

Betterment of the Circumstances Affecting Indigenous Populations in the City of Hamilton

Indigenous Self-Representation Plan

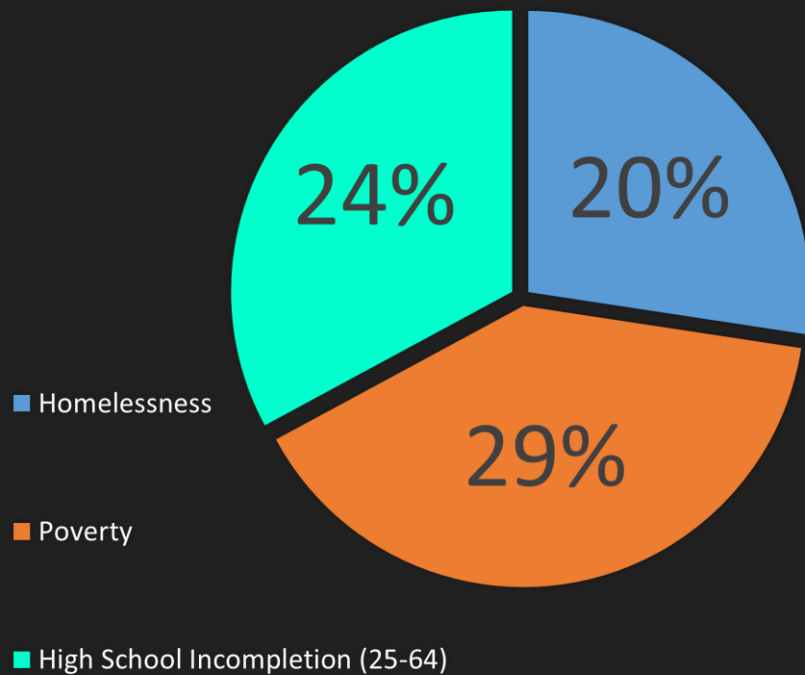
Introduction

1. Focuses on the relationship between urban Indigenous communities and the Hamilton municipal government providing examples from other current policy initiatives in Canadian municipalities.
2. In order for Hamilton to engage meaningfully with Indigenous communities, there needs to be an understanding of Aboriginal self-determining autonomy.
3. The goal is to recognize existing programs and focus on creating meaningful and feasible programs in which the urban Indigenous community and the Hamilton municipality can jointly discuss and address issues of concern.

1.2 Demographics/ The Problem



Urban Indigenous Demographics in Hamilton

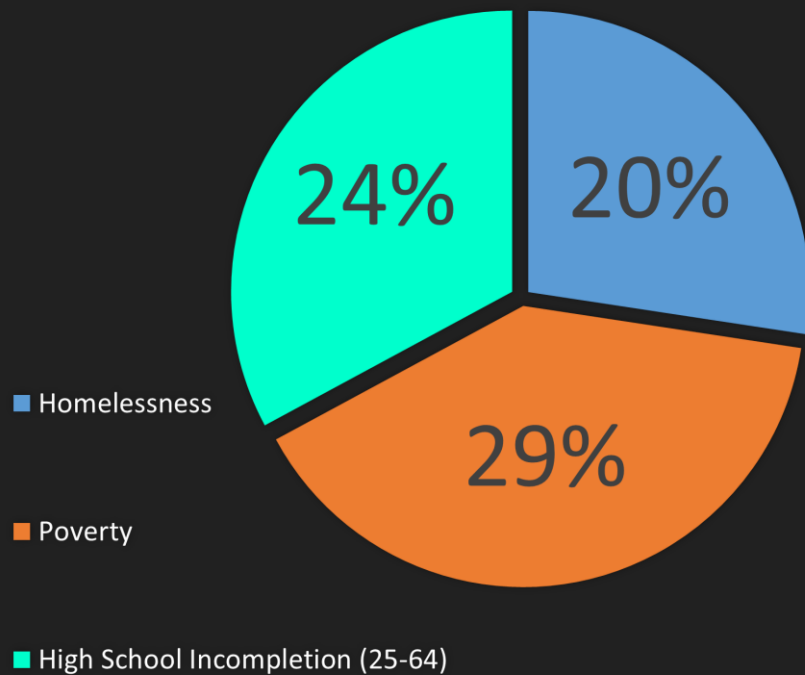


- **Hamilton's population of Indigenous descent = ~15,840 (3.1%) in 2011 as counted by the National Household Survey (SPRC's Profile of Hamilton Residents).**
- **Among Hamilton's Aboriginals 87% are First Nations according to the NHS.**
- **Aboriginals in the Hamilton community face numerous struggles, including health concerns, homelessness, low employment rates, and high poverty (SPRC).**

2.2 Demographics/ The Problem



Urban Indigenous Demographics in Hamilton



- **The poverty rate of Aboriginal residents in Hamilton is > than both the average for Aboriginals in Ontario (24%) and the general population in Hamilton (16%).**
- **From the ages of 25 to 64, Aboriginals have not completed high school compared to 13% of the rest of the Hamilton population.**

1.3 Research Suggestions

Lessons from Other Initiatives – Indigenous Justice Strategies (IJS) for Self- Determination

1.2 Indigenous Justice Strategies (IJS)

- Focus on existing municipal strategies in **Vancouver, Edmonton, and Winnipeg.**
- The relationship between municipal-Indigenous governance can be improved through a “stronger process of ensuring Indigenous citizen participation from the scale of the house hold, to community /neighborhood, to city council.” Suggestion is to increase the consultation between the municipal-Indigenous interface by creating a local Municipal Indigenous Advisory body.

2.2 Advisory Board

- In this Advisory board, members who represent multiple Aboriginal communities and their leaders could work together to coordinate, consult, and create a focus on which municipal issues such as community services, planning and design. To create an advisory body that ensures diversity and representation, a combination of community nomination and a stratification process should be used. This includes having different Aboriginal nations presented and political communities, elders, service providers.

2.3 Research Suggestions

Indigenous Education and Research Initiatives (Hawaiian Case Study)

1.2 Education Preservation

Section 7203 of the U.S. Department of Education states that the U.S. should:

- (1) authorize and develop innovative educational programs to assist Native Hawaiians;
- (2) provide direction and guidance to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies to focus resources, including resources made available under this part, on Native Hawaiian education, and to provide periodic assessment and data collection;

2.2 Education Preservation

- (3) supplement and expand programs and authorities in the area of education to further the purposes of this title; and
- (4) encourage the maximum participation of Native Hawaiians in planning and management of Native Hawaiian education programs.
- Additionally, **Section 7204** proposes the establishment of a **Native Hawaiian Education Council** in order to allow the Native Hawaiians to have a say in their education and to preserve their cultural autonomy.

3.3 Research Suggestions

Interview with Hamilton

Regional Indian Centre (HRIC) – The Importance for Financial Independence

1.2 HRIC Interview Results

- The government needs to work on **improving consultation** and actually engaging with the community at hand.
- Urban Indigenous communities in Hamilton do not have a strong sense of self-determination in governmental processes today.
- The main concerns of the HRIC were to create more opportunities for **low-cost housing** for Aboriginals.

2.2 HRIC Interview Results

- There also needs to be a greater focus on Indigenous youth in the community and their **mental health**.
- If the Hamilton municipality wants to take on more initiatives with the Indigenous community and build a relationship built on trust, it should first begin by learning the culture and immersing itself in existing organizations.

Conclusion

Allowing and giving the Indigenous population of Hamilton room for self-determination and providing opportunities for them to become self-represented in the governing body is important if improving the engagement, participation, and productivity of Indigenous individuals is targeted.

Better Representation

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graph TD; A[Better Representation] --- B[Financial Independence]; A --- C[Creation of better consultation practices in Urban-Indigenous Initiatives]; A --- D[Political/Academic representation (IJS)];
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**Financial
Independence**

**Creation of better
consultation
practices in Urban-
Indigenous
Initiatives**

**Political/Academic
representation (IJS)**