

CULTURE AND COMMEMORATION

POLICY INNOVATION LAB 2025

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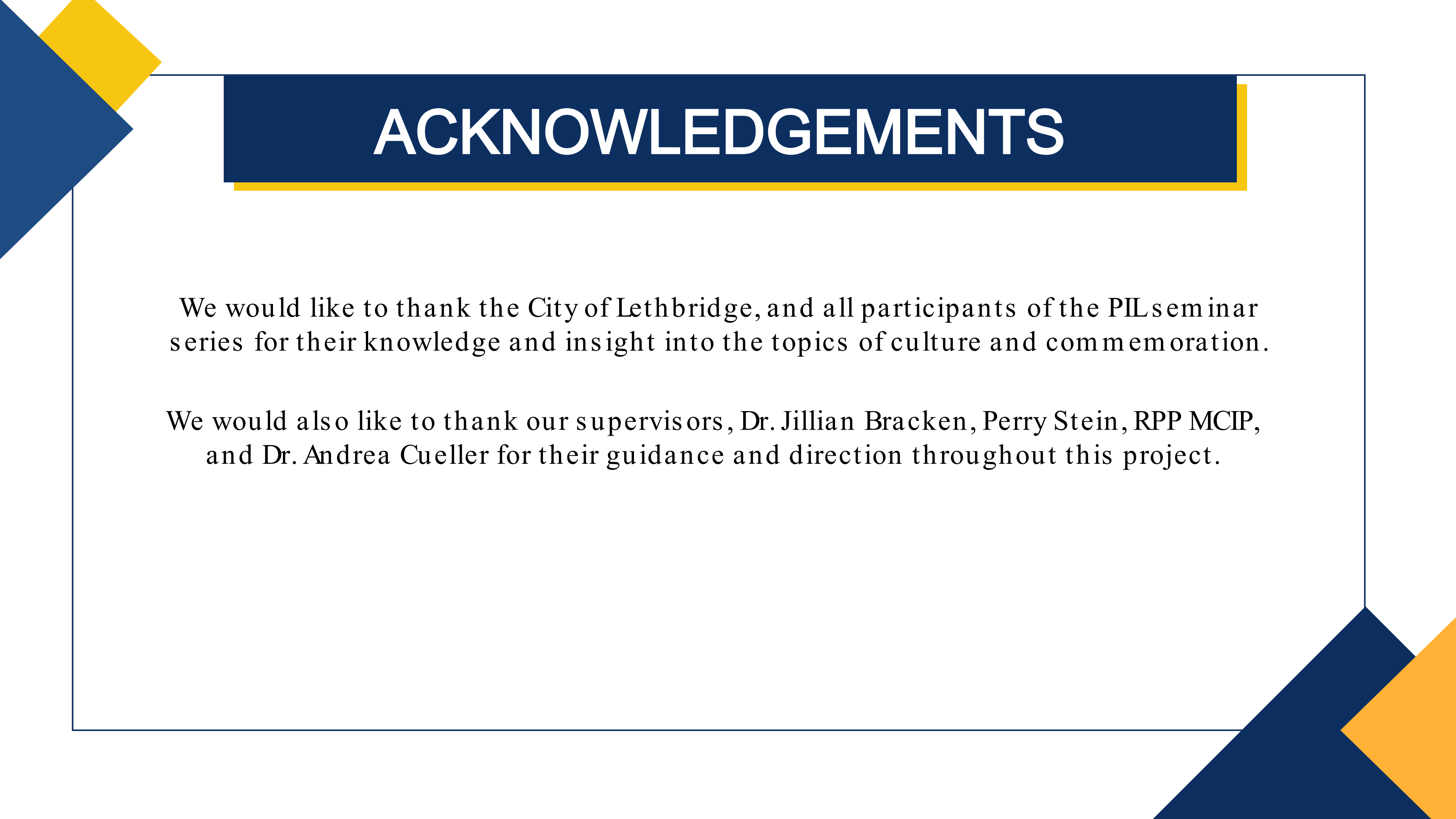


the Prentice Institute
for Global Population and Economy

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Oki. We acknowledge that the work done on this report, and this presentation today have taken place on the traditional lands of the Blackfoot Confederacy, including the Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani Nations, and within the territory of Treaty 7. Sikookkotoki, now known as Lethbridge, is also home to members of the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

We recognize and respect the enduring relationship the Niitsitapi have with this land. A relationship rooted in knowledge, stewardship, protection, and cultural continuity since time immemorial. These lands hold stories, languages, and traditions that shape the past, present, and future of this place. We are committed to honoring Indigenous perspectives and the continued presence and contributions of Indigenous communities in this work.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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OUTLINE

1. Culture and Commemoration
2. Trust-STARS Framework
3. Alberta and City of Lethbridge Context
4. Case Studies:
 - i. The Māori Language Act
 - ii. City of Victoria
 - iii. City of Calgary
 - iv. City of Winnipeg
 - v. Applications
5. Lethbridge
6. Recommendations
7. Final Remarks
8. References

CULTURE

Culture :

- Difficult to define in a global context; in general, relates to historical, spiritual and practical elements of identity
- This shared identity, relates to values, beliefs, behaviors, and traditions which connect a group of people (Pentland 2021; van der Hoeven 2019; Perry, Ager, and Sitas 2020)

Tangible Cultural Heritage:

- Physical objects that hold significance such as art, food, regalia, or buildings (UNESCO, 2003)

Intangible Cultural Heritage :

- Typically passed down through generations, transforming as cultures interact with their environment (UNESCO, 2003)
- Non-physical elements such as practices, expressions and knowledge

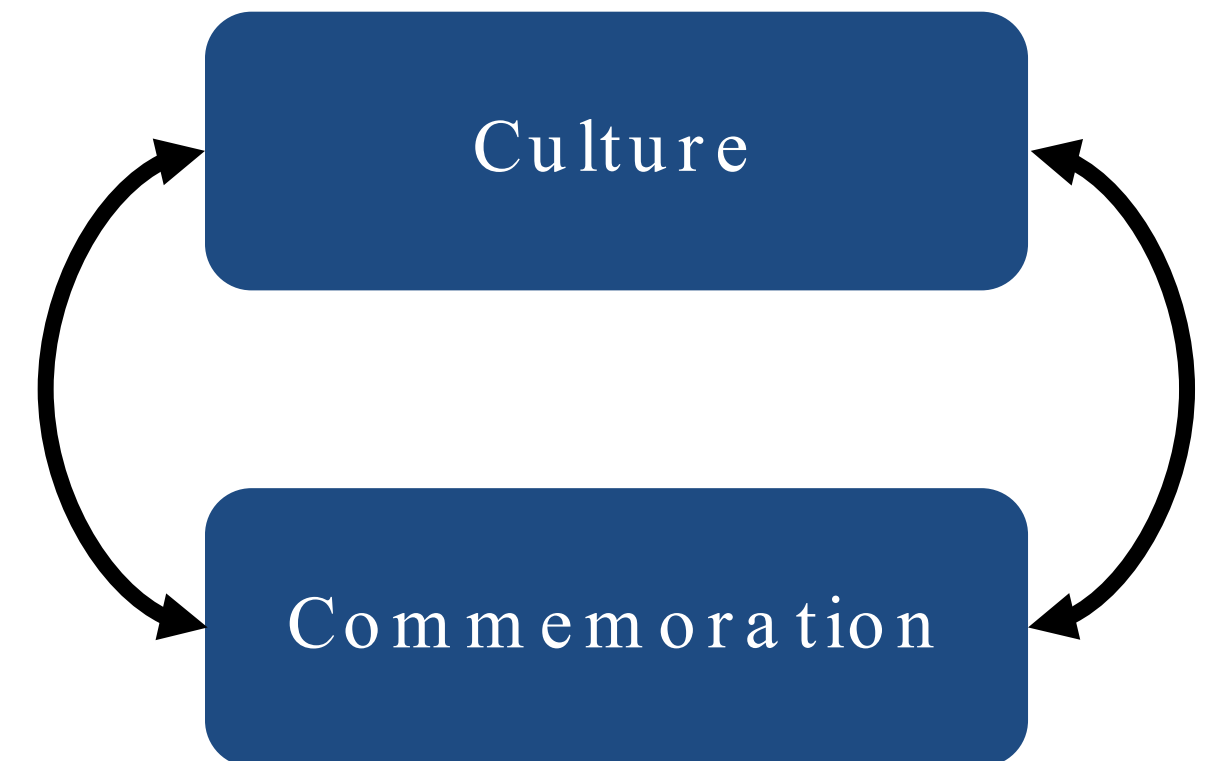
COMMEMORATION

Commemoration :

- Practical application of remembering and maintenance of culture (UNESCO 2003; Pentland 2021; Rodgers Petersen and Sanderson 2016; Ebbrecht Hartman 2021)
- Keep history and culture alive

Relationship:

- Inspire connection, belonging and place
- Trust, History & Memory, Embracing Diverse Communities, Placekeeping & Placemaking, Shared Authority



Trust - STARS

Trust :

Shared Authority

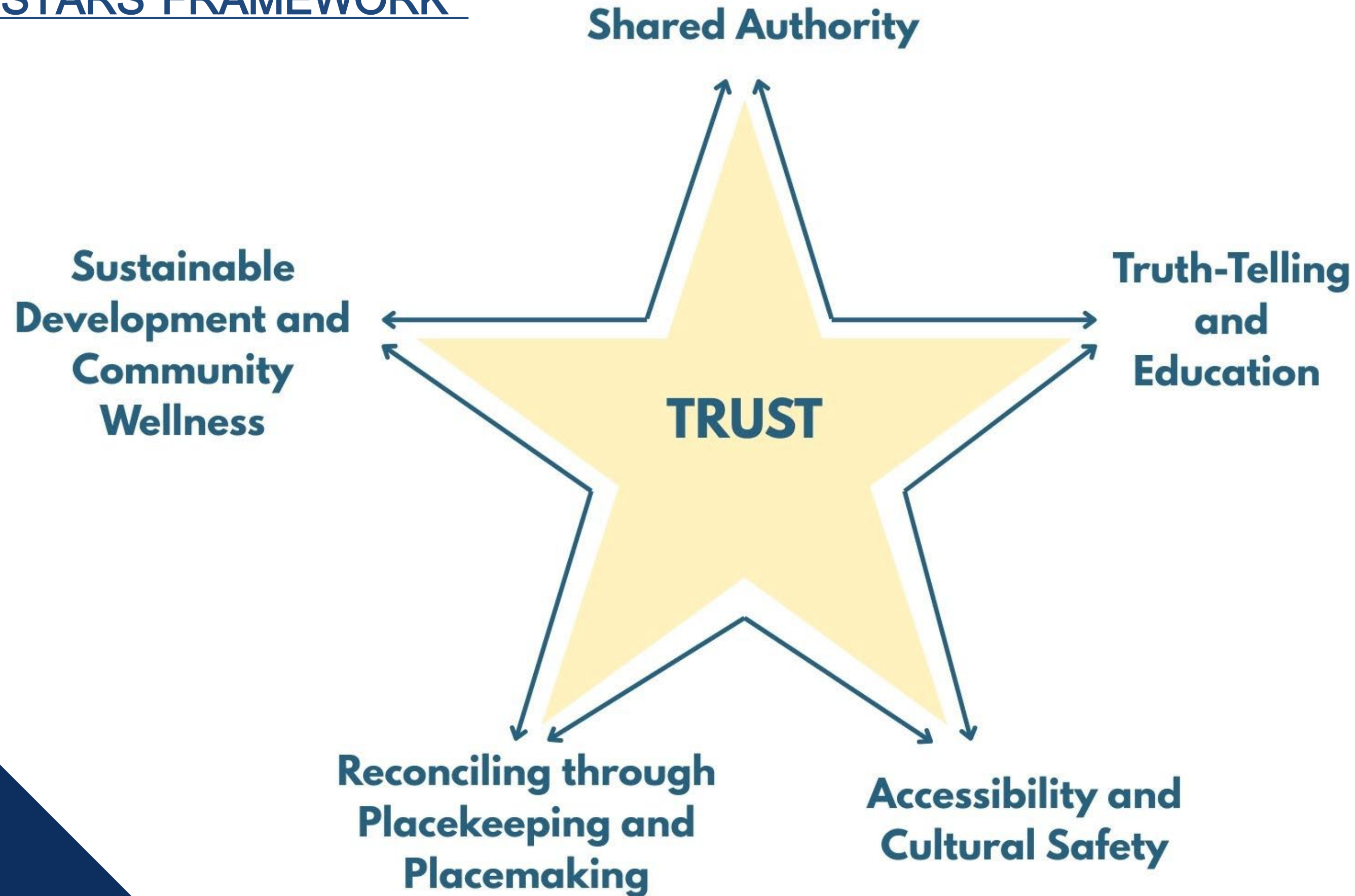
Truth-telling & Education

Accessibility & Cultural Safety

Reconciling Through Placekeeping & Placemaking

Sustainable Development & Community Wellness

Trust -STARS FRAMEWORK



ALBERTA CONTEXT

Alberta culture is characterized through western and white perspectives; however, the reality is much more diverse (Schäfer 2020).

Urban Indigenous Populations

- Urban Indigenous populations in Canada have been growing at a higher-than-average rate, with the largest Indigenous populations in Alberta living in Edmonton and Calgary (Government of Alberta 2023)
- There is little recognition of these urban populations, with a common perception that most Indigenous populations live on-reserves (Trovato 2014)

Perception of Migrant Influx

- Alberta has experienced an influx of both international and interprovincial migration in the last 5+ years (Government of Alberta 2025)
- This realization of changing demographics can create both complexity and opportunity within our cultural landscape (Shayegh 2020)

ALBERTA CONTEXT

Youth Retention and Belonging

- We have seen increased movement of urban Albertan youth leaving for bigger cities out of province (Canada West Foundation 2022)
- Many young adults (age 19-24) perceive Alberta to be lacking vibrancy and diversity, and do not feel particularly close to their communities (Canada West Foundation 2022)

- **These factors show the need for an inclusive commemorative landscape in Alberta**
- **Recognizing urban Indigenous and diverse perspectives will work to include and represent these populations**
- **This representation will communicate to youth and migrant populations about the vibrant reality of Albertan culture, helping to inspire connection, inclusivity, and retention**

City of Lethbridge CULTURAL PLANS

“A Culturally Vibrant City”

Municipal Development Plan (2021):

- Provides an overall structure and states the goal of seeing Lethbridge as a "culturally vibrant city"
- Importance of integrating art, culture and heritage into the city's urban fabric (p. 105)

Civic Culture Plan (2024):

- Operationalize the aspirations of the MDP by creating actionable goals
- Creates common definitions, values and goals to align the City's cultural efforts

Heritage Management Plan (2023):

- Provides an overview of the rich culture of the Lethbridge area and outlines actions the City intends to pursue or inquire
- Seeks to ensure that stewardship of Lethbridge's heritage is at the heart of development (p. 12)

City of Lethbridge CULTURAL PLANS

Public Art Policy (2007):

- Guide acquisition of public art to build a visually rich environment

Public Art Master Plan (2012):

- Establish a long-term vision for public art in Lethbridge

Indigenous Placemaking Strategy and Public Realm Audit (2022):

- Help advance planning and identify opportunities to showcase Indigenous cultures, languages, and histories

Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Assessment (2017):

- Plays a vital role in providing historical context regarding the protection and management of significant Blackfoot and First Nations sites and resources

Reconciliation Implementation Plan (2017):

- The main role is to promote reconciliation within the City of Lethbridge by addressing the TRC calls to action

CASE STUDIES

<u>Criteria :</u>	Relevance to Lethbridge's Context
	Engagement with Culture and Commemoration
	Policy Application & Action
	Public Participation
	Overall "Success"

AOTEAROA

Historical Overview:

- 1987 Māori Language Act
 - Established Te Reo as the official language of Aotearoa
 - Legislation to recognize and protect Te Reo
- 2016 Revision of the Māori Language Act
 - Shared authority between the Māori and Federal Government
 - Greater collaboration
 - Shift in focus from revitalizing to intergenerational transmission



Maori Language Act 1987 –New Zealand Ministry for culture and Heitage Te Manatu Taonga

AOTEAROA

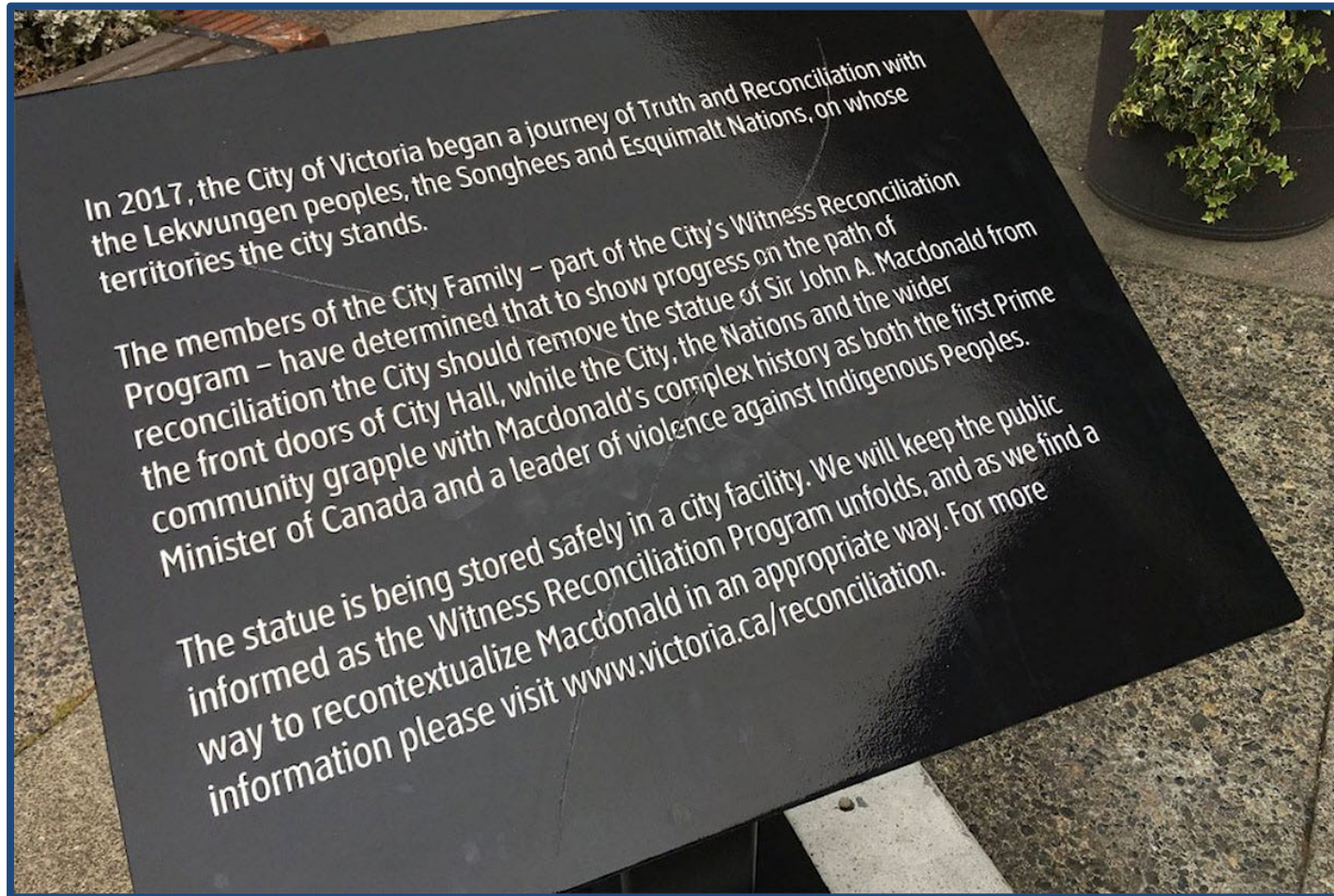


Bilingual Te Reo Maori Traffic Signs NZ, NZLanka News, 2023

Key Takeaways:

- Shared Authority between Māori and New Zealand Government
- Reconciling past wrongs through Placekeeping and Placemaking
- Essential nature of municipal engagement
- Integration of Māori language and culture
- Review, Revise and Re-Adopt

VICTORIA, B.C.



Anthony, Kristen. 2018. *The plaque that replaced the Sir John A. Macdonald statue in front of Victoria's City Hall*, Victoria News.

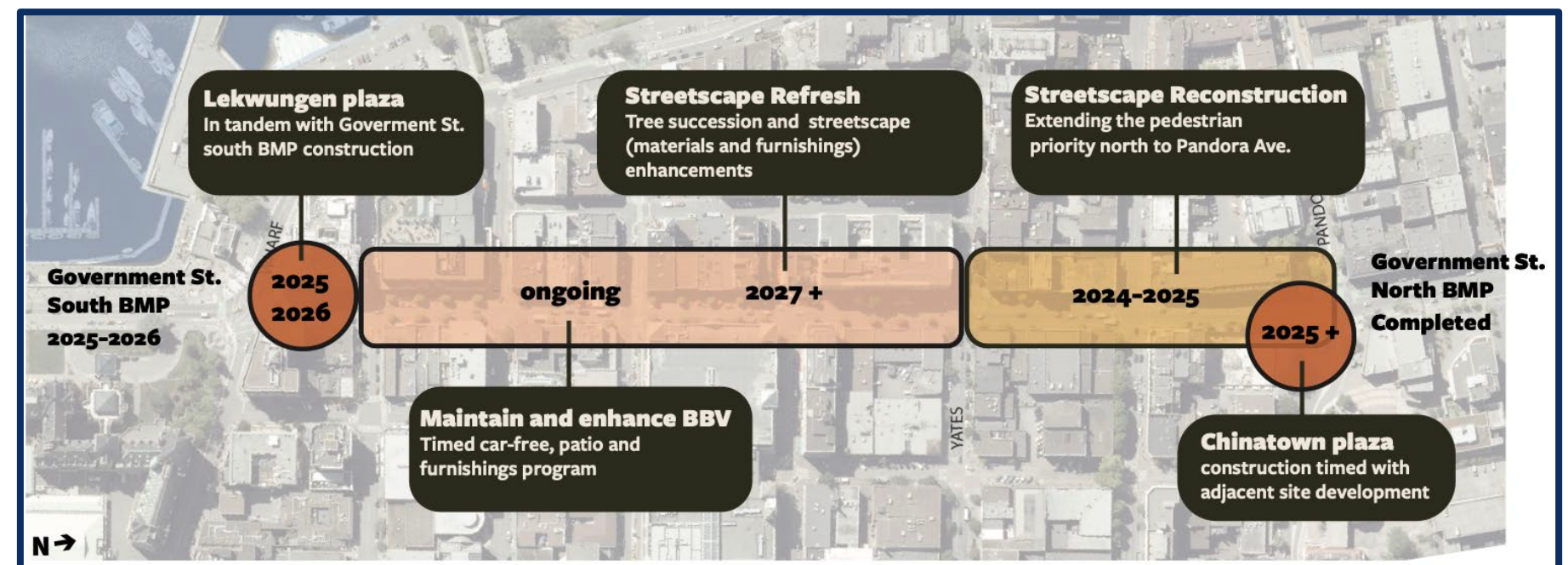
The Removal of the John A. Macdonald Statue

- Removal of City Hall statue after consultation with Witness Reconciliation Committee (Stanley 2019)
- Ability of commemoration and settler symbology to hinder cultural safety and reconciliation
- Importance of truth-telling to evaluate commemoration, and action taken to enhance cultural safety

VICTORIA, B.C.

Re-Development of Government Street

- Emphasis on interculturalism and the representation of multiple narratives
- Abilities of community engagement and the incorporation of culture within development
- Focus on enhancing cultural safety and accessibility, with a people-first mindset
- Emphasis on community engagement with Indigenous communities as well as community and city stakeholders



City of Victoria. 2022. *Phasing and Implementation of Government Street Refresh Concept Vision Report.*

CALGARY, AB.

Tomorrow's Chinatown

- Created alongside community members
- Plans & calls for engagement shared in multiple languages to maximize reach (Calgary.ca)
- Multiple community engagement sessions
 - **Chinatown Cultural Plan, 2022**
 - Developed in response to calls for revitalization from the Chinatown community
 - Developed alongside members of the Chinatown community
 - **Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan, 2024**
 - Informed by community engagement
 - Intended to provide consistency between community members, developers, and decision makers



(City of Calgary, 2024. *Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan*)

WINNIPEG, MB.

Case Overview

- The Welcoming Winnipeg Committee was created to oversee renaming requests with a focus on indigeneity and reconciliation
- Committee was not paid, nor did they have support staff to assist with the project (Loverin 2025)
- There was a variety of means to submit requests, comments, and feedbacks with many requesting renaming that did not focus on reconciliation, or criticizing the committee's purpose (Chang 2024)
- In early 2025, the Mayor's Office did a review of the committee, noting that the structure "has placed Indigenous perspectives in competition with non-Indigenous naming opportunities" (Loverin 2025)



City of Winnipeg. 2024. Now is your chance to join the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee of Community Members,

WINNIPEG, MB.

Structured Community Engagement for Cultural Safety

- Community engagement must have a clear purpose, structure, and intention that prioritizes the cultural safety of participants
- While this committee strived to uplift diverse voices, failing to provide budget or support leaving members to face hate led to community members feeling demoralized with the project
- Engagement should not burden community members or make them feel like they are working against the system
- If committee members are responsible for full implementation and the justification to City officials, they must be properly compensated and recognized
- Community engagement must be re-evaluated and adjusted to ensure inclusivity and cultural safety



City of Winnipeg. 2024. Now is your chance to join the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee of Community Members,

<u>TRUST</u>	<u>Shared Authority</u>	<u>Truth-Telling and Education</u>	<u>Accessibility and Cultural Safety</u>	<u>Reconciling through Placekeeping and Placemaking</u>	<u>Sustainable Development and Community Wellness</u>
Victoria, B.C.	Engagement to inform commemoration	Education about impact of settler symbology	Removal of John A. Macdonald statute	Incorporation of Indigenous perspectives	Cultural spaces and revitalization
Aotearoa	Governance shift	Māori ways of knowing	Bilingual signage	Official language status	Integration of culture in space
Calgary, AB.	Community-led	Educational material	Three languages	Cultural continuity and recognition of history	Economic development and cultural space
Winnipeg, MB.	Power struggles	Integrating Indigenous culture	Lack of cultural safety	Place-keeping Indigenous names	Focus on renaming efforts of public spaces

APPLICATIONS

Vancouver, B.C.

- Address Indigenous and equity-denied groups' erasure in commemorative landscape (Joint CoV/PB Commemoration Framework Report, 2022)

Kelowna, B.C.

- Collaboration between multiple actors (Bradford, 2003)
- Can help guide community-based innovation for commemorative projects

Torun, Poland

- Integrating the UN's SDGs at municipal level and local institutional level (Eremenko and Kraski 2025; Yerun, 2024)
- Applicable to Lethbridge to enhance community wellness through sustainability initiatives that can double as commemorations



(<https://portal.umk.pl/en/article/community-garden-open-for-spring> / NCU News)



(Gatzke Orchards - Tourism Kelowna.com)



(West End Journal 2025)

Trust - STARS & City of Lethbridge

Trust:

Participation in community engagement initiatives

- ☐ Continue to build relations, not a one-time commitment

Shared Authority:

A clear goal for reconciliation

- ☐ Focus on paid positions and partnerships with equity deserving communities to engage in cultural and commemorative initiatives

Truth Telling & Education

Representation of diverse perspectives

- ☐ Embrace interculturalism and recognize the tension of varying perspectives

Accessibility & Cultural Safety:

Recognition of inequity within spaces

- ☐ Financial, physical & emotional barriers for cultural spaces

Reconciling Through Placekeeping and Placemaking:

Reconciliatory plans

- ☐ Evaluate existing symbology

Sustainable Development & Community Wellness:

Initiatives that focus on enhancing community well-being

- ☐ Incorporate commemoration within practical infrastructure

RECOMMENDATIONS

Commemoration Framework Policy

- Implement a municipal policy specific to culture and commemoration, utilizing the tenets of the Trust-STARS framework.

Government Grants

- Enhance awareness of available grants and funding opportunities to support cultural and commemorative projects.

Functional and Sustainable Commemorations

- Utilize sustainable development goals to create functional commemorations that enhance community wellness.

Widen the Scope of Perspectives

- Prioritize community engagement conducted with "casual citizens".

RECOMMENDATIONS

Change Management within Engagement

- Utilize change management strategies in community engagement.

Treaty Alignment

- Work in collaboration with the Buffalo Treaty when implementing commemorative efforts in the city of Lethbridge.

Event Distribution

- Disperse cultural events outside of the downtown core.

Multilingual Engagement Material

- Prioritize sharing information in English and Blackfoot.

FINAL REMARKS

- The MDP, CCP, and HMP make the goal of cultural vibrancy very clear
- There are great cultural initiatives supported by the City throughout Lethbridge
- Commemoration stands out as an area to pursue
- The tenets of the Trust-STARS framework will help with this ongoing alignment

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