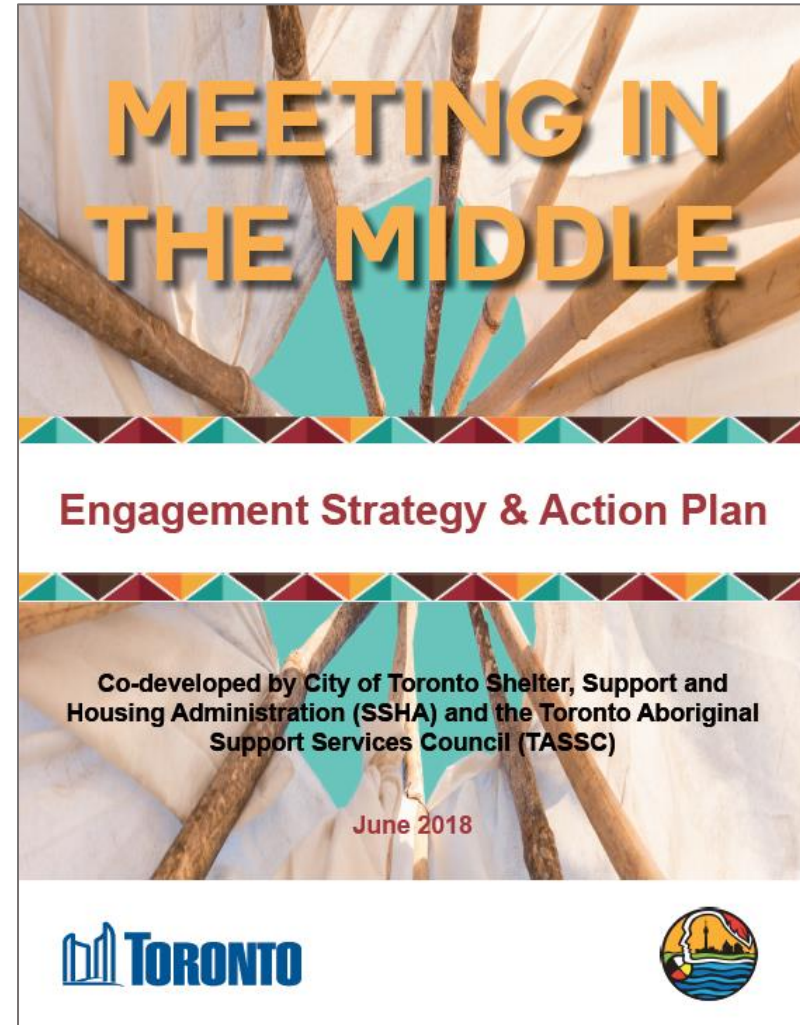


**Building Partnerships
to Address Indigenous
Homelessness:
*Co-Creating the
Meeting in the Middle
Engagement Strategy
and Action Plan***



Our Shared Vision

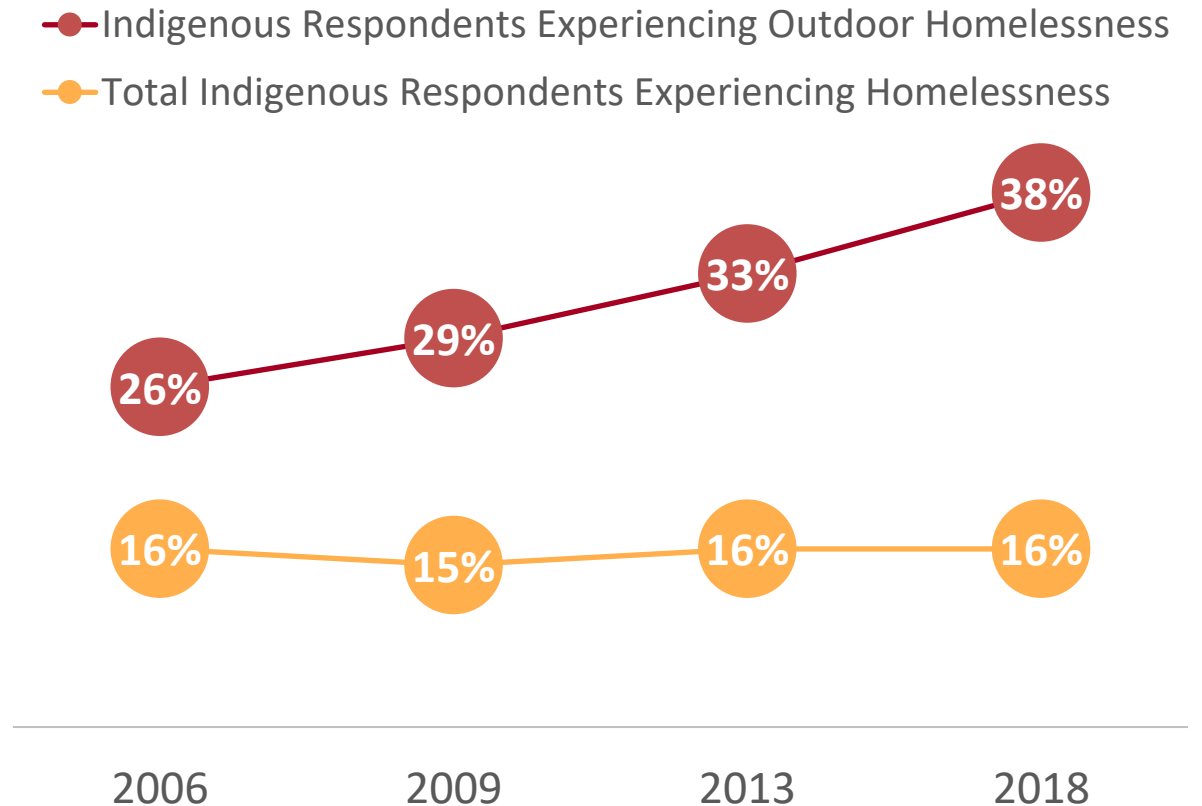
Meaningfully address
Indigenous homelessness in
Toronto by addressing the
City of Toronto's Statement of
Commitment to Aboriginal
Communities

***Partnerships are foundational
to this work***



Why This Work is Important

- Persistent overrepresentation of Indigenous people in Toronto's homeless population, especially among individuals staying outdoors
- Direct result of colonialism, structural and institutional racism, government policies and practices, and intergenerational trauma



Indigenous people represent up to 2.5% of the Toronto population, yet 16% of those experiencing homelessness

How We Got Here

- Challenges in understanding & approaching engagement with Indigenous partners
- Mutual recognition of the importance of Indigenous-led solutions and meaningful engagement to address Indigenous homelessness in Toronto



Co-Creating the Meeting in the Middle Strategy

- Three-day planning session, grounded in an Indigenous approach, with leaders from Shelter, Support & Housing Administration, Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council and the Indigenous Community Advisory Board for Homelessness Partnering Strategy funding



Upholding the City of Toronto's Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities



Meeting in the Middle Commitments (1/3)

Commitment 1 – Learning & Development

- On-going cultural learning and development of all staff

Commitment 2 – Integrating Holistic Approaches

- Integrate holistic approaches into policy and programs with the guidance/support of Indigenous partners

Commitment 3 – Supporting Capacity-Building

- Support capacity building of Indigenous organizations
- Develop data strategy to ensure Indigenous data are owned/protected by local Indigenous authority

Meeting in the Middle Commitments (2/3)

Commitment 4 – Meaningful Engagement

- Hold separate consultations in addition to general consultations
- Advocate for increased inclusion of Indigenous people on municipal boards/committees

Commitment 5 – Employment Practices

- Promote employment opportunities to Indigenous communities
- Explore on-the-job training
- Funding for Indigenous knowledge keepers to support public consultations

Meeting in the Middle Commitments (3/3)

Commitment 6 – Opportunities for Collaboration

- Create engagement and collaborative opportunities with Indigenous organizations
- Seek opportunities to share promising practices to promote our mutual work

Commitment 7 – Action & Accountability

- Meet annually to review progress on commitments and actions
- Explore and monitor impacts of commitments and actions on improving housing outcomes for Indigenous people

Birthing the Meeting in the Middle Strategy

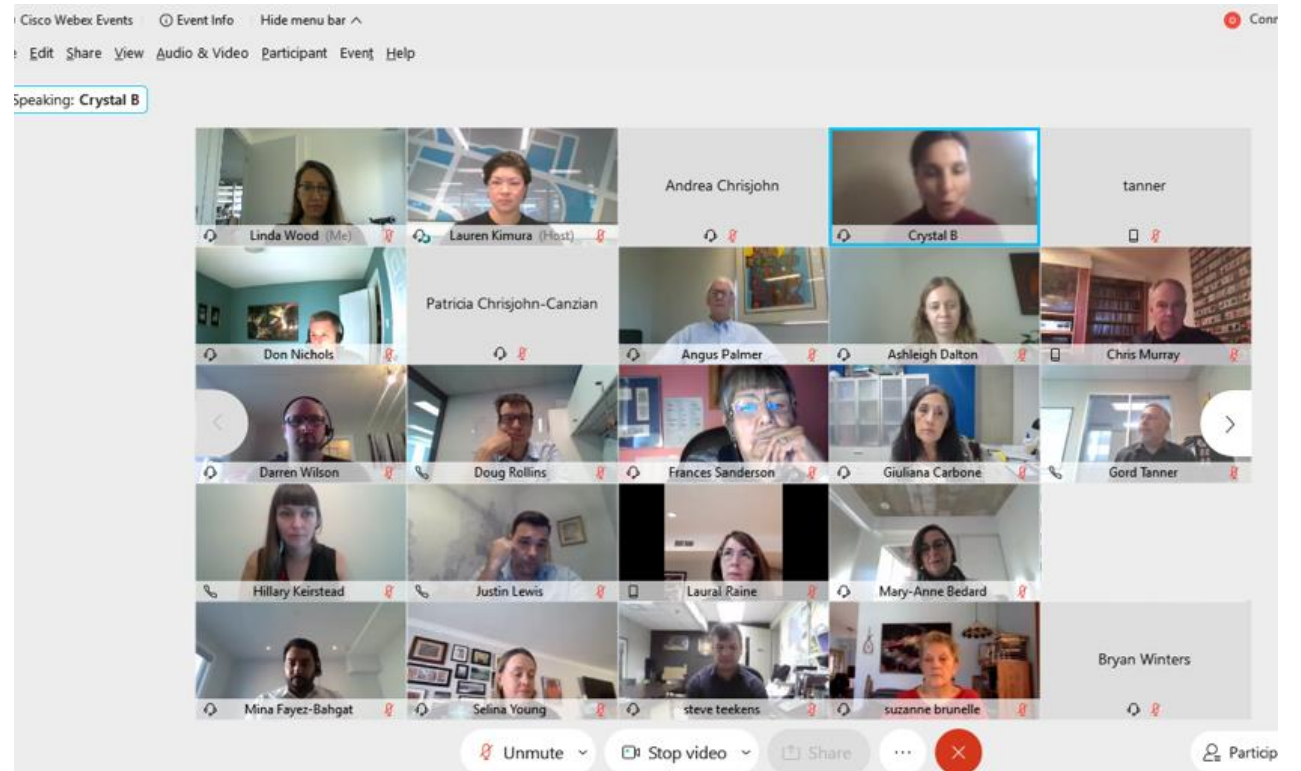


June 2018

First and Second Annual Gatherings



October 2019



November 2020

Outcomes & Impacts of *Meeting in the Middle* (1/2)

- Solidified partnership with the Indigenous CAB and TASSC
- Increased Divisional awareness and understanding of the *Meeting in the Middle* commitments and actions
- Strengthened Divisional capacity to meaningfully engage with Indigenous organizations on policy and program development
- Increased financial investments in Indigenous housing and homelessness prevention

Outcomes & Impacts of *Meeting in the Middle* (2/2)

- Strengthened cultural learning and development of SSHA staff with focus on local realities of Indigenous homelessness
- Strengthened capacity of TASSC and Indigenous CAB to engage with the City and Indigenous community
- Increased responsiveness of funding and recruitment processes to the needs of Indigenous organizations and communities
- Increased accountability of SSHA to Indigenous partners in the housing and homelessness sector

More Information

- Meeting in the Middle Engagement Strategy and Action Plan
- 10 Tips for Engagement with Indigenous Partners
- Protocols and Practices for Meaningful Engagement with Indigenous Partners and Communities

Available at [Housing & Homelessness Research & Reports](http://www.toronto.ca/housingresearch)

(www.toronto.ca/housingresearch)

