



George Gordon First Nation
Off-Reserve Membership Services

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Strategic Plan

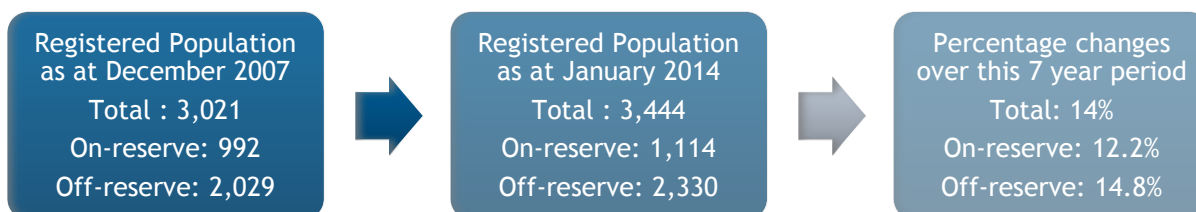
Draft Document

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Introduction

George Gordon First Nation (GGFN) On and Off-Reserve membership has been growing at a much higher rate than the general population of Canada. Over the last 10 years Canada's general population has grown at slightly more than one percent per year, however, one could estimate George Gordon's population growth rate at approximately two percent per year. An increasing number of our membership is located in the City of Regina.



The 2011 National Household Survey reported 13,745 persons or 6.6% self-identified as First Nations. A report from the 2006 Census by Statistics Canada, Crime and Justice Research Series called 'Neighbourhood Characteristics and the Distribution of Crime in Regina contained some alarming information concerning the Regina Aboriginal population. Overall, Aboriginal people in Regina are doing better than 20 years ago. However, three quotes from the report indicate that;

- Aboriginal people reported the highest rates of violent victimization compared to other minority populations and the non-Aboriginal population;
- Aboriginal women reported being particularly at risk, with rates of violent victimization that were 3.5 times higher than rates for non-Aboriginal women;
- Neighbourhoods with higher proportions of Aboriginal people also tend to have high proportions of households in low income situations, high proportion of population receiving government transfers, low education rates, high unemployment, housing in need of repair, high proportion of multiple-family dwellings, high proportion of renters and a higher proportion of recent movers (Source: Statistics Canadaⁱ).

The level of services provided to George Gordon First Nation off-reserve from current First Nation and non-First Nations Community Based Organizations (CBO) is difficult to determine because of the lack of available data. However, the Statistics Canada suggests a significant need for services for the overall Aboriginal population in Regina – and it also offers the grounds for the George Gordon First Nation to be present within the program and service delivery realm in this region.

Little evidence exists that outline how many Gorge Gordon First Nations members live in Regina, nor do we know what health, income, employment and education levels exist within this population. What we do know – primarily from existing government reports like the one noted above – suggests a significant need. Therefore, we feel that the needs of Gorge Gordon First Nations members would be more efficiently provided for by the development and administering of services for GGFN membership by a Gorge Gordon First Nations urban based organization. The organization could focus on the

main challenges for services, for example health and wellness, education, employment and training, housing and particular attention to youth services. Doing this would enable a rapidly growing youth population to access the tools for success. Additionally, by providing community based programming that is holistic, accessible and reflective of our member's needs and priorities we can eliminate the barriers to participation and provide the advocacy required for the progress of our members.

George Gordon First Nation Urban Office - Off-Reserve Membership Program

A non-profit corporation will be created to serve as the organizational foundation for this program. The non-profit will have the following three key characteristics:


- membership corporation (not a charitable corporation);
- Governance: Board of Directors that are directed to operationalize a strategic plan that is co-developed and approved by GGFN Chief and Council.
- Form alliances and working relationships with other community-based-organizations to ensure programs and services are not duplicated - but that rather GGFN know and access all existing programs and services.

The GGFN Urban Office will provide essential services with a goal of capacity building. Community engagement and planning will initiate community based programming to ensure the success of the program for GGFN members. Programming will be linked to on reserve services to ensure that leadership supports the growth and advocates for GGFN off-reserve membership. Closer linkages to GGFN are also a means of ensuring Treaty Rights are always at the forefront of all activity. The formation of a non-profit organization opens new doors for non-traditional funding sources that include grants and proposal driven programs to support the services offered.

The intent of the USAP is to provide new opportunities without duplicating existing programs and services currently offered to both on and off reserve members. Notwithstanding, the program shall not exempt membership from accessing those current services offered to the general band membership regardless of residency. The purpose of the program is to fill the gap whereby no support services are currently offered to non-resident members.

The following list of programs and services provide an indication of what types of services and programs we believe are important to GGFN membership.

- Health and Wellness Programs
 - Prevention Programs;
 - Promotion Programs;
 - Mental Health Programs;
 - NNADAP Services - Provide addiction services to urban members with the opportunity to work with GGFN community Family Wellness Counsellors.
- Housing
 - Liason and advocacy to existing programs;
 - Advocacy for affordable and quality housing.
- Recreational Programming
 - Assist to eliminate the barriers to inclusion ie. Lack of equipment, transportation, basic skills, funds, etc.

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- Assist members to participate in current activities offered by other agencies.
 - Employment and Educational support & Referrals
 - Training support;
 - Career goal setting and developing resumes;
 - Completing job applications and obtaining job leads.
 - Transportation
 - Provide vehicle to support programming and special events such as funerals and cultural events.
 - Provide guidelines and minimal fees for a vehicle program.
 - Access essential identification and banking requirements;
 - Assist in applications for identification.
 - Registry
 - Provide the opportunity for GGFN members to access Status Cards and registry information.
 - Justice
 - Develop fine option programs for GGFN off-reserve members for cultural development opportunities and community engagement;
 - Provide Justice personal for our members.
 - TLE
 - Provide office headquarters in the City of Regina and provide the opportunity to support the operation of GGFN TLE Department by sharing human resources.

A major focus will include prevention programs for GGFN youth and emphasize holistic healing and healthy choices that are easily accessible. Incentives such as transportation, nutrition and rewards such as movie nights and other activities will be implemented to meet the need of prevention through participation.

Context Organization Operates Within - The Off-Reserve Membership Program

The report referenced above provided an indication of the challenges that exist for First Nations living in the city. Again, some of the existing challenges for First Nations in Regina are: households in low income situations, high proportion of population receiving government transfers, low education rates, high unemployment, housing in need of repair, high proportion of multiple-family dwellings, high proportion of renters and a higher proportion of recent movers. Generally speaking then, this is the context that GGFN membership currently faces. This is a general statement, we understand that some GGFN members are employed and have sufficient income, we also understand that others have gained post-secondary certificates, diplomas and degrees others may also have attained trades credentials. The organizational context is elaborated on in the format of a SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis looks at the *internal* Strengths and Weaknesses of the organization as well as the *external* Opportunities and Threats. The following page briefly highlights that analysis.

Off-Reserve Membership Program SWOT Analysis

Internal to the Organization

Strengths

- Ability to reach GGFN members through existing and proposed communications channels;
- Familial, community and cultural linkages;
- Housed in multi-use facility that is owned by GGFN;
- Growing GGFN population increases pool of knowledge, skills, and experience organization can draw from;
- Existing networks of project proponents, i.e. GGFN political leaders;
- Strong GGFN political support for the newly emerging organization;
- New organization with limited reputational challenges;
- Organization has a blank template - can organize programs and services specifically on members needs.

Weaknesses

- Limited human resource capacity;
- Limited financial resources;
- Lack of membership specific demographic, health, education and employment data;
- New organization will need to prove itself;
- New organization with no existing policies, procedures, operational practices.
- Lack of existing knowledge of the needs of GGFN off-reserve members;
- Lack of knowledge concerning existing programs and services in Regina;
- Potential membership apathy.

External to the Organization

Opportunities

- Potential for partnerships/alliances with existing First Nations CBOs and non-First Nation CBOs;
- Use of social media to connect to members;
- Dual funding access - to GGFN and to programs for non-profits in Regina.

Threats

- Many existing CBOs - potential for duplication of programs and services;
- Competition for funding from other CBOs;
- Limited funding may be available;
- Off-reserve members may have existing relationships with other Regina CBOs;
- Working collaboratively with existing CBOs may be a challenge;
- On-reserve GGFN members may challenge the organization because of the fear that resources are being drawn from the on-reserve membership.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Community Vision Statement

The GGFN will always work towards achieving the Vision of the George Gordon First Nation:

Saulteaux (nākawē)

Cree (nēhlyawēwin)

Kika māmawi ôsihtomin ânîn cî-isi mino-pimâtising Kanosimowinan sikwâ kihcî kikentâsowin kika māmawitômin cî-wâpicitôwat Māmawêkamik ômâ Anisinabê cî-mino pamêhâtôwat Anîn cî-isi-mino-pimâtisiwat

Kahkiyaw kika-mā-mawi-atoskātēnānaw ka-kichi itēyihākwhahki tanisi ta-isi-miyo-pimātisiyahk ôṭē nikān ta-mamitonyihmamihk kiskēyihamowin ta-wīchitoyahk kakiyaw ta-mā-mawi-māmitonēyihamahk kēsi-miyo-pimātisiyahk

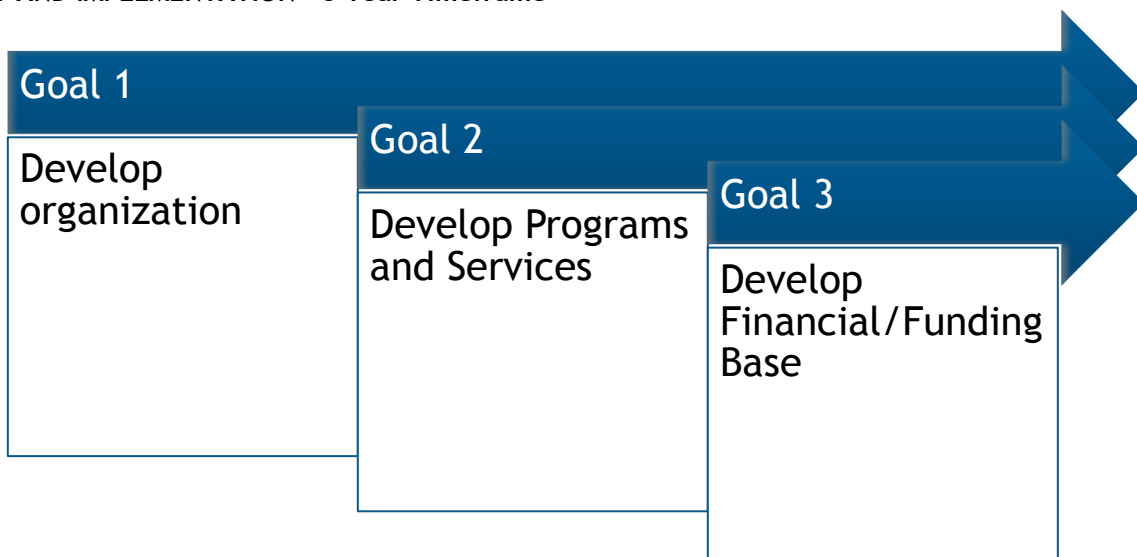
Together we will build our future on the values, knowledge and potential of our people by encouraging a balanced approach to life-long learning.

Goals:

Long Term Goal

The goal of the GGFN Off-Reserve Membership Program is to become self-sufficient.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION - 5 Year Timeframe



The following highlights the key goals and strategies that will define the work of the organization over the next 5 year timeframe. This strategic plan will require annual operational plans that will outline how the organization will work towards meeting each of these three key goals.




Goal 1 - Develop Organization

Strategies: Year 1 to 3

Initial Governance: A committee and the Urban Portfolio Councillor will oversee the management team.

1. Register Non-Profit Corporation

- The Urban Portfolio Councillor will implement the registration of a non-profit corporation. It will be a member corporation with the initial governance committee transitioned to the Board of Directors.
- Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws will be developed by a lawyer and approved by the initial governance committee and the Urban Portfolio Councillor at the inaugural meeting of the Board of Directors.
 - Outline Board Governance processes, meetings, etc.
- The Board of Directors will report to the GGFN Chief and Council.

Timeframe: Mid-Year 1

2. Formulate Staffing Needs and a Staffing Plan

- Develop organizational structure, roles, positions, etc.

3. Initiate development of policy and procedures for organization

- a. Develop policies for Training and Employment Support Program;
- b. Develop policies for Education Support Program.
- c. Review and adopt existing GGFN applicable policies.
- d. Develop knowledge of organizational policy gaps and formulate a plan to full gaps.

Timeframe: Year 1 to 3



Goal 2 - Develop Organization Programs and Services

Strategies - Year 1 and 2

1. Knowledge Creation: Membership Needs

- Develop and Implement an Urban Strategy Needs Assessment.

Timeline: Complete by mid-year 1.

2. Initiate working relationships to develop programming

- Develop a list of existing programs and services
- Develop a list of potential contacts
- Initiate contact with existing CBOs

Timeline: Year 1

3. Program and Service Development - Training, Employment and Education Support

The creation of two funds that will directly impact the potential of GGFN membership - in particular the youth - will create the much needed initial support for the organization.

Timeline: Launch beginning of Year 2.

Training and Employment Support

The Training and Employment support component will focus on increasing the number of our members in the trades and overall labour force. The initial focus is to ensure the job readiness of GGFN members to meet the needs of the labour force, which includes the following (however special circumstances will be considered):

- Enhancement of employability skills;
- Pertinent skills upgrading not provided by the employer;
- Referral services;
- Training support;
- Career goal setting and development of resumes;
- Completing job applications and obtaining job leads.

This component will not exceed the amount of \$500 per request, per fiscal year. The objective is to focus on preparing and ensuring the success of our members to enter the job market. Written confirmation from the potential employer/skills training provider and complete assessment with the Urban Services Coordinator will be required.

Education Support

Education support component will focus on the success of our elementary and secondary level students. By supporting GGFN students to succeed in the main-stream educational system we will be preparing our youth to aspire to leadership/managerial roles in today's economy. This component will not exceed the amount of \$200 per school year and be made payable to the school/institution. Supporting documentation from the school must accompany the written request. Special circumstances will be considered.

Education support will address the needs of members who require assistance in the following areas:

- Elementary/Secondary Students
 - Recognition of academic/sport/recreation accomplishment through scholarships;
 - Bus vouchers to attend school or programming;
 - School fees;
 - Extra-curricular activities;
 - Tutoring.

Timeline: Launch Beginning Year 2

4. Formulate Proposal Development/Writing Capacity

- An important task for the organization to engage in is to develop the capacity to plan, develop, and write funding proposals. This task may involve seeking external help (expensive), internally driven through strategic hiring and/or seeking the aide of members and the Board. Management must keep this task at the forefront of developing the organization, its programming and the financial capacity - this task in fact encompasses all three of the identified goals.

Timeline: Initiate immediately - ongoing.




Goal 3 - Develop Financial / Funding Resources

Strategies - Year 1 to 5

1. *Develop a 5 year Financial Plan that encompasses:*
 - a. Facility (lease, overhead, office supplies);
 - b. Board Governance;
 - c. Program Contributions
 - d. Staffing;
 - e. Travel (if necessary);
 - f. External Assistance (if necessary);
 - g. Other expenses.

Timeline: Year 1 - review each year - track monthly variance

2. *Develop Potential Funding Sources Database.*
 - o Potential sources may include:
 - Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy (AHRDS)
 - Urban Aboriginal Strategy
 - Heritage Canada - UMYAC
 - City of Regina Grant Programs
 - Social Assistance Program

Timeline: Year 1

3. *Initiate proposal development*

Timeline: Year 1



CONCLUSION

The benefits of the Urban Office will assist in the coordination of meeting the needs of a high proportion of our membership who reside off-reserve. Band development will benefit our members by providing access to services and programs specifically designed to meet their unique needs. Education, culture and recreational development will be key areas of programming that will be made available. Urban Services is essential for the prosperity of our people to develop a community based program that will aid in enhancing their skill set and enabling a link between on and off reserve programs.

Urban Development will be included in the strategic planning of the GGFN.

ⁱ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-561-m/2006008/findings-resultats/4053919-eng.htm>