

**The American Indian Community
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Between the
Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors
On behalf of the American Indian Community**

&

The Honorable Mayor Betsy Hodges and the Minneapolis City Council

This MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) is hereby entered into by the entities that have the responsibility to support and serve the American Indian community. The MOU is hereinafter referred to as the “American Indian Community” MOU. The MOU is perpetual and will be reviewed and updated every five years.

A. PURPOSE

The MOU is to promote and sustain a dedicated promise and ongoing sense of urgency to further develop reciprocal paths of participation and success for members of the American Indian community. Through the vehicle of the MOU, an established working partnership predicated on friendship, dialogue, direct action, and measurable results will continue to exist between the Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors Group (MUID Group), the Mayor of Minneapolis, and the City Council of Minneapolis.

This MOU will continue to provide for the following items:

Knowledge Construction: A community-government process of constructing and sharing knowledge through an ongoing process of engagement and dialogue. This ongoing process is to allow for a better understanding of how the cultural values, perspectives, and community practices of the American Indian people can be further integrated into the planning, development, and stewardship of the city of Minneapolis

Ongoing Relationship and Support: A community-government process that acknowledges, honors, and supports the ongoing contributions each party makes to the overall vitality of the city throughout the year. This includes sharing in the successes earned by each party, and by attending or participating when invited to key events, activities, ceremonies, milestones, or engagements hosted by either the American Indian community or the City of Minneapolis whenever applicable – including at the leadership level. Additionally, it is also important that the community-government process continues to honor and acknowledges the history, perspectives, and values held by the American Indian people in a consistent and thoughtful manner sensitive to the American Indian community’s unique historic, cultural, and political status in all public actions. Finally, the most concrete manner by which this supportive relationship has been exemplified is through the ongoing sustainment of an American Indian community liaison position within Minneapolis city government. This American Indian liaison position must be retained going forward.

Direct Action: A community-government process that sustains an ongoing commitment to create, monitor, and refine specific goals and objectives based on the knowledge gained through this partnership that will further enhance the American Indian people as a culturally unique, self-sufficient, and participatory community within the city of Minneapolis. The MOU will also ensure that all relevant data regarding the American Indian community is collected, included,

and disseminated within all relevant reporting conducted by the City of Minneapolis for the express purposes of achieving the stated goals provided for by the MOU. Additionally, this MOU will further sustain a commitment to consult and collaborate with the American Indian community regarding any direct actions pursued to achieve these stated goals or on behalf of the American Indian community.

Results: Agreement to evaluate the efforts of the city and other stakeholders through this effort as it relates to the priorities developed by the American Indian community.

B. BACKGROUND

PAST: The American Indian community has been an integral and vital component of the City of Minneapolis, historically pre-dating the city's actual founding when this land was in the belonging and stewardship of the Dakota. Throughout the ensuing years, the American Indian people have continuously made significant contributions towards accelerating the evolution of Minneapolis with regards to the arts, culture, medicine, sports, sciences, environmental protection, economic development, education, and political discourse. Owing to these remarkable contributions, the American Indian people remain deeply rooted within the city as a foundational community integral for the ongoing sustainment of the city's health, knowledge, wealth, and overall vitality.

PRESENT: As detailed within earlier iterations of this MOU, there remain several factors that require innovation and invention in order for government entities to be able to authentically engage with the American Indian community. Most notable, American Indians typically define community as a "cultural space" and not in terms of the more generally accepted geographic or political borders used by the dominant culture. At times in the past this distinction has complicated efforts to build broad and sustainable support with elected officials whose responsibility is otherwise limited to the confines of political boundaries.

Further, American Indians hold a unique political status in the form of a legally codified government-to-government relationship with the federal and state governments of the United States. However, the customary consultation and intergovernmental effort codified in statute for American Indians relates only to federally recognized tribes and reservations – of which there are eleven within the state of Minnesota. This government-to-government relationship does not include the large, diverse, and thriving American Indian population living within America's urban centers that are comprised of a wide variety of tribal affiliations originating from far beyond any one state's political boundaries. Such large urban American Indian populations are found in many major metropolitan areas – with Minneapolis being one of the largest in the country. As a result of the indigenous diversity found within these urban American Indian populations, many people within these communities continue to utilize non-Tribal Government civic organizations as their principle vehicle for policy, advocacy, and support for the community. MUID was created specifically for these reasons, and continues to honor these considerations to this very day. Owing to such coalitions and the long history of effective practice that have been present within the urban American Indian community of Minneapolis (as exemplified by the MUID Group and the various non-profit member organizations present therein), the Twin Cities – and Minneapolis specifically – stands today as the recognized national leader regarding the urban American Indian experience throughout the United States and across all of Indian country.

For well over two decades, the MUID Group has been serving the Twin Cities American Indian community as a gathering of leadership to discuss and inform the community of organizational and community issues, as well as an advocate for policy and direct action on behalf of the people.

The current MUID Group roster is comprised of over thirty different organizations, programs and partners from the American Indian community.

In recognition of the depth and breadth of services provided by all of the member organizations, the MUID Group has created six specialized subcommittees in order to offering a convening space for our organizations front line staff and direct service practitioners. During these sessions, the subcommittee membership has been afforded an ongoing opportunity to share best practice methodologies, provide technical assistance for one another, meet with industry experts and key stakeholders within their respective fields, and initiate cross-organizational collaborative efforts in order to optimize service delivery.

The standing six subcommittees of the MUID Group are:

1. Education (*aka Phillips Indian Educators or "PIE"*)
2. Employment and Economic Development (*aka Native Employment and Economic Development or "NEED"*)
3. Family Preservation and Family Well-Being (*aka "Mini-MUID" or "ICWA Group"*)
4. Housing
5. Health and Wellness
6. Public Safety

FUTURE: Going forward, the MUID Group will continue on with its stated objectives, while continuously improving the community-government process embodied within this MOU. To this end, the MUID Group seeks to enhance relationships with key stakeholders in both the public and private sector, as well as with those occupying local, county, state, and federal positions.

Additionally, the MUID Group seeks to expand its existing framework in order to incorporate or inspire the development of similar collaborative American Indian working groups throughout the various urban centers both in the state of Minnesota as well as throughout the United States. In this respect, the city of Minneapolis and the MUID Group will become the vanguard of an enlightened and progressive model for community and government relations to be emulated and replicated across the nation.

C. IMPLEMENTATION

The parties to this MOU acknowledge the importance of sustaining robust communication and coordination on an ongoing basis. Such practice has significantly aided the success of the American Indian population and improved city services. Through this MOU, the MUID Group and the city of Minneapolis continue to hold a shared vision to increase the quality of life of American Indian people living within the city. With this understanding and through the vehicle of this document, the parties to this MOU will continue to work together to resolve community, organizational and local government issues that may include matters beyond local jurisdiction. Resolution of these issues will require an ongoing collaborative effort that ensures direct community involvement, strategies that have been co-created by all participants, and ensures that the voice of the American Indian people is present in all work that involves their own community.

C1. COORDINATION

Mechanism: The MUID/Minneapolis Workgroup will continue to consist of a minimum of ten members. The Mayor will appoint the Workgroup Chair as a member of city government. The City Council will appoint four workgroup members from city government. MUID will select five participants to complete the workgroup roster. All appointees will be in place within 45 days after the approved refresh of the MOU. The Workgroup will be comprised of leaders and decision makers with the ability to address cross-cutting issues that can arise in multiple sectors.

Integration: The MUID/Minneapolis Workgroup will continue to create goals and objectives that will be integrated into the business plans of key city departments. This will include but not limited to The Office of the Mayor, City Council, Minneapolis Health Department, CPED, Minneapolis Police Department, Minneapolis Fire Department, Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights, and the Minneapolis City Coordinator's office.

C2. ACTIVITIES

Annual Work Plan: The MUID/Minneapolis Workgroup will continue to employ an Annual Work Plan that has been designed to address the goals and objectives identified by the parties of this MOU. This Annual Work Plan will also specify the tasks and information needed to implement the American Indian Community MOU. A "State of the American Indian Community Report" that encompasses the Annual Work Plan will be written and presented to all stakeholders on the anniversary of the MOU refresh date.

State of the American Indian Community Address: As part of this agreement, in addition to the annual State of the American Indian Community Report, MUID and the City of Minneapolis will put forth an annual verbal account to key stakeholders about this report known as the State of the American Indian Community Address. The MUID/Minneapolis Workgroup will be responsible for the design and production of the address. To this end, the MUID/Minneapolis Workgroup will collect and present pertinent data in a timely manner and on an ongoing basis during these addresses. The State of the American Indian Community Address will also serve as an overview of the progress and challenges currently facing the American Indian community, serve as a roadmap for future action, as well as to acknowledge and celebrate community achievements.

Evaluation – Reserved

D. ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH PARTICIPATING AGENCY

The annual work plan created by the working group will delineate the role and responsibility of the city of Minneapolis and the Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors fulfilling agreed upon objectives and goals. Upon the selection of the workgroup, a draft work plan will be presented to the City of Minneapolis and the Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors no later than 90 days after acceptance of this MOU.

In addition to the appointed work group members, the list of principal staff contacts for both parties will be developed as an attachment to the work plan. They are responsible for working within their respective agencies to ensure implementation.

E. MUTUAL AGREEMENTS AND UNDERSTANDINGS

1. LEGAL INTENT. This MOU does not alter or amend any existing law or regulation, and it does not create or give any party any authority or right to try to enforce the document

2. NON-FUND OBLIGATING DOCUMENT. This instrument is neither a fiscal nor funds obligating document. Any endeavor invoking reimbursement, contribution of funds, or transfer of anything of value between the parties to this instrument will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures. Such endeavors will be outlined in separate agreements that shall be made in writing by representatives of the parties and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority. This instrument does not provide such authority.

3. MODIFICATION. Changes within the scope of this instrument shall be made by a mutually executed modification

4. PARTICIPATION IN SIMILAR ACTIVITIES. This instrument in no way restricts any agency from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals. In addition, partnerships or other relationships will be documented or authorized in appropriate documents.

5. INITIATION AND TERMINATION. Any party, in writing, may initiate or terminate its own participation in whole, or in part, at any time before the date of expiration.

6. PRINCIPAL CONTACTS. The list of principal program contacts for this MOU is attached.