program Next Gen Careers. In the following months we hosted three registry sessions in partnership with RLI and Next Gen Careers at high schools across Alberta.

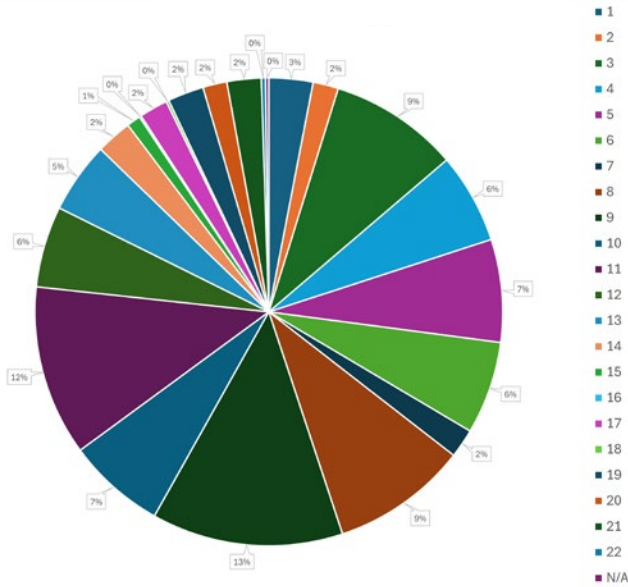
In 2024, Registry continued its mission to enter correctional institutions and collect applications from residents looking to obtain citizenship. By developing a relationship with both federal and provincial institutions within Alberta, the Registry Department was able to host 11 registry sessions inside eight institutions across the province, including institutions like the Edmonton Remand Centre, the Red Deer Remand Centre, and the Peace River Correctional Centre. These sessions have been incredibly successful in spreading awareness.

The Registry Department has taken a more active role in assisting the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (OCEO) with council elections this past year. Registry assisted with the District Council elections for Rocky View Métis District 4, Calgary Elbow Métis District 6, St. Paul-Cold Lake Métis District 12, Athabasca Landing Métis District 20, and Wabasca-Desmarais Métis District 22 as well as the District Captain elections for Foothills Métis District 1, Jasper House Métis District 9, and Lac La Biche Métis District 19. These elections ran from October 29, 2024, to November 5, 2024. These Citizens were directed to update their contact information through the Contact Information Portal.

CONCLUSION AND WHAT'S NEXT

The Registry Department will continue to serve our applicants and Citizens in our province and beyond. As the first contact that most Citizens have with the Métis Nation within Alberta and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, our professionalism and integrity are paramount. Our ongoing focus remains on reducing the application timeframe and increasing citizenship year over year. ■

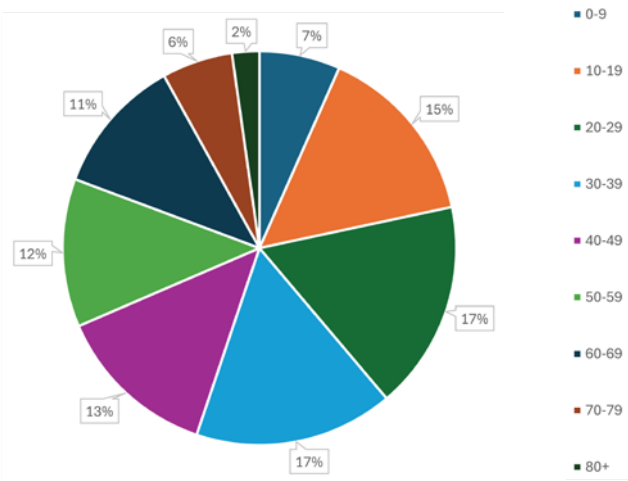
Percentage of Citizens Per District



Percentage of Citizens Per District

District	Count	Percentage
1	2248	3.04%
2	1297	1.76%
3	6613	8.95%
4	4611	6.24%
5	5242	7.10%
6	4740	6.42%
7	1472	1.99%
8	6940	9.40%
9	9780	13.24%
10	5020	6.80%
11	8704	11.78%
12	4143	5.61%
13	3623	4.91%
14	1833	2.48%
15	710	0.96%
16	97	0.13%
17	1459	1.98%
18	140	0.19%
19	1839	2.49%
20	1230	1.67%
21	1750	2.37%
22	205	0.28%
N/A	172	0.23%
Total	73858	

Provincial Citizenship by Age



Provincial Citizenship by Age

Age	Count	Percentage
0-9	4903	7%
10-19	11087	15%
20-29	12682	17%
30-39	12078	17%
40-49	9861	13%
50-59	8983	12%
60-69	8318	11%
70-79	4296	6%
80+	1650	2%
Total	73858	

Self-Government

The role of the Self-Government Department is to provide administrative support to all branches of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, helping it achieve the standard of fair, transparent, accountable, and responsible government envisioned in our Constitution. This work continues the long tradition of self-determination, and the inherent right of self-government that has defined the Métis throughout our history.

While we are still in the early days of this new government, the last year has been full of incredible progress in finding our feet and building the systems and institutions that will provide the foundations of a strong, reliable, and democratic government.

The Self-Government Department is made up of the following teams:

- Transition
- Governance and Policy
- Government Administration
- Strategic Governance

TRANSITION

This year marked an incredible milestone in the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's transition from the previous governance structure prior to our Constitution. As of May 5, 2025, 12 of 22 District Councils—more than 50%—have now been formally established and incorporated.

The Transition Team has been kept busy with meetings with Local Councils, Citizen Information Sessions, and meetings with District Captains and Councils over the last year. They have also turned their attention to developing written and audio-visual resources to communicate the transition process to Citizens, Local Councils, elected officials, and other governments and organizations.

Information about the Districts' transitions can be found in the District Councils report, pg. 46.



Self-Government Department staff at the registration table for a January 17, 2025 transition information session in Calgary.

OTIPEMISIWAK MÉTIS GOVERNMENT LAW

Changes to Legislation

The Self-Government Department provided administrative support to the Citizens' Council in passing two pieces of legislation in 2024/25: *An Act to Amend the District Boundaries Act*, passed July 2024; and *An Act to Amend the Elections and Referenda Act*, passed January 2025. Both acts make amendments to existing laws—you can read more about these laws in the Citizens' Council report on pg. 15.

Under our *Self-Government Act*, each proposed law, or amendment to a law, must pass three distinct steps (called readings) in the Citizens' Council before it becomes official. As part of that process, the Citizens' Council is responsible for giving notice of proposed legislation and consulting with Citizens. Our department provided support in publishing the draft legislation online, developing and sharing feedback surveys, and communicating feedback to the Citizens' Council on these acts.

All Otipemisiwak Métis Government legislation can be found in the Public Registry.

Public Registry

The Public Registry is the online repository that holds all Otipemisiwak Métis Government Laws, regulations, orders, and many other key documents. You can find it at albertametis.com/governance/public-registry



This past year, in collaboration with the Communications and Citizen Engagement Department, the Self-Government Department worked to improve the online Public Registry, formerly known as the Registry of Laws, to ensure greater alignment with the Constitution and ease of use for Citizens. Improvements included changes in language to avoid confusion with the Register of Citizens, clearer organization of different types of documents within the Public Registry, and the addition of an archive for inactive or superseded documents.

Legislative Development Process

In order to facilitate the legislative role of the Citizens' Council, department staff have been working to refine a legislative development process that allows Citizens' Council members to draw on the support and expertise of staff to draft proposed legislation.



Self-Government Department staff and members of the Citizens' Council discuss the development of a council of Elders and Knowledge Keepers with Elders at a February 2025 workshop.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Citizens' Council and Cabinet

The 2024/25 fiscal year was the first full year of Citizens' Council meetings, following the September 2023 general election. Over the period from April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025, the Self-Government Department provided administrative support for 14 meetings of the Citizens' Council, along with several Cabinet meetings, information sessions, governance training sessions, and workshops.

A major priority for 2024/25 was to support the Citizens' Council in the development of a council of Elders or Knowledge Keepers as required in the Constitution. To this end, the department organized three multi-day workshops in early 2025 for Council to work through and discuss how this council should be structured and function. You can read more about the council of Elders and Knowledge Keepers in the Citizens' Council report on pg. 16.

In March of 2025, the department organized and supported a governance training session for Citizens' Council. A major component of this session was the first workshop to develop and refine rules of procedure for the Citizens' Council. Future workshops are planned for the coming year. These rules will help the Citizens' Council meetings to run smoothly, improve clarity around meeting conduct, and reinforce transparency and accountability.

District Councils

As we have continued to move forward in the transition from the Métis Nation of Alberta to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, many new District Captains and Councillors have joined the ranks of the Otipemisiwak

Métis Government. To support these newly elected officials in taking on these critical roles within our government, the Self-Government Department hosted a two-day onboarding session in February 2025 and also began development of online learning resources for District Council onboarding.



Self-Government Department staff support the June 12, 2025 Citizens' Council meeting.

OFFICERS AND JUDICIAL BRANCH

Officers

Ombudsman: the Self-Government Department provided support to the Office of the Ombudsman in developing policies and procedures in the operation of his duties.

Chair: the Self-Government Department played a key role in the operations of the Office of the Chair over the last year, assisting in the distribution of meeting notices, preparation of reports, and other administrative tasks.

Judicial Branch – Judicial Tribunal

During the 2024/25 fiscal year, Citizens' Council appointed members for the two remaining vacancies on the Judicial Tribunal. A Clerk of the Judicial Branch was also hired during this period to support the work of the Judicial Tribunal.

Now that all seats of the Tribunal have been appointed, the Self-Government Department, primarily through the Clerk of the Judicial Branch, has provided administrative support for six meetings of the Judicial Tribunal. During the first two of these meetings, department staff provided support and expertise for the development of the Interim Rules of Procedure for the Judicial Tribunal.

CONCLUSION AND WHAT'S NEXT

This upcoming September will mark two years since the first Otipemisiwak Métis Government was elected and our Constitution came into force. February 2025 also marks two years since Canada signed the *Métis Nation within Alberta Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement*.

We have come a long way in that time, but there is still a long way to go. The Self-Government Department continues to provide the support needed by our government to fully implement and uphold the values and principles set out in our Constitution, and to achieve the goal of self-government that our Métis ancestors fought for.

In the coming year, the Self-Government Department plans to continue to support the Citizens' Council in developing and establishing a council of Elders and Knowledge Keepers, which has a clear mandate in our Constitution to provide advice and support to the Citizens' Council. We are also working to refine the policies and practices for Citizens' Council meetings to improve accessibility for Citizens. Supporting the advancement of self-government treaty negotiations with Canada continues to be a key priority.

More broadly, the Self-Government Department will continue to address gaps in current practices and structures, and to develop solutions for the challenges faced in building a strong Métis self-government. ■



Swearing in of judicial tribunal members for Lower Athabasca River and Lesser Slave Lake Territories appointed by the Citizens' Council on May 29, 2024. From left to right: Janis Cunningham (Lower Athabasca River Territory), President Andrea Sandmaier, and Corinne Willier (Lesser Slave Lake Territory).

Youth Programs and Services

Youth Programs and Services Department aims to empower Métis youth by grounding them in culture, providing growth opportunities, and supporting their journey toward becoming confident and capable leaders within their communities.

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Department of Youth Programs and Services remains committed to meeting the unique needs and aspirations of Métis youth aged 12 to 29 across Alberta. This vibrant generation of Métis youth is enthusiastic to connect with their culture, deepen their understanding of Métis history, and foster a strong sense of pride in their Métis identities. Central to our mission is the active involvement of youth in key decision-making processes where their fresh perspectives and innovative ideas help shape meaningful change. Our continued efforts focus on strengthening the connection between youth and the Métis community to ensure they remain firmly grounded in their cultural roots.

This report provides a comprehensive summary of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's initiatives in support of Métis youth throughout Alberta. During the 2024/25 fiscal year, the Youth Programs & Services team has offered valuable support to Métis youth and their families. Through a variety of programming and events, we have worked tirelessly to preserve, nurture, and enrich the

relationship that Métis youth have with their culture and identity. We encourage you to review the contents of this report, which outlines the key accomplishments, barriers, and strategic objectives that guide our work. As we continue our unwavering commitment to the empowerment, support, and development of Métis youth across Alberta, this report serves as both a reflection of our progress and a roadmap for the future.

PROVINCIAL INITIATIVES

Wahkômâtowin Summer Camp

The 2024 Wahkômâtowin Summer Camp took place from August 19–23, 2024. The camp began on Monday, August 19, with icebreakers and a ribbon shirt and skirt-making session led by a Métis facilitator. The day continued with crafts, a movie, and games before heading to Pine Valley Resort for cabin assignments and dinner. Campers spent the evening making personalized door signs, enjoying s'mores around the fire, and sharing their cabin names. Tuesday featured a nature walk and teachings about our





relationship with the land, followed by traditional Métis games and a youth-prepared dinner. On Wednesday, campers learned beading and spoon painting, followed by outdoor games, and a fun tie-dyeing activity. After a stew and Bannock dinner, the group gathered for a dance that transitioned into another cozy campfire and sharing circle. Thursday was spent at the lake, where campers learned to fish and created fish scale art facilitated by the Harvesting Department. The evening wrapped up with a kitchen party featuring live fiddle music, jigging, a sash ceremony, and Bannock-making over the fire. The final day, Friday, was quieter, with a medicinal plant scavenger hunt, an obstacle course, and a card-making activity. Camp concluded with campers reflecting on their week, sharing farewells, and returning home with full hearts and lasting memories.

2024 MIYOOAYAAN (Wellness) Summit

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Department of Youth Programs and Services hosted the 2nd Annual MIYOOAYAAN (Wellness) Summit at the Pomeroy Hotel & Conference Centre in Grande Prairie from November 8–10, 2024. This provincial gathering was specially designed for the young Citizens of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government to foster a sense of community through cultural connections and promote the importance of positive mental health and self-care. The 2024 summit focused on the 8 Pillars of Wellness, offering inspiration for youth to incorporate each pillar into their daily lives as part of a balanced and fulfilling journey toward well-being.

This provincial event was dedicated to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's youth Citizens residing in Alberta aged 12 to 29, to gather in a safe and inclusive space and learn about overall wellness. Through connection to culture, Métis youth will feel engaged and connected to their communities through participation in conversations and various wellness workshops that focus on their

mental health and self-care. The keynote speaker, Métis Bev, delivered a dynamic and interactive presentation that encouraged youth to reflect on their wellness journey. A Men's Mental Health Panel followed, featuring three inspirational men who shared personal stories and strategies to support mental wellness among Métis men and boys. Following the panel, the youth were divided into four groups to take part in a series of engaging wellness workshops, including Michif Language, Weaving Wellness, Connecting Through Cultural Art, and Yoga and Massage.

2025 Youth & Seniors Gathering

The 9th Annual Youth and Seniors Gathering began on February 21 with registration and the opening of the Artisan and Information Market, giving attendees the chance to connect with local vendors and community services. Co-Emcees Doreen Bergum and Brianna Lizotte welcomed participants with a fun icebreaker, followed by an opening blessing. After dinner, the event transitioned into a crib tournament and vibrant kitchen party that brought the community together in celebration. This gathering is an opportunity for Métis youth aged





12 to 29 and seniors aged 60+ to share knowledge and teachings, listen to inspiring keynote speakers, partake in cultural workshops, and create connections and belonging within the community. This is an annual event attended by over 400 Métis Citizens that was created as a space to promote mentorship and knowledge sharing opportunities between youth and seniors.

February 22 was filled with cultural pride and learning, beginning with breakfast and a Grand Entry featuring dignitaries, veterans, RCMP representatives, and Elders. The day continued with a powerful keynote by Lorelei Higgins on belonging and intergenerational connection. Attendees then chose from a wide range of workshops, including beading, jigging, Métis medicine, storytelling, and justice programs. The evening featured a Moose Calling Contest, followed by the presentation of the Outstanding Youth and Senior Awards to Rayven Glazebrook and Theresa Majeran.

2024 Sports and Recreation Grant

Sports and recreational activities are vital to the health and wellness of Métis youth. Low-income Métis youth are often unable to participate in sports and recreation activities due to financial barriers that may exist; these barriers include registration, equipment, and travel expenses. To ease the financial struggle of many Métis Albertans and to ensure Métis youth have increased opportunities to participate in sports and recreation activities, the Department of Youth Programs and Services launched the Sports and Recreation Grant in the fall of 2020. This grant provides Métis youth from across Alberta the opportunity to participate in sports and recreation activities without worrying about the financial barriers that often accompany them.

The Sports and Recreation Grant was available to Métis Albertans who are the parent or guardian of a youth aged 5 to 17 living in their household. The program, which can be accessed once per application period, provides up to \$500 per eligible youth to help cover costs related

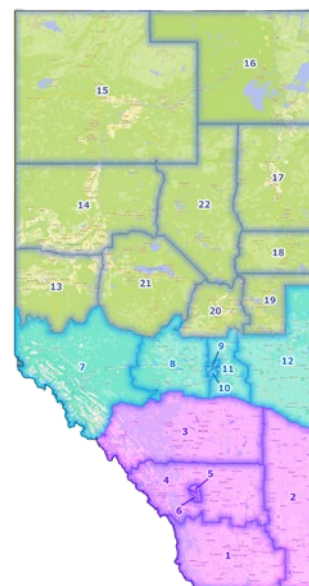
to their chosen activity. To qualify, applicants were required to submit all necessary documentation within the designated timeframe. The 9th round of the Sports and Recreation program opened on November 18 and received 2,106 applications. Of those, the Department of Youth Programs & Services successfully approved 2,004 applications for Métis youth.

PROGRAMMING INITIATIVES

District Programming

In the past year, the department has been fortunate enough to expand programming and offer more frequent programs for Métis youth within Alberta. The Youth Team currently has coordinators offering programming in the Northern Region, Central Region, Southern Region, and virtual programming, including mail-out kits. The Youth Programs & Services department promotes cultural education and personal growth among Métis youth by offering dynamic and engaging programming.

Youth Programming Areas



Northern Programming
Districts 13–22
3,671 Registered Citizens aged 12–29
Central Programming
Districts 7–12
10,569 Registered Citizens aged 12–29
Southern Programming
Districts 1–6
7,499 Registered Citizens aged 12–29
(4,435 Youth Citizens within Calgary districts)

Cultural Enrichment

The Youth Programs and Services Department continues to develop and deliver cultural enrichment programming across Alberta, providing Métis youth with opportunities to learn, connect with, and practice cultural traditions. Throughout 2024, the department has expanded its programming by offering new, innovative workshops and enhancing the long-standing programs.



Beading workshops remain a favourite amongst the youth, with the assistance of talented facilitators and knowledgeable programming staff who have gone beyond basic templates to offer more advanced beading circles. The past year, youth have created intricate pieces such as beaded ball caps, poppies, pins, cardholders, wristlets, croc charms, and more. The beading circles are an incredible opportunity for youth to learn new techniques in addition to showcasing their creativity and cultural pride.

Language revitalization continues to be a core priority. Our Virtual Programming Coordinator offers bi-weekly Virtual Michif Lessons, which are uploaded with lesson plans to ensure accessibility for all youth to learn at their own pace and revisit the lessons as needed.

In the Southern Region, our youth jigging troupe continues their success and has completed showcases in many schools and at cultural gatherings. The Youth Programs and Services Department has launched *Jig N Jam Kitchen Parties* across the regions for youth to learn the basics of jigging, spoons, and to enjoy traditional fiddle music.

Some of the cultural programs delivered throughout the past year include workshops and lessons such as:

- Beginner Ribbon Skirt and Shirt Making
- Beading Circles
- Tuppie Workshops
- Jigging Lessons
- Caribou Tufting
- Traditional Plant Walks
- Métis Mitten Workshops
- Finger Weaving
- Dot Art
- Capote Making
- Virtual Michif Lessons
- Virtual Beading Mail Out Kits
- And more!

Life Skills

The Youth Programs and Services Department continues to develop life-skills programming that directly addresses the needs and aspirations identified by Métis youth,

empowering them with the tools and knowledge to succeed in their daily lives.

The Acimowin Book Club continues to gain popularity amongst youth participants. Each month, participants sign up and receive a new book by an Indigenous author and meet virtually at the end of the month to discuss the book.

Academic supports also remained a priority. Homework Drop-In Sessions were held at the Youth Building, offering a quiet and supportive space for youth to complete assignments, prepare for exams, and request help as needed.

The department also introduced several new life-skills programs to help youth navigate a wide range of real-world situations. The programs include:

- Healthy Eating & Cooking Lessons: Facilitated by a Métis youth, participants learn basic cooking skills, meal planning, recipes, and nutritional knowledge
- Community Garden Project: Youth were taught gardening and fostered a sense of environmental stewardship and community
- Hunter Education & Non-Restricted Firearm Certification: Workshops to teach safe and responsible outdoor practices for youth interested in harvesting
- Babysitting Courses & First Aid Certification
- Métis Mix-Up Virtual Cooking Lessons on YouTube
- Wellness Challenges
- Young Parents Group
- Mental Health & overall wellness workshops
- And more!

With these life-skills initiatives, the Youth Programs and Services Department continues to provide a comprehensive suite of programs that support youth in their personal development, well-being, and future goals.

Youth Group

The Youth Programs and Services Department offers Youth Groups and Young Adults Groups in Northern, Southern, and Central Alberta as well as virtually, offering youth Citizens a safe and welcoming space to connect, build lasting friendships, and most importantly, have fun. These groups are designed to be dynamic, often aligned with the seasons. For example, recent outings have included movie nights, community field trips, laser tag, dinner nights, recreation centres, and more.

Youth Programs and Services are committed to an inclusive, safe, comfortable, valued program where our youth feel seen and heard. Our programming is designed to foster a welcoming environment for all participants.

CONCLUSION AND WHAT'S NEXT

The Youth Programs and Services Department has an action-packed 2025 for Youth Programming. As part of our 2025 goals, we are enhancing our province-wide virtual programming to better serve youth who face transportation barriers or live in districts where in-person programming is limited. The Virtual Programs will provide a space for cultural, life skills, and community-building programs in an online setting to ensure that all youth can participate. We will also be expanding our online resources, including tutorial videos, Michif language lessons, cooking videos, and new mail-out kits.

Our department continues the planning for key upcoming events, including the Miyooayaan Wellness Summit in Calgary, Alberta Métis Fest, and the 10th Anniversary of the Youth & Seniors Gathering and Youth Summer Camps. These events will provide further opportunities for youth to connect. The 10th round of the Sports and Recreation Grant will re-open in fall 2025.

Moving forward, we are dedicated to collaborating with community members to identify and develop future initiatives, facilitated workshops, and events that reflect the unique needs and interests of Métis youth across Alberta. We will continue to gather input directly from youth to help guide programming and ensure all initiatives provide a meaningful sense of connection and belonging within the Métis community. In 2025, we look forward to expanding our reach, building stronger relationships with youth across Alberta, and creating more opportunities for youth to thrive. ■



Affiliate Reports



Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc.

Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. (AMDI) was created in 1984 under a federal government contribution agreement with Native Economic Development Program, an initiative promoted by Industry, Science and Technology. The total committed funds for the creation of AMDI was \$8.8 million.

In 1988, AMDI commenced operations by providing commercial financial services and business management advisory services to Métis entrepreneurs throughout Alberta. Under the original Federal Government Contribution Agreement, \$800,000 was expensed on the initial start-up costs while the capital pool of \$8 million was disbursed in stages. Since inception, we have rolled our capital over at least 12 times while maintaining strength (value) in that portfolio to the extent that we could leverage our portfolio if more loan capital is needed.

AMDI has lent out over \$100 million since 1988 and has assisted in the creation of over 1,500 Métis-owned businesses throughout the province of Alberta, while maintaining a capital base of \$8 million. We remain committed to the growth of Métis business and prosperity in Alberta. Our purpose is to support Métis entrepreneurs on their journey to business success, creating economic resilience for generations. This purpose is rooted in a deep respect for the enterprising spirit of Métis people and a strong desire to be far more impactful for our customers today and in the future.

We empower Indigenous individuals and communities to create jobs, build wealth, and strengthen the broader Alberta economy. We do this by acting as a bridge, connecting Indigenous entrepreneurs with financial institutions, government programs, and critical business supports. We help entrepreneurs overcome barriers, such as lack of collateral, limited credit history, or lack of

access to capital, and we help turn their strong ideas into thriving, sustainable businesses.

Through our work we are supporting job creation, improving family incomes, strengthening community resilience, and contributing to long-term prosperity across Métis communities.

The funding we receive from Indigenous Services Canada covers our operating costs, client services such as business plans and bookkeeping, and the grants we provide in support of client loans.

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

During the 2024/25 fiscal year, AMDI reimagined its role as the primary Métis capital provider in Alberta, approving \$3.7 million in new financing for 68 entrepreneurs and progressing \$1.3 million in applications now poised for completion in early 2025/26. These investments catalyzed business startups, expansions, and job creation across 17 districts. While construction and service enterprises remained dominant, we observed emerging demand from professional services and knowledge-based firms, validating the 2023 forecast that the Métis economy is diversifying beyond asset-heavy sectors.

The non-repayable contribution funded by Indigenous Services Canada lowered average repayment by approximately 22%, materially improving cash flow resilience for entrepreneurs.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The AMDI Board of Directors and staff have been working on a strategic plan to recommit to our purpose and dedication to Métis entrepreneurs. Rapid technological advancements, macroeconomic shifts, and the rising prominence of purpose-based strategies present opportunities for Apeetogosan to innovate and grow. A review of the strategic and competitive positioning has identified critical factors shaping our future direction. These realities underscore the need to address



vulnerabilities, capitalize on our unique strengths, including an underutilized Métis brand, and align our strategies to navigate an evolving landscape.

Our Values

- We believe in integrity, honesty, and professionalism with respect to our clients, communities, and our company.
- We believe in effective, timely, seamless delivery of our services.
- We will be accountable in our relationships with all stakeholders.
- We believe in effective communication at all levels.
- We believe in respect for all peoples.
- We believe in positive and professional leadership and teamwork.
- We believe that education is a fundamental cornerstone in small business development.
- We believe in commitment to our clients and company.

We envision a future where every Métis entrepreneur can thrive, building businesses that reflect their ambitions, talents, and cultural identity. This means Métis entrepreneurs are empowered with the resources, knowledge, mentorship, and networks they need

to succeed. With a commitment to equipping and empowering the next generation of Métis business leaders, we will solidify our reputation as a trusted advisor, collaborator, and advocate for Métis entrepreneurship.

Our goal is to significantly expand the reach and impact of our organization by inspiring and supporting more Métis entrepreneurs and strengthening the broader Métis entrepreneur ecosystem. Success will be measured by the growth in the number of clients we serve, reflecting our ability to connect more Métis business owners with the financial and advisory support they need to succeed. To be a truly valuable partner to Métis entrepreneurs, we must be recognized as a trusted and effective resource in their business journey. Our ultimate measure of success is the positive impact we have on the entrepreneurs and businesses we serve.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

AMD's 10-member team blends decades-long institutional knowledge with new experienced hires in business planning and lending. They support a wide range of needs for Métis clients. Collectively they have a vast knowledge of all aspects of the entrepreneur path, and they collaborate to ensure the best service is provided to the entrepreneur.

PINNACLE BUSINESS SERVICES LTD.

Pinnacle Business Services Ltd. is a dedicated business consulting firm committed to supporting Métis entrepreneurs and business owners across Alberta. We facilitate access to vital funding opportunities, including government programs administered through Indigenous Services Canada and loan financing offered by AMDI. Through our partnership with AMDI, Pinnacle plays a key role in helping Métis clients navigate the often complex process of starting, expanding, or formalizing a business.

Our primary function is to provide professional consulting and advisory services with a focus on preparing detailed, customized business plans. These business plans serve as a critical component of funding applications and investment proposals. Each plan is tailored to reflect the unique circumstances, goals, and challenges faced by the client, and is designed to strengthen their application for loans, grants, and other financial support mechanisms.

Pinnacle's business consultants work closely with clients to evaluate business opportunities from a strategic and operational perspective. This includes:

- Assessing the viability of proposed ventures through financial modeling, market analysis, and competitive landscape evaluations.
- Identifying areas of risk and weakness, such as gaps in management experience, financial literacy, or market access, and advising on risk mitigation strategies.
- Outlining client responsibilities, particularly those associated with accepting financial support in the form of loans and non-repayable contributions like the Métis Entrepreneur Assistance Program (MEAP) grant.

We help ensure that clients fully understand not just the potential of their business idea, but also the responsibilities, commitments, and long-term impacts that come with launching or expanding a business. Our goal is to empower clients with the knowledge and tools to build sustainable, growth-oriented enterprises.

Once an opportunity is validated, Pinnacle supports the development of a structured business plan that outlines the steps required for execution. This plan becomes the core presentation document used to secure financing. It includes:

- A detailed project description and implementation plan
- Financial projections (cash flow, income statements, break-even analysis)
- Capital cost breakdown and use of funds



- Funding requirements and sources
- An evaluation of the client's capacity to deliver a competitive product or service
- Identification of key milestones and measurable performance indicators

The strength and clarity of this document are vital to instilling confidence in lenders, investors, and funding agencies. Pinnacle ensures that each plan meets high professional standards while being rooted in the client's vision and goals.

AFTERCARE AND ONGOING SUPPORT

Pinnacle's services do not end with the submission of a business plan. We are committed to the long-term success of our clients, which is why we offer aftercare services to ensure their businesses are properly supported once operational. These services include:

- Establishing sound accounting and bookkeeping to meet the business' reporting needs
- Providing entrepreneurs with bookkeeping services for a maximum of 2 years, including GST filing and payroll
- Offering ongoing advisory support to ensure compliance and financial health

By assisting with these foundational aspects of business management, Pinnacle helps clients build a solid infrastructure to support sustained growth and profitability.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCESS

Pinnacle acts as a first point of contact for many aspiring Métis entrepreneurs. On average, we receive two to three inquiries per week from individuals within the Métis community. These inquiries vary widely in nature, from initial explorations of business ideas and questions about tax implications, to requests for guidance on accessing funding and navigating the business planning process.

Whether someone is seeking to turn a passion into a full-time venture, expand an existing operation, or simply explore the feasibility of a business concept, Pinnacle provides culturally informed, professional guidance tailored to the unique needs of the Métis community.

we are ensuring that every entrepreneur has access to the expertise and tools they need to succeed.

Looking ahead, our strategic focus is clear: to amplify our reach, strengthen our impact, and serve as a trusted partner in every stage of the entrepreneurial journey. We will continue to adapt to a changing economic landscape, leverage the strength of the Métis brand, and champion innovation that is rooted in culture and community.

Our work is far from done. But together, with our dedicated team, valued partners, and the enduring entrepreneurial spirit of the Métis people, we are building a future where Métis-owned businesses thrive and communities prosper. ■

CLOSING REMARKS

As we reflect on the past year, Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. is proud to reaffirm its unwavering commitment to empowering Métis entrepreneurs and strengthening Métis economic development across Alberta. Our continued success, measured in millions of dollars in financing, hundreds of supported businesses, and deepening community impact, is a testament to the resilience, ingenuity, and vision of the Métis people we serve.

We are not only upholding the original spirit of our founding agreement but evolving into a cornerstone of Métis business support, to create a robust ecosystem of financial and advisory services. With strong partnerships

Métis Crossing

Métis Crossing is a major initiative of the Métis Nation within Alberta. It is a signature destination of Métis cultural sharing, education, gathering, and business development. Our vision is to be a place of inspiration, sharing the warmth and strength of our rich and distinct Métis culture, offering legendary experiences that elevate the spirit and enrich lives. In 2024, Métis Crossing was identified as one of the top 50 places in the world to visit by *Travel and Leisure* magazine and in 2022 we were highlighted as one of the 22 best places to visit by *Conde Nast*. Métis Crossing has grown to be a place of pride for Albertans, Canadians and most of all Métis people, where we share and celebrate our culture with all people – near and far!

Today, Métis Crossing encompasses over 1,800 acres of land including an 1,100 acre working buffalo ranch, a historic river lot farm, a Cultural Gathering Centre, many types of accommodations including a RV park, Trappers Tents, the Lodge at Métis Crossing, and a series of sky watching structures. Our guests can experience the Visions, Hopes and Dreams at Métis Crossing Wildlife Park, Tales of the Trapline, Through the Eye of a Hunter, Meet the Métis, and Star Stories when they visit.

Métis Crossing is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by Citizens' Council who provide the vision, direction, and oversight to the organization. The board is comprised of the necessary combination of connection

to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, Métis culture and industry experience:

- Audrey Poitras, Chairperson
- Andrea Sandmaier, Director (Otipemisiwak Métis Government President and Secretary of Tourism and Economic Development)
- Grant Lacombe, Director (Otipemisiwak Métis Government Secretary of Harvesting and Culture)
- Art Cunningham, Director and Knowledge Holder
- Andy Popko, Director

UPDATES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As Métis Crossing successfully completes our third year of operation as a full-service cultural destination (experiences, accommodation, and food services), we have many accomplishments to share for the fiscal year April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025. The successes will be described in the areas of:

- Business development
- Operations enhancements
- Physical developments
- Métis Crossing Ranch

Business development

Financial self-sustainability is a foundational goal for Métis Crossing. The achievement of this goal requires intentional actions in the area of business development. Our market segmentation goals outline a well distributed mix of guests that match our organizational goals:

- 30% Métis Nation within Alberta events (Otipemisiwak Métis Government departments, Rupertsland Institute, Apeetogosan, Métis Housing)

- 30% Corporate and group bookings (government departments, other Indigenous organizations, industry, not-for profit organizations, etc.)
- 25% Leisure travellers (Métis, Alberta, Canada, USA, and other international)
- 10% Family events such as weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, family reunions
- 5% School groups.

This year, Métis Crossing hosted 24 Otipemisiwak Métis Government and affiliate events at which we welcomed over 5,000 Métis Citizens, our largest guest numbers. These events included Connecting through Culture, Quitcore, Alberta Métis Fest, department planning meetings, and affiliate training. Approximately \$1,100,000 were spent at Métis Crossing and reinvested into our Nation's facilities, programs, and people.

Another 18 Indigenous organizations (Métis National Council, Métis Nation British Columbia, Metis Settlements, First Nations groups, and non-profit entities) also chose Métis Crossing as the place to gather. We continue to build our corporate events through participation in industry trade shows. Métis Crossing most often participates as speakers, panel experts, and tradeshow presenters. Corporations and government departments are increasingly choosing Métis Crossing for their events because of the beautiful accommodations, incredible food, legendary cultural experiences and amazing service from our team.

Our Leisure segments are also increasing, resulting from our active participation in travel trade events and promotions. In partnership with Destination Canada, Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, Travel Alberta, Indigenous Tourism Alberta, Explore Edmonton, and the Edmonton International Airport, Métis Crossing works to attract guests from around Canada, the USA, and other international markets. Métis Crossing packages and experiences are now actively sold in Japan, Korea, Germany, France, the UK, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Australia, and the USA by tour operators. Just three years ago, Métis Crossing was not in any of those markets. While this segment has taken time to build and gain consumer trust, it will grow to be a very significant contributor to our financial sustainability as guests to Canada have a much higher spend per person than other Canadians.

Operational enhancements

Financial sustainability is also dependent on an organization's spend. This year, Métis Crossing grew in efficiency as new software systems were procured that better align with the full operations of a destination of this scale. The new systems allow for smoother operations

of the restaurant, accommodations and giftshop, as well as better connectivity to the financial systems. These facilitate more timely and accurate reporting, as well as streamlining the purchasing and inventory controls. Importantly, the upgrades are improving team and guest satisfaction. Implemented at the end of this fiscal, the beginning of 2025/26 year will be spent training and cross training the team to ensure full system optimization.

Métis Crossing annual events are also growing in popularity. Events such as Indigenous Veterans' Day, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Métis Crossing Day, Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day and New Year's Eve are regularly filling the Cultural Gathering Centre with community members anxious to participate in Métis cultural celebrations. They are becoming expected annual events around which people are now planning their trips.

Physical developments

Last year Métis Crossing began the Infrastructure Masterplan to design the full infrastructure build out required to operate in a sustainable manner. A key component of this plan is a potable water treatment plant and distribution system. The process to complete this system has taken over two years:

- The well was drilled and licensed in 2022
- The Plant was designed in 2023 to treat the specific water from our well
- Alberta Environment approvals received in 2023
- Potable Water Treatment Plant was constructed and commissioned in 2024
- Health and safety operations continue to ensure we have the clean water for our guests and staff

The wastewater collection and treatment system is our next priority. The system has been designed and submitted to Alberta Environment for approval. The approvals were received in 2024, and equipment was purchased. Funding is sought to complete construction in 2025/26. Currently Métis Crossing collects waste and trucks it offsite. This new system will both reduce greenhouse gas emissions from our day-to-day operations and reduce operational costs.

Another critical component of infrastructure being planned is our backup power system and microgrid. At Métis Crossing, as with many rural locations, power interruptions occur regularly. To ensure seamless business operations in these situations, we have undertaken a study to design a short-term backup solution. In addition, we are working closely with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change team to submit an application to the

Smart Renewables and Electrification Pathways Program (SREPs) to build the full renewable microgrid solution. Both studies and design were funded by Prairies Canada.

Finally, Métis Crossing has continued construction of additional Sky Watching Cabins at Métis Crossing. While the Sky Watching Domes have been extremely popular with guests, they have not proven to be energy efficient. To align better with our sustainability goals, a re-design was undertaken, and new cabins are under construction to continue to provide legendary guest experience while improving operational efficiency. Funding for this project was received from Travel Alberta and Prairies Canada.

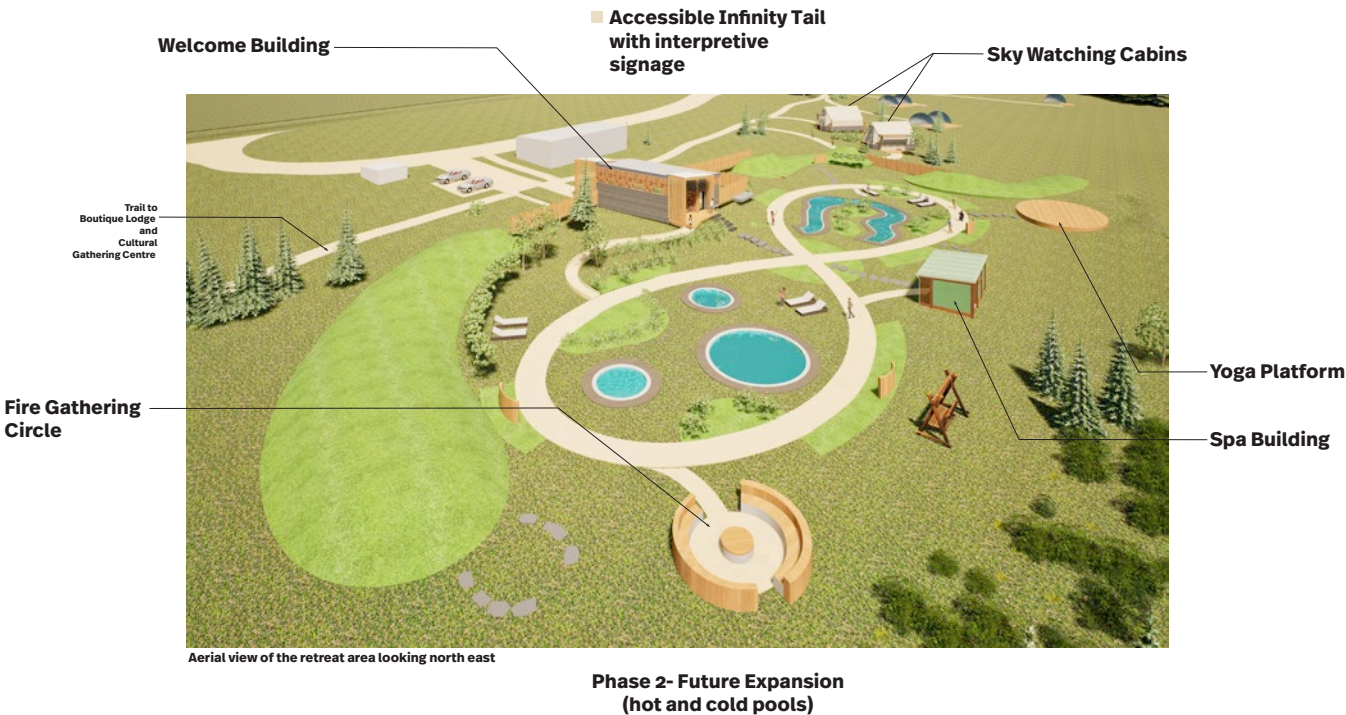
This funding was also used to support the design of *Sage and Spruce Indigenous Spa at Métis Crossing*. This development builds on our success sharing Métis lifeways with our guests through many unique experiences designed to connect our guests with our culture and the land. The full conceptual design will take a few years to complete, but Phase I has started with additional funding from *Canada's Signature Indigenous Tourism Experiences* program. This program invested in existing Indigenous experiences with authentic opportunities to extend a guest's stay an additional night. The Indigenous spa is designed to do just that with the following elements:

- Phase 1 construction includes a Welcome Building with treatment room, fire circle, Infinity Trail and private booking spa module with a sauna and cold plunge is underway. Scheduled for a soft opening in July 2025 and Grand Opening on Métis Crossing Day, September 25, 2025.

Métis Crossing Ranch

As highlighted last year, Métis Crossing worked closely with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change team to purchase an additional 1,100 acres of land and bison herd. The land purchase was partially funded by Canada's *Nature Smart Climate Solutions* program. The Otipemisiwak Métis Government and Métis Crossing have committed to reestablish the buffalo on this land as the keystone species. Learning to manage the buffalo herd in a regenerative manner is a long-term journey. Métis Crossing has undertaken the development of a regenerative land management plan supported by Pembina Pipelines. Through this journey we are building new partnerships to do this work the right way, in balance with Mother Nature, to ensure commercial, environmental, cultural, and economic sustainability. This work will see the land, which has been used for

Métis Crossing Retreat Area Expansion Rendering

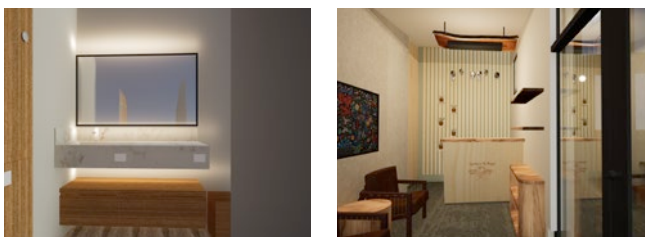


intensive agriculture for the past 50 years, regenerated back to natural northern prairies grasslands. Our relatives, the buffalo, are teaching us as we go.

WHAT'S NEXT

As discussed above, Métis Crossing has some important developments to complete including the Sage and Spruce Indigenous Spa, wastewater treatment plant and backup power. With each new physical development, operational and guest experience plans are also required. Each element of Métis Crossing is connected to the others.

We will also continue to increase our business revenue, focusing on the ideal segment mix outlined at the beginning of this report. An important element of this growth comes from our participation and leadership in Alberta's Indigenous Tourism space. To that end, we are participating in the International Indigenous Tourism Conference to be held in Edmonton in 2026. We strongly encourage all Métis entrepreneurs and communities wanting to enter the tourism space to attend this conference in February 2026. ■



Welcome Building side and Building Interiors



Fire Gathering Circle in Winter



Sky Watching Cabin and Interiors



Spa Building

Métis Education Foundation

The Métis Education Foundation (MEF) 2025–2029 Strategic Plan outlines a bold vision of cultivating a legacy of Métis scholars—grounded in culture, connected to community, and empowered through growth. Established in 1991 by the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA), MEF has been instrumental in increasing educational access and success for Métis learners. With the recent Community Legacy Initiatives (CLI) Funding Protocol Transfer Agreement between the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and MEF, the Foundation enters a transformative era. MEF is poised to enhance governance, strengthen community accountability, and expand operational capacity as it moves forward as a stand-alone affiliate.

MEF's impact is rooted in its enduring partnerships, particularly with Rupertsland Institute (RLI) and Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). Since 2006, these collaborations have enabled the creation of perpetual post-secondary endowments across 21 Alberta institutions, providing sustainable scholarship support for Métis students. As MEF revisits its renewed commitment to educational equity, community impact, and long-term sustainability, it continues to build upon its foundational work to support current and future generations of Métis learners.

GOVERNANCE

The MEF is governed by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, reflecting our deep-rooted commitment to the Métis Nation within Alberta. The Board of Directors meets quarterly, or as needed, to review and approve changes to endowment agreements, receive reports from post-secondary institutions, and discuss strategic adjustments to enhance education initiatives.

Board of Directors:



Andrea Sandmaier

President
Otipemisiwak Métis Government
(October 2023 – present)



Sarah Wolfe

Secretary of Records
Otipemisiwak Métis Government
(June 2025 – present)



Jason Ekeberg

Secretary of the Treasury
Otipemisiwak Métis Government
(October 2023 – present)

Shannon Dunfield, Citizens' Representative, Otipemisiwak Métis Government (October 2023 – June 2025)

Strategic Priorities

Growth: Expanding funding, institutional capacity and program impact

Connection: Deepening relationships with students, alumni, and institutional/community partners

Legacy: Building sustainability, identity, and renewed community engagement

2024/25 MEF EVENTS

Drag Show

On March 29, 2025, MEF hosted its second annual Métis 2SLGBTQIA+ Charity Drag Show at the Edmonton EXPO Centre, in collaboration with the Promoting and Increasing Cultural Safety (PICS) Conference and the 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth Gathering. The event celebrated Indigenous drag artistry with six dynamic Two-Spirit performers—including returning Canada's Drag Race winner Venus—and a surprise debut by MEF's mascot, Buffy the Métis Scholar. With 386 attendees, photo booths, food, and community connection, the show raised an impressive \$6,164.67, more than doubling the previous year's total. These funds will establish a new Métis Scholar Award for 2SLGBTQIA+ post-secondary students.



Grateful Gathering

On March 5, 2025, MEF attended MacEwan University's Grateful Gathering to connect with Métis students and scholarship donors. This event provided MEF with an opportunity to engage directly with students and witness the positive impact of its support on their educational journeys.



Portage Awards Ceremony

On February 27, 2025, MEF attended the annual Portage Awards Ceremony and celebrated the recipients of the 2025 Métis Scholar Award.

Portage College students in 2025/26 will benefit from a \$75,000 contribution to the Métis Scholar Award made by Métis Education Foundation.



Read about
the Funding
Announcement



Youth & Seniors Gathering

On February 21 to 23, 2025, MEF was proud to attend the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Youth & Seniors Gathering. We were especially honoured to recognize two outstanding team members, Theresa Majeran, awarded Outstanding Senior of the Year (Auntie Métis), and Rayven-Sumonay Glazebrook, awarded Outstanding Youth of the Year.



Elder Stockings

On December 17, 2024, MEF partnered with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government to create and distribute winter holiday stockings for elders at Métis Housing's Renaissance Place, spreading warmth and care during the season.



Indspire National Gathering 2025 Winnipeg

The Métis Education Foundation attended the Indspire National Gathering in Winnipeg from November 19–21, 2024, to show support for our partners at Indspire and take in educational teachings on Indigenous barriers in post-secondary education.



Delia Gray Gala

On November 16, 2024, MEF contributed to the planning and success of the Delia Gray Gala at the Edmonton Expo Centre, supporting the celebration of Métis Week.



Youth Open House – Meet the OMSA

On November 14, 2024, MEF hosted a booth on behalf of the newly branded Otipemisiwak Métis Student Association (OMSA) at the Métis-tea Party open house, organized by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Youth team.



Olds College Endowment

The Métis Education Foundation and Olds College established Métis Scholar Award opportunities on October 10, 2024 for Métis Citizens pursuing their education at Olds College.



Read
about the
Partnership



Shaakipakowa

On October 3, 2024, MEF attended Shaakipakowa (They are budding) on behalf of the Otipemisiwak Métis Student Association (OMSA) at the Carriage House Inn in Calgary. This special event celebrated the stories of Métis alumni while uplifting the bright futures of Métis students. Rooted in themes of growth, connection, and renewal, Shaakipakowa welcomed vendors, student ambassadors, and community members for an evening filled with interactive art, cultural celebration, and meaningful connection.



Read about
Shaakipakowa
in Indigenous
Lands &
Resources Today.



U of A Tawâw

On August 29, 2024, MEF hosted a booth at Winter tawâw at the University of Alberta to connect with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. MEF successfully shared information about scholarships, awards, and employment opportunities, supporting students in exploring their career and education options.



Buffy Birthday

On July 26, 2024, MEF proudly collaborated on the planning and delivery of Buffy's Birthday Bash, celebrating Rupertsland Institute's incorporation and affiliation with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. The event featured outdoor games, a barbecue, door prizes, and a special OMSA giveaway for post-secondary students. MEF was honoured to support this cultural and community-focused milestone.



Alberta Métis Fest

On June 22, 2024, OMSA attended Alberta Métis Fest on behalf of MEF. At the event, OMSA supported the Métis community and assisted the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Youth Department, helping to create a welcoming and engaging space for youth throughout the event.



Bow Valley: Celebrating Student Futures Donor Event

The Métis Education Foundation attended Bow Valley College's annual donor event on May 14, 2024, in celebration of our ongoing partnership and in support of Métis student award recipients.



Audrey Poitras Golf Tournament

On June 14, 2024, the Métis Education Foundation played an active role in organizing and supporting the 25th Annual Audrey Poitras Golf Tournament at Legends Golf Course.



NorQuest Métis Scholar Awards

In May 2024, MEF attended the NorQuest Métis Scholar Awards, celebrating and supporting the academic achievements of Métis students. During the event, MEF had the opportunity to meet and connect with award recipients, learning more about their educational journeys and future goals.



MEF SUCCESS STORIES

Keyano College

“It is truly an honour to be recognized, and I am deeply appreciative of your support in my educational goals. This means more than just financial assistance; it is also a meaningful acknowledgement of my heritage, a reminder of the strength and resilience of our community. Your generosity has eased the financial burden of my studies and allowed me to focus fully on my academic development. I am committed to working hard and making the most of the opportunities this scholarship has provided.”

– Warm regards, Lolita Merrit

“As a full-time student who is also deeply involved in coaching, working a second job at Elections Canada, and volunteering within the community, this bursary eases the financial burden of post-secondary education and enables me to focus on my academic goals and the work I do. I plan to pursue studies in Sports Management to create opportunities for youth to grow through sport. Your support inspires me to continue toward my goals and to give back to my community in meaningful ways.” – Warmest regards, Gabriella Gladu



2024 MEF Internal Awards

“I cannot express to you how much this financial gift means to me. In today’s economy and the uncertainty that faces everyone, especially young people in post-secondary studies trying to survive, such as me, I am incredibly grateful for the financial help from the Métis Scholar Award program. I can assure you that I will endeavor to make the Alberta Métis Nation proud of my academic accomplishments as I continue to work towards my goals in achieving my Engineering Degrees in Mechanics and Entertainment Engineering.”

– Kind Regards and once again, Maarsii,
Owen Anderson

Lethbridge Polytechnic

“The receiving of this scholarship has helped me immensely, more than you know. This year I have been extremely struggling with finances. This scholarship going towards my tuition is genuinely the best news I have received in a long time. Thank you from the bottom of my heart, it has made a significant difference. – Kind Regards, Megan Schaaf

Medicine Hat College

“I am a mature student going back to school to better the lives of myself and my family of six. They are involved in many sports and this money allows me to continue my education while providing a healthy life for my children. It has been my dream to become an educator who is a caring, safe space for my future students, and brings a Métis perspective to my future classroom. I am honoured to be chosen for this award, thank you kindly for your continued support.”

– Sincerely, Rachel Vair ■

2023/24 Métis Scholar Award Endowment Chart

Endowment	Original Date Established	MEF-RLI Contribution	Partner and Third-Party Contribution	Endowment Amount	Year	Market Value
MacEwan University	2008	\$1,750,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$2,750,000.00	2023/2024	\$4,280,274.54
University of Alberta	2008	\$3,324,570.17	\$501,000.00	\$3,825,570.17	2023/2024	\$8,225,775.03
NorQuest College **	2008	\$625,000.00	\$375,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	2023/2024	\$1,100,000.00
NAIT	2009	\$1,300,000.00	\$1,070,000.00	\$2,370,000.00	2023/2024	\$3,547,947.52
Portage College	2009	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	2023/2024	\$1,350,028.62
Northwestern Polytechnic *	2011	\$250,000.00	\$96,000.00	\$346,000.00	2023/2024	\$439,222.14
University of Calgary	2012	\$1,500,000.00	\$750,000.00	\$2,250,000.00	2023/2024	\$3,725,870.00
Mount Royal University	2012	\$250,000.00	\$250,075.00	\$500,075.00	2023/2024	\$807,283.10
University of Lethbridge	2012	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	2023/2024	\$1,369,567.86
Lethbridge College	2013	\$250,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$500,000.00	2023/2024	\$540,746.49
Athabasca University	2014	\$250,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$500,000.00	2023/2024	\$798,289.69
Northern Lakes College	2015	\$175,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$200,000.00	2023/2024	\$101,507.68
Lakeland College	2015	\$417,600.00	\$50,000.00	\$460,000.00	2023/2024	\$522,191.47
Bow Valley College	2015	\$260,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$460,000.00	2023/2024	\$565,621.49
MEF Endowment Trust Fund	2015	\$2,000,198.78	-	\$2,000,198.78	2023/2024	\$2,723,542.00
Medicine Hat College **	2018	\$170,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$200,000.00	2023/2024	\$200,000.00
SAIT	2018	\$500,000.00	\$372,785.00	\$834,759.19	2023/2024	\$1,091,895.35
Concordia University	2018	\$250,000.00	-	\$250,000.00	2023/2024	\$272,625.00
ELCC Endowment Trust Fund	2020	\$1,400,061.06	-	\$1,400,061.06	2023/2024	\$1,765,155.00
Keyano College	2021	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	2023/2024	\$1,087,426.92
Red Deer University	2021	\$250,000.00	\$75,000.00	\$325,000.00	2023/2024	\$417,209.19
Olds College	2021	\$250,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$350,000.00	2023/2024	\$452,181.89
TOTAL MARKET VALUE:						\$35,335,793.72

Please note: Current collection year (2024/25) presents 1-year lagged contribution amounts, endowment amounts, and market values (2023/24) amounts, and market values (2022/23).

* Formerly Grande Prairie Regional College

** Does not report individual market value

2023/24 Métis Scholar Disbursements

Endowment	Total Funds	Total Number of Awards	Reporting Year
MacEwan University	\$95,000.00	24	2023/2024
University of Alberta	\$267,500.00	39	2023/2024
NorQuest College	\$22,500.00	5	2023/2024
NAIT	\$102,500.00	24	2023/2024
Portage College	\$30,000.00	10	2023/2024
Northwestern Polytechnic *	\$8,000.00	4	2023/2024
University of Calgary	\$115,000.00	18	2023/2024
Mount Royal University	\$25,600.00	8	2023/2024
University of Lethbridge	\$57,000.00	8	2023/2024
Lethbridge College	\$21,000.00	6	2023/2024
Athabasca University	\$2,500.00	1	2023/2024
Northern Lakes College	\$9,000.00	6	2023/2024
Lakeland College	\$21,000.00	7	2023/2024
Bow Valley College	\$20,000.00	5	2023/2024
MEF Endowment Trust Fund	\$110,000.00	11	2023/2024
Medicine Hat College	\$8,500.00	4	2023/2024
SAIT	\$3,000.00	1	2023/2024
Concordia University	\$5,000.00	2	2023/2024
ELCC Endowment Trust Fund	\$25,000.00	5	2023/2024
Keyano College	\$11,000.00	2	2023/2024
Red Deer University	–	0	2023/2024
Olds College **	–	–	2023/2024
\$959,100.00		190	

Current collection year (2025) presents 1-year lagged information (2023/24)

* Formerly Grande Prairie Regional College

** No awards will be distributed until the 2024/25 school year, as outlined in the initial endowment agreement.

Métis Nation Holdings

In 1997, the Métis Nation of Alberta reactivated an existing corporate entity, formerly known as Métis Nation Productions, and renamed it Métis Nation Holdings Ltd. Currently, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government retains 100% ownership of the company's shares. Métis Nation Holdings Ltd. holds title to the Provincial Office property on Kingsway Avenue in Edmonton, as well as a 50% ownership of the Métis Veterans property on 111 Avenue, in partnership with Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. The holding company allows for arms-length lease transactions and limited liability. The Board of Directors of Métis Nation Holdings Ltd. is composed of the current Otipemisiwak Métis Government Executive.



DELIA GRAY BUILDING, PROVINCIAL OFFICE

11738 Kingsway Avenue, Edmonton

The decision to secure permanent office space for the Métis Nation was born out of necessity. In 1997, the building we leased on St. Albert Trail was sold, and the new owner proposed a significant rent increase. Concerned about long-term affordability and operational stability, our then-Provincial Council directed efforts toward purchasing a building. The goal was to secure a property that met the Nation's office needs, offered long-term financial benefits, and did not require program funds.

After months of research, a deal was finalized on the Kingsway Avenue property, now known as the Delia Gray Building, by assuming the existing mortgage with no down payment. The mortgage was fully paid off in 2004, and we have held clear title to the building ever since.

In the years that followed, the Delia Gray Building has seen numerous capital improvements to support our government's evolving needs. Major upgrades have included a complete roof replacement, the installation of a 63.2 kW DC solar panel microgeneration system, and a thorough assessment of the building's energy efficiency. These initiatives were made possible through successful funding applications led by our Environment Department, enabling the work to be completed at minimal cost to the organization.

Interior renovations have kept pace with organizational growth. The Executive Office received a full refresh, its first since the building's acquisition, including new flooring, paint, ceiling, and reception area updates. A new office was also constructed to accommodate the expanding Human Resources Department. Additional improvements were made to shared spaces throughout the building, including a refurbished staircase, a renovated reception desk, an upgraded meeting room on the main floor, and a fully modernized upstairs copy room with new paint, cabinetry, and flooring.

More recently, Métis Nation Holdings Ltd. has begun applying a sustainability lens across its operations. This work began with a thorough evaluation of existing assets to identify opportunities for environmentally-responsible upgrades. Early actions have included improvements in energy efficiency, accessibility, and overall functionality for both tenants and program users. These efforts are helping to guide long-term planning and investment strategies focused on reducing energy consumption, extending asset life, and ensuring inclusive, adaptable spaces that reflect the needs of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.



MÉTIS VETERANS BUILDING

12304 – 111 Avenue, Edmonton

On November 1, 1999, Métis Nation Holdings Ltd. finalized the purchase of the Métis Veterans Building. Since then, the building has become a central hub for a range of Métis-serving organizations. As of March 2025, tenants include Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc., Pinnacle Business Services, Rupertsland Institute, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Children and Family Services and Health Departments, our Judiciary Council, the Métis Veterans Society, and the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. The building's mortgage was fully paid off in September 2010, with clear title secured. Property management, once contracted externally, is now jointly managed by Métis Nation Holdings Ltd. and Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc., each holding a 50% ownership stake.

Over the years, the building has undergone numerous capital improvements to maintain and enhance its infrastructure. These have included a complete roof replacement, installation of a solar energy system, and structural repairs to the sidewalks, parking ramp, and parkade floor. A significant renovation was also completed to support the expansion of Rupertsland Institute's space on the main floor. This redevelopment involved the removal of interior partitions to create additional training rooms and office space, along with upgrades such as fresh paint, new ceiling tiles, modernized kitchen and lounge areas, and selective new flooring.

In the past year, Métis Nation Holdings Ltd. initiated a comprehensive structural review of the building. This included assessments of the parkade infrastructure, elevator systems, HVAC systems, plumbing, and windows, which are part of a broader strategy to ensure the facility's long-term safety, efficiency, and operational performance.

Additionally, a targeted renovation is currently underway to expand Rupertsland Institute's office space in response to growing program needs. Scheduled for completion by July 2025, this expansion will provide increased capacity to support the continued growth of the Métis Education Foundation and Rupertsland Institute's broader program delivery.



MÉTIS YOUTH BUILDING

11821 – 123 Street, Edmonton

In December 2022, Holdings assisted the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Youth Department to purchase an 11,000-sq. ft three-story office building to house the Youth Department and host youth programming. A full renovation of the building was completed between late December 2022 and mid-March 2023, transforming the main floor into a vibrant and welcoming space designed to support youth and community programming. The updated facility now includes a dedicated gathering centre, a jiggging studio for cultural expression, a fully equipped kitchen, a computer learning area, and flexible meeting rooms to host workshops, group activities, and mentorship sessions. The space was thoughtfully designed to foster connection, learning, and cultural pride among Métis youth and the broader community.

Over the past year, Métis Nation Holdings Ltd. began a comprehensive evaluation of its operations through a sustainability lens. This initial phase has included assessing the condition and efficiency of core building infrastructure, such as the HVAC systems, windows, doors, and other structural elements. The goal of this assessment is to identify opportunities for energy efficiency, reduce long-term operational costs, and enhance overall environmental performance across all properties.



NEKINAN

4607 – 52 Avenue, Smoky Lake

The Smoky Lake Continuing Care Centre was acquired through a lease arrangement facilitated by collaboration between Alberta Health Services and the Town of Smoky Lake. Renamed Nekinan, “Our Home,” this 11,000 sq. ft., 20-bed facility was initially adapted to serve as residence for Métis Crossing staff, instructors, students, and program resource personnel.

The vision for Nekinan has since evolved into creating a dynamic community space that celebrates Métis culture. The space is being developed to support a broad range of community programs, cultural activities, and educational initiatives. It will provide a welcoming gathering place where individuals and families can connect, learn, and celebrate their identity. With flexible programming areas, cultural workshops, and social events, Nekinan aims to foster community engagement, strengthen cultural ties, and offer meaningful opportunities for growth and collaboration within the Métis community.

Extensive renovations have significantly enhanced the facility, including a complete roof repair with skylights, kitchen modernization, repurposed laundry facilities, updated plumbing fixtures, new shower rooms, and the installation of a fob security system with cameras. Interior upgrades feature new bedroom furnishings, air-conditioned common areas, fresh paint throughout, and improved sidewalks and steps. All windows have been replaced, flooring renewed, private washrooms added to guest suites, and exterior painting and landscaping improved. A major boiler system replacement is currently underway, transitioning from pneumatic to digital controls. The detached 4,000 sq. ft. former nurses’ residence, now known as Kapesowin Lodge, has also undergone comprehensive renovations, including full roof repair and interior upgrades encompassing electrical, plumbing, heating, insulation, flooring, walls, doors, windows, kitchen, and washrooms.

In line with a commitment to sustainability, Métis Nation Holdings Ltd. has recently undertaken a portfolio-wide

review aimed at creating more welcoming, efficient, and resilient community spaces. Key initiatives include assessing roof improvements, exploring solar energy solutions, and developing a renewable landscaping strategy. These efforts are designed not only to reduce environmental impact and enhance operational efficiency but also to strengthen the site as a vibrant hub for community connection, cultural celebration, and public events that reflect the values and identity of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

KINGSWAY PROFESSIONAL CENTRE

10611 Kingsway Avenue, Edmonton

In April 2024, Métis Nation Holdings proudly acquired an 83,000 sq. ft. facility, a major milestone in our journey toward supporting the transition from the Métis Nation of Alberta to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. This landmark purchase represents more than just a physical space; it embodies our vision of a united, self-governing future.

Designed to serve as a central hub for our community, this building will bring together key departments, leadership, and services under one roof, strengthening collaboration and advancing our self-determination. Renovations are now underway to transform the space into a modern, culturally grounded, and functional headquarters that reflects the values and aspirations of the Métis Nation.

The property offers a total of 73,901.8 sq. ft. of underground parking with 197 stalls, along with 7,830.4 sq. ft. of surface-level parking containing 27 stalls. The revenue generated from these parking areas is currently being reinvested to support tenant improvements throughout the building.

Construction and renovations are expected to continue through 2026, with every step moving us closer to a space that truly supports and empowers our growing government and community.

CURRENT FOCUS

Looking ahead, Métis Nation Holdings Ltd. remains committed to embedding sustainability into the management of all its properties. This approach supports long-term operational efficiency, environmental responsibility, and cultural relevance. By prioritizing energy-efficient upgrades, resilient infrastructure, and inclusive design, we are creating spaces that not only serve the needs of today but also reflect the values and aspirations of the Métis Nation for generations to come. ■

Métis Urban and Capital Housing

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government, through its housing affiliate Métis Housing which is comprised of Métis Capital Housing Corporation (MCHC) and Métis Urban Housing Corporation (MUHC), is dedicated to providing housing programs and services designed specifically for Métis people in Alberta. Our goal is to provide housing programs and services that support, respect, and reflect the community's unique culture, helping members make the right housing choices.

SUBSIDIZED AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMS

Métis Housing offers subsidized and affordable housing to all low-income Indigenous people in Alberta. Our subsidized housing program, administered by Métis Urban Housing Corporation, offers accommodations where

rent equals 25% of the family's income. Métis Capital Housing Corporation administers an affordable housing program where rents are based on 20% below market rent. Even though we have a waitlist for both programs, these housing programs are ongoing, and we accept applications year-round.

In 2024/25, we had 1,430 housing applications on our subsidized housing waitlist, an approximately 11% increase from the previous fiscal year. Among these applications, 451 were from Métis households. The highest demand was for three-bedroom homes, followed by two-bedroom homes, and then one-bedroom homes. Although there is a demand for four-bedroom homes, this need is only reflected in larger cities like Edmonton and Calgary. The need for the number of bedrooms remained consistent with the previous fiscal period.

In the affordable housing portfolio side, we currently have 364 applications on our waitlist, which represents an increase of approximately 5% compared to the previous fiscal period. Of these applications, 187 were from Métis households. This waitlist reflects demand for one-bedroom homes, followed by two- and three-bedroom homes. Again, the need for the number of bedrooms remained consistent with the previous fiscal period.

The occupancy rate in MUHC remained at 81%, whereas MCHC achieved an occupancy rate of 92%.





Cecil Bellrose Manor
ribbon-cutting ceremony.

COMPLETED DEVELOPMENTS

Cecil Bellrose Manor, Edmonton

We recently held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for our new development in the heart of the Griesbach community in Edmonton. This project achieved substantial completion on March 31, 2025, and the facility is named after renowned Métis leader, Cecil Bellrose. We are currently accepting applications, assisting with tours, and welcoming new families into this facility.

This building features 127 affordable suites for women and children, ranging from one-bedroom to four-bedroom. Among these, 50 suites are dedicated to women and children fleeing from domestic violence. Additionally, 42 suites are barrier-free, with 10 of them being fully accessible.

Furthermore, the building offers over 15% reduction in energy consumption and GHG emissions, in accordance with the National Energy Codes for Buildings 2017.

Sonisîpîhk, Peace River

Our other affordable housing project in Peace River was named after the Cree word Sonisîpîhk, which means “By the River.” This facility is located by the beautiful Peace River, offering a great waterfront view. It achieved substantial completion in March 2025. It offers 11 affordable suites ranging from one to four bedrooms, including two barrier-free suites.

NEW CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS UNDERWAY

Seniors’ Lodge, Edmonton

- 36 affordable suites for seniors over the age of 65
- On-site services include meals, home care, laundry, and cleaning

Alberta-wide Infill Development Project

- 21 old homes are being rebuilt and converted into 36 new subsidized homes that will become rent-ready in fall 2025.
- These properties are located throughout Alberta:
 - Edmonton – five properties
 - Calgary – seven properties
 - Red Deer, Grande Prairie, Slave Lake, Lac La Biche – one property in each location
 - Cold Lake – two properties
 - Peace River – three properties

Update: To date, 20 homes have been built and rented. The remaining 16 homes are near completion and will be rent-ready on or before summer 2025.

Phase II Family Reunification Program, Bonnyville

This project is expected to be completed by summer 2025.

HOME UPGRADE PROGRAM

During 2024/25, Métis Urban Housing Corporation and Métis Capital Housing Corporation collaborated with the Environment and Climate Change Department to conduct home upgrade assessments on 20 select homes with a budget of \$300,000 in funding to determine and complete the energy efficiency upgrades. Several retrofits were made to select homes, which included upgrades to the attic insulation, attic hatches, air sealing, furnace, box end insulation, doors and windows, high-efficiency storage water heaters, and programmable thermostats. Each home included in this project received an energy efficiency kit.

HOME PROGRAMS

1. Rental Supplement Program and Student Rental Supplement Program

As of March 31, 2025, MCHC supported 412 new eligible Métis families and individuals with rental supplement programs.

2. Downpayment Assistance Program

During the 2024/25 intake for the Downpayment Assistance Program, MCHC received applications from 193 Métis families. As of March 31, 2025, 70 applicants received funding, and an additional 15 applicants were approved for this funding, whereas 30 applications were denied, and 78 applications remained in processing, awaiting final documentation.

3. Home Repair Program

During the 2024/25 intake for the Home Repair Program, MCHC received 446 applications. As of March 31, 2025, funding was disbursed to 157 eligible applicants, and an additional 37 applications were approved for financing, whereas 39 applications were denied, and 213 applications remained in processing, awaiting final documentation confirming the completion of work.

4. Mortgage Assistance Program

MCHC has supported 29 eligible Métis families in meeting their home mortgage obligations. Although this program remained the least popular amongst all other home programs, it still met the needs of Métis families dealing with home debt issues.

REACHING HOME PROGRAM

The Reaching Home Program remained committed to supporting Métis people who are homeless or are on the verge of being homeless. This program

supported families with emergency housing, housing set-up costs, housing placement, referrals, prevention support, food security, and more. During 2024/25, the program supported 806 unique Métis Citizens and their households with several financial and non-financial support and services. We recorded over 1,600 encounters with unique Métis Citizens during this period. These encounters included support for retaining housing, eviction prevention, emergency housing assistance, short-term rental supplements, income assistance, social and community integration, and help with food, clothing, and transportation. Cultural support remained the centre of their holistic wellness.

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

To more effectively address the housing requirements of Métis Albertans, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)

partnered with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government to co-develop an Urban, Rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy. Various methods were employed to identify the housing needs of Métis Albertans, including community engagement sessions, community survey, demographic data analysis, and engagement sessions with District Representatives and board members.

The assessment revealed several key findings: many survey respondents lack stable housing, and there is an insufficient quality of housing stock, with approximately 23% categorized as being in core housing need. Participants expressed a need for a range of new programs and services, including transitional and emergency housing support, emergency home repair, rent-to-own opportunities, relocation expenses, home maintenance services, life skills development, the establishment of a Métis home insurance company, sustainable and energy-efficiency upgrades, and general affordability initiatives.

Based on all data gathered, key considerations for moving forward include increasing the availability of appropriate housing units, providing in-person local support, enhancing transitional housing and emergency support, implementing affordability initiatives, increasing Métis cultural presence, identifying areas of improvement for already existing programs, conducting regular transparent program evaluations, and establishing partnerships with other supports and services.

The insights gained from the Housing Needs Assessment will be implemented in the development of future housing programs and infrastructure. ■



Read Summary:
Alberta Métis
Housing Needs
Assessment

Rupertsland Institute

Rupertsland Institute (RLI) was established in 2010 as an affiliate of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government with mandates in Education, Training, and Research. Our mandates are performed out of nine offices located across the province, a head office in Edmonton, and two mobile units travelling to rural areas throughout Alberta.

MÉTIS TRAINING TO EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Funded under the Indigenous Skills & Employment Training agreement, the Métis Training to Employment Program assists Métis individuals in improving their

skills through training, preparing for, finding, and keeping employment.

Programs Offered:

- **Certificate Programs:** Funding for up to 52 weeks in length.
- **Technical Training:** Funding for four years of a trade.
- **Employment Supports Program:** Assists individuals with a job offer by funding necessary tools, personal protection equipment, or training.
- **Diploma Programs:** Funding support through all years based on full-time enrollment.
- **Online Application Portal:** All programs offered by Rupertsland Institute can be applied for online, making it easier for all Alberta Métis Citizens to access funding or job assistance, regardless of location.
- **Mobile Employment Centres:** Rupertsland Institute operates three mobile employment centres, providing services to those in remote locations. Monthly schedules are posted and updated on our website.

Program Impact

Region	Citizens Received Funding	Citizens Employed/ Self-Employed	Citizens Returned to School
Central	361	186	59
Northeast	186	100	31
Northwest	125	78	15
South	252	132	29
Online		213	25
Total	924	709	159

Visitors hosted by Rupertsland Mobile Services

Region	Métis	First Nation	Inuit	Non-Indigenous	Total Visitors
Central	246	58	0	295	599
Northeast	359	190	0	332	881
Northwest	133	111	0	101	345
South	130	37	0	129	296
Total					2,189

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Rupertsland Institute’s Post-Secondary Program is designed to provide financial assistance to Métis students seeking to enroll in post-secondary degree programs. It is structured to support students through their entire educational journey, from initial enrollment to graduation. The program is accessible to Métis students pursuing a wide range of programs at accredited universities and colleges.

the program across the province so that all Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizens have access, regardless of which community they live in. For those who preferred the in-person approach, we were able to conduct two in-person workshops in Edmonton and Calgary.

Outcome: In total, we were able to assist 49 participants in acquiring the knowledge and coaching necessary to move forward with their goals. Of these participants, 16 were able to immediately move forward in starting their own businesses. The remaining 33 participants are continuing to refine their business ideas as they work towards self-employment.

Metric	Number of Citizens
Citizens received post-secondary education funding	779

PROVINCIAL PROJECTS

Our provincial projects for this past fiscal year showcased RLI’s commitment to addressing demand in the labour market. These projects empower Citizens to further their professional pursuits with the support of Rupertsland Institute and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government at every step.

In 2024/25 we held the following Provincial Projects:

Métis Entrepreneurial Workshop (MEW)

In 2024/25 we conducted four workshops, two virtual and two in-person. Our virtual workshops are designed to allow entrepreneurs who have not made the leap from their regular employment to self-employment, fit the project around their schedules. It also allows us to offer

Calgary

Métis Entrepreneurship

Strengthen • Grow • Thrive

Getting Grounded

Getting Started

Getting It Right

This workshop will provide Métis Citizens in Alberta a path to successfully navigate their business ventures.

Total workshop duration is 16 hours over two days in person. All participants must be Alberta Métis to enroll.

For details or to register, visit [MetisEntrepreneurs.com](https://metisentrepreneurs.com)

February 27-28th, 9 AM - 4 PM

OFFERED BY MÉTIS TRAINING TO EMPLOYMENT. A PARTNERSHIP OF:

Rupertsland Institute

Otipemisiwak Métis Government

Canada



Women in Micro-Business (WIMB) Seminars

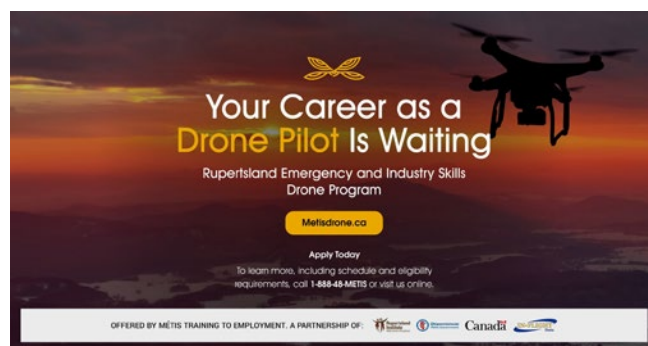
In 2024/25, we conducted four seminar series, each with seven seminars, plus an optional eighth seminar focusing on strategies to boost attendees' brands.

Outcome: Over the 2024/25 fiscal year, we had 59 people participate in the seminars. Of those participants, many went back to their full-time careers while increasing their revenue in their micro-businesses. However, some participants found even greater success after attending the seminars. Of the 59 participants, 13 were able to grow their side hustle into full-time self-employment.

Jelly Academy Digital Marketing Bootcamp

This course took students through 11 weeks of online part-time Digital Marketing training including Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and tracking online analytics through Google and Meta.

Outcome: This project ended with 31 participants finishing and graduating from the course.



Rupertsland Emergency and Industry Skills Drone (REISD) Training Project

In 2024/25 we officially launched our first iteration of the Rupertsland Emergency & Industry Skills Drone Training Project (REISD). This first-of-its-kind training opportunity provided participants with the opportunity to obtain their advanced drone pilot certification, along with additional certifications and safety tickets that would assist with employment or self-employment once they completed the program.

Outcome: There was a strong demand from applicants expressing interest in participating in the program. Of these, 15 participants were approved to attend the project, with 13 completing the necessary pre-requisites to take their advanced certification testing. The program ended with 11 successful, newly certified, advanced drone operators, with the remaining 2 planning their retakes in the weeks following.

RUPERTSLAND CENTRE FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING (RCTL)

Early Learning Education Childcare Training (ELECT)

- 14 Early Learning Educators received ELECT certificates after completing over 200 hours of Métis-specific training in the year-long program.
- 16 Early Learning Educators received ELECT certificates after completing 140 hours of Métis-specific training in the summer intensive option.
- Professional Development: Provided Métis-centric training to over 75 Early Learning Educators.
- apisci nitôtîmak/Little Friends Early Learning Funding: 190 Métis children have been supported by RLI this year through this program.

- Michif Language Programs
- Michif in the Classroom: 44 Early Learning and K-12 educators working with two different Knowledge Holders to learn Michif and bring it in the classroom.
 - 151 participants in the Introduction to Michif course
 - Development of a children's book, introductory Michif grammar book, and album, coming soon on our website.

K-12 Education

- Rupertsland Institute received the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta 2024 award for Promoting and Advancing the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada as it relates to education in Alberta. This award was given in recognition of RLI's commitments to redressing the legacy of residential schools and advancing the process of Canadian reconciliation.
- Launched over 15 new Métis learning resources, including Métis land-based learning videos.
- Hosted 14 Virtual Field Trips this year for over 17,000 participants including students, teachers, and individuals.
- RLI provides tutoring services for Métis students in grades K-12 with a certified Tutoring Provider of their choice. Over 294 Métis students accessed tutoring services this year.
- Métis K-12 Needs Assessment: Assessment to understand and improve Métis education in Alberta schools. The report is being finalized and will be shared in the near future.
- Rupertsland Institute is recognized as a key education stakeholder and sits on many education action and advisory committees that influence curriculum development. We have also partnered with two school divisions to create authentic resources that directly support the Alberta curriculum.
- RLI is supporting school divisions across Alberta to learn from Métis Knowledge Holders, fostering cultural awareness, and providing safe spaces to support Métis students' success through in-school programming through the Government of Alberta's Bridging Classrooms grant.
- Over 62 of RLI's resources are now available in French on RLI's website, supporting authentic Métis learning across French-speaking school districts.

Join Rupertsland Institute's Métis-centric:

Early Learning Education Childcare Training

Educators of all backgrounds working with Métis students are invited to learn with RLI about weaving Métis early learning into their centres.

- Métis culture, history, Michif, Land-Based Learning and more
- Online and In-Person for No-Cost
- Certificate of Completion



Learn more and Sign Up in the RECC Room:
[RLI.CONNECTEDCOMMUNITY.ORG/HOME](https://rli.connectedcommunity.org/home)
 EMAIL FOR MORE INFO: EARLYLEARNING@RUPERTSLAND.ORG

apisci nitôtimak

Little Friends

Early Learning Funding

Citizens of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government can now apply for funding support with their preschool and kindergarten fees!

Up to \$100/month per successful applicant available.

Requirements:

- ✓ Preschool and kindergarten registered learners ages 2-6
- ✓ Caregiver or learner's OMG Number

To learn more and register, LOGIN to the RECC Room!

<https://rli.connectedcommunity.org/>




PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, COURSES AND CONFERENCES

- Facilitated over 75 professional learning opportunities for school divisions across the province, reaching 2,500 educators.
- 257 educators completed the Foundational Knowledge Themes Course.
- Rupertsland Institute has a relationship with the University of Alberta wherein 3 RLI courses are offered:
 - Métis Foundational Knowledge for Teachers and Leaders
 - Métis Foundational Knowledge for Pre-Service Teachers
 - okiskinohamakeshiyahk michif pikishkwewin: Pedagogical Approaches for Teaching Michif for Preservice Teachers

Métis Education Service Agreements (MESAs)

- Agreements with Northland, Clearview, Christ the Redeemer, Pembina Hills, Prairieland and Livingstone Range School Divisions to provide resources, cultural support, and professional development.

RECC Room

- Over 5,400 members this year.
- The RECC Room is transforming into the RCTL Community – a bold new chapter for Métis education in Alberta. Launched in early 2025, this reimagined space will bring fresh community spaces, deeper connections, and powerful learning opportunities for educators, students, and families across the province.

MÉTIS

Talks





Dr. Justin Tetrault & Sharon Bourque
Dr. Sandra Bucerius

"Finding Justice: Métis families' experiences with the criminal justice system" Documentary (2023, 52-minutes).

Métis and Indigenous Experiences with Re-entry from Prison: How the Canadian Justice System Creates Impossible Conditions

Thursday December 5, 2024
1:00 PM – 3:00PM (Mountain Time)
ONLINE







RUPERTSLAND CENTRE FOR MÉTIS RESEARCH

The Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research (RCMR) was established in 2011 as an independent academic research centre, housed in the Faculty of Native Studies (FNS), University of Alberta (U of A). Their mandate is to build provincial and national connections with the Métis community, increase research capacity to advance Métis-specific research, and train student researchers through research employment.

RCMR works in a close and ongoing collaborative way with community partners as projects are initiated and developed, from start to completion. An organic and responsive approach allows for flexibility to meet unfolding needs, keeping community priorities top of mind in working together.

MÉTIS JUSTICE PROJECT

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Justice Department approached RCMR in the spring of 2023 to conduct a literature review. This literature review was completed in early 2024 by Métis scholar Larry Chartrand with the help of a University of Alberta law student, Sara Ugljesic. A Métis Talks event related to this topic was held December 5, 2024 with 60 people attending online. The theme of this session focused on Métis justice and Métis experiences with re-entry from prison and included presentations from the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Justice Department Director Sharon Bourque, and Métis scholar, Dr. Justin Tetreault, Augustana Campus, University of Alberta. The Justice Department and RCMR are now planning on co-creating a Métis Justice online micro-course.



MÉTIS TALKS

The Spring 2025 Métis Talks was an in-person event held on the University of Alberta North Campus, featuring Métis authors Marilyn Dumont (professor cross-appointed in the Department of English and Film Studies and the Faculty of Native Studies, University of Alberta) and Conor Kerr (assistant professor in the Department of English and Film Studies, University of Alberta). Forty people were in attendance, and the audience enjoyed an afternoon of tea and bannock as they listened to two amazing Métis authors read from their recently published works.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR RESEARCH WITH INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES SYMPOSIUM 2024 (PRINC 2024)

On September 18 and 19, 2024, the University of Alberta office of the Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming & Research) and the office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) hosted a two-day event, PRINC, which brought together University of Alberta researchers and Indigenous and Northern Communities to discuss the centrality of partnerships leading to high-impact research. RCMR Director, Dr. Nathalie Kermaol, and Administrator, Amanda Evans, presented to a full-house audience of 160+ registrants about how RCMR builds and maintains, through its multiple projects, mutually ethical and beneficial research relationships. ■



Meeting Minutes *2023/24*





Otipemisiwak
Métis Government

Citizens' Gathering

DRAFT CITIZENS' GATHERING MEETING MINUTES

DATE:	August 16, 2024
LOCATION:	Edmonton Expo Centre 7515 118 Ave NW, Edmonton AB T5B 0J2
ROOM:	HALL F

Opening Prayer

10:00 am Knowledge Keeper Norma Spicer delivered the opening Prayer.

Establish Quorum

9:50 AM The Secretary of Citizenship and Registry, Joseph Chodzicki, reported 473 registered Citizens in attendance.

Agenda Item #1 – Call to Order

10:06 AM The Chair called the 2024 Annual Citizens' Gathering to order and appointed the Sergeant-at-Arms as Cst. Derrick Campbell and confirmed the Cree Translator as Marlene L'Hirondelle.

Agenda Item #2 – Adoption of Agenda

10:07 AM **MOTION #20240816-1:**
Moved by: Brian Hamelin
That the agenda for the August 16, 2024, Annual Citizens' Gathering be adopted as presented.
Seconded by: Audrey Poitras

No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus

Agenda Item #3 – Government Reports

10:07AM The Chair invited each Otipemisiwak Métis Government Provincial Secretary along with the department director or manager for each department and institution, to report on their activities and achievements over the 2023/24 fiscal year, as information to the gathering attendees.

Citizens were provided with an opportunity to ask questions following each report.

10:07 AM Consultation – President Andrea Sandmaier & Director Theo Peters

10:22 AM Intergovernmental Relations – President Andrea Sandmaier & Manager Wyatt Telford



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Agenda Item #4 – Government of Alberta Announcement

11:01 AM Announcement of Healing Waters Recovery Centre – President Andrea Sandmaier, Secretary Kaila Mitchell and Honorable Dan Williams, Government of Alberta Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

President Sandmaier and Secretary Mitchell announced a partnership with the Government of Alberta for the creation of a recovery centre at Métis Crossing that will be Métis owned and operated.

Construction has begun on the 75-bed facility that will include land-based healing retreats, a pilot program for opioid wrap around supports and up to twelve months of residency at no cost while receiving individualized support.

Hon. Dan Williams brought greetings on behalf of Premier Danielle Smith and shared that Alberta is investing \$350 million dollars for 11 recovery communities in the province, with Healing Waters being the fifth facility with construction underway and expected to open in 2026.

Due to timing, questions were not available.

Agenda Item #5 – Government Reports Continued

11:16 AM Advancement of Women & Girls – Secretary Tai Amy Grauman

11:38 AM Metis Settlement & First Nation Relations – Secretary Karen (KC) Collins

1:04 PM Health & Seniors – Secretary Bobbi Paul-Alook & Director Reagan Bartel

1:22 PM Mental Health & Addictions – Secretary Kaila Mitchell & Director Reagan Bartel

1:42 PM Tourism & Economic Development – General – Secretary Lisa San Filippo & Manager Wyatt Telford

2:05 PM Tourism – Métis Crossing – Secretary Lisa San Filippo & Chief Executive Officer Juanita Marois

2:27 PM Economic Development – Apeetogosan – Secretary Lisa San Filippo & Chief Executive Officer, Carol Sales

3:04 PM Registrar's Report – Secretary Joe Chodzicki & Registrar Shawn McKay

3:17 PM Environment, Climate Change & Emergency Management – Secretary Jason Chernow & Director Andres Filella

3:38 PM Language – Secretary Shannon Dunfield on behalf of Secretary Lisa Wolfe & Manager Mike Parks

3:58 PM Education & Training – Rupertsland Institute – Secretary Shannon Dunfield on behalf of Secretary Lisa Wolfe & Chief Executive Officer, Tavia Laliberte



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4:11 PM Education & Training – Métis Education Foundation – Secretary Shannon Dunfield on behalf of Secretary Lisa Wolfe & Senior Executive Officer, Lisa Savill

Agenda Item #6 – Gathering in Recess

4:34 PM The Chair declared that the meeting of the 2024 Annual Citizens' Gathering be in recess until 9:00 am Saturday August 17, 2024.



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Métis Government

Citizens' Gathering

DRAFT CITIZENS' GATHERING MEETING MINUTES

DATE:	August 17, 2024
LOCATION:	Edmonton Expo Centre 7515 118 Ave NW, Edmonton AB T5B 0J2
ROOM:	HALL F

Establish Quorum

9:15 AM Secretary of Citizenship & Registry Joe Chodzicki reported 424 registered Citizens in attendance.

Agenda Item #6 - Recall to Order

9:17 AM The Chair recalled the 2024 Annual Citizens' Gathering to order.

Agenda Item #7 - Government Reports Continued

9:24 AM President's Report – President Andrea Sandmaier

9:34 AM Secretary of Records Report – Secretary Shannon Dunfield

Secretary Dunfield provided updates on the Ordinary and Special Resolutions passed at the 95th AGA and confirmed that next year, Citizens' Council will prepare a report on actions taken from the proposals presented at this gathering.

- Special Resolution #1 re: Transition to District Councils – this work is ongoing and will be addressed in the Self-Government and Transition report.
- Ordinary Resolution #1 re: Metis Settlements – President Sandmaier created a portfolio specifically to address the Metis Settlement and First Nation relations.

10:07 AM **MOTION #20240817-1:**
Moved by: Audrey Poitras
The minutes of the 95th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Alberta Association, be approved as presented.
Seconded by: Craig Letendre

No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus

9:45 AM Ombudsman & Judicial Branch Report – Senior Director Garrett Tomlinson



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Senior Director Garrett Tomlinson advised that the Ombudsman, Phillip Werth was appointed in November 2023 and is in the process of developing the requirements and standing up the Office of the Ombudsman per the Constitution.

The five-member Judicial Tribunal is fully appointed as of Spring, 2024 with the members attending workshops and preparing to start their work in fall of 2024.

Detailed biographies of all Otipemisiwak Government Appointed Officers can be found in the Annual Report 2023/24.

9:50 AM

2023 General Elections Report – Chief Electoral Officer Del Graff

Mr. Graff provided an overview of the work his office completed in the year, including an overview of the office, key points that preceded the 2023 General Election, hiring of elections staff, complaints and Citizen participation with ideas on how to improve the elections process.

He is working with policy advisors to develop clear practices, support planning for district elections and reporting results and communications around elections.

10:49 AM

Citizens' Council Report – Chair Garrett Tomlinson

10:57 AM

Harvesting & Culture – Secretary Grant Lacombe & Harvesting Manager, Craig Letendre

11:31 AM

Self-Government & Transition – President Andrea Sandmaier, Senior Director Garrett Tomlinson & Manager Nicole Shepherd

11:52 AM

Path to Self-Government – Legal Counsel Jason Madden

Mr. Madden provided updates on the status of Bill C-53, the federal court decision on the challenge to the Self-Government Agreement by Metis Settlements General Council and the Fort McKay Metis, and treaty negotiations with Canada. He confirmed that while the Courts struck down Chapter 6 and the definition of Metis within Alberta in the agreement, that it remains in place and legally binding on Canada. Negotiations on the agreement will be finalized by 2025 with a ratification vote by citizens, as was done with the Constitution.

Agenda Item #8 – Federal Government Announcement

12:16PM

Canada's Commitment – Frank Osendarp, Chief Federal Negotiator, Canada & Michael Schintz, Federal Negotiations Manager, Canada

Mr. Frank Osendarp provided greetings from the Minister and confirmed Canada's commitment to a renewed government-to-government relationship as well as reaffirm a shared commitment to implement the Métis right to self-government.



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Canada is committed to walking hand in hand on reconciliation and working toward a Modern Treaty with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Agenda Item #9 – Government Reports Continued

- 1:47 PM Children & Family Services – Secretary Brooke Bramfield & Director Kelsey Bradburn
- 2:08 PM Youth & Sport – Secretary Rebecca Lavallee & Director Melissa Tipler
- 2:23 PM Métis Urban Housing / Métis Capital Housing – Secretary Valerie Quintal & Senior Executive Officer, Aaron Barner
- 3:18 PM Métis Nation Holdings – Secretary Valarie Quintal & Director Ron Harrison
- 3:31 PM Justice – President Andrea Sandmaier & Director Sharon Bourque
- 4:08 PM Secretary of the Treasury / Auditor General Report – Secretary Jason Ekeberg, Senior Executive Officer, Aaron Barner, Director Ryan Fleming & Auditor General Ruben Jeffrey

Agenda Item #10 – Citizens' Proposals

- 4:49PM PROPOSAL #1
MOTION #20240817-2:
Moved by: Krista Leddy
 That the Citizens' Council consider the creation of 2SLGBTQ+ coordinators that are integrated into the departments of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.
Seconded by: Kayla Lar-son

No Debate
Result: Carried by Consensus
- 4:52PM PROPOSAL #2
MOTION #20240817-3:
Moved by: Jaron Breland
 That the Citizens' Council consider that a 2SLGBTQ+ Provincial Secretary be



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appointed and entrusted with a mandate regarding 2SLGBTQ+ issues to deal with the concerns and perspectives unique to two-spirit people.

Seconded by: Krista Leddy

No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus

4:54PM

PROPOSAL #3

MOTION #20240817-4:

Moved by: Colette Poitras

That the Citizens' Council consider that there be an Elder, youth, 2SLGBTQIA+ (two-spirit), and women position on committees and advisory councils where reasonable. **Seconded by:** Susan Cunningham

This motion was altered by an amendment to include women, which was accepted by the mover and seconder.

Result: Carried by Consensus

5:02PM

PROPOSAL #4

MOTION #20240817-5:

Moved by: Barbara Hermansen

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.

Seconded by: Frankie Berland

No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus

5:05PM

PROPOSAL #5

MOTION #20240817-6:

Moved by: Josh Morin

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

Seconded by: Agnes Novak



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No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus

5:07PM

PROPOSAL #6

MOTION #20240817-7:

Moved by: Tracy Brown

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

Seconded by: Pat Brothers

No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus

5:08PM

PROPOSAL #7

MOTION #20240817-8:

Moved by: Trevor Ward

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.

Seconded by: Jamie Rozema-Stinson

No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus

5:11PM

PROPOSAL #8

MOTION #20240817-9:

Moved by: Don Pente

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.

Seconded by: Georgina Supernault

No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus



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5:12PM

PROPOSAL #9

MOTION #20240817-10:

Moved by: Georgina Supernault

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

Seconded by: Barb Emmrich

No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus

5:13PM

PROPOSAL #10

MOTION #20240817-11

Moved by: Chantelle Trudel

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

Seconded by: Jamie Rozema-Stinson

No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus

5:25PM

PROPOSAL #11

MOTION #20240817-12:

Moved by: Kelly Myers

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.

Seconded by: Bryan Fayant

Debate from the floor

Upon review and advice from administration, the Chair confirmed that this proposal conflicts with s.4 of the Elections and Referenda Act.

"4(2) If a Citizen is ordinarily resident in a District for at least 90 days before the close of voting, they are entitled to:

(a) have their name included on the list of voters for the District in which they are ordinarily resident; and

(b) vote in an election for the office of President, Women's



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Representative, Youth Representative, and the Citizen Representative for their District, or in a referendum.

- (3) *If a Citizen is not ordinarily resident in a District, they are entitled to:*
 (a) *have their name included on the list of voters; and*
 (b) *vote in an election for the office of President, Women's Representative, and Youth Representative, or in a referendum."*
(Elections and Referenda Act, 2023)

Result: Ruled Out of Order

5:27PM

PROPOSAL #12

MOTION #20240817-13:

Moved by: Chantelle Trudel

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

Seconded by: Barb Emmrich

No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus

5:32PM

PROPOSAL #13

MOTION #20240817-14:

Moved by: Robyn McGeough

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.

Seconded by: Maureen McGeough

Debate from the floor

Upon review and advice from administration, the Chair confirmed that s. 4(2) of the Citizenship Act allows for this.

"4(2) A person's eligibility for citizenship in the Métis Nation within Alberta is independent of their place of residence." (Citizenship Act, 2023)

Result: Deemed Unnecessary - Withdrawn



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5:31PM

PROPOSAL #14

MOTION #20240817-13:

Moved by: Barb Tatum

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

Seconded by: Melissa Zarft

No Debate

Result: Carried by Consensus

Agenda Item #11– Adjournment

5:46 PM

MOTION #20240817-15:

Moved by: Mike Durocher

Being no further business properly on the Agenda, and Adjournment having been moved from the floor, the Chair declared the 2024 Annual Citizens' Gathering of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government to stand adjourned until further notice.

Notes





Otipemisiwak

Métis Government

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