

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Development of Urban Indigenous Community Safety Plan in Thunder Bay

The following is a joint News Release from Anishinabek Nation, City of Thunder Bay, Fort William First Nation, Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA), Thunder Bay Police Service and Thunder Bay Police Service Board

THUNDER BAY, ON (June 3, 2024) — In recognition of the five-year anniversary of Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' (MMIWG); Anishinabek Nation, City of Thunder Bay, Fort William First Nation, Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA), Thunder Bay Police Service, and the Thunder Bay Police Service Board announce the joint development of an Urban Indigenous Community Safety Plan for Thunder Bay.

This initiative, part of Public Safety Canada's Aboriginal Community Safety Planning Initiative (ACSPI), is a first of its kind for a community the size of Thunder Bay. It underscores the collective commitment to addressing the systemic issues affecting Indigenous women and girls, and promoting safety, healing, and reconciliation.

The Urban Indigenous Community Safety Plan will be developed through a collaborative and community-driven process and will aim to address the unique safety concerns and priorities of Indigenous women and girls and their families.

The development of this safety plan reflects a shared commitment to honouring the lives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and gender-diverse people, and to preventing further tragedies through proactive and community-led initiatives.

We invite all community members, including Indigenous people, organizations, and allies, to actively work towards ensuring the safety of Indigenous women and girls by supporting this important work. Together, safer, more inclusive, and resilient communities for everyone can be built.

“Community Safety Planning Initiatives are a fundamental step towards creating safe and secure environments where women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples can thrive. Implementation of the Final Report's recommendations has been a top priority for many Anishinabek First Nations and we are proud to partner in this collective effort. Uniting through these shared responsibilities strengthens our relationships and will propel our work towards outcomes and successes that will continue to evolve in the future.” - Anishinabek Nation, Grand Council Chief Reg Niganobe

“The City of Thunder Bay is proud to support the Urban Indigenous Community Safety Plan. This collaborative effort between the Ontario Native Women’s Association, Anishinabek Nation, Fort William First Nation, Thunder Bay Police Service, Thunder Bay Police Service Board, and the City of Thunder Bay is so important. As we continue our journey towards reconciliation, and addressing systemic issues facing our community, we are also making the safety of Indigenous women and their families in our community a top priority. We would like to thank Ontario Native Women’s Association for their continued efforts and advocacy towards making Thunder Bay a safer place for all.” – **City of Thunder Bay, Mayor Ken Boshcoff**

“Developing a community safety plan that is rooted in cultural sensitivity, community collaboration and proactive measures is an important step towards addressing the systemic issue faced by Indigenous women and girls. Fort William First Nation is committed to working together through this partnership to ensure the well-being of our women and to develop a positive path forward.” – **Fort William First Nation, Chief Michele Solomon**

“We must recognize the resilience and strength of survivors, families, and communities who continue to seek truth, justice, and accountability. We all have a role to play to ensure the safety of Indigenous women and girls. This is a positive step that we can take as community to address and prevent incidents of violence against Indigenous women in our city. It’s time to change the narrative of our community and show Indigenous women that we have heard them, believe them, and are prepared to action their solutions together.” – **Ontario Native Women’s Association, Chief Executive Officer Cora McGuire-Cyrette**

“It is an honour to work with such knowledgeable and progressive partners to improve the protection and well-being of Indigenous women and girls in our community. This Indigenous-led, holistic, and proactive approach recognizes the powerful impact of collaboration on community safety.” – **Thunder Bay Police Service, Chief Darcy Fleury**

“As Chair, and on behalf of the Board, we strongly support the work of ONWA and other community groups that have recognized a need to address the critical public safety challenges that exist for Indigenous people in Thunder Bay, especially Indigenous women and girls. We call on all levels of government to provide the funding necessary to result in the safety of Indigenous peoples in Thunder Bay.” – **Thunder Bay Police Service Board Chair Karen Machado**

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